

The Kensington Society

Registered Charity Number 267778

Statement of Financial Activities

for the year ended 31 December 2023

The Kensington Society

Report of the Trustees

The Trustees present their report and accounts for the year ended 31 December 2023.

Constitution and objects

The Charity's objects shall be to preserve and improve the amenities of Kensington for the public benefit by stimulating interest in its history and records, promoting good architecture and planning in its future development and by protecting, preserving and improving its buildings, open spaces and other features of beauty or historic or public interest.

The Kensington Society was founded in 1953. The constitution is a trust deed adopted on 11 November 2010 and is available at www.kensingtonsociety.org.

Patron

His Royal Highness the Duke of Gloucester, KG, GCVO

President

Lord Carnwath of Notting Hill, CVO, PC

Vice-President

Nick Ross CBE

Council

Barnabas Brunner
Peter De Vere Hunt
Susan Lockhart
Sir Angus Stirling

Trustees

Amanda Frame, chairman
Martin Frame, treasurer and membership secretary
Michael Bach, chairman of the planning committee
Michael Becket, annual report editor
Thomas Blomberg, editor of newsletter and website, member of planning committee
Vanessa Bartulovic, member of planning committee
Sophia Lambert CB, member of planning committee
Peter Mischcon
Barry Munday, member of planning committee
Steve Mertz
Henry Peterson OBE, member of planning committee
Shayan Keyhan-Rad, member of planning committee (Appointed 29 October 2023)

Review of the year's activities and achievements

I moved to Kensington in 1987, to Portland Road, two houses from the Portland Arms. The Arms was a bit of a rough pub catering to the non-Julie's crowd. A few of the neighbours met to discuss the problems which extended beyond the pub to traffic and parking. No problems with the postman who quickly introduced me to the local doctor, Dr Watson, and the butcher, Lidgates.

The importance of architecture in our lives cannot be understated; it surrounds us and reflects us. I studied architecture because of the house I grew up in. It was by Paul Rudolph. Every aspect was thought through, responding to the climate pre-AC, it was light and transparent. What that house gave me was what I became. The effect of both good architecture and bad architecture cannot go unnoticed.

We moved to St James's Gardens in 1998, a house built for an architect! I was asked to join the Norland Conservation Society (NCS) board as secretary. Dear Clive Wilson realised I was not the one for secretary when my first minutes were recorded as the Norland Conversation Society.

True action came when 3G offered the church in our square £15,000 for the use of the tower. Their plan was to remove the bells, install the 3G equipment in the tower and replace the flagpole with a mobile mast. NCS took the position that the church needed the money. I did not take that position. It was not difficult to gather support opposing the proposal and very quickly the powers took over. An offer was proposed to the church that the same money would be given over a period to be used for non-ecumenical needs. The wonderful thing besides saving our grade listed church, was the programme which was developed using the funds established a reading programme. The local primary school had over thirty-seven different languages and the children were not able to read at home. The after-school programme grew and soon it was obvious that the mothers were staying on as they too were learning to read and to speak English.

In 2001 I joined the Kensington Society. I was asked to assist the review of planning applications, just up my alley. I continued as a co-opted member and was appointed to the executive committee in 2003.

In early days I along with a member or two of the committee, would meet in the RBKC planning department to review the actual plans of applications. I am unclear how the cases we reviewed were selected but there were few. Our comments were written in pencil on a form provided by the planners and usually stated "We, the Kensington Society, deplore the destruction of this fine Victorian mansion." No mention of planning policies or reasons for opposing the application.

I became the planning chairman in 2006 and that year for the first time the annual report included a planning report. It is not surprising, to look back as the first developments were the Odeon, De Vere Gardens, 100 West Cromwell Road, Commonwealth Institute and deep subterranean excavations! I was elected the chairman of the Society in 2008.

Sir Ronald Arculus had recently retired as chairman to become the President. Sir Ronald was not the retiring type and with several major changes in the committee, we were highly active in the beginning with the administration. One of the duties as chairman was to meet with Sir Ronald bi-monthly at the Muffin Man. Over tuna sandwiches, I was grilled about every detail of the actions of the society. It may sound painful but it was a joy and very much a learning experience.

One of the first actions was to ask Clive Wilson, a fabulous champion for conservation and an artist, to provide a painting for the cover of the annual. You might not have noticed but every annual since that date has had a living Kensington artist's work on the cover.

In the following years, the society was regularly active in both opposing and supporting the changes within the planning system. What became a common theme by the government was 'the presumption in favour of development'; even then

'expanding the definition of permitted development rights'. What I see clearly now is the fight we have had for years had gone on before me and will continue.

Another first action we took was to update our constitution. It might be a task which should be taken by the next chairman? We went from an executive committee to trustees. Over time the accounts were adjusted. No longer held in a plastic bag and given to an accountant at the end of the year. The membership records were recorded in paper ledgers and only the membership secretary was allowed to access them. Both the membership and the accounts were computerised and reported at the trustee bi-monthly meeting. Thank you, Martin Frame!

If you look at the trustees now you will see diversity, character, dedication and the ability to disagree but form a single, joint opinion and to give unimaginable amount of time.

My first architectural argument as chairman was with our MP, Sir Michael Rifkind, over the Commonwealth Institute. Sir Michael supported de-listing the buildings allowing for developers to move in unrestricted. The Institute was listed in 1988 Grade II*. Sir Malcolm thought it unattractive. My response was not all buildings are 'attractive' but buildings such as the Commonwealth Institute do lead us on from one era to the next. Besides being architecturally beautiful, it is engineering significant. We would not have Bilbao today.

The same year we fought to save the Institute, the Warwick Road Planning Brief and masterplan was produced. Undisclosed was an architect who produced the entire masterplan, we understand without fee, and then went on to be the architect for all the buildings but one site. A bit fishy and no wonder the sameness. The result on Warwick Road today is exactly what we feared. The buildings are boring, characterless, produced by computer engineered repetition. They could be in Dallas or Beijing. Warwick Road typifies the banality that too often is accepted by RBKC. Where is the humanity in those buildings, in the site? What are those single tall buildings...called campaniles?

Many within the community around Newcombe House in Notting Hill opposed the Kensington Society support of the former scheme by Brockton Capital. Even some of our trustees vocally opposed the design. But there was a central park, space for a farmer's market, improvements required for the underground station, a large medical centre, and both luxury and affordable housing. What has been approved this time? A small surgery and a structure that is 316% larger than existing...no other public benefits, no housing. I feel strongly that the planners, but most importantly our councillors, have failed us. That is besides the fact that the building will be a horror. As for the handwritten pencil objections, I am often accused particularly by the former Mr Bore, that our objections were too long. We now clearly quote the Local Plan, the NPPF, the Mayor of London Plan and Act after Act. What he and others did not understand was the objections were written for our members as well as, if needed, for an appeal.

Since becoming chairman our membership has grown, our involvement with and participation with the council has flourished. I for one very much value the relationships we have with RBKC officers. The relationship is direct, respectful and differences are allowed to be voiced without anger.

There are other relationships I value. We have the most amazing relationships with the museums, with developers, and with our members. There are a few developers who do not understand what can be accomplished together. A fine example of one which has not worked is with Wellcome Trust who speak to us through their PR firm. The same can be said of Native Land. But then there is our relationship, an open and direct one, with the Earls Court Development Corporation and South Kensington Estates. We will not give up on Ballymore/Sainsbury at Kensal but that may be a lost battle directed by the Mayor.

Eight of our twelve trustees are either chairman of their own resident's association or on the main committee. One of the main aims that we are currently pushing is to

increase the thirty-six affiliates in both our actions as well as understanding their needs.
Since 2004 it has been fun, frustrating, rewarding, intelligentially stimulating, and ...

Financial review

The Society thanks all the members who have generously subscribed £11,005, donations and legacies of £10,963 which qualified for Gift Aid of £4,810.
The total income for the year was £53,862, an increase of £22,800.
The cost of administration is allocated on a time basis to the various charitable activities.
The total expenditure was £60,414, an increase of £24,389.
The balance sheet has unrestricted funds of £61,677, a reduction of £6,551. These funds are necessary to secure the future of the Society. Rebuilding funds through subscriptions, donations and legacies is welcomed.

Statement of financial activities for the year to 31 December 2023

Income	2023	2022
	£	£
Donations and legacies		
Membership subscriptions	11,005.00	10,577.00
Donations and legacies	10,963.67	2,975.71
Gift Aid	4,810.92	2,730.06
Total donations and legacies	26,779.59	16,282.77
Charitable activities		
Events	14,176.21	4,038.00
Annual report advertising	11,700.00	10,250.00
Total charitable activities	25,876.21	14,288.00
Investment income		
Bank interest	1,206.95	491.76
Total income	53,862.75	31,062.53
Expenditure		
Charitable activities		
Newsletter	3,330.10	3,001.97
Events	20,412.21	6,590.22
Annual report	11,040.35	9,347.96
Planning	23,443.72	14,540.96
Membership	1,111.80	1,030.65
Charitable subscriptions	200.00	195.00
Total charitable activities expense	59,538.18	34,706.76
Other		
Insurance	96.00	658.31
Examiner	780.00	660.00
Total other expense	876.00	1,318.31
Total expenditure	60,414.18	36,025.07
Net income/(expenditure)	(6,551.43)	(4,962.54)
Total unrestricted funds brought forward	68,228.79	73,191.33
Total unrestricted funds carried forward	61,677.36	68,228.79

Balance sheet as at 31 December 2023

	2023	2022
	£	£
Current assets		
Debtors		
Accrued income and prepayments		
Interest	133.61	122.31
Insurance	64.00	64.00
Total accrued income and prepayments	197.61	186.31
Cash at bank and in hand		
Nationwide Building Society	40,000.00	60,000.00
Barclays Bank	26,778.04	12,738.57
PayPal	1,437.14	1,604.16
Total cash at bank and in hand	68,215.18	74,342.73
Total current assets	68,412.79	74,529.04
Creditors: amounts falling due within one year		
Deferred income		
Subscriptions and donations	1,220.00	1,010.00
Creditors and accruals		
Creditors	3,797.27	3,632.09
City Living Local Life - Norland	998.16	998.16
Accruals	720.00	660.00
Total deferred income and accruals	6,735.43	6,300.25
Total net assets	61,677.36	68,288.79
Funds of the charity		
Unrestricted funds	61,677.36	68,288.79

MSc Frame 17 April 2024

Approved by the Trustees 18 January 2024

Signed: Martin Frame, Chartered Accountant
Treasurer and Membership Secretary
The Kensington Society

Notes to the accounts for the year ended 31 December 2023

- **Charity registered address and number**
The Kensington Society's charity number is 267778.
- **Accounting policies**
These accounts have been prepared based under the historical cost convention in accordance with Accounting and Reporting by Charities – Statement of Recommended Practice (FRS 102).

Income

- **Recognition of incoming income**
These are included in the Statement of Financial Activities (SoFA) when:
 - The charity becomes entitled to the income.
 - The trustees are certain they will receive the income; and
 - The monetary value can be measured with sufficient reliability.
- **Donations**
Donations are only included in the SoFA when the charity has unconditional entitlement to the income.
- **Tax reclaims on gifts and donations**
Incoming income from tax reclaims are included in the SoFA to the extent that claims have been made.
- **Volunteer help**
The value of any voluntary help received is not included in the financial activities.
- **Investment income**
This is included in the financial activities when receivable.

Expenditure and liabilities

- **Liability recognition**
Liabilities are recognised as soon as there is a legal or constructive obligation committing the charity to expenditure.

Financial instruments

Debtors

Debtors do not carry any interest and are stated at their nominal value. Appropriate allowances for estimated irrecoverable amounts are recognised in the SoFA when there is objective evidence that the asset is impaired.

Cash at bank and in hand

These comprise cash at bank and other short-term highly liquid bank deposits with an original maturity of three months or less.

Public Benefit Statement

The trustees confirm that they have complied with the duty in section 4 of the Charities Act 2011 to have due regard to the Charity Commission's general guidance on public benefit 'Charities and Public Benefit'.

THE KENSINGTON SOCIETY
REPORT OF THE INDEPENDENT EXAMINER
TO THE TRUSTEES OF THE KENSINGTON SOCIETY

I report on the accounts of The Kensington Society for the year ended 31 December 2023, which are set out on pages 2 to 8.

Respective Responsibilities of the Trustees and the Independent Examiner

The Trustees are responsible for the preparation of the accounts; you consider that an audit is not required this year under section 144(2) of the Charities Act 2011 (the 2011 Act) and that an independent examination is needed.

It is my responsibility to:

- (i) examine the accounts under section 145 of the 2011 Act;
- (ii) to follow the procedures laid down in the general Directions given by the Charity Commission under section 145(5)(b) of the 2011 Act; and
- (iii) to state whether particular matters have come to my attention.

Basis of the Independent Examiner's Report

My examination was carried out in accordance with the General Directions given by the Charity Commissioners. An examination includes a review of the accounting records kept by the charity and a comparison of the accounts presented with those records. It also includes consideration of any unusual items or disclosures in the accounts, and seeking explanations from you as trustees concerning any such matters. The procedures undertaken do not provide all the evidence that would be required in an audit, and consequently no opinion is given as to whether the accounts present a 'true and fair view' and the report is limited to those matters set out in the statement below.

Independent Examiner's Statement

In connection with my examination, no matter has come to my attention which gives me cause to believe that in any material respect:

- the accounting records were not kept in accordance with Section 130 of the 2011 Act; and
- the accounts did not accord with the accounting records;
- the accounts did not comply with the applicable requirements concerning the form and content of accounts set out in the Charities (Accounts and Reports) Regulations 2008 other than any requirement that the accounts give a "true and fair" view which is not a matter considered as part of an independent examination.

I have no concerns and have come across no other matters in connection with the examination to which attention should be drawn in this report in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.

A. Ktistakis

Angela Ktistakis, ACA, FCCA
GMAK Chartered Accountants
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London W11 2DX

Date: *17 April 2024*