



Newsletter, Winter 2013

Ham House, "ageing gracefully" at the CARA AGM

AGM business was swiftly dealt with: our treasurer reported healthy finances; membership was growing; and CARA had had another busy year passing on information about planning proposals and parking surveys, and holding another successful barbecue and two litter-picks. Priorities for the coming year would include: developing communications; liaison with local police; keeping an eye on the hotel development, the "Mini Village" planning brief for the gasometer area, and the Gala Bingo Hall development; Canbury Gardens and the riverside; and that hardy perennial, parking.

Fay Clough who had stood down from the committee was thanked, particularly for organising the CARA survey earlier this year, and two new committee members, Stuart Devall and James Roy, were welcomed. Residents were also invited to be "street contacts" (see page 3 for more about this).

Entertainment followed in the illustrated talk by Ham House steward Camilla Churchill about our local treasure, Ham House and its many owners since 1610, all indulging in improvements (including bathrooms), renovations, restoration and conservation. Now in the hands of the National Trust, Ham House is ageing gracefully as it is gradually restored to its state in the 1740s, with the stress these days on preventative conservation: keeping period furniture and contents very clean and avoiding too much light.

Camilla also talked about the immense amount of work that goes into occasional (profitable) use of the House as a film set: pictures and furniture are packed away, doorways and floors have to be protected, and elaborate sets are constructed as the House is transformed into a film set for just a few days; you certainly wouldn't recognise it in "John Carter", the film Camilla used to illustrate the process. And then everything has to be put back just as it was.

By the time you read this, Ham House will be closed until March for its rigorous annual winter cleaning, though the gardens remain open. It was clear from Camilla's talk that it is definitely worth a visit – and it's a lovely walk from here too.

Secret drinkers strike again – and CARA volunteers tidy up



CARA's October litter-pick went well, thanks to the 15 or so volunteers (*some pictured above with their haul*) who turned out despite the damp weather, and did a thorough tidy-up along the riverside between the Half-Mile Tree and the Barge Dock. Though perhaps there wasn't as much litter as there is sometimes, items picked up included a broken recycling bin, a bird-table and a handbag – and our informal survey also counted about 300 cans, three rubbish bags of plastic bottles and one of glass, all of which could have been taken home for recycling instead of leaving for CARA to recycle. The glass collected included about 20 empty vodka bottles and three half-full bottles of white wine, also sometimes found elsewhere and at other times in our neighbourhood, though no one yet has observed the secretly drinking litter-louts.



The CARA Committee wishes you a happy Christmas and all the best for 2014.



A better bus service?

The 65, described in 2009 as the worst bus route in London, with 107 passenger complaints in eight months and coming fourth in the list of buses that failed to stick to their timetable, is having a welcome upgrade. After reports of overcrowding, and with a new school on the horizon, TfL announced that from 2nd November there would be an additional 65 bus in mornings and evenings, bringing provision up to 9 buses an hour in both directions. Let's hope they don't all arrive at once, as 65s tend to!

New green technology on our doorstep



Members of CARA Committee joined developers NHP, CEO of United House Mike Spenser-Norris, a Mitsubishi representative and local MP Ed Davey for the formal opening of the Barge Dock pump-house (pictured above) which will provide heating and hot water to the United House sections of the development on the former power station site. This is a very new technology, more efficient and more environmentally-friendly than the standard systems normally used to meet green energy requirements for large new developments; Mike Spenser-Norris had to persuade his colleagues, Kingston Council and the Environment Agency to rise to the challenge of being first in the UK to use it on this scale. But with help from the manufacturer, Mitsubishi, and Ed Davey, reservations were overcome – and residents of the new development should find their energy bills reduced by 20%, with the energy produced being carbon-free. The hope is that this will be the first of many developments using this green source of energy.

A new red and black buoy just below the first arch of the railway bridge marks where the water intake sits on the bottom of the river, and the plan is for the somewhat unattractive yellow-brick pump-house to be screened by other structures and planting. The Thames Venturer will be moored on the outside of the Barge Dock, with access across the new paved path over the dock.

Slow down, you move too fast

CARA has had several complaints of motorists speeding down the river roads. Last time we asked the Council to monitor this, it was rather embarrassing to find that the culprits were mostly CARA residents. So please could we all help to keep the CARA area a safe 20mph zone?

Policing matters - and Neighbourhood Watch

Canbury Gardens is now covered by a Designated Public Place Order, which gives local police extra powers to deal with nuisance drinking – you can read more about DPPOs on the CARA website.

Tudor and Canbury Safer Neighbourhood Team (SNT) recently joined the Environment Agency, the Marine Support Unit, and enforcement officers from Kingston and Richmond Councils to deal with illegally moored and unlicensed boats between Teddington Lock and Canbury Gardens. Unlicensed boats were issued with warning notices giving 14 days to get licenses or face fines. For more information and photos see www.twitter.com/MPSKingston.

Lower Kings Road and Grosvenor Gardens require willing volunteers to become Neighbourhood Watch Coordinators. This involves passing on information from police by email, keeping the Tudor SNT in the loop with concerns raised by residents, and going to panel meetings every three months. If you think you could do this, please call PCSO Laura Reynolds of the TSNT on 0208 721 2580 for more information.

Remember how cold it was last winter?



Did the snow on your roof melt faster than on your neighbours'? Is your house draughty? Is it time to install more insulation or to switch energy supplier? You can find advice about what to do to keep warm and reduce your energy bills on the Energy Saving Trust website.

Parking

A Council questionnaire about possible changes to local parking (illustrated below) should have reached residents in Albany Park Road, Lower Ham Road, Bank Lane and Albany Mews by now, and results will be considered at the Town Neighbourhood meeting on February 5th. You will probably also have received a letter from residents who want parking controls, who have set up a website: northcanburygardensconsultation.wordpress.com.





Velma Boathouse proposal

A pretty little 19th century boathouse facing Canbury Gardens (pictured left) is threatened with being moved away from the riverside to make space for a new building. See more details, including pictures of the proposed new building and a request for support from our neighbours across the river in Richmond, on the CARA website in the "News about local developments" section .

RideLondon back again next year

The 2014 cycle race will take place on 10th July over a slightly different route from the 2013 ride. It will go through Kingston again, but seems likely to be no more disruptive than it was this year and much less so than the Olympics road races.

Could you be a CARA street contact?

You will see from the list of Committee members on the back page that some roads are well represented while others aren't. We know that committees, with meetings and duties etc, are not for everyone, but perhaps you would consider being a street contact, a point of communication between your neighbours and CARA – without any other obligations. We would particularly welcome volunteers from Albany Park Road, Richmond Road, Lower Kings Road, Woodside Road and Albany Mews, all currently under-represented. If you think you might be interested or would like to discuss the idea, please contact jennylangridge@yahoo.co.uk.

Local Food Scheme commended

From the Ground Up (FGU), Kingston's community, not-for-profit, organic food scheme (now fortnightly at the nearby Scout Hut on Park Road) won "Commended" from *Time & Leisure's* Food and Drinks Award 2013 for Best Food Retailer in S W London by popular vote, and the Kingston Business Excellence Awards for Best Green Business, 2013. FGU's mission of making local, seasonal organic produce affordable to most, not a luxury for the few, has been well received by the Kingston community, and being volunteer-run keeps costs and prices lower than those of the supermarkets: "Volunteer staff also build a community of like-minded people with a shared passion for food that is local, pesticide-free and grown with sustainable farming practices," says Stephanie Hofielen, manager of FGU.

To find out more or to register or to contact FGU, see <http://www.ttkingston.org/groups-and-projects/ground-up/index.php> or email fgu@ttkingston.org.

CARA Naturewatch

Cunning little vixens?

It's hardly believable, but our canny urban foxes have now learned how to get into the brown food bins even when they are supposedly locked. To avoid food being strewn over your garden, try putting the locked food bin upside-down in your green recycling box, or on its side with the handle nearest the ground.

Winter visitors

Cormorants (one pictured right on a riverside tree drying its wings) and Tufted Ducks join their resident relatives on our stretch of the river in winter. More exotic suburban visitors include Redwings, Fieldfares and Waxwings, (one pictured below) which fly in from Scandinavia to feast on our berries. If you spot any, do post the news and location on CARA's



Facebook page so that the twitchers amongst us can see them too.



Also visiting...

Ring-necked Parakeets can be seen here all year round but are keen feeders on the nuts we put out in winter (usually for other birds). They look particularly stunning in the photo below perched in autumn foliage.



Do your children know the difference between a Sparrow and a Dunnock?

Or between a Chinese and an Egyptian goose? Or what an ash or an oak tree look like? Do they know what Alkanet and Stitchwort are? Do *you*? (All these and more can be seen around the CARA area.) In October, the Royal Society for the Protection of Birds (RSPB) published a study that found that only one in five UK children is "connected to nature", and worried that "as a result [few] will care enough to help save it in the future". You can read about the study and find out how connected to nature you are at <http://tinyurl.com/p8hvn9j>. The RSPB also suggests lots of nature-inspired activities for children at <http://www.rspb.org.uk/youth/>. Grown-ups who'd like to "give nature a home" should have a look at <http://homes.rspb.org.uk/>.

CARA COMMITTEE

Stuart Devall, 21 Eastbury Road;
stuart.devall@virginmedia.com

Penny D'Souza (CARA spokesperson; Council contact; liaison with Canbury Gardens Working Party), 14 Chestnut Road; pennydsouza@blueyonder.co.uk; 020 8549 5331

Clare Francis (liaison with Conservation Area Advisory Committee, Kingston Heights), 16 Chestnut Road; clarefrancis@gmail.com; 020 8549 4581

Anneke Ferrier (social events; Albany liaison), 1 York Court, The Albany, Albany Park Road, KT2 5ST; anneke.ferrier@gmail.com; 20 8274 0823

Marilyn Mason (CARA newsletter and communications; Town Centre Management liaison), 142 Lower Ham Road; marilyn.mason142@gmail.com; 020 8546 4086

Richard Mobbs (newsletter distribution; Thames Landscape Strategy liaison), Chestnut Road; richard@statacom.net; 07762 598 309

John Parrish, 108 Lower Ham Road;
john.parrish@zen.co.uk; 020 8546 1235

James Roy, 10 Avon House, Samuel Gray Gardens; 07951080 639; jwr2410@gmail.com

Trevor Willis (liaison with police, Canbury Pavilion, Youth Provisioning Project), 7 Eastbury Road; trevorwillis77@gmail.com; 07889 731 264; 020 8549 3076

Peter Wolf (treasurer), 126 Lower Ham Rd;
pgw_subs@yahoo.co.uk; 020 8541 3191

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

■ **Every Saturday, 9.45 – 10.45am, exercise group, Canbury Gardens:** sociable, informal, free. All welcome, meet by the children's playground.

■ **February 5th, Town Neighbourhood Committee** at the Council consider parking in this area.

■ **Saturday April 5th, 11.15am – lunch-time, CARA spring riverside litter-pick:** please meet by the slip-way at the northern end of Canbury Gardens to help tidy up the river bank. Once more we will be focusing on the stretch by Canbury Gardens and along Lower Ham Road. CARA will provide grabbers, gloves (you may prefer your own), rubbish sacks, high-visibility vests, and guidance on health and safety at 11.15.

Families welcome, as long as children are with a responsible adult.

See www.kingstonfirst.co.uk for events happening on our doorstep in the town centre.

A big thank you...

to a new CARA member for a generous donation to CARA funds. The donation will help CARA to continue its work of protecting the area's special character and keeping residents informed about local issues.

Joining CARA helps to make our voice louder, so thank you, as well, to everyone who joined or rejoined on our renewal date in September, and a reminder to non-members that it is not too late to join – see the membership form below.

CARA MEMBERSHIP, Winter 2013 - September 2014

Name:

Address:

Postcode:

Telephone:

Email:

I / we would like to join / renew my household's subscription to CARA .

I have set up a standing order* for a payment of £5 now and thereafter annually on 1st September to CARA, Barclays Kingston, sort code 20-46-73, account number 53451518, using my house/flat number and street/block as a reference.

OR

I enclose cash / cheque for £..... payable to "CARA" to cover (please delete / tick as appropriate):

£5 for 1-year membership £10 for 2-year membership £15 for 3-year membership

an additional donation towards the running of the association of £..... I require a receipt.

Signed:

Date:

Please send the completed form to: CARA Treasurer, c/o 31 Chestnut Road, Kingston, KT2 5AP.

*You can arrange a standing order from your bank account, either on line, by letter or in branch.