

The Battersea Society

Registered charity Number No: 1103560

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Chair's Report for 2009/2010

The Society has continued its work on seeking to deal constructively with the main issues facing the communities of Battersea. At the same time we have also endeavoured to provide a service to our members by informing you of these issues and providing a varied programme of events to both entertain and also to enlighten.

COMMUNICATIONS

The Battersea Society website continues to attract large numbers of visitors, local, national, and international. In the last twelve months the site has been visited almost 50,000 times, with many of those visitors spending a considerable time on the site, and viewing many different pages. The most viewed pages are the regularly updated News page, and the two photo galleries – with the gallery featuring Battersea pubs winning out over the one featuring Battersea gardens! It is hoped to add more galleries over the coming year.

The Events Diary is regularly updated to show new Society events, and there is now also a more community based page listing non-Society events, mainly within Battersea, but also elsewhere in Wandsworth, and further afield where appropriate. Current and past editions of the full colour version of Battersea Matters are also available online.

The newest innovation in the last year has been the introduction of a facility for new members to join online, using the PayPal payments system. Whilst only a handful of new members have come via this route, this is undoubtedly the way forward and the system will over time prove its worth. In due course it may prove feasible to also sell events tickets online.

Regular email Newsletters are sent to those members who have provided their email addresses. There are now almost 200 members on this list. The Newsletter has recently been re-designed making it more 'user-friendly' and seems to be working well. On a few occasions in the last year, the Newsletter has proved to be the quickest and cheapest way to communicate with the Society's members about a change of venue to an event, or a newly arranged event. Our email list is not complete and it is hoped that the numbers can be expanded over the coming year.

There are no plans to make major changes to the website in the near future, but it is hoped that eventually a new and re-invigorated design will be produced.

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b) Battersea Matters: Jenny Sheridan jennysheridan@btinternet.com 7350 2749

MEMBERSHIP

Through various means such as canvassing at meetings, talks, St. Mary's Summer Fete, etc, our membership at the end of 2009 was 272 which included single and family members, several organisations and residents' associations. The total fell slightly to 261 at the beginning of 2010 by way of mortality and mobility, as well as simple non-renewal of subscriptions.

We continue to promote the Society to increase the membership and would remind members that we always welcome volunteers on any of our Committees and as helpers at our events (talks, summer party etc.). (Contacts are at the end of this Report).

Contact: Maureen Larkin maureen.larkin@btinternet.com 7228 4873

MARKETING

The role of the marketing committee is to increase general awareness of the Battersea Society as well as seeking to increase our membership. During the course of the year, Battersea Society leaflets have been handed out to the general public at local events, charity fundraisers, in parks and public spaces as well as local community centres. The postcards and visiting cards printed in eye-catching yellow and black have proved very popular, and our Christmas card was equally well received (which is why we will be doing another one this year). We now have a good range of display materials for events – a banner, an A-board, postcards, leaflets – and will be standardising our 'corporate identity' during the coming year so that we have a defined and instantly recognisable look.

Contact: Sara Milne marketing@thebatterseasociety.com 7585 1616

EVENTS

The Events Team, when preparing the yearly programme, aim to bring to members aspects of some of London's rich cultural and historic heritage (including Battersea) through access to many places not readily accessible to the general public. This appears to be much appreciated and during 2009 many of the visits, in particular were oversubscribed. Highlights, for example, were our first attempt at a coach trip (this time to Lydiard House and Park - the ancestral

home of the Bolingbroke family of Battersea) and we also contributed to the Wandsworth Festival of Arts with a lecture on Henry Moore. Through this we discovered that the *Three Standing Figures* in Battersea Park, evolved from Henry Moore's 'Shelter Drawings' that he produced during World War two and were of some significance to his development as a sculptor.

A further illustrated lecture of great interest was that of The History of Lavender, by Susan Andrew Andrews, Archivist at Kew Gardens. This talk included references to the prevalence of lavender in Battersea and the surrounding areas.

And on a lighter note - some information gleaned from one of our visits to Southside House, Wimbledon. Were you aware that significant houses of the era 17/18C possessed a cupboard in which was seated a servant who's job it was to puff fresh powder, using a bellow (through a hole in the cupboard wall) over the wigs of gentlemen - seated on the other side, who had arrived for dinner on horseback? Not a very pleasant occupation for the servant.

The Social Events of the year, the Spring Lunch, and in particular, the Annual Summer Party proved to be very popular, even though the party had to be held in The Crypt of St Mary's, due to the inclement weather.

Contacts:

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PLANNING

~~Both the~~ Battersea Power Station and the wider Nine Elms area have remained major issues for the planning committee over the past year. Additionally the **Core Strategy for Wandsworth's Local Development Framework** progressed to its final stage, and the society contributed to the consultation stages and took part in the Inspector's Examination in Public of the submitted [report document](#). At the time of writing her final comments on the strategy are awaited.

Treasury Holdings submitted their plans for the **Battersea Power Station** site last Autumn and members of the planning committee visited the Town Hall to work through the many boxes of the application before commenting on the proposals. I am sorry to report that, while we are all anxious to see the site developed, we felt it necessary to object to the application on a number of grounds, not least the extent of [work-the additions](#) proposed to the Power Station and the density of the buildings surrounding it. Many of our reservations were echoed by others commenting on the application.

The re-launch of Nine Elms as a part of the **Vauxhall, Nine Elms and Battersea Opportunity Area** took place last November with the publication of a draft planning framework. ~~At this stage t~~The documentation was very much addressed to developers and other professional planners. While we were pleased that planners at the [Greater London Authority GLA](#) took time to present the plans ~~in outline~~ to us, we were disappointed that ~~the a~~ non-technical leaflet was produced only ~~after some delay at a very late stage~~ and was not widely publicised. ~~Despite this t~~The Society was able to submit lengthy comments, ~~which before the deadline.~~ ~~They~~ can be read on our website.

New US Embassy. ~~Earlier in 2010~~[In February](#) the US government selected [Chicago-based](#) architects Kieran Timberlake as the winners of the design competition for the embassy. Members of the ~~p~~Planning ~~c~~Committee attended the launch of these plans and this was followed by an outline presentation ~~on the plans~~ to the planning committee. As a result we were able to arrange a [well attended](#) meeting for [Society](#) members and friends at which Stephen Kieran and James Timberlake presented their plans for the embassy and shared the thinking which had led to their design.

The committee continues to monitor all planning applications and to [attend participate in](#) various council meetings including those of the Conservation Area Advisory Committee. This on-going work, together with the major issues for the area, ~~have~~ placed a considerable burden on David Lewis, chairman of our planning committee. I am particularly pleased, therefore, to welcome Liz Walton as the new Joint Chair of the Planning Committee. Liz brings to us considerable knowledge of planning matters [through her work with (DN?? Liz please add in here)] and we are delighted that she has felt able to find time for this new role despite her many other commitments.

Contacts:

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|----------------|--|-----------|
| a) David Lewis | drlewis27@yahoo.com | 7622 8017 |
| b) Liz Walton | liz@thedrives.org.uk | |

OPEN SPACES

Over the year we have sought to monitor developments in each of Battersea's open spaces. We have been discussing how the Battersea Riverside walk might be enhanced and are considering investing in walkside signage to highlight some of the earlier sites and events of the area.

Elsewhere we continue to engage with council officers about the proper management of our open spaces and seek to find ways of enhancing our environment. Specific issues have included placement of refuse or storage bins, speeding cyclists, indifferent signage, etc.

Contact: Harvey Heath harvey.heath@virgin.net 7585 3788

COMMUNITIES and HEALTH

This committee meets to consider specific issues on an ad hoc basis as and when they arise. We are constantly looking for participating members with special interests and experience. We have commented favourably on the Grant Road health facilities and look forward to them moving to permanent accommodation. We anticipate that there will be considerable changes in the future on health issues and we shall play our part in any consultation processes.

Contact: Harvey Heath harvey.heath@virgin.net 7585 3788

CONTACTS

We are a small voluntary charitable organization and all our work is undertaken by volunteers. But we need more people to play an active role in the work of the Society.

We would welcome members to participate in any of our committees and in particular would welcome similar assistance at events. We like to think that we can offer congenial company and purposeful activities. Input on planning, health and community issues would be especially welcome.

Below are the points of contact in the Society. If you want to join in, do please get in touch as below.

Contact details are:

Planning	David Lewis	drlewis27@yahoo.com	7622 8017
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16th June 2010

Tony Tuck: Chair: The Battersea Society