

The Ladbroke Association - Annual Report to the AGM 2011

Chairman: Graham Child.

Welcome to all of those here. I am sorry to have to report the passing of Joyce Meadows, the widow of one of our Founders. I did not know her myself but I know she will be much lost.

I have been in position for 6 enjoyable months. My predecessor David Corsellis did an excellent job. He was plunged into the job at short notice when the previous chairman died unexpectedly and we have every reason to be grateful to him. Notable in his time was the survey of and report on Subterranean Developments and the exhibition following on the comprehensive photographing of the Conservation area from the street side. Very many thanks to him for all his work.

We are sorry to be losing our President, Sir Angus Stirling who has been with the Association for very many years. He has moved out of the area and has understandably expressed a wish to stand down. Very many thanks to him. He was one of the founder members of the Ladbroke Association and was its first chairman. He became President some years later, a position he has occupied for some 40 years. The Association has been extraordinarily lucky to have a President of such distinction for so long. He is one of the most experienced and distinguished people in the arts world, with a strong background in “heritage” matters. His many appointments are numerous, but they include Director-General of the National Trust; Chairman of the Royal Opera House; President of the Friends of Holland Park; and many many others. Our Association could not have had a better start.

We are most grateful to Thomas Pakenham who has kindly agreed to take on the role of President and we very much look forward to working with him. He also has a long history with the Ladbroke Association, having been its chairman in his time. He is a long time resident of the area with a strong interest in its heritage. A distinguished writer and historian of Ireland and Africa, he has also written highly acclaimed books on trees. We of course pride ourselves on our remarkable trees in this area, many of which he has commented upon. We are delighted that he has agreed to take over from Sir Angus and we could not have a better successor.

Robina Rose retired from the Committee within the year, but before I became Chairman. Members of the Committee who worked with her wish to thank her for her contribution over many years and for her tremendous enthusiasm for the area.

My own thanks go to all the members of the Committee during my own period of office who in their various ways and according to their various expertise contribute greatly as well as very cheerfully. My particular thanks go to the Secretary and Treasurer who not least have organised this meeting. The Committee continues to review planning applications every month and to comment to the Planning Authority. Our architect members are particularly to be thanked for their work on this. I have met both Jonathan Bore, the Director of Planning, and David McDonald the Conservation Officer. The meetings were very cordial and we covered a lot of ground. I believe our views are well respected and regarded as helpful to the planners.

The Association continues to produce a News Letter twice a year and Sophia Lambert and David Campion are to be very warmly thanked for this most important and much regarded work. Sophia would be extremely grateful if members could let her know what sort of things they would like to see in future issues.

We had a successful Christmas Party at the house of Mr and Mrs Heyden who are to be warmly thanked for their hospitality and Peggy Post for the organisation. We also were able to provide a Springtime walk through three of the Communal Gardens led by Henrietta Phipps with our Secretary and Sandra Kamen of the Committee. It was much appreciated by those who were on it. The Committee meets monthly in the house of one of its members, and Committee members who have hosted Committee meetings are also to be warmly thanked.

As regards current work, the matter of Subterranean Development continues to be on the agenda. The Localism Bill is going through Parliament. It is currently in the House of Lords. As drafted by Government is offered little if anything in the way of prospective relief to all those suffering from the most unhappy effects of major disruptive work in our streets. We have made strong and very detailed representations to various Peers and amendments to the bill. some of them drafted by us. have been tabled seeking to alleviate the problems,. We are lobbying hard and in the next few days it may become clear whether the Government is willing to take this matter on

board and make provisions in the bill. We very much hope they will. Sir Merrick Cockell has promised his support, which is welcome news.

Apart from our regular monitoring and commenting upon planning applications we hope in due course to conduct a review of our area to see whether there are grounds for asking the Council to list any of the buildings not covered by listing. We will also be looking at the application of rules concerning permitted development in our area. There are many buildings in relation to which at least some permitted development rights have been suspended, meaning that certain things that could otherwise be done without planning permission, need such permission. These so called Article 4 situations will be reviewed by us with a view to making recommendations to the Planning Authority for possible changes.

Finally it falls to me to thank all members for their support and particularly those who have come this evening. Among those is David Lindsay, one of the councillors for the Norland ward, who has kindly agreed to answer questions on ward matters if anybody has anything they want to raise. We are particularly grateful to him for the help and advice he has given us on subterranean development.

At the meeting:

Sir Angus Stirling spoke about the origins of the Association and about his involvement saying that the founders were very keen that the Association should not simply exist to say “no” but should provide the Council with informed and helpful opinion and thereby contribute to the preservation of a very remarkable example of early town planning. He said he was sad to leave but hoped to retain contact.

Thomas Pakenham expressed pleasure in taking up the role of President. He mentioned that he had given a lecture on trees in the area ten years ago and was willing to give an updated lecture next year, which was warmly welcomed.

There was discussion in particular about the up coming White City development and possible development at Notting Hill Gate.

Wednesday 6th July 2011