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NOTTING HILL GATE IMPROVEMENTS GROUP EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

MINUTES OF THE 65th MEETING HELD ON WEDNESDAY 15 JUL 09 AT 7.30  
AT 233-235 WESTBOURNE GROVE LONDON W11 2SE (JOHN SCOTT'S HOME)

**IN MEMORIAM** J.S. read an appreciation for Toni Newman who had died recently and who had done so much for enhancing the Public Art aspirations of N.H.I.G. Her inspiration and initiative to create and manage the Print Project was greatly applauded. The meeting held a minutes silence In Piam Memoriam. Carter & Brevin Newman were welcomed to the meeting and kindly agreed to help with the Print Project.

1. **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE** were received from Maria Vlotides, Willoughby Wynne, Robin Price, Geoffrey Roome, Elizabeth Lindsay, Christopher Buckmaster, Daria Marshall and Amin Taha.
2. **PRESENT** were those ticked on the list below.
3. **MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING (64th)** held on 3 Mar 09 were approved with the accounts circulated at the meeting and were signed by the chairman (also available on the website).
4. **DATE OF THE NEXT MEETING** Wed 11 Nov 09 – same venue 233-235 Westbourne Grove (J. Scott's home) at 7.30pm.

**5. ITEMS FOR REPORT AND DISCUSSION**

(1) **BILL WOODROW CLOCK**

B.W. had been recommended to N.H.I.G. by Piers Gough for our Public Art Project financed by the Arts Council. At a recent meeting with Cllr Daniel Moylan and R.B.K&C. Art Consultant Ann Elliot, N.H.I.G. had been encouraged to make a Planning Application for the Clock to be located at the traffic island outside Kensington Place Restaurant in Kensington Church Street. A meeting had been called on 8th July at Committee Room 2 at the Town Hall to present the bronze maquette of the clock to local Councillors. N.G. kindly agreed to make the application. There was a serious problem with the cost of estimates at £350,000. Cllr Moylan had pledged £50,000 (the cost of installation). J.S. had pledged £100,000 from N.H.I.G.'s fundraising efforts (probably unwisely!), which left £200,000. It was hoped that S106 agreements and 1% for Art funds would help. Members were urged by J.S. to exercise their best endeavours to find sponsors /donors. It was stressed that there had been very little recent fundraising but now we have our largest project by an outstanding artist and we must rise to the challenge.

2. **ECO HALOS**

We have introduced these to Murad Qureshi, the Chair of the Environmental Committee of the London Assembly and a full presentation was made by Dante Leonelli, Philip Gumuchdjian and Richard Wilding. It is greatly hoped the Committee, including Nicky Gavron, will progress their enthusiasm. A.P. urged the meeting to try Audi Cars as an ideal sponsor so an approach will be made to Frank Leiberman.

3. **N.H.G. UNDERGROUND LAVATORIES**

Murad Qureshi was most interested in Piers Gough's design for a development of these outrageously disused public conveniences. It is reported that the, oft unmanned, modern toilets at Charing Cross Station charge 30p for their use. A first class facility in N.H.G. would be self-financing.

Following the collection of over 500 names, addresses and emails of supporters garnered by D.M., J.S. & Lucy Fleming-Brown the project has been put before Boris Johnson.

4. **RETAIL COMMISSION**

Considerable dismay surrounded the announcement that David Prout was leaving to join a Government body. There appears to be scant news save the appointment of a Portobello & Goldborne Rd Market's Initiatives Manager. Mr Mark Atkinson lives in the area and exudes intelligence & enthusiasm. The absence of determined political will by both the Council and Government make it most difficult to envisage what easy improvements can be made.

J.S. sought the indulgence of the meeting & read out & circulated the following letter. There had been considerable support for the aims of this exhortation but some councillors felt the Inspector overseeing or LDF papers might not accept it.

**I urge the following Council Policy Statement to be set on the front page,  
underlined and in capitals of the L.D.F.**

**THE POLICY OF THE ROYAL BOROUGH OF KENSINGTON & CHELSEA.**

The Royal Borough of Kensington & Chelsea encompasses some of the fairest and most desirable land in Great Britain, if not the world. Consequently there exists an almost insatiable demand to live, work and visit this place.

It is the firmly stated policy of The Royal Borough to preserve and enhance the outstanding and glorious heritage both of the open spaces and built environment. Any new buildings and changes must be of the highest quality so there is no lowering of standards and diminution of the excellence we have inherited

In recent years enormous pressure to enlarge buildings has often resulted in a serious erosion and destruction of our heritage. But, it can confidently be asserted that no one who lives or works here will wish this to happen.

Currently there is an unhappy anomaly here. It is lawful to carry out permitted development without any correlative duty to repair and restore. The delights of the area thus often diminished for private gain.

How can The Royal Borough fulfil their moral duty and restore and enhance the superb environment bequeathed to us by our forebears?

The only present answer is in the life and soul of all who live and work here. This duty falls mostly on the Planning Department but the pleasure of achievement for this group will be the greatest felt. Persuasion and enthusiasm must be used with developers. We are often talking of modest works – the restoration of front gardens, replacement of proper windows, doors, railings, fences and gates etc. This to be achieved on a wholly voluntary basis.

In most cases the extra cost is exceeded by the increased value of the property. And the improved environment benefits everyone. Most developers will welcome the advice and knowledge of what would be appropriate, an improvement and the clear fulfilment of their public duty.

It is quite a tall order; but the prize is great and with much job satisfaction. Collaboration between Conservation Associations and Planning Staff will be much enhanced to the benefit of all. Such co-operation will be an example to the other areas keen to preserve & enhance their domain.

This is our declared policy,  
Signed,

The Leader,  
Cllr Merrick Cockell

C.C. Cllr Daniel Moylan  
Cllr Tim Ahern  
Cllr David Champion  
Director of Planning Mr David Prout  
Mrs Penelope Tollitt

**5. ART PROJECT**

Carter Newman & her brother Brevin displayed one copy of each of the prints and it was agreed to fix a joint meeting with Jane & Peter England of England & Co. to progress the sales & launch party.

**6. ART IN NOTTING HILL GATE STATION**

The harsh economic climate has reduced the Art installation to nil. The 8 ‘triangles’ to left & right on the stairs from street level will be tiled with plain matching buff tiles. An opportunity thus arises for an art tile scheme on each of these ‘triangles’ when finance & a suitable image is available. The meeting felt these 4 exits created a fine opportunity to design an image evocative of, say, Holland Park, Portobello Market, Marble Arch, Hyde Park, Kensington Palace & Gardens.

## 7. CORONET CINEMA

The difficulties in executing any works to preserve and enhance the area (so great are the Planning restrictions) it is essential to press The Royal Borough to exercise every reasonable endeavour to secure the full restoration of this Grade II building. This should be the No1 objective in the priority objects of the LDF in “Renewing the Legacy”.

## 8. BUREAU DE CHANGE. 148 KENSINGTON CHURCH STREET

For many years multiple objections have been launched at this shop to maintain it as an A1 Shop. Certainly the hated uses of Estate Agent, coffee shops & Bureau de Change had been hurled at the Planning Dept. To the disgust of all neighbours and lovers of the magical charm of Kensington Church Street the Council gave consent for a part use of the shop as A2 Bureau de Change. And this for a small shop! Inexplicably the entire premises including plastic signage, save a small silver showcase as a pure fabrication, are ... Bureau de Change. The meeting was left with the feeling that the Planning Department had no concern or care for the valid desires of local people to enhance this historic thoroughfare.

## 9. LINDEN GARDENS PILASTER PROJECT

The meeting, in the face of lack of enthusiasm by the local residents for this project, advised J.S. to discontinue this project.

## 10. FINANCIAL POSITION

As set out on the statement from H.S.B.C. circulated at the meeting indicating a surplus of £15,917.25

## 11. OTHER MATTERS

a) Planning Conditions extensive discussions resulted in a firm determination to ensure & secure that conditions are fully binding and enforceable against property where planning consents had been granted.

b) The ineffectiveness of our Planning Office caused amazement & despair as it was revealed from a high place that officers frequently had insufficient time to survey & confirm that the consented development had been completed in accordance with the plans. Reliance has been placed on the public making objections.

c) Development of wooden decking on front garden of the hotel at 113-119 Westbourne Grove. The Inspector here wrongfully, in the meeting's view, surmised that IN HIS OPINION the developers of the Crystal Palace would have approved of the said decking. Inspectors are not supposed to hold opinions.

d) Portobello Market enhancement. The sale of modern tat – pashminas, T-shirts, CD Roms etc were much derided but it was felt nothing could be done. D.M. observed that stalls under Westway were available at £50 p.w.; these are now available at £10 p.w.

The meeting ended at 10.00pm

Distribution:	* = by invitation			
Petra Brown ✓	Christopher Buckmaster	David Campion ✓	Kim Finer✓	Nathaniel Gee✓
David Marshall	David McHugh✓	Peter Mishcon✓	Dez O'Neil	Andrew Pilkington✓
Robin Price	Geoffrey Roome	Robina Rose	John Scott✓	Amin Taha
Maria Vlotides	Iain Wilcock	Willoughby Wynne		
*Elizabeth Lindsay	*Carter & Brevin Newman✓	*Clare Singleton✓		