



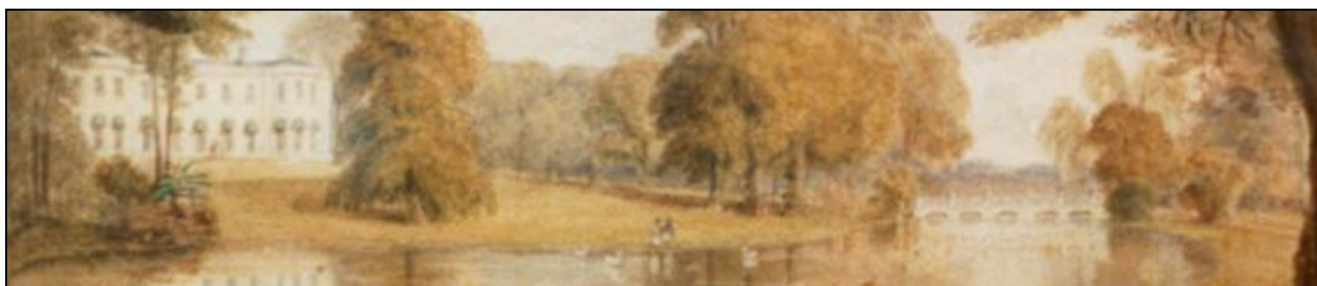
### UPDATE ON GUNNERSBURY'S REGENERATION

*The information given here is based on reports to the Gunnersbury Park Joint Advisory Panel in July.*

Works to the roof, the render and various utilities of the Large Mansion are in progress. Some floors are being strengthened and repairs to fire surrounds and plaster-work are being planned. Colour schemes will be based upon evidence from paint analysis. The painted panel from above the door of the room where the carriages stood has been removed for conservation.

Pipe-work linking the Round Pond, Horseshoe Pond and Cattle Pond scrape (lower down the Park) is now complete; work on auto top-up, Horseshoe Pond aerators and water-level balancing systems comes next. However, emptying the Round Pond made possible a detailed survey revealing substantial unforeseen problems; this Pond needs new walls with foundations and possibly a liner in the long term. The cost of work on this scale was not included in the funding bids. If not resolved it will present a problem in future as boating income was expected to support the business plan.

About 75% of the new walls of the Horseshoe Pond have been completed. Its Middle Bridge has been uncovered and designs for its reconstruction confirmed. This once supported the boundary wall between the separate gardens of the two Mansions, with half of this Pond in each. Five arches revealed on the Large Mansion side are those in a 19th century watercolour (detail below) still owned by descendants of the Coplands who built it, but there's a different design on the east side.



Conservation specialists are advising on designs for a new Orangery roof in glass and aluminium and its masonry parapet is being opened up to determine the extent of stone-work needing repair. The Orangery's rear facade is a short section of the garden boundary wall from the 1660s Palladian mansion. Some 17th century brick has been visible until now, but it is proposed that the detail of this is recorded before it is covered in a cement render, for weather protection and aesthetic reasons. A stretch of the 17th century wall on the east side has been repaired and consolidated and is visible.

A vault has been discovered near the west end of the Large Mansion which is probably simply a support for the terrace. The Popes Lane gateway is being restored and urgent repairs, replacing a failed rainwater downpipe and fallen brickwork, are being undertaken at the Potomac Tower.

Picus testing, a sonic process assessing levels of decay, has been carried out on the most significant historic trees, like the cedars by the Temple, and will be used on other trees later in the year. The community garden was completed and handed over to the Head Gardener and the garden volunteer team in April where they are cultivating 4 large beds with heritage vegetables and fruit. Future plans include a World War 2 *Dig for Victory* garden. As work is continuing on the surrounding gothic walls, with scaffolding still in place, this area will not open to the public until early autumn.

The Small Mansion is the base for staff and the learning programme during work on the Large Mansion. To meet appropriate standards some fire safety measures need to be put in place so an application for Listed Building Consent will be submitted soon.

## FRIENDS' PRIZE

Each year we sponsor a prize for a student at the Gunnersbury Centre of Capel Manor College, someone who has made a special contribution. Matthew Watson, the Centre Manager, tells us that Richard King-Brown was the very deserving winner of the 2016 prize of £75 book tokens.

"Apart from being a strong candidate for the best student in his class, he has brought his infectious cheerful demeanour and positive attitude to the whole campus. An instinctive grower of crops, he took over maintaining our container beds in his own time. He's always willing to go the extra mile, and made himself very useful at Saturday open days and on the Horticulture study tour to Cornwall."



*Richard King-Brown with his award*

## CAPEL COURSES

If you are interested in doing one of the College's courses, go to the next Gunnersbury advice evening which takes place on 6 September from 5.00 –7.30pm. See [www.capel.ac.uk](http://www.capel.ac.uk).

## NEW MEMBERSHIP SECRETARY

David Bush has now stepped down from this role. Already a committee member, he took it on in July 2010 when Joan Catterall, our first membership secretary, became seriously ill. David's full records will make the hand over to his successor easy and we are very grateful for all his work on our behalf.

David lived near the Park with his wife and daughter and knew it well. For many years his spare time interests included local and family history. He completed a Local History MA at Kingston University and joined our group working on Gunnersbury's history. We now have all his research on the Small Mansion and the families who lived there. Though the family has moved to Norwich, David will be keeping in touch.

We made a temporary arrangement while we searched for a successor but we are delighted to say that Richard Barnett has already offered to become our Membership Secretary. He lives with his family near Ealing Common, about 15 minutes' walk from the Park, and is a regular visitor at weekends and holidays. He was motivated to join the Friends on seeing the dilapidated state of the mansions and run-down condition of the Park, and the clear need to secure investment in its future. We are pleased to welcome him to the committee; his contact details are given at the end of the Newsletter and on our web-site.

## FUND RAISING

A number of applications for grants from charitable trusts and foundations have been submitted by the Gunnersbury Park Development Trust and by the Friends. The target is £1.4m and so far £75k has been secured from the Country Houses Foundation and £100k from the Foyle Foundation. If any readers have links to large charities of this kind and can champion our bids, do please get in touch. Such support could be very important.

## THE SPORTS HUB

The GPJAP meeting in July was briefed on hoped-for funding for the Sports Hub. The Brentford Sports Trust has confirmed its contribution of £500k. A grant application for £4m has been submitted to the Football Foundation's *Park Life* scheme and decisions are awaited on grant applications, both for £500k, to the Lawn Tennis Association and the London Marathon Charitable Trust. A further sum of £500k may come from the International School of London "subject to agreement".

Soft market testing for an operator for the gym facility, which will be delivered if the *Park Life* grant succeeds, indicates that a rate of return which would satisfy the Football Foundation and other funding partners is likely to be possible.

The planning permission for this building was conditional upon consultation on its materials and their colours (something on which we commented strongly) with Hounslow's Chair of Planning and Brentford ward councillors. We understand that nothing has yet been done on this front.

## GUNNERSBURY JOINT ADVISORY PANEL

The Panel met on 15 July. Cllr Myra Savin (Hounslow) was elected as Chair for the coming year and Cllr Yvonne Johnson (Ealing) as Vice-Chair. The other members for 2016/17 are Hounslow Cllrs Mel Collins and Adrian Lee, Ealing Cllrs Joanna Dabrowska and Binda Rai and the Friends' Chairman, James Wisdom, who continues as a co-opted member.

The short, clear reports and the minutes can be seen on Hounslow Council's web-site at [tinyurl.com/gsr2wtd](http://tinyurl.com/gsr2wtd). Matters relating to most of the refurbishment have been described above. On this it was also reported that works to the Large Mansion will take about 9 weeks longer than planned but it is hoped that they will be kept within the budget.

An estimate of the cost of refurbishing the Small Mansion has been prepared by the architects for the Large Mansion. This indicates that building work will cost £1.4m and full refurbishment about £5m in all. Formal expressions of interest for leasing this building and also for the Stables will be invited soon; this was subsequently confirmed as "in the autumn". Emphasis will be placed upon finding a cultural sector partner, such as a museum or gallery capable of fulfilling the criteria for a Heritage Lottery Fund *Enterprise Grant*, to bring the Small Mansion back to life.

Benugo has been awarded a catering contract, but little detail was given; it was suggested at the meeting that there would also be "preferred caterers" for functions. This is seen as an expensive company and the Panel asked for reassurance that there would reasonably-priced refreshments.

Other matters discussed included a number of operational issues. Some small progress has been achieved on security in the Park but there are still problems. Abandoned cars have been monitored by Parks staff then given notification stickers by the LBH enforcement team, which caused owners to withdraw some of them with the remainder being towed away. New *No Overnight Parking* signs are being designed.

There was some vandalism earlier in the year but anti-social behaviour, such as incidents with drunks and rough sleepers, has been limited. The Police report no major problems that they have been alerted to but a Park Guard patrol is now being instituted at Gunnersbury to reassure Park users.

Better locks on the gated area round Potomac Lake and *No Fishing* signs have deterred some but not all the fishing activity there. Also a 'wild swimmer' has been spoken to and stopped!

A buried high voltage cable is required for the Brentford Stadium development, with the preferred route through the Park, probably down the west side under pathways. A contribution of money or works in kind towards the Sports project is expected should this be agreed.

The meeting was told about the new Chief Executive, who will oversee the Park and Museum for the new Community Interest Company. Due to start on 18 July, he withdrew shortly beforehand. Recruitment starts again in September.

## SHARON WALTERS



It is a pleasure to welcome Sharon Walters who has become Gunnersbury's Public Programmes Officer. She tells us she applied for the post because it offers such an amazing opportunity to be involved at an early stage in re-creating the Museum and devising innovative ways for people to get involved in Gunnersbury activities.

She loves the fact that there will be so much space in which things can happen and is intrigued by the idea of sharing the achievements of local people in the past.

Sharon grew up in the London Borough of Ealing and still lives locally. She has worked with several local arts projects including Black History and Culture West London, based at the Acton Community Forum offices in South Acton.

She studied Fine Art at Central St Martin's, has also studied Social Sciences and has a postgraduate qualification in Citizenship and Education. Now with two small children and another life as an artist and arts administrator, she works part-time in her role at Gunnersbury and is usually in the Small Mansion offices on Monday mornings, Tuesdays and Wednesdays. We look forward to working with her on shared events in the future.

## 1930s PAINTING

Following our report in *Newsletter* 103, about the purchase of a 1930s painting of Gunnersbury Park, curator Julia Tubman got in touch. She has asked us to make clear that grants from two significant bodies, the Art Fund and the V&A Purchase Grant Fund, had been received to support the acquisition.

Their involvement is important because it provides independent confirmation of the significance of the picture for the collection. As a result our offer of funds was not needed for the purchase but we have promised instead to support the cost of much-needed cleaning and conservation and for the re-framing of the picture.

## "THE CURVE"

We reported in *Newsletter* 103 on this excessively large and ugly proposal for redeveloping the site next to B&Q at Chiswick Roundabout. We understand that this scheme has now been withdrawn and is being re-designed.

## PARK WALK IN APRIL

Twenty Friends joined the walk round Gunnersbury despite a bitterly cold wind. Chris Ellis, the new Head Gardener, accompanied us. We considered the impact of the planned Sports Hub and peered through wire mesh screens at the empty Round Pond, repairs in progress on the Temple and on the brickwork of historic boundary walls as well as the excavation of half of the Horseshoe Pond.

## NEWSLETTER 105

This will be compiled in October. Send items for inclusion to The Hon Editor at 25 Hartington Road, London W4 3TL or email [info@gunnersburyfriends.org](mailto:info@gunnersburyfriends.org).

## CAFÉ FIRE, 25 July



Gunnersbury's temporary café was destroyed by fire early on 25 July. While the new café and transport gallery for the carriage collection are being built, it was providing sandwiches, cakes, drinks and ice cream near the playing fields. The London Fire Brigade was called to the scene at 4am and as a result of an survey of the scene by their Fire Investigation Unit, which ruled out an electrical fire and led to suspicion of arson, the Police were called later that day. Their appeal for witnesses seems unlikely to succeed given the time of the fire.

*Photo by Bryan Betts from ChiswickW4.com web-site*

## MEMBERSHIP SUBSCRIPTIONS

Subscriptions fell due on 1 April and a very large proportion of you renewed your subscriptions in April and May – we are very grateful that you are continuing to support the Friends.

Please do encourage others to join at this exciting time for Gunnersbury, or perhaps buy membership as a gift. Larger numbers give us a stronger voice. Additional donations are always very welcome. One member left a generous legacy, enhancing our investment income and enabling us to continue to make donations to support the Park and Museum.

This year we introduced the option of paying by standing order. We must apologise for taking a little longer than we intended to process the large number of forms which came in. If you have forgotten to renew your membership there will be a reminder slip tucked into your *Newsletter*.

Membership costs £10 a year; the application form can be found at [gunnersburyfriends.org/friends/join-the-friends](http://gunnersburyfriends.org/friends/join-the-friends). Send your form and cheque to the Friends' Membership Secretary at 62 Creffield Road, London W3 9PS.

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