



CARA
Canbury & Riverside Association

CARA newsletter December 2007

Seasons Greetings

... to all our members from the CARA committee. We hope you enjoyed the CARA carol concert on the 16th, and wish you all a happy 2008.



Hotel development update

As most readers will know by now, the latest plans for the hotel and residential development have been rejected by the Council. The developers, NHP, intend to appeal, but, because the appeals procedure can be lengthy, expensive and uncertain, they are also reconsidering the design and have commissioned architects Squire and Partners to come up with new designs that would overcome the objections, most of which were related to the bulk, height and density of the proposed residential blocks nearest the river.

On 27th November, representatives from NHP and Squire and Partners met with CARA committee members, a representative from the Royal Quarter Residents Association, and several local councillors, to discuss the possibilities and to hear a range of views. It proved a very

constructive and interesting evening, with the architects suggesting that 7 or 8 storeys, or even fewer, carefully planned and arranged on the site, could achieve the requisite density without damaging trees, views or public access. Architect Michael Squire specialises in simple buildings with interesting rooftop "jewellery", and also expressed a wish to design just one tall slim building as an iconic and elegant landmark on the site, though he would sacrifice this if it proved unpopular or impractical. He also said he was "passionate" about environmentally-sound design.

Though all present agreed that the site as it is now is an eyesore and that development is well overdue, views about the way forward were, inevitably, mixed, with some supporting the original design, some wanting something more traditional, and some supporting truly 21st century designs. Sustainability, the appearance from various viewpoints, and the effects of the development on Canbury Gardens and neighbouring housing were all raised as concerns. The discussion around height was particularly interesting, and it remains to be seen whether local residents will share the architects' love of slender towers.

See the CARA website for more details and diagrams of the architects' suggestions.

Soupcon's seasonal recipe

Local residents and proprietors of Soupcon Café on Richmond Road Ben and Amanda Sharp thank all of you who have become regular customers since they opened earlier this year. They aim to cater for local people who appreciate simple, seasonal, home-cooked food, without all the preservatives and chemicals in processed food. Ben and Amanda offer CARA members the following seasonal recipe.

Mincemeat and Apple Jalousie (Serves 8)

400g mincemeat
1 small Bramley cooking apple, peeled, cored and finely chopped
Zest of one orange
½ tsp ground mixed spice
2 tbsp rum
375g puff pastry
Plain flour, for dusting
1 large egg, lightly beaten
1 dsp golden granulated sugar, mixed with ¼ tsp ground cinnamon
Caster sugar, for dusting

Pre-heat the oven to 200C or 400 F / gas mark 6. Lightly grease a large baking tray.

Place the mincemeat in a large bowl, then add the apple, orange zest, spice and rum and give it a good mix.

Unroll the pastry onto a surface lightly dusted with flour, and roll it into slightly thinner rectangles, each measuring approx. 15 X 45 cm.

Roll one of the pieces of pastry slightly thinner and larger, and then fold it in half lengthways. Using a sharp knife cut diagonally about 5cm into a fold at 2.5cm intervals.

Place the second rectangle of pastry on the baking tray and pile the mincemeat filling onto the pastry, leaving a 2.5cm edge all around. Brush the edge with a little cold water.

Unfold the first rectangle of pastry and place it over the mincemeat. Using your thumbs, press the edges all around the filling to seal them. Finally, trim the pastry to 1 cm around the filling and either crimp the edges with your fingers or use a knife.

Brush all over with the beaten egg, then sprinkle with sugar and cinnamon mixture over the top. Bake for 30 –35 minutes and sprinkle with icing sugar just before serving with cream.

About Kingston Rowing Club

Kingston Rowing Club, based in Canbury Gardens, is one of the world's oldest and most successful amateur rowing clubs and will be celebrating its 150th anniversary in 2008. The club caters for all levels, from novices to medallists in the last two Olympic Games. The 50 men and women currently training under the guidance of a professional coach enjoy one of the longest and calmest stretches of rowing water in the UK. Their intensive training schedule involves land training four times a week and training on the river both days at the weekend.

The club also supports a large and successful junior group, organised by age into a junior 18 -14 squad and a junior 13 - 11 squad. This was developed under the Project Oarsome initiative to introduce younger rowers to the club and create the Olympians of the future. The junior section hosted an Open Day on Sunday December 16 for parents and children who would like to become involved in 2008.

Thames Landscape Strategy

TLS has many plans of interest to Thames-lovers, but amongst the ones that came up at the Community Advisory Group's November meeting that most directly affect the CARA area are proposals to use parts of Ham Lands as "space for water" to avoid flooding elsewhere. This would involve removing all the rubble deposited there post-war and some trees (also post-war),

and restoring / creating water meadows. For most of the time the land would not be flooded and would still be accessible for dog-walking, jogging, cycling and all the other ways it is currently used.

Consultation and research is taking place on riverside lighting on the towpath between Richmond and Twickenham. Use of the towpath at night, the local bat population, different kinds of lighting, light pollution and reducing reflection in the water will all influence the Richmond decision, which will be very relevant to decisions on lighting in the similar environment of Canbury Gardens.

It emerged at the meeting that Kingston has had less Heritage Lottery Funding than any other London borough and therefore applications would be favourably received. Possible HLF / TLS / CARA projects could be restoration of Canbury Gardens, lighting projects, and improvements to the area between the Gardens and town.

See www.thames-landscape-strategy.org.uk for more information.

Richmond Road improvements

Following the December 2006 meeting attended by CARA, representatives from the Council, and local shopkeepers, a package of improvements was agreed to improve the image of the Richmond Road parade of shops in order to encourage additional trade and provide a more vibrant amenity for local residents.

The first phase has already been completed whereby the Council carried out a package of Highway improvements to roads adjacent to the parade. These included new entry treatments, corrections to pavements, the removal of unnecessary street furniture (bollards, signs etc) and improved signage for the free one hour shopper parking.

This month we are pleased to inform residents that the Council are now in the process of proceeding with the second phase of these works which includes

planting trees out side Nos.127-141 Richmond Road, the removal of unapproved advertising hoardings, and the installation of new cycle stands. As it has now been confirmed that the forecourts in the main have been dedicated to the Council for Highway purposes, and given their very poor state of repair, the Council also intend as part of these works to resurface as much of the area as is possible. The works for the tree pits started on Monday 3rd December, and the remaining works such as the resurfacing, cycling stands and the removing of the advertisement panel outside the old bookmakers will start in the New Year.

We look forward to supporting a continually rejuvenating local suite of shops which are a key asset to so many of our members. At the same time we appreciate the efforts of many of our local traders in support of the improvements being made. Please support them by spending some money locally!

RBK green spaces and trees strategy consultation

Though it would be easy to mock a 113-page document that expresses the intention that "each green space will fulfil at least six functions with the majority of sites being able to fulfil nine or ten" Kingston's green spaces strategy's basic aims, of preserving and enhancing the borough's open spaces, are laudable. The new steps in Canbury Gardens are cited as an improvement [though they yellow handrails won't be to everyone's taste] and the restored pavilion is described as "a vibrant, sustainable resource for Kingston". Anyone interested in the future of Canbury Gardens should have a look at the very relevant discussions on the pros and cons of lighting parks, of dog-walking and dog-free zones, and of "youth shelters."

The tree strategy is being developed alongside the green spaces strategy and is now available for consultation. Its approach is essentially to preserve trees as a valuable environmental resource wherever possible.

Both the Trees Strategy consultation and the green spaces strategy can be found at http://www.kingston.gov.uk/browse/environment/parks/green_spaces_strategy.htm. Copies will also be available at libraries and the Environmental Reception in Guild Hall 2 on the second floor.

CARA Membership

As many of you are aware, everyone's membership was due for renewal on 1st November. Some of you have already paid for the coming year (thank you!) and so don't need to do anything. If you haven't, you will be getting a reminder letter and renewal form before Christmas – so if you're not sure if you've renewed or not, and you don't hear from us, you don't need to do anything!

If you're not already a CARA member and would like to support our work, membership costs £5 per household per year. Your subscription funds the cost of our newsletter which goes to all households in the area, social events, and the local community grants that we make. And, more importantly, the more members we have, the louder our voice when liaising with the council and other agencies on local issues such as the proposed hotel development.

So if you'd like to join us, please send your subscription with your name, address, telephone and email if you have one to Penny D'Souza (see next column).

Thank you so much for your support – it really matters.



Introducing the new CARA committee members

Claire Ferguson lives in Ulster Court, The Albany, Albany Park Road, and will be happy to share ideas or concerns on behalf of The Albany residents at CARA committee meetings.

Linda Key lives in Arun House, May Bate Avenue.

Marilyn Mason lives at the northern end of Lower Ham Road. She hopes to represent the concerns of residents at this end of the CARA area (so please tell her what they are - her phone number is 8546 4086), as well as the environmental issues that are her particular interest. She attends Thames Landscape Strategy meetings on behalf of CARA, and is helping with the CARA newsletter.

Richard Mobbs is the new CARA Treasurer. He lives on Chestnut Road and can be contacted on 07762 598 309 or richard@statacom.net.

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