

News from Ladbroke

The Newsletter of the Ladbroke Association

Spring/Summer 2006



St John's Church and the buildings at the west end of Kensington Park Gardens epitomise the character of the Ladbroke Conservation Area

Chairman's Report

David Corsellis-Acting Chairman

As many of you will probably know our Chairman Charles Levison was taken seriously ill a while ago and is hors de combat. Charles has been an outstanding chairman. His tact, wit, charm and intellect as well as his professional expertise have been of immense value and what is more he has made the meetings of the Committee fun. We all hope that he will return to help one day.

In the 2004 Newsletter, after having been Chairman for about a year, Charles reviewed the purposes of the Ladbroke Association. I commend this article to you – it is available on the Association's website.

I think that he would say that over the past two years the Association has made steady progress. It is in fact quite difficult and very

time consuming to follow up the results of the interventions the Association makes on planning matters as a whole. Clearly we can pursue individual ones such as that concerning 18 Horbury Crescent but it is quite difficult to answer the question 'how much influence does the Association have.'

There is one thing that so far we have completely failed to do and that is to find someone who lives in the extended area of the Conservation Area, i.e. parts of Portobello and Westbourne Park Roads, who would be prepared to be a member of the Committee. We would really welcome someone putting their name forward. Essentially it involves attending as many as possible of the twelve monthly evening meetings which normally last under 2 hours.

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THE LADBROKE ASSOCIATION ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING 2006

The 37th AGM of the Association will be held on Wednesday
5th July 2006
at 7:00pm for 7:30pm
at St Peter's Church Hall,
59a Portobello Road, W11.

AGENDA

1. Apologies for Absence
2. Minutes of last AGM
3. Matters arising from the Minutes
4. Chairman's Report
5. Adoption of Annual Accounts
6. Re-election of Auditors
7. Election of Officers
8. Election of Committee
9. Any Other Business

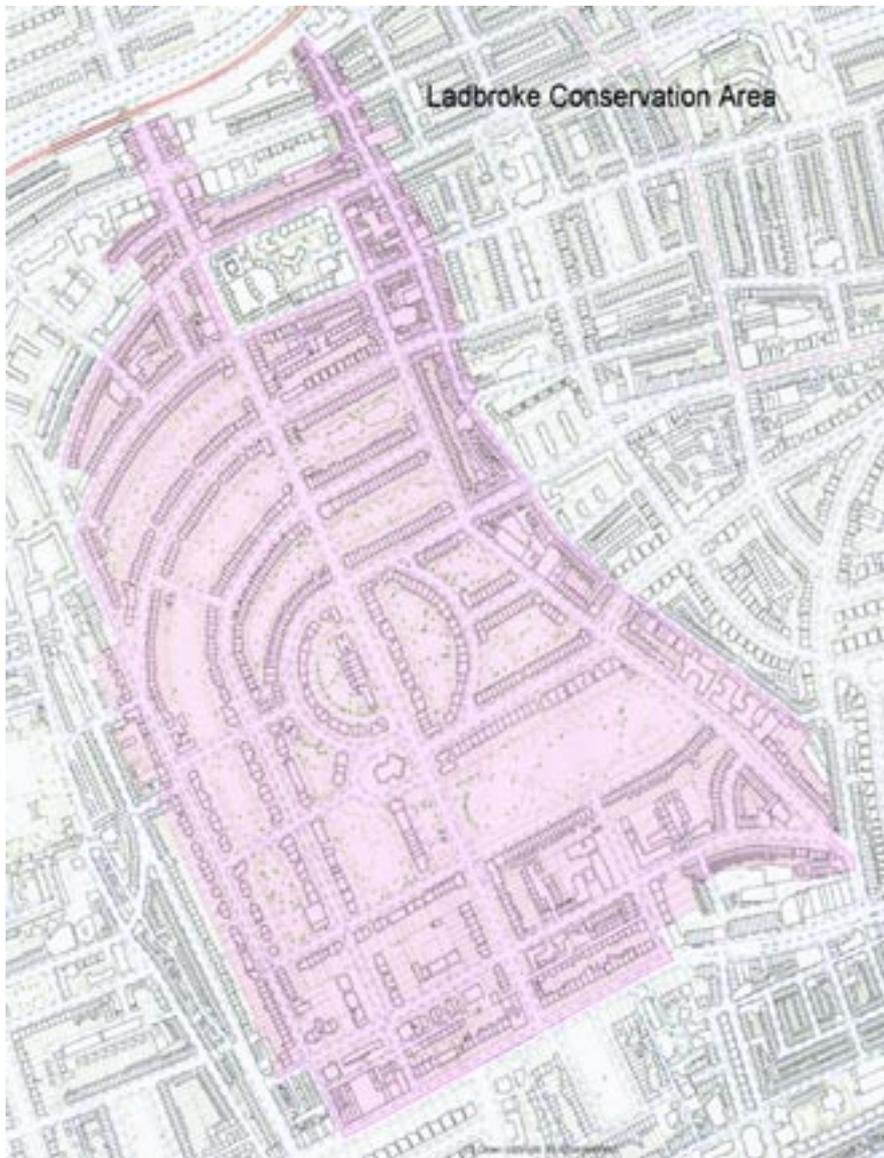
Nominations for Officers and Committee Members, proposed and seconded, should have reached Anne Chorley, Hon Sec at 19 Stanley Gardens, London W11 2NG before the meeting.

GARDEN WALK

The Association, led once again by Henrietta Phipps, whose fascinating, knowledgeable insights are invaluable for understanding how each garden was designed and developed, will hold another of its walks around some of the communal gardens in the Ladbroke Estate on

Tuesday 27th June 2006

and this is programmed to include Ladbroke Square and Notting Hill Garden. Those wishing to attend should ring the Hon Sec Anne Chorley on **020 7727 7494** as soon as possible to book a place as numbers are restricted.



THE LADBROKE CONSERVATION AREA

The Association is now having to keep a watchful eye on a much larger area than previously and we are keen to recruit new members, who live in this extended area to the north, and to encourage a wider committee membership to cover this wider area of responsibility.



If anyone is interested but doubtful please ring me or Paul Bastick to talk about it.

In the year ahead we expect to see an important planning application for the EDF site off Victoria Gardens.

This development will affect many residents of the Conservation Area both during and after construction.

Another subject which we hope to raise with the Council is the effects of major excavations to construct swimming pools, utility rooms and fitness centres et al.

Such applications are becoming more common. There are serious questions to be considered on the long and short term effect of these excavations on, for example, foundations and underground water flow.

David Corsellis
ViceChairman

TREASURER'S REPORT

Your Treasurer is busily preparing the income and expenditure account for year ending March 2006 for the AGM. Just to remind you that last year, our total income was £4,454.84 made up of subscriptions, bank interest and takings from the Christmas party. Expenditure amounted to £3,758.29.

Most of the expenditure was for the production of the newsletter and the cost of the Christmas party together with printing, postage and cost of secretarial fees. I am anticipating a surplus for the year 2006. Details will be available at the AGM.

Thank you to everybody who responded to the Gift Aid request. I am now sending this information to the Customs and Excise office to reclaim the tax element of the subscriptions which will help our income for next year and the following years.

We need to maintain a high level of membership to give us credibility as a local Association when dealing with the Council and other statutory bodies.

Paul Bastick
Hon Treasurer

CHAIRMAN DESIGNATE

David Corsellis, currently standing in as Acting Chairman until the Annual General Meeting, has been nominated by the Executive Committee to take over as the new Chairman for the next three years.



Born in 1937, he has lived in Horbury Mews off and on since 1967. He spent 35 years in the Army and then 12 years as Assistant Under Treasurer at Lincoln's Inn. He is married to the painter Jane Corsellis and has two sons and five grandchildren.

THE LADBROKE ASSOCIATION'S PHOTOGRAPHIC PROJECT

Commissioned by the Association and funded by a bequest, Thomas Erskine has made a photographic record of every house, block of flats, church and any other building within the boundaries of the Ladbroke Estate to show the façade and usage of each property as they were in 2005.

Apart from providing an architectural benchmark of the outside colours, materials and features, the photographs will now be an invaluable source for planners in the future to decide on planning, conservation and restoration issues.

The Ladbroke Committee decided that the project was one of the most important the Association could undertake to reinforce its mission to help preserve and conserve the architectural character and streetscape of one of London's most attractive, dynamic and popular localities.

Thomas was ideally qualified to do the practical work. He has lived in Notting Hill much of his life and been mostly educated locally and he has a deep visual understanding of and feel for its architecture.

He used a digital SLR (single lens reflex) Nikon D70 fitted with an ordinary 18-70mm zoom lens, plus a combination shift lens. The photographs, were then downloaded onto a PowerMac and printed on an Epson Photostylus colour printer.

Work is now in hand to produce a comprehensive index of both the prints and the electronic images. The idea is to ensure that the data is in a readily useable form.

Once this work is complete, the Association will consider mounting a public exhibition of the photographs and digital images produced, in association with Thomas.

The photograph below, of No 14 Ladbroke Road, shows the quality of the photographic record that has been produced. It is intended to include a range of other photos from the records in future editions of this Ladbroke Association Newsletter.





Above - Elgin Crescent

The photographs reproduced above and left are examples from the Ladbroke Association's photographic record.

The stitching together of individual photos, in Elgin Crescent (above) enable a complete street scene to be captured.

While the cars look rather funny at least the architecture, which is point of the project, shines through the technology involved.

The grandeur of the Victorian architecture shows through in the photo of Lansdowne Crescent (left).

Apart from this useful historical record of houses fronting on to the streets there is also the need to consider taking additional photos of the backs of houses where they are seen from the garden squares. This additional work is now being given consideration and will involve obtaining permission from the various garden square committees.

Left - Lansdowne Crescent



LOST COAL HOLE COVERS?

Recent repaving works in Kensington Park Gardens and Stanley Gardens, using York stone, almost resulted in the loss of many of the

original coal hole covers which are of considerable historic interest. The Association became aware of this and consulted the Council's Highways Department to alert the

officers about the work being carried out by its subcontractors on site. The Council's policy on coal hole covers is to retain where possible or replace with replica ones which are kept in stock.

If you need to replace your own coal hole cover or you see someone else in the act of removing a coal hole cover then please contact the Council by E-mail sent to: **streetline@rbkc.gov.uk** or phone to **020 7361 3001**.

It would be a great pity to lose part of the local heritage that is represented by these original Notting Hill-manufactured examples.





THE CHANGING FACE OF THE LADBROKE CONSERVATION AREA

Conservation is about enhancement not about preservation at any cost.

This is exemplified by the change that has taken place over a number of years on the site of No 78 Ladbroke Grove.

The top photo shows the post-war brick-built police block that existed on the site up to 2003. It is perhaps just as well that it was pretty well hidden from view, at least during the summer months, as it did not fit comfortably into what was not then but is now a conservation area.

The middle photo shows the new Ladbroke Grove House as it was in 2005. The tree cover was very much reduced so as to enable the construction to take place.

The bottom photo shows the site in 2006 with the trees growing back albeit that some pretty vicious pruning has had a deleterious effect!

This was a major redevelopment project and well illustrates how a skilful architect, in spite of some local objections, can enhance the character of a conservation area.

While the new building is in an unashamably contemporary style the colour of its external face respects the Victorian buildings adjacent to it.

The trees on the site provide a useful foil so that the building merges well into its surroundings.

David Campion

LADBROKE GROVE TREE WORKS

The Association is very concerned about the recent excessive tree reduction work that has been carried out on the planes in Ladbroke Grove in the section between Holland Park Avenue and Ladbroke Square.

While accepting that there are some instances where this may have been necessary as a result of subsidence insurance claims from adjacent householders, this practice is not acceptable for routine tree works.



LOCAL DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK

The Government decided on radical changes to the planning system and Parliament passed legislation to change the way that development plans are drawn up across England.

The relevant provisions of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act came into force at the end of September 2004 and a review of the Royal Borough's Development Plan will be undertaken in accordance with the new system.

The Act requires the Council to prepare a Local Development Framework - which will be made up of a portfolio of Local Development Documents (LDDs) - by September 2007. This will replace the Unitary Development Plan at that point. The UDP is "saved" for those three years

The documents that the Council is producing, that will comprise its Local Development Framework, are:

- * **Development Plan Documents** (*which will replace the UDP*),
- * **Statement of Community Involvement;**
- * **Annual Monitoring Report**
- * **Supplementary Planning Documents** (*the equivalent of the supplementary planning guidance notes*).

The Government identifies four key stages of production for the Development Plan Documents (DPDs) and Statement of Community Involvement (SCI):

- ***Pre-production** (*evidence gathering*)
- ***Production** (*consulting on Issues and alternative options; participation on Preferred Options and preparing the documents for submission to the Government*);
- ***Examination** (*representations on submitted documents, the examination in public and the Inspector's binding report*); and
- ***Adoption** of the LDF.

All of the Council's documents are now in the 'Production' stage. The timing of production is set out in a three year work programme, the Local Development Scheme (LDS), which came into effect in May 2005.

Given that all Councils are now working with a new planning system involving new procedures, estimating the timing of the production has been difficult.

The Planning Inspectorate manager responsible for development plans has recently said that local planning authorities across the country are struggling to produce the raft of documents required and that timescales have generally slipped.

This has led to Councils flagging up revisions to their LDSs in their Annual Monitoring Reports.

The Council produced its Annual Monitoring Report to deadline (December 2005) and, as with other authorities, it is having to revise its production milestones because of some slippage.

At the same time, the Council is being advised to change its approach to document production by Counsel so that residents and the Council obtain the most benefit from the processes prior to submission to the Secretary of State.

The revised timings have yet to be agreed with the Cabinet Member. In addition, they have not been agreed by the Secretary of State or the Planning Inspectorate, with which the Council has to negotiate a service level agreement.

Milestones

In summary, the past and immediate future milestones are:

- *Involvement on the draft Statement of Community Involvement (Feb/June 2005 - completed)
- *Consult on Issues and Options for the Core Strategy and Development Control Policies DPDs - Nov/Dec 2005 (completed, waiting for the consultants report on consultation)
- *Participation on the draft Statement of Community Involvement (June/July 2006)

*Consultation on Issues and Options for the Site Allocations DPD (June / July 2006)

*Participation on Preferred Options for the Core Strategy DPD (September/ October 2006)

*Participation on Preferred Options for the Development Control Policies DPD (January/February 2007)

Getting involved

Anyone wishing to be consulted on the future preparation of the Royal Borough's Local Development Framework, or would just like to know more about the process of drawing up of the future Local Development Framework, should e-mail the Council's Planning Policy Team at:

PlanningPolicy@rbkc.gov.uk
or ring on **020 7361 3879**.

Alternatively you can write to:

The Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea
Planning Policy Team
Room 331
Town Hall
Hornton Street
London W8 7NX

The Council has published a series of LDF newsletters, which explain the main elements of the new planning system, outlines the stages in the process and asks for your views on how you would like to be involved.

David Campion

BUILDING OWNER'S RESPONSIBILITIES

Those who own properties in the Ladbroke Conservation Area have a legal responsibility to apply to the Council for planning permission when they intend to carry out alterations to their buildings - ignorance of the law is no excuse for not doing so!

One of the benefits of the photographic records, which were referred to earlier in this Newsletter, is that they help to establish, for legal planning purposes, the state of many properties before any recent alterations were made.

David Campion



MOBILE TELEPHONE MASTS

The example of The Lodge, in Kensington Park Gardens, clearly demonstrates the implications of permitting the erection of mobile telephone aerials in conservation areas.

In an area where the mobile telephone signals are poor which should be the priority - an improvement in signal quality for those with mobile phones or a strong policy resisting aerials needed to make this improvement in sensitive conservation areas.

It is not just the visible aerials that affect the amenity of the area but also the large amount of equipment that is needed to power the aerials.



EXCESSIVE TREE PRUNING AT ST JOHNS?

Is this really what we want to see done to our plane trees in Ladbroke Grove?

The argument of the arboricultural fraternity is that tree's growth will improve again over the years.

Many would consider that they prefer to see their trees pruned less at any one time so that it is not necessary to wait for several years to gain the visual benefit. While this may be more expensive in terms of pruning costs it does call into question the community benefit which might be considered rather more important.



PORTOBELLO ROAD

Town planning matters only very irregularly result in a general public outcry rather than concerns on a more limited scale by those immediately and locally affected by a proposed development. The future of Portobello Road now falls into the former category and considerable local and even regional and national interest is being expressed.

There is concern about one developer who has been buying up a lot of the property as it is not yet clear what he intends to do with it.

Certainly, the Council has long been encouraging the upgrading of the upper parts of properties over the shops to provide more residential accommodation; if this is the aim, then it is to be welcomed.

The Council has also had a long term policy of not granting change of use from retail shopping to restaurants. It does have some control that can prevent multiple individual premises being combined to form larger units that could, for example, become yet more supermarkets.

The internationally famous vegetable market appears to be suffering a long term decline at least partly as a result of rising costs.

The Ladbroke Association has long complained that the designation within the UDP of Portobello Road as a principle shopping centre, rather than just a local shopping centre, is the cause of some of the problems currently being faced.

There is a major application for both the Woolworths site and the synagogue in Kensington Park Road currently being considered.

18 HORBURY CRESCENT AND THE PROBLEMS OF EXCAVATION

The saga of 18 Horbury Crescent has been a long-running one which has kept the Executive Committee busy on numerous of occasions.

It started off many years ago as a "house in multiple occupation" and the desire of the then owner to sell it for conversion to a single family house; this was, of course, contrary to the policy of the Council which was and still is to maintain HMOs as they provide much sought after accommodation for those members of society who cannot afford the high property prices in the area that have increased out of all proportion over the years.

Eventually, as the property had lain empty for many years, the Council very reluctantly decided to agree to its conversion.

There have been a number of planning applications and some unauthorised works carried out. This has necessitated enforcement action which has still to be resolved by the appeal process. The Association continues to monitor progress.

