



# Cheyne Walk Trust Newsletter



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# UNDERGROUND FOR WORLD'S END?

Crossrail 2 is a proposal for a major new rail link connecting southwest and northeast London intended to relieve pressure on major London stations and reduce overcrowding on congested Tube lines. The idea for Crossrail 2 - or the Chelsea-Hackney Line as it has previously been called - has been around for many years and the Council of RBK&C has always been a supporter of the scheme.

The strong case for Crossrail 2 is driven by the need to improve and expand London's dated infrastructure and cater for the growing population and increasing tube-line overcrowding with improved lines and frequency, including better access to key interchanges.

The present project timetable is for Transport for London to conduct consultation with the London Boroughs, principally on the present and possible changes to the 'long' safeguarded underground route and report on viability in spring 2014; submitting a case to the Government in 2015. Thereafter, public consultation on the scheme in late 2015 would lead to appropriate legal powers being sought by the end of 2019 and construction in the period 2020 to 2030. TfL has secured £2 million to conduct an effective study and at present the scheme is estimated to cost some £15 billion.

The line would have a considerable local impact. It would pass deep under Chelsea and a station on the King's Road would link our residents to Clapham Junction, the West End and four of central London's busiest mainline stations.

## CHEYNE WALK TRUST ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING 2013

At Petyt Hall, Chelsea Old Church,  
64 Cheyne Walk, Chelsea

The Cheyne Walk Trust AGM and Autumn Reception for 2013 will take place in Petyt Hall, Chelsea, by kind permission of the Vicar, The Rev. David Reindorp, on Tuesday 6th November at 6.30 PM. The short AGM will be followed by a talk at 7 PM by the Chief Executive of Cadogan, Hugh Seborn, on "The Cadogan Estate in the Millennium". The traditional champagne reception will follow and invitations have been sent to members for whom the event is free. Members' guests are welcome to attend and make a £10 contribution at the door.

### ON OTHER PAGES

2-3 Super Sewer Double Whammy

3-5 Changes on Cheyne Walk

6 Property Market Report

6-7 Basement Developments

7-8 Airport for London

## Two options are being considered for Crossrail 2:

- The Metro option: An underground railway between Wimbledon and Alexandra Palace. The frequency could be up to 40 trains per hour
- The Regional option: A combined underground and over-ground railway, operating from Alexandra Palace and Hertfordshire to various locations in south west London and Surrey. The frequency could be up to 30 trains per hour

At present both would involve an underground station in the King's Road, currently at the safeguarded site of the Fire Station/Dovehouse Green. An alternative route south of the river is not part of this study but is strongly favoured by the Borough of Wandsworth. RBK&C conducted a public consultation this summer within the TfL exercise and this resulted in a 70% vote in favour of such a scheme from the 3000 responses submitted.

The Chelsea Society mounted a public sounding on the programme at Chelsea Town Hall on 30th September and this indicated general support for a station in the western part of Chelsea rather than in the central King's Road location. A station west of Beaufort Street would better meet the currently

poor transport facilities of west Chelsea, soon to be further stretched by projected major development in the Lots' Road area, it might also afford scope to link very efficiently with the existing surface station at Imperial Wharf as well as serving the rapidly growing population either side of the Clapham/West Brompton surface line. As importantly, it might deflect commercial attempts to convert the King's Road into a major retail destination more akin to Oxford Street or Kensington High Street; there is little question that such development could irretrievably damage Chelsea's hugely treasured 'village' atmosphere, already at threat of creeping erosion. Lastly, it would avoid a major construction programme over at least 5 years in the middle of the King's Road with the colossal disruption that this would entail.

For the foregoing reasons the Trust intends to continue to represent firmly the option of a west Chelsea station with both TfL and the Council of RBK&C as further consultation takes place.

**David Waddell**

**See possible routes at:**

<http://www.tfl.gov.uk/corporate/projectsandschemes/27405.aspx#utes>

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## SUPER SEWER DOUBLE WHAMMY

**In September this year it was revealed that millions of Thames Water customers face a double-whammy of one-off surcharges and annual bill hikes to pay for the company's controversial super sewer. Just days after the company flooded south London, causing £4million worth of damage, Thames Water announced that customers face a new 'surcharge' of £29 on their bills next year to pay for cost overruns on the £4billion Thames tunnel. This one-off surcharge comes on top of annual hikes of around £80-£100 that the company is proposing between 2015 and 2020.**

Cllr Nicholas Botterill, H&F Council Leader, said: "The estimated cost of the Thames Tunnel has nearly tripled since it was first proposed and its colossal cost no longer justifies the fairly modest benefits – especially when there are cheaper, greener, more modern, more socially acceptable and less disruptive alternatives. The financial and human cost of the

super sewer is too much to bear and the Government and Ofwat must now block the scheme in the interests of 14million customers."

Greg Hands, M.P. for Chelsea and Fulham, has added: "As a result of this latest shocking turn of events, Nick Botterill and I have contacted again the Secretary of State, Owen Paterson, asking him to review the whole scheme. We await his response." The revelation comes after it emerged that Thames Water did not pay a penny in corporation tax last year. It also got a £5million Treasury rebate in the financial year when it made £549million and hit customers with a 6.7 per cent increase in bills.

Controversy over the best means to address the problem of sewage discharge into the Thames has not been put to rest. In 2011 Lord Selborne's Thames Tunnel Commission recommended that green infrastructure solutions, also known as sustainable drainage systems (SuDS), should be considered instead of the Thames Tunnel. But Thames Water

ignored this advice, having spent £5.5million on studies to support the choice of a tunnel solution, and spent just £12,000 researching SuDS projects that would ease the pressure on the underground sewers by soaking up rainwater before it flows into the pipes and forces sewage into the Thames.

The Planning Inspectorate - a Government body that investigates large planning applications - has now started the process of examining Thames Water's planning application. A recommendation on whether to grant approval will be submitted to government ministers - who are expected to make the final decision in autumn 2014. If consent is granted, preparatory construction work is scheduled to start in 2015, with main tunnelling due to begin in 2016. Two key concerns raised by the Trust are addressed in the new plans, in particular use of Cremorne Gardens and Ranelagh Gardens as construction access sites has now been ruled out. But, whilst Thames Water has also taken some account of our urging that a much greater proportion of both material deliveries and spoil removal should take

place by barge rather than road in order to reduce the unacceptable lorry movements associated with the seven year construction phase, this does not go far enough. The enormous road movement requirement will create colossal traffic disruption along Chelsea Riverside, through Chelsea and more widely since vehicles for sites in Hammersmith and beyond will come through RBK&C.

We consider the token shift to barge borne movement with an increase of only 11% is totally inadequate. The revised plan reduces lorry movements to and from Cremorne Wharf and Chelsea Embankment Royal Hospital foreshore by only 22% and 32% respectively and will still require the reduction of Chelsea Embankment traffic lanes to single lanes in either direction. Furthermore, our wish that the riverside treeline at both sites should be enhanced by substantial additional planting has not been acknowledged. We will continue to press these matters as consultation and planning submissions proceed.

**David Waddell**

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## CHANGES ON CHEYNE WALK

**Abridged from a piece  
by Alan Crawford for the  
ARCHITECTURAL REVIEW**

Thomas Carlyle wrote his to wife in 1834, "Chelsea is a singular, heterogeneous kind of spot, very dirty and confused in some places, quite beautiful in others, abounding with antiquities and the traces of great men...." Carlyle found a spacious house in Cheyne Row, whose back windows looked out on trees and fields, and built himself a cork-lined room at the top of the house to shelter himself from the sound of horse's hooves clumping on cobblestones.

The Arts and Crafts movement evolved architecture of individualism which respected tradition without slavishly copying precedent at the end of the 19th

century. C. H. Ashbee's work in Chelsea created a sense of place in Cheyne Walk reflecting the individuality of the artists who occupied his houses. The sense of the past was strongest by the waterfront, on Cheyne Walk and round Chelsea Old Church. But the Tudor and Stuart palaces which had stood there, earning Chelsea the title of "The Village of Palaces" were only a memory. Small houses, of varied and more recent date lined the river bank, either set back behind a road and a row of trees or tumbling down to the water's edge by wharfs and water-stairs.

Chelsea's population doubled in the course of the fifty years the Carlyles lived in Cheyne Row, and the former village merged with London. Artisan housing was built along many of the streets, polite stucco terraces expanded southwards from Kensington and in places there were appalling slums. The old houses on the river's edge were swept away

by the building of the Chelsea Embankment between the Royal Hospital and Battersea Bridge in the early 1870s; communications were improved and Chelsea exchanged its picturesque river bank for a trim and urban promenade. Within a few years, middle-class houses were going up along the Embankment, big brick town houses by Norman Shaw, E. W. Godwin and others, in the "Queen Anne" style. The gentrification of the river front had begun.

In 1893 work began on a house just west of Albert Bridge, at 37 Cheyne Walk. The architect was C. R. Ashbee, and the house was for his mother. Ashbee is best known as the founder of the Guild of Handicraft, a group of craft workshops in the East End remarkable for their romantic Socialist inspiration and their austere elegant silverwork. This house at 37 Cheyne Walk was his first significant project and the

street front was designed in the same Queen Anne spirit as earlier houses on the Embankment, but in a more severe taste: there was a three-storey oriel with good views down the river, motifs were drawn freely from two centuries of English building, and the whole thing was loosely composed, almost as if it had been added to. He featured good plain brickwork, without the customary “Queen Anne” embellishments. He named the house “The Ancient Magpie and Stump” after an old (and disreputable) pub that had stood on the site, and referred to an old 17th century wooden front of Sir Paul Pindar’s House in Bishopsgate (now in the Victoria & Albert Museum) with his oriel window.

Ashbee lived at 37 Cheyne Walk himself and developed a taste for Chelsea and the artistic circles there – Whistler’s disciples, the New English Art Club, the habitués of Tite Street, just off

the Embankment, where Godwin had built some remarkable studio-houses. In the mid 1890s Ashbee concentrated his architectural efforts on building similar studio houses on Cheyne Walk.

The first house was for a painter from Glasgow E. A. Walton, with a separate sculptor’s studio and flat above and behind the arched entrance. (This house replaced Mrs. Maunder’s Fried Fish Shop, a humble gabled house said to be the oldest then surviving in Chelsea and much sketched by Whistler and others.) Ashbee’s brickwork

was now more severe than ever, a flat sheet upon which features were carefully laid so as to be read in several ways: as functional, the irregular openings reflecting the requirements of the plan; as an accretive design, the big oriel with its different detail looking as if it has been added; and as a formal composition, a surface upon which Ashbee disposed his elements with almost painterly discrimination. The house next door, with its low eaves and oddly stepped frontage was 74 Cheyne Walk, added by Ashbee in 1897-98 for his own occupation when he got married.

(Photographs by courtesy of RBK&C Kensington and Chelsea Library)



Plate 1 - 38 and 39 Cheyne Walk



Plate 2 - 72 and 74 Cheyne Walk

A year or two later he built two houses next door to the “Magpie and Stump” at 38 and 39 Cheyne Walk. Most comment on these houses has stressed the freedom and modernity of their design, but contemporaries noticed how old-fashioned they were, and The Builder commented on the “house front in Old London style, brick below and plaster or roughcast above, with all the small paned windows right up to the face of the wall.... The whole thing has character, though rather of an archaeological kind.”; which of

course was Ashbee’s intention? Arts and Crafts architects sought freedom within tradition, free in detailed design, broad and rough in execution.

In 1902-03 he built 75 Cheyne Walk next door to his own house. Since his client kept a carriage Ashbee ran his odd, two-storey projection across the full width of the house, pushed a carriage arch through it, gave over the accommodation to the carriage and coachman, and then used the whole thing as a podium on which to rest the main apartments, with a

little roof garden in front. The house must have had a pleasant riverside air to it, informal to the point of eccentricity, for there was no obvious front door.

Ten years later he built his last riverside house at 71 Cheyne Walk for another woman artist. The tall, four-bay facade reflects the popularity of Georgian

exemplars in the years around 1910, and an early plan was for an almost flat and regular facade. But at the last minute Ashbee reverted to the picturesque mood of his earlier houses by setting back the ground and first floors under a false cornice, and throwing a balcony across. The resulting broken facade was once again additive and mongrel in character and very aware of the river.

Ashbee was fascinated by the atmosphere of the riverside and in the hall at 39 he had the streetscape painted as a frieze

running round the room. The frieze presents one viewpoint from which Ashbee designed his Cheyne Walk houses, seeing them not just as individual houses but as groups, and as part of the whole fabric of Cheyne Walk, and its history and the great names associated with the place: Sir Thomas More in Tudor times; Girtil, Gillray, Smollett, Horace Walpole and Steele in the 18th century; Rossetti, George Eliot, Carlyle and Turner in the 19th, and the artists' quarter that Chelsea had become by the beginning of the 20th c. Ashbee's tenants at 74 Cheyne Walk included Whistler, who died there in 1903, his departure hastened, so his friends claimed, by the din of Ashbee's building works next door. Later there was Epstein who, being hard up, paid his rent in kind, a naked male torso, member erect, deposited in the garden of 37 Cheyne Walk to the scandal of Ashbee's mother. Ashbee's houses succeeded in that they caught, or created (one can hardly tell which) an identity for artists, a sense of belonging to Chelsea. Without being especially imitative, they breathed the spirit of the place.

**Ann Colcord**



39 & 40 Cheyne Walk in 1910, watercolour by Sidney Newcombe, (Image by courtesy of RBK&C Kensington and Chelsea Library)

## COMMUNICATING WITH MEMBERS BY E-MAIL

From time to time we receive information or advice that would be of interest to members but the cost of postage precludes writing to all of you. We have a number of e-mail addresses for members but would very much like a more comprehensive and up to date record. Please would you send to our Membership Secretary Ann Hawkes [Memsec@cheynewalktrust.org] an e-mail entitled 'CWT Member Contact' from your normal contact mail address and include your name and address in the body of the text. Your e-mail will be considered to be confidential and will not be passed to any commercial or other external bodies.

## CHEYNE WALK TRUST COMMITTEE

The Committee seeks to represent members to best effect in the objectives of working to ensure that Chelsea riverside continues to be an attractive and enjoyable place in which to live and in seeking both to protect and enhance its many qualities as a residential area. We would welcome wider member representation on your committee, in particular if you are interested in planning issues and/ or involvement with our newsletter. We meet informally every two months or so, hence it is not too onerous a commitment. If you are interested please contact David Waddell on 0207 352 9353 or by mail to [Chmn@cheynewalktrust.org].



## PROPERTY REPORT BY KNIGHT FRANK

**House prices in prime central London increased by 0.7% in September and have risen by 1.7% over the past quarter. The key driver for price growth continues to be the sub-£2m price bracket.**

While house prices have continued to rise in central London, there is little sign that this has reduced buyer demand. The volume of new buyer registrations rose by 28% in the first nine months of the year compared to the same period in 2012. This increase in buyer interest has translated into higher sales volumes. In 2013 to date, sales in the prime central London market are nearly 50% higher than during the same period of 2012. Unsurprisingly, given the higher level of transaction activity, stock levels across prime central London have fallen. The number of available properties for sale was 8% lower in September 2013 than in September 2012. While prices have been rising for 35 consecutive months, the rate of annual price growth has slowed. Price growth of sub-£2m homes is outperforming the growth at the top end of the market. Homes in the £5m-£10m and £10m+ price bracket have increased in value by 3.1% and 1.6% respectively in 2013, while homes in the sub-£1m and £1m-£2m price bracket are higher by 10% and 8.9% respectively.

The Chelsea Market remains the epicentre of international interest, the demand is more focussed on flats as the profile of the buyers is transient, so being able to lock up and leave a property with a porter is important. Many international buyers come from cities where living on one floor is much more familiar to them than being in a house plus new building in this sector is often preferred over traditional conversions. The arrival of super prime schemes at Glebe Place and Chelsea Manor Street will for the first time provide the Chelsea market with the Knightsbridge serviced apartment model seen at 199 Knightsbridge and at One Hyde Park. It will be interesting to see how these fair when they come to market. The domestic/UK buyer is still a major component of the market place and still account for well over half the purchaser found in the Chelsea market up to £5m.

The general outlook is positive, the market has been robust in the first six months of 2013, with the wider economy tangibly improving, the good UK news story's go round the world making it all the more appealing. In summary I think we are set fair for a solid quarter of sales and steady growth.

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## PROGRESS ON SPECIAL PLANNING GUIDANCE ON BASEMENT DEVELOPMENTS

**The Council of RBK&C continues to wrestle with the problem of how to reduce the problems arising from the constant increase in applications to carry out residential basement development and the consequent impact on other residents, arising from collateral damage, disturbance and inconvenience.**

Following extensive consultation, and in the absence of any realistic possibility of securing Government support for a more restrictive planning framework that might assist, the Council is working toward more effective Special Planning Guidance (SPG) to supersede that now in place. Not surprisingly, the development and commercial planning lobby are vigorously opposing constraints on their freedom to

pursue unfettered applications for new building works and resisting guidance that they anticipate might restrict their activities.

The Council's current phase of consultation closed in May 2013; with the finalised policy reported to Council in June, issued for 'soundness' consultation over the summer, and intended to be submitted to the Planning Inspectorate in the autumn, with

the examination taking place hopefully before Christmas. Adoption would therefore be in the 2014.

Work towards greater control has largely focused on the extent of potential basements in terms of environmental impact; depth (limitation to a single storey) and percentage of extension under garden areas; exclusion of development under listed buildings; the degree and quality of visual impact; how best to control disturbance and impact of development works and the how to ensure more effective consultation and enforcement of Construction and Transport management Plans (CTMPs). This last is viewed by many residents as the least satisfactory area.

The Trust welcomes progress in developing the stage 2 Basement SPG and has commented to the

Council that it notes that this has concentrated on the guidance to be applied to planning matters.

The Trust considers that a major element of public concern is the inadequate control over the manner in which such developments are carried out and the related nuisance and disturbance for neighbours and others in the vicinity as well as potential collateral damage. To an extent the CTMP seeks to address these matters. We believe this would be much enhanced by two additional measures:

1. Introducing a requirement as part of the CTMP that the applicant agree with the Council a fair period in which the development is to be completed and hence limit the period of disruption and nuisance likely to arise.

2. To require the applicant to place in escrow a substantial prior deposit of 10% of the project value which may be subject to be drawn against as follows:

- To compensate adjoining neighbours for damage resulting directly from the development
- As a surety to provide for penalty payments that the Council should be able to demand on a monthly basis if the applicant/developer exceeds the agreed period of active development construction work that would be required as a condition of agreeing the CTMP

**Further information can be**

**accessed on:** [<http://www.rbkc.gov.uk/planningandconservation/planningpolicy/corestrategy/basements.aspx>]

**David Waddell**

## AIRPORT FOR LONDON

**The Trust is delighted that our local MP, Greg Hands, is opposed to the expansion of Heathrow; an abridged version follows of his submission to Sir Howard Davies, Chairman of the Airports Commission on long term capacity proposals.**

However, the Trust would like to see the case more robustly made for the option of a new Thames Estuary Airport as proposed by the Mayor for London, Boris Johnson. A modern four runway 24/7 international hub airport, linked into effective rail and road infrastructure, would be the only means to meet the constant growth in air traffic, in particular for the Far East, at present badly served by Heathrow. Marginal enhancements (additional runways) at Heathrow, Gatwick and Stansted would only cope with short term traffic growth to about 2025 and not provide the single major hub so clearly needed. Furthermore, this incremental approach will do nothing to alleviate overflying of London with its excessive and increasing noise and potential hazard. London is the only major international city that

permits and continues to endure such disturbance and danger. Indeed, the case for investing some £50 Billion in a Thames Estuary hub rather than HS2 must be evident.

Greg Hands write: As Member for Parliament for Hammersmith & Fulham since 2005 and Chelsea & Fulham since 2010 as well as a local Fulham resident since 1990 aircraft noise is a regular source of complaint in my constituency.

Chelsea & Fulham, like many other areas across west London, must face, on a daily basis, more than a thousand planes coming in to land at Heathrow. This includes night flights which land before 6 am and disturb the sleep of a number of residents every night.

With the disruption the airport currently causes my constituents, I do not believe there is a case to build a further runway at Heathrow when more economic and less invasive solutions to our nation's airport capacity problem are available. Indeed, I note that Heathrow Airport proposes an increase in annual air movements from 480,000 per annum to some 740,000, an increase of more than 50% on top of an already intolerable situation.

**A 'Distributed Hub'** -- The debate over increasing airport capacity has primarily focused on three proposals. Building a third runway at Heathrow; an extra runway at either Stansted and/or Gatwick; or a new hub airport located in the Thames Estuary.

I believe that London can have three or more major international airports, which do not necessarily have to be 'hub' airports. In New York, La Guardia Airport serves destinations within the United States while JFK and Newark have a mixture of domestic and international routes. An additional runway at both Gatwick and Stansted on top of the two runways currently at Heathrow might address the capacity problem for decades to come, in my view.

The evidence ('justifying a major hub airport') is mixed. Looking at the 'BRICS' countries as a leading indicator of connections with the developing world, Frankfurt does presently have better connectivity with Russia, and marginally with China, but Heathrow is superior on connections with India, South Africa and Brazil. This is even before considering some of the connections offered by London's other airports to important developing world destinations.

Heathrow currently offers flights to four destinations in China, having this year added Guangzhou, with Gatwick also providing a route to Beijing. Eight cities in India are also accessible from Heathrow with routes to Vietnam and Russia added in recent years to Gatwick's portfolio.

The addition of these routes show that airports can adjust when demand increases even when close to capacity. More importantly, new routes have not been focused on Heathrow but also on Gatwick, dispelling the myth that flagship airlines do not wish to fly into London's other airports.

To support possible expansion at Gatwick and Stansted, more should be made of our current infrastructure with the aim to cut travel time to central London and to each airport. In addition, connections to other transport modes such as Crossrail, HS2 and the Underground will be of benefit to all Londoners, not only airport passengers visiting the Capital or transferring flights.

**The Future of Flying** -- International air travel is changing. The launch of Boeing's 787 Dreamliner and the Airbus A380 show two very different visions of how passengers will travel in future. The long-range, lower-seat number, Dreamliner is a point-to-point aircraft which is designed to take passengers

from regional airports direct to their destination. To date, 800 Dreamliners and 617 Airbus A350s have been earmarked for service on long-haul routes. In contrast, only 260 of the bigger A380s have been ordered which are primarily designed for use to hub destinations.

Expanding Heathrow and creating one 'mega-hub' does not appear to be the direction airlines or air travel are expanding in. Passengers, in general, wish to travel from a nearby airport and onward to their final destination, not through a hub airport. The A350 and the Dreamliner appear to cater to that desire. It is therefore not obvious that there is a need to build a third runway at Heathrow, with such uncertainty over the future need for hubs.

**Conclusion:** I believe that current debate on the future of London's airport capacity has mistakenly drawn links between it and other European cities such as Frankfurt and Amsterdam. Instead, New York should provide us with a working example of how a city can have three major airports serving different routes and complementing each other, without the need for a single 'hub' airport. Indeed, in terms of size of the city and its position geographically at the edge of a continent, London is far more akin to New York than it is to Amsterdam or Frankfurt. For both safety and environmental reasons an additional runway at Heathrow would lower living standards for my constituents and disturb hundreds of thousands of Londoners.

Heathrow, Gatwick and Stansted all have a place to play in maintaining or expanding Britain's global connections and securing trade for British industry. A distributed hub would provide the extra capacity airlines need, the routes businesses desire; without afflicting west London residents with additional noise. Greg Hands, MP, concludes: I therefore strongly urge the Commission to reject further expansion of Heathrow Airport.

THE CHEYNE WALK NEWSLETTER is issued to Cheyne Walk Trust members. The Cheyne Walk Trust represents the interests of Chelsea Riverside residents in maintaining and enhancing the historic area in which they live.

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