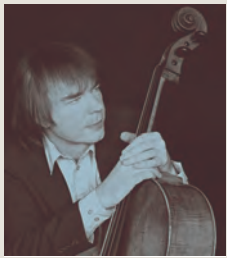




News

Please ensure we have your current email so we can keep you up to date on neighbourhood issues. Contact us: onslowna@gmail.com

Julian Lloyd Webber, our President, writes



Happy New Year to all ONA members and to all who live – and to nearly all who work (more about that later) – in this extraordinary part of our capital city.

To be honest, your President feels a bit of a fraud writing this year's welcome as I have spent the

last six months of last year in northern climes – i.e. Birmingham! On July 1, 2015 I started my new job as Principal of the Birmingham Conservatoire – a marvellous music college which is top of the league in the National Student Survey.

As a Londoner – and indeed a South Kensingtonian – all my life, I thought I would miss London, and I do. But Birmingham as a city has a lot to commend it. Its 'cultural offer' is second to none: Symphony Hall is the best concert venue in the UK and then there are the Royal Shakespeare Company, the Royal Ballet and the magnificent City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra. There are Michelin-starred restaurants and plenty of excellent pubs and bars as well as fantastic shopping – particularly since the opening of a huge new John Lewis. And, what's more, there is not a single prostitute card in a single phone box – which brings me back to

South Kensington and why my New Year's greeting excludes some 'workers.'

Our local police are to be congratulated for tackling the tacky menace of the phone carders at last. Perhaps they could now turn their attentions to the massage parlours masquerading as 'health centres' in the Royal Borough? Whatever one's moral stance on these places, it is extremely unfair on all the other bona fide retailers – who are working increasingly hard to pay their rents by legitimate means – to tacitly accept their flagrant disregard of their licensing conditions.

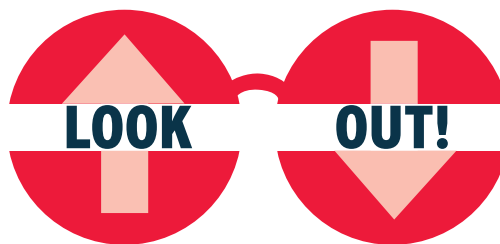
One of ONA's greatest triumphs in recent years was to 'rein in' the proposals for a gross overdevelopment – complete with fifteen-storey tower – of South Kensington Station. I hear that a much smaller-scale development, in keeping with the neighbourhood, is now on the cards. This has to be a good thing. I just about remember the little row of shops and restaurants along Pelham Street (there was a very nice Chinese restaurant – one of the first in London – called the Rice Bowl). By the time of next year's newsletter it would be good to think that work had begun on transforming that eyesore of a long brick wall into something which both is useful and adds character to this unique corner of the world.

Editor's Note: The ONA AGM will be held at Christie's South Kensington on Tuesday 15 March, at 6:00 for refreshments, 6:30 for the meeting. Please come and bring neighbours. Our guest speaker will be Graham Stallwood, Director of Planning and Borough Development at the Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea (RBKC)

Residents will soon need to make sure to look both ways when crossing some one-way streets in our area.

Against many ONA members' objections, the RBKC Council will allow cyclists to travel against the existing one-way flow of traffic on Sumner Place, the west side of Onslow Square and Glendower Place, as part of its Quietways scheme.

We feel that the concerns of our residents, who have to cross the busy streets in our area, have been pushed aside in favour of cyclists who often dash through the



streets illegally. The Council overruled our objections on the basis that there are 21 other streets in the borough that allow cycling against one-way traffic, and these sites have 'an excellent safety record.'

Quietways are designed to allow cyclists to avoid busy main roads and the inconvenience of having to follow less-direct routes on one-way streets. We anticipate that these Quietways will soon become 'rat runs' for speeding cyclists.

The Council is moving forward with the scheme in

Look Out! *continued*

stages. The plans are available to view on the Council's website: www.rbkc.gov.uk/cyclegrid. The section between Albert Bridge and Harrington Road, which includes Onslow Square and Sumner Place, was approved last October, and by late spring signs and road markings will be in place. Another stage will affect Dovehouse, Cale and Sydney Streets.

A third stage in the Quietways scheme, under 'Brompton Cemetery to Exhibition Road', is of interest to all of us who see the daily, horrid traffic congestion during the rush hours around South Kensington Station. The website will lead you to the plans for Cromwell Place – Thurloe Place, which show the junction where buses stop outside the station and traffic tries to turn right into the Harrington Road.

The plan shows the introduction of five-metre-deep Advanced Stop Lines (ASL). An ASL is an area of road in

front of traffic lights reserved for cyclists when the lights are amber or red, and there is a fine of £100 for failing to observe it.

The trouble with an ASL at this busy junction is that it removes five metres of the useable road whenever the lights are amber or red, so traffic has to travel an additional five metres before it is in position to negotiate the turn, and if cyclists occupy the ASL space, the traffic has to follow them into this junction, making a bad situation worse.

Of course people should be encouraged to cycle, but encouraging cyclists to enter this very busy junction as part of a Quietways scheme is folly.

The public consultation phase of these stages have ended, but if you have questions or comments about these and other Quietways proposals you can email cyclinggrid@rbkc.gov.uk



Slow but Steady: Progress on South Kensington Station



Starting last autumn, Transport for London (TfL) has organised monthly meetings with the local Neighbourhood Associations (NAs) to discuss the long-awaited redevelopment of the South Kensington Station. TfL wants to involve the NAs at an early stage this time, as a series of projects since 1989 have failed due to the intervention of groups including Brompton Association, the Kensington Society, the Knightsbridge Association and of course ONA.

The last meeting, on 9 December, served mainly to introduce the architect of the project, Buckley Gray Yeoman, to the NAs and to review some of the issues that the NAs have raised.

The NA representatives underlined the station's historic value as one of the first underground stations in the world and its partial listing in 2004 to preserve its unique architectural value. They reiterated their firm view that specifically the front part of the station, the 'bullnose', and the arcade should keep their current front and form; the same applies to the

buildings along Thurloe Street. They were open, however, to an additional residential development along Pelham Street on the condition that the development's height would be similar to the existing buildings and not add to the considerable traffic already on Pelham Street. The representatives also addressed the fact that current retail offering around the station is too concentrated on food shops and restaurants serving mainly visitors, whereas the retail offering for locals was rather limited. A request was put to TfL to address this imbalance when leasing its shops.

Other elements were discussed. To create more capacity, the currently disused northern platform will be reopened for eastbound District and Circle Line trains and an initial design for a roof cover in a modern form and shape for it was presented. The central platform will then be used only for westbound trains. The escalators to the Piccadilly Line will be replaced, during which time the Piccadilly Line will not be stopping at the station.

There is still much to be developed

and discussed, including making step-free access part of the first stage of construction. As representatives of ONA, we stressed, together with the other representatives, that parts of the current architecture of the station should remain intact. While the discussion started with a good collaborative atmosphere, there is likely to be tension around creating a balance between the preservation of the station architecture and TfL's commercial needs, which are aimed to maximise income to help fund the redevelopment. As part of the station is listed, the NAs suggested to TfL to obtain a heritage lottery fund grant to help to fund the redevelopment cost.

Given that TfL has been keen to get feedback from the NAs from the start of this new development, we are hopeful that we are in a better position to influence the project so that the end result is beneficial for residents and visitors alike. The next meeting of the Consultative Working Group is to take place on 17 February – and your representatives will be there.

Planning Notifications: *A new policy*

Up until now, we all were aware when neighbours were contemplating a development to their property, because the RBKC Planning Department would send us a letter advising us of their proposal.

No more. Now the Planning Department will issue one printed notice that they will attach to a nearby lamp post or railing, and that is all. You can sign up for email notifications, but then you will receive notices of planning applications from this and thirty other wards. If you don't have the time to read through all the applications, and don't see that single notice pinned to the lamp post, you may know nothing about an application that could impinge on your 'quiet enjoyment' until the


trucks and builders show up next door.


This Association looks through the applications for this ward, tries to identify those where the applicant does not seem to be conforming to the standards laid out by the Council, and submits comments and objections as appropriate. Residents affected by nearby development should pay particular attention to the Construction Traffic Management Plan, as this document allows for local residents to propose changes to the movement of traffic for the development.


If you are not already a member of this Association, and want to stay informed about planning applications near you, it might be a good time to join now!




Protecting Your Neighborhood: *Recent ONA actions*


 ONA helped persuade the RBKC Planning Department to refuse the application for a basement excavation under the footprint of St. Paul's Church in Onslow Square. *(See Update on next page)*


 ONA helped persuade the Council to reject the application to convert St. Luke's Chapel, the only Grade II*-listed building in our neighborhood, into a residence with a new kitchen extension on the northern façade.


 ONA joined with other NAs to support a Public Space Protection Order to tackle noisy, powerful cars speeding in our area. The measure, which allows for fines up to £1,000, was approved and came into effect in November. The eastern end of the ONA area is within the PSPO boundary, but the order will be likely to have a knock-on effect in surrounding streets. For more information, go to www.rbkc.gov.uk/pspo

 ONA helped persuade the Council to impose new conditions on Thurloe Street's Boujis nightclub, the scene of frequent late-night disturbances including a serious fight in October, when seven patrons were arrested. Though the club's license was renewed, the club must now provide at least two staff to monitor the behavior of customers outside until they

have dispersed. Residents who notice ongoing noisy and disruptive behaviour can call Boujis on 07754 749 427, Environmental Health on 020 7361 3002 or the Met Police on 101.

 ONA continues to be in discussion with the Council about traffic congestion outside South Kensington Station and along Sydney Place to Fulham Road. Though unreceptive to our suggestion to try re-phasing traffic lights, the Council and TfL are considering a new set of lights on Pelham Street by the station, and new pedestrian lights across both Sydney Street and the Fulham Road. We will continue to represent the interests of residents and will be pleased to hear from anyone with specific ideas for improvements.

 ONA helped persuade the Council to reject an application to change the use of 40 Pelham Street from office space to retail shops. At this location, the pavement is particularly narrow and already crowded; the addition of a number of shops would have exacerbated both road and pavement congestion.

 Following representations by ONA, the Council rejected Tesco's application to extend the hours for sale of alcohol from 11pm to midnight.



Walking With Dinosaurs: *The Natural History Museum's Grounds Redevelopment*

The NHM invited ONA and other local residents' associations to several meetings over the past year to discuss plans to redevelop its 15-acre grounds, the largest open space on the Cromwell Road.

The new design features a 'civic square' at street level at the corner of Exhibition and Cromwell Road, more green space, a new entrance on Queen's Gate Road and easier access to the Wildlife Garden. These features are meant to reduce crowding and queuing and make this rare urban space more welcoming for nature lovers and families.

A revamp is much needed to cope with the rise in visitors to the museum, from 1.5 million a year twenty years ago to 5.5 million in 2014.

The new landscaping will also echo the exterior of the building, with extinct flora and fauna relief sculptures on

the eastern wing and living species represented on the western wing. Dippy the Diplodocus will be the most prominent new resident of the eastern lawn, along with ferns and other ancient plants. On the western grounds, much of the existing Wildlife Garden will be preserved, with the addition of new pathways, a wildflower lawn and three curving terraces with a variety of plants that grow well in cities.

ONA members have been impressed by the Museum's responsiveness to residents' concerns, including its pledge to provide a public drinking water fountain, a much-needed amenity that will cut down on plastic bottle waste.

The NHM is in the process of submitting a planning application, and hopes to begin work by the end of this year or the start of 2017.

St. Paul's Church *Update*

Over last summer, Holy Trinity Brompton (HTB) put in an application to increase the depth of the crypt at St. Paul's Church in Onslow Square. HTB wanted to excavate up to one metre in depth of soil under the entire footprint of the church in order to construct additional facilities.

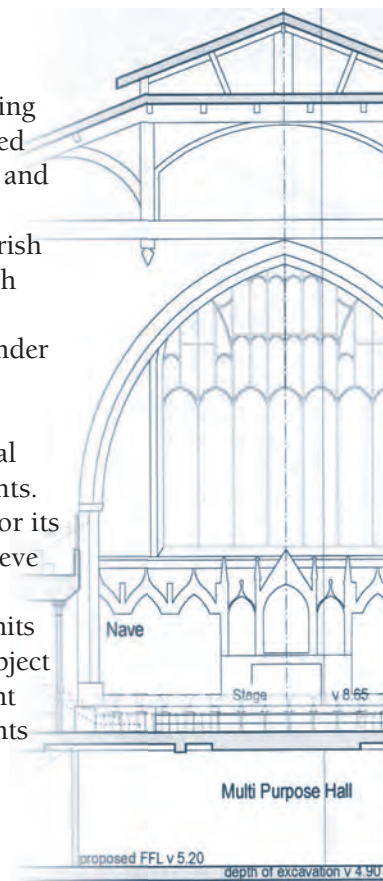
The application HTB made was under legislation that allows, under certain circumstances, for development to be carried out without the need for planning permission – meaning that the proposed construction would not have to conform to the conditions now normally applied to basement development by the Council. There would be no requirement for the developer to consult local residents about their plans for construction traffic, for example.

This Association, along with the Kensington Society, Brompton Association and Quentin Marshall, our Ward Councillor, and with the

advice of a top QC with expertise in planning laws, wrote to the Council that the proposed excavation was an 'engineering operation', and that the result of this development would change the use of St. Paul's from a local parish church to an institution catering for a much wider audience than a local church would expect. Thus the application did not fall under this special piece of legislation and the application was turned down.

The ONA is aware that St. Paul's is a local church built for the benefit of local residents. It appears that HTB is looking elsewhere for its congregation, and are endeavoring to achieve further expansion of the St. Paul's site.

If HTB continues with its plans, and submits a normal planning application, it will be subject to the new stringent conditions for basement development in the RBKC, and local residents will have an opportunity to express their opinions.





ON SLOW

Neighbourhood Association

President Julian Lloyd Webber



Join us!



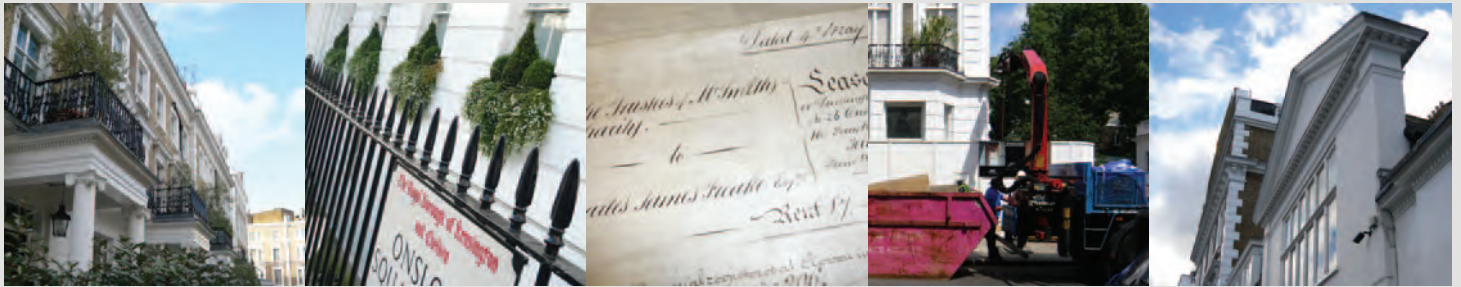
The Onslow Neighborhood Association was formed in 1973 to protect and enhance the residential and environmental quality of a western portion of the Wellcome Trust in South Kensington.

We do this, among other things, by monitoring the weekly applications for planning in the neighborhood, which is not necessarily limited to the boundaries of our area (*see map*). If there is an application just outside our area that seems to conflict with our objectives, we will make an objection in order to avoid the 'leap-frogging' of bad architecture in our area. We are not an island, but part of the larger South Kensington area of the Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea.

We cover the area bounded by the Old Brompton Road to the north, Fulham Road to the south, Thistle Grove to the west and the railway line at South Kensington station to the east.

We often join forces with other associations to lobby on issues that are outside our area if we think they are important enough and may impact on our area in the future. What is not part of our brief are relationships between Landlord and Tenant, or rents, or prices of property.

We keep in touch with this annual newsletter and regular email updates, and host the only garden party permitted in Onslow Square. *This year it will take place on Tuesday 21 June.* Ticket announcements will be sent out in advance.



The objectives of Onslow Neighbourhood Association are:

- To encourage high standards of architecture and town planning
- To stimulate public interest in and care for the beauty, history and character of the neighbourhood
- To encourage the preservation, development and improvement of features of general public amenity or historic interest
- To take all other steps to protect and advance the interests of persons living within the neighbourhood

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address of your bank postcode

On receipt of this request and on each subsequent 1st January until further notice, please pay to the HSBC Bank Ltd, 40-05-14, Gloucester Road Branch, 95 Gloucester Rd, London SW7 4SX, the sum of £15 for the credit account of the Onslow Neighbourhood Association (Account No. 6101 1723)

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signature please print your name

PLEASE SEND TO: Richard Skinner, Honorary Treasurer, ONA, 8 Neville Street, London SW7 3AR **ENQUIRIES:** onslowna@gmail.com



useful Numbers

To report building material or rubbish blocking the road or pavement:

STREETLINE 020 7361 3001

To report noise and nuisance – late loud parties, out-of-hours construction work, etc.:

**ENVIRONMENT HEALTH
020 7361 3002**

To report anti-social behaviour – aggressive begging, disorderly or disruptive conduct:

**MET POLICE 101 and/or
SAFER NEIGHBORHOOD TEAM
020 7161 8982 or
07768 178 122**

**CALL 999 for a fast response
to a dangerous situation**



ONA Garden Party

The annual ONA Garden Party will take place on Tuesday 21 June in Onslow Square. Ticket announcements will be sent out in advance.



photos: Laura Mosedale



The second annual Exhibition Road Community Christmas Street Party, organised by South Kensington Estates, took place on 3 December 2015. With a grant obtained by ONA from City Living London Life, free mince pies, sausage rolls and mulled wine were provided to guests. Despite the damp weather, a collection raised £132 for Alzheimer's Society. www.alzheimers.org.uk

Tour Parliament... *with your neighbours*

The office of Lady Victoria Borwick, the MP for Kensington since May 2015, has offered to organise a free tour of Parliament for up to twenty members of ONA. It will take place in the spring or early summer. If you are interested, please email onslowna@gmail.com



Would you like to contribute to this newsletter?

Please email the editor
Laura Mosedale
lpmosedale@me.com

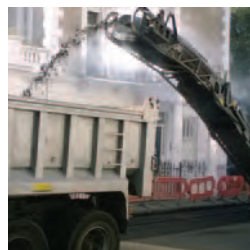
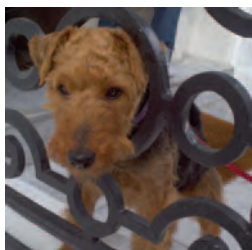
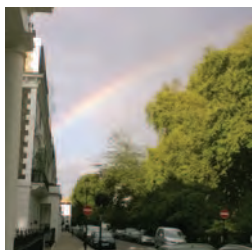
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