

LADBROKE ASSOCIATION
Draft Minutes of 48th Annual General Meeting
held on Thursday 27th July 2017
at St.Peter's Church Kensington Park Road

Present Sophia Lambert, Chairman
 Paul Bastick, Treasurer
 Anne Chorley, Secretary

Michael Becket
Kay Broadbent
Barbara Carlisle
Peter Chapman
Nicola Child
William Clark
Carol Conrad
Tom Croft
Rita Darlow
Fiona Fleming Brown
Jean Gillespie
Jack de Gruiter
Peter Hodges
Lady Amabel Lindsay
Ann Mytton
Denise Neilson
Malcolm Pawley
Robina Rose
Jo Simmonds
Diana Ward

Apologies Peter Mishcon
 Peggy Post
 Catherine Faulks
 David Marshall
 David Campion
 Sandra Kamen
 Tony Temple
 Gordon Cooke

The Minutes of the last Annual General Meeting

The minutes of the last meeting were circulated and approved.

Matters Arising from the Minutes

Robina Rose suggested that, as we were approaching our 50th year of the Ladbroke Association's foundation, it might be worth considering producing a brochure on the history of the Ladbroke Association which could be widely distributed as part of a membership drive.

Chairman's Report

Planning matters

The Chairman reported that the Association's main work during the year had continued to be the monitoring of planning applications. The Committee looked at all those relating to the Ladbroke area, around 20 a month. Normally, they would put in objections to no more than three or four a month, mostly relating to extensions that are out of character with the area. In quite a few cases, the Association does not actually object, but suggests minor changes to improve what is proposed, or that the opportunity of the works should be taken to put right some other defect, eg a missing cornice. The Association's hope is that the Council will try to persuade the applicant to make the appropriate changes. However, there was little sign of their doing so. Fortunately there were quite a lot of applicants who themselves are keen to restore missing features, for example the reinstatement of a missing porch in Clarendon Road and the restoration of bottle balustrade at roof level on a pair of semi-detached villas at 7-8 Lansdowne Walk.

The Association kept an eye on applications for 'non-material amendments' to planning applications. When an application has been granted, the applicant can apply later for minor amendments without these going through the full planning process. These are only be accepted by council officers if they believe that they will not be controversial and will make little difference to the approved proposal. But the officers did not always realise the effect that even minor changes can have on neighbours or on the historic interest of the building.

Basements

There had been a big reduction in the number of applications for basements, no more than 8 or 9 over the last year in the Ladbroke area in the last 12 months. It was not clear how far this is a result of the Council's new tougher policy

towards basement development. Probably a more important element was the state of the economy. Unfortunately there were still plenty of unimplemented planning permissions for basements from previous years, so we were unlikely to see any real tail off in basement works in the area for some time. Although planning permissions lapsed after three years, once work had begun there was no deadline for completing it.

Although RBKC have taken significant steps to reduce the nuisance caused by basement development, there are still some problems that can only be solved by changes to the rules by central government. In particular, The Association had urged that authorities, when deciding planning applications, should be able to take into account the pollution and other nuisance caused during the construction period. There were also a number of defects in the party wall legislation which mean that many people were left out of pocket. As a result of pressure from the Labour peer Lord Dubs, DCLG had agreed about 18 months ago to a review of the planning regime as it applied to basements. The Ladbroke Association submitted a detailed response setting out what we believe needed to be changed, but since then we have heard nothing.

New houses

There had been several cases of applications to demolish houses and rebuild them bigger and better. An example was the application to demolish three pleasant but undistinguished 1950s houses in Lansdowne Rise and replace them by two larger family houses. Mostly, however, it was Mews houses that are targeted for this treatment. The Association was keen to protect historic mews buildings which add to the character of the area. But in many of our mews most of the houses are often post-war Jerry-built structures of little interest. While one had to deplore the massive nuisance caused to mews residents by the demolition and construction, this was not something that the planning system can take into account, and on other grounds it was difficult to object to such projects. Indeed, in some cases, there was an opportunity in a mews for some really imaginative modern architecture that would not fit in a grander street. Unfortunately this opportunity was rarely taken.

Grenfell Tower

All members of the committee had been as shocked and horrified as everybody by the Grenfell Tower fire, not least because it is so close to the Ladbroke area. We are an apolitical charity and are bound by the rules on charities not to step outside our charitable objectives, which are to do with promoting high standards of architecture; the beauty and character of the neighbourhood; and local features of amenity and historic interest. We concluded, therefore, that we should not intervene in the debates that have followed, but we have tried to give members some idea of how to direct their help.

Website

The recent Newsletter announced that the Association wanted to modernize the design of its website (which gets some 20 or 30 hits a day). Suggestions would be welcome from members on what should be included on the website, or on an expert (preferably local) who could redesign the website.

Annual Party

As well as pursuing its charitable objectives, the Association had always tried to arrange events for its members, normally on a payment basis. Last winter it had held a very successful annual party, thanks to Flora Fraser who allowed the use of her beautiful house in Kensington Park Gardens. The Committee was immensely grateful to the generous residents who made these parties possible by lending their houses.

Adoption of the Annual Accounts

The Treasurer circulated the accounts to the meeting and presented a report on individual items of income and expenditure. It was noted that the Association claimed Gift Aid on a two yearly basis. The subscription remained at £15 and there had been a number of new members, although others had left when they moved out of the area. It had been decided to donate £2500 from a £5,000 legacy we had to St Peter's Church Appeal and this would be put towards the restoration of the Temple on the pinnacle of the Church which had not been explored for more than 40 years. Reserves remained substantial and were considered to be prudent and sufficient to enable the Association to support any action in respect of planning or the need for specific advice.

Peter Chapman proposed the adoption of the accounts and this was seconded by Nicola Child.

Election of Officers

In 2015 Sophia Lambert had been elected as Chairman for three years. Paul Bastick and Anne Chorley had agreed to stand again as Treasurer and Secretary. They were proposed and seconded by Jean Gillespie and Peter Chapman.

Election of Committee

The three year terms of committee members David Campion, Peter Chapman, Catherine Faulks, Sandra Kamen, David Marshall, Peter Mishcon, Malcolm Pawley and Peggy Post had expired, but all had agreed to stand again. Their

election was proposed by Nicola Child and seconded by Jean Gillespie.

Tom Croft and Kay Broadbent were elected to the committee in 2016 and 2015 respectively and would be due for reelection in 2019 and 2018.

Peter Chapman had agreed to act as Vice Chairman (an informal position) for the coming year. The Committee hoped to coopt Tony Temple, a barrister from Lansdowne Walk at its next meeting.

Any Other Business

Robina Rose suggested that the Ladbroke Association should be talking to the Council about the way that the Building Regulations were implemented. At the present time this varied from Borough to Borough which was not very satisfactory.

Malcolm Pawley raised the matter of Article 4 Directions. The Chairman confirmed that the Association was planning to approach the council on making new Article 4 directions on a number of worrying features, including large garden sheds and painting brickwork.

Lady Amabel Lindsay asked what could do about protecting the original telephone boxes which we designed by Gilbert Scott. It was pointed out that there were none on the streets of the Ladbroke area and most outside it are now listed.

Jean Gillespie proposed a vote of thanks to the committee for all they do on behalf of the members and Peter Chapman proposed a vote of thanks to the Chairman, Treasurer and Secretary.

There being no further business the Chairman thanked everyone for attending and closed the meeting.

