

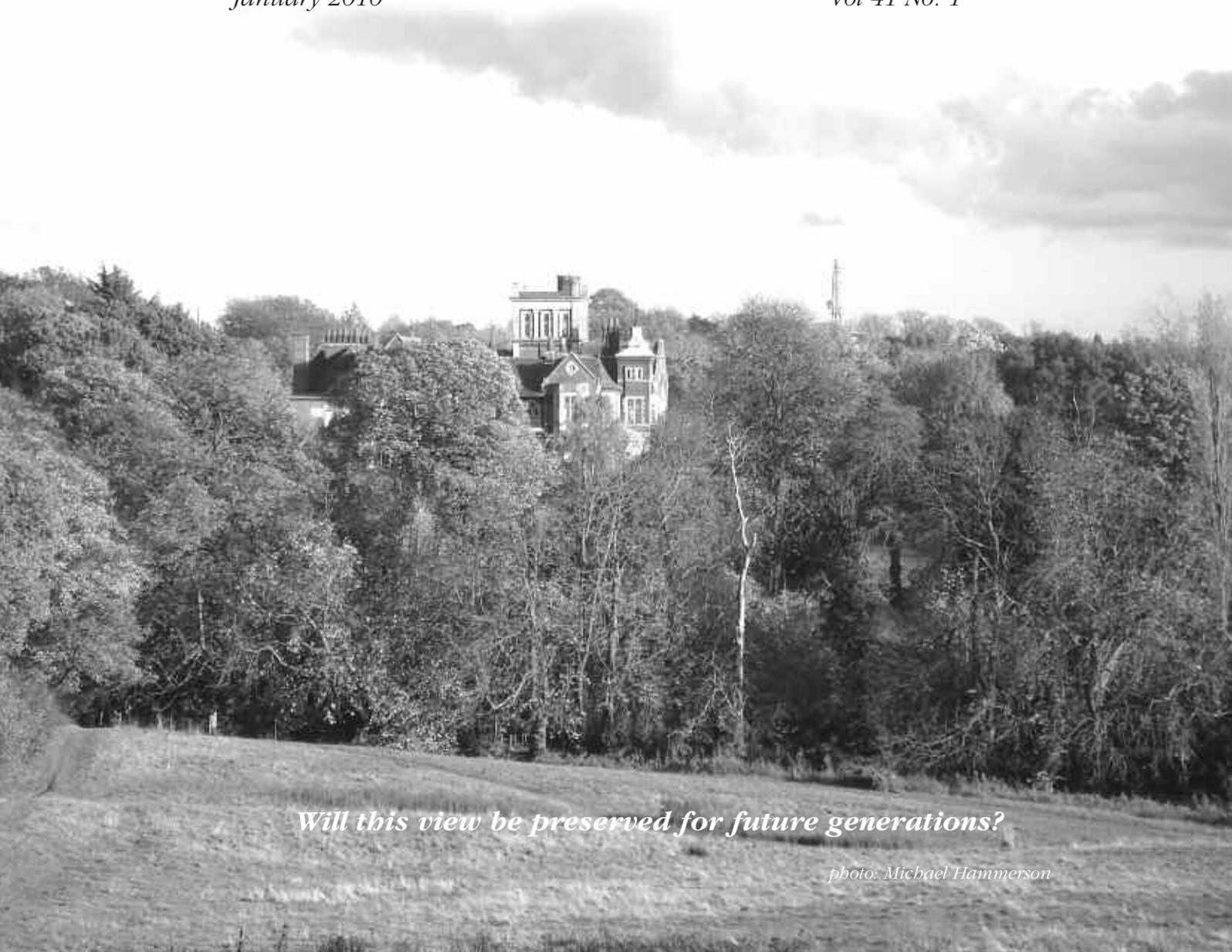


The Heath & Hampstead Society

NEWSLETTER

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Will this view be preserved for future generations?

photo: Michael Hammerson

Contents

	Page
Saving Athlone House	1
Treasured Heath view under new threat	2
<i>Jeremy Wright</i>	
The secret history of Caenwood Towers	3
<i>Helen Marcus</i>	
Dates for your diary - local events	5
Keeping up the good fight: Chairman's Report	6
<i>Tony Hillier</i>	
London Forum celebrates 21 years	8
Update on Basements	9
<i>Tony Hillier</i>	
PPG15 - a policy disaster averted	11
Heath news	12
<i>Tony Gbilchik</i>	
A New Pond on The Heath	14
<i>John Hunt</i>	
The Springett Award	15
<i>John Hunt</i>	
Town News	16
<i>Frank Harding, Gordon Maclean</i>	
Hampstead 2020 - Future Vision	20
<i>Ann Eastman</i>	
The Hampstead War Memorial	22
<i>Skip Murphy and Helen Marcus</i>	
The Hampstead & Highgate Festival	24
<i>Gwenneth Bransby-Zachary</i>	
Bulletin Board: Heath Life film & Heath Walks	25

Saving Athlone House

Congratulations to Highgate Society

We congratulate our colleagues at Highgate Society on their splendid leafleting campaign to publicise events at Athlone House. We were delighted to contribute to the cost. It has been a most successful initiative, alerting hundreds of people to this potential planning disaster for the Heath, and one from which we can learn valuable lessons for the future. It was particularly gratifying that it drew such a large response from the public. We sometimes wonder how many people who walk on the Heath care as much as we do about its integrity. This exercise taught us not only that there is indeed huge support out there, but also how to enlist it.

Athlone House is rightly in the news!

Hundreds of local people are outraged that the owner has applied to Camden to knock it down and replace it with an ostentatious 'palace' at a reputed cost of £80m. Having already profited hugely from Camden's permission to build three blocks of luxury apartments on the site, the same owner now wants to renege on the other part of the same permission that required him to restore it. Jeremy Wright spells it out in the following article. Once upon a time we had a Fringes of the Heath Policy that helped to protect it from such threats. With every government-led change to local government and planning law over the last 12 years, such protections as there were have been deliberately dismantled.

It would be unconscionable if the whim of one person – the present owner and would-be developer of Athlone House – were to be allowed to destroy a landscape beloved by millions of people for his own selfish purpose.

Treasured Heath view under new threat

by Jeremy Wright

The finest late Victorian mansion in the area

Standing next to Kenwood on the Highgate side, it is the finest mansion in this late Victorian style in the area, and is the only surviving work in London of the gifted architect Edward Salomons. The mansion and its landscaped setting were designed as a single composition, and its romantic detailing and mellowed tower provide interest but do not intrude on the Heath. Its owners included Sir Robert Waley-Cohen who helped buy Kenwood for the public, and during the war it was requisitioned as the secret national headquarters for RAF Intelligence as described in the following pages. It makes a positive contribution to the Highgate area and is an important part of Highgate's architectural history.

The owner now claims that it has deteriorated and would cost too much to restore. This is irrelevant as it has been in his care since 2005 when he was happy to sign a binding agreement to maintain and restore. Presumably he now aims to make even more profit by demolishing our local history.

A grandiose replacement palace

And what of his grandiose replacement palace, in pale stone with four green domes, in a pretentious pseudo-classical style with giant columns? This is designed to be seen, to impress, to awe, and perhaps to rival Kenwood House itself. It might be enduring standing alone in a vast parkland, or perhaps in Bishop's Avenue, but it is completely inappropriate on this small site, prominently self-proclaiming its importance. It will destroy the time-honoured skyline from the Heath and Kenwood, protected for over a century by the work of this Society, particularly if the owner were to cut down trees to improve his view.

The legal argument

The owner tries a legal argument that it is on "a major developed site" which might permit such a large edifice. But if it ever were, that has now long passed. It is simply a replacement dwelling on Metropolitan Open Land, which is as strongly protected as the Green Belt. And as the owner well knows, replacement dwellings cannot be "materially larger", as tested by the Heath and Hampstead Society last year in the Court of Appeal, (the Garden House, Vale of Health, again recently refused permission by Camden for an application about 10% larger). But this palace is a staggering two and a half times the area of the existing mansion, and the elevation facing Kenwood is 70% larger! Planning permission should be refused.

The owner's agent was reported in the press last year saying that "It will cost Camden tax-payers a fortune if the scheme is dismissed". People round here do not take kindly to being bullied!

Planning lawyer David Cooper, representing the owners, who have not been named, was reported as saying: "Its history as an RAF place is irrelevant. This is a dreadful fuss about nothing"; "it was a gothic monstrosity" and "the agreement can be removed if we appeal against it. If we win permission, it will not make any difference."

The Athlone House Working Group representing thousands of local people are outraged by this broken agreement. But we know there is a simple solution. If the owner is not willing to comply with Camden's condition to restore but wants to demolish, then clearly he has bought the wrong house. He should repair any damage he has allowed to occur, and put Athlone House on the market at a realistic price. We have twice inspected it and believe it is eminently restorable. And there is, we know, at least one willing buyer keen to restore and convert it.

The secret history of Caen Wood Towers

Support for the campaign to save Athlone House has come from an unexpected source. Helen Marcus reports

Historic mansion was base for RAF intelligence work

The sale of Athlone House, the Victorian mansion in Hampstead Lane, by the NHS, was first mooted in the late 1990s. As the then chairman of the Heath and Hampstead Society one of my first lines of inquiry was to find out what happened to the house after 1942 in case there were any covenants attached to its use as a hospital that might prevent its sale to developers. Searches at the Camden Local History Archives in Holborn, and at the London Metropolitan Archives drew a mysterious and complete blank, as did a visit to the Records Office at Kew, and sight of a copy of the last will and testament of Sir Robert Waley-Cohen.

Only in the last year has the truth been revealed, explaining the mystery shrouding those years: it was actually an intelligence base

for the Royal Air Force, the existence of which was an Official Secret, and all who worked there would have been subject to the Official Secrets Act.

RAF historian Flight Lieutenant Dan Marshall uncovered this important missing piece of local and British military history when he began researching the history of the Royal Air Force Intelligence Branch, as part of work to launch the RAF Intelligence Officers

Association. He had found a mysterious badge for a unit no one knew about, which led him to documents declassified only in 1996, (but still being withheld when I made my inquiries soon after), revealing the fascinating history of the true role of this building from 1942 to 1948.

Formed in 1939 in Harrow, the first official Royal Air Force Intelligence School moved to Caen Wood Towers in 1942. Described as the RAF's version of Bletchley Park, it was also the base for the top secret M19 unit, responsible for training of all RAF Intelligence Officers during the war. The School was an Official Command position for an Intelligence Officer, who was also de facto Station Commander of RAF Highgate. From February 1943 the USA Air Force also taught there.

Some of the modern additions to the house dated from this period when a two-storey brick and concrete wing was added for "nurses" accommodation and training. Students were also accommodated in 3 large houses on Sheldon Avenue (Officers, WAAF Officers and Airmen).

The details are contained in a beautiful leather bound document, prosaically titled Form 540 - Operational Record, found by Flight Lieutenant Marshall at the National Archive at Kew: "Nobody in the RAF knew about it. I did some research and we now know Athlone House played a key role in the RAF's history."

Form 540 is a daily log of how thousands of Intelligence Officers were educated in the art of predicting the enemy, intelligence analysis, escape, and surviving capture. They apparently used Hampstead Heath to sharpen these survival skills, building bivouacs and hunting rabbits. It mentions two near misses by V1 'Doodlebug' Flying Bombs that caused damage and injuries to a number of personnel in late 1944.



The badge showing a Sphinx and a sun, with the Latin motto "Praemonitus Praemunitus" – which translates as "Forewarned is Forearmed".

The secret history of Caen Wood Towers (cont)



Designed by architect, Edward Salomons, it was built in 1870 for Edward Brooke, a dye manufacturer, on the site of an 1830s house, Fitzroy Farm, and Dufferin Lodge, (the late residence of Lord Dufferin), and called Caen Wood Towers.

In the First World War it was used as a military convalescent hospital. Sir Robert Waley-Coben managing director of Royal Dutch Shell, bought it in 1919 and lived there until 1942 when it was requisitioned for war service. The government cover story was that it then became a hospital for injured Second World War officers, before passing, in 1948, into the ownership of the NHS. The name changed to Athlone House when it became a geriatric hospital after 1972.

The officers who featured in the film *The Great Escape*, the story of prisoners who dug their way out of the Stalag Luft III camp, would have been trained in Hampstead Lane.

The unit had its own RAF Crest, the original of which, signed by the King, currently hangs in the RAF Club on Piccadilly.

In 1948 when the House was acquired by the Health Service and became a nursing home, the Unit was forced to move to less suitable accommodation in Whitehall. It continued until 1969 at the Air Ministry, before being disbanded following the introduction of Joint

Service Intelligence training at Ashford, Kent. Its successor, the Defence Intelligence School is now at Chicksands in Bedfordshire.

There are rumours floating around that even after the RAF left, the tower may have been used by UK Intelligence to monitor the Russian Trade Delegation building in Highgate! This would certainly tie in with other stories that the mast that used to be near Whitestone Pond was also used for intelligence.

Flight Lieutenant Marshall is very keen to support the campaign to keep

Athlone House and would appreciate any assistance in gaining any local knowledge of the School during this period: "It is paramount that we find as much about our own history as possible, much of which was very secretive, before it is lost with peoples' memories". He also felt that he would be able to muster a great deal of support to preserve this part of RAF heritage, from "our serving and former serving Members" in the RAF Intelligence Officers Association, who as individuals (although not, he was keen to stress, the RAF itself as an official body) are trying to save the house and get it recognised.

Dates for your diary - local events



The Friends of Hampstead Town Hall

Celebrity Interviews 2010

Michael Palin

Tuesday 16 March

7.30 pm

Hampstead Town Hall

213 Haverstock Hill NW3

Tickets: £5

*Can be booked in advance from:
The Hon Secretary,
22, Lyndhurst Road, London NW3 5NN
email: corinnegibbons@hotmail.com
Cheques payable to The Friends Of
Hampstead Town Hall
Please enclose SAE*

*For more information:
telephone 020 8450 8864*

Wine bar

All welcome

In the hope that this newsletter
arrives in time, a last minute
reminder of the fundraising
guitar concert at



Hampstead Parish Church

Church Row, NW3

International guitarists

John Williams &

John Etheridge

Sunday, 31st January 2010

7.30pm

*in aid of
The Monkey Sanctuary
at Looe Cornwall
founded by John Williams' father,
and The Burgh House Trust*

Tickets £20

from Burgh House

Tel: 020 7431 0144

or

info@burghhouse.org.uk

Keeping up the good fight

News from the Chairman, Tony Hillier

A Happy New Year to all our Members

I was delighted to welcome over 200 of you to our Christmas party in the restored St Stephen's church on Pond Street. It was a dramatic and striking venue enhanced by beautiful lighting, thanks to Farokh Khoroshi. And once again we are enormously grateful to Janine Griffis and her family, and her team of helpers for organising such a successful and enjoyable event. Before moving on to business, I would like to wish you all a happy and prosperous New Year.

The Most Recent Successes of 2009

Your Committees and their Chairmen have kept up the good fight during the last quarter of the year. Their two great virtues, upon which the Society relies for its continued success, are skill and persistence: skill in mastering the rather complex legal issues that entangle our work, and in persuading the various authorities, bureaucrats, special interests and developers, sometimes on the same side and sometimes in direct opposition, to improve rather than harm Hampstead and its wonderful Heath. Equally important are our sheer obstinacy and unwillingness to give up after 112 years, in the case of the Heath, and decades in some of our more recent struggles, including some of the four I mention below.

In December the ground was broken for the restoration of Whitestone Pond. Work should be complete by July. A second application to develop Garden House in the Vale of Health was turned down by the Camden Development Committee on grounds of footprint size and unsuitable design for the very special setting.

Basements

A second application to overdevelop 9 Downshire Hill with a massive basement did

not proceed. The objectors had the benefit of a strong Counsel's Opinion, which was heavily critical of the legality of the Camden Officer's recommendation to approve this application, and the developer withdrew at the eleventh hour for further soil stability tests. We are hopeful of two outcomes for this and future applications: that we can persuade Camden, either by advocacy or through the courts, that they have to properly apply existing national planning policy guidance on excessive basement excavation; secondly, that developers can be shown in the extreme cases to fail the strict, technical ground stability tests that should by law be applied by Camden to all deep basement applications in this geologically fragile area of north London. We are conscious that too many dangerous applications have been allowed to go ahead already. I have written more on this issue below.

Progress has also been made on two other important sites, with long-standing controversial histories, and which together with the Highgate Society we continue to try to protect from hideous, excessive and illegal development. We have succeeded in respect of Witanhurst, the huge private mansion in Highgate overlooking the Heath, which was turned down by Camden. And our strong joint objections have also been registered with Camden for the latest stage in the proposed replacement of Athlone House, by what we believe would constitute a construction damaging to public enjoyment of the fringes of the Heath, and illegal in terms of its footprint size on yet another piece of private Metropolitan Open Land. Jeremy Wright has written more on this for this Newsletter and we also have a fascinating report of the role of the house in secret war work that has just come to light.

Affiliation: an Important Community Initiative for 2010

Most of us who live in Hampstead and in the other attractive communities around the Heath are prepared to work hard to protect the special qualities of this whole area. Many of you, as well as belonging to this Society, are also members of your local resident associations and/or of the larger groups, such as those representing Hampstead Garden Suburb, Highgate, Dartmouth Park, Gospel Oak and Belsize Park. Joint action with sister societies is vitally important. All of these voluntary amenity societies do, I feel sure, directly support one of the charitable objects of The Heath & Hampstead Society:

to preserve the Heath in its wild and natural state, as far as is consistent with public enjoyment, and preserve the amenities of the environs of the Heath and promote public interest in its natural history

and share, each in their own area, what we are committed to do for Hampstead as a whole, namely

to promote and maintain the amenities and characteristics of the buildings and streets of Hampstead and to promote public interest in their conservation and history

We believe that the interests of the wider community as a whole will benefit from developing a closer working relationship between the Society and all other local groups with shared objects. We have begun discussions with all the local societies we are aware of, to work out the details. Our intention is that they would be invited to become Affiliates of the Society, which will not require a change of the Society's constitution. The final set of arrangements will be presented to our next AGM for members to comment on.

Many of us already work well together at a personal level and such an agreement would formalise this collaboration on areas of special mutual importance. It would:

- strengthen our collective know-how and develop strategic policies for the area (e.g. police stations, post office closures, street furniture, traffic, shop closures); and to
- share expertise on issues such as basements, licensing law and tree protection.

Concerning the Heath, and outside the existing City Committees, this could

- improve our ability to share know how and strategic ideas for protecting bio-diversity and preventing bad development on the fringes of the Heath.

Across the area this could help us all to:

- deliver quicker and better co-ordinated responses, and increase our clout with politicians and officers on agreed local issues through weight of numbers
- strengthen our ability to challenge decisions through the courts at appeal or judicial review, which cannot be undertaken without significant financial pledges from local residents to meet the inevitably high legal costs.
- work together to increase membership of all our local amenity groups.

This is important in an era where local government wants to count heads as much as to listen to reason.

While each organisation will want to retain autonomy over any serious financial commitment for its members, we feel that affiliation will strengthen our collective local voice, and may well have a deterrent effect on developers who might otherwise underestimate local feeling.

News from the Chairman (cont)

The practical working of such Affiliation will need careful planning to make all our operations more rather than less effective, but there are successful precedents: the Camden Amenity Forum of the 1990s. The Society has had the benefit over time of the dedicated voluntary work of considerable experts in a number of specialist areas and such an affiliation would widen the scope of all affiliates, for example in access to a wide range of outside consultants, such as engineers and geologists (very useful guys in challenging basement applications) in advising us all.

All of the objects which we amenity societies endeavour to carry out are what the moral philosophers and the economists call “public goods”. These have two characteristics: they are indivisible, meaning that everyone who has access to them enjoys them equally, and they are public property, meaning they don't belong to anyone. It is therefore in all our interests to remind all local

residents from time to time that the best way for them to protect these public goods is to join and support the local organisations who have the capability to create and maintain them. It therefore makes perfect sense as part of the Affiliation “package” for the Society and the Affiliate to have joint membership drives from time to time.

A New Membership Secretary

We are delighted to welcome Robert Linger, who has been a keen contributor to the work of the Town Committee, to the General Committee. It is many years since the Society had a dedicated Membership Secretary and Robert has kindly - and bravely - accepted the this role with the responsibility of moving forward one of the most important tasks we have, looking at ways to keep the Society's membership growing. It is timely, too, at the moment when we are taking steps to develop our links with other like-minded organisations within this strong community.

London Forum celebrates 21 years of achievement



The London Forum of Civic and Amenity Societies celebrated its 21st Birthday in style at its AGM last October, with well

over a hundred guests. Representatives from National organisations included Paddy Pugh, the Director of Planning and Development for English Heritage London Region, Steve Whitbread, CPRE London branch, and Tony Burton, who is leading the Civic Society initiative. Congratulations and warm good

wishes were sent by Boris Johnson, Simon Hughes MP, Lord Smith of Finsbury, and London Assembly members Jeanette Arnold, Len Duval and Jennifer Jones.

Darren Johnson, chair of the Assembly and leader of the Green party, and Sir Richard MacCormac, the Forum's distinguished president, spoke in praise of the Forum's work, in particular of founding Chairman Marion Harvey and current Chairman Peter Eversden.

With a delicious buffet, the evening provided a convivial opportunity to meet representatives from other civic societies from all over London.

Update on Basements

By Tony Hillier

We aim in this report to give help and guidance to our members, and other local amenity societies and associations in dealing with this severe problem.

As Gordon Maclean tells us in his report on page 17, in the past two years there has been an onslaught of applications for development of basements. Despite the reasoned objections of the Society and many neighbours it has not been possible to protect Hampstead against the 100-plus such developments which Camden has approved. At least four recent cases of deep basement excavation approved by Camden have caused immediate serious damage to neighbouring properties, and more, we fear, will prove damaging in years to come.

Analysis of the British Geological Survey for the area, as further updated by Dr Eric Robinson (an expert on urban geology who taught at University College London from 1953 to 2000 in the department of Earth Sciences, and was for many years an advisor to this Society), shows that much of the NW3 area is *prima facie* unsuitable for deep basement development. This work has been drawn to Camden Officers' attention by the many objectors to such developments.

The Society, on Dr Robinson's advice, has been warning about these problems for decades. In response to these new and increased threats it has now sought further legal and geological advice from nationally acknowledged experts with a view to formulating a policy informed by the latest expert advice. Basing its future objections on the most up-to-date information will help cope with this damaging trend.

What is the Law?

Local Planning Policy is in a state of flux. With the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004,

Central Government swept away existing land use plans, Unitary Development Plans (UDP) and required them to be replaced with Local Development Frameworks (LDF; reported on extensively in previous Newsletters). But these are currently only in preparation and will not be formally adopted until at least late 2010.

Section 51 of the Town & Country Planning Act places clear responsibility on the planning authority to take into account development below the ground as well as above.

National Planning Policy Guidance 14, Development on Unstable Land (PPG 14, published in 1990 and updated in 1996 and 2002), places a clear obligation on Camden to require any developer to provide independent technical analysis showing that a development will not cause ground instability to the neighbouring area. Where instability is suspected, which must in our opinion include all deep basements in this area, Camden must require a geotechnical report showing that the development will not set off instability for neighbours. Where such a threat is shown to exist, the developer must demonstrate what steps he will take to mitigate such threat in a satisfactory way, otherwise the application must be refused. Only then can Camden make a proper decision on a basement application.

Camden's emerging LDF contains two excellent Development Policies, in response to Society lobbying, which have received strong public support. One of these, DP23, covering water flows, requires water run-off to be no worse than occurs in "greenfield" sites. Another, DP 27, specifically requires among other issues that basements should "not harm the amenity of neighbours" and must "ensure the structural stability of the building and neighbouring properties". Core Strategy 15 will retain UDP policies on bio-diversity and

Update on Basements (cont)

natural habitats protection and protecting water quality from deep excavation near the Heath.

In response to further intense local lobbying by the Society and others, Camden published a Guidance Note in December 2008: “New Basement Development and Extensions to Existing Basement Accommodation”. It summarised the policy implications from the outgoing UDP for determining basement applications, including the statements that there should be “no detriment to the water environment; that there is no undue harm to the amenity of neighbouring properties”.

Why has Camden not been applying the Law?

The answer is not entirely clear. Publication of the emerging policies cited above confirms that Camden does recognise that control of basement development falls to it as a planning authority.

However in its handling of these matters the Planning and Building Regulations Departments have shown a worrying trend to confusion and contradiction. Although PPGs are not statutory, they must be given due weight by a planning authority in determining an application. Yet they seemed until recently not to be aware of the existence and relevance of PPG 14. While they recognise flooding risk in some streets, they have not shown public recognition of the relevance of the ground geology or hydrology of Hampstead to basement planning applications. On a number of occasions some Camden Planning Officers have advised members of the public that planning law is not applicable to basement applications, because neighbours have adequate protection from a combination of Party Wall and Building Regulation law. All this clearly contradicts Section 51 of the Town & Country Planning Act and is, in particular, further

contradicted by Sections 22 and 23 of PPG 14. We do not believe that such advice is a correct legal interpretation in a geologically unstable area such as NW3.

Unfortunately both Camden’s 2008 Guidance Note and LDF policies are what are known in planning law as “Emerging Policies” (i.e. they have not been formally adopted). Although they should by law and precedent be taken into account, legal opinions will always differ on what precise weight an emerging policy should be given. Moreover Camden has claimed that the Government is denying local authorities the right to take emerging LDF policies into account when determining applications, until the LDFs become law. We have not seen under what statute the Government has authority to give such an instruction, which is contrary to the law as we understand it. We have received no reply to our request that Camden explain its position more fully.

Against this background, it is important for Camden and all local interested parties to consider carefully whether the way in which the large number of recent basement approvals have been determined, and the specific grounds upon which they have been objected to, properly reflect

- (i) the environmental threat such developments constitute cumulatively and over a longer time span to the neighbourhood and
- (ii) clear existing national planning policy guidelines and important local emerging policies, which have been widely consulted on and endorsed.

What is the Society doing about all this?

Together with the Highgate Society and expert advice, we are commissioning a local geological/hydrological report, setting out the issues for

A policy disaster averted

preserving ground stability. A copy of the report will be posted on our website, when ready.

We will endeavour to co-operate closely with Camden so that they are able to officially recognise this work which we hope will form the basis of a constructive dialogue with senior Camden Officers and Councillors in tackling the fairly complex set of obstacles, which have so far frustrated us. Our aim is to:

- help Camden to acquire or have access at reasonable cost to the necessary expertise to execute its duties, which can be technically challenging, under PPG 14;
- bring a wide range of other local amenity groups, associations etc. into the picture to join us in promoting a better understanding of the dangers of deep basement excavation and strengthen the lobby against further irresponsible development;
- continue to oppose with all possible expertise and resources future and currently pending deep basement applications, including judicial review;
- press Camden to recognise the emerging policies now, and support them if they seem threatened by central government.

What Can Members do to Help?

Please continue to support us in this important campaign. Encourage any other local amenity groups you belong to to contact us with their support also. Respond when we ask again for help in lobbying either Officers or Councillors on this subject.

For this and many other causes
please send your email address to
admin@heathhamp.co.uk.
so that we can keep you informed

Draft Planning Policy Statement 15 (PPG 15) on conservation withdrawn

The recent draft for a new version of this important document, which underpins national conservation strategies, has caused widespread dismay and consternation.

The Royal Town Planning Institute launched an unprecedented attack on it as “fundamentally flawed”, and “unfit for purpose”. Martin Willey, its president, said: “This could prove to be a charter for people who want to knock buildings down. It assumes that heritage stands in the way of development and economic recovery, which is patently untrue. Historic buildings and places are an asset, not a burden”.

It was condemned also by the Royal Institute of British Architects, and experts estimated that tens of thousands of listed and heritage properties could be demolished as a result of the proposed changes which seemed to be aimed at “benefiting developers” and “reducing the number of applications for planning permission rejected on heritage-related grounds”.

Responsibility was to be given to Local Authorities to decide if the “material harm” caused to an area's heritage was “outweighed by the wider social, economic and environmental benefits of the proposed development”.

The planning minister, John Healey, said that “The consultation shows that there is some confusion, which we will clear up before we publish the final statement. To put it beyond doubt, there is no question of downgrading the protection of historic buildings. The current language in the planning policy statement is not clear enough”.

He has promised: “We will redraft it to make clear that the protection of heritage buildings will not be reduced”.

We shall see.

Heath News - Water, water everywhere!

by Tony Ghilchik

It is good to see all the ponds on the Heath full again. Some of the smaller ones dried out during the dry late summer period but filled up again during our very wet November.

New small pond at Highgate

Those of you who walk alongside the Highgate Ponds will have seen the new small pond which has been created in the Tumulus Field above the Boating Pond, in that very wet area which often had to be given a wide berth when walking diagonally across to the Tumulus. One of the long-term objectives for managing the Heath under a changing climate is to be able to retain more of the surface water on the Heath rather than just see it drain away. Taking advantage of the wet site is the latest example of what the City have been doing in recent years. It follows on from the similar small pond created at the edge of Cohen's Field, by the Athlone House boundary, and the work done to slow the water as it flows along various streams. The work done earlier this year in creating pools along the Hampstead Valley for water flowing down from the Vale of Health Pond is another excellent example, and similar pools are to be created along the valley between the West Heath Bog and the Leg of Mutton Pond. This will start next year with new glades, to increase light levels, formed around new pools in the stream, to slow down water flow and allow silt to settle before it reaches the pond. John Hunt gives more detail on page 14.

Management Plan update

Other very much welcomed work around the ponds includes some done along the stream between the Viaduct Pond and the Bird Bridge. Part 3 of the Management Plan being developed by the City will set out detailed plans for different areas of the Heath and show how the

various techniques outlined in Part 2 will be applied in the main areas of the Heath. Draft 10-year plans for the first two areas, the Upper Vale of Health and the Viaduct Pond, have been prepared and circulated to members on the Consultative Committee for comment.

The Viaduct Pond

The Viaduct Pond enclosure has many different habitats (woodland, gorse, a marshy area alongside the stream and the pond itself) within a relatively small area. This pond has been identified as having the highest biodiversity of those on the Heath (because of all the submerged vegetation in it), and the Woodland within the pond enclosure is a particularly popular area for birds as the fencing prevents disturbance by people and dogs. What is more, the thick ivy in the woodlands provides a great nesting opportunity.

The 10-year plan for the Pond aims to maintain and improve not only the variety and quality of these habitats, but also the water quality of the pond and the views of, and from, the Viaduct. A start has already been made within the marshy area north of the Viaduct up to the Bird Bridge. There is a danger of the wet reed area loved by water rails (a shy bird that is not seen elsewhere on the Heath) at the northernmost part of the pond drying up because of all the silt brought here by the stream. Work is being done to let more light into the area and retain the sediment before it reaches the pond, by removing sycamore saplings shading the stream that flows down from the Bird Bridge, and by building some small dams in the stream. Holly and birch growing alongside the stream have been thinned, and robinia removed, in order to restore part of the historic view from the Viaduct to the Bird Bridge so you can, once

again, see the Viaduct from the Bird Bridge or, looking the other way, the Bird Bridge from the Viaduct Path as it crosses the Viaduct.

Gorse is a scarce habitat on the Heath and the patch on the south facing sandy banks is another habitat doing well – a kingfisher nesting site has been installed here but it is not yet in use, possible because it is relatively new but more likely because kingfishers may prefer a longer stretch of water for their fishing. Finally the marshy areas with its abundance of small insects that thrive in such locations provide great feeding sites for birds.

Cycling and paths

Although failure to get Heritage Lottery funding for the Parliament Hill Master Plan has put a temporary halt on building the proposed new cycle path down from the Bandstand to the Lido, that route has not been abandoned but put back in the melting pot with more work being done on pedestrian, vehicle and cyclist numbers, cycling speed, and safety levels at path junction points in order to come up with a more generally acceptable solution.

When the existing shared-use paths were being evaluated, the consultants advised that two routes (sections of the Viaduct Path, and the path from the Viaduct Path across to the Highgate Ponds and Millfield Lane) needed to be widened and resurfaced to make them safe for mixed pedestrian and cyclist use. Some work was done last year removing fences along the Viaduct Path as it passes through the cutting on its descent to the Hampstead Ponds; and TfL has granted the City £100k towards upgrade work on the path across to the Highgate Ponds, which will be remade with an aggregate surface and speed hump chicanes to slow cyclists. The new path will be 4m wide and built slightly further into Tumulus Field. When this new path

is completed the existing path will go so that the wild edge to the hedgeline can extend.

Sinking standards at Kenwood

Over in Kenwood, we are still waiting for the grass damage from last summer's Concerts to be repaired, even though we had been assured that whatever was needed would be done shortly after the concert season ended. The problem is very similar to last year in that the required work was identified promptly but by the time the contractor arrived to do it in October the ground had become too waterlogged. It will now be spring before the work can be done, leaving the grounds below par for some nine months of the year. As I wrote last year, the extra revenues from the concerts were supposed to help English Heritage maintain Kenwood but instead they are bringing the grounds to below the standard required of a Grade II listed garden. In all other respects the concerts were well managed; the new speakers were an improvement on the previous year, as was the new tent masking the toilet installations. However we believe IMG and English Heritage must aim to do the grass repair work in September, watering the repaired areas if necessary, rather than waiting until October, and we are calling on Camden not to grant a licence covering more than one year until English Heritage have demonstrated that they can repair the damaged grass within a reasonable time.

The Springett Lecture

Our annual Springett Lecture heard Colin Tudge Consider the Birds (or, as re-titled in the recent paperback edition of his book: The Secret Life of Birds) – his entertaining and mind-opening explanation of how birds have developed over the millennia. We hope to have an outline of Colin's talk in the next Newsletter.

A New Pond on The Heath

by John Hunt

Anyone who has struggled through the winter mud – especially after a cross-country run – on the south side of Lime Avenue near to the bird feeders on the Sanctuary pond will no doubt have had cause to wonder where the water is coming from. If they have a curious dog it might have had fun digging into the hole where a fairly constant spring emerges by the young birch trees. On one of the Heath inspection walks with the City, the Society was examining this mud, and Dr Meg Game, the City's ecologist, came up with the brilliant idea of turning a possible liability into an asset. A simple plan was hatched and we now have a new pond! It will of course be a safe shallow pond into which the spring water will run and hopefully out of the other side to a slightly more directed channel.

It will be planted with wetland plants and is fenced – at least for a temporary period whilst it establishes.

Work commenced on 22nd October but the digging of the hole for the pond was preceded by a team of archeologists and a few volunteers (including yours truly), led by Heath Sub-Committee member Michael Hammerson. Michael is a qualified archaeologist who had found a prehistoric flint a few yards away earlier during the year and obtained the City's consent to carry out a brief investigation, with volunteers from the Hendon and District Archaeological Society. Michael had hoped we

might find evidence of disturbance of the soil but, apart from some 17th century pottery and similar aged clay smoking pipes, little was found. He wondered whether the spring was the result of broken land drains or perhaps was an ancient spring holding valuable evidence of the Heath's prehistoric past in the form of peat deposits containing preserved seeds and insect remains, as was found in the excavation of the West Heath Mesolithic site in the 1970s. Meg Game and Supervisor Danny Murphy were extremely helpful, providing not only a small digging machine and GIS surveying support, but also coffee and sandwiches!

Nothing prehistoric was found in the small area excavated. However several clay pipes and pieces of pottery from the period c. 1660-1700 must have been dropped by farm workers, or possibly by members of the work gangs digging the Highgate ponds close by at the



Michael Hammerson (left) and Meg Game (right) with the team making preparations for the new pond

The Springett Award

by John Hunt

bottom of the slope. The other main finds were a quantity of good-quality china and tableware dating from the later 18th to the mid-to-late 19th century – not the sort of thing the average walker or picnicker would carry with them, so possibly discarded material from the Kenwood estate. Of particular interest was a fragment of a cup or small bowl with the date 1792 painted into the decoration. Research into whether this was a date of any significance for Kenwood or the Earls of Mansfield is being undertaken.

Finally, several crushed milk bottles of an early type were found near the surface. While air photos suggest that the nearest allotments, to which use parts of the Heath were turned during the Second World War, were across the other side of the field, it may be that the allotment holders came over here to make their tea! The excavations therefore shed some light on various episodes of the history of the area, and once the finds and excavation data have been assessed a short report will be produced.

The Springett Award has developed hugely since being incorporated into the Environmental Education on Hampstead Heath Project run jointly by the City of London and the RSPB, and delivered by RSPB staff. It began in April 2007 when they were awarded £87,000 by the Heritage Lottery Fund to run a joint education project on Hampstead Heath. This has been extremely successful, engaging with well over 5,000 children, improving the education facilities on site, and recruiting some excellent staff and volunteers. In the summer months field teaching sessions are run on the Heath and include pond dipping, identifying birds and bug hunting. In the winter months the project offers selected local schools in the London boroughs of Camden and Barnet the opportunity to take part in a free outreach programme. The outreach programme consists of a visit to the schools by a team of Field Teachers to deliver a classroom based session or assembly.

The staff with the able assistance of Sam Crosby, education officer at the Education Centre, help to choose the recipients of the Springett Award from the many schools who participate in the project during the year.

2009 proved to be another successful year. Two schools each received a cheque for £500 this year from the Springett Fund for their projects on the Heath. Brookfield Primary School created a wonderful Sensory Garden in the “Secret Garden” at the Swain’s Lane corner of the Heath and the Gospel Oak Primary School Environment Club made impressive models and sculptures of birds inspired by their trips on the Heath.



John Hunt and Heath Superintendent, Simon Lee, with some of the Gospel Oak Springett Award winners

Town News

Town Committee

by Frank Harding

It seems like yesterday that I drafted the Report for the September issue, yet it is already time to update the information in it. It also makes me recognise that so much of what I reported last time as work in progress continues to be just that – work in progress!

Cleaning the pavements

The Town and Fitzjohn's wards Area Forum organised by Camden has taken on board a proposal to undertake a "deep clean" of the pavements around Hampstead Underground station. This will lead to the removal of much of the staining of the pavements and to a considerable improvement of the area. It is to be hoped that that improvement will be so apparent that Camden will decide to extend the programme to a wider area.

Financial help for a hydrology report

The last issue referred to the proposal by the Society to the Forum that a substantial part of the £20,000 available for spending during the current financial year be allocated to an in-depth professional study of the hydrology of the area. This proposal is still being considered by Camden, although not as part of the Area Forum budget, and the Society continues to press for it to be adopted.

Traffic- a 20 mph zone on Fitzjohns Avenue

At the time of writing this article (mid- December) the position on developments relating to the School Run is still unclear. Consultation papers will, by the time you read this Newsletter, have been distributed by Camden to schools, residents, businesses and amenity groups in and around Fitzjohns Avenue. These consultations ask whether the proposals to establish a 20 mph zone on Fitzjohns Avenue, a scheme to enable the bussing of children to the schools and the

resulting changes to the streets to allow the busses to pull in, and other related work, should be approved. The consultation period, which ends in mid January, will provide evidence of the degree of support to be considered by the Camden Executive (Environment) Sub-group meeting on 15 February 2010. The Society strongly supports the proposals and I hope that local respondents will have shown similar support.

Whitestone Pond, the War Memorial and the Tollgate

Work on the area surrounding the Whitestone Pond continues. The new lighting is in place and the old lamp standards have been taken down. Considerable further work has still to be undertaken, particularly to the pond itself, and it is unlikely that it will all be completed before the Summer. Juliette Sonabend continues to keep a watching brief.

Last Autumn we and others suggested that significant refurbishment to the War Memorial outside Heath House, opposite the Whitestone Pond, was desirable. I am pleased to say that this suggestion has been supported by Camden Councillors Linda Chung and Chris Knight. The work is to be undertaken early in the New Year and more detail is given on page 22.

Camden has recently commissioned independent architects to advise on the restoration of the Tollgate House; the resultant draft proposals are currently being discussed with English Heritage and with Camden Conservation. It is hoped that these proposals will be agreed early in the New Year, whereupon formal plans will be drawn up for planning consent purposes. The Society remains closely involved in all aspects of this project.

Hampstead 2020

Most readers of the Newsletter will no doubt have seen and heard of the vision for Hampstead put forward by Farokh Khorrooshi and his Hampstead 2020 colleagues. The Society strongly supports this initiative and will work with them and with Camden on consideration of the ideas and the development of plans. Ann Eastman gives more detail on page 20.

NW3 Hampstead

NW3 Hampstead is the group that represents the traders and business people of Hampstead village and South End Green. Its remit includes the continuing improvement of the services provided to shoppers and others doing business in Hampstead and thus the ongoing development of the facilities and attractiveness of the area. As such, its objects in many areas overlap those of the Society and we wish therefore to work closely with it. I have held discussions with Andrew Lavery, the chairman of NW3 Hampstead, and we have agreed to liaise closely on our programmes and those issues where we have common interests.

Hampstead plaques

Although I had hoped that one or perhaps two new Hampstead plaques would be erected over the last few weeks, we have been frustrated in moving the scheme forward. We are still working on those two sites in the hope of getting agreement to do so and further names are being considered. We expect that 2010 will see a number of former local residents being commemorated.

In closing, may I wish you all a very happy and healthy New Year.

Planning Sub-Committee

by Gordon Maclean

The headline this time (again), in spite of good news elsewhere, is:

Basements

In the three months since our last Newsletter in September, there have been 17 Planning applications for new basements in Hampstead. Of these, we have objected, strongly, to 15. This shows, perhaps, that we do not react with a kneejerk to anything subterranean. Several of them come into the category of gigantic, extending from boundary to boundary, front, side and rear, and two levels deep; three if you include swimming pool plant. One lies within a stone's throw of one of the Heath ponds, and they are all damaging to subsoil and ground water resources, to trees, and of course to the health and well-being of neighbours. Our roads, already congested enough, would have to accept many hundreds of 30-tonne lorries to carry away the excavated earth.

One proposal, which amazed even our case-hardened Committee, was for a new self-contained house buried in the rear garden of another, leaving only a narrow 'ha-ha' for ventilation. The 'host' house would then benefit from a flat croquet lawn garden forming the roof of the new troglodyte structure.

These are, of course, applications only; it will be up to Camden's Development Control Committee to make the decisions. The Officers' reports, however, will almost certainly recommend acceptance - despite the fact that none of these proposals conform with Camden's new policies and guidance documents on basements. They still insist that until these new policies, within the new Local Development Framework (see our last Newsletter) are ratified by the Minister, mid-next year, they may not be used in decision-making. We have taken legal opinion which says that so-

Town News, Planning (cont)

called “emerging” policies can be taken into account. We have reminded officers of this. Tony Hillier has given greater detail on measures we are pursuing.

We will see; there will be some important decisions made in coming weeks.

Athlone House

Many of you (those, in fact on our e-mail list) will have heard from us, asking for your support in opposing this large, important and quite complex application: to demolish Athlone House as it exists, and replace it with a very large mansion of intrusive design. The applicants seek not only to disregard Metropolitan Open Land rules - as per Garden House, Vale of Health - but also overturn legal obligations they entered into 4 years ago when they replaced the old hospital buildings with new flats. The effects on the Heath would be very damaging, and we have had the support, in objecting to the application, of many local and national bodies - as well as hundreds of you; your response has been very encouraging.

The application may be rejected by Camden - they can hardly do otherwise - but an Appeal will no doubt follow, and this is when the gloves will come off...

Local Development Framework (LDF)

The final version of this was published by Camden a month ago, and has now gone to the Ministry. As indicated in our last Newsletter, this is now as good as we could have hoped for, and will form a decent basis for Camden's Planning policies in the future. The sooner it is ratified the better (see above).

Article 4 Directions

The vital consultation meetings took place last month, and approved Camden's proposals overwhelmingly - again, thanks largely to you,

who responded to the questionnaire in good numbers. This will now go to the Ministry early in the New Year, and is likely to be on line by May.

Trees

Our proposal for the appointment of a London Tree Commissioner will now be put to Boris Johnson - or, rather, to his Environmental Advisor, in January. This concept was set out about a year ago, but has taken time to arrange.

Our proposal is for the appointment of someone with status and authority to deal with all matters relating to urban trees in the London area - no such person exists at the moment. He or she would bring together all the people and policies relating to the conservation of trees: their protection against development; research into tree diseases; action to counter the prejudicial and standard insurance company view that trees cause subsidence and building damage; the need for Local Authority Tree Officers to be given more status and power to protect trees - etc etc. Some of these issues have a degree of fragmented attention, but none is coordinated on a London level.

A Tree Tsar, in fact!

We are optimistic that we will be given a sympathetic hearing.



Don't forget to use the Hampstead Card

The current list of businesses taking part in the scheme can be found on the Society's website

www.heathandhampsteadsociety.org.uk

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

Newsbriefs- planning issues of interest

The North London's Waste Plan - Preferred Options report

The controversial Brent Cross development plan includes a waste incinerator with a 140-metre-high chimney, likely to emit toxic particles, polluting the air for miles around. But what many people in Camden may not be aware of is that it is part of the North London Waste Plan drawn up by seven North London local authorities, including Camden. The others are Barnet, Enfield, Hackney, Haringey, Islington and Waltham Forest.

North London has no landfill sites and Camden has very few sites other than household waste amenity sites and metal recycling facilities. Waste is exported to sites in surrounding counties. The Mayor has decided this can not continue, and that London must deal with its own waste.

These seven boroughs are therefore jointly preparing plans to deal with the problem up to 2021, and to identify alternatives, such as recycling, composting and using it to produce energy within North London.

The final plan will form part of the boroughs' Local Development Frameworks and will also need to comply with the Mayor's London Plan.

More information can be found on the website: www.nlwp.net; or email: feedback@nlwp.net Camden officer Archie Onslow can be contacted at Camden Town Hall, Argyle Street, London WC1H 8EQ.

Night flights over London

A threat to our area of increased aircraft noise has appeared: the Civil Aviation Authority is putting forward plans to ease restrictions on night flights for the Olympic Games in 2012. It is feared that such a move will be used as a back door method of introducing permanent night flights – something that the aviation industry has been lobbying for.

You have been warned!

Threat to green space at the Welsh Harp

Keen gardeners or boating enthusiasts may be concerned to hear about a threat from housing development at the Welsh Harp reservoir. Two planning applications have been made for development at the popular Greenhouse Garden Centre, Birchen Grove and at Woodfield Nursery, Cool Oak Lane by Malcolm Scott, who is the owner of the sites.

The Open Spaces Society, together with the pressure group Save Our Remaining Bits of Green, have joined the campaign, and have submitted a strong objection to Barnet and Brent Councils.

Kate Ashbrook, general secretary of the Open Spaces Society, said: "It is outrageous that this wonderful green lung should be desecrated with over 160 houses. This open space is of vital importance for residents and visitors from further afield for quiet recreation and bird watching. It is invaluable and irreplaceable".

If you feel strongly about this you might care to send in an objection to Brent and Barnet councils urging them to reject these damaging applications. Information can be found on their websites www.brent.gov.uk and www.barnet.gov.uk

Development at the British Museum

A call-in to Secretary of State, John Denham, by our colleagues, Camden Civic Society and Bloomsbury Conservation Area Advisory Committee, of the controversial plans for a modern extension to the British Museum by Rogers Stirk Harbour + Partners, has been refused.

The objections included gross over-development and considerable harm to the setting and architecture of the Museum's Grade 1 existing buildings. It may well set a dangerous precedent.

Hampstead 2020 - Future Vision

by Ann Eastman

Many people are worried about the deteriorating appearance of Hampstead Village and its immediate surroundings. Its visual charm is being steadily eroded by the increasing amounts of traffic-related street 'furniture'. Attempts by many people over the years to stop this tide of clutter have failed.

However new ideas have been emerging in recent years which advocate freeing up our streets from engineering "solutions". This has encouraged a small group of people with a huge visionary concept, to try to do something to reinstate that former charm. **Hampstead 2020** is the brainchild of Farokh Khorooshi and its mission is to eradicate the encroaching forest of signs, mess, rubbish, confusion, and traffic chaos.

The **Hampstead 2020** group is just five committed locals – Anthony Casingena, Ann Eastman, Jo Konrad and John Weston – who share Khorooshi's forward-looking vision, to make Hampstead a better place for residents, local businesses and visitors.

Hampstead 2020's concept went public at the Everyman Cinema in October and a few weeks later in Burgh House, where it met with an overwhelmingly enthusiastic response from residents, local groups, Councillors and Camden officers.

The proposed concept sets out initially to create awareness of the environmental degradation. It is a psychological fact that many residents don't actually see their surroundings – they simply become accustomed to the familiar sights and accept them. This is happening in Hampstead; it is slowly degrading before our eyes. Khorooshi draws an analogy with police horses: they are trained to ignore unusual and frightening sights and sounds that normally terrify horses.

What will Hampstead look like in 2020?

The images in the presentation clearly illustrate that the precious character of Hampstead is eroding. The High Street and its environs are submerging beneath all the unnecessary traffic signs, ugly street furniture, A-boards, and uncollected rubbish. Many of the shop fascias conflict with the historic architecture, while the buildings above look shabby. Traffic chokes the roads, and the place hardly looks like a conservation area!



Future vision: de-cluttered Hampstead Underground Station

Fortunately, ears are already in listening mode. The retailers' group 'Hampstead NW3', which instigated the hanging baskets and Christmas lights, is in discussion with Camden about rubbish problems.

Hampstead 2020 solutions would transform Hampstead's main shopping areas. A video presentation created by Khoroshi demonstrates how it might look if they were devoid of the clutter. The simple traffic solutions and visually pleasing street surfaces echo the approach in many historic European towns, where studies show that drivers are far more careful when driving through busy areas without unnecessary signs, lights, lines and bollards. Pedestrians, too, are more careful, and feel less tyrannized by traffic.

The other area that would benefit greatly from further work is Whitestone Pond. The Society's Juliette Sonabend has done sterling work, getting Camden and the City to cooperate on a programme of improvements but much more could be done. Of historical importance and interest, the pond is London's highest point with distant views, where a lighted beacon warned of the approaching Armada. Originally a natural pond, it was enlarged in 1875 so that horses could walk in to cool down after the haul up Heath Street. Thirty years ago it was still a focal point for children with their model boats. Now it is merely a roundabout, with restricted views.

Enthusiastic Responses

The ***Hampstead 2020*** ideas have generated enthusiastic responses from Camden Councillors Ralph Scott and Chris Knight. They find the ideas exciting and workable. It so happened that Chris was already heavily involved in the Camden project, 'Naked Streets' a major de-

cluttering scheme that has already done work in Lincoln's Inn, Queen Street and Drury Lane and will be looking at Camden Town in March.

Just before Christmas ***Hampstead 2020*** met Chris Knight and two of his colleagues, an urban designer and an engineer. The first idea to be considered is to be the congestion and clutter outside Hampstead Tube Station, where railings spawn parked bikes and posters, newspapers have two outlets, and original windows are bricked-up.

Innovations invariably have teething problems, so Hampstead 2020 will study carefully the results in Camden Town. And as those who attended the presentation were reminded, it is imperative that the needs of wheelchair users and people who have little or no sight are considered.

Already some changes have been observed: the battered bins of the mini recycling centre at Swiss Cottage – 'the gateway to Hampstead' – have been replaced and moved back from the kerbside, although unfortunately they still attract additional rubbish around them.

The large mysterious 'E' at South End Green, and the junk above the Hampstead Underground Station's news kiosk have gone.

So far, everything augurs well for ***Hampstead 2020***. The concepts will be a slowly evolving process, but it seems that they might happen long before the year 2020!

If you would like more information contact Hampstead2020@gmail.com

The Hampstead War Memorial

By Skip Murphy

Thousands pass it daily, yet how many realize its importance to the people of Hampstead?

After the carnage of the Great War 1914-1918 the people of Hampstead responded to fundraising and donated £13,700, no small sum for that time. Their desire was for a simple memorial near the summit of the Heath where the men drilled for action.

Designed by Sir Reginald Blomfield, who supervised its building, it was unveiled by Major General Sir Charles Townshend KCB MP, on May 4 1922. Sited at the junction of North End Way and Spaniards Road, it remained there until after the Second World War.

In 1953 the memorial was relocated a few feet away on to land in front of Heath House, donated by a member of the Guinness family, then owner of the house. Two panels had been added 'calling to memory' the dead of both World Wars, a phrase that calls to mind Sir Charles' words in 1922, that all "remember with honour and glory...the lads who laid down their lives for King and country".

On April 23 1953 it was unveiled on its new site by Field Marshal Viscount Alanbrooke, Lord Lieutenant for London. Of course the second war cost the lives of women and men, civilians as well as warriors, each generation giving their all in defence of all.

Over recent years there have been concerns about the neglect of the memorial and the need for a general refurbishment. Local Councillors Linda Chung and Chris Knight have been working with Society committee member Juliette Sonabend to restore the monument, and were hoping to bid for area forum money for the project.

So we are indeed fortunate that in response to a recent local campaign, featured in the Ham & High, a very generous benefactor who wants to remain anonymous has offered to meet the estimated £11,000 cost of this. Thus the spirit of the original fund raising is repeated in our time. Brave world indeed to have such people in it.

As it is a public monument it is surely the duty of our Council to maintain it, to honour the dead.

All are to be congratulated on their work in fundraising, and behind-the-scenes work on getting repairs done. Thanks also to Christopher Wade for information, and the Archivists in the Local Studies Department at Holborn Library for help. The facts were gleaned from old copies of our local journal of record, the Ham & High.



Protection for War Memorials

by Helen Marcus

London Assembly survey

War memorials are currently not adequately protected under the existing planning system. While most memorials are treasured others are neglected and left to suffer the effects of ageing, or vandalism, or are lost through redevelopment or other change. The War Memorials (Local Authorities' Powers) Act 1923 forms the basis for much UK-wide war memorials legislation. This empowers local authorities to use public money to care for war memorials, but, as with so much of such legislation, it does not oblige them to do so. Much of the recognition and protection for war memorials derives from local authority planning policies that are set out in their development plans. The best boroughs have an inventory, linked electronically to asset registers, so that any planning application for a site that affects a memorial triggers notification. This was certainly the case when Hampstead Town Hall, with its two memorials, was restored in the 1990s.

Memorials that are unrecorded and not linked to registers are more likely to be overlooked in the planning process. There needs to be specific mention of war memorials as individual elements of the built heritage environment in their own right. This would help promote the recognition of memorials and could assist in raising their profile.

In response to widely-expressed concerns the London Assembly has now produced a survey of London's war memorials, of which there are nearly 6000.

It found that often boroughs do not know where memorials are. It argues that their protection and preservation should be a material consideration in borough planning policies, and that in the review of the London Plan the Mayor should specifically refer to war memorials as relevant to London's built heritage.

It points out that the community is often the best custodian to ensure the continued protection and maintenance of war memorials, as our campaign has amply demonstrated, and more should be done to raise awareness and educate people about them, their history, social context and preservation.

More information about the GLA report can be found at: www.london.gov.uk/assembly/reports

UK National Inventory of War Memorials

A UK National Inventory of War Memorials (UKNIWM) was established in 1989 to record memorials. It is a joint initiative between the Imperial War Museum and English Heritage. It is independently funded from donations and grants and covers all kinds of memorials as far back as the 10th century including lost memorials where evidence shows that they were erected.

For more information or to volunteer to help UKNIWM can be contacted at the Imperial War Museum Lambeth Road London SE1 6HZ
<http://www.ukniwm.org.uk>
e-mail: memorials@iwm.org.uk
Telephone 020 7207 9851/9863

War Memorials Trust Grant Schemes

In 1997 the Friends of War Memorials was set up by Ian Davidson, a former Royal Marine (H&HS newsletter May 1997). With the support of Countess Mountbatten this has successfully grown into the War Memorials Trust and it operates various grant schemes to help restore war memorials.

More information can be found at:
www.warmemorials.org
42a Buckingham Palace Road,
London SW1W 0RE
Telephone: 020 7233 7356 / 020 7834 0200

New direction for the Hampstead & Highgate Festival

Gwenneth Bransby-Zachary is the new Hampstead & Highgate Festival Director. She introduces the 2010 Festival which takes place from 24 September to 3 October

The Hampstead & Highgate Festival not only has a new Artistic Director and Festival Director, but will take place at a different time of year and will have a broader range of events. All change indeed.

Programming - a broader range of events

Building on our tradition of concerts, literary events, walks and 'Night Skies' at Hampstead Observatory, readers, actors, visual artists and musicians will join forces in imaginative programmes not widely available in London, giving the festival a unique flavour and strong individual identity. We are also carving exciting new links with local retailers via *NW3 Hampstead*.

Ballets Russes theme for the 11th Festival

The 2010 programme has a Russian flavour, inspired by the overarching theme of Serge Diaghilev's *Ballets Russes* dance company. It coincides with the opening of the Victoria & Albert Museum's major *Ballets Russes* exhibition and the Festival will put on its own small scale complementary photographic exhibition celebrating Tamara Karsavina, lead *Ballets Russes* dancer. While it is well known that Pavlova – her great rival - lived in Hampstead, it is not so well known that Karsavina also lived there - at 108 Froggnal – and is buried in Hampstead Cemetery.

Diaghilev's unique inter-disciplinary artistic collaborations, bringing together leading visual artists, composers, extraordinary dancers, and revolutionary choreographers, was a huge influence on generations of musicians, writers, artists, fashion designers, interior designers, choreographers, and dancers.

We celebrate the births of composers Schumann and Chopin (both 1810), whose music featured in some of the most popular *Ballets Russes* productions. We also commemorate the death of Russian literary giant and keen musician Count Leo Tolstoy (1910), and the birth in 1860 of Anton Chekhov, writer of plays and short stories. Both are connected with Diaghilev and his world.

Educational activities

There will be an art competition for schoolchildren in Hampstead and Highgate schools in association with the Catto Gallery, and we are hoping to stage a 1920s Parisian children's ballet involving local ballet school pupils. We are in discussion with the Roundhouse, local hub of activity for young people aged 11-25, with regard to theatrical and musical work. We also plan events on Hampstead Heath in association with the City of London.

Artistic Director

Danny Driver is a versatile solo and chamber pianist known for creating exciting concerts contrasting neglected and unusual works with mainstream repertoire. He has given acclaimed performances at the Wigmore Hall and South Bank Centre and throughout the UK and abroad. His CDs on the Hyperion label have been internationally acclaimed, with the most recent release of Hampstead composer York Bowen's Piano Sonatas selected for the Editor's Choice in December's issue of Gramophone Magazine.

We look forward to welcoming members of the Heath and Hampstead Society to Festival events in 2010 - the Festival primarily for Hampstead and Highgate residents!

Gwenneth Bransby-Zachary has been managing classical music events for over 20 years. She was Director of Concerts at St Martin-in-the-Fields in the late 1980s, has managed festivals in London and overseas, and has run The Parkhouse Award since 1991. She has worked with Danny Driver for over five years in the promotion of his London concerts and together they bring a lively working partnership to the Festival.

For more information, or to become a Friend:

www.hamandhighfest.co.uk -

Tel: 020 8761 6565 -

email: info@hamandhighfest.co.uk

PO Box 11845, London SE21 8ZS

Bulletin Board

A film about the Heath – a unique opportunity

Heath Life is a film and education programme that aims to celebrate the rich heritage of Hampstead Heath, explore its role and resonance for Londoners today, and give voice to people who feel passionate about the Heath and its place in their lives. The project, by the talented young film maker Nick Hillel, has three interlinked strands: the creation of a 60 minute video portrait, a series of multimedia education workshops leading to an exhibition and an audio visual installation performed with live musicians.

Fundraising will come from a range of public and private sources and they need your support. Heath Life is a not-for-profit project. 100% of all money donated will go towards the costs of making and showing the film, delivering the workshops and running of the Heath Life website.

How to make a donation

If you would like to find out more, or make a donation, or talk to someone about how you can make a difference, please contact Nick Hillel at nick@yeastculture.org

Cheques, payable to Yeast Community Culture, can be sent to 4th Floor, 158 Junction Road London N19 5QQ

If you would like to donate via paypal details of how to do this can be found on the Heath Life website.

Donors will be invited to the premiere of the film and receive a copy of the DVD. Full acknowledgement of all contributions will be made in the film credits and on the Heath Life website.

More details, and examples of Nick Hillel's beautiful photography can be found on the Heath Life website: www.heathlife.co.uk

Brendan Nolan

We have been very saddened to hear of the death, at the age of 73, of Brendan Nolan, a most valued Highgate Society colleague. As editor of Highgate Society's newsletter, Buzz, for many years, he brought enormous skill and professionalism to the task, gained from his wide business experience. He was a forthright campaigner for many local causes. He was a delight to know, a warm-hearted generous man always prepared to help. He will be very greatly missed.

News from

Burgh House



New faces

Susan Bubr who has worked at the Museum for two years as Curatorial Assistant has been appointed Museum Curator. Susan's family came here from the USA when she was 16. She has studied at Cambridge and is currently completing a masters degree in Museum Studies at the University of Leicester.

Julia Scott, a Friend and steward, has kindly volunteered to become Membership Secretary.

Support the Friends of Burgh House

For more information tel: 020 7435 8460

***Museum, Buttery, Bookstall
Exhibitions, talks, concerts and classes
Burgh House, New End Square NW3
www.burghhouse.org.uk***

Tel: 020 7431 0144

Open Wed - Fri, & Sun, 12 - 5.00pm

(Saturdays by appointment)

Heath Walks 2010

Walks are held on the first Sunday of every month except January. Most start from Burgh House, New End Square, London NW3 1LT - ten minutes walk from Hampstead Tube Station. (see www.burghouse.org.uk for map) NB: parking is extremely difficult, especially in spring and summer. Starting times are either 2.30pm or 10.30 am, 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 £2 per adult, to be collected at the beginning of each walk, to help support future development of the walks programme and to promote the Society's activities generally.

The Society does not organise walks specifically for children but they 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.

Please note starting times and meeting points.

Further information from walks organiser, Thomas Radice, Tel: 020 8455 1025; mobile: 07941 528 034 or email: thosradice@gmail.com



No walk in January

7 February 10.30am (meet at the flagpole, Whitestone Pond) How the Heath was saved for the nation: led by Thomas Radice, member of the H&HS Heath Sub-Committee

7 March 10.30am (meet at Burgh House) Tales of the Heath: an interactive walk led by staff of the City of London Heath Education Centre

4 April 10.30am (meet at Burgh House) Birds of the Heath in Spring led by John Hunt, Heath Sub-Committee member and former chairman of the Marylebone Birdwatching Society

2 May 2.30pm (meet at Burgh House) Trees of the Heath led by Lynne Leveson, official volunteer guide, Kew Gardens

6 June 2.30pm (meet in North End Way, on Hampstead side of Inverforth House) The Pergola, the Hill Garden and Golders Hill Park led by Peter Tausig, member of the H&HS Committee and Heath Subcommittee

4 July 2.30pm (meet at Burgh House) Flora of the Heath led by David Bevan, Conservation Officer and Past President, London Natural History Society, and Fellow of the Linnean Society, London

1 August 2.30pm (meet at the cattle trough in Spaniards Road, near the Spaniards Inn) The Heath Extension led by Tony Ghilchik, Vice-Chairman of the H&HS

5 September: a choice of two walks, held concurrently (NB different start points)

10.30am (meet at Burgh House) Birds of the Heath in Autumn led by John Hunt (see previous details) and Sash Tusa, member of the H&HS Heath Subcommittee

10.30am (meet at the Kenwood Kitchen Garden entrance, Hampstead Lane) Fungus foray led by Andy Overall, Group Leader, London Fungus Group, and founder of 'Fungi to be with'. **NB Booking essential (H&HS members have priority)**

3 October 2.30pm (meet at Burgh House) Practical Conservation led by Rupert Sheldrake, biologist, author and advisor to the H&HS Heath Subcommittee