

Watermark



The Newsletter of the Thames Landscape Strategy, Hampton to Kew Issue 16 September 2004

Celebrating Ten Years of Success



HRH The Prince of Wales aboard the Environment Agency royal launch 'THE WINDRUSH'.

The Thames Landscape Strategy celebrated its Tenth Anniversary on May 26th in grand style in the presence of HRH The Prince of Wales. The Prince was welcomed aboard the Environment Agency royal patrol boat, 'The Windrush' at Hampton Court, following a tree planting ceremony in the Palace grounds. Aboard the boat were invited guests representing the various aspects of the Strategy's work, the community and the funding partners on their way to Richmond Lock.

The river cruise provided the opportunity for the delights of the Arcadian Thames to be explored and for project work to be explained. *Continued on Page 2*

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Annual Meeting 2003



350 guests attended the 2003 TLS Annual Meeting at Kew Gardens.

Guest speaker was Sir David Attenborough, TLS Patron.

Riverside Festival Launches the Teddington Gateway Masterplan

The Teddington Gateway (The Thames Landscape Strategy in Action) scheme was formally launched at the splendid Teddington River Festival on June 6th. A joint initiative between the TLS, the Environment Agency, RNLI and the local community, the project intends to breath new life into the historic lock, its environs and the River Thames itself between Hampton and Kew. Turn to pages 9-11 for more information on this exciting scheme or visit the Thames Landscape Strategy website on thames-landscape-strategy.org.uk



W a t e r w o r k s

Bringing you up to date with progress on the Thames Landscape Strategy

HRH Celebrates Ten Years of the TLS

Continued from Page One

At Kingston, 'The Windrush' came alongside the 'Richmond Venturer' to visit the River Thames Boat Project's specially equipped community boat. On board HRH was introduced to a party of school children from Bedelsford School who were on the Venturer for 'School on the River', a day of environmental education activities about the Thames, run by the Boat Project staff and volunteers. The children were not told until the last minute who they would be meeting that morning and were understandably very excited when they discovered who their special guest was.

Following the boat trip, HRH attended a garden party at Holly Lodge in Richmond Park where he chatted with representatives of local groups (chosen at random from a hat to ensure all TLS Friends got a chance to attend!) and funding partners. Closing the party, HRH gave an informal speech reminding guests of the importance of good design and well considered conservation management before making his way to Ham Polo Club for the 'HRH The Prince of Wales Charity Trophy polo match'. Following the match Nick Colquhoun-Denvers, Chairman of Ham Polo Club presented the Thames Landscape Strategy with a cheque for £5,000, the TLS being one of two organisations personally selected by The Prince to benefit from the event (the other being the Mihai Eminescu Trust).

The TLS would like to thank everyone involved in making the day so special.



One of the most exciting sights on the Thames this year: Concorde being loaded aboard the 'Terra Monique' at Isleworth before making its way down the river and onto Scotland.

New Accolade for the TLS

The Thames Landscape Strategy was nominated in October 2003 for the 'National Waterway Renaissance Awards' - a prestigious accolade given annually for best practice in the field of waterway management and restoration. Nominations are invited for a number of different categories, where projects range in size from the restoration of entire derelict canals to small community projects clearing out ditches. Judging for the 'Partnership' category took place between November 2003 and February 2004 and at the finals in March, the TLS was awarded with a special commendation. The winner was the restoration of the Kennet and Avon Canal (a £26m Heritage Lottery funded scheme). In awarding the commendation, judges were particularly impressed with the way that the TLS acts as a day-to-day link between the river, the riparian agencies and the community. In addition, it recognised recent work to improve river maintenance which it described as 'truly innovative in terms of understanding nature and co-ordination' and the TLS's drive to encourage usability of the waterway summing up that the 'TLS shines with enthusiasm and originality'.

The 'KSO': An Update

A significant step in the delivery of information was taken in the London Borough of Richmond recently with the establishment of a 'Key Strategic Organisation' (KSO) for the Environment and Civic Pride. Tenders were invited and in response a consortium consisting of BTCV (British Trust for Conservation Volunteers), ETRuT (Environment Trust for Richmond Upon-Thames) and TLS (Thames Landscape Strategy) was successful in being awarded 'KSO' status, administered by the Council for Voluntary Service.

The aim of the KSO is to provide an information platform in a central location on local groups engaged in conservation work and environmental services and also to support groups and individuals requiring information and guidance on environmental and civic pride issues. A requirement of the KSO is to establish a website and database to provide this information for quick reference as well as a telephone information service. In addition the consortium will also offer assistance to local groups on where to access funding and offer support on completing applications. There is future scope for other initiatives to be launched from the website.

A full-time officer (also to administer Local Agenda 21) has been appointed, administered by the Consortium's lead partner BTCV. If you would like more information please contact Colin Cooper, KSO Project Officer for the Environment & Civic Pride on c.cooper@bctv.org.uk or telephone 020 8831 6150.

The TLS Ten-Year Review: An Update

Work is progressing on the two stages of the Ten-Year Review of the Thames Landscape Strategy. Firstly a review of project work and management proposals including an update on how the area has changed during the past ten years will be undertaken, although this has waited until clarification can be reached regarding the future status of the TLS as Supplementary Planning Guidance. More information and public consultation will be carried out only once these boundaries have been established.

The second strand of the Review is to identify possible changes to the organisational structure of the TLS in order to establish the best way forward to maximise the use of limited resources. To date, the TLS partners and representatives of the TLS Community Advisory Group have been canvassed to establish initial boundaries before any proposals are tabled for wider consultation in November 2004. More information regarding the Review in Watermark 17 but in the meantime please phone the Co-ordinator if you have any comments.

HRH The Prince of Wales Visit



HRH is given a guided tour through Thames Ditton by Cllr Ruth Lyon and TLS Author Kim Wilkie



The Holly Lodge garden party



Aboard the Richmond Ventureer



HRH with Mavis Batey MBE



HRH meets lock staff and the RNLI at Teddington



HRH shares a joke with TLS Co-ordinator Jason Debney



HRH meets TLS partners, freinds, staff and former TLS Co-ordinator Donna Clack



Representatives of the Royal Parks greet HRH at Holly Lodge



Floodscape: a new approach to Flood Risk Management

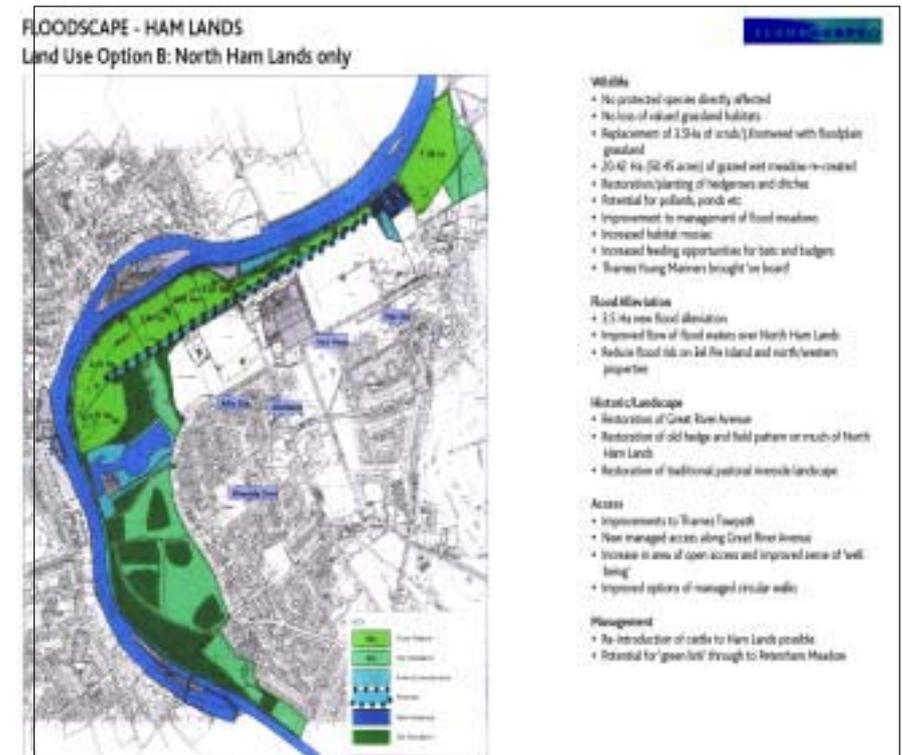
The Thames is a powerful natural force and like all rivers can create and destroy. It has, with time, been modified and tamed by humans but as with all natural forces it is in a constant state of change. One of the most important initiatives along the Thames at the moment is to find new ways to manage this change and in particular what to do in response to rising sea levels and the increasing risk from flooding.

The Thames floodplain is home to 1.25 million people, major infrastructure and areas of high historical and natural conservation value. The Thames has some of the best flood defences in the UK, protecting London and the Thames Estuary to an extremely high standard. However, these flood defences are getting older, and as climate is changing the time has come to plan for the next generation of flood management measures that will account for population growth, evolution in land management practices and the biodiversity and use of the riverside.

In London, the floodplain is at risk from a number of sources including the twice-daily rise and fall of the tide, North Sea surges, fluvial floods from the upper Thames and urban run-off. In the capital alone there are a staggering 429,000 properties at risk from tidal flooding and 85,000 properties at risk from fluvial floods. The estimated value of this property is £80 billion and home to one sixth of London's population. It is responsibility of The Environment Agency to maintain the high standard of flood defences.

It is now commonly accepted that the effects of climate change will have severe impacts on all of our lives. Heavy rainfall will be more frequent, storms will be greater and sea levels are rising by 6mm a year. It is anticipated that the flow of the Thames as it passes over Teddington Weir will be 20% higher by 2050. These changes may sound low but the consequences of flooding on homes, businesses, power supplies and transport would be catastrophic.

This said, the Thames Barrier provides London with one of the best flood defences in the world. But what is little known is that the operation does not just involve the closure of the main barrier but also 8 other major flood barriers on the Thames tributaries to stop flooding 'by the back



door' and 380 smaller movable defences at great expense. The Barrier was constructed to provide protection to 2030, however, it was designed to allow for changes in the way the river works and as such the defence will continue to operate well after this time.

What is of concern is the frequency of use. The Barrier was designed to be shut 3-4 times a year. As sea level rises and fluvial flooding increases however, the number of closures is increasing. For example in January 2001 alone the Barrier was shut twenty four times. It is this increased usage that is causing concern on the wear and tear to the infrastructure, disruption to shipping and fish migration, cost and the consequences of closure on communities downstream of the defence.

The flooding events in 2001 and 2003 were exceptional but are on the increase and importantly the consequences for riverside communities in our part of London is significant. The Barrier closures that took place in 2001 and 2003 were mainly to protect the area between Kingston and Richmond as at the time a series of very high floods were moving their way down the river from the upper reaches of the Thames and meeting high water in the Estuary downstream of Teddington. The problem we face is one of where does the water in a freshwater (fluvial) flood go when the tidal river is full during a high tide. Without the

closure of the barrier river levels would have been 1.5m higher in Richmond and Twickenham causing huge damage to property and devastating the local community. What the Environment Agency is concerned about is what will happen in the future in light of the anticipated changes in sea level and use of the Thames Barrier. In the past, the solution to flood water would have been to construct flood walls and embankments but these are increasingly unpredictable and would have a devastating impact on the historic and natural landscape and the way that people enjoy their riverside.

A European initiative has been established (funded by the EU) to investigate new ways to make space for water during exceptional events by allowing managed inundation at certain points along the river. This flood risk management initiative is being led by the Environment Agency and has been called FLOODSCAPE: a joint project between the UK, Germany, Netherlands and Belgium. FLOODSCAPE is trying to find local solutions to these problems that address the needs of local communities, wildlife and heritage. Six sites have been chosen across Northern Europe to investigate how this programme will work. In the UK, three sites have been included in Essex, the North Kent Marshes and Ham Lands. The flood plain, both

sides of the river to include Teddington and Twickenham has been surveyed and modelled so that the way the river floods at present and could flood in the future can be demonstrated. This has been carried out on 10m square grids and provides a level of accuracy unprecedented before. The task now is to use this data to devise a community based solution that manages flooding whilst taking into account the areas wildlife, use and history.

Ham Lands were for centuries managed as grazed wet meadows but following extensive gravel extraction and subsequent filling with bomb rubble their character was altered and in particular the capacity for the area to accommodate flooding reduced. The diversity of plant life created by the variety of soil types from the bomb rubble though was exceptional but once grazing by cows ceased in the 1970's much of this diversity has declined and scrub and invasive species now dominate much of the area. The opportunity to restore sections of Ham Lands to meadowland would allow the river to flood these areas during exceptional floods (estimated at only 2-3 times per year and for short periods of time). This would divert water away from the more populated areas in nearby Twickenham, Petersham and Richmond. At the same time the lost Great River Avenue could be restored, acting as an additional flood barrier to protect Ham and Petersham and through land management improvements the declining diversity of the grassland would be turned around.

In the last couple of months a series of options have been published by FLOODSCAPE to provide local people with a way to try and understand how flooding can be accommodated in order to reduce the impact on property and at the same time restore and enhance the conservation value of the area. These range from a do-nothing approach to a maximum flood alleviation option. A vast array of factors have been included in developing the models including litter, long-term management, funding, recreational use, wildlife and traditional countryside management techniques. FLOODSCAPE is an important development in the on-going renaissance of our river and one which still requires much consultation. For more information visit www.floodscape.net

'Kingston K+20': An Exciting New Initiative

A consultation document called 'The Kingston K+20' initiative was launched by the Royal Borough of Kingston in June 2003 to develop a vision for Kingston town centre for the next 20 years. It is a far-reaching proposal and of great interest to the TLS as it also includes the scope for considerable enhancements along the Thames corridor that has potential to return the focus of the town centre (now the second largest shopping centre outside central London) to its river. As such, the TLS and Kingston Council have teamed up to develop a series of proposals and funding mechanisms for the riverside that will run from Queen's Promenade to Canbury Gardens. The next stage of the project will be to develop more detailed proposals and identify possible funding sources. It is proposed by the TLS that the development of these more detailed proposals for the local area should have strong links with wider TLS initiatives such as the Teddington Gateway. In this way the potential for the increased use of the river as an intrinsic part of Kingston life will be ensured and tourist potential of the town as a visitor attraction can be maximised.

To achieve this, access and connections along the river and between the river and the town centre will form an important aspect of the project, providing considerable scope to enhance the area around the station as a 'gateway' site. Several projects have already started such as enhancement to the Eagle Wharf site and the establishment of two new conservation areas that effectively now place almost the entire Borough's riverside within this important designation. It's early days yet but the commitment now being demonstrated by Kingston Council to the Thames Landscape Strategy and to their river is exciting and bodes well for the future.

A New Look for Kingston's Eagle Wharf

Major landscape improvements for an important stretch of the Thames riverside near the centre of Kingston are planned by Kingston Council, following an initiative launched by three local voluntary organisations.

The site concerned lies off High Street, just south of the town centre, between the Ram public house and the Queen's Reach flats. It is known as Eagle Wharf, having once been occupied by Kingston's Eagle Brewery. Currently in a state of neglect, the open space, some 30m by 20m in extent, was identified by a group of local societies as an appropriate location for a newly commissioned work of public art commemorating Kingston's associations with the River Thames over more than a thousand years. Before designing an appropriate feature, the group sought assurances from Kingston Council concerning the enhancement of the site as a whole by suitable landscaping.

The three societies concerned are the Kingston upon Thames Society, Kingston Tour Guides, and the Friends of Kingston Museum and Heritage Service. The same three societies joined forces to create the lavish historical mural which was unveiled last year on the wall of Shrubsole Passage in Kingston's Market Place. In creating the Market Place mural the group had the support of local businesses and grants from Kingston Council and the National Lottery's Awards for All scheme. They hope for similar support in creating an attractive new permanent feature on Eagle Wharf.

The proposal has the support of the Thames Landscape Strategy and the Council has responded positively and hosted a series of meetings at which provisional designs for the open space have been discussed. These incorporate comfortable seating, a small amphitheatre for outdoor performances, areas of grass and trees - and a suitable position for the group's proposed heritage feature. Once funding has been secured it is hoped that the scheme will make a big contribution to the enhancement of the Thames riverside in Kingston.

By Anthony Leitch

The Hampton Court Long Water Restoration by Terry Gough

King Charles II commissioned the Long Water Canal with its flanking lime tree avenues soon after the restoration of the monarchy in 1660. In 1661 the King sent an emissary to Portugal to win the hand of Catherine of Braganza. The visit was successful and this was perhaps the reason for the great scheme that Charles embarked upon at Hampton Court Palace. He had the whole course of his father's ambitious project, the Longford River, diverted to create a canal almost three quarters of a mile in length, striking eastwards into the Old Deer Park from the palace. This was embellished with a double row of lime trees on both sides, centred on a gilded balcony in the Queen's lodgings on the east side of the palace – suggesting that Charles intended the scheme to be seen as a compliment to his new bride.

The designer of the scheme was probably the French gardener André Mollet who carried out work at Fontainebleau in France and Honselaarsdijk in the Netherlands. Mollet was one of several famous French gardeners who were employed by the King following the Restoration to carry out grand formal landscaping projects, like those the King had admired during his period in exile.

The avenue concept leading to the East Front of the palace with its semi-circular termination was a trait of Mollet's avenue designs and appeared in his book *Le Jardin de Plaisir* in 1651. This layout seems to have been the model for the canal and avenues that were also laid out in St James's Park between 1661 and 1662.

The work of implementing Mollet's grand designs for the King was undertaken by the royal gardener Adrian May, who was appointed as Supervisor of the French Gardeners and employed at Whitehall Palace, St James's Park and Hampton Court. May purchased a consignment of 758 European lime trees from Holland through Sir William Warren and Gregory Page who ran a shipping business, which transported the trees to Hampton Court Palace.

The setting out of the avenue was undertaken by the royal gardener Philip

Moore but May used a variety of workmen for digging tree pits, planting, staking, fencing, weeding and mowing. The main contractor for cleaning and repairing the Longford River and for digging the new canal was Edward Maybanke.

Catherine of Braganza's reaction to the new canal and its flanking lime avenues is not recorded but within a month or so of her arrival in England the famous gardener and diarist John Evelyn visited Hampton Court and on 9 June 1662 noted in his diary, 'The Park, formally a flat naked piece of ground now planted with sweet rows of lime trees and the canal for water now near perfected'. The completion of the canal and avenues was an important moment in English landscaping history. Charles II had now introduced the great formal gardening style to England from France and had completed his father's ambitious plan to use the watercourse from the Longford River to provide a water feature for Hampton Court Palace.

In 1689 joint monarchs William III and Mary II used the Long Water Canal and its avenues as the foundation for their own ambitious plans for the rebuilding of the palace and the re-landscaping of the gardens and estate. Sir Christopher Wren took the Long Water as the centre line for the east façade of the new Baroque palace.

The King's designer, Daniel Marot, embellished the semi-circular termination of the Long Water Avenue by truncating the canal nearest to the palace and filling the area with a magnificent parterre garden. This was known as the Great Fountain Garden due to the fact that it contained 13 ornate fountains. William and Mary also used the Long Water and its avenues as the centrepiece for creating the *patte d'oie* (or goosefoot) pattern of avenues that radiated outwards from the new palace towards Home Park.

Royal gardeners George London and Henry Wise planted three additional lime tree avenues, known as the Kingston, Ditton and Cross avenues, which completed William's *patte d'oie* scheme. By the time of William's death in 1702 the total number of European lime trees

planted in all four of the lime avenues at Hampton Court was 3,366.

Based on the avenue's planting date of 1661 and the average life expectancy of a European lime tree (200-250 years) we can ascertain that the Long Water Avenue was in its prime at the beginning of Queen Victoria's reign (1837-1901) but was in decline towards the end of it. Therefore, this great feature, which had not been compromised by changes in garden tastes, was sadly being endangered by the rigours of time.

In order to address the problem of the decline of the avenues, successive palace administrations had adopted a policy of 'gapping up' where trees in the avenue had perished. Sadly, this policy was unsuccessful, mainly because the new trees were forced to compete with the older trees for light, nutrients and water, and were damaged by branches falling on them from more mature specimens. This policy also compromised the historic integrity of the layout as many of the trees used were the wrong species of lime and were planted out of line, giving the avenue a moth-eaten, gap-toothed canopy.

In 1986, following a series of surveys and reports into the condition of the trees within the Long Water Avenue, it was agreed that the section of avenue within the formal palace gardens (namely the semi-circle and transverse arms) should be replanted, not only because they had declined in number but because they presented a serious health and safety risk to the public who walked under them. By the spring of 1987, 200 European lime trees had been planted within this section of the gardens and these can be seen flourishing today providing the backdrop to the colourful displays of summer bedding plants.

The methodology adopted for the restoration of the avenues in 1986 was revolutionary. Not only were documentary and pictorial evidence used, but garden archaeology was also employed to confirm the original layouts, the methods used, and the constraints for the project. In addition, the correct species



Hampton Court Palace with the Long Water lower left

in the traditional way, each tree being replanted in its exact historic position to create a strikingly uniform avenue of equal size and proportion.

In 1997, Historic Royal Palaces produced a Gardens Conservation Plan for the gardens and estate of Hampton Court Palace that focused on the plight of the lime tree avenues, as one of its many landscape objectives. Further tree surveys were carried out on all the remaining historic avenues within Home Park to assess the condition of the trees and their level of decline. The results of these surveys made it perfectly clear that unless we embarked upon a long-term phased plan for replanting, then these avenues, which had formed the spine and structure of the estate for over 300 years, would be lost completely.

The surveys indicated that the worst affected area was the remaining section of Charles II's Long Water Avenue, which by 2002 had seen its original number of 544 trees diminished to a mere 280. What made matters worse was that of the remaining 280 trees only 14 survived from the original planting date of 1661 and these were now in an extremely dangerous condition. The other 266 trees had, therefore, been inter-planted over the years and were also suffering serious defects as they had started life planted between mature specimens and thus had been starved of

light, nutrients and water throughout the whole of their life, making them tall, spindly, weak and etiolated specimens. Following these surveys, Hampton Court Palace put together a brief and submitted this to all the statutory planning bodies and experts in the field, in order to seek their support for restoring the remainder of the Long Water Avenue using the same successful methodology that had been used in 1986.

The plan also involved working closely with ecologists in order to ascertain the ecological significance of this habitat. Surveys identified that the Long Water Avenue was not a significant ecological habitat and concluded that it was possible to produce a plan that would mitigate the effect of the removal of the trees on the ecology of the park as a whole. Measures for this included placing additional bat and bird boxes in other trees within the park and the storing of some of the older timber within the other avenues in order to conserve the fungi, invertebrates and lichens. In 2003, Hampton Court Palace's Restoration Plan, complete with its Ecological Mitigation Strategy, was accepted and, indeed, acclaimed by the local planning authority, allowing work to start on the project in October 2003.

Most of the 280 trees that remained in the avenue were felled using a revolutionary technique which simply involved pushing the trees over with a

large JCB machine. This felling process had the added advantage of removing the trees complete with their root plates and proved to be a time-efficient process. Field ecologists were employed at all times while this work was undertaken in order to oversee the Ecological Mitigation Strategy. Using this method, all the trees within the avenue were cleared successfully in record time, enabling our garden archaeologist to clearly identify all 544 historic planting positions for the new trees, and to allow ample time for replanting to take place well before Christmas 2003. The Gardens and Estate team at Hampton Court Palace then carefully restored the avenue by reconfiguring the banks of the Long Water Canal and replanting all 544 lime trees in their original positions. The original clone of lime was used: *Tilia Europaea koningslinde* ('The King's Lime') and the trees were grown in the historic style of the period, ie, on their own roots, and not budded or grafted.

In order to protect the trees from the browsing deer, it was decided that the original 17th-century style of tree crate would be used, constructed of three oak timber panels, made into a triangular shaped crate. Each tree is secured within the crate by a cross member into which a watering tube is secured providing nourishment direct to the rooting zone. We believe that this system of planting will allow the trees to flourish in the same way as those planted in 1986.

The whole restoration project was completed within six months, bringing Charles II's Long Water Avenue back to its former 1661 glory. Although it has to be accepted that this restoration has temporarily changed the mature vista looking from the palace into the park, and vice versa, we believe that the methodology used to undertake this difficult and complex project was the right way to faithfully restore one of England's most important historic landscape features. It has ensured that the conservation of the layout is protected for us and for future generations to enjoy.

By Terry D Gough
Head of Gardens & Estates
Historic Royal Palaces

Celebrating the Fascinating History of one of the Arcadian Thames Most Interesting Public Open Spaces: Hurst Park



Earlier this summer an imaginative piece of public art was unveiled by the riverside in Hurst Park, (the ceremony is shown in the photographs). Incorporating interpretative information about the area's history, the scheme was initiated and designed by the Hurst Park Residents Association, who also raised the funding for the project to be completed. To celebrate its installation the following article tells the story of Hurst Park, one of the most fascinating along the River Thames dating back many thousands of years.

Archaeological evidence suggests that the earliest human activity in Hurst Park dates back to around 4,700 years ago. Excavations have unearthed a 3,500 year old circular burial mound, 20 metres in diameter and at its centre a burial urn containing the cremated remains of two adults who were obviously of quite high status. The first recorded evidence of the Park's habitation was in 1249, when the 'Herstegg' (as it was then called) was a type of land known as 'Lammas Land' which meant that hay was made in the spring and summer and then after Lammas Day on 1st August it was open to all commoners for grazing their cattle. It was in the early 18th Century that the area was transformed from a sleepy riverside meadow into one of the great people's playground's of London. Archery, cricket, boxing, cock-fighting, golf and horse-racing all found a place: it was also a favoured rendezvous for duellists.

Cricket has been played here since 1723, with matches attracting many thousands of spectators including Royalty and the good and great of the day.

In 1890 the Australian cricket team played

on the cricket ground, which by this time was in the centre of Hurst Park Racecourse. In 1758, the first ever recorded game of golf in England was played on the meadows when the famous actor David Garrick, who lived across the river, had a group of friends from Scotland to stay.

In the early 19th Century the Hurst rose to fame for its bare-knuckle fights, with crowds of up to 20,000 arriving by road and river, until the sport was outlawed in a ruling at Kingston Assizes in 1824. Fights were very popular nationally, even amongst royalty and politicians. 'Moulsay Hurst' became known at this time as the 'pugilistic Waterloo' and held more fights than anywhere else in England. In 1808 a huge crowd gathered, including the Duke of York and Lord Byron to watch the English Championships with a total prize of 1,000 guineas for the winner.

But the attraction of 'Hampton Races', fostered by the Duke of Clarence (later King William VI) meant that the Hurst continued in popular importance. The annual 'Cockney Derby' held in June was a great London holiday which Dickens described in *Nicholas Nickleby* as a 'carnival of humanity, with musicians, jugglers, fortune tellers, ventriloquists, beggars, gamblers and pick pockets'. The drinking tents ensured the crowd was always well oiled and fights were commonplace. Indeed, in one year there was a large 'battle' between two rival gangs of gypsies who only stopped fighting each other to fight the police who were trying to break the fight up! The derbies ended in 1887 when the Jockey Club refused to renew the course licence on the grounds of its lack of proper maintenance.

In 1889 as new course, called Hurst Park,



was opened, surrounded by a wooden fence 7 feet high. The visual intrusiveness of this huge fence running within a few feet of the Thames provoked numerous protests but to no avail – the owners threatened to sell the land for building if they were balked. From 1891 – 1962 Hurst Park was one of the most successful racecourses in the country. In 1962, although the course was still running at a profit, the owners decided to sell the site for housing and at the subsequent auction even the turf, well-known for its springiness, was sold. The wide strip of grassland, which comprises Hurst Park today, was preserved as a condition of the planning permission for housing put up in the early 1960s. Remnants of the old race course still survive such as the large gates in the park that were used to close off the road so that the horses could race over it.

Flowing beside Hurst Park, the River Thames has been intertwined with the meadow's history from the earliest times. It was on the river that steamers brought hoards of day-trippers from the East End of London to Molesey to Hurst Park, Hampton Court and to enjoy the races and regattas have been held here since 1835. The Molesey Amateur Regatta was started in 1867 and is still held every year. At its peak the regatta ranked second only to Henley, when the river teamed with boats.

The river was also a highway for the movement of goods in and out of the capital, and by the 19th century barges hauled by 50 men or a dozen horses were carrying up to 200 tons of material. As the traffic increased, the ad hoc arrangement of wooden weirs and dams, which created sufficient depth of water for navigation in the Molesey area, became increasingly unsatisfactory. The lock at East Molesey was opened in 1815 as the last part of a series to improve the Thames navigation and it has frequently been modernised since.

Apart from commercial traffic, on weekends and holidays the lock was crowded with pleasure boats. Jerome K. Jerome thought Molesey the busiest lock on the river, and in 1889 described how 'I



have stood and watched it sometimes, when you could not see any water at all, but only a brilliant tangle of bright blazers, and gay caps, and saucy hats, and many coloured parasols, and silken rugs, and cloaks and streaming ribbons, and dainty whites'. Molesey is still a focus of watery activity and compared to much of the Thames is still one of the busiest stretches with many active rowing and sailing clubs.

Immediately downstream of the Park, Molesey Riverside still retains much of its Edwardian glory with many notable buildings and a bustling High Street although the area is intersected by the Hampton Court Way, separating the area from Cigarette Island.

Cigarette Island has a particularly colourful past and was much admired as a picturesque backdrop to the Hampton Court Palace, directly opposite. By 1900 however, the riverbank was lined with houseboats and Davis's Ait (as the island was then known as) was a mass of weekend holiday homes made from wood and corrugated iron, converted buses and caravans. In 1935, the Office of Works purchased the island and set about removing the eyesore to create the public park much admired today. T

The TLS is currently working with Elmbridge Borough Council, The Environment Agency and local community groups to develop a series of environmental improvement projects in the area. An initial scoping document has been produced, although due to the complex nature of the site, progress to date has concentrated on establishing ownership and responsibility rights. This has now been concluded and it is anticipated that work can now start to take the project forward over the winter.

As with all TLS projects this will necessitate in much consultation before any ideas are formally presented. If you would like to know more contact the TLS Co-ordinator at Holly Lodge.

Teddington Gateway Update

Local residents and River Thames users are being asked to voice their views on an ambitious plan to enhance the delights of Teddington Lock and its surrounding area. Launched for consultation on Sunday, June 6, at the Teddington River Festival, the 'Teddington Gateway Masterplan' puts forward ways of improving and rejuvenating the area for locals, boaters, walkers, cyclists, anglers and other river visitors. The Masterplan, a joint project by the Environment Agency (responsible for managing the non-tidal River Thames), LBRuT and the Thames Landscape Strategy, will be available for consultation over the next two months. During the consultation period the initial Masterplan proposals will be available on the TLS website, at Teddington Lock and at special one-off events.

Andy Yeates, recreation and business development officer for the Environment Agency and the Masterplan project co-ordinator (seconded to the project for 2.5 days per week), said: "The Masterplan sets out several ways we propose to rejuvenate the river and the surrounding areas of Teddington Lock. The proposals range from minor improvements such as providing better signs and planting shrubs, to more ambitious plans such as enhancing the lighting around the footbridge and Ferry Road. We want the river to be an attractive leisure destination for all to enjoy whilst conserving the area's unique character. But to make this a success we need all those with an interest in the River Thames - be it local residents, boaters, anglers or walkers - to really get involved and let us know what they think. We will welcome as many comments as possible during the consultation period and we look forward to hearing your ideas."

The first phase of the masterplan identifies key themes and proposals for conserving and promoting Teddington Lock. It also identifies long-term aspirations and ideas to rejuvenate the local waterspace. The scheme has been separated into two strands - a Waterspace and Visitor Action Plan (more about that on the next page) and a Landscape and Site Management Plan. The Landscape and Site Management Plan will focus on the immediate area around the lock and has been broken into four topics for consultation namely: Signage and interpretation, Landscape and Ecology, Facilities and Access, and Heritage and Restoration.

Work has already started to transform certain aspects of the lock, in particular the recent construction of a wonderful new facility for boaters upstream of the lock. The new moorings have been constructed to follow the Agency's strict environmental guidelines and as such special habitats have been created for wildlife and materials have been chosen to blend into the surrounding area. The works did create a bit of disruption, particularly the piling but measures have been put in place for all disruption to the surrounding area to be made good following completion. In another exciting development, the London Borough of Richmond upon Thames has agreed to allocate the funding needed to restore the magnificent iron footbridge across the Lock Island back to its former glory. Work will commence next year and has been phased over a three year period.



If you would like to know more about the project or be involved with its development please contact the project team via Holly Lodge.

Left The launch of the Masterplan at the Teddington River Festival

Teddington Riverside Festival

One of the most exciting events that the Thames Landscape Strategy has been involved with took place at Teddington Lock on June 6th to celebrate the 100th anniversary of the opening of the Barge Lock and to launch the Teddington Gateway Masterplan. A hugely successful family event, the day was organised to co-incide with the RNLI Teddington Lifeboat Day. The sun shone all day and it is estimated that up to 15,000 people came to enjoy the fun and entertainment. The festival re-kindled the sense of the river's Edwardian halcyon days. The lock was buzzing with people, and boats of all kinds decked in their finery filled the water. There were children's events, otters, lifeboat displays, trip boats, craft stalls, bands and beer tents. But at 4.00pm everyone fell silent for one minute to honour fallen D-Day heroes (the day co-incided with the 60th anniversary of D-day) before a brass band played happy birthday for the lock. Organised jointly between the Environment Agency, Lock Staff, the TLS and the RNLI it is hoped that the event will become a regular fixture in the river calendar.



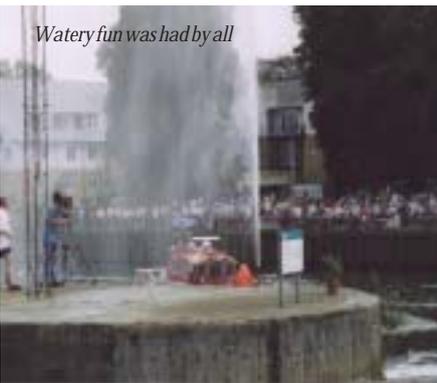
The band plays 'Happy Birthday'



The TLS marquee



Local MP Dr Vincent Cable learns about Teddington Gateway



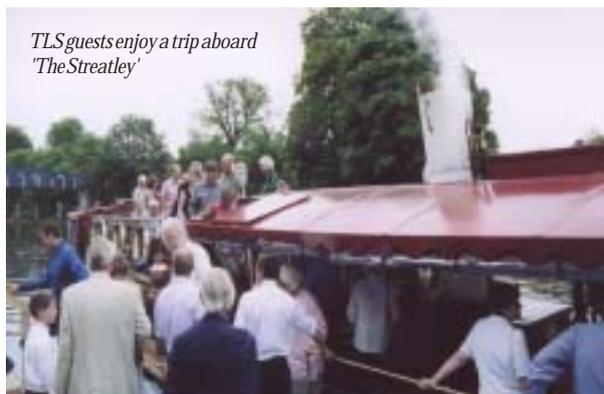
Watery fun was had by all



The Mayor of Richmond with Don Vickers of the Environment Agency



Waterway Manager Eileen McEever launches the event



TLS guests enjoy a trip aboard 'The Streatley'

The Waterspace & Visitor Action Plan

Although the Teddington Gateway scheme is primarily focused on the regeneration of the Lock and its immediate environs the project has initiated an exciting new scheme called the Waterspace and Visitor Action Plan. The idea for this emerged from a realisation that if new life is to be breathed into Teddington Lock a much wider understanding as to how the river is used needs to be carried out. The Lock is at the boundary of two navigational authorities and any works here are also affected by what takes place in Kingston, in Ham Lands through the Floodscape project and at Richmond in the London's Arcadia scheme.

These initial ideas have been taken one stage further to develop an Action Plan that will link all initiatives along the Arcadian Thames to breath new life in the use, connectivity and understanding of this remarkable stretch of the river and its unique character. In doing so it is anticipated that the role of the Thames Landscape Strategy will be strengthened linked to the emerging Ten-Year Review.

The TLS Waterspace & Visitor Action Plan will propose ways that connections between the different attractions along the Arcadian Thames both on and beside the River can be enhanced. It will embrace all aspects of access, recreational use and transport including river use, walking and cycling routes, bus networks and gateway railway stations, and will propose a unified approach to interpretative material between neighbouring regeneration schemes. It will ensure that a co-ordinated approach to environmental enhancement projects is taken along the river and that separate education & learning initiatives are intralined with each other.

These aspects will be intrinsically connected to a long-term marketing plan. This will not attempt to re-invent the wheel or promote individual attractions. Nor will it set out to increase visitor numbers in any significant way. Rather it will increase the visitor's appreciation, understanding and use of the area's special character, linked to external funding opportunities and regeneration schemes, to encourage longer stays, joint visiting of riparian sites and to foster local community involvement.

Much work has already been done to prepare the way during the development of the Heritage Lottery funded 'London's Arcadia' scheme including the production of access, interpretation, marketing and learning strategies. It is anticipated that these will form the basis for the wider Action Plan, modified to suit local characteristics and needs. In this way local diversity will be maintained and the risk of creating a Disney type 'Arcadialand' minimised.

It is envisaged that the Action Plan will be wide ranging and encompass projects in a variety of locations such as mooring and landscaping enhancements to Teddington Lock and the Kingston Railway Bridge car park, riverside facilities at Hampton Court Palace and improvements to Kingston Riverside. In addition the Action Plan will need to identify new locations for trip boat stops and public pontoons. Naturally this will need much more time to develop as there are so many different issues to account for but already new pontoons have been suggested for Ham, Twickenham, Radnor Gardens and Brentford. At Kew the possibility of linking Syon House with Kew Gardens via a special 'garden tour ferry' has been muted and in Richmond the London's Arcadia team has started to identify a suitable location for public short stay moorings and ways to enhance the River Lane draw dock in Ham.

The main purpose of the Action Plan therefore, is to pull together into one coherent plan, existing and proposed schemes so that opportunities are not lost and limited resources are maximised through much closer co-operation between TLS partners in order to breath new life into the Arcadian Thames. It is proposed that the Waterspace and Visitor Action Plan will initially be developed under the Teddington Gateway scheme leading to an anticipated publication in September 2005 following extensive consultation.

The Waterspace

To produce a definitive set of proposals to breath new life into the use of the River Thames.

To connect riparian attractions, gateway sites and car parks through the improvement of infrastructure for trip boats, hire boats and short stay moorings. To promote and support river events and regattas and the Great River Race.

To promote and support rowing, sailing, skiff and Canoe clubs.



Recreation and Use

To co-ordinate existing walking, riding and cycling initiatives across the region

To improve cross-river connections and public transport networks linked to river transport and riparian attractions. To promote rail stations as 'Gateway Sites' linked to wider improvements.

To co-ordinate and connect neighbouring projects to ensure that a strategic approach to signage, interpretation, information provision and design is ensured.

Marketing and Promotion

To market and promote the unique delights and recreational opportunities of the Arcadian Thames as one of the world's greatest cultural visitor destinations.

To promote the vision of the Thames Landscape Strategy to a wide audience and to raise awareness, pride and respect for the river landscape, as defined in the TLS report (1994).

To promote the region, attractions and recreational opportunities under a single theme: linked by the river and accessible to all on foot, by bicycle, trip boat or public transport.

To link these initiatives with partner and existing marketing proposals.

To introduce a series of innovative educational initiatives that cuts across the TLS partnership.

Funding and Management

To market the Arcadian Thames as a future UNESCO World Heritage Site to encourage greater understanding, protection and inward investment both for the major attractions and for the public

open spaces that link and provide meaning to the landscape.

To raise the funds necessary to implement the Waterspace and Visitor Action Plan.

To develop a sustainable mechanism to manage infrastructure improvements in the future

Ferry Quays



A major step forward in the intergrated use of the Arcadian Thames was completed earlier this year with the opening of a new stretch of the Thames Path in Brentford.

Running alongside the River Brent between The Thames and Brentford Lock, the impressive new walkway formed part of the Ferry Quays developemnt. Significantly for the TLS the walk will allow visitors much improved access between Ferry Quays and Syon House if a ferry is introduced here to link with Kew Gardens. Talks with Syon Estate to construct a new access into the park linked to the Thames Path is already underway although the final plan is a long way off.

London's Arcadia

The longest running of the TLS 'In Action' projects is 'London's Arcadia', the £3.2m Heritage Lottery funded (HLF) scheme for the area on and below Richmond Hill at the centre of the Arcadian Thames. 2004 has been spent developing the 'HLF Stage Two' bid, an essential requirement of the lottery. This is now complete and has been delivered, on time, to the Heritage Lottery Fund for their approval, expertly put together by Project Manager Tim Wilson who leaves at the end of October to start a new life in Italy. Stage Two requires detailed architects drawings and costing down to the smallest level. It also requires information on how the education, marketing, access and funding initiatives will be carried out. The area included in lottery bid was separated into two parts, 'pastoral' and 'urban' and two separate landscape architects appointed to draw up the plans for each. London based firm CUH2A was chosen for the urban areas and Kim Wilkie for the pastoral reaches including Richmond Hill. The first drafts were ready for consultation in the early summer. These changed many times as the views of local people were gathered. Consultation has still not finished and there is scope for minor changes to the plans almost until the day works start. The designs have been warmly received, although there are still one or two areas that still need to be refined.

Running alongside the development of the detailed designs and wider strategies has been a revised day-to-day maintenance programme and the on-going volunteer programme to deliver the series of 'early hits'. The works to Chitty Hole are completed and the on-going restoration of Ham Avenues continues. Work to River Lane in Ham has been delayed but significantly the view between the river and the Octagon has been re-opened. In addition, the fundraising strategy has been put in place to be launched in October 2004 in order to raise the necessary match funding. If all goes to plan it still intended that works on the ground will begin in earnest, early 2005. For more information please contact the Interim Project Manager Ken MacKenzie on 020 8891 7309.



Volunteers clear Ham Avenues



Jason Debney, The Chilean Ambassador and Cllr Arbour celebrate 'O'Higgins Day' - more next time!



Tim Wilson:



Orleans House re-opened with its river

Support the Thames Landscape Strategy

The TLS is a unique 100 year blueprint for the river Thames between Hampton and Kew. Launched in 1994, it has won several national and international awards. Supported by a partnership of local authorities and national environmental agencies, over 180 projects and management proposals to enhance the riverside have been agreed. Already over 140 projects are complete or in progress. Sir David Attenborough is the Patron of the Strategy, which works closely with local community groups to implement projects. Funding has been secured from the lottery, charitable trusts and commercial sponsors. However, we need to raise every penny we can each year to enable the work to continue. If you would like to help please contact the Co-ordinator at Holly Lodge or visit www.thames-landscape-strategy.org.uk

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PORT OF LONDON
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SURREY
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