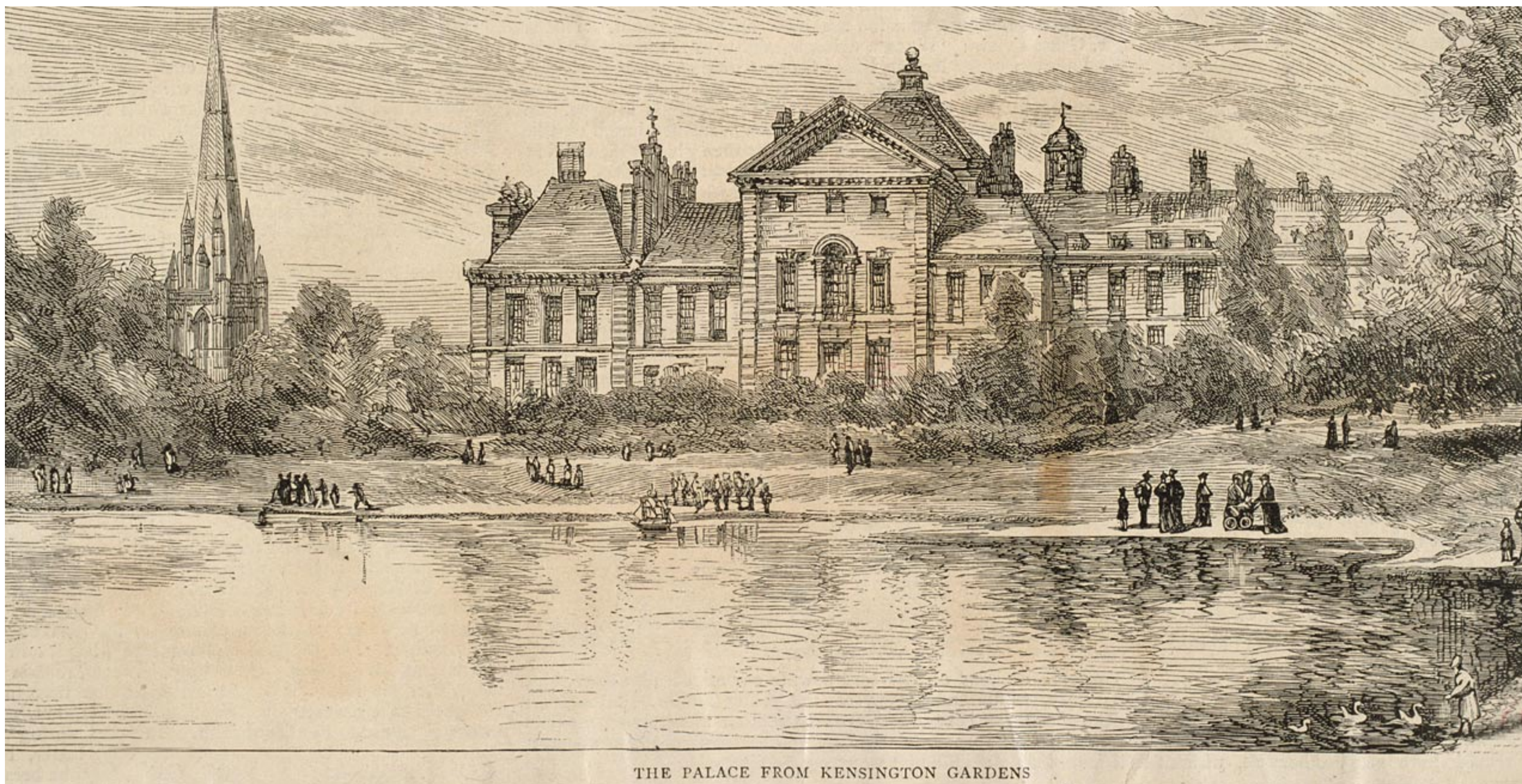


Towers, Tribulations and Triumphs

The Kensington Society: 50 years of vigilance



We celebrate the Golden Jubilee of the Kensington Society. Founded in 1953, its remit is 'to preserve and improve the amenities of Kensington for the public benefit'. Since 1953 it has expanded from the preservation of buildings to the prevention of architectural disasters and to concern with streetscape, traffic, licensing, and major matters like the Royal Borough's Unitary Development Plans and the Mayor's recent Draft Plan for London. Such matters as these, and individual planning applications, are reviewed every month by our Planning Committee.

Recently we have made representations on such major concerns as the Queen Elizabeth College and Thames Water site proposals on Campden Hill (both overruled on appeal, though totally against residents' wishes); and, in conjunction with the Chelsea Society, on the preliminary proposals for the redevelopment of the South Kensington Station site.

Though the Society fought the intrusive early plans for the Princess Diana memorial garden and fountain as destructive to the character of Kensington Gardens and as a serious hindrance to traffic flow north and south of the park, the Society has in fact founded two gardens in Kensington, one at the Town Hall in memory of Princess Alice, Countess of Athlone, a former Patron of the Society, and the other behind St Mary Abbots in memory of Alec Clifton-Taylor, a former President of the Society. We have also donated trees to Kensington Gardens and to sites elsewhere in Kensington. And we were honoured in 2001 to donate a public clock to the Town Hall in celebration of the Golden Jubilee of H.M. the Queen.