

## WINTER 2013 NEWSLETTER

### CHAIRMAN'S COMMENTS

Organisations such as ESSA focus on the local community and its environment, while Civic Voice takes the national view and the Kensington Society is concerned with the wider interests of the Borough.

Our main remit is to deal with an area whose boundaries are largely the same as those of the Abingdon Ward but from time to time we step outside our immediate geographical area where we think that the interests of our members will be affected. It might concern national or Borough policies where we make representations, or events such as Opera Holland Park which has a big impact on our nearest area of parkland. We make a point of liaising with other organisations to give us all greater strength.

At our heart however are local planning applications, the traffic in our streets, the shops which add so much to our community, the pubs and restaurants and the myriad of other local activities so this time we have invited a number of local residents and others to contribute to the winter Newsletter. Tim Honnor has written about his weather station in Pembroke Square, we have a piece about City Living Local Life, Jennie Kettlewell has provided some very interesting information on trees, and Maggie MacFarlane has been researching opinions about basements and is planning more action. To add to this, local shops have joined the ESSA Local Business Group and we have initiated a 'Stories from Stratford Road' piece which we hope will become a regular feature. The Mansion Block Group provides a local meeting point for those living in the buildings which are such a feature of the Borough, and we have invited our Ward Councillors to contribute as well.

As you all know we have taken a very active interest in the future of the Commonwealth Institute and, while

we strongly objected to the tower blocks of flats, we have supported the Design Museum from the outset. That relationship has continued and we hope for an even closer involvement in the future; to this end we have an article from Rhiannon Green about their progress and an announcement concerning their plans for volunteers.

We are still working on the website with the intent that it be a source of information, some of which we already distribute from time to time by email, with details about ward boundary changes, traffic problems and similar matters.

Some areas have taken up the idea of Neighbourhood Planning but we think that this is perhaps less likely to be of interest to our residents and feel that we can strengthen local interest in more informal ways.

Do please let us have your views concerning the contributions to this Newsletter and ways in which you think ESSA should work within and for the community. You can send your comments to us at [essaw8@gmail.com](mailto:essaw8@gmail.com) or to me direct at the contact details on the back page.

The qualities we love in our conservation area are of course not due to the buildings alone. We are planning to develop this theme at the AGM next year so please do put the date in your diary and keep it free.

In the meantime if you can introduce any new members it would be a great help to us. There are application forms in the Newsletter or we can send you some.

### PUT IT IN YOUR DIARY

**The AGM is on Tuesday 13th May. We are planning a stimulating debate on which there will be more details in the next Newsletter.**

## BASEMENTS

Basements have been the big talking point over the last six months. The proposal to update the policies under the Local Plan has produced some very strong feelings, particularly in our part of the Borough. The next step, to submit the proposed policies to the Planning Inspector who would hold a hearing and then rule as to whether or not they are sound, should have happened by now.

The vociferous campaign mounted by some parties, mainly basement construction companies and developers, has led the Council to take rather longer in seeking to reinforce the material to be submitted. At the same time many of the amenity groups, including ESSA, have been making representations that the proposed policies are still not strong enough or have loopholes such as the definition of what constitutes a basement.

While we support the Council's wish to improve the policies ESSA representatives consider that the planning department is not making the most of the controls which already exist. In the SPD for Subterranean Development several items of information are set out without which an application will not be validated. These include an assessment by an appropriately qualified engineer that the proposed works and method of construction will take into account the impact on adjoining properties and that temporary works will mitigate the effects on neighbours, or that a code assessor will prepare an environmental assessment without which the application will not be validated. Applications are however being submitted and validated without all these items of information. The planners argue that this information will be required before any decision can be taken which must extend the period for consultation and also wastes both their case officer's time and ours!

For some time now the planners have not assessed the structural information submitted but relied, as stated in the SPD, on the professional integrity of the applicant's engineer to ensure that the construction of a subterranean development is safe and will not impact on the structural integrity of the neighbouring properties (Clause 6.1.4). We can cite at least one example locally where the presence of a significant crack on the façade shows that this procedure was not reliable. The same clause gives the Council the opportunity to appoint an independent engineer at the applicant's cost to verify that the structural work is sound.

The Council refuses to do this, even in cases where there is evidence that the applicant's engineer has not had access to all the properties and thus, regardless of his or her integrity, is not in a position to be certain about the structural conditions.

We are continuing to press the Planning Department to ensure that everything which can be done to protect the residents under the current policies is done and we ask both our Ward Councillors and others to ensure that this is the case.

We understand that Sir Malcolm Rifkind shares the concern about the impact of basements on residents and considers that there needs to be a better balance between the various interests than exists at present. Do write to him to tell him of your concerns at **House of Commons, London SW1A 0AA**.

## STRATFORD ROAD STREET PARTY

The annual Stratford Road street party is on the evening of Wednesday 4th December this year. ESSA will be represented there at a table kindly hosted by **Mountgrange Heritage**.

## DOG FOULING

Some small black waste bins have been put out within the ESSA area, in a vulnerable spot, and the effects have been excellent: no little plastic bags lying on pavements any more! Our Ward Councillors have taken an active role in this process and if enough people write to **Matthew Lawrence, Council Offices, 37 Pembroke Road, W8**, the matter of extending the provision of these bins might be considered by the council.

## ROOFSCAPES

There have been several applications for works to 4 Inkerman Terrace, one of which would have destroyed the historic roofscape and was not only refused by RBKC but was also dismissed when they went to Appeal. ESSA takes a strong interest in the roofscape of our area which will be an important part of our review of the Conservation Area. The real importance of this in areas with many mansion blocks and tall buildings was brought home to me recently on looking out over the roof of the National Gallery from

the National Portrait Gallery restaurant, where the clutter of railings and access walkways totally marred the appearance of a building which has been described as a 'much loved friend'. There is a growing understanding that buildings can be seen from many different angles and that seeing them from above can be as important as the view from the ground. We have achieved greater recognition of the importance of mansion blocks in our streetscape and are pressing for similar recognition of high level views.

## ESSA ESSAY

by Maggie Macfarlane

So now they have closed off South Edward's Square. You know, the public road, paid for by our taxes, running east to west on the south side of the square. Apparently a private individual has bought a property on the southwest corner and requires a multiple subbasement complex to accommodate his or her own needs. Perhaps a swimming pool, a media room, a gym, nothing would surprise any of us at this point. Neither would it surprise any of us that no matter how vainglorious the scheme, the Council approved it. More than any other issue in the Borough, subbasements have become totemic of the Council's perceived indifference to the welfare of its residents.

From the beginning of the process, the system is biased in favour of the building works. Someone submitting a sub basement application may receive assistance from a Planner, no such person is available for those wishing to submit particularly persuasive objections. In the few cases (less than 10%) when a sub basement application is denied, there is right of appeal, not so if objectors are unsuccessful, there is only judicial review, but anyone taking that road needs very deep pockets.

When more than three objections are received, the application "goes to committee." That might sound hopeful, but it is not. The last public committee meeting I attended, the Planners heard the arguments both pro and against and then asked the builder for his assurance that he would take special care of the worried neighbours' properties. The builder nodded, and the Planners granted every one of the four double basements on the table.

**Objections?** Well they tend to fall into two categories.

### Structural:

Our homes in this part of London are built on substrata of clay, and underground streams abound. Almost all of our houses are built to function as units, terraces in some cases, and blocks of two or four houses in others (villas). We have hardly any foundations, but the Victorians knew what they were doing because they designed our homes to "move" as one unit when subjected to the variability of weather conditions. This was known as "heaving."

Together with the absence of any deep foundations as well as the bricks of our houses being set in lime mortar, an especially giving material, our homes supported each other, and for the last 150 years have done so rather well.

Sub basements jeopardize this time tested system. When one house in the unit "breaks away" it destabilises the other parts of the unit. The house undergoing reconstruction will be reinforced with RSJs and concrete foundations, the rest of us weakened, and as seen so clearly all over the Borough, vulnerable to being damaged.

### The Impact on Our Home lives:

Well there isn't a home life when living near to one of these projects. The Council reminds us that we each have the right to develop our own property, but a sub basement is in its own category. On the average, it goes on for more than a year. It requires oversized equipment which block off big chunks of our neighbourhoods. It is particularly dirty and noisy, on a hot day one cannot open the window, put a baby down for a nap, have one's child study for exams and conducting one's business from home is completely out of the question.

Yet this disgraceful situation prevails. The Council still resorts to an Orwellian double speak, trying to reassure us that the sub basement plans are rigorously scrutinized by its planners and engineers, and that its traffic and noise management schemes work, and yet those of us living near these projects are often left with damaged houses, (and it is up to us to manage the burden of proof), and nerves that are so shattered that it feels as if we are being driven mad by our own democratically elected local government.

## NEW DESIGN MUSEUM UPDATE

### KEEPING ESSA INFORMED

I recently joined the Design Museum as their new Volunteer and Community Development Manager.

Over the next two years I will be working with various charities, residents associations, local business and RBKC council to ensure that everyone is kept up-to-date with the latest developments of the new Design Museum project and provide opportunities to feed into planning. The Museum is currently looking at different ways to involve local residents in the project so if you have any ideas please do let your Chairman know. You can follow the progress of the project online <http://newdesignmuseum.tumblr.com/> or why not join the Design Museum's audience panels below!

DESIGN  
MUSEUM



### MAKE IT YOURS - VOLUNTEER FOR THE NEW DESIGN MUSEUM

Interested in being part of one of London's leading museums? The Design Museum is looking for volunteers to join its audience panels to be a part of its move to the former Commonwealth Institute on Kensington High Street.

You don't need to be an expert to take part; just interested in sharing your opinions and giving it a go!

### STARTS NOVEMBER 2013

Free entry to the Design Museum  
Discounts in the Design Museum shop  
Travel expenses reimbursed up to £8.90/day  
Contact: [volunteer@designmuseum.org](mailto:volunteer@designmuseum.org) / 020 7148 6883

### LATEST PROJECT DEVELOPMENTS

On-site in Kensington, the remodelling of the former Commonwealth Institute building continues with works to begin digging out the basement commencing in the next few weeks.

Off-site at the present Design Museum, colleagues are working hard to complete RIBA Workstage E, finalising the internal layout and technical design of the building. RIBA Workstage F is planned to start at the beginning of November 2013 and is expected to be completed in mid-March 2014. The planned opening of the new Design Museum is late 2015.



Latest pictures of the former Commonwealth Institute, September 2013. Exterior view (above left), view into the ground floor (above right)

## CLEAN AIR IN LONDON

The Department for Environment Food and Rural Affairs (Defra) held a consultation during August about the future of local air quality management. It caused a furore, even though many people were away on their summer holidays, because all four options would scrap or reduce air pollution monitoring, reporting and local air quality management by local authorities across England. Over 300 detailed responses flooded into Defra and thousands more were generated by the online campaign group '38 Degrees'. Defra is due to publish its response at the end of this year of early next.

In significant other news, an investigation by 'Clean Air in London' (CAL) found that garages are offering to remove factory-fitted diesel particulate filters (DPF) from cars to improve fuel consumption or avoid the cost of repair or replacement. The Government says that removing a factory-fitted DPF is not illegal of itself but using a vehicle on the road thereafter almost certainly would be. Insurance may also be invalidated or worse. Be warned. Separately, CAL forced the Mayor to disclose the amount and source of carcinogenic diesel exhaust emissions for over 40,000 road links in London.

In October, the World Health Organisation classified outdoor air pollution and particulate matter carcinogenic to humans. They now rank alongside asbestos, diesel exhaust, plutonium and smoking. The official announcement, which received little coverage in the UK, created a paradigm shift in the true sense of the words. Suddenly, it is clear there is no 'silver bullet' and we must all work together to tackle all aspects of outdoor air pollution. CAL has produced a free app to report the health impact of long-term exposure to dangerous airborne particles for populations in local areas, regions and England as a whole (RBKC is equal worst in England). It can be downloaded at <http://itun.es/i6xj69k>

Last but not least, the European Commission's 'Year of Air' will draw to a close in December with an announcement expected of an emission reductions package comprising: a revised National Emission Ceilings directive to implement reductions up to 2030 together with the reinforcement of existing legislation for industrial emissions, eco-design and non-road mobile machinery; ratification of the Gothenburg Protocol; and action on air pollution from medium scale combustion installations. The last of these is particularly relevant for RBKC where harmful emissions from new combustion installations are believed to be increasing rapidly.

by **Simon Birkett**, *Founder and Director, Clean Air in London*



# *A Brief History of Pembroke Square Weather Station*

by Tim Honnor

I have been running the weather station in Pembroke Square for 32 years. As a child, I always used to like watching the mercury rise and fall in a thermometer. I had already been taking simple temperature readings outside the kitchen window for several months when I was introduced to the geography teacher at Hammersmith & West London College. Together with the woodwork teacher, she helped me make the Stevenson screen, a white louvered box that reflects heat and allows air to pass inside.



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Four thermometers, maximum, minimum, dry and wet bulbs accurately record the shade temperature and humidity to one-tenth of a degree Celsius. There are also soil and earth thermometers in the flower-bed at depths of 5, 10, 20, 30, 50, 100cm. The two deepest thermometers are suspended on chains inside steel tubes. Two thermometers, grass minimum and concrete minimum are laid on the ground overnight. A rain gauge completes the set of instruments. A display board headed "Today's Weather" allows me to write some of these readings for passers-by. Three cages protect the ground thermometers from tennis balls and small children.

I sought permission to place the Stevenson screen in the garden of Pembroke Square from the Prudential Assurance Company and the freeholders, then only on the north and south sides. I distinctly remember the day it was installed. Thursday 6 August 1981 was very wet with thunder and lightning and torrential rain. It was so dark in the afternoon that the street lights automatically switched on. It produced

one of the highest 24-hour rainfall totals that I have recorded, 42.6mm, 12/3 inches. From then, I gradually added the instruments that make up the weather station that you see today.

It has been interesting to record the highs and the lows over the years. The highest maximum temperature was 37.7°C, 99.9°F on Sunday 10 August 2003 and the lowest minimum was minus 8.1°C, 17.4°F overnight on Monday 12 January 1987.

I also remember The Great Storm of Thursday 15 to Friday 16 October 1987. A big tree on the north side was blown down, falling fortunately onto scaffolding that protected the house opposite, completely blocking the north side of the square for several days.

An unbroken record could never have been kept without the help and support of the many distinguished neighbours who did the readings for me when I was away. This includes the current Mayor and Mayoress of RBKC. The Council and ESSA have recently helped with providing a new cage, a sturdy protective cover for my grass and concrete minimum thermometers.

## MANSION BLOCKS

The Mansion Block group goes from strength to strength with fifteen blocks now represented. Apart from discussing conservation issues in relation to the impact they may have on neighbouring blocks (the redevelopment of the Commonwealth Institute is a good example) we also share information about suppliers, services and other costs related to the running of such buildings. In this context a good database of suppliers is being built up and shared among our members. We have created an email forum where you can request and exchange any information and which can save us all time and money. Membership is just £100 pa. If members of your block would like to join this group please ask your Board of Directors or Managing Agent to contact Julian Childs on **0207 938 1332** or [julian.childs@talk21.com](mailto:julian.childs@talk21.com)

# Are your trees fit for the future?

by Jennie Kettlewell

Trees have an uncanny similarity to humans, not least in that they occasionally appreciate a sugary drink and an Aspirin might do them good when they're feeling down.

On a day out with The Plant School, I found myself being tutored on tree ailments by Glynn Percival, an advisor to Kew and consultant at tree care specialist Bartletts. He believes that it's possible to activate a tree's defence system, just like vaccination in humans and that this can forestall more drastic, and costly, remedial treatment. Trees can get stressed and that's when they succumb to pests and diseases.

All of us with stewardship over significant trees would do well to ensure they are fit for the future, but what can we do? It pays to start with understanding the biology of each specific tree and deciding what it wants. Is it showing signs of stress, which could be for many reasons such as drought or compacted roots? Signs to look for are stag horn die back at the top of the crown, twig die back on sections of a tree, cankers and outbreaks of fungus.

Solutions vary and need professional advice and equipment. We witnessed demonstrations of injecting tree roots with systemic fungicide and I enjoyed having

a go with the high pressure fungicide spray powerful enough to reach the top of a massive horse chestnut. The spray has a kick like a mule but I managed to stay upright though I'm not sure all the spray ended up where it should have done.

So where do the sugary drinks and Aspirin come in? Photosynthesis is the process by which sunlight acts on leaves to produce sugar as an energy source for plants. When the leaves are damaged, lack of sugar weakens the plant. Sugar dissolved in water to drench the roots simulates sugar production and encourages root growth.

Research has shown that when trees are watered with an Aspirin solution, it improves the tree's resistance to some bugs and diseases. A big tree would need a lot of pills, so tests are being carried out on using a mulch of willow from which the essential ingredient, salicylic acid, is derived.

Trees that are fit are more likely to shrug off pests and diseases that might see off weaker subjects. So get ahead of the game and find out how tree defence activators can lengthen the life of your trees.

**25 October 2013**

After a career spanning corporate communication, culture change programmes and development of individuals and teams, Jennie decided to spend time on a passionate interest – plant science. She is in her fourth year of study with The Plant School. Being chairman of The Friends of Holland Park and a trustee of an organisation that funds conservation of the Nyika Plateau in northern Malawi feeds her interest in plants.



A Bartlett consultant using the PICUS system to check hidden decay and cavities inside a large Plane.

## PLANNING

### Saving our shops

An application was made to convert part of the shop on the corner of Abingdon Villas and Earls Court Road into residential use. ESSA objected on the grounds that although a small shop would have remained it would involve the loss of a good local unit, leaving too small a space for the present local grocer who gives a very valuable service. It would also have meant losing the loading bay and the vehicles servicing the remaining unit would have had to stop close to what is a very busy corner which we considered to be a health and safety risk. The application has been withdrawn and we hope that the unit will continue to provide a local service for many years to come, however we must continue to be vigilant.

There was another application for a change of use to residential at 2-4 Abingdon Road, right in the middle of a very useful secondary retail frontage. ESSA objected and planning consent was refused ; we wait to see what happens next.

### Save our restaurant

An application has been submitted for a change of use from restaurant to financial services for number 353 Kensington High Street. This has been a popular restaurant and contributed to the vitality of the small parade of local shops in a way that a financial services operation would fail to do. ESSA has objected to the loss of the restaurant and at the time of writing we are awaiting the decision.

## PLANNING APPLICATIONS

### *Alma Terrace* .....

An application for a double basement in Alma Terrace raised many questions, some of which are still unresolved. The Planning department was not willing to consider the recommendations of the Baxter Report which was commissioned last year, on the grounds that this was linked to emerging policy which had not yet been approved by the Planning Inspectorate. While we understand the need for caution we do feel that at least some weight could be attached to this and the fact that this is identified as a 'building of merit'. Our main cause for concern however is that despite an adjoining owner having commissioned a specialist engineer's report which identified the very real risks of which the applicant's engineer was unaware because

he had not had access to the adjoining building, the planners decided to rely on the report of the applicant's engineer (as set out in the SPD) rather than obtaining an independent report at the applicant's expense which would be normal procedure and to which they are entitled under clause 6.1.4 of the SPD.

### *7 Phillimore Terrace* .....

7 Phillimore Terrace is one of those properties which attract many planning applications with ten having been made since May 2012. Some have been refused and some have been granted and one to raise the roof to provide an additional floor is awaiting an appeal decision. We hope that the Planning Inspector will dismiss the Appeal since, as noted elsewhere, the roof lines of our terraces are an important part of the streetscape but also because this building is being stretched to its absolute limit to extract the greatest possible profit with no regard for its surroundings.

### *South Edwardes Square* .....

There have been two recent applications in South Edwardes Square, numbers 59 and 60/62. The former was a purpose-built late Victorian artist's studio complex, of which there are a number in the ESSA area. It was a complex building and had been vacant for many years.

Number 60/62, in contrast, was built in 2006/7 and replaced a group of small buildings surrounding an open space on the south side of the Square. The proposal was to extend the building further, both into the historic open ground space and also with additional roof accommodation. ESSA supported local residents in their objections and lodged our own. We considered it would have created a development uncharacteristic of the Square and would have resulted in the loss of an historic pattern in the townscape.

Number 59 was more complex and the real issues arose after the consent, which contained a condition requiring a traffic management plan. This involved the closure of the south side of Edwardes Square for fifteen months which only became clear with the submission of the traffic plan. Ward Councillors were very helpful in facilitating a meeting with all concerned. ESSA was not only concerned about the impact of this development if the road were closed for this period, but also as to what would happen if consent were granted for 60/62. We considered that there were two options, first to have a more tightly controlled series of road closures rather than a blanket closure or secondly for the contractor to use smaller vehicles as happened at Markham Square in similar circumstances. In the end residents opted



to accept the contractors' undertaking to keep the road open as much as possible while still having the right to road closure during the whole period. At the time of writing we note that they are keeping it open a lot of the time but the notices in roads nearby state that it is closed and so most of the traffic is diverted from the area. We will keep an eye on how successful this is since it is likely to apply to 12

Pembroke Square when Earls Walk will need to be closed; in that instance the developer, following meetings with ESSA and local residents, has offered a very detailed traffic management plan. We would welcome your feedback on how well the traffic management works.

### *10 Abingdon Villas* .....

As many of you will know this has been one of the longest running basement works, causing a number of problems and should be a key lesson for planners. The latest application, although it stems from the basement application, relates to a balcony. The original application was investigated in some detail by the case officer at the time and precise requirements were established. The applicant then allowed or instructed his builder to install the railing so it reached further towards the adjoining property, thereby increasing the potential for overlooking. Enforcement proceedings commenced to have it installed in the correct position and the applicant made an application for the new position. The new case officer considered that there was a minimal change and it would not be sufficient to refuse the application. ESSA considered that, however small the change, it was the responsibility of the applicant and we saw no reason why an adjoining owner should suffer to any degree at all. Our local ward councillors, objected as did a number of nearby residents. The proposals were however approved by committee. No wonder that our residents feel let down and consider that neither the planning department nor the committee has the residents' interests at heart.

### *Opera Holland Park* .....

You will recall that ESSA supported others in objecting to the planning applications for the canopy to be retained permanently and subsequently, when that was refused, for a longer time to be allowed. We drew the officer's attention to policies which they had overlooked and in the end the committee, to their credit, granted only a shorter period. The Friends of Holland Park have been in discussion with RBKC and the applicant about future seasons and a new application is about to be submitted. We do not necessarily expect a significant change this time but hope that the application will give rise to acknowledgement that

change is needed in the future. Much of this is tied up with the long- term funding of the Opera. We shall keep an eye open for this application and let members who are on email have our comments.

### *12 Pembroke Square* .....

An application was submitted earlier this year for reconstruction of the back closet wing of this building, the demolition and rebuilding of the Mews building facing Earls Walk, and a basement for both buildings. In the case of the main building the basement was under the garden as this is listed. ESSA considered that the application was badly flawed and in particular that the traffic management plan did not work and would put the listed building at risk. We also felt that the basements would inhibit the green quality of the garden. The application was withdrawn and the applicants have submitted a revised proposal which has addressed many of the concerns raised and also other points such as protection of the cobbles in Earls Walk which we pointed out in subsequent discussions. We still have concerns however and have registered these with the planners. We are aware of the many objections and feel that the most important role ESSA can play if consent is granted is to try and ensure that the construction phase is properly managed particularly with regard to the construction traffic management. In that regard we are able to report that we have had good feedback from members regarding another basement being constructed by the same developer.

## CONSERVATION

As you know ESSA has undertaken to carry out a review of the Edwardes Square Conservation Area, including examination of the boundaries and a detailed assessment of the buildings, other structures and the characteristics of the distinct component parts. We have a group of volunteers and, thanks to funding provided by our Ward Councillors from the City Living Local Life fund, we have been able to appoint a distinguished architectural historian Neil Burton to guide us through the process. An initial meeting was held to help the team to understand the scope of the study and also to help us, and of course Neil, to understand precisely what assistance the members would need. In parallel with that activity we have also been taking part in the various workshops and smaller groups arranged to help to develop the emerging policies with regard to conservation and design in the Local Plan. Unlike the basement policy development, the conservation side has had a high level of agreement although there continue to be areas which still need work.



What has become clear however is that the new policies will rely even more on the new Conservation Area Appraisals which will define the interest in each area. We have therefore taken a step back for the moment to consider precisely how this will affect what our team does before starting the detailed work. In the meantime Neil has outlined strategies with regard to the areas where we need to consider boundary adjustments which we shall need to take into account with the detailed assessments.

## CITY LIVING LOCAL LIFE

As your Ward Councillors we have approached all the residents in Abingdon Ward to ask for your help in identifying small projects in the area where we could make a difference by contributing some money. This £15,000 pot is part of the City Living, Local Life project set up by the Council which “supports people to develop practical solutions to make their area a better place to live.” We wanted to report back on some of the successful projects from the past year and to ask for new ideas for this year.

The wonderfully successful Abingdon Diamond Queens Jubilee party was an early recipient of some funding which was used in the planning and organisation. We also funded the new cover for the weather centre in Pembroke Square, which Tim Honor has written about elsewhere; provided some matched funding for Chatsworth Court to go towards the flowers in their revamped flowerbeds to help brighten up Pembroke Road; created a leaflet showing the youth organisations in Kensington to support the younger generation – e.g. police cadets, Brownies etc. which the young might like to join and helped to advertise the Stratford Road Christmas Fair through the local Kensington Magazine and ran a stall there. We are doing the same again this year for Stratford Road and hope to see you there on 4th December. Our two largest allocations were to ESSA and to St Philips church. Abingdon ward sits in a Conservation Area and ESSA has been keen to take the lead and refresh the Conservation Area Policy. This document identifies important historical and architectural aspects that are key to the area and should be preserved for the future. As this is specialist work, we have helped to fund the employment of Neil Burton, an architectural historian, who is providing advice to ESSA under Tony Walker’s careful guidance.

The work at St Philips is a building project to create a new meeting room on their upper floors to which we were happy to contribute on the understanding that this would be

available for local community use. We now need to plan for this year and we’d love to hear your suggestions. Let us know your ideas for local projects where some matched funding or a small contribution could help. You can either email any of us directly or go to [www.rbkc.gov.uk](http://www.rbkc.gov.uk) and search for “Start Something Good” or “City Living”. For Contact Details see Councillors Corner page 10.

## STORIES FROM STRATFORD ROAD

### *Chez Patrick*

Since taking over this cosy restaurant seven years ago, Patrick has managed to build up strong support from the local community and beyond by offering a constant quality in traditional French food and good service while keeping his prices very affordable.

The daily supply of fish and other products guarantees a high standard of every dish offered. The first floor is available for private functions with budget-tailored menus. His involvement in the community, whether in organising charity dinners or being present at the yearly street party, makes him well known and respected as an asset in Kensington.

Bookings are highly recommended in the evening and once there you’ll be transported to France, led by the owner, his charm and his Franco-British sense of humour.

A local restaurant to visit, to enjoy, to support, so why not to become a regular? **Chez Patrick** is at **7 Stratford Road London W8 6RF**. Bookings on **020 7937 6388**.

## LOCAL BUSINESS MEMBERSHIP

Local business is a crucial part of the quality of our environment in providing both vitality and important amenities. The ESSA committee has recognised this and taken the positive step of creating a Local Business Membership which is growing steadily. Over the years we have fought many planning battles in helping to protect a wide variety of local businesses and we would like to hear about what it has done for those concerned.

You will see above that we have started with ‘The Story of Stratford Road’. If you run a local business or know of anyone with a story to tell in this field, do please contact us. We would like to have at least one piece in each Newsletter telling us about how you came here and what is important to you in being part of the local the community.

**Planning:** As your ward councillors we continue to work on a variety of issues throughout the ward. The issue of most concern to us is planning, with so many applications for large basement developments and the impact these works have on the neighbours' lives. We have worked with residents in objecting to large basements and will continue to do so. Joanna and James have both been part of a Council working group scrutinising the Council's proposals to restrict basements to one storey, not to extend into more than 50% of a garden and other aspects, while also pushing for no noisy working on Saturdays. This has been a long process due to the formal steps needed to change Council policy and it is due to come out to public consultation early next year, before going to the Planning Inspector to review it independently. We will need residents to write in and support this as it has taken over two years to get through all the consultations and formal hoops and could still fail if the Inspector does not approve it. Unfortunately as a Council we cannot ban basements completely as many would like, as this is only within the Government's power, but we will lobby our MP to do so.

**Nightclub:** All three ward councillors met the Kensington Close Hotel manager to hear the proposals for a nightclub in the basement. We feel this is inappropriate for the area, bringing in late night noise and revellers. Should this proposal come forward, we would work hard with residents to have it refused by the Licensing Committee.

**Noise Nuisance:** We have continued our work over noise nuisance in the ward. Tescos on Warwick Road was fined £5,000, and £8,000 costs, for regularly working through the night to refurbish their store without regard for nearby residents. If you encounter a Noise issue, please call the Council's Noise Nuisance line **020 7361 3002**. This is a 24 hour line which logs the complaint and, where necessary, members of the team can come out in person, subject to competing demands, up to 1am on weekdays and 2.30am on Friday-Sunday to witness the noise and help put a stop to it.

**Recycling:** The Council has just launched a campaign to reduce contamination in recycling bags - for example a dirty food container, shredded paper or used tissues in a recycling bag means the bag is rejected and has then to be sent to general rubbish. This costs twice as much as if it had been put out as general rubbish at the outset. So, "If in doubt, leave it out" of the recycling bag please.

**Council changes:** Due to a reduction in the Borough's population shown in the 2011 Census, Abingdon will undergo a slight change to its boundaries in accordance with the Boundary Commission's final proposals. We lose the new developments in Warwick Road as this would have given us too many voters, keeping only the Tesco site, and we gain the flats in Wrights Lane. Overall the Council will reduce in size to 50 elected members. Unusually the Government has moved the local elections next year so that both the Council and European elections take place on Thursday 22nd May 2014.

**Electoral Registration:** If you have not already done so, now is the time to register to vote by going to [www.rbkc.gov.uk](http://www.rbkc.gov.uk) and searching "Registering to Vote" or call 020 7361 3444 (Mon-Fri 8.30am-5.30pm) or email [elect@rbkc.gov.uk](mailto:elect@rbkc.gov.uk).

**Online App:** A final point: The Council has introduced a new online app for those with mobile phones or tablets which allows you to report such things as a missed bin collection, graffiti or a parking meter problem. You can download it for free from your phone store: search under "RBKC Local".

Do feel free to contact any one of us if we can help.

Many thanks,

**Victoria Borwick**  
cllr.borwick@rbkc.gov.uk  
020 7376 9262

**James Husband**  
020 7937 6226  
cllr.husband@rbkc.gov.uk

**Joanna Gardner**  
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## CONTACT US

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### CHAIRMAN

**Anthony Walker** 4 Iverna Gardens London W8 6TN

### HON SECRETARY

**Mrs Suzy Anderson** 8 Phillimore Terrace W8 6BJ

### TREASURER AND MEMBERSHIP

**Stuart Brown** 8 Pembroke Road London W8 6NT

### MEMBERSHIP SECRETARY

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# ESSA ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL

Dear ESSA member,

We appreciate your membership and interest in ESSA, and we hope to serve you well. **If you have not paid your membership fee for 2014 please do so now**, or if you would like to recruit a new member please use this form.

- Here's my cheque for £10 for standard family membership for 2014
- Here's my cheque for £5 for senior citizen membership for 2014
- Please change me to a direct debit payer – the form is below
- .....(enter name here)  
is no longer a member, please remove this from the list

**Remember:** if you let us have an email address you not only save ESSA money on postage but you will also get more information including updates on the latest issues in our area



A charity registered in England and Wales (262019 charity number)

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*I confirm that I am a UK taxpayer as stated and therefore eligible for you to apply Gift Aid.*

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Thanks for your help,

Stuart Brown  
Treasurer and Membership  
8 Pembroke Road, London W8 6NT  
stupbrown@bopenworld.com  
Edwardes Square Scarsdale & Abingdon Association

## ESSA BUSINESS MEMBER STANDING AUTHORITY

**Note to Bank: please replace all prior ESSA standing orders with this one**

Your Bank:.....

Branch:..... Sort Code:.....

**PLEASE PAY AS FOLLOWS:**

<b>Bank:</b>	<b>Branch Title:</b>	<b>Sort Code:</b>
National Westminster	55 Kensington High Street, W8	50-30-10
<b>Beneficiary's Name:</b>	<b>Account Number:</b>	
<b>Amount:</b>	<b>Amount in words:</b>	<b>Quoting Reference:</b>
£5 (OAP)/£10 (Family)	..... Pounds Sterling	ESSA
<b>Commencing date:</b>	<b>And thereafter every:</b>	<b>Frequency:</b>
	2nd January	Annually

**ACCOUNT TO BE DEBITED:**

<b>Name of Account:</b>	<b>Account Number:</b>

Name:..... Date:.....

Signature:.....

