

AMENITY – DIVERSITY – CHARACTER

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NOTTING HILL GATE IMPROVEMENTS GROUP

**MINUTES OF THE 62nd MEETING HELD ON TUESDAY 8 JULY AT 7:30
233-235 WESTBOURNE GROVE LONDON W11 2SE (JOHN SCOTT'S HOME)**

The meeting welcomed two enthusiasts – Lucy Fleming-Brown and Kim Finer who has lived in the area for some 40 years

1. Apologies for Absence were received from David Marshall, Robin Price, Maria Vlotides, Iain Wilcock & Robina Rose.
2. Present were those ticked on the list below.
3. Minutes of the last meeting (61st) held on 20 March 08 were tabled & copies circulated with the accounts at the meeting and were approved and signed by the chairman.
4. Date of next meeting Tuesday 25 November – same venue 233-235 Westbourne Grove (J. Scott's house) at 7:30pm.

ITEMS – REPORT & DISCUSSION

- A. THE RETAIL COMMISSION – Despite enquires of David Prout, Councillor Tim Ahern and Chris Turner (7361-3236) no concrete progress was made save that on Monday and Tuesday 7th and 8th July seven candidates were interviewed for the post of “Town Centre Initiatives Manager” at “up to £49,000 p.a.” It is thought to be valuable in understanding the thought process of The Royal Brought to quote from the “Job Profile” proposed (see appendix).

A 60 cap cricket captain of England objectively considered the mammoth task a masterpiece of obfuscation dwarfing in magnitude the seven labours of Hercules. The Council would appear to require multitudinous grounds for dismissal of the manager!

The meeting expressed dismay that a NHIG member was not invited to sit in on the selection process. It was further stressed, in anxiety, that the applicant would not be a man of clout. “We don't want some drone from The Institute of Town Centre Management” some said.

- B. THE KENSINGTON KONE – This “Kone” by Liliane Lijn on 2A Kensington Park Road had become currently impossible as the building structure is very fragile. If the site was developed this would be an ideal project.
- C. 148 KENSINGTON CHURCH – An appeal against use of 99 Notting Hill Gate as Bureau de Change was successful on 25 December 07. The damage caused by this gaudy and excessive bureau was fully discussed at length. It was fully agreed that all pressure should be put upon the Council to secure similar refusal on 148 Kensington Church Street. This property is an eye sore and a serious damage to the attractions of this street that NHIG for years has sought to enhance. It is particularly disturbing as this historically colourful and characterful thoroughfare has suffered from a, hopefully, temporary decline in the “antiques trade.” The plethora of Estate Agents and Bureaux de Change has seriously damaged the variety of shopping that the Association has consistently urged the Council to repair.

After heated discussion it was unanimously resorted to state “NHIG is greatly concerned that the present planning laws are POWERLESS TO ENABLE RBK&C TO EXERCISE SUFFICIENT CONTROL OVER THE MIX OF USES (particularly Coffee Shops, Estate agents and Bureaux de Change) to the serious detriment of a good shopping environment.” There was considerable anger at the lack of action and resolve to rectify this malaise persistently over the last 40 years. Members were exhorted to apply to attend these controversial planning applications and appeals to add their personal weight to the battle.

- D. CORONET CINEMA – A meeting with Pastor Colin Dye of the Elim Church, David MacDonald RBK&C Conservation officer, Shelia Stone Senior Historic Building Advisor i/c The Coronet building. This meeting resulted in a letter from the chief executive of English Heritage Dr Simon Thurley who said nothing could be done but hoped that improvements to the signage and the loss of architectural features would be carried out. NHIG have exhorted the Deputy Leader, Daniel Moylan, to exercise his persuasive charms on the pastor and we wait in hope. The Church had agreed in writing four years ago to “restore the Coronet to its former glory.”
- E. ART PRINT PROJECT – Toni Newman gave a helpful analysis of the state of this project commenced some six years ago. A somewhat disappointing image by Peter Blake was surveyed (with its other [7 in all] images) and it was agreed NHIG should pay £3,500 for printing 55 images to be signed by the Artist. Toni agreed to meet with Jane and Peter England and negotiate a sales agreement from their gallery, England & Co. Proposals to be agreed with DMcH or J.S. Toni was given a round of applause for her tenacity on this awkward undertaking.

- F. LETTING OF 121 KENSINGTON CHURCH STREET, W8 – After considerable negotiation with Delancey (who were most gracious and helpful) J.S. reported that a letting of 221 Kensington Church Street has been agreed with Chegworth Farm from 1st June 08. Chegworth owned by David Deme and his family Linda, Ben and Charlotte along with Edwin Lyons who have been the principal participants in the Farmers’ market
 This shop being small, family run and independent providing daily fresh farm produce is exactly what this group is trying to achieve.
 It was reported a most successful NHIG opening party with quality printed invitations, held at 6:30 – 8:30, 26th June at the premises. Chegworth produced English apple juices and delicious canapés were served. Some 150 guests attended a memorable occasion that has already increased turnover as more local people became delighted at the delicious provisions on offer.
 We greatly hope the newly appointed “Town Centre Initiative Officer” will be successful in this field.
- G. RBK&C MASTER PLAN FOR NHG – progress on this seems to have slowed with the current economic climate. The official RBK&C line is to seek the development of new buildings to give the area some real pride in its aspect and re-alignment to create much improved public open space. It appears that economic downturn has induced Delancey to favour refurbishment.
 Lichfield and Partners (who previously considered Westfield would be beneficial to Kensington!) are doing a further study on retail shopping.
 J.S. reported that RBK&C had indicated a desire to seek to purchase small shops freehold to encourage desirable uses and better tenant mix.
- H. FARMERS’ MARKET LOCATION – it was reported that alternative locations for the Farmers’ Market were being considered: - a) behind Marks & Spencer, b) in front of Smiths and Boots, c) in Rabbit Row, behind Barclays Bank. None of these seemed appropriate.
- I. 77 PORTOBELLO ROAD – an application to change these long established Antique shops into a Class A3 restaurant was much disapproved of. This would break the line “of specialist antique” shops and is what this Association is trying to prevent in Notting Hill Gate.
- J. THE FINANCIAL REPORT – the financial report to 8 July 2008 was tabled and approved.

The meeting ended at 9:45.

Distribution:	* = By Invitation			
Petra Brown ✓	Christopher Buckmaster ✓	David Campion ✓	Nathaniel Glee ✓	David Marshall
David McHugh ✓	Robert Medows	Peter Mischon ✓	Adam Moy	Toni Newman ✓
Dez O’Neil ✓	Robert Pilkington ✓	Robin Price	Geoffrey Roome ✓	Robina Rose
John Scott ✓	Amin Taha	Maria Vlotides	Iain Wilcock	Willoughby Wynne ✓
* Lucy Fleming-Brown ✓	* Kim Finer ✓			