

For our latest news, please visit our website: [ona.org.uk](http://ona.org.uk)

photo: © Julian Lloyd Webber

## Julian Lloyd Webber, our President, *writes*



As the president of a neighbourhood association in such a magnificent place as South Kensington, it is tempting to use my annual message to draw attention to anything that might threaten its unique character. This year, as a welcome change, I decided to celebrate a few of the many good things that have happened in our 'neck of the woods', beginning with the cheery sight of the former Christie's Sale Room on Old Brompton Road buzzing with life again, with its Banksy Limitless show. Then there was the cool refit of Little Waitrose – which has promised to repeat its showcase of the talents of our local schoolchildren with another Easter colouring competition. And – bucking the trend of retail nearly everywhere else – several useful independent shops have opened in previously boarded-up sites. Now let's turn to the saga of the plans to build on top of South Kensington station ... (oops I've done it again)!

## Letter from our chairman, Mark Goodwin

On several occasions in the last year, different groups of residents have reached out to the ONA, in ways which reflect our growing ability to provide support and solutions so that everyone benefits. We had a relationship crisis between residents and the Anglesea Arms. By understanding the root of the problem, and discussing with all involved, we were able to restore former clientele, boost security, and return to harmony. On another occasion, we were involved in a crisis requiring sensitive police support.

We have been active in improving traffic planning on Pelham Street, to restore roads to residents when developers are not actually working, particularly at weekends.

We maintain a very effective relationship with our Councillors, and continue our regular 'walkabouts' with RBKC Street Enforcement Officers. ONA reviews all planning and licensing applications, in the interests of our membership. At the moment, we are still hindered by the recent cyber-attack on RBKC, which will hopefully soon be resolved.

### COMMITTEE ASSISTANCE NEEDED, PLEASE VOLUNTEER IF YOU CAN!

We are looking for new committee members.  
Please email [onslowna@gmail.com](mailto:onslowna@gmail.com) if you think you could help.

## ONA AGM 2026

20 April @ 6pm

Please come to the 53rd **Annual General Meeting** on **Monday, 20 April** in the Garden Room at the Natural History Museum, entrance via the gate on Exhibition Road. Bring a neighbour! Drinks at 6pm, and the meeting will start at 6.30pm. An agenda will be posted on [ona.org.uk](http://ona.org.uk)

Save the Date!

# 10 JUNE



The ONA 2026  
**Garden Party**  
Onslow Square

## POLICE AND CRIME UPDATE

# Stop, Thief!

Report by Laura Mosedale  
Courtfield Ward Panel Chair

As the chair of the Courtfield Ward Panel, I invite any resident of the ward to join our group. It is a great opportunity to meet local police, find out what's happening in our area, and provide feedback. If interested, please email [onslowna@gmail.com](mailto:onslowna@gmail.com) with 'CW Panel' in the subject line.

At our last meeting in December, Sergeant Peter Leach reported that recorded crimes for the last three months were similar to the previous quarter. Forty percent of crimes in Courtfield Ward were theft (much of it shoplifting from Waitrose and Tesco) and 20% were thefts of (or more commonly from) motor vehicles. The most common sites of these thefts were Onslow Square, Sumner Place and Ashburn Place, often between Tuesday and Friday, and between 6pm and 9pm. Sergeant Leach noted that when officers were sent out on cycles to patrol the streets, thefts from cars dropped (12 were reported

in October). When officers were temporarily drafted elsewhere, thefts rose (to 23 in November). Police presence is a deterrent. Sgt. Leach hopes to resume these patrols. The usual advice for residents applies: *do not leave any valuable items in cars, even for a short period*, and remind all guests and visitors to take the same precautions.

A detailed Met Police report for the Royal Borough of Kensington & Chelsea, Westminster, and Hammersmith & Fulham for the period from 22/12/2025 to 18/01/26 revealed that Courtfield Ward was considered a hotspot for residential burglaries, compared to other wards. The peak time frame for these offences was between 11am and 1pm; windows were often the point of entry, and scaffolding was a risk factor, making it easier to access higher floors. *Always secure your windows and doors, and do not open your front door to*

*allow anyone access into a lobby without verifying their identity.*

In that one-month period, across the three boroughs, there were reports of 1,100 mobile phones snatched and 555 stolen by pickpockets. Hopefully, the recent successful Met Police 'Operation Echosteep', which took down a prolific mobile phone crime ring, will reduce these thefts, but all residents should keep their phones out of sight when out and about, particularly if standing at a bus stop.

In late February, Kensington Police Station, the last in our borough, closed its front desk to the public, due to budget constraints. Other front counters across London closed, while some extended opening hours. Most members of the public already access police services online or by phone. Sgt. Leach encourages all residents to sign up to the new MetEngage website: [www.metengage.co.uk/Content/Pages/Sign-Up](http://www.metengage.co.uk/Content/Pages/Sign-Up)

## LOCAL PLANNING NEWS

Report by Michael Stock, ONA Planning

### PICTURE HOUSE, FULHAM ROAD

Last summer, with Cllr. Janet Evans and others, I met with the Little House Group (LHG), new owners of the cinema, to discuss their plans to create a flagship member club for adults and children. Their vision is to restore the building as a place of entertainment, with two cinema screens open to the public. More news on the LHG website & when the planning application goes in.

### EVELYN GARDENS

The Wellcome Trust (WT) have held public consultations on their proposals to refurbish their properties, currently leased to Imperial College. The plans will create family-sized and smaller units, providing an estimated 90 additional homes. The draft Construction & Traffic Management Plan is available at

[www.evelyn-gardens.co.uk](http://www.evelyn-gardens.co.uk) and ONA will respond fully when the planning application is submitted. Important questions remain about design quality, facades, parking, affordability, and traffic. WT have been invited to the ONA AGM to share information on final plans.

### BLAKES HOTEL, ROLAND GARDENS

Although ONA encouraged RBKC to serve an enforcement notice on the owner a year ago, the scaffolded building remains a blight. Apparently, it is up for sale and there is a full-time on-site security presence.

### GLEN HOUSE, 125-133 OLD BROMPTON ROAD

The building gap above the former car showroom is to be filled in with high-quality architecture, and the Ferrari showroom is expected to return. ONA has given initial support for the proposed mixed-use development.

# South Kensington Station & Pelham Street



In January Transport for London finally announced that the redesign of South Kensington Station will now take place. The plans include the provision of step-free access to the District & Circle lines and the Piccadilly line, a new entrance on Thurloe Street, and a disused platform brought back into use to improve capacity. Onslow Neighbourhood Association (ONA) worked hard with other residents associations to ensure that any redevelopment of the site was conditional on these improvements to the station.

The Wellcome Trust projects at 40 & 80 Pelham Street are still underway. These will provide offices, with commercial units at ground level. Work at No. 40 is in its final stages and is expected to complete in May. No. 80 still has a way to go, with completion forecast for October 2027. ONA remains committed to helping residents with issues of noise, traffic and other disruptions.

# e-bike

## update



Since January 2025 Royal Borough of Kensington & Chelsea enforcement officers have confiscated over

1,000 rental e-bikes from Bolt, Forest, Lime and Voi. All parked dangerously on the streets, these bikes were placed in storage, and only released when the providers paid a one-off seizure fine, together with a daily storage fee if the bikes were not collected within 14 days. When left outside of a parking bay, but not causing an obstruction, the officers report this to the suppliers, who then have to move the bikes within two to six hours, or have these bikes also seized. By the end of 2025, RBKC had collected £81,000 in charges against the e-bike companies, income used to expand the work of the enforcement officers.

photo: Laura Moseedale

# Natural History Museum garden

The BBC recently aired David Attenborough's Wild London documentary. With some 4,000 parks and four million private gardens, London can be said to be the greenest major world city. The five acres at the Natural History Museum (NHM) were featured, being home to the Evolution Garden (Exhibition Road entrance) and the Nature Discovery Garden (Queen's Gate entrance).

You can walk through time from east to west. Exiting the TFL tunnel, you emerge into a canyon, created from UK rocks more than 2.7 billion years old. Pathways lead past dinosaurs and their footprints, on to present-day plants and pond life. The new Garden Kitchen café is located in the Evolution Garden. The NHM are kindly hosting our AGM this year in the Garden Room, when we shall hear more about the museum and its gardens.

*Update by Malcolm Ransome*

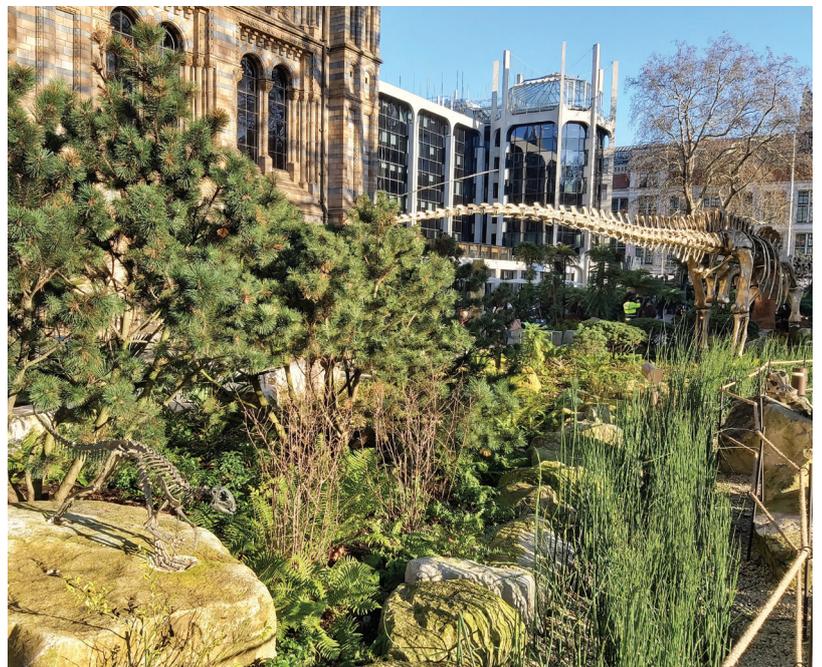


photo: Malcolm Ransome



# ONA Garden Party

Last year's Garden Party was a wonderful success, with fine weather, and a large gathering of our members, neighbours, and other local residents, all enjoying the beautiful gardens and our string quartet. This year's event will take place on **Wednesday 10 June** in Onslow Square. Please check your e-mails and the website for updates. If you would like to help on the day, please email [onslowna@org.uk](mailto:onslowna@org.uk)



photo: Laura Moseedale



## ONSLOW

Neighbourhood Association

President Julian Lloyd Webber

ONA is a Registered Charity. Charity Number: 264 296

 *Join us!*



The ONA was formed in 1972 to protect and enhance the residential and environmental quality of much of the western part of the Wellcome Trust estate in South Kensington (*see map*). We keep in touch with this annual newsletter and regular email updates. We host the only garden party permitted in Onslow Square – a unique opportunity to meet your neighbours, councillors and representatives of other local associations. Household membership is only £20 a year.

Joining is easy – please print off and return our membership form at <https://ona.org.uk/printform.html>

### *The objectives of the ONA are:*

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



### *useful contacts*

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

**STREETLINE 020 7361 3001** email: [streetline@rbkc.gov.uk](mailto:streetline@rbkc.gov.uk)

[www.rbkc.gov.uk/contact-us/report-problem](http://www.rbkc.gov.uk/contact-us/report-problem)

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

**ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH 020 7361 3002** email: [environmentalhealth@rbkc.gov.uk](mailto:environmentalhealth@rbkc.gov.uk)

[www.rbkc.gov.uk/global/report-it/noise-or-nuisance](http://www.rbkc.gov.uk/global/report-it/noise-or-nuisance)

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

**MET POLICE 101** or [www.met.police.uk](http://www.met.police.uk) and click on **REPORT**. Call **999** to report an emergency