

The Pembridge Association NEWSLETTER



The Newsletter of the Conservation Society for the Pembridge Conservation Area

February 2006



30 Ledbury Road

The saga of 30 Ledbury Road rolls on but at last we are able to see the change from what was there previously (*below*) and what is now there (*above*); this represents a great improvement in terms of the street scene, albeit in the form of a more contemporary appearance but, importantly, the brickwork that

was a character of the previous design has now been replaced by a rendering painted white which is much more in keeping with the adjacent shop premises and indeed the general character of this part of Ledbury Road.

Last year the Council gave approval to the general form of the refurbishment but, pressed by the Pembridge Association that it was inappropriate for the first floor to be used for retail purposes, as this would set a precedent here, the permission was made conditional on the first floor being used only for storage and not retail display. As often happens, the premises has now been let and the first floor is clearly being used for retail purposes in spite of the condition. A planning appeal against the Council's refusal to allow the first floor to be

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

WEDNESDAY
22nd February 2006
at 8 pm at
The New Church
5 Pembridge Villas, W11

Guest Speaker:
Amanda Frame

Chairman of the Kensington Society's Planning Committee and Hon Sec of the Norland Conservation Society.

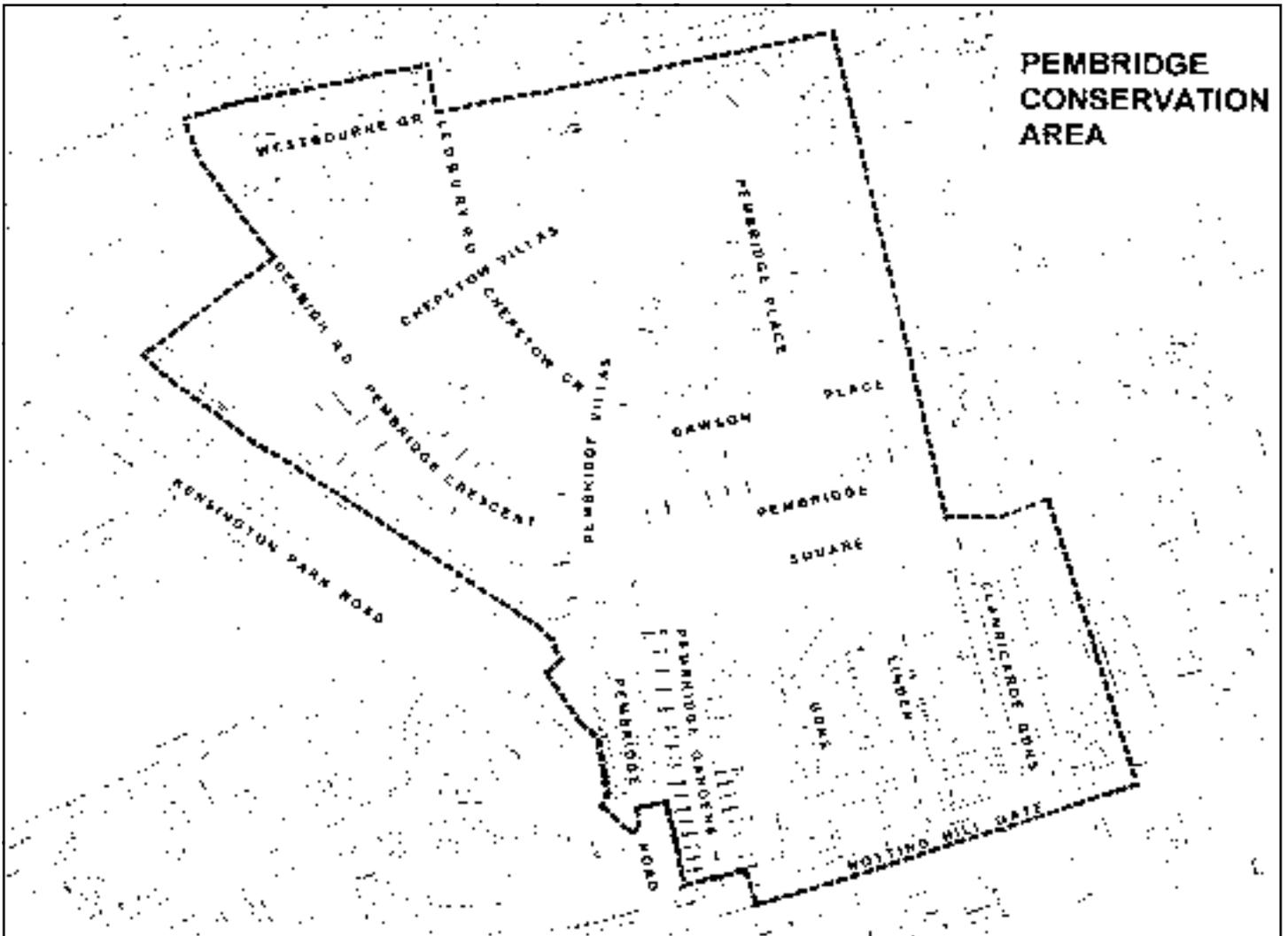
All local residents are welcome - wine will be available after the meeting when you will also have a chance to discuss matters with the Committee Members and consider joining the Association if you are not already a member.

used for retail purposes was heard by a planning inspector on 14th February. We await his decision on this with interest. A further application was submitted for the erection of an illuminated sign to be fixed on the fascia externally at first floor level. The sign has, in the mean time, been fixed inside the window at first floor level where it does not need to be the subject of a planning application.

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The Association has written to the Council to object to the erection of this illuminated sign externally at first floor level.

There are no other similar signs in this section of Ledbury Road and the view of the Association is that it would be inappropriate, since the upper floors of almost all the houses are in residential use and the sign would form a discordant element in what is essentially a residential street.

We also take the view that the shops in Westbourne Grove are part of a local commercial area and whereas signs there are appropriate the same argument ought not to be used in Ledbury Road. One of the long term aims for this section of Ledbury Road must be to try to ensure that small shops are maintained to provide amenity to local residents; we can do without more restaurants and estate agents.

We await the decision of the Council on the sign and the planning inspector on the matter of the upper floor of No 30.

From the Chairman's Desk

The Council is progressing the development of its Local Development Framework (LDF) which will eventually take over from the existing Unitary Development Plan (UDP) as the key document for controlling future planning applications and other developments.

These documents are important in that the Council has to use them as its guide when deciding whether to approve or refuse planning applications. In the same way, if an applicant appeals against the Council's refusal of planning permission then the planning inspector hearing the appeal is also expected to take the UDP and eventually the LDF into account when coming to a decision on the appeal.

The Association will follow the consultations on the development of the LDF with specific reference to our own Conservation Area.

Much concern is now being expressed nationally about the loss of the smaller

independent businesses and whether the larger multiples are having an undue and dominant effect on the local shopping areas. This is particularly the case along Notting Hill Gate and may also become a problem in Portobello Road where the Council is now being faced with demands for redevelopment rather than refurbishment.

The Pembridge Conservation Area is primarily residential in character and different criteria will be needed here for setting the standards for any future development. It is essential that the historic character of the streets in our conservation area is not damaged by inappropriate design of new and any replacement details such as front garden walls, cornices, porches, front garden paving and windows.

It is also important the rear of properties, facing the gardens, are also treated sympathetically and in character with the adjoining properties. It is not a case of "out of sight - out of mind" since any one living opposite may well take a dim view of poor design.

David Campion

Planning Report

The primary activity of the Pembridge Association during each year is to monitor all planning and conservation-related applications, including tree applications, submitted to the Council of the Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea for change of use and changes to buildings within the Pembridge Conservation Area.

During 2005 our Planning Secretary, Roy Griffiths, scanned the weekly list of planning applications received from the Council, visited the Planning Office at the Town Hall to see the drawings and wrote formally to the Planning & Conservation Department where the Pembridge Association felt that its comments were necessary.

During the year 89 planning applications and 70 tree applications were seen by the Planning Secretary and of these the following were considered to be those that concerned the Association the most:

30 Ledbury Road

Application for use of the first floor for retail purposes was refused and is the subject of a planning appeal.

54 Chepstow Villas

Change of use of lower ground floor for market use and continued use of garage and forecourt for siting of market stalls. The appeal was allowed.

Guesthouse West

163-165 Westbourne Grove

Application for decking and umbrellas in the front garden, an illuminated sign over the front entrance and use of the restaurant, dining room, club and bar by the general public as well as hotel residents. These were all withdrawn and we await further news,

2 Pembridge Place

Application for excessive redevelopment at the rear including an underground swimming pool that could endanger the roots of the trees in the garden of 30 Chepstow Place that abutts No 2.

Home Cottage

41A Pembridge Villas

The erection of a single storey ground floor kitchen extension was approved in spite of the strong objections from the owners of 28 & 30 Dawson Place.

Ashdown Lodge

Mobile phone aerials approved in spite of strong local objections.

2 Pembridge Place

Although the Association felt unable to object to the planning application to demolish the existing 2-storey building at No 2 Pembridge Place and to replace it with another building similar in design



No 2 Pembridge Place

and height to No 1 Pembridge Place, the Council's Planning Services Committee took into account the strong objections expressed by local residents and the application was refused primarily on the ground that the existing building is of historic interest to the area.

It was therefore not unexpected that the applicant would try to maximise the development of the site at the rear. The view of the rear of No 2 Pembridge Place from the garden of No 30 Chepstow Place is shown below.

While any extension at No 2 will hardly be noticeable at ground level there is a different picture when viewed from the upper floor level. The application proposed the construction of a roof terrace that would be at the level of the apex of the existing roof at the rear of No 2

Continued on next page



Views from the garden of No 30 Chepstow Place, looking west from ground level, (above) and from the third floor level, (below) showing the existing extension at Nos 2 & 3 Pembridge Place



which would be higher than the adjacent building, shown on the left at No 3 Pembridge Place. The Association objected to both this and the inappropriate design of the French windows proposed behind the terrace without intermediate glazing bars. In both cases the Council asked for a better design and this was eventually approved.

The possible effect of the deep excavation for the swimming pool was covered by a condition which aimed to ensure that the trees on the rear boundary of No 30 Chepstow Place would not be seriously affected.

The planning permission was also conditioned to replace other trees on the site on completion.

Pembridge Square

The Pembridge Square Garden Subcommittee had erected a children's play hut on two levels within the garden without first seeking planning permission. This was drawn to the attention of the Council by neighbours in the adjacent property on the north side of Pembridge Square who complained of the noise caused by children using the facility.

Subsequently, however, the Council's Planning Services Committee considered the retrospective application that had been submitted and decided to grant it; there was also a question raised as to whether the timberwork should be painted dark green, in order to minimise the impact of the play hut on the Square Garden, but it was decided that the weather would in time produce a similar result.



Drinking Fountain & Cattle Trough

A historic drinking fountain was maintained on the western end of the island in Westbourne Grove when the present public toilets were erected; however, the fountain was not connected to a water supply.

John Scott, who lives nearby, has been researching and discussing with the Cattle Trough & Drinking Fountain Association both this drinking fountain and a cattle drinking trough that was thought to have existed on the island many years ago.

It appears that the trough was removed by the Council and subsequently sold to Julie's Restaurant where it now resides outside the restaurant on the pedestrian area at Clarendon Cross (See picture below).

John is proposing that a replica be constructed and placed on "Turquoise Island" and also planted to provide a local amenity in Westbourne Grove.

The Pembridge Association Executive Committee considered this at its February 2006 meeting and agreed to make a contribution of up to £500 towards these two proposals.

It now remains for the proposals to be fleshed out and worked up into a formal project together with agreement as to how the costs will be shared. John has agreed to make a major contribution himself towards the costs. The least that we can do is to welcome and to support his initiative.



A view of "Turquoise Island" looking towards the west. The proposed drinking trough would be placed towards the east end of the island towards the bottom of the above photo.



The cattle trough now situated outside Julie's Restaurant at Clarendon Cross (below) and the existing drinking fountain on the west of "Turquoise Island" (above).

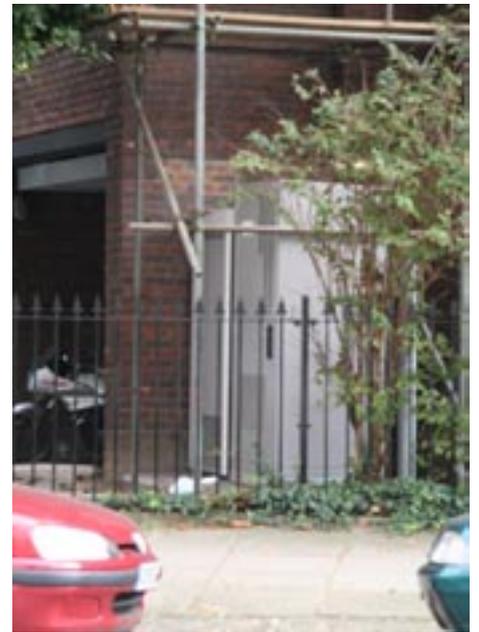




Ashdown Lodge Phone Aerials

If there is one thing that seems to cause strong opposition it is planning applications to erect mobile phone aerials in our

residential areas. Objections are based on two matters, firstly, the fear that many people have that the radiation from the aerials will have a long term effect on health, particularly of children and, secondly, the visual effect on the character



The transformers are an unsightly addition.

of the area. The planning application for the erection of aerials on the roof of Ashdown Lodge was the subject of a large number of objections from local residents. The applicants had considered alternative locations in the area as they believed that there was a problem with poor signal reception.

The top left photo shows the upward extension of the tower which has been constructed to hide the aerials behind fibreglass simulated brickwork.

The problem with allowing the erection of such phone aerials is that there is also a need to accommodate the equipment needed to drive them. In this case it can be seen that there are large transformers that have been erected at ground level within the conservation area.

The view of the Association is that the Council should have made it a condition of the granting of permission that additional planting should be used effectively to hide the transformers. There is of course nothing to stop the owners of the block from doing this, of their own free will, so as to improve the visual appearance; it is hoped that the leaseholders of the flats will take this up.

On the matter of danger from radiation this has yet to be proved or disproved in the long term - only time will tell.

However, standards of acceptable levels of radiation have been laid down and it is usual for such installations to be well within the limits concerned.

In considering planning applications the Council cannot refuse an application on the grounds of radiation where the levels are within the accepted standard.

Tree Works in Chepstow Villas

The Association is very concerned about the loss of so many mature cherry trees in Chepstow Villas; they used to provide a wonderful display of cherry blossom each Spring.

A fungus has been attacking these trees (see photo on the right) and the Council has had to remove a large number of them on safety grounds.

Councillors Doreen Weatherhead and Campbell recently inspected a number of trees that were subsequently removed (see photo below).

The Council has now planted many new trees but it will take many years before they can restore the street to its previous glory.



Garden Party July 2005

The annual garden party is the primary social event for the Association when both existing members and potential new members can meet each other in the attractive and informal surroundings of the well kept garden.

The weather behaved itself and a most enjoyable time was had by all those who attended.

Our guests of honour were the Member of Parliament for Kensington & Chelsea, Sir Malcolm Rifkind, The Mayor of the Royal Borough of Kensington & Chelsea, Cllr Warrick Lightfoot and the Deputy Mayoress of the Royal Borough Cllr Barbara Campbell who also serves as a member of the Pembridge Association Executive Committee.

Towards the end of the evening we held the traditional raffle, to raise funds for the Association, with quality prizes most generously donated by the following local businesses:

Baywood Chemists	Accessories
Chalmers & Gray	£20 voucher
Fresh & Wild	Hamper
Guy Parsons	Accessories
Lanna	Jewellery
Mr Christians	Hamper
Tylers Homecare	Jug & glasses
Wall	Alpaca scarf
Wild at Heart	Flowers

We were once again indebted to Sally Heilbut for her persistence in persuading local businesses that it will be to their credit to make their donations for the raffle.

We were also very appreciative of the work undertaken by Elizabeth Shaw in organising the event so successfully, and by members of the committee and their friends who helped at the event by manning the entrance and membership table and the bar.

Not least, our thanks are due to the Pembridge Square Garden Committee for allowing us to hold the event in their garden again. We have always been very careful to ensure that we leave the garden in the state in which we found it and that no damage is caused.

We look forward to holding our annual garden party in the Square again this year on Saturday 15th July 2006.

We try to keep the ticket prices as low as possible but at a level that avoids a loss to the Association.

Hotel Signs in Pembridge Gardens

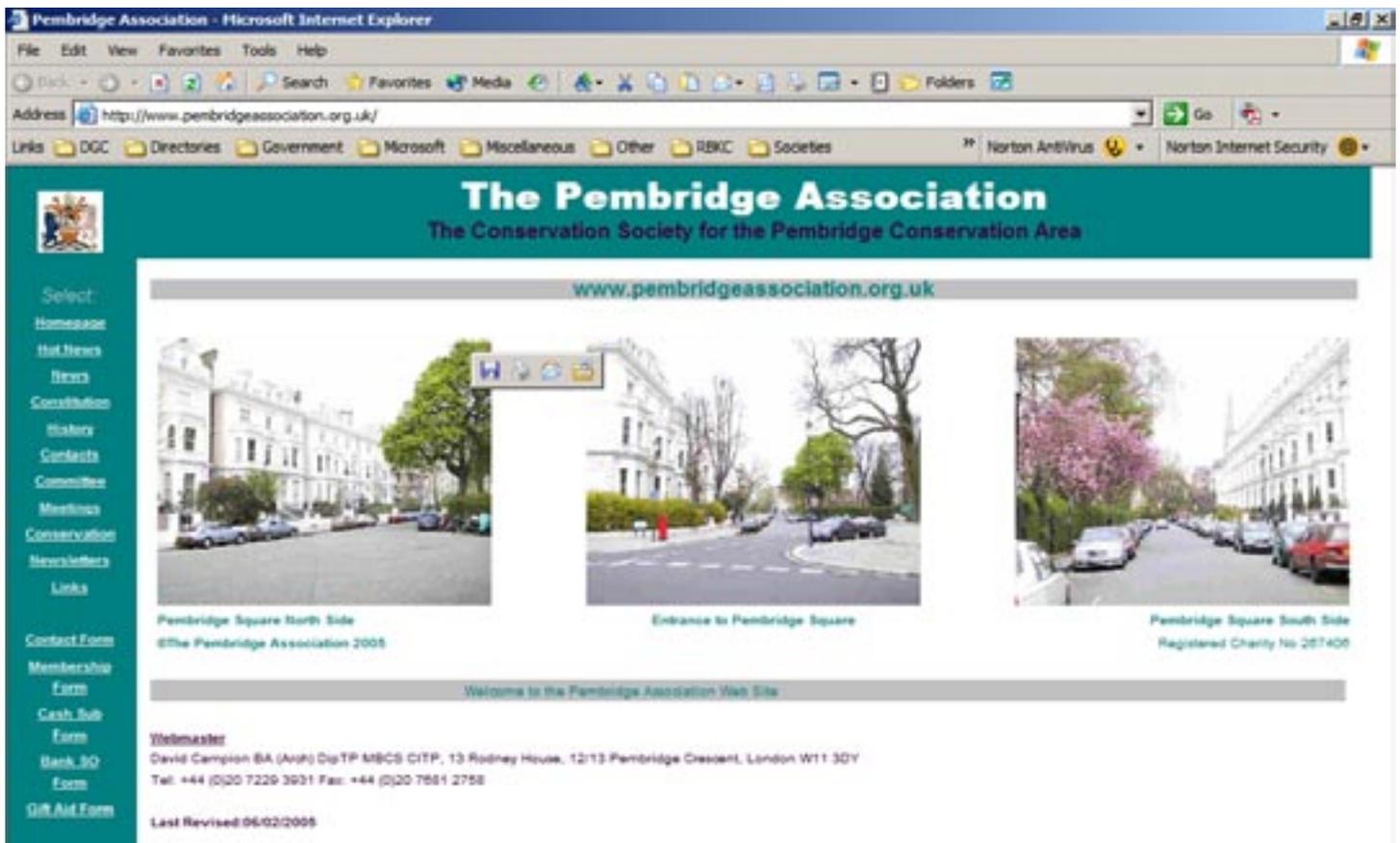
Considerable concern has recently been expressed about the new hotel sign and flag pole that have recently been erected at 35 Pembridge Gardens by the new Lennox Hotel (see left hand photo below) without the benefit of planning permission; this was previously the Pembridge Court Hotel.

A standard that minimises the impact on the conservation area and any Listed Buildings was agreed many years ago as typified by the Hillgate Hotel (see right hand photo below) so representations have been made to the Council to deal with this infringement which hides the architectural details of the porch.



Cllrs Doreen Weatherhead and Barbara Campbell inspect one of the fine cherry trees just prior to its removal on the grounds of safety.





The Association's Web Site

The Pembridge Association Website, originally created in 2000 and restructured in 2005, provides a means both for publicising the work of the Association and for recording information that is accessible to a wider public with an interest in conservation matters. The web site may be accessed on the Internet using the following URL:

www.pembridgeassociation.org.uk

The Pembridge Association is keen to encourage the further development of its website with contributions from local residents who have access to historical information that may be of general interest to others.

The Association puts its annual Newsletters on its website so that they are readily accessible for anyone who has missed an issue. The Newsletters also form a useful historical archive of matters relating to the conservation area.

While it would be possible for the Pembridge Association to include details of all planning applications on its website that affect the Pembridge Conservation Area, this would be very resource intensive and the decision was taken to deal with this via a link to the Royal Borough's own website which now contains a wide

range of planning and conservation details. These include, among others:

- * Planning Applications & Decisions
- * Planning Appeals & Results
- * Enforcement Actions
- * Tree Applications & Decisions
- * Agendas & Minutes of Meetings

The Council's new constitutional structure, using the Leader and Cabinet model, has a procedure whereby "Key Decisions" are taken by "Cabinet Members" each of whom has a "portfolio" of responsibilities.

In the case of planning and conservation policy decisions, other than decisions delegated to the Executive Director of Planning and Conservation, and planning decisions that go before the quasi-judicial Planning Services Committee, these are taken by the cabinet member concerned.

The Council is legally required to publish a rolling Forward Plan of Key Decisions each month, covering a period of up to three months ahead, and these are accessible from the homepage of the Kensington & Chelsea Council's website which can be accessed at:

www.rbkc.gov.uk

The Pembridge Association website contains, on its "links page", a direct link to the parts of the Council website relating

to planning and conservation matters. Anyone who is interested in receiving details of Key Decisions can contact the Cabinet Co-ordinator at:

cabinet.coordinator@rbkc.gov.uk

and ask to have their name put on a Key Decisions E-mail notification system which is published daily and will be forwarded to them at their own E-mail address.

You can subscribe to the Council's E-mail Notification Service via:

www.rbkc.gov.uk/emailnotification

and get selected weekly details of all planning applications affecting you by Ward, Conservation Area, Street or Postal District.

You can also get details of all premises licensing applications and decisions as well.

A more recent development, provided by the Council's website, is the ability to access scanned copies of planning application drawings which can be downloaded in the form of Adobe Acrobat pdf files.

The benefit of this is that if you are unable to visit the Council's Planning Information Office to see the original drawings submitted, you can view applications on your own computer at home.

David Campion

COMMITTEE 2006

CHAIRMAN

Cllr David Campion 13 Rodney House
12/13 Pembridge Crescent, W11 3DY

HON TREASURER

Mr. Bruno Giorgi 28 Pembridge Square, W2 4DS

HON. SECRETARY - Planning

Mr Roy Griffiths 14 Denbigh Road, W11 2SN

HON SECRETARY - Membership

Mrs Sally Dixon-Brown 2 Chepstow Villas, W11 3RB

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

Mrs Vicky Butler 2B Ledbury Mews North, W11 2AF
Miss Rosemary Buttar 1 Chepstow Villas, W11 3EE
Cllr. Barbara Campbell 25 Pembridge Gardens, W2 4EB
Mr. William Clarke 13 Pembridge Gardens, W2 4EA
Miss Sally Heilbut 17 Pembridge Crescent, W11 3DX
Mr. Dori Schmetterling 11a Dawson Place, W2 4TD
Dr Elizabeth Shaw 25 The Limes, Linden Gardens, W2 4ET
Cllr. Doreen Weatherhead 15 Clanricarde Gardens, W2 4JJ
Ms Jan Brown 60 Chepstow Villas, W11 2QX

The election of the Officers and the Committee will take place at the Annual General Meeting on 22nd February 2006. The above Members are all standing for re-election but the Association welcomes nominations from other Members who are interested in serving on the committee.

THE AIMS OF THE PEMBRIDGE ASSOCIATION

1. To encourage and promote high standards of architecture and town planning in the Pembridge Conservation Area,
2. To stimulate and promote public interest and care for the beauty, history and character of the neighbourhood,
3. To encourage the preservation, conservation, development and improvement of features of general public amenity or historic interest within or affecting the neighbourhood.

These aims are pursued by charitable means only and the Association has no affiliation with any political party.

Our job is to show that conservation is important, and to provide a channel for the views of the community. To do this effectively we need your active support.

Membership is open to all those who are interested in the aims of the Pembridge Association. Anyone who is interested in becoming more closely involved with the work of the Association should initially make contact with the Chairman and will be welcome to attend a Committee Meeting.

We much prefer annual subscriptions to be paid by bank standing order as this helps to minimise the effort in renewing subscriptions each year!

If you have a point of view you would like to express about Conservation matters or issues raised in the Newsletter, write to the Chairman whose name and address is shown at the top left of this page.

GARDEN PARTY

The Pembridge Association will be holding its Annual Summer Garden Party in Pembridge Square Garden on Saturday 15th July 2006 from 6pm - 8pm.

This is an opportunity for local residents to come and meet their neighbours, to learn about the Pembridge Association and join as a Member in order to support the aims of the Association as set out above on this page.

Entrance is from the gate on the north side of Pembridge Square which faces Pembridge Place.

There is an entrance charge to defray the cost of the food and a glass of wine, and there will be a raffle to raise funds for the work of the Association.

It is also hoped that the
Guest of Honour will be our
Member of Parliament
Sir Malcolm Rifkind QC MP

Newsletter was edited and the art work was set up by David Campion using Aldus InDesign 2.0.1

SUBSCRIPTIONS

If you would like to support the Pembridge Association please complete this Banker's Order Form and send it to the Hon. Treasurer:

c/o 13 Rodney House, 12/13 Pembridge Crescent, W11 3DY

If you would prefer to pay your subscription by cheque, or charity voucher, please complete the name and address section below and send this form with your remittance (payable to "The Pembridge Association") to the above address. A Gift Aid Form is also available by request to the same address.

To: The ManagerBank/Building Society

Address

Please pay £ (pounds) to "The Pembridge Association"
at NatWest Bank, 46 Notting Hill Gate, London W11
Account No: 51098067 (Sort Code 60-15-33)
with the first payment on (Date)
and annually thereafter until cancelled.

Signature: Date:

Name: Account No:
(BLOCK CAPITALS)

Address:

The minimum subscription is £3, the average paid is £10; however, some Members subscribe £20, £50 and even £100 to support our activities.