

News from Ladbroke

The Newsletter of the Ladbroke Association

SPRING 1982

BLLENHEIM CRESCENT G.I.A.

The Council has for some time been considering the declaration of its fifth General Improvement Area, to be known as the Blenheim Crescent G.I.A., and in fact it is likely that declaration will have taken place by the time this Newsletter is published. The northern part of the Ladbroke Conservation Area is contained within the proposed G.I.A. boundaries, full details of the streets to be contained within the latter being as follows:

Blenheim Crescent	53-137 (odd) 36-98 (even)
Clarendon Road	60-120 (even)
Cornwall Crescent	3-77 (odd) 2-14 (even)
Elgin Crescent	17-153 (odd) 18-126 (even) Galsworthy House
Ladbroke Crescent	1-8 (consecutive) 13-24 (consecutive)
Ladbroke Grove	85-153 (odd) 70-94 (even)
Lancaster Road	134-136A (even)
Railway Mews	2 and 5
Rosmead Road	1 and 2
St. Marks Place	1-13 (consecutive)
St. Marks Road	2, 4 and Piper House

The Council's purpose in declaring the G.I.A. is twofold: to secure the provision of "basic amenities" (fixed bath or shower, wash hand basin, loo, hot water supply and proper cooking facilities), and to carry out environmental improvements. So far as residents are concerned, the important result of G.I.A. status is the availability of grants from the Council, related to these two objectives. Thus various types of house renovation grant (so-called improvement, intermediate and repair grants) will be available to modernize and repair property, and could amount to several thousand pounds per dwelling. Full details are available from the Borough Environmental Health Officer at the Town Hall.

Additionally, there will be grants for environmental improvements, including stucco work and restoration of railings, provided that the work improves the appearance of the area as a whole (structural repairs being excluded from this type of grant). The maximum grant could be £400 per dwelling, and full details are available from the Borough Planning Officer at the Town Hall.

The Council itself intends to carry out a number of street improvements in the area. These have not yet been finalized, but provisional proposals include widening the pavement and tree planting at the junction of Elgin Crescent and Clarendon Road (as well as a landscaping scheme at the end of Ladbroke Crescent). A publicity leaflet informing residents of the existence of the G.I.A. and inviting comments on the various proposals will be circulated to all houses in the area in due course.

STREET LIGHTS

Peter Thorold writes:

As members may have noticed, new street lighting has been introduced in Kensington Park Road, Clarendon Road and Elgin Crescent. In fact it is only a start as the Borough is intending gradually to convert all its street-lamps to modern high pressure sodium (SON) lighting. Change had to come since the old lights are obsolete and expensive to run. In Kensington Park Road the columns to the lamps are regarded as having a further useful life of ten years and have been left in place, while in Clarendon Road and Elgin Crescent entirely new lighting has been installed.

Since the old lamps were generally considered, particularly in the smaller streets, as being so undistinguished visually, they are not likely to be mourned, although a number of people have taken exception to the pronounced orange tinge of the new lighting and few of us are likely to regard the lampstands as inspired.

However, like them or not, the Association has found itself in the disconcerting position of having had no opportunity to comment in advance on what was proposed. Usually, the Council takes its responsibility to consult us seriously, and circumstances like these, when we are completely ignored, are happily rare. We have of course protested strongly to the Council Department responsible for lighting and, failing to get anywhere, to the Chairman of the appropriate Committee. The issue is one of basic principle: should we, or should we not, be consulted on planning projects which affect the character of the Ladbroke Estate. If not, the role of the Association needs to be reconsidered fundamentally.

The attitude of the Council is ambiguous. It is conceded that we should be consulted on important planning proposals, but we are told, apparently in all seriousness, that the reconstruction of the street lighting is merely a question of normal maintenance and that therefore the requirement to consult does not apply. When you think how the height of lampstandards can affect the proportions of a street and how its atmosphere can be changed by the colour of the bulbs, this seems an astonishing proposition. It becomes the more so since it is in direct contradiction to what is stated in the Council's own Conservation Area Policy Document for Ladbroke.

The Committee has no intention of being fobbed off in this way and the argument continues.

MEMBERS' ACTIVITIES

Barbican Arts Centre

Two groups of members took advantage of David Mizen's kind offer to make a pre-opening tour of the new Barbican Arts Centre.

Spring Meeting

The Spring Meeting took place at the Knights of St. Columba Club on 8th March when the Association's Vice-President, Angus Stirling, gave a most interesting lecture with slides on "The National Trust in the Eighties".

Angus Stirling is deputy director general of the Trust.

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

The Association's AGM will be held at the Knights of St. Columba Club, 11 Lansdowne Road at 8.30 pm. on Monday, 21st June. The bar will be open at 8 pm.

Apart from a report on the Association's activities, financial business and elections to the Committee, the meeting will consider two changes to the Constitution recommended by the Committee. They will be circulated in advance of the meeting.

BOUNDARIES OF LADBROKE

Not all our members, especially new residents, are familiar with the precise boundaries of the Ladbroke Area. Set out below therefore is an up-to-date list of all addresses in the Conservation Area, and opposite is an accompanying map, specially drawn by Jeremy Lever for this issue of the Newsletter.

Arundel Gardens	All
Blenheim Crescent	36-94 even, 41B, 43-137 odd
Boyne Terrace Mews	All
Bulmer Mews	All
Chepstow Villas	35-41 odd and 54-62 even
Clarendon Cross	12 only
Clarendon Road	2-110 even, 13-99 odd
Elgin Crescent	16-36, 50-126 even, 17-153 odd and Galsworthy House
Garden between Arundel Gardens, Lansdowne Road, Lansdowne Crescent, Ladbroke Gardens and Kensington Park Gardens	
Garden between Elgin Crescent, Clarendon Road, Lansdowne Gardens, Arundel Gardens, Kensington Park Road and Lansdowne Walk	
Garden between Kensington Park Road and Stanley Crescent	
Garden between Ladbroke Grove, Elgin Crescent, Clarendon Road & Blenheim Crescent	
Garden between Stanley Crescent and Ladbroke Grove	
Gardens between Lansdowne Crescent, Ladbroke Grove, Lansdowne Walk and Lansdowne Road	
Holland Park Avenue	2-98 even, The Mitre P.H. and Holland Park Station
Horbury Crescent	All
Horbury Mews	All
Kensington Park Gardens	All
Kensington Park Road	1-15 odd, 4-38, 54-184 even, Kelvin Court, Matlock Court, Buckingham Court, Princes House and St. Peter's Church
Kensington Temple & Sunday School	
Ladbroke Gardens	All
Ladbroke Grove	2-94 even, 7-119 odd
Ladbroke Road	All except 88 and 141
Ladbroke Square	All
Ladbroke Square Gardens	All
Ladbroke Terrace	3-17 Consecut
Ladbroke Walk	All
Lansdowne Court	1-16
Lansdowne Crescent	All
Lansdowne Mews	All
Lansdowne Rise	All
Lansdowne Road	All
Lansdowne Walk	All
Pembridge Road	Prince Albert Public House
Portland Road	142A only
Portobello Road	55-113 odd, 15 and 17
Rosmead Road	1 & 2
St. Johns Gardens	All, including St. John's Church
St. Marks Place	2 & 1-13
Stanley Crescent	All
Stanley Gardens	All
Stanley Gardens Mews	All
Westbourne Grove	282-306 even, 283-307 odd
Wilby Mews	All

PLANNING

35 Lansdowne Road

Planning approval was sought for some minor alterations to this house and for a single storey extension to the house at lower ground floor level to form a garage. This extension was to be built in the gap between the house and the site boundary. The proposal generated a lot of interest and concern and some controversy. A number of local people objected to it, and the Council's Town Planning Committee took these objections into account in reaching its decision. Planning approval was refused on the grounds that the extension was contrary to the stated policy for the Ladbroke area with regard to the filling of gaps between buildings, and that the use of the flat roof of the garage as a terrace would infringe the privacy of the adjoining owner.

1 Arundel Gardens

A previous planning application regarding a large extension to this

building on its garden fronting on to Kensington Park Road was refused. The proposal went to appeal and it was again refused. Now, two further applications have been made for modified proposals of a more traditional character. The Association has taken the view that, like the former proposals, the present proposals are unacceptable in principle and in detail. Local residents are urged to make their views on this matter known to the Council.

Kensington Temple

The work going on at this building has caused a lot of inconvenience and even danger to the users of the adjacent pavements. Paving slabs have been broken and the pavement has frequently been made filthy with mud from the site. Boundary walls have been broken down and trees on the site inadequately protected. The Association has complained to the Council about these matters and will continue to press for the full and appropriate reinstatement of this important corner site.

Condition of roads and pavements

The exceptionally bad winter has caused damage to roads and pavements. There has also been a lot of activity in the renewing of water mains and other underground services, and the damage caused has been only temporarily repaired, and often very roughly. Altogether, many roads and pavements are uneven and a source of danger to vehicles and pedestrians. In its attempts to identify and deal with these and other problems, the Council issues reply-paid postcards on which residents may report and give details of damage or other problems. These cards may be obtained from The Director of Engineering and Works Services, RBKC Central Depot, Warwick Road, W14 9BR.

KENSINGTON PARK TERRACE NORTH: PROGRESS AND PROMISE

Dr. Peter Austerfield, Chairman, Kensington Park Terrace North Residents' Association, writes:

The environmental improvement scheme for the Terrace was originally commissioned in 1979 by the Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea in consultation with the Ladbroke Association. By 1980 the report of the architects had been enthusiastically received by the Council and a number of meetings arranged for residents so that issues could be clarified and the strength of feeling for the scheme assessed. Generally speaking, although there were some reservations, the report was accepted by the necessary majority of residents who were prepared to join in the spirit of the development to enhance the overall impact of the Terrace. A local residents' association was also formed to help communications and provide some kind of focus for the scheme.

Bearing in mind the difficulties of the whole terrace being developed in one go, it was decided to "localize" improvements to the groups of houses identified in the report. This meant, in effect, that groups of five, six or seven houses, each group

having a different colour, would try as far as possible to work together on aspects of the development scheme.

Originally it had been understood that certain developments would qualify for up to a 50% grant and this gave residents some incentive to proceed, in the knowledge, however, that they would have to provide a considerable outlay themselves. Unfortunately by late 1980 it became apparent that the Department of the Environment and the G.L.C. intended to withdraw from the grant scheme leaving the Council as the sole grant-providing body. To its credit the Council decided to allocate some £7,000 to developments, which, while not providing the level of funding originally hoped for, did encourage some residents to maintain interest in the scheme and proceed with renovations.

In keeping with the Council's decision each house or group of houses could apply for a 30% grant or 25% grant for certain facade or forecourt renovations respectively, on a first come first served basis. To date some £4,000 has been taken up or approved for developments and hopefully further applications will be forthcoming.

The suggested time-scale for the scheme is three years and thus we are into the second year of development. Although the Terrace is some way from the original conception, the overall pattern is beginning to emerge. The partial completion of the facades of the central portion of the Terrace has given a tremendous boost to the plan as has the near completion of the group of houses to the south. Other groups also show progress towards the overall colour scheme and 1982 should add to total.

Some attention is now being focused on the forecourts of the houses following a recommendation that a particularly unifying concept for the Terrace would be at least the regular arrangement of garden forecourt piers.

As for the future, if the initial surge of activity since 1980 is maintained, we may come near to realizing the original concept which was so enthusiastically supported by the Ladbroke Association, the Borough Council and many residents of Kensington Park Terrace North.

**The Ladbroke Association,
41 Ladbroke Square,
London W11.**