

THE PEMBRIDGE ASSOCIATION

Supporting the Pembridge Conservation Area, Kensington

www.pembridgeassociation.london



September 2020

Dear Pembridge Association Members,

As a result of the restrictions imposed by the Government over the last six months, we have not been able to organise any social gatherings. However, we do hope that you have managed to stay safe and well and to enjoy your time if you were unable to work from home. Our last event was the AGM in February, which really seems a very long time ago.



Pembridge Square and Gardens

Your Committee has been active during the lock-down period, as despite the restrictions there has been much activity regarding planning applications. We have been involved both in the developments in the Pembridge Conservation area as well as supporting other residents' groups in adjacent areas of the Borough. Decisions have been reached on a number of Applications but some are still under discussion. Here are a few examples:

Newcombe House, Notting Hill Gate/Kensington Church Street: Despite a vigorous campaign of objections from local residents, The Pembridge Association and a number of other local groups the Secretary of State, Robert Jenrick finally granted Brockton Capital consent for the large-scale redevelopment of the site, following the public inquiry to which we made a presentation. The height of the tower, its impact on the skyline of adjacent conservation areas including our own and that of the Royal Parks and particularly Hillgate Village remain of concern. Whether in the current difficult economic climate there is still an appetite for purchasing or occupying luxury apartments, high specification offices and boutique retail remains to be seen. We will continue to monitor the situation and keep our members informed.

28-32 Pembridge Gardens Some of the most historically significant buildings in our Pembridge Conservation Area are the Grade II listed houses located in Pembridge Gardens. A recent application by an Anglo Chinese school to combine three buildings (currently Imperial College student houses of residence) and substantially alter them aroused considerable local concern. Issues including traffic congestion, irrecoverable loss of period features and noise were voiced by members and your Executive Committee who held a number of meetings with the applicant. We were relieved when the application was subsequently withdrawn following RBKC officers' objections and we now await any further revised applications



Pembridge Gardens looking towards Pembridge Square

230 Westbourne Grove – formerly Joseph Many of our longest serving Association members will recall the battle undertaken in 2000 by the Pembridge Association to put in place Planning Condition 7 to ensure that this prominent corner frontage would be preserved as three separate units should *Joseph* vacate the premises. This was to prevent it becoming a supermarket or other use inappropriate to the village atmosphere of this section of Westbourne Grove. Despite our objections (and those of neighbouring Residents' Associations and Forums), the new owners *1983 Trading* successfully applied to RBKC for the units to remain combined. It is currently hosting various North Kensington community arts-based initiatives including work from groups affected by the Grenfell Tower fire whilst its owners consider its future use.

146-164 NHG, Frogmore's Hotel - formerly Marks & Spencers : We have just heard that demolition of the now vacant site will begin in mid/end October led by contractor Gilbert-Ashe. The first phase will consist of levelling works to the rear of the plot (the former car park). Work will then commence on the service road and a new electricity substation before the old substation is de-commissioned and the major demolition of buildings take place. Members who remember the Notting Hill Improvements Group founded by the PA's indomitable former Planning Secretary, the late John Scott, will be pleased to know that Barney McMahon's much-loved street scene mural which enlivened the passageway adjacent to the site will be preserved throughout the construction phase.

Kensington New Church, 5 Pembridge Villas: We eagerly await the future application as yet unsubmitted for this property which has been bought by a branch of the Greek Orthodox Church. We understand they plan to use it as part nursery and part church.

Turquoise Island – Westbourne Grove: This Notting Hill landmark and architectural icon including its much-needed lavatories was conceived by the Pembridge Association and these are now badly in need of refurbishment. The project driven by the late John Scott and designed by Piers Gough RA was completed in 1993, when the site fell within Pembridge Ward. After the ward boundaries were redrawn, they “moved” to Colville Ward. We are currently exploring ways to fund the repairs to restore them to their former glory.

Memories, Heritage and Documents: We are very grateful to members for sharing their documents and memories of the Pembridge Conservation Area and the Association with us. We are very keen to digitise any interesting material which you may have concerning either – old postcards, newspaper clippings, papers are all invaluable in filling in gaps in both our own and the RBKC archive and we will return the originals to you if required. Member Arun Weys has done sterling work last year to recover material and we hope to upload more to our website: pembridgeassociation.london

When a planning application arises we are often dependent on these sort of references to make the case for the reintroduction of authentic material. We are especially seeking information about the *Notting Hill Improvements Groups* and its arts projects, the early days of the Pembridge Association and campaigns such as those to save The Coronet in Notting Hill Gate. Please do contact us if you have any memories or documents to share on these or other projects. (phone) (Email) We are very grateful to members particularly David Hale, Jacqui Pruskin, Dawn Butler and Takakko Shimzu Scott who have helped us in this aspect of our work but much more remains to be done.

Membership and Finances:

We are pleased to welcome 6 new members so far this year which is helping towards our target of 100 in 2020. Apart from the well-attended AGM in February, we have not been able to hold any further events and this has hampered the recruitment drive. But it does mean our outgoings for the year will be low and, with further donations from film companies using our streets for their sets, we have funds that can be used for projects in the conservation area. All suggestions welcome!

David Campion

Sadly, David Campion, a long-time member of the Pembridge Association and Chairman on two occasions has died. David was for many years an RBKC Councillor and in 1985 was Mayor.

Newsletter

We plan to produce the Newsletter on a regular basis, in order to improve communication within the membership. We have also continued to upload photographs of our streets taken in the 1970's, on our website, so do please go to the downloads tab to see if you can find your building there.

In addition, we are planning to organise guided walks of the Pembridge Area to look at places of historic interest in the neighbourhood. We will communicate about this shortly. We hope you and your families, will continue to remain safe and well and that as soon as life returns to somewhere near normality, we will be able to organise a social event to welcome back our Pembridge Members and friends.

With best wishes from the Executive Committee

Richard Payne (Chair)

Kevin Mead (Treasurer & Membership)

Andrew Pilkington

Fiona Fleming-Brown (Secretary)

Vivien Thompson