



Est. 1897

The Heath & Hampstead Society **NEWSLETTER**

May 2022

Vol 53 No 2



'Tawney owlets'

Annual Report for the year 2021-2022

Contents

Notice of the Annual General Meeting.....	5
Treasurer's Report for 2021 <i>by Maureen Clark-Darby</i>	8
Heath Report <i>by John Beyer</i>	9
Planning Report <i>by David Castle</i>	11
Town Report <i>by Andrew Haslam-Jones</i>	12
Summer Musical Events.....	13
Hampstead Summer Festival Events.....	14
Hampstead Historical Ramblings: Peter Pan is buried in Hampstead! <i>by Martin Thompson</i>	16
A Kite Display at Parliament Hill.....	17
An Unusual Encounter with a Juvenile Swan <i>by Claudia</i>	18
Best Practice for Swan Encounters <i>by Louisa Green</i>	19
A Brief History of Planning and Changes in Hampstead since 1945 <i>by David Castle</i>	22
Summer 2022 Events in the Library.....	27
My Life in Hampstead and the Society <i>by Martin Humphery</i>	28
Proms 2022 at St Jude's 25 June to 3 July – Heritage Walks and more.....	32
The Springett Lecture.....	35
New Biodiversity Interpretation Boards on the Heath <i>by Jeff Waage</i>	36
A New Project to Save the Hedgehog and the Important Role of the Heath <i>by Jeff Waage</i>	37
Heath Walks: 2022.....	38

Front cover: The Society runs a regular photographic competition on Instagram #myhampsteadheath. Leo He's image is the Society's current winner. Professional photographer and author, Matt Maran, is the Society's judge for the competition. "After photographing the Heath for five years, I never managed to see – let alone capture – such a fabulous image of tawny owlets. A tricky composition pointing up through the canopy executed and exposed for superbly. The backlit plumage highlighted perfect against the dark trunk of the oak tree completes a great capture". See the Society's website for competition rules and right for the uncropped version of this winning photograph.



by Marc Hutchinson

A year ago in this Newsletter, I wrote in hope the life of Hampstead, its Heath and the Society would return to normal. In most ways it has, and we can look back with satisfaction on a very eventful 12 months.

Melvyn Bragg's Glass-in-Hand Lecture

Before reviewing our year, I must mention with gratitude the lecture given earlier this year by Melvyn Bragg. Laid low by Covid, I was unable to chair the event, but Society Vice-Chair Andrew Haslam-Jones took my place and writes:

On 22 March, a packed Rosslyn Hill Chapel was informed, educated and entertained by new Society Patron Melvyn Bragg's fascinating lecture on William Tyndale (1494–1536): The Bible and its Language. Anyone who ambled into the holy precinct with a vague idea of the existence of William Tyndale at the beginning of the evening left with a comprehensive portrait of the man. Melvyn made a robust argument to present him as the greatest ever Englishman, with a breath-taking career through his life from young firebrand preacher to his eventual execution and beyond, to the enduring and wide influence of the language of his translation of the New Testament, a feat that, in response, inspired the audience to a steady stream of questions.

Planning

North Fairground Site

We have been monitoring the situation on this site since it was purchased by Knightsbridge Parks LLP in 2020. So far, there have not been any proposals for development on the site and it continues to be occupied by residential caravans.

Jack Straw's Castle

It was a huge disappointment to us that, contrary to the findings of previous planning inspectors, the latest planning inspector decided the car park of Jack Straw's Castle was suitable for the construction of two small mock-Georgian townhouses. At the time of the inquiry, it was made clear no residents parking permits would be issued for the occupants of the new houses. Nevertheless, the developer has now submitted an application for an underground stacking car park to accommodate the several cars of the putative residents. The Society is opposing this application.

The development itself has run into planning difficulties in so far as the revised plans as submitted and approved by the inspector – although this point was seemingly missed at the inquiry – entail encroachment of the new buildings onto the Heath. The City will resist this encroachment as it is required to do under the terms of the 1871 Hampstead Heath Act. It is unclear at the time of writing how the developer proposes to solve this structural problem.

55 Fitzroy Park

We recently received the most welcome news that the planning officers at Camden have refused outright this application to build five houses on the present site of 55 Fitzroy Park, part of which abuts Millfield Lane and the Heath. The refusal was couched in clear and forceful terms, including with reference to the need to preserve local open space, and we feel this is the result of the consistent and tireless engagement by the Fitzroy Park Residents Association and, in particular, local resident Karen Beare, who are to be congratulated on the outcome. The Society has supported their efforts over the years.

Murphy's Yard

This 10,000 page (plus) planning application, possibly

the largest of any current application in London, is going heavily to engage the Society over the coming years. The project is so vast that the planning process will take years and, as we understand it, the planned period of construction is itself nine years. The planning application received an overwhelming number of objections from affected residents, neighbourhood forums, amenity and conservation organisations, and the City and the Society. The Society's initial objection can be read on its website. The remit of the Society in relation to the development is the protection of the Heath, especially the area around Parliament Hill. Accordingly, our objection focuses on the destruction of protected views towards the City from Parliament Hill, the expected enormous increase in the footfall in the area of Parliament Hill as a result of the thousands of new residents and workers who will be eventually living and working on the site, and the adverse consequences for traffic (and associated pollution) in Gordon House Road where, by the Gospel Oak Underground Station and railway bridges, is to be located the proposed entrance to the site.

With regard to the loss of views, the Society does not believe the mock-up photographs prepared by the developer are representational in terms of their carefully chosen viewpoints and, subject to expense, the Society will consider having prepared mock-up photographs demonstrating the loss of views from other viewpoints on and around Parliament Hill and its southern slopes.

Licensing

Previous Newsletters have recorded all the premises in Hampstead and South End Green in relation to which the Society has been involved in objecting to the terms of applications either for alcohol sales or late-night openings. I will not recap those here. As Andrew Haslam-Jones pointed out in the last

Newsletter, whilst it has almost invariably been the case the licence applied for has been granted, nevertheless the intervention of the Society, in some cases with the assistance of Hampstead Town Ward Councillor Stephen Stark, has resulted in the scope of the application being cut down so as to comply with the so-called “framework hours” stipulated in Camden’s licensing policy, both in terms of alcohol sales (on- and off-premises) and opening hours. As a result of our written objections and regular appearances at licensing panel hearings, we feel we have been able to hold the line in terms of keeping premises to the framework hours and avoiding the setting of harmful precedents. The sheer volume of applications has of course been the result of businesses trying to increase their income in response to the loss of income caused by the pandemic. At the time of writing, we are seeing a gratifying reduction in the number of applications. I am very grateful to our Licensing Officer, Maddy Raman, who monitors applications on a weekly basis in order for us to make timely objections.

Lectures

We have been very fortunate to have had three outstanding lecturers over the last 12 months. Dr Merlin Sheldrake gave the 2021 Springett Lecture on the subject of fungi, on which he has written an international bestseller. Sir Simon Jenkins, a Society Patron, gave a lecture last autumn entitled *Traumas in London’s History*, in which he dealt disapprovingly with post-war urban planning policies. Melvyn Bragg’s memorable lecture is mentioned above.

The Springett Lecture is paid for out of the Kate Springett Legacy, but the lectures by Sir Simon and Melvyn were done as fundraising exercises for the Society, raising between them several thousand pounds. The trustees are deeply grateful to our Patrons for their financial support of the Society in this way.

The Society was also fortunate to receive a wholly unexpected gift of £10,000 from author Hunter Davies from the proceeds of the publication of his latest book *The Heath – My Year on Hampstead Heath*. Hunter is a life member of the Society but, in recognition of his generous donation, the trustees have offered him, and he has accepted, Honorary Membership.

Events

Events which were being planned but delayed by reason of the pandemic were eventually able to be staged. The first was a Kite Day on Parliament Hill staged by the Kite Society of Great Britain. Then we had a live, free, public concert on the Heath styled the Natural Aspect Concert in reference to the Society’s first charitable object and the language of the 1871 Act. We followed that with an outdoor film showing of *Tinker Taylor Soldier Spy*, introduced by Melvyn Bragg speaking to John le Carré’s son, Nicholas Harkaway.

The purpose of these events was to draw public attention to the significance of the sesquicentenary of the Act of 1871 and what it has achieved in its 150 years, to encourage more visitors to the Heath and to make all visitors aware of the Heath’s importance as arguably London’s greatest open space, and to educate them about the need for its continuing protection.

We intend, in response to public demand, to repeat the Kite Day, Natural Aspect Concert and a film showing in 2022.

Hampstead Card

Annual members will find enclosed with this Newsletter their new Hampstead Card. A revised list of outlets who continue, with our gratitude, to participate in the Hampstead Card scheme is available on the Society’s website..

Annual Report for the year 2021-2022 (cont)

A Constant Vigil

In 1997, the Society marked its centenary by publishing *A Constant Vigil*. The book's title was a phrase chosen by the late Peggy Jay (a past President of the Society) to make the point the work of the Society will never be completed. A depressing reminder of this truth is to be found in the fate of the new High Street tree planted in 2018 by Society Patron Bill Oddie, as reported in the May 2018 Newsletter. Recently, a vehicle smashed the tree down. The Society is liaising with Camden over its replacement.



Anthony Diamond

His Honour Anthony Diamond QC served as a trustee of the Society from 2003 to 2005 and passed away on 5 March 2022. Anthony was a distinguished barrister, judge and arbitrator. After he retired as a trustee, as a Newsletter from the time noted, "Tony has kindly offered to help with some of our historical projects". We send our sympathies to his family.

Tony Ghilchik

Tony has served on the Heath Sub-Committee since 2001. He has been a trustee of the Society since 2002 when he also became Chair of that Sub-Committee, a

position he held until 2015 when he was succeeded by John Beyer. In that capacity, he also served on the City's Hampstead Heath Management Committee, the statutory committee which takes the decisions on general management of the Heath. Tony has contributed a great deal to the protection of the Heath and the success of the Society and we are very grateful for his long service. He steps down from the General Committee at the forthcoming Annual General Meeting and has decided not to seek re-election. However, he will remain a member of the Heath Sub-Committee until at least the end of this year.

Annual General Meeting

You will find in this Newsletter details of our Annual General Meeting on Wednesday 15 June at St Stephen's, Rosslyn Hill. We hope you will be able to attend when our most welcome guest speaker will be the newly-appointed Heath Superintendent, Stefania Horne, who is going to speak not about the Heath, but rather about an important project on which she worked some years ago for the protection of migratory birds of prey in southern Italy.

Conclusion

As you will see from our Treasurer's Report, our finances remain solid and our membership numbers have recovered following the unlawful closure of our PO box.

We look forward with great confidence to the future and I wish to thank all the members of the Society's committees who devote so much time and effort towards the Society's endeavours, and our broad membership for their enthusiastic support.

Notice of the Annual General Meeting

Notice is given that the 124th Annual General Meeting of the Society will be held on **Wednesday 15 June 2022 at 7.30 pm** at St Stephen's, Rosslyn Hill, London NW3 2PP.

The business of the meeting will be as follows:

1. Approval of the minutes of the 123rd Annual General Meeting held on 14 July 2021.
2. Election of Lord Mance as President.
3. Chair's report for 2021-2022.
4. Treasurer's report on the Society's examined financial statements for the 2021 financial year and adoption of those financial statements.
5. Appointment of Fisher Phillips LLP, Chartered Accountants, as the Society's auditors for the 2022 financial year.
6. Determination of membership subscription rates for the 2023 financial year. The trustees propose that there should be no change to the rates.
7. Determination of the limit on free/discounted memberships. The trustees propose that there be no change to the current limit of 200, approved by members in 2019.

Note: this relates to the figure of 200 specified in Rule 10(4):

"10(3) Notwithstanding Rules 10(1) and (2), the General Committee may determine, with effect from 1 January 2017, that the applicable annual subscription for a new member shall, for the member's first year of membership only, be less than the applicable annual subscription determined under Rule 10(1).

10(4) The General Committee may make such a determination only as part of a particular scheme designed to increase the paid membership of the

Society, and so that the amount of subscription income thereby forgone in respect of such new members does not exceed, in any year, an amount equal to the aggregate of subscription income (for a standard annual individual membership) that would be payable in that year by, subject to Rule 10(5), 200 members.

10(5) The number of members specified in Rule 10(4) may be changed by resolution of the members of the Society at any general meeting of the Society."

8. Election of Officers and other Members of the General Committee.

Officers

The following candidates have been duly proposed for election to the following positions:

Chair: Marc Hutchinson

Treasurer: Maureen Clark-Darby

Secretary: Evelyn Ellis

General Committee Members

The following have been duly proposed for election for a first term of three years: Thomas Radice and John Weston.

Note: Latoya Austin, Frank Harding, Jessica Learmond-Criqui, Robert Linger and Maddy Raman continue the terms for which they were elected. The Chairs of the three Sub-Committees are trustees and members of the General Committee, but they are appointed from time to time by the General Committee, not elected. Professor Jeff Waage is also appointed, not elected, as a trustee and member of the

Notice of the Annual General Meeting (cont)

General Committee in his capacity as the Society's representative on the Hampstead Heath Consultative Committee. It is the intention of the General Committee to appoint Vicki Harding (currently an elected member serving a second three-year term) to the General Committee as an appointed member for the year 2022-2023.

9. Any other business.

Information about the candidates standing for election to the General Committee is set out below.

Evelyn Ellis, Secretary
1 May 2022

Notes on Candidates for Election

Thomas Radice is a retired senior civil servant and parliamentary officer, and has lived near the Heath Extension with his family for over 35 years. As the Society's representative on the City of London's Hampstead Heath Consultative Committee (recently succeeded by Prof Jeff Waage) he joined the General Committee as an appointed member in 2015. He grew up in Highgate and has known the Heath and Kenwood since he was five. He worked in various government departments, including the former Department of the Environment (DOE), and was Secretary of the standing Royal Commission on Environmental Pollution from 1981 to 1986. After that he was responsible within DOE until 1991 for policy on ancient monuments, listed buildings and conservation areas and for relations with grant-aided bodies in the built heritage field, notably English Heritage. After retirement from the civil service in 1995 he worked for eight years in the House of Lords as Clerk to the Environment Sub-Committee of the EU Select Committee.

Thomas joined the Heath Sub-Committee in 2006 and for many years has organised the Society's public walks on the Heath. He also represents the Society (jointly with Prof Waage) on the Kenwood Landscape Forum and takes a particular interest in relations between the City and English Heritage.

John Weston has lived in Hampstead village for 17 years and is married with two school-age children. He is a Creative Director (Advertising) by profession. He served on the Society's Planning Sub-Committee 2003-2010, and on the General Committee 2007 to present. He has been the Society's website editor since its inception in 2007. He has also served on the Hampstead Conservation Area Advisory Committee, the City of London's Hampstead Heath Consultative Committee and the Kenwood Landscape Forum since 2003. John studied Modern History at Oxford University and is locally interested in history, architecture and birdwatching.



Est. 1897

The Heath & Hampstead Society

Please join us for our Annual General Meeting and Reception

St Stephen's, Rosslyn Hill, London NW3 2PP

Wednesday 15 June 2022 7.00pm (doors open)

7.00pm Reception – Refreshments will be served. Trustees and sub-committee members will be present to talk about their work. Come and learn more about that work over the last year.

7.30pm Annual General Meeting

8.30pm Guest Speaker – Stefania Horne, newly-appointed Superintendent of Hampstead Heath, will give a short, illustrated talk entitled *'Bird Migration on the Straits of Messina: Where Eagles Dare.'*

Stefania writes: *"Every spring around 30,000 birds of prey cross the Straits of Messina, one of the three most important European corridors for birds of prey migration from Africa to Europe. The tip of Italy is an amazing site for bird migration and for years the marvel of the phenomenon has been tainted by illegal poaching that has made the route one of the most dangerous for majestic birds such as eagles, buzzards, storks and falcons. Come and hear the story about how a group of volunteers has helped in making the site safer through community action and environmental education."*



Bonelli eagle

We are grateful to the St Stephen's Trust for hosting our meeting

Treasurer's Report for 2021

by Maureen Clark-Darby

The Society is pleased to present its Financial Statements for the year ended 31 December 2021.

The Society reviews its accounting policies each year. The trustees are satisfied that the current policies meet the Society's needs and circumstances. These policies, which have not changed, are disclosed on pages 9 and 10 of the Financial Statements.

The operating gain for 2021 was £10,567 (2020: gain of £4,148).

The Society made an unrealised gain of £550 on its investments. The resulting total gain for the year was therefore £11,117.

Membership subscription income decreased by 5% year on year – 2021: £26,861 (2020: £28,371). The decrease is mainly due to the wrongful closure of the Society's PO Box from autumn 2020 until spring 2021, which frustrated the seasonal membership renewals for 2021.

Membership numbers have been sustainable year on year, standing at 2,015 at the end of 2021, of which 535 were life memberships.

The principal donations received during the year were £10,000 from author and Society honorary member Hunter Davies, and £1,000 from Society member Todd Berman. Both donations were received into the general fund.

Dividend income increased for the year to £223 (2020: £150). Interest income decreased for the year to £10 (2020: £274). The decrease is due to the extreme drop in money-market interest rates during the pandemic period.

The Society's running costs, excluding exceptional costs, increased in 2021 to £30,122 (2020: £27,055). The increase is mainly due to production of a third newsletter, costs of membership promotion (including lectures) and AGM costs; in 2020, due to the pandemic, no membership events and AGM were held.

The Society's exceptional costs for the year were legal fees of £4,176 in relation to the planning inspector's inquiry into the fate of the Hampstead Police Station. These costs were met by specific member donations.

During 2021, following the ending of the last lockdown, the Society continued its efforts to increase membership and subscription income.

The trustees believe that the Society's Capital and Reserves are satisfactory at £58,910, of which £34,280 are held in unrestricted reserves and £24,630 in restricted reserves.

The Society wishes to thank Fisher Phillips LLP, Chartered Accountants, for carrying out the Independent Examination of the Financial Statements for 2021.

Fisher Phillips LLP, Chartered Accountants

Fisher Phillips LLP is a proactive and forward-thinking UK firm of Chartered Accountants based in North West London providing accountancy, taxation and business advisory services to individuals and businesses.

The Society is very grateful to Fisher Phillips LLP for examining the Society's annual financial statements each year on a pro bono basis.

Contact: info@fisherphillips.co.uk | T: +44 (0)20 7483 6100 | Summit House 170 Finchley Road, London NW3 6BP

Heath Report

by John Beyer

Farewell to Anne Fairweather

At the end of March, Anne Fairweather stepped down as chair of the City's Hampstead Heath Management Committee and Consultative Committee. An increase in her work responsibilities at Hargreaves Lansdown meant she did not stand for re-election in local elections in the City on 24 March. Anne first came to the Heath as a child courtesy of a great aunt who lived nearby, and was demonstrably attached to the open space. Our thanks to Anne, whose term in office from May 2020 coincided with a difficult period of intensive Covid restrictions, for her willingness to listen to views from the Society.



Anne Fairweather with former Lord Mayor William Russell

“Constable’s Pond”

The project, championed by RedFrog (The Redington Frognaal Association) was launched in February, following the grant of planning permission from Camden. An event at Burgh House on 8 February, hosted by incoming chair of RedFrog, Anne-Marie O'Connor, featured an exhibition on the project and talks by Jonathan Meares, the Heath's

Trees and Conservation Manager, among others. Jonathan said the plan was to complete the project this year. Once the scrape was dug out, the basin would need to be lined with clay to avoid water loss through leakage. There would then be planting by the Heath team to create a pond similar to the No 3 Pond on the Heath Extension, with the aim of creating a wildlife refuge. Jonathan expected to plant vegetation to encourage pond wildlife, for example marsh marigold, water mint and meadowsweet; reed beds might create more habitat, perhaps for reed warblers.

Murphy’s Yard

This out-of-scale development, which, as proposed, would have a massive visual impact on the Heath, continues to be a major issue for the Heath Sub-Committee and the Society as a whole. Jeff Waage and Pete Mantle from the Heath Sub-Committee have attended consultations over the last two years. When the planning permission was finally posted on Camden’s planning portal, they were joined by Society Chair, Marc Hutchinson, and David Castle to draft an appeal to all Society members to contribute comments to Camden. We are grateful to the many members who took action.

The same team then produced the Society’s objection, which was copied to the forty or so local groups who oppose the application as submitted. We have been working closely with these groups and will continue to do so. We have also liaised with the City on this problem.

Kite Display

After the success of last year’s event in honour of the 150th anniversary of the 1871 Hampstead Heath Act, the Society decided to once again organise a visit by

Heath Report (cont)

the Kite Society of Great Britain. The Kite Society will return to the Heath this year on Sunday, 26 June. They will once again give a kite performance on Kite Hill (Parliament Hill) from 2:00pm to 5:00pm.

Natural Aspect Concert

On 4 September, the Society will once again host a concert by the band, Natural Aspect, whose name derives from the 1871 Act. There will be a range of music to enjoy at the Parliament Hill bandstand on the Heath.

Springett Lecture

We are delighted that David Humphries, the Heath Tree Management Officer, and Alasdair Nicholl, the Arboricultural Team Leader, will speak on 29 September this year about the protection of veteran trees on the Heath and their ecology.

Heavy horses repair the Heath

Heavy horses visited the Heath on 6 March to restore ground churned up by the English National Cross-Country event the previous weekend. The two horses, Joey and William, came from Operation Centaur, an organization based in Richmond which promotes the use of working horses.

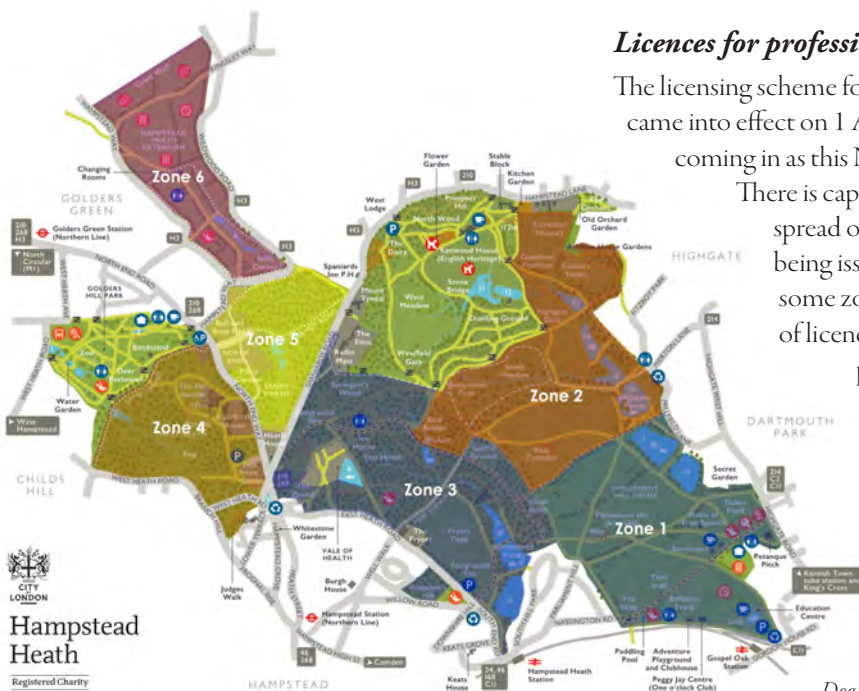


Heavy horses. Courtesy: Danny Murphy, Heath Ranger Supervisor

Licences for professional dog walkers

The licensing scheme for professional dog walkers came into effect on 1 April. Applications were coming in as this Newsletter went to press.

There is capacity for up to 70 licences spread over six zones. Licences are being issued for specific zones, with some zones having a lower number of licences available to be issued to protect sensitive bird nesting sites. Each professional walker can go out with up to four dogs. The fee is £300 per annum to operate for four days or more in a week.



Dog walking licensing zones

Planning Report

by David Castle

55 Fitzroy Park

We have just received the very good news the application to build five large detached houses in a large garden at 55 Fitzroy Park has been refused by Camden. The garden is on the edge of the Heath and contains a large old spring-fed pond and a small orchard. The garden contributes to the openness of the Heath and is designated Private Open Space in Camden's Local Plan, which is supposed to protect it from development.

The additional objection to two of the proposed houses is they would be near to, and very visible from, Millfield Lane and the Heath. Millfield Lane would start to change for the worse from a well-used and loved quiet narrow rural lane and footpath to a road lined with houses and used by service vehicles and cars. The applicant paid for Pre-Application advice as long ago as 2017. It is surprising and unfortunate for the applicant the initial advice encouraged a very full and expensive application to be submitted which, after extra costs involving much discussion and amendment, was finally refused five years later! The Pre-Application process was introduced to prevent such lengthy, costly and unsuccessful applications.

A further and worrying aspect of the Pre-Application process is the presumably encouraging advice given to this development can be used by the planning inspector in making a decision if an appeal is made against Camden's refusal. This could encourage an appeal by the applicant and of course the inspector could decide the need for the provision of four extra houses carries more weight than all of the many reasons to reject.

Insulation – inside or outside?

A planning application has recently been sent to Camden Council proposing to encase a Victorian four-storey semi-detached house with thick insulation protected by white panels. New triple-glazed windows are proposed, fixed in the same plane as the insulation, so the appearance would be very different from the existing row of brick semi-detached houses with recessed windows and fine segmental arches. The garden side of the semi-detached house can be seen from the Heath – one half Victorian brick and the other half covered in white – visually very different. The house threatened with external insulation is part of a continuous line of fine well-preserved Victorian brick buildings and, as they can be seen from the Heath, it is crucial that the rear elevation should not be radically changed in appearance.

Fortunately, the insulation required on the front elevation has been added to the *interior* surface of the external wall in order not to disrupt the regular continuity of the intricate front brick and painted stone elevations of the street.

With the disaster of Grenfell Tower in mind, the dangers of fire-spread will need to be considered when the externally fixed insulation is submitted for Building Regulation approval.

Insulating a solid brick wall on the inside or outside surfaces is equally viable. In fact, in the UK climate, which can be hot one day then cold the next, there is good reason to insulate on the inside as this allows a quick response to raising or lowering the internal temperature. It seems reasonable to require insulation to be always added to the inside surface when a valued façade or series of façades would otherwise be lost or disrupted.

Town Report

by Andrew Haslam-Jones

The Hampstead Transport Partnership: Traffic and pollution

The Hampstead Transport Partnership (the “HTP”) was set up before the pandemic by one of the Sub-Committee members, Jessica Learmond-Criqui. Many of you will know of Jessica from her campaigning on various issues, including transport, and particularly from her popular and informative email newsletter, *I Love Hampstead*.

HTP’s aim is to come up with a transport strategy for Hampstead, taking in the council wards of Hampstead Town and Frognal and Fitzjohn’s, to assist Camden Council in transport planning in the area in much the same way that the Hampstead Neighbourhood Forum’s Neighbourhood Plan assists the Council on the general planning side. Neighbourhood plans are not intended to cover transport per se and HTP has arisen out of a sense that many transport changes being implemented in Hampstead were piecemeal and did not take into account the wider implications of the changes being made. The hope is HTP will be able to develop a strategy for dealing with transport and traffic in the area as a whole.

HTP’s members come from a range of community groups and the Society is also present there. Last year, many of you will have participated in HTP’s online survey, which the Society helped to publicise as part of HTP’s plan for assembling a strategy taking into account local people’s concerns and priorities.

HTP has received more than 700 responses to the survey and is producing an analysis of those responses before proceeding to the next stage.

This may involve HTP, with the help of some of the Community Infrastructure Levy (“CIL”) funds for the area, instructing an experienced transport consultant who would then be able to engage with a wider range of community groups to develop the strategy on the back of the survey results.

Not unrelated, the Hampstead Neighbourhood Forum’s pollution survey, started at the end of 2021 and due to run for a year, has produced its first tentative results. As mentioned in the Society’s last Newsletter, the previous survey carried out by the Forum five years ago, and reported in the Society’s Newsletter at the time, produced some concerning results. The initial results from the current survey appear to show a very slight improvement in air quality in comparison with five years ago. These are very early results and the optimism of the apparently slightly improved results might be tempered by the thought the results five years ago were already well above recommended and legal levels in most cases. It has also been pointed out the results show averages, which means there will most likely be times of the day of high traffic use that are still significantly above recommended levels of pollution. At least, the results are not worse than five years ago.

Whatever the reasons are for the halt in worsening traffic pollution, the results of the pollution survey should also assist the development of HTP’s transport strategy and what can be done to address the high levels of invisible traffic-related pollution existing in Hampstead.

Plaques

There are two new plaques being unveiled. One

Town Report (cont)

plaque, in conjunction with English Heritage, is for the philosopher Sir Isaiah Berlin on Hollycroft Avenue. The other plaque, in conjunction with the Marie-Louise von Motesiczky Foundation, jointly for the Austrian painter and for Elias Canetti, the German-speaking Bulgarian writer, in Chesterfield Gardens.

Summer Festival

Once again, the Hampstead Summer Festival will be taking place in the gardens of Keats House. It will be on 3 July and the Society will have a stall there again. We expect the festival to be busier and have more stalls than last year. Do pop by and say hello to the volunteers on our stall. If you have some time and would like to volunteer to help out for a couple of hours, do get in touch at info@HeathandHampstead.org.uk.



Hampstead shops

Regular readers will know the Town Sub-Committee covers a wide range of issues and concerns, including almost anything relevant to a heritage society that is not the Heath or planning. If you think you would like to contribute to the work of the Sub-Committee, please get in touch. We are always on the lookout for new members. In particular, if you are interested in helping the Society maintain its relationship with the shops and other commercial enterprises of Hampstead, we would like to hear from you. Again, you can contact us at the email address in the previous paragraph.

Summer Musical Events

St John-at-Hampstead Parish Church
Church Row NW3

Monday 9 May Now is the Month of Maying

Hampstead Collective – selection of
Madrigals, sacred and secular

Monday 6 June Jubilee Event

The Coronation Anthems by G.F. Handel
directed by Aidan Coburn

Monday 4 July Song recital

Ruairi Bowen (tenor) and
Rebecca Hardwick (soprano)

Monday 1 August Sacred and Secular partsongs

Including works by Haydn, Schubert and
Schumann

Each event begins at 7.00pm;
doors open at 6.30pm

All enquiries to Jenny Macdonald-Hay
0207 794 1193



HAMPSTEAD SUMMER FESTIVAL

HAMPSTEAD, GET READY TO PARTY!

THE SUMMER FESTIVAL IS HERE!

Four events across two weekends in the beautiful gardens of Keats House

Opening Event

25th June 2-5pm

Come and see the Keats-inspired canvas murals along the walls of Keats Grove; a Rock Choir and school choirs will perform for you whilst you enjoy a picnic on the lawn of the lovely gardens. A wine bar and refreshments will be available.

Free Admission

Family Garden Party

26th June 2-5pm

Film school for kids, rhyme-time, storytelling, art activities, giant chess set, magician, Birds of Prey demonstration, tea and delicious cake from Gail's and a wine bar. Sponsored by TK

International. *Free Admission*

The Taming of the Shrew

2nd July Two shows: 1pm & 5pm

An open-air, family-friendly production of Shakespeare's popular comedy, performed by Drama Impact. Tickets £25/£20 concession/£78 for a family of 2 adults and 2 children.

To book go to <https://www.eventbrite.co.uk>

Art Fair

4th July 2-5pm

An Open Exhibition of paintings and sculptures, as well as Picture the Heath competition entries, children's art activity table, beautiful craft stalls, delicious freshly-cooked food, ice cream, and a wine bar.

Free Admission



Please check our website

www.hampsteadsummerfestival.com

for latest information and ticket links.

The Hampstead Summer Festival committee is delighted to that all proceeds will go to two popular and vital local charities: Hampstead School of Art & Keats Community Library.

**Keats Community Library and Keats House,
Keats Grove, NW3 2RR**

Thanks to our sponsors



**Hampstead
School of Art**



Osbornes | Law^o
280a Hampstead High St NW3 1QA



HAMPSTEAD
SUMMER
FESTIVAL



Hampstead
School of Art

Picture the Heath

En Plein Air Painting & Drawing Day

Sunday 19th June

Win up to £500 plus other prizes.

Let the Heath and Hampstead Village inspire you

Picture the Heath is an annual drawing and painting event, which celebrates the Heath and its surrounding area. It is open to everyone 16+ and takes place on **Sunday 19th June**, meeting first at Keats House, Keats Grove NW3 2RR. All finished work will be exhibited and judged during Hampstead Summer Festival **Art Fair Day**, in Keats House Garden on July 3rd.

Open Art Exhibition

Enter your work for display at the Hampstead Summer Festival Art Fair.

Sunday 3rd July



Xiaolan Gu at the Art Fair

Display your work for sale or exhibition in the Art Fair's marquee at Keats House, with the opportunity to win the Principal's Prize, Mount Anvil Prize, London Art Prize, and the Hampstead School of Art Prize for Best in Show selected by the Art Fair Day Opener.

We welcome entries from artists of any discipline, whether you are an established artist or at the early stage of your career.

Registration for both is through **Eventbrite**. £20 entry fee (+ £2.15 booking fee) or call Hampstead School of Art on **0207 794 1439** for further information. Or use the links on:
www.hampsteadsummerfestival.com or www.hsoa.co.uk

Hampstead Historical Ramblings: Peter Pan is buried in Hampstead!

by Martin Thompson

We are delighted to introduce Hampstead Historical Ramblings, a new regular feature to the Newsletter by London Historians member and Society Town Sub-Committee member, Martin Thompson. Martin will be shedding light on interesting corners of our village. Peter Pan is the subject of the first appearance of this feature.

Believe it or not, this is true. Scottish novelist and playwright JM Barrie is the author of the original 1904 play, *Peter Pan*, or *The Boy Who Wouldn't Grow Up*, and the later book now simply known as *Peter Pan*, but originally called *Peter Pan and Wendy*. He based his story on the Llewelyn Davies boys. Peter



Peter Llewelyn Davies grave in the churchyard of Hampstead Parish

was the middle son of the family. The family tomb is situated in the churchyard of Hampstead Parish Church, Church Row. His name can be clearly seen on the tombstone. Interestingly, Peter was also a first cousin of the author Daphne du Maurier who was born in Hampstead.

For those who may not know, *Peter Pan* is the story of a mischievous young boy who can fly and never grows up. Consequently, he spends his never-ending childhood having adventures on the mythical island of Neverland. He is the leader of the Lost Boys, interacts with fairies, pirates, mermaids and Native Americans.

Peter was an infant in a pram when Barrie befriended his older brothers during their outings in Kensington Gardens with their nursemaid. Sadly, the boys' father and mother died in 1907 and 1910 respectively. In her will, their mother named Barrie, as well as their uncles,

as guardians of her sons.

In 1929, Barrie gifted the rights to his book to Great Ormond Street Hospital. Over the years this has provided a significant source of income to the hospital.

In 1912, Sir George Frampton created a sculpture of Peter Pan and Neverland which can be seen in Hyde Park. Barrie had the sculpture installed in the dead of night so children would think it had appeared by magic. Some 41 years later in 1953, Disney made an animated film of the story and it is probably these characters that are most associated with the story today.



Peter Pan and Neverland



The Kite Society,
The City of London Corporation,
and The Heath & Hampstead Society
present

A KITE DISPLAY AT PARLIAMENT HILL

Come and see members of The Kite Society of Great Britain give a spectacular display of the art of kite flying, with tricks and intricate routines accompanied by music, in the beautiful surroundings of the Heath.

26 JUNE 2022 • 2 PM TO 5 PM • PARLIAMENT HILL

An Unusual Encounter with a Juvenile Swan

by Claudia [Surname withheld on request]

Hampstead local tells the Newsletter about a very unusual encounter she had with a young swan early this year. Following this account is a best practice guide for such encounters written by an experienced swan rescue volunteer.

Early one winter morning, my two dogs and I were walking home on the main avenue of the Heath. In the middle of the avenue I saw what I at first thought was a heron. My eyes are not the best in the gloom of the morning and they were so huge. As I approached the bird, I saw people and dogs avoiding and walking around them. The bird does not get any smaller in size. I realised then the bird was an adolescent swan! They must have lost their way and they were honking a bit. Were they calling for their siblings?

I decided to walk up to the swan. I put both my dogs on the lead; I approached, and the swan allowed it. I was wearing a white jacket. Might I have resembled their mother?

The swan waddled up to me and we walk at their pace for about 150 yards. I tried to steer them towards the playing field and to the right towards the lower ponds, where I knew they belonged.



Claudia's swan encounter

I thought they would try to fly off once we reached open ground. But no. They looked at me to say, "What do we do now?" They allowed me to stroke their body. I then stroked their neck, gently securing it to ensure they would not bite me or panic. Wonderfully, they remained quite calm.

I decided to take action because I feared leaving the swan might mean an encounter and possible injury or worse by dogs. And that would have weighed on my mind endlessly. So, I dropped the dog lead and told my dogs to stay, which they do for a change!

I placed my arms around the young swan's body to encase the wings so they would not flap against me. The swan was huge and weighed so much. I lifted them up into my arms and never realised I had such strength in me. The swan was not terribly comfortable with that; they felt a bit gawky, but they did not struggle too much.

At this point, people approached me, concerned. I asked them to take my dogs and follow me to the ponds. They did which was kind of them. The young swan struggles a bit and pushes their huge webbed feet against my coat, tearing it.

We managed to reach the pond and I placed them on the ground. They then toppled over backwards onto the path, dishevelled and with their feet up and wings outstretched. Eventually, they managed to right themselves. Then they readjusted and tottered to the pond, jumping in, paddling off and dipping and diving into the water, in seeming delight to be back in the pond again, in water, rather than in the forest.

What I supposed were their parents were in the bathing pond on the opposite side, calling. I hope they got together again.

Best Practice for Swan Encounters

by Louisa Green

We wanted to know more about what to do if we were to encounter a swan on the Heath, like Claudia did, and to learn more about the rescue work of [The Swan Sanctuary](#). So, we asked someone with expertise to give us the best advice and contact details in case we should ever come across a stray or injured swan.

I was asked to write a piece in response to a letter from local lady Claudia, and also to the Society in general, with regard to what the public should (and should not!) do if they come across a swan or other water bird in difficulty on the Heath. I am a fully trained volunteer rescuer for [The Swan Sanctuary](#) and operate predominantly in North London, East London, Essex and Hertfordshire, together with my colleague, Gill Walker. Monday to Friday, I work at the Royal Free Hospital as a cancer immunologist, so am generally very close to the Heath most of the time. In recent

years, I have dealt with the vast majority of rescues in Hampstead.

Claudia initially wrote to describe how she came across a lone cygnet in December last year in the woods next to the Mixed Pond. Obviously, this is not the usual place to find our swans! It is likely the cygnet miscalculated a landing after some flying practice. The main risks associated with a crash landing are leg injuries, spinal problems or internal injuries. Without access to a mobile phone, Claudia did the right thing in guiding the swan back to the safety of water. ***In future, I would urge everyone to please just wait with the swan, and call myself or Gill if you come across a similar situation. You could also call the Constabulary, who will contact the Rangers, who will then alert myself and/or Gill immediately.***



Louisa Green holding a rescued cygnet and Arlene, a Heath Ranger, assisting. Courtesy: Ron Vester

Best Practice for Swan Encounters (cont)

At first glance it may look like a crashed swan is fine, but internal or spinal injuries can be difficult to spot to the untrained eye. Myself and Gill are well-primed to notice any slight and seemingly irrelevant signs and clues of a bird being in pain or discomfort, and this will ultimately influence our decision on whether to admit to the Sanctuary. Trying to catch a sick or injured bird once back on water is considerably harder than on land. So, if we are contacted whilst the bird is still on land, it will ensure we can perform a thorough examination before deciding to return the bird to water or admit to the Sanctuary.

The other major risk with returning a lone swan back to water is they might not actually be from a resident family. Since February 2022 alone, we have had three intruder swans to the Heath, all on separate occasions, and returning them to one of our territorial ponds would have caused a significant territorial fight, and likely resulted in the intruder(s) being killed. Whenever I have been called recently for an extra swan on the Heath, the first thing I do is ascertain whether all of our swans are accounted for, and if so, then the intruder will be returned to the nearest flock (or territory, if we can establish where the intruder came from) after examination.

If anyone spots a swan or other bird tangled in fishing line, please also call us and never attempt to free the bird yourself, no matter how tempting it might seem. I know people only want to help the bird faster, but I can assure you failed attempts only act to make the bird more spooked and unwilling to come to the edge of the pond near people. For every failed attempt (by a rescuer or the public), it typically adds a day to the time until the bird is successfully caught. Imagine having a fishing hook stuck in your mouth for days longer than necessary! Removing fishing hooks is also a very delicate skill which takes time and patience to

master. The course of action we take varies depending on the type of hook and where, anatomically, the hook is stuck. A hook down the throat and fishing line trailing out of the mouth will require surgery to remove and should never be attempted either by the public or rescuers at the scene.

If anyone witnesses a dog attack on a bird, please call us immediately no matter the time of day or night. If you are able, take a video of the attack and/or the dog and owner. Survivors of dog attacks require antibiotic treatment as soon as possible and we will always respond to a dog attack call as an emergency. The earlier the bird is examined, the better their chances of survival. This is especially important in the case of swans who will actively grieve for their missing partner.

There has been a significant increase in the number of calls we are getting for dog attacks all over London, which we believe is likely due to dogs which were acquired during the lockdowns of 2020 and 2021 when all of the family were at home, were not properly trained, and are now left at home alone all day without knowing how to appropriately respond to the stimuli of the natural world. It is actually a criminal offence for a dog (and by association, their owner) to disturb a nesting bird, and against the Wildlife & Countryside Act 1981 to disturb, injure or kill a wild animal, including birds. If found guilty, these offences can carry a term of up to six months in prison, and a £5,000 fine for each offence.

I hope this has helped people to know what to do in future in response to our most common issues involving water birds. It is extremely helpful to us if anyone reporting a problem can wait with the bird until we arrive, and this is especially important if the bird is on land in areas such as the Heath which is popular with dogs, often off leads. As swans do not have vertical flight and need a runway to take off,

Best Practice for Swan Encounters (cont)

it puts them at a significant disadvantage on land. Waiting with the bird also ensures we can find them quickly – sometimes Gill and/or I can be rescuing for 12 to 14 hours a day, so the faster we can locate a bird needing help, the faster we can deal with the situation and head off to the next casualty. My availability Monday to Friday is generally limited due to being at the Royal Free, but I can nip out at lunchtime or afterwards, and I walk on the Heath each morning before work, so if you do call me and I do not answer,

please always call Gill. We both have a very good relationship with the Heath Rangers, who also alert us to any problems and are very well-rehearsed at basic rescue techniques, if Gill or I are not available immediately.

Louisa can be contacted on 07725 748099, and Gill on 07970 404866. If anyone has any questions or comments, please feel free to email Louisa at lgreen2891@gmail.com.



Louisa Green releasing Papa swan back into Hampstead Pond Two after taking fishing hook from neck. Courtesy: Ron Vester

A Brief History of Planning and Changes in Hampstead since 1945

by David Castle

David Castle, architect, planner and Society Vice-Chair highlights changes in British planning laws and how they have both preserved and affected the character of Hampstead.

A person standing on Parliament Hill in 1947 would see the dome of St Paul's towering over the city and the vast areas of desolate bomb damage stretching eastwards towards the Docks. There were no buildings over seven storeys high, many were empty, and construction was licensed and reserved for essential war-damage, repair and essential developments.

Much has happened since then in terms of laws affecting planning, development and construction in London and Hampstead.

Post-war developments in planning

From 1943, to the National Government's credit, influential reports were commissioned on the essential improvements needed after the end of the war in

education, social policy, housing and planning. The reports made clear that much needed to be changed, upgraded and improved. Particularly important was the need to build large areas of housing, renew the many areas of sub-standard housing and improve infrastructure, especially the road system. The need for radical action was endorsed by a massive vote for Labour in 1945.¹

The Town and Country Planning Act 1947, was a keystone in the Labour Party's establishment of the Welfare State. The 1947 Planning Act was not just about the control of development and change of use (which is now all it has become). More importantly, it was about the establishment of a means by which local authorities could rebuild a shattered land, provide a much-needed improved infrastructure, improve housing conditions, protect the countryside, improve the protection of historic buildings and create national

¹ Hampstead voted Conservative in 1945 and until 1992.



*Panorama of London from Parliament Hill Fields in the 1920s.
Courtesy: Camden Local Studies and Archives Centre*



Panorama of London from Parliament Hill Fields in 2022

A Brief History of Planning and Changes in Hampstead since 1945 (cont)



Hampstead High Street 2022. The Post Office building on the left (approx. 1960) is designated a 'negative' contributor by the Hampstead Conservation Area Statement.



Hampstead High Street 1951. Courtesy: Camden Local Studies and Archives Centre

parks. Acts adopted in parallel to the 1947 Planning Act enabled compulsory purchase and a payment system from the central government to enable local authorities to carry out development. For example, the 1947 Planning Act permitted the County of London Plan, which had been prepared in 1943, to be promulgated.

The County of London Plan 1943 and the revised County of London Development Plan 1951 hardly mentioned Hampstead. There were no proposals for redevelopment or new roads within the borough. However, the London County Council-wide planning standards to control all new development from then onwards applied to Hampstead. These were:

- **Density** – a maximum 30–70 persons per acre, which was similar to or less than the existing housing. The maximum permitted density in Inner London was set at 200 persons per acre;
- **Daylighting** – this standard was designed to ensure more distance between dwellings;

- **Plot Ratio** – 2:1 for commercial buildings only, which was very low; and
- the UK-wide **control of any change of use** – at first, only few changes were allowed as Permitted Development.

Planning in Hampstead since 1947

From 1947, the result for Hampstead was there was almost complete control of all development or change of use and, in addition, all developments were limited to the density and scale of that which already existed. From 1949, a very limited Permitted Development ("PD", meaning development not needing planning permission) was allowed. At first, this introduction of PD only included small rear extensions or very small sheds in the gardens of single dwelling houses, not flats.

By the 1950s Hampstead Town had a thriving local economy with many shops, tea rooms, studios, some workshops and a very mixed population of tradesmen, artisans, professionals, and eminent people in politics and the arts.

A Brief History of Planning and Changes in Hampstead since 1945 (cont)

The apparent changes caused by the Second World War were the gaps caused by bomb damage, the loss of all the cast-iron railings, the streets empty of cars, and the number of unpainted and dilapidated buildings. A more substantial but hidden change, which had begun during the inter-war period and was exacerbated by the War, was the change in occupation of a large number of houses originally built for rich families with servants. These became occupied by lodgers², became boarding houses, were subdivided into flats, or used as schools, nursing homes or other purposes.

Social and speculative housing in Hampstead

Despite the restrictions, much building did occur in Hampstead on available sites. For instance, 24 units of social housing were built in 1947 at New End in a very plain style. In 1948, a four-storey, neo-Georgian development of social housing was built at Wells House, Well Walk.

In 1962, speculative flats in seven-storey high blocks were built at Oak Hill Park. From the 1950s onwards, many of Hampstead's large houses were converted into flats. In 1978, during the final bout of council housebuilding, two- to three-storey houses were built in the park-like setting of Branch Hill. At the time, these were criticised by some for being both an unsuitable location for social housing and excessively expensive. Since the *right to buy* was introduced, these houses now sell for over £1 million and they are rarely on the market.

Road improvements

The immense national post-war road improvement

programme missed Hampstead despite proposals to widen East Heath Road and to introduce a roundabout at Whitestone Pond both of which were successfully opposed by the Society.³ A Motorway Box around London, due to go through Chalk Farm together with a partial *cut and cover* access route through Maresfield Gardens, Fitzjohn's Avenue, and Belsize Park was proposed and later quietly dropped in 1973.⁴ Unsurprisingly, both proved very unpopular, would have been very destructive of large areas and very expensive.

The popular criticism at the time was all the road-building programme achieved was to encourage more traffic, ruin many places, increase noise and pollution and provide the shortest route from one traffic jam to the next.

Developments and rise of housing prices in the mid to late 20th century

Unlike large parts of West Kentish Town, Hampstead did not have a large area of 19th century housing considered to be substandard and in need of demolition. During the 1960s and 1970s, almost all the area, parts of which were delightful, was rebuilt with high point blocks and four-storey flats in a layout deliberately different and divorced from the surrounding streets.

In spite of the potentially strict control over new buildings in Hampstead, some new buildings built during the 1960s and 1970s were unsympathetic to the neighbouring buildings, too large and often of a utilitarian nature. At that time, the proliferation of dormers and roof extensions, which spoil some streets, was allowed to proceed in an uncoordinated fashion.

² F.M.L. Thompson, *Hampstead - Building a Borough*, at page 428.

³ Helen Lawrence, *How Hampstead Heath was Saved*, at page 232.

⁴ Steven Denford, *The Hampstead Book*.

A Brief History of Planning and Changes in Hampstead since 1945 (cont)

By the 1960s, due to the large and small developments of an often poor quality and unsympathetic character occurring over the whole country, many people, irrespective of their political persuasion, were questioning the widespread destruction of districts for social, economic or aesthetic reasons. Consequently, the government introduced the Civic Amenities Act 1967. The Act gave the power to councils to declare particular areas worthy of additional protection from development. To its credit, the newly-formed Camden Council acted quickly and declared Hampstead Village a Conservation Area in 1968. Over the next 15 years, Conservation Area status was gradually extended to all of Hampstead, including the Victorian and Edwardian areas.

The declaration of Conservation Areas has enabled more control over new buildings or conversions in Hampstead as they are expected to enhance the existing buildings. This has not always been easy to achieve and some new buildings have proved to be pale, unsuccessful imitations of the existing buildings.

House prices in Hampstead and London steadily increased during the 1960s and 1970s because of the Rent Act 1957 and gentrification. Both these factors caused those with lower income to move away from Hampstead. This population movement increased from the 1980s onward due to the continued rapid increase in house prices, and the consequent conversion and building of expensive flats and houses, sometimes after the demolition of a valued existing building.

A more hidden effect of the dramatic rise in house prices is the constant change of, for instance, workshops, offices and hospitals to much more profitable flats and houses. These changes reduce the variety of activities, trades and people contributing to the special character of a place.

The current situation

The Town and Country Planning Act 1990 is the most recent revision of the 1947 Planning Act and still retains the principles and structure of the original. However, over the last 10 years PD regulations have been changed considerably to allow many changes-of-use and building work to take place without the need for planning permission to be obtained. This means that planning law cannot protect Camden's many large gardens from the construction, without permission, of enormous buildings – over 50% of the garden area!

The Localism Act 2011 allowed the much valued Neighbourhood Plans to be developed by local Neighbourhood Forums, giving more powers to local people to influence planning decisions. Since 2010, the Coalition and later Conservative Governments have reduced and limited planning control. They have achieved this by issuing the National Planning Policy Framework (“NPPF”) in 2012. The NPPF enforces housing targets for each local council. For every application and appeal, the quality of the application has to be balanced against the number of housing units being provided in order to meet the council's target. The balance is frequently judged in favour of more houses and not, for instance, the quality of the proposal or its effect on the surroundings.

In addition, the originally strict limitation on density of development has been scrapped. Developments of the highest possible density are encouraged and expected by the NPPF. This has encouraged developers to propose extremely high and dense developments such as the current proposals for both the nearby O2 Centre and for Murphy's Yard.

We are expecting such high-density developments in Hampstead at, for instance, Queen Mary's House by the Heath near Whitestone Pond. Even if such a

A Brief History of Planning and Changes in Hampstead since 1945 (cont)

planning application were rejected by Camden, it is almost certain it would be approved by an inspector at a planning inquiry on the basis the extra dwellings are necessary for Camden to meet its housing targets.

During the last 75 years, Hampstead has been protected from large-scale speculative development and demolition by the 1947 Planning Act and its gradual amendments. The widespread listing of the many historic buildings in the central part of Hampstead, which have strict protection, has also enabled it to retain its very special character.

In summary, and although not all buildings built in the last 75 years add to Hampstead's very special qualities, it is very probable that, without planning control, parts of Hampstead would have been demolished and replaced with buildings of uncontrolled height, mass, scale, and use. It has to be hoped that planning control is not relaxed still further, as has been threatened.

Delivering the Newsletter by email

Would you prefer to receive your Newsletter by email in the form of an Acrobat PDF file so that you can read it on screen?

It is environmentally more friendly, saving paper, unnecessary waste and cost.

With postage charges increasing, this is now a major consideration. The occasional extra flyers could also be sent via email, if wished.

PDFs of the Newsletter can be seen on the website. If you would like to try this, please let us know at:

info@HeathandHampstead.org.uk

SUPPORT YOUR LOCAL THEATRE

Become a Friend and never miss a show

From £60 per year, Friends receive exciting benefits such as Priority Booking, invitations to exclusive events, 10% discount at our Café and more.

Join now on: **hampsteadtheatre.com/friends**

Call us on **020 7722 9301**

or visit us on Eton Avenue, NW3



We look forward to seeing you soon!



Remember to use the

Hampstead Card

The current list of businesses taking part in the scheme can be found on the Society's website and can be downloaded from there:
www.HeathandHampstead.org.uk

*Benefits offered are granted at the traders' discretion.
The Society is not responsible for changes in terms or availability of any discounts or offers.*



Summer 2022 Events in the Library

Tuesday 24 May 7.30pm

Dame Jane Glover: in Conversation with Michael White



The acclaimed conductor, professor of music and author of *Mozart's Women* and *Handel in London* will be in conversation with music critic, Michael White. Dame Jane Glover is a specialist in baroque music, and has conducted in opera houses and the greatest orchestras all over the world. Michael White has written for the Guardian, Independent and New York Times and has introduced the Proms and fronted Cardiff Singer of the World for the BBC.



Thursday 9 June 7.30pm

Neil Titley: Under Ken Wood

Popular local actor, author and raconteur, Neil returns to the library for an illustrated talk on the celebrities who have lived in Hampstead, with some lively anecdotes about the eccentric and characterful clientele of the legendary Magdala pub.



Wednesday 6 July 7.30pm

Shelley: A Poet for our times

Poems on the Underground marks the bicentenary of Shelley's death with readings of his poems and discussion of his life and works, and his belief in poetry as an agent of political change. With writer Judith Chernaik (*The Lyrics of Shelley*; *Schumann: The Faces & the Masks*); poet George Szirtes (*The Philosopher at Sixteen*); Shelley editor Kelvin Everest (*Keats and Shelley: Winds of Light*) and other guests.

Tickets £10 from the library or online at www.wegottickets.com

KCL Events are generously supported by



My Life in Hampstead and the Society

by Martin Humphery

Martin Humphery, as reported in the February 2022 Newsletter, retired as the Society's Vice-President on 31 December 2021. Here, he recalls some aspects of his early life in Hampstead and his work for the Society over 26 years.

I came to live in Hampstead in 1956 having married Angela Vandervell, the daughter of Ken Vandervell, the proprietor of Vandervell's garage which used to stand on the corner of Haverstock Hill and Belsize Park opposite the Hampstead Town Hall (still then the home of Hampstead Borough Council, of fond memory) I had worked at the garage for a couple of years before fatally meeting the boss's daughter.

To put this into a historical perspective, it was the year which saw the Suez Crisis, the Hungarian Revolution and the landing in Cuba of Fidel Castro and Che Guevara. God, I feel old!

We lived in a small flat in Nassington Road, in those days, surrounded by houses which were, for the most part, split into very grotty flats inhabited by young, impecunious journalists, aspiring actors and that typically Hampstead breed of layabouts with no visible means of support who nevertheless managed to live a riotous life based on the Magdala pub and bottle parties in the flats of whoever's turn it was that night.

The "Mag" was a great pub, always packed to the doors and presided over by a fierce landlady called Stella. One day we went into the bar with our dog to hear Stella yell, "No dogs allowed!". Angela was quick enough to reply, "What about the bitch behind the bar?" To her credit, Stella joined in the general laughter. A feature of the Mag was the standard of graffiti in the gents. Some journo wrote, "Lord Rothermere is a c**t". Soon there appeared, in another hand, "No I'm not". I never understood the one which

just said, "Down with the Halle Orchestra."

It does seem to be a shame that none of those cheerful young people could possibly afford to live here now

But I digress. This piece is supposed to be about my recollections of my time in the Heath & Hampstead Society, isn't it? I seem to have left it too long before joining the Society in 1994 in the closing stages of Peter Gorb's chairmanship. Peter was married to Ruth Gorb, who is thankfully still with us and was the stellar arts correspondent and critic under Gerry Isaaman's inspired editorship of the Ham & High. His paper was famous worldwide and described by the New York Times as "the only local paper with a foreign policy".

When I joined, the Society was going through tricky times indeed. A huge row had boiled up following resignation threats by a group of prominent members. The burden of their complaint was that the General Committee had become a self-perpetuating body which paid little heed to the needs and views of the Society's members. The General Committee had responded by commissioning a report on its governance by a very senior civil servant, Sir John Boynton. The first meeting I attended was a Special General Meeting of the Society called to discuss the report's recommendations. It was a pretty tumultuous affair and left me wondering what I had left myself into! I had some sympathy with the "rebels" but joined many others in hoping to avoid a public row by settling the matter internally. In the event, the Boynton Report was accepted, changes were made, and the whole affair eventually died down, as is so often the case.

Shortly after this excitement, Peter was succeeded in the chair by Helen Marcus who, in my view, steadied

My Life in Hampstead and the Society (cont)

the ship and provided the energetic leadership we needed. However, she also ruined my retirement by parachuting me into the then Town Sub-Committee.

In those days the Town Sub-Committee dealt with everything not covered by the Heath Sub-Committee. Covering planning, traffic, streets and pretty well all Camden's local functions was an absurdly large brief which we struggled to do effectively. This was not made any easier by the chairman's habit of only calling meetings when he felt like it. Not long after my arrival, a serious misunderstanding arose resulting in the resignation of the entire Sub-Committee save myself and two others. Having only just taken the chair, I was left to try to reconstruct the Sub-Committee more or less from scratch. Fortunately, several keen members soon came forward and on we went. One of our new recruits was the much-loved late Gordon Maclean, a distinguished international architect and town planner who hugely beefed up our planning function and whose trenchant and expert observations on a myriad of planning applications I still read today, in awe at his mastery of the planning system and his beautifully phrased objections and observations.

It was in 1998 that I was asked to succeed Helen Marcus as Chairman of the Society (the ghastly title of "Chair" was not yet in general use). I say "asked" but "strong-armed" might be a more accurate description. While I was keen to do my bit, an awkwardness arose because nobody was willing to take over the chairmanship of the Town Sub-Committee. In a moment of madness, I agreed to cover both roles. I think this unusual arrangement sort-of worked but it involved me in a huge number of meetings, with the inevitable snowstorm of paperwork and annoyance to "er indoors". Thank God support was at hand from Hampstead's usual good supply of knowledgeable

enthusiasts. Not having been closely involved with Heath matters, I was particularly grateful for the expertise and energy of the redoubtable Jeremy Wright who chaired the Heath Sub-Committee.

The formidable Peggy Jay was our President. Although she was always supportive of me, I was constantly aware of her stern presence and occasional disapproval. I liked to sit in the middle of the table at General Committee meetings and she always arrived first and took her seat directly opposite to me so that, as I always thought, she could keep a good and often baleful eye on me. I quickly realised that there were a few subjects on which Peggy had firm views, and that one should avoid these if possible! Peggy was, I think, a great leader who put the Society firmly on the map both locally and nationally, but she could scare the life out of me.



Peggy Jay in a not uncharacteristic pose, photographed for the Ham & High in 1988 when she denounced a proposal to put 200-ft windmills on the Heath as "bonkers"

My Life in Hampstead and the Society (cont)

Looking back, I am struck by the fact that so many of the problems I faced were those which have always beset us: overdevelopment, basements, traffic, litter and cycling on the Heath, to name but a few.

It was towards the end of my chairmanship in 2006 that a huge planning matter arose in the Vale of Heath. The owners of a property called “The Garden House”, which still stands in a beautiful situation overlooking the Vale of Heath Pond, proposed to demolish it and erect a much larger house on the site. This piece of land was and is designated as Metropolitan Open Land which is the London equivalent of Green Belt and enjoys strict statutory limits on development. To cut a long story short, it

became clear to us that the development proposals, which greatly increased the size and footprint of the building, offended against planning law but, despite protests from us and many others, Camden proceeded to grant permission on clearly spurious grounds. I led the Society’s delegation to the Planning Committee meeting and was astonished to hear the senior planning officer giving entirely wrong advice to the Committee members. We soon concluded that this outrage had to be challenged in court and an appeal for pledges of financial support from members quickly raised about £40k, which gave us the green light to go ahead with an application to the High Court for judicial review. How lucky we were to have amongst our members an expert planning barrister,



Panoramic view of the Garden House

David Altaras, and solicitor John Hunt. It is a long story involving many anxious meetings, but eventually the then Mr Justice Sullivan delivered a judgment quashing the Camden decision and telling Camden off in round terms. After Camden's QC had done his best to defend their stupidity, David rose to reply and it was then that I heard the judge utter the wonderful words which will always be with me, "I need not trouble you, Mr Altaras." We all went over the road to the pub and ordered champagne! The developers and Camden lodged an appeal to the Court of Appeal which was swiftly thrown out, with costs awarded to the Society.

So ended what I modestly regard as the most exciting and successful episode in my years of service to our great Society. Soon after, I was "booted upstairs" to the office of Vice-President, than which, as our American cousins can confirm, there is nothing so useless.

I was asked, not long ago, what I thought had changed over the more than sixty years I have lived in Hampstead. Of course, our streets present a different aspect, with dress shops and restaurants replacing

many of the older traditional shops. Who now remembers Forster's grocery, the Blue Star Garage and Gaze's haberdashery? I remember a timber yard where restaurant Cote (formerly Zen W3) now stands. Several pubs have disappeared including The King of Bohemia, The Bird in Hand and The Coach and Horses. But we have to realise times and people's needs do change. We now face a huge challenge from on-line shopping which threatens all retailers, but meanwhile let us all support our local shops.

Thank God the Heath still remains the "Lungs of London," a unique wild place in our roaring City. We can be proud of our role in protecting the Heath since 1897.

I conclude by thanking all the great friends I have met along the way for giving me such a busy and hugely enjoyable chance to try to contribute to the welfare of the beautiful place we all call home. Having been able to see most of the world, I am in no doubt that Hampstead is the planet's best place to live.

Good luck to you all!

Members' email addresses – are you missing out?

Keeping you informed of the latest news and events.

The Society is increasingly using email, to let members know of vital issues that crop up between Newsletters. It is also an invaluable way to bring you other useful information, such as walks, talks and events that do not fit in with the Newsletter timetable.

If we do not have your email address you may be missing out on important local and Society news and initiatives.

So, if you have not already done so, please do send your email address to the Society at:

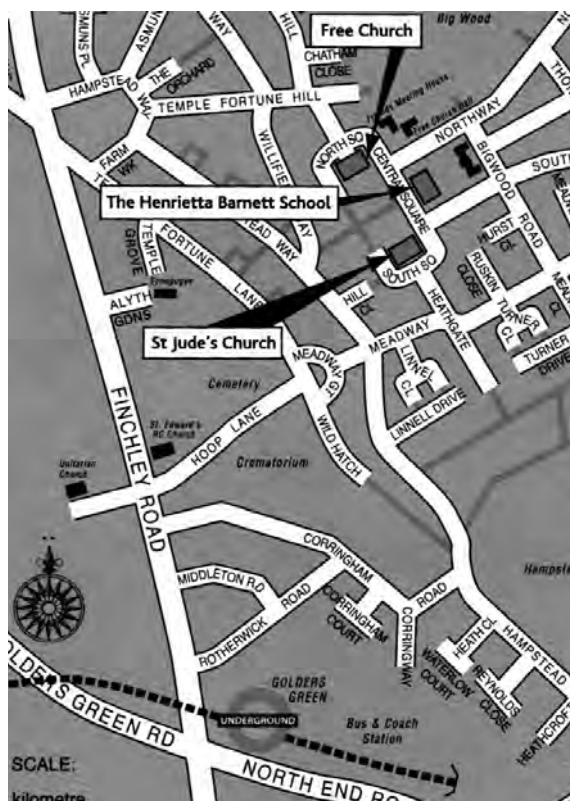
info@HeathandHampstead.org.uk

Make sure that you include your name and street address so that we can identify you.

This will also enable us to update our membership records and simplify our communications with you.



Proms 2022 at St Jude's 25 June to 3 July – Heritage Walks and more



Map showing how to reach St Jude's

Normal service with full audiences and hospitality returns to Proms at St Jude's in Hampstead Garden Suburb from 25 June to 3 July 2022, inclusive. This festival, run by volunteers from the community, hosts world class musicians and authors and is celebrating its 30th year. Full details of the programme are on the Proms website at www.promsatstjudes.org.uk.

During the festival there will be a mix of evening concerts with something for all tastes, free lunchtime concerts, a LitFest during the first weekend, family and education events, pizza on the square on the last weekend, stand-up comedy and a mix of Heritage Walks.

Whilst the music and LitFest are based in Hampstead Garden Suburb in the iconic Lutyens' buildings of Central Square, the Heritage Walks extend into Hampstead and central London too. Hampstead Garden Suburb is rightly world-famous among architects and town planners but is less well known to north Londoners. Walks led by experts from the Hampstead Garden Suburb Trust offer an ideal opportunity to learn more about the history, architecture and conservation of the area, as well as how the creation of the Suburb went hand-in-hand with the extension of Hampstead Heath.

Proms 2022 at St Jude's 25 June to 3 July – Heritage Walks and more (cont)

The full programme of **Heritage Walks** is outlined below and each walk must be booked in advance via the Proms' website <https://www.promsatstjudes.org.uk/2022-walks>

Monday 27 June 10.30

Welcome to the East End. An introduction to London's multicultural East End, focusing on Spitalfields and Whitechapel – the area closely associated with Samuel and Henrietta Barnett, who created Hampstead Garden Suburb. Led by Mark King, Blue Badge Guide.

Monday 27 June 14.00

"Laugh, I Thought I'd Never Start." Guide and lecturer Lester Hillman leads a light-hearted exploration of the Suburb's comedy heritage, centred around Wyldes and North End.

Tuesday 28 June 10.30

Hidden Corners of Hampstead. So you think you know Hampstead? Tamara Rabin takes us on a tour of some of her favourite, but less well-known, places in Hampstead village. NB: The pace is gentle but involves some steps.



Highlight of Hampstead Garden Suburb walk. Photo courtesy: David White

Tuesday 28 June 14.00

The Lost Suburb. Today's Suburb is not entirely as planned – or built. Hampstead Garden Suburb Trust's Paul Capewell leads an exploration of what isn't there – from Unwin's unbuilt Central Square and Marketplace to the replacement of the original village green by Queens Court.

Wednesday 29 June 10.30

Grasslands and Wetlands of Hampstead Heath.

Richard Payne, Hampstead Heath Conservation Supervisor, leads us on a walk down the eastern side of the Heath, via the Highgate chain of ponds to look at the ecology and management of these important grassland and wetland sites.

Wednesday 29 June 14.00

Courts and Closes. An exploration of the carefully planned roads and courtyards linked by twittens; the provision of high-quality housing for lower income people was central to the original vision and design of HGS. Led by James Phillips, HGS Trust Assistant Architectural Adviser.



A walk in Hampstead Heath. Photo courtesy: David White

Proms 2022 at St Jude's 25 June to 3 July – Heritage Walks and more (cont)

Thursday 30 June 10.00

The Square at the Heart of the Suburb. This short, leisurely walk around Central Square focuses on the creation of Hampstead Garden Suburb, its founder Henrietta Barnett, and the iconic buildings of the square. Led by Kate Webster.

Thursday 30 June 14.00

The Hidden Landscape. The present Suburb conceals the rural landscape that preceded it. Jane Horder, HGS Trust Estate Manager, explores this hidden landscape and shows Unwin's care in shaping his plan around pre-existing natural features.

Friday 1 July 10.30

Covent Garden – The Las Vegas of the Swinging (Seventeen) Sixties. By the 18th century Covent Garden offered a heady mix of taverns, brothels, playhouses and eateries where literary giants rubbed shoulders with notorious Covent Garden ladies. Ian Fagelson delves into the area's fascinating historic people and places.

Friday 1 July 14.00

The New Town on Our Doorstep. Brent Cross Town (BXT) promises to be as revolutionary as Hampstead Garden Suburb was 100 years ago.

Kate Webster examines the vision and plan for the town, early developments including the award-winning playground and park, seasoned by the history of the locality.

Saturday 2 July 10.30

The Wyldes of Hampstead. Marilyn Greene, guide and former curator of Hampstead Museum, explores Hampstead's once rural northern edge, including the hamlet of North End, with its famous residents, hostelry, 17th century Wyldes farmhouse. We'll learn how farmland augmented the Heath and provided the site for Hampstead Garden Suburb, returning to Golders Hill Park café via the enchanting Hill Garden.

Sunday 3 July 10.30

Punks, Priests and Poseurs – The Hampstead Set.

Julia Male, Blue Badge guide, takes us in the footsteps of some of Hampstead's famous (and infamous) residents, many of whom have been commemorated on English Heritage or Heath and Hampstead Society plaques. NB: Part of the route involves steep steps.

Any surplus generated by Proms at St Jude's is donated to our two charities, Toynbee Hall (for youth projects) and the North London Hospice – we were proud to pass the £1 million milestone in 2020!



Highlights from the central London walks

Spirit of the Proms. Photo courtesy: Michael Eleftheriades

The Springett Lecture

*To be given by David Humphries and Alasdair Nicholl on Thursday 29 September 2022
at 8:00pm (doors open at 7:30 for refreshments) at Rosslyn Hill Chapel*

*Admission is free for members of the Heath & Hampstead Society and Marylebone
Birdwatching Society. Please RSVP to info@heathandhampstead.org.uk*

Non-members please book via Eventbrite

Protecting the Veteran Tree Ecology of Hampstead Heath

David is Trees Management Officer for the City of London Corporation at Hampstead Heath and has been observing trees and their fungi associations at the site for over thirty-five years. David oversees the Heath's tree team managing 30,000 trees, undertaking inspections, tree health care, safety and veteran tree protection.

David is co-author of the Arboricultural Association's '*Fungi on Trees – a photographic reference*'. In 2020, he was recognised for his work in receiving the London Tree Officers Association Individual Commitment Award, at the Forestry Commission's London Tree and Woodland Awards "*showing consistent dedication and commitment*" to protecting London's trees.

Alasdair Nicholl is currently the Arboricultural Team Leader at Hampstead Heath. He has worked as a conservation-focused arborist for 20 years, specialising in ancient and veteran tree management and is recognised as a VETcert practicing arborist.



New Biodiversity Interpretation Boards on the Heath

by Jeff Waage

The excellent biodiversity interpretation boards have been updated for the season.

Following positive feedback, the Society is repeating its series of seasonal interpretation boards around the edges of the Heath, to introduce to visitors the Heath's remarkable biodiversity. The spring boards went out in early April, and feature unusual birds, plants and insects for which the Heath is a special London refuge. In many other biodiversity hotspots, wildlife interpretation boards illustrate the very rare species for which the site is noteworthy, but which you are almost certain not to see! Our boards are quite different. We celebrate distinctive species and habitats that are easy for visitors to find and enjoy on the Heath, but which are uncommon in urban areas, and sometimes in local or even national decline.

To design the boards, we have once again teamed up with a variety of partners for this project, including the City, English Heritage, Heath Hands, London Natural History Society and the Marylebone Birdwatching Society. This year, we have a focus on four seasonal boards highlighting habitats and species easily recognisable by visitors.

This year, we are placing a special focus on actions to enhance and protect biodiversity on the Heath. These include efforts to which the Society has contributed, such as the creation of a refuge on the Heath for the Whitethroat, a rare bird in urban areas, and trials with grazing sheep to improve biodiversity in meadows. The boards also show how visitors can 'make room for nature', by respecting fences and conservation areas, and keeping dogs under control in woodlands and pond. A QR code on the boards takes a visitor to a whole range of opportunities to learn about the Heath's biodiversity and to participate actively in its



conservation, from monitoring snakes and butterflies, to surveying for rare plants, or donating to create wildlife refuges.

All four of our 2022 boards, along with these opportunities for participating and a changing page of monthly biodiversity highlights, can be found on the Society's website at <https://www.heathandhampstead.org.uk/heath/biodiversity/>



A New Project to Save the Hedgehog and the Important Role of the Heath

by Jeff Waage

Hedgehogs are a critically endangered and iconic animal. This new project and your participation will help in understanding what can be done to stem the decline.

In May, the Society begins an exciting new project with the Zoological Society of London, Heath Hands, the City and other local partners to map hedgehog populations in this part of London and to devise ways to reverse the decline of this iconic species. Funded by the Mayor's Rewild London Scheme, the project will combine the use of camera trapping on the Heath and in other local Sites of Interest for Nature Conservation (SINCs), with an online survey of local residents, to gather historical records of hedgehog sightings. This will allow us to piece

together the distribution of hedgehogs locally and to identify the barriers and other factors that threaten their survival. According to the ZSL, Hampstead Heath supports the largest hedgehog population in Central London, which we feel may be crucial to the survival of this species in our neighbourhoods.

Members of this Society will be asked to participate in a survey to share their local hedgehog experiences and help us to build this map. Then with the project's results, we hope to help our members take simple actions to protect and enhance hedgehog populations in and around the Heath. For the link to the survey, please see the Society's website.



Photo courtesy Adrian Brooker

Heath Walks: 2022

Walks are normally held on the first Sunday of every month except January. Most start from Burgh House, New End Square, London NW3 1LT – 10 minutes walk from Hampstead Tube Station (for map see www.burghhouse.org.uk).

NB: *Parking is extremely difficult locally, especially in spring and summer; the West Heath car park (behind Jack Straw's Castle) is more likely to have spaces than the East Heath car park.*

Starting times are either 2:30pm or 10:30am (9:30am for birds), depending on season and subject matter.

Walks last approximately two hours. They do not necessarily follow made-up paths; you are recommended to wear suitable footwear as conditions may be rough or muddy.

You will be invited to make a minimum donation of £5, to be collected at the beginning of each walk, to help support future walks programmes and to promote the Society's activities generally.

Children are always welcome so long as they are suitably shod, can walk reasonable distances and are accompanied by an adult taking full responsibility for them.

Further information from the walks organiser,
Thomas Radice

mobile: 07941 528 034 or
email: hhs.walks@gmail.com

Sunday 1 May 10.00am (meet in **the Orchard, Golders Hill Park**) **Please note early morning start**

Our place among trees: historical uses and future threats led by David Humphries, Trees Management Officer, Hampstead Heath.

NB: *limited numbers: advance booking essential (preferably by email as above)*

Further walks will be announced in the next Newsletter.
Details of walk programmes will be available on the Society's website:

www.HeathandHampstead.org.uk

 [@HandHSocHeath](https://twitter.com/HandHSocHeath)

Sunday 5 June 2.30pm (meet at **Burgh House**)

Spider foray led by Edward Milner, former BBC producer and National Spider Recorder for Middlesex and London; author of *Trees of Britain and Ireland*.

Sunday 3 July 10.00am (meet at **the Flagstaff**, Whitestone Pond)
Please note early morning start; walk lasts up to 3 hours and ends in Vale of Health

The Geology of Hampstead Heath led by Diana Clements, Former General Secretary, The Geologists' Association; author: *The Geology of London*.

Sunday 7 August 2.30pm (meet at **Spaniard's End** by flower stall near the Spaniard's Inn)

The Heath Extension led by Lynda Cook, member of the Heath Sub-Committee.

Sunday 4 September 9.30am (meet at **Burgh House**)

Birds of the Heath led by Pete Mantle, member of the Heath Sub-Committee.

Sunday 2 October 2.30pm (meet in **North End Way, by entrance to Inverforth Close**)

The Pergola, the Hill Garden and Golders Hill Park led by Thomas Radice, Trustee of the Society and member of the Heath Sub-Committee.

Sunday 6 November 10.30am

Details to be announced.

Sunday 4 December 10.30am (meet at **Kenwood Walled Garden**, off Hampstead Lane)

The Hidden Heath: signs of the Heath's past led by Michael Hammerson, a Vice-President of the Highgate Society and member of the Heath Sub-Committee.

