

Watermark



The Newsletter of the Thames Landscape Strategy, Hampton to Kew Issue 15 December 2003

Three New Partners for the TLS



Representatives of the TLS partnership gathered at Pembroke Lodge for the Summer Event 2003

The Thames Landscape Strategy (TLS) was nominated in October 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, and projects ranging in size from the restoration of entire derelict canals to small community projects clearing out old ditches. Judging has taken place over the past couple of months and significantly the TLS has progressed through to the final round. Results are expected in the New Year.

The TLS was nominated for the 'Partnership' category, in reflection of recent achievements and in particular the Strategy's groundbreaking approach to partnership working. This recognition has been given a further boost over the summer as a further three new organisations have joined the TLS partnership. The Port of London Authority, Historic Royal Palaces and the Royal Botanic Gardens Kew all joined - taking the number of partner organisations to fourteen. This exciting development strengthens the long-term viability of the Thames Landscape Strategy and allows for a greater use of the partnership whilst developing projects and proposing policy changes. The TLS partnership is now well placed to move towards the Ten Year Review and to develop even more exciting projects up and down the river.

INSIDE

Waterworks: Bringing you up to date on recent events 2/3

Update: 'London's Arcadia' 3

Feature: Riverside Management 4

Feature: Thames Reedbeds 4

Feature: The Landscape of Syon by Richard Pailthorpe 5

Feature: A Regency Legacy at Orleans House by Mavis Batey 6

Feature: The Restoration of Orleans House Gardens 7

Feature: 'Brentford Riverside' 8

Feature: The Restoration of Ham Avenues by Kim Wilkie 9

Feature: The River Thames Alliance 10

Feature: Hurst Park 10

Feature: Teddington Gateway 11

Feature: News in Brief 12

Contact Details: 12

This special twelve page edition of Watermark, is published by the Thames Landscape Strategy Hampton to Kew. Watermark 15 highlights the many projects, management proposals and strategies that the TLS has developed and implemented over the previous year

Exciting Projects Launched

The Thames Landscape Strategy has been busy developing a series of new projects and management proposals designed to build on the success of the £2.3m Heritage Lottery Funded 'London's Arcadia' scheme. These have been designed to embrace the range of interests the Strategy encompasses and to cover the full geographic length of the River between Hampton and Kew. An exciting scheme is proposed for Hurst Park in Elmbridge. Although still at a very early stage, £6,000 has already been secured to develop a conservation plan. At the opposite limit of the TLS region in Brentford, funding has been won to develop a landscape masterplan for Watermans Park and The Hollows footpath around Kew Bridge. In Kingston, a way forward for the unsightly open space below Kingston Railway Bridge has been found and a major project has recently been launched at Teddington. 'Teddington Gateway' is being developed jointly by the TLS and the Environment Agency. In recognition of its significance a member of staff, Andy Yeates, has been seconded (part-time) from the EA to steer the project to the next stage.

Up and down the river new maintenance regimes developed by the TLS are transforming the appearance of the river such as at Ham (pictured right) and new strategies are proposed to halt the decline in river use. The TLS partners are busy too, Historic Royal Palaces have begun the restoration of the Long Water at Hampton Court and the London Borough of Richmond has started to write a heritage lottery fund bid for the Terrace Gardens. All-in-all an exciting time down on the river!



W a t e r w o r k s

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

Marble Hill Centenary



The Thames Landscape Strategy stand at the Marble Hill Centenary event

Over a gloriously hot and dry May weekend English Heritage hosted a spectacular event to celebrate the centenary of the opening of Marble Hill Park to the public. In 1902 the Park was to be built on for housing but following local indignation it was saved by the Act of Parliament that protected the View from Richmond Hill. Marble Hill Park was purchased by the LCC and opened to the public. The centenary event re-enacted much of the splendour of events 100-years ago with the TLS having a large display stand right in front of the House.



Dr Simon Thurley (English Heritage), Lord Watson (TLS) and Mayor Urquart (Richmond Council) enjoy the event

'Twickenhamshire'

Hosted by the London Parks and Gardens Trust, the Association of Gardens Trusts' annual conference 2003 took place along the banks of the Arcadian Thames based at Horace Walpole's riverside house at Strawberry Hill. Delegates from across the country visited many of the riverside gardens associated with the Thames Landscape including Marble Hill, Garricks Temple, Hampton Court House, Radnor Gardens, Orleans House and York House. Lectures were based around the theme of 'Twickenhamshire' reflecting 18th Century changes in gardening that at the time

overturned the world of garden design, taste and attitudes to nature. Significantly the Thames Landscape Strategy took a central role in the conference and was able to inform delegates of all the positive changes planned and underway to enhance the world famous landscape. The conference was hailed as a complete success and those attending left with a greater understanding of the region's past and plans for the future.

Bushy-tastic!

London's Arcadia is not the only historic open space associated with the Thames Landscape to receive a Heritage Lottery Fund grant this year. Bushy Park, the 450ha, 16th Century deer park has been awarded a £410,000 development grant towards an anticipated £4.9m award for the parks restoration. Works will include restoration of the water and woodland gardens and the appointment of a Head Gardener, an Education and Community Officer and a Project Manager. Congratulations to the Royal Parks Agency – more details in the next Watermark.

'Worst Wasted Space' Acolade for the Jolly Boatman

Launched in May and funded by the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister CABE Space (an off-shoot of the Commission for Architecture and the Built Environment) intends to champion better use of urban parks, derelict land and open spaces. Earlier this year CABE Space invited members of the public to nominate their worst derelict open spaces - The Jolly Boatman site in Molesey made the short list!

New Leisure Guide for London's River

A new fold out map for London's rural Thames between Hampton and Chelsea has been launched and is jam-packed with information on places to walk, eat, pubs, attractions, public slipways and riverside parks. The guide was produced jointly by Richmond and Hammersmith & Fulham Councils with help from both the Thames Landscape Strategy and the Thames Strategy Kew to Chelsea. The guide is available from all local tourist information centres.

A Bucket Load of Fun

A novel way of raising money for the Arcadia in the City Heritage Lottery Bid was initiated at the Ham Common Fair last May. Organised jointly by the Ham and Petersham Association and Latchmere Resettlement Prison, buckets, made at the prison were sold to members of the public at the event with a percentage of sales benefiting the project. Over £200 was raised for the Arcadia project to carry out works in the Ham area. Jason Debney, Co-ordinator of the Thames Landscape Strategy was delighted stating "this is a fantastic way of making funds. Over the next three years we need to raise a total of £750,000 to match the Arcadia Heritage Lottery Bid. This is just the sort of community based project we need if all the money is to be raised. Well done to all those who took part and a special thank-you to Latchmere Resettlement Prison who raised so much money.

The View

Organised by Fred Hauptfuhrer of the Asgil House Trust an exhibition of specially commissioned paintings to co-incide with the Centenary of the Act of Parliament that saved the View from Richmond Hill has raised over £100,000 for local environmental improvement schemes. The impressive collection of paintings brought together some of the country's leading landscape artists who all donated a percentage of sales income to the good cause. Pictured below is artist Susan Ryder painting her 'view'.



Photo: Ron Berryman

Out and About with the TLS

One of the most effective ways for the TLS to meet new people whilst bringing old friends up to date is to attend many of the local events organised across the TLS region. Here is a taste of this year's festivities.



Walton Heritage Day



Above: At the Kingston Car Free Day



The TLS attended the Walton Heritage Day in September. The sun shone all day on the collection of stalls and activities gathering along the old town wharf. One of the highlights of the day's events was a cavalcade of traditional Thames boats. Pictured above is Mayor and Lady Mayoress Cllr Mick Burgess of Elmbridge Borough Council with the TLS Co-ordinator.

Over the August Bank Holiday the TLS Co-ordinator Jason Debney and Arcadia Project Officer Ken Mac Kenzie packed up shop and attended the IWA National Waterways Festival. This annual event moves to a new site each year to represent the diversity of Britain's waterway heritage. This year the festival was at Child Beale Wildlife Park, next to the Thames at Pangbourne Berkshire. Attracting well over 40,000 visitors the TLS decided this was an opportunity not to be missed. Over the four-day event, thousands of people learnt of the Strategy's work (see picture above). Many were regular boaters, walkers or river enthusiasts from across London and the South East who were amazed at the amount of work taking place in the TLS region. The event was a complete success and importantly gave the TLS an opportunity to mix and swap ideas with other waterway restorers from across the country.

Twickenham Clean Up

The Annual Draw-Off between Richmond and Teddington Lock provides a perfect opportunity to scrape about on the revealed foreshore. This year, the Environment Trust for Richmond and the TLS organised three Volunteer Clean Up Days - the following is the amazing tally of what was dredged out of the riverbed at Twickenham Riverfront on the 15th November 2003:

17 shopping carts; 32 shopping baskets; 2 bicycles; a hot water tank; an out board motor; a lawn mower; 3 chairs; a television (not working); a bus stop; 2 parking control signs; 3 radio/CD players; a fibreglass cast for a leg; a 30metre long plastic pipe; Several other shorter lengths of pipe; 2 push chairs; 1000's of pint and ½ pint glasses; Endless amounts of broken glass and bottles; Plastic doormats; 2 exhaust pipes and 1 car battery.

What a terrible way to treat London's greatest natural asset.

London's Arcadia

The last few months have been a watershed in the development of the London's Arcadia project. An external fundraising consultant 'Action Planning' has been appointed and a formal funding appeal has now been launched. Tender documents to draw up the 122 projects have been released and a series of 'early hits' projects agreed to take place over the coming six months has started to be implemented.

In April 2003 the Heritage Lottery Fund granted a 'Stage I Pass' effectively ring fencing the £2.3m applied for whilst the scheme is developed to the next stage. Arcadia was structured in a way that allowed us to successfully apply for these additional costs called 'Development Funding'. These Development Funds pay for all those extra costs incurred in any major project including architect fees, ecologists and other specialist staff such as a full-time project manager. These funds are on top of monies granted for works on the ground so will not eat away at the money ring-fenced for capital improvements.

The development of any lottery-funded project is a minefield of European legislation and red tape so it was with great relief that in October Tim Wilson was appointed as full time Project Manager. Importantly, Tim's previous job was actually with the Heritage Lottery Fund so he knows all the tricks of the trade allowing us all to really get things moving. At present the team is busy selecting a consultant to draw up the detailed designs and consulting on the next wave of early hits projects. These include work to River Lane, Petersham, the opening of the Orleans House Octagon and landscaping to the Thames Path at Chitty Hole - all key projects contained within the Thames Landscape Strategy. A full-time Volunteer Co-ordinator (Paul Clay) has been appointed, jointly funded by the HLF and Local Agenda 21 to stimulate community support and take some of the strain away from Jason and Ken in the management of volunteers.

The project is now well on target to begin work on the ground early in 2005. Significantly, due to the way the project has been established many of the project work anticipated for 2006/7 has been brought forward. This means that whilst the start date has slipped back by nine months the overall completion date is considerably sooner. For more information contact the TLS at Holly Lodge or the Arcadia Project Manager Tim Wilson on 020 8891 1411.



Ken Mac Kenzie

Riverside Management: a new approach

One of the most important tasks that the TLS carries out is advising riparian owners on the effective day-to-day management of the riverside. This ranges from advice to private householders through the 'Riverside Garden' leaflet to the development of entire management regimes for large sections of riverside. As the TLS expands its role in the development of major strategic projects this role will be increased as all major funders always insist on best practice including a sustainable long-term maintenance regime.

The Heritage Lottery Fund requested a considerable improvement in the day-to-day management of the riverside before granting the Stage I Pass for 'London's Arcadia' to include litter picking, grass cutting and weed control along footpaths. Effective day-to-day management is always the key to the long-term success of any environmental project so in June of this year a new management regime drawn up by the TLS was introduced for the riverside, avenues and parks included in the HLF scheme.

The riverside is a particularly difficult environment to manage. The diverse needs of wildlife, aesthetics, bio-diversity and recreation all have to be juggled. The maintenance plan had to account for the rhythms of the tide, complex ecosystems, river borne litter and huge visitor numbers at the same time as allowing people to connect with the river whilst still giving the appearance of a 'natural' environment full of wild flowers and wildlife.

Most importantly along the tideway the monthly fluctuations in the tide must be accounted for when developing work schedules. It is known when the spring tides are due (these take place each month just after the full moon) and the river will break its banks and flood the towpath. This information is particularly important when using large machinery on the riverside that can get bogged down in wet mud.

Also much of the litter on the towpath is deposited on these monthly high tides. The plan allows for the litter to

accumulate during the spring tides to be cleared away when the tides retreat. This has had a significant reduction in the overall amount of litter on the towpath and Richmond now has one of the cleanest riversides in Greater London.

The trick now is to extend this approach up and down the river through out the capital and to educate people not to throw their rubbish into the Thames (and to that point plastic material down the toilet – it has to end up somewhere!).

Trees, weeds and vegetation are now managed in a much more sustainable way. For example, weeds are controlled in the town centre areas whilst allowed to flourish in the more rural parts. Trees are maintained to allow riverside views without destroying the splendid habitat and character they provide.

Throughout the summer, many hours were spent with Service Team, the Council's contractor on the riverside developing these new management regimes. Each stretch of the riverside has to be managed differently so the key to success is often clarity in communication between managers and those people actually doing the work. To this end six 'supervisory areas' under the management of six separate supervisors were merged into one area under the supervision of one dedicated manager. A good old-fashioned work gang was trained up and over the summer these guys got to know their patch and importantly to take pride in their work. Volunteer work was then dove-tailed into the formal management plan.

Litter was tackled next. Significantly Richmond Council granted extra funding for more litter pickers along the river particularly during the busy summer months. This has seen a huge improvement already but there is still a long way to go. During 2004 a new approach is to be trailed utilising local volunteers working in partnership with the Council's contractors during expected busy periods. Local fundraising is also to be targeted in order to top up council budgets.

For more information on this new approach to riverside management please phone Jason Debney at Holly Lodge.

Thames Reedbeds

Historically, a tall wetland grass called 'common reed' growing in the shallow water margins would have dominated large sections of London's riverside. The common reed is the UK's largest native grass and although now confined in the capital to small pockets on the Thames and its tidal tributaries, the habitat still hosts a wonderful diversity of species.

Reedbeds are important fish spawning grounds and support a wide range of species including: kingfisher, water vole, interesting invertebrates, great crested newt, bearded tit and Cetti's warbler and even Bittern. The habitat is however, vulnerable to problems caused by invasive, non-native species such as overgrazing by Canada geese and bank destabilisation by Chinese mitten crabs.

Across the UK, up to 40% of reedbed habitats have been lost between the end of the 2nd WW and 1990 and in response have been designated as a nationally scarce habitat and priority habitat for conservation (UK Biodiversity Action Plan (DOE 1995)).

This said, many man-made reedbeds are now flourishing particularly in disused industrial sites, restored gravel workings and flood storage basins. Although mainly located in east London (with the obvious exception of the Wildfowl and Wetlands Trust at Barnes) the potential to re-introduce the habitat within the Thames landscape is considerable.

The plans will not see large expanses of reedbed introduced, at least not in the near future, but small plantings along the river's edge in appropriate locations. Following much survey work funding has been secured from the Environment Agency to plant several stretches to start the reintroduction.

Of particular note is the Warren Footpath running alongside Marble Hill Park. As projects emerge more areas will be surveyed at Brentford, Isleworth, the Old Deer Park, Ham and Teddington.

Volunteers will carry out planting later in 2004. If you would like to help please contact Ken MacKenzie (London's Arcadia Project Officer) on 020 8891 7309.

The Landscape of Syon by Syon Estate Manager Richard Pailthorpe



Syon Park is a living landscape containing many elements of British history from prehistoric times to the present day. Its many changes reflect the wealth and power of its owners and have been expressed through the latest trends and technologies in architecture and design. Syon is now the only part of the tidal Thames with water meadows (an SSSI, still grazed by cattle) and a natural foreshore. It is likely that much of the site once formed an eyot. In prehistory the stretch of the river around Syon was a mass of creeks, islands and marshes, and it is possible that the line of the two lakes in the park represents a former channel.

In 1415 King Henry V founded two religious houses, one dedicated to the Carthusian Order at Shene, on the opposite side of the river to Isleworth, and the other to the 'Order of St. Saviour, the Blessed Virgin Mary and St. Bridget of Syon' at Twickenham. The Twickenham site proved unsuitable and the abbey was moved to the site now occupied by Syon House. Construction commenced in 1426 and by 1431 the first buildings were ready for occupation. No plans survive of the abbey buildings or their layout but very recently archaeological investigation by Channel 4's 'Time Team' show that Syon House was built on the site of the abbey church. Evidence suggests that the church was built on a scale comparable to a cathedral and extended well beyond the east range of the house and onto the meadow overlooking the Thames. The

nun's cloister and reredorter were also discovered under the South lawn adjacent to the house. The 'Time Team' investigation has highlighted what a dramatic sight the abbey must have appeared to those passing up and down the Thames before its suppression in 1539.

When the Duke of Somerset acquired Syon in 1547 he laid out with the help of his physician the botanist William Turner, what has been called the first botanic garden in Britain, a grand formal garden in the latest Italian style. Henry Percy, 9th Earl of Northumberland had been given the freehold of Syon by James 1st in 1604, but it was his son, the 10th Earl who developed the formal French garden style at Syon. A series of avenues of lime trees had been planted during the early 18th century. The chief example is the great Lime Avenue to the west of Syon House, which was created as a grand entrance drive.

When the first Duke and Duchess of Northumberland succeeded to the Percy estates, they were determined to make their mark and 'Capability' Brown was in 1750 engaged to extend the park. In 1764 King George III also commissioned Brown to landscape the ground of his Palace at Richmond, on the site which is now Kew Gardens, and this is the only example of adjacent Brown landscapes, with the river as the centrepiece, rather than the dividing line. The terraces and walks around Syon House were replaced with sweeping

lawns, and a ha-ha constructed, but the biggest changes took place to the north. In place of the old kitchen gardens he created 'Syon Pleasure Ground' with trees and walks around the lake and a statue of the goddess Flora on a 55-foot Doric column. The technologically innovative Great Conservatory, designed by Charles Fowler was built between 1826-27 and the gardens were brought to a state of near horticultural perfection during this time. Throughout the 20th century Syon continued to be maintained as a rural aristocratic estate. There was a working farm within the park until farm buildings were converted for the garden centre in the 1960's when a number of inappropriate buildings were added.

The present Duke of Northumberland, aware of the need for change and improvement, during the 1990's instigated a major redevelopment plan for Syon developed by Kim Wilkie. The plan has recently received planning permission and included the demolition of the 1960's buildings and the building of a hotel which enables the reinstatement of the historic landscape from Brown's original scheme. The plans include the reinstatement of the lakehead in the Pleasure Grounds and the 18th century oval carriage drive. The present ugly and uninviting car park will also be completely relandscaped. This exciting project together with restoration work already taking place such as the creation of vistas across the Thames will continue to make Syon a remarkable survivor of a privately owned country estate with in Greater London.

Richard Pailthorpe 2003

A Regency Legacy at Orleans House by Mavis Batey



Orleans House Octagon

The following article has been written by Mavis Batey on behalf of the Garden History Society and is timed to co-inside with the proposed 'restoration' of Orleans Gardens and the re-opening of the lost Octagon river view, reconnecting Gibbs's masterpiece with the Thames in early 2004.

Orleans House and gardens have a long association with the Thames Landscape, both by reason of its beautiful riverside location and for its outstanding collection of paintings of the area. It has much been involved with the TLS ever since it hosted the Thames Arcadia exhibition ten years ago, in association with the Garden History Society and more recently an exhibition to celebrate the centenary of the protection of the View from Richmond Hill.

The woodland garden forms a delightful semi-wild walk between Orleans House and Marble Hill: the separation of the two properties by a brick wall and door into the lane serves to remind us that this part of the riverside was occupied by individual villas set in large grounds in the 18th Century, which blended into a harmonious river landscape.

In these early days when James Johnson, Secretary of State for Scotland, owned the house there were formal gardens and noted orchards. When he retired from public life in 1702 Johnson 'amused himself with planting and gardening, in which he reckoned to have a very good

taste'. His terraces and formal gardens were removed by Sir George Pocock in the late 18th Century when good taste implied natural landscape gardening. Some time in the early 19th Century ornamental shrubberies were laid out.

Gravel digging in the woodland garden area in the 1920s destroyed the gardens that can be seen in outline on early OS maps, but the general effect we see today, although somewhat wilder than intended, is very much in keeping with the ideas of the Regency period when Louis Philippe, Duc d'Orleans lived there and the house became known as Orleans House. The garden in its heyday is seen in a charming lithograph by Pringet showing the Duke on a return visit in 1844 when he was King of the French. By that time Alexander Murray, who acquired the house in 1827, had commissioned Papworth to build a conservatory to link the Octagon to the house. It was probably Papworth, author of *Ornamental Gardening*, who advised on the accompanying landscape planting as he did at Twickenham Park when he built the conservatory and aviary for Thomas Todd in 1829. Papworth favoured ornamental Regency planting with plenty of climbers as seen in his plans for the Orleans House conservatory.

The best description of the style of the picturesque Regency garden is given by Henry Phillips in his book 'Sylva Florifera' in 1823. The title itself 'flowery woodland' evokes the design. In the 18th Century trees, shrubs and flowers were usually separate components in the landscaped garden. Trees were planted in avenues, clumps and belts, singly on lawns or as frames in picturesque scenes, flowers held sway in the flower garden and shrubs were largely used to screen outhouses. Following Gilpen's 'Remarks on Forest Scenery' in 1791 landscape designers began to imitate the natural mixed planting to be found in hedgerows on the edge of commons and forests. When John Nash laid out St James's Park in the 1820's he planted his ornamental shrubberies using 'the same principles that hold good in all wild wood and shrub plantations'.

The shrubs, mainly evergreen, were planted first and into the spaces were recessed flowers such as hollyhocks,

martagon lilies, peonies, day lilies, foxgloves, sunflowers and michaelmas daisies. Up the bare trunks of trees and woody shrubs were grown passion flowers, flaming nasturtiums, jasmine, everlasting peas and honeysuckles. Shrubs were arranged with due regard to seasonal flowering and included dogwood, viburnum, acacia, judas trees, euonymus, guelder, roses, thorns, lilac, philadelphus, brooms, gorse and laurel and one of the most important components was the sweet briars and Scotch roses. Periwinkle, St. John's wort and ground creepers avoided hard lines of edging.

The aim was to produce, as far as possible, a natural hedgerow effect. In Henry Phillips's flowery words: 'the guelder rose should appear as if escaping from the dark bosom of the evergreens'; the 'brooms should be planted to peep over the sombre evergreens like the rays of the sun' and the light and elegant acacia had 'a more beautiful effect when its branches float over the firm and dark holly or bay tree'. If the owner were lucky enough to possess a common hedgerow at the end of his property this made an ideal basis for an ornamental shrubbery.

Few Regency flowery woodland gardens have survived as they were overtaken by more intensive Victorian 'gardenesque' cultivation and bedding out schemes. Today a controlled wilderness of mixed wild and cultivated plants would be appreciated by gardeners and nature conservationists alike. The Victorian owner of Orleans House was lulled to sleep by 'the sweet song of the nightingales'. It was in just such ornamental shrubberies that Keats heard the nightingale in his Hampstead house. Such an area would be relatively easy to establish and maintain at Orleans House today and could be managed by volunteers as in the delightful Crescent Garden at Alverstock, Gosport who have rediscovered the skills and delights in managing a similar Regency garden. At Orleans, the inclusion of a few cherry and pear trees might be mingled with the shrubs for Johnson's sake and, for the Duke d'Orleans, who was a great lover of roses, the elusive Orleans Rose might be trained up a tree.

Mavis Batey 2003

The Restoration of Orleans House Gardens



Orleans House and garden in 1844 - from the Ionides Collection LBRuT

Mavis describes a colourful past for Orleans Gardens. The following article demonstrates how this study can be used to guide the site's future. All parties are agreed that 'restoration' is needed but as the garden has undergone many transitions (including extensive gravel extraction) which historic period would be chosen?

Mavis Batey reminds that 'restoration is now used as a general term to include conservation and renewal. It has always been inappropriate to consider 'restoration' in the narrower sense in relation to the Orleans House Garden. Restoration of a garden to a known plan is only possible, or desirable, where there is a contemporary existing property as at Ham House across the river from Orleans House, where the National Trust has made one of the most authentic period garden restorations in England based on a plan belonging to the house'. Orleans House is a different matter altogether as all that remains of the original house is the famous Octagon building and the adjoining wing'.

It was demonstrated that the most important date for any renewal of the garden in an historical sense is 1815-1817 when Louise Philippe, Duc d'Orleans lived there and the house became known by that name. Mavis adds that 'a clear indication of what the setting of the house and the Octagon was like then and later, when in 1844 the Duke returned as King of the French, can be seen in paintings in the Ionides collection in the gallery'. The next stage is to devise a conservation

plan. The expertise of local residents (and ex Kew Garden staff): Joy Lee and Ray Desmond have been enlisted to develop this. Steered by the TLS, technical advice is provided by English Heritage, Richmond Council, Orleans Gallery, the National Trust and local societies. It is proposed that works to the garden will be to establish a Regency garden in the style of the 'original' based around the gardening principles set out in the early 19th Century as proposed by Mavis. The garden conservation plan will re-establish the woodland walks, shrubberies and glades of the period without the need to rip out much of the 20th Century tree growth.

This sits well with the garden's appearance and use today. As the garden is a haven for wildlife it is important that before any works start a full ecological survey will be carried out during 2004 to establish exactly what is growing. A volunteer group can then be established to begin implementing the new management regime whilst learning valuable conservation and horticultural techniques. The plan will naturally take access considerations, long-term management implications and costs and vandalism into account. To start the restoration the link between the Octagon and the Thames will be re-opened. This will necessitate the felling of several semi-mature trees but care will be taken to remove only those specimens (or individual branches) that are necessary to open up the view. After each tree is felled, work will stop and the site surveyed to establish exactly what is needed next to ensure minimum intervention.

'Floodscape'

Climate change is possibly the greatest environmental threat that the world faces over the coming century and for the Thames basin that will mean changes in the way the river floods. With warmer summers, wetter winters and rising sea levels a sustainable approach to manage this predicted change has to be found. Fortunately, the Environment Agency is tackling the problem head-on proposing a pro-active approach to tackle the issue through the European funded project 'Floodscape'.

Traditionally, flood managers have reacted to flooding by constructing ever higher flood defence barriers. Floodscape intends to turn this approach around to find new ways of managing flood risk which is sustainable in the long-term by making space for exceptional floods whilst retaining (and even enhancing) land use patterns and amenity. Within the TLS region this will necessitate in approaching both fluvial and tidal flooding - finding a solution to living with these exceptional events rather than always fighting back the waters.

This is a ground-breaking approach that will use local priorities to set the agendas on future flood alleviation schemes to keep people and property safe. The Thames Landscape Strategy has been working with the Environment Agency from the very inception of the 'Floodscape' initiative to ensure that TLS policies are fully integrated. This is crucial as the solutions developed over the next decade in Floodscape will have implications for the river corridor and the sustainable future of the Thames landscape.

Hightide at Richmond



Brentford Riverside

Over the past decade Brentford has seen many changes – more in fact than any other area within the Strategy remit. Each development has left its own mark on the landscape and regenerated another piece of derelict space. ‘Brentford Riverside’ hopes to bring these separate schemes together to create a homogenous and legible riverside that reflects the town’s historical development and special character that is focused once again on its riverside. This will be no easy task in a landscape that has undergone such radical changes in recent years.

Although the proposals are at a very early stage it is intended to develop a series of environmental improvements into an indicative landscaping scheme for the area between Waterman’s Arts Centre and Strand on the Green to form the basis for a future external funding bid. The scheme is being progressed by the TLS in partnership with the Thames Strategy Kew to Chelsea and Community Initiative Partnerships (CIP), Hounslow Council and local people.

One of the principle aims of the project is to improve the links along the Thames Path to connect Waterman’s Park with Strand on the Green both physically and in terms of continuity of design and use of materials. It is proposed to enhance the appearance of the riverside and streetscape, linking the open spaces to the river including biodiversity works and habitat creation along the foreshore. Importantly the scheme will develop and improve access and facilities for local people such as a new play area and will be designed to decrease the perception and the threat of crime.

Long-term maintenance issues will be accounted for, as will cross-river considerations. ‘Brentford Riverside’ will provide a well designed backdrop for the UNESCO World Heritage Site at Kew Gardens, with landscaping at Waterman’s Park designed to provide a setting that frames the waterscape drawing attention away from the Park towards the river, the tidal fluctuations and the magnificent Brentford Ait with its array of bird and animal life (recently described by a local school child as ‘better watching than the telly’).

Whilst the scheme is focusing on the riverside around Waterman’s Park and Strand on the Green it will not lose sight of future proposals to connect the area with Ferry Quays (as intervening property comes up for development), then to the Grand Union Canal and onto Syon Park via a footbridge over the cut. Any proposals will take reference for these long-term plans to ensure continuity is achieved. In addition to improving connections along the river ‘Brentford Riverside’ will develop ways to link housing estates adjacent to Waterman’s Park with their river.

Brentford from Lotts Ait showing recent development



TLS Summer Event



Photo: The National Trust

Keith Halstead of the National Trust joins the TLS

On Wednesday July 2nd 175 people, representing almost 80 organisations, attended an evening in celebration of the Thames Landscape Strategy at Pembroke Lodge, Richmond Park. Guests gathered at the hill top Lodge overlooking the world famous ‘Matchless Vale of the Thames’ to witness the signing of the Thames Landscape Strategy Memorandum of Agreement for a further three years and excitingly to welcome The National Trust as the first new funding partner to join the Strategy since its launch nine years ago at Kew Gardens. The evening included speeches by the Thames Landscape Strategy Strategy’s Co-ordinator Jason Debney and current TLS Chairman Richard Copas of the Environment Agency before the partners signed the new agreement.

Keith Halstead, Regional Director of The National Trust signed on behalf of The Trust. Appropriately, the rain clouds cleared at this point enabling guests the opportunity to spill onto the Terrace to see the magnificent views across the Thames Valley to Ham House (The National Trust). Commenting on the occasion Keith said “I am delighted to confirm The National Trust as a full funding partner to the Thames Landscape Strategy. The time is right to be part of this award winning initiative particularly in light of recent developments initiated by the Strategy with The National Trust, notably the launch of ‘London’s Arcadia’, and the Ham Avenues Management Plan”. The event was sponsored by Daniel Hearsom.

The Restoration of Ham Avenues by Kim Wilkie

The Ham Avenues provide the structure to some of the most interesting and extensive public open space owned by any local authority in London. As well as forming an intrinsic part of the world famous view from Richmond Hill, the Avenues link areas of great nature conservation interest. For nearly three and half centuries the majority of the five kilometres of Avenues have been maintained and replanted. They have managed to survive, with Ham House at their heart, as the most complete Carolean landscape in the country.

In 1902 an Act of Parliament preserved the view from Richmond Hill for 'the use, enjoyment and recreation of the general public'. The avenues are central to this use and enjoyment. They create vistas, paths and wildlife corridors. They link Ham House to the Thames, to the surrounding towns, to Richmond Park and, across the river, to Marble Hill, Twickenham and Strawberry Hill. Walkers, cyclists, horse riders and bird watchers all use the land and there is scope for neighbouring schools to benefit from the resource right on their doorstep.

The ravages of gravel extraction, bomb rubble disposal and Dutch elm disease have reduced the Avenues from their former glory, but the lines remain largely unobstructed. The landscape, though neglected, is still one of the most remarkable of any city in Europe. Above all Ham epitomizes that most special of English values – the countryside in the city. During the development of the project, the rural character of the river landscape was the most frequently and prized aspect mentioned. The word 'rural' was used quite deliberately. People cherish the long tradition of man in nature, which is at the heart of the English Landscape Movement and the Thames Landscape Strategy – a true Arcadia in the city where cows, people and badgers coexist, rather than the more American concept of an impenetrable wilderness from which people are to be excluded. Indeed the traditional farming of the flood plain creates a richer mosaic of habitats and biodiversity than would abandonment. The historic relationship between man and landscape has to be maintained through continuous management of the land if the wildlife habitats are to survive.

Open space within a city has a special and complex value. The river and parks along the Thames are cherished throughout London. Particularly at weekends, visitors come here from all over the capital. There is also a proud sense of ownership of the Ham flood plain by the local community on both sides of the river, who use or look into the place on a daily basis. This is a landscape that is loved and enjoyed by many different people in many different ways. Decisions about how the land should be managed understandably and justifiably raise strong emotions. A living landscape is constantly evolving. The priorities of how to manage that evolution need regular reassessment. The Avenues have deteriorated markedly since the 1970's. As the trees have died and rides have become overgrown, public access has been reduced and different wildlife habitats have taken their place. Ironically the change to the landscape through the lack of management over the last thirty years has probably been more radical than in the previous three centuries.

The publication of the Ham Avenues Management plan followed much consultation and proposes a way forward that is the culmination of an initiative started by the Thames Landscape Strategy back in 1991. The Strategy focused on the restoration of the Ham Avenues as its flagship project and now, this has come a step closer. Already a thorn and holly hedge has been planted along the Great South Avenue and many schemes will be implemented as part of the 'London's Arcadia' Heritage Lottery Fund project including: the enhancement of Ham car park; vegetation works to the riverside; towpath repairs; and the restoration of Petersham Lodge Wood. The Petersham Trust has raised many thousands of pounds to secure a long term future for the meadows and the Teddington Gateway project is investigating proposals to the riverside immediately upstream of Ham towards Kingston.

Now formally adopted by the London Borough of Richmond, the Ham Avenues Plan is entering the next phase in its development. Proposals for the long term restoration include: phased replanting of English oaks around Ham Common; the full replanting of the Great River Avenue

(aligned on the Royal Star and Garter and Radnor Gardens); the phased replanting of the Great South Avenue from Ham Common to Ham House; the phased replanting of the North Avenue and Melancholy Walk; and the long term replanting of Petersham Avenue, when the current trees near the end of their lives.

Much of the momentum behind this exciting initiative has been generated by the Thames Landscape Strategy, demonstrating how the Ham Avenues provide not only a structure to the wider riparian landscape but significantly a mechanism for its holistic restoration and subsequent management. As the project develops, areas of adjoining land (after further consultation and study) could be integrated into a wider landscape enhancement. It is anticipated that this will be developed in partnership with the Environment Agency through their emerging Floodscape Project to investigate ways of linking the long term sustainable management of London's flood plain with local initiatives. In this way, the proposed scheme would provide a unique opportunity to restore not just the avenues themselves but to rejuvenate much of the surrounding landscape, halting the decline in the diversity of the riverside meadows, enhancing the flood alleviation mechanisms for the region and creating recreational opportunities to rival those of any European capital city. This exceptional initiative is at the core of the Thames Landscape Strategy and could hold a key to the future for public land and open space ensuring that the right balance is struck between dwindling public funds, nature conservation, public access and the historic landscape.

Kim Wilkie 2003

The Great South Avenue



The River Thames Alliance

The use of the River Thames has been in decline for many years. Between 1980 and 2000 holiday boat hire on the Thames fell by 77% and between 1990 and 2000 private boat use fell by 30%. This said, the Environment Agency has recently begun to notice a reversal in fortunes. Although small compared to previous decline last year saw a 4.7% increase in the number of powerboat licences for the Thames and visiting boats were up a whopping 19%.

Following a HM Government Review in 2000 the Environment Agency (the navigation authority responsible for the Thames upstream of Teddington) has taken a much more pro-active approach to reverse the fortunes of the river. Much of this has been achieved through the Agency's 'Thames Ahead' project, launched in 2000, to raise revenue to improve infrastructure of the river in order to promote greater use.

Running alongside the Thames Ahead initiative, the River Thames Society commissioned Oxford Brookes University to propose recommendations

for a strategy embracing the freshwater Thames. This was published to much acclaim earlier this year.

In an exciting development the Environment Agency has now teamed up with the River Thames Society to launch a new initiative that brings together 'the Thames Ahead' initiative with the Oxford Brookes study called the 'River Thames Alliance'. The Alliance hopes to achieve 'a healthy growth in the use of the freshwater Thames for communities, for wildlife, for leisure and for business.' Already the initiative is having positive benefits for the Thames landscape in initiatives such as Teddington Gateway and proposals for the enhancement of Molesey Lock.

Messing about on the river!



Photo: Patrick Kildner

A Waterspace Strategy for the TLS

It is proposed that a *Waterspace Strategy* will be produced by the Thames Landscape Strategy in order to provide a strategic framework to guide the direction of current and future project work and to encourage a greater use of the river by boaters.

The requirement for a Waterspace Strategy has arisen from an identified need to bring together emerging projects in terms of their interaction with each other and with the river itself to ensure continuity in design and recreational use, effectively placing the *water* at the heart of each project.

The potential for a Waterspace Strategy embracing the Thames landscape has only been made possible by the Port of London Authority's agreement to join the TLS as a funding partner in July 2003. A plan can now be developed that crosses navigational boundaries that could stretch from Molesey downstream to Kew and, the entrance to the Grand Union Canal at Brentford and even to Putney.

Hurst Park & Molesey Riverside

One of the first Thames Landscape Strategy projects to be implemented on the ground was the re-grading of the riverbank along Albany Reach in Thames Ditton. Six years later it has been proposed that a 'Conservation Management Plan' should be produced for the riverside open spaces immediately upstream of Albany Reach between Cigarette Island (pictured below) and Hurst Park (inclusive). Although still at a very early stage, £6,000 has already been secured to develop the plan leading eventually to a master plan document and funding bid to action the proposals. The resulting plan would include landscape and future management proposals, tree works, access improvements, interpretation, establishment of volunteer groups, links to the wider landscape, measures to reduce the threat of crime, bio-diversity work, visitor management and riverbank treatment. The production of a Conservation Plan would follow a full survey (both desk top and field survey) of the area in order to establish and appraise the distinctive character that is to be enhanced such as the framing of important views and retention of special riverside features. It is not anticipated that any major work will be needed rather repair and consolidation of existing structures and planting.

All measures would be taken to ensure that the Conservation Plan dovetailed into existing designations and policy such as local conservation area studies. The setting of Hampton Court, Garrick's Temple and Bushy Park will be addressed as an integral part of the design process. This said however, the plan will be focused very much at creating a series of connected and legible open spaces for local people. For more details of this emerging plan please contact Jason Debney at Holly Lodge.



Teddington Gateway



Teddington Lock Footbridge

On December 11th a major new initiative was launched by the Thames Landscape Strategy and the Environment Agency at Teddington Film Studios to regenerate aspects of this key River Thames location. At the junction between the tidal and non-tidal rivers, Teddington forms a gateway between the estuarine and freshwater rivers and is a popular riverside attraction well known along the Thames. Waterway restoration schemes across the country have demonstrated the potential for such 'gateway' sites to act as a catalyst for wider regeneration and renewal of the river corridor.

Previous meetings with interested local stakeholders in the Teddington area have unanimously endorsed the need for a detailed study to determine where improvements to the local infrastructure and amenities should take place and how funding can be secured to action the plan. In response the TLS has teamed up with the Environment Agency to develop and action a wide reaching scheme called 'Teddington Gateway' to propose a way forward to unlock the potential of the river to initiate a real renaissance in the area and the wider waterspace corridor.

Before any recommendations can be developed a full appraisal of the existing character and use of the river will be undertaken. This will include a brief review of relevant

documentation and legislation, site based survey work, a review of any ongoing waterside regeneration plans in the region and an audience development study. Following the survey and analysis of opportunities, a masterplan for the Teddington Lock area will be prepared to demonstrate how Teddington can fully exploit the river for a range of improvements and activities. This first phase of the masterplan will identify the key elements of the landscape & site management strategy and give an indication of the overall concept and vision at Teddington. Essentially, it will provide a framework for raising external funding and will be prepared in time to launch at the Centenary of the opening of the Barge Lock in June 2004. This event will be used as a platform to move the project to the next stage, the production of a delivery report to be used to secure funding for the implementation

stage. The report will identify the following themes:

Landscape & Site Management Strategy - To identify landscape improvements for the lock and surrounding landscape in order to conserve the identified heritage and improve access, interpretation and facilities to benefit locals, visitors and riverside wildlife. The production of a site management plan will form a key component of this strategy.

Waterspace Strategy - Identify improvements to facilities and infrastructure on the water space between Hampton and Putney including moorings, visitor & navigational facilities, pontoons and draw docks to halt the decline in the use of the river.

Visitor and Marketing Strategy - Identify ways of increasing the tourism experience of Teddington Lock and the River Thames corridor as an attraction in its own right and to encourage a wider understanding of the river.

The finished masterplan will complement and inform work already underway as part of the Thames Landscape Strategy Hampton to Kew Ten Year Review, London's Arcadia, Ham Avenues Management Plan, EA Thames Ahead initiative, Environment Agency capital works to the Lock and other relevant studies.

For more information contact the TLS.

Edwardian Teddington - bustling with people 'messaging about on the river'



And Finally...

Events Programme 2004

If you would like to find out more about the work of the Thames Landscape Strategy why not visit the TLS marquee at one of the local fairs over the summer. Although dates are unavailable at present the Strategy intends to visit the following events this year: Richmond Fayre, Ham Common Fayre, Kew Fayre, Barnes Fayre, Kingston Green Fair at Canbury Gardens, Walton Heritage Day, Esher Fayre and the Radnor

Gardens Music Festival. A special one-off event is planned for Sunday June 6th to celebrate the Centenary of the opening of the Teddington Barge Lock. The Lock and every available open space will be transformed into a hive of activity with stalls, children's activities, bands and refreshments.

Maritime London 2005

A celebration of London's maritime heritage in 2005 is proposed, to coincide with the Year of the Sea. This initiative would focus on the water and could help to raise the public profile of the Thames as a working river in a significant way. Details at present are limited but the TLS is sure to take part.

Thames Pilot

An exciting new online resource of images and documents about the river has been launched formed by a partnership of libraries and museums along the Thames to make images and documents from their collections freely available to all. A website and information store have been created for communities along the Thames to search for information on specific subjects or locations and to select images. To access this remarkable new resource please visit: www.thamespilot.org.uk

Left Below: Volunteers from American Express help to keep the View from Richmond Hill open. If you or your company would like to take part in a volunteer action day please contact the TLS at the address below. Right Below: One of the strangest things to emerge from the river during 2003. An amphibious craft uses the Strand on the Green Draw Dock having cruised from Twickenham.



Bridgete Clements, Consultation Manager for the London's Arcadia project helping the TLS at a local event

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 the address oposit or visit www.thames-landscape-strategy.org.uk

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**PORT OF LONDON
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**SURREY
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