



THE CHEYNE WALK TRUST

Newsletter

October 2025 | Issue 60

www.cheynewalktrust.org

50th Anniversary of the Cheyne Walk Trust

A half-century helping preserve the special character of the Chelsea riverside



Albert Bridge, twilight. Image by Tony Hannaford.

The Cheyne Walk Trust was founded in 1975 by Dr. May Maguire as the Cheyne Walk Residents' Association to protest against the increasing number of houseboats moored in Chelsea Reach which obscured the attractive view of the foreshore. Jack de Manio agreed to be Chairman, the Countess of Glasgow, President and Lesley Lewis (later Chairman of the Chelsea Society) were duly elected. By 1978 the RBKC issued formal planning guidance which determined that the gap between the two blocks of boats should be maintained as 55 metres and the number of boats at 58.



Dr. May Maguire and her children campaigning for the night time lorry ban.



*Chelsea Houseboats, watercolour by Dr May Maguire.
Heatherly School of Art, 2010*

By this time the noise and pollution from lorries along the Embankment had become a nuisance and we fought for a night-time lorry ban and less pollution, including the removal of lead in petrol. Headed by a Professor of Chemistry and a dermatologist, children from local

schools agreed to be tested for lead levels in their blood, and slowly the government brought in the new lead-free petrol. There was little interest taken by the medical profession at the time!

With our support, the inner London box route was dropped and then Western Environmental Improvement Route (WEIR) abandoned. This was for an eight-lane highway along the Embankment and the construction of a new bridge. The opening of the M25 made a huge difference reducing the lorry rat run from the West.

Along with these challenges we had been kept busy! The Cheyne Walk Trust was against the creation of red routes in local residential roads. The red routes were delayed in the borough for six months, but we failed to prevent their appearance in spite of a judicial review.

The Cheyne Walk Trust has strenuously sought to protect against harm the heritage character of the wonderful historic area of the Thames riverside along which most of our members live. We strongly endorsed the Thames Conservation Area Appraisal 2020 and have pressed for the long-delayed completion of the Thames Conservation Area Management Plan now being consulted by RBKC. The Trust has supported the houseboat owners over difficulties with their licenses as the new owners of the boatyard wish to build two storey large multi-unit houseboats and that will destroy the unique riverside charm, of which sadly only the paintings of the 2010 art exhibition held at the Heatherly School of Art may soon bear witness.

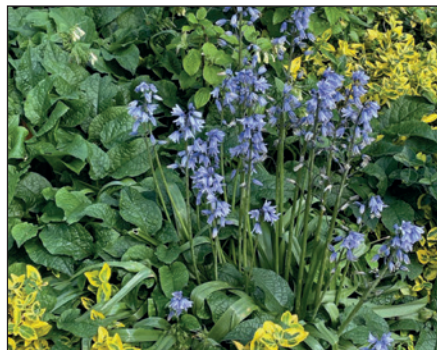
Since 2002 we have urged Transport for London to make safe the notorious accident black spot of the Battersea Bridge/Cheyne Walk traffic junction by introducing safe pedestrian crossings (see article on CAST also).



David Waddell with former Chelsea MP Greg Hands working for a safer junction at Battersea Bridge



The Chelsea Embankment Gardens renewal featured the planting of hundreds of spring bulbs.



The re-planting of the flower beds in the gardens has created more colour and greenery.

More recently the Trust has strongly supported establishing the Lots Road Neighbourhood Forum and sought the inclusion of the Chelsea Reach Moorings as part of that statutory body. The Trust has also formed a Chelsea Embankment Gardens Steering Group that has successfully with very welcome RBKC Council support managed the restoration of the much-loved riverside gardens that had suffered from progressive cumulative economic and maintenance reductions over recent years.



The CWT successfully campaigned against the proposed 1 Battersea Bridge skyscraper.

The Trust has routinely been most active in campaigns to oppose unsuitable development along the Thames riverside, notably the Battersea side Albion Wharf development (in the event reduced in height by 2 storeys to 11). Most recently we have been prominent in wide opposition to the outrageous proposed 34 storey tower block development of the Glassmill site at 1 Battersea Bridge, thankfully recently refused by Wandsworth Council.

We continue to consult closely with the Chelsea Society and RAs, our members and all who love Chelsea Riverside in seeking to improve and protect the history and charm of this unique London quarter.

Article written by: CWT Founder and Committee member Dr May Maguire and CWT Chairman David Waddell.

Safety at Battersea Bridge Junction, an ongoing challenge

CWT Chairman David Waddell reports



Traffic Chaos on Cheyne Walk. Photo D. Waddell

The Battersea Bridge/Cheyne Walk junction has been in effect an accident black spot for far too many years; the Cheyne Walk Trust together with the Chelsea Society, other resident associations, and the Council for RBKC have long sought to make this junction, controlled by Transport for London, safer for all. In 2003, TFL undertook to introduce safety measures in 2005 but failed to carry them through.

In the 5 years up to 31 December 2020, there were 63 recorded collisions with 72 casualties, including a fatality. A second fatality in January 2021 galvanised public concern. A jogger, Jack Ryan, tragically was killed while trying to cross the northern end of the bridge at Cheyne Walk where there was no controlled pedestrian facility.

After the years of delay and a hugely popular campaign in 2021 by journalist Rob McGibbon, TFL belatedly completed installation of a light-controlled crossing at the north end of Battersea Bridge in December 2021. Disastrously, a third fatality occurred on 10 August 2023 when a 27-year-old female cyclist was crushed against the bridge pavement balustrade by a large truck.

TFL held a public consultation on the other three unprotected arms of the junction in 2022/23, publishing a report in June 2023. During the consultation, RBKC, the Chelsea Society and the Cheyne Walk

Trust jointly proposed a 3-phase safety scheme (the “Chelsea Option”) that would be designed after consideration of traffic data collection and assessment. However, this option was disregarded in the TFL consultation report.

Clearly, it is vital that unforgivably delayed improvements are implemented urgently on the still unsafe remaining 3 arms of the junction, not least since the government committed £1.5m to the project for FY 2022. This work is part of the route improvements now ongoing. However, it is critical that safety improvement plans are agreed with RBKC that are acceptable to Chelsea residents rather than dominated and distorted by TFL’s ambitions to project a cycle superhighway (CS8) along the whole of Chelsea riverside. TFL plans for CS8 have already resulted in the disruptive banning of north and south turns at Chelsea Bridge, creating huge congestion west along Chelsea Thames-side; likely to be compounded by TFL plans further to restrict access to and from roads into Chelsea.

CS8 plans for Chelsea Embankment/Cheyne Walk included the introduction of needless road-constricting Bus lanes for the 5 times per hour route 170 bus. After adverse comment, TFL agreed to reduce the extent of the bus lanes. However, it remains to be seen what impact the residual bus lanes will exert on embankment traffic. The Kings Road is almost gridlocked already following the installation of TFL-inspired Local

Traffic Neighbourhoods (LTN) in Fulham, and this will become significantly worse.

Following a briefing meeting between RBKC, TFL and several Chelsea resident associations on 11 March 2024 and subsequent correspondence with TFL, it was agreed to establish a forum for further discussion of the scheme.

The Cheyne Walk Trust together with the Chelsea Society, the Council for RBKC and the most-concerned, affected Resident Associations including for Oakley St., Tite St., Beaufort St., Chelsea Old Church St., and others formed a Chelsea Alliance for Safer Traffic (CAST) to engage with TFL in order to obtain up-to-date traffic counts and to discuss options for better safety for all traffic modes, approaches to and movement on Battersea Bridge with green man controls as a priority.

CAST met with TFL by a TEAMS virtual meeting on 31 October 2024 in order to discuss numerous concerns arising from TFL’s decision to proceed with their pre-consultation plans-- that largely ignored local requests to modify those plans. In particular CAST had requested TFL to reverse the ban on westbound vehicle turns south onto Chelsea Bridge and also the intended ban on vehicle turns north into Beaufort Street from westbound traffic on Cheyne Walk. CAST was supported at this meeting by the senior Metropolitan Police officer for Chelsea who expressed concerns over traffic hazards on the eastern approaches to Battersea Bridge, arising from uncontrolled traffic rat-running south through Old Church Street and Danvers Street seeking to access Battersea Bridge south. Despite expressing their support for direct discussion, TFL resisted all the CAST proposals, refusing to make any amendment to their plans that might relieve or alleviate CAST concerns over traffic safety and related problems for south Chelsea.

Despite vigorous CAST objections, TFL is implementing the proposed ban on the established left turn north into Beaufort Street for eastbound traffic. There is no evidence of accidents involving pedestrians or cyclists resulting from left turning vehicles at this junction. The recorded accidents and fatalities have taken place at the northern access to or actually on Battersea Bridge.

This ban will displace more traffic onto the already overloaded Oakley Street and Tite Street routes. It will also be an undoubted precedent for TFL to ban the few remaining turns North into Chelsea from the riverside. Those who live or work in southwest Chelsea will effectively lose normal vehicle access to their borough and have to make substantial traffic-increasing detours to do so.

Subsequently, CAST approached our local MP Ben Coleman to intervene with TFL. Generously he arranged and chaired a meeting on 30 April 2025 between CAST and TFL jointly to review TFL's plans for enhancing safety at Battersea Bridge and the related TFL traffic schemes for changes south of the river in Wandsworth and changes north of the river in Chelsea. Amongst other matters, CAST called on TFL to explain to what extent they had sought to follow the statutory guidance of the Gunning Principles, guidelines that describe the way public authorities should conduct public consultations.

Despite Ben Coleman's skilled and highly objective chairing of this meeting, TFL effectively failed to address CAST concerns and argued that no modifications were acceptable. Consequently, our MP arranged

and most helpfully chaired a further joint CAST/TFL in late September to clarify the need for traffic monitoring data and reviews in order to establish the impact of TFL's changes and if these required further modification. It is notable that despite our MP's personal involvement, at no stage, has TFL's Walking and Cycling Commissioner, Dr Will Norman, as far as we are aware, seen fit to take any direct interest or make any response to CAST's direct approaches to him.

CAST remains concerned that a number of traffic safety problems arising from TFL's modifications need effectively to be addressed. Ben Coleman MP most helpfully has requested a further meeting for CAST with TFL in November 2025 to address the following:

- Appropriate camera monitoring and data recording of TFL's traffic changes in order to assess and enhance ongoing traffic safety and efficiency
- The impact of bans introduced at Chelsea Bridge and Beaufort Street
- Traffic congestion by HGVs and busses in Oakley Street aggravated by the banned turns
- Measures to enhance traffic safety for

all modes on the north bank eastern approaches to Battersea Bridge

- Review of TFL's application of the Gunning Principles (statutory guidance for the conduct of public consultations) generally and in particular in respect of risk assessment of banned turns at Chelsea Bridge
- The need for improved signage to control and enhance safety

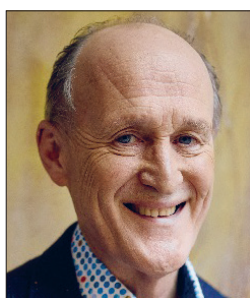
CAST will continue to seek the safest and most practical resolutions that best serve residents of Chelsea as well as through traffic and welcomes any constructive comment to that end.

For further information email:
Chmn@cheynwalktrust.org

Celebrating the 150th anniversary of Chelsea Embankment

Sir Peter Bazalgette will speak at the CWT AGM on November 18th at 6.30pm

Members' guests are welcome to attend and make a £10 donation at the door



Sir Peter Bazalgette is the great-great grandson of legendary engineer Sir Joseph Bazalgette, whose revolutionary Victorian sewage system cured London of its devastating cholera. A visionary civil engineer, he also laid out much of the modern city we know, especially along the Thames.

To commemorate the 150th anniversary last year of the Chelsea Embankment opening, Peter will speak about the project and his illustrious relative.

Peter has had an impressive career himself. He has been Co-Chair of the UK's Creative Industries Council since 2021. He also chairs the Royal College of Art and before that chaired Arts Council England and the broadcaster, ITV. He was previously a television producer and the inventor of several internationally successful entertainment

formats, including Ready Steady Cook and Ground Force.

Peter sits on the board of the UK's Department of Education & previously was a non-exec at the Department of Culture, Media & Sport. His several books include *Billion Dollar Game* (2005) and *The Empathy Instinct* (2017). He was knighted in the 2012 New Year's Honours for services to broadcasting.

Opening of the Chelsea Embankment, 1874. Image: RBKC Archive



Sir Peter Bazalgette was knighted in the 2012 New Year's Honours for services to broadcasting

Chelsea Embankment Gardens

An overview by Sarah Brion, Senior Project Manager

RBKC Parks and Leisure Team



A view of the refurbished Chelsea Embankment Gardens, by Melissa Scott Miller. Image courtesy of the Chris Beetles Gallery

The planting scheme for Chelsea Embankment Gardens was designed by Boon Brown Landscape Architects, with input from the resident steering group and the Kensington and Chelsea Council Parks Service. The planting took place in Winter 2023-24, and the planting has now successfully established.

The planting scheme was the result of resident consultation with the RBKC Parks Team and the landscape architects. The brief was to add more colour in the gardens, and improve biodiversity, while being low maintenance and reducing watering.

All the plant species were chosen for their ornamental qualities, drought-tolerance, and biodiversity value. Given the increasingly warm, dry summers this is especially important. The main additions to the gardens are a series of new herbaceous planted beds in the lawns to both the east and west gardens, and these were supplemented with ornamental trees and hundreds of Spring flowering bulbs such as daffodils and crocus. The existing shrub beds were also cut back

and cleared out and supplemented with additional planting. Garden benches and waste bins were replaced and restored.

Why were herbaceous plants chosen?

The benefits of herbaceous and ornamental grasses are that they are long lasting and provide a continuous display of colour and texture throughout the growing season. Herbaceous plants are low maintenance and come back year after year.

Most herbaceous plants provide good sources of nectar and pollen which supports bees, butterflies, and other pollinating insects. They provide shelter and a place of hibernation for overwintering insects, and also play a role in capturing atmospheric carbon dioxide, which is especially relevant given the traffic along Cheyne Walk.

The planting requires cutting back in the winter season, particularly the grasses and the flowering plants. The maintenance tasks are undertaken by Idverde, the council's Parks and Landscape Contractor.

The Dark Side of the Muse

Charles Mayes reflects on Chelsea painter John Minton's life, untimely death, and quest for greatness

The Chelsea Riverside has been home to some of our greatest painters. Their fame and talent propelled them to the highest levels of achievement. Artists like Turner, Whistler and Rossetti all lived by the river. But what of the others, unsung heroes struggling with their muses in the hope of attaining artistic fulfilment? One such artist was John Minton, who lived and worked by Cheyne Walk in Apollo Place.

Minton, born in Great Shelford, Cambridgeshire, on Christmas Day 1917, became an artist of some renown yet, over the years and despite his success, he turned into a complicated and deeply unhappy man.

John Minton suffered many crises relating to his art and in his own life. The first major blow to land was the death of his father, a successful solicitor, when Minton was thirteen years old. Minton went on to study at St. John's Wood School of Art, showing significant talent both as a painter and as an illustrator. He spent some months in 1939 painting and studying in France, returning as the Second World War began.

The twenty-one-year-old artist registered as a conscientious objector at the outbreak of war but was called up to serve in the Pioneer Corps. He may have had a change of heart about his moral position and, in 1943, he was commissioned into the Oxfordshire and Buckinghamshire Light Infantry. However, in that same year, Minton was discharged on medical grounds and took up a position teaching illustration at Camberwell College of Arts.

It is likely that this medical discharge was due to some kind of nervous breakdown and that this in turn was linked to a central and defining fact of the artist's life; Minton was homosexual, in an age when the legal consequences of prosecution were severe and life-changing.

The war inflicted a further appalling tragedy on Minton. He had a brother, Richard, six years younger, who was showing signs of considerable talent as an illustrator. Richard was killed in action in Belgium in 1944 while



*John Minton (1917-1957) 'Self-Portrait' c. 1953.
Image: National Portrait Gallery*

serving as an officer with the East Surrey Regiment; he was twenty years old.

His brother's death affected John very deeply. He had been extremely protective of Richard, who was one of the very few people from whom John would take criticism of his work. It is also hard to imagine that, apart from the terrible personal loss, John would not have been aware of the contrast between his own truncated military service and that of his young brother.

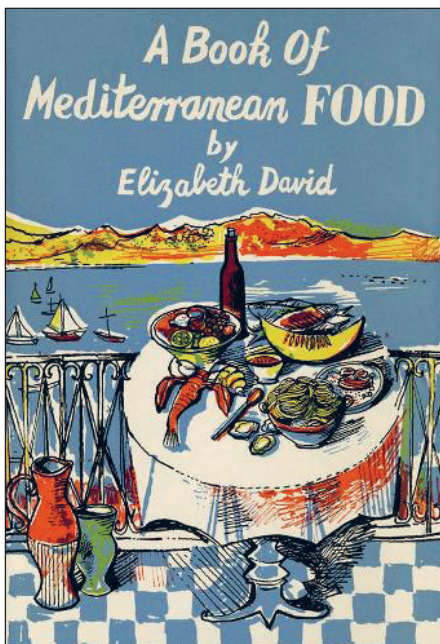
Following the war, John entered a period of considerable success. He moved from Camberwell to teach drawing and illustration at the Central School of Art and Design, while continuing his own career as a painter. He had seven one-man exhibitions at the prestigious Lefevre Gallery between 1949 and 1956. From 1949 he was teaching painting at the Royal College of Art. Samuel Palmer and English Romantic painting were considered influences on Minton's painting style at this time.

John Minton will be remembered chiefly for his illustrations. His covers for Elizabeth David's books, 'A Book of Mediterranean Food,' 1950, and 'French Country Cooking,' 1951, are superb evocations of a Mediterranean idyll, featuring mouth-watering pages of recipes for unattainable food in a country living under the yoke of rationing. The books were hugely successful exercises in escapism and Minton's art their perfect visual expression – but this was not what the artist saw as his metier. He wrote to a friend, "I've made some drawings for my cookery book, mostly of sailor boys which is going to disconcert the eager housewife."

As the 1950s wore on, Minton had taken to drinking heavily and there are reports, of him being outrageously drunk and rude in public. Some believe his homosexuality troubled him, being illegal and necessitating living a double life. It is also quite possible



John Minton, 'Time Was Away' (illustration detail). Book cover, 1948.



Minton's illustrations for Elizabeth David's bestselling book helped establish his reputation. Image: Abe Books.

that his brother Richard's death in the war continued to upset him, contrasting strongly with Minton's own wartime breakdown.

Minton was now at the centre of a group of hedonistic and bohemian friends, which included Lucian Freud, Francis Bacon, and Henrietta Moraes. There was some family money which allowed Minton to acquire his studio and home in Apollo Place. Thanks to this bourgeois windfall, Minton could afford to be generous in paying for his less well-off friends. There might also have been guilt that his share of family money was increased by his younger brother's death.

It is quite possible that John came to feel his position among his contemporaries was upheld not so much through their respect for his painting as his ability to pick up the tab at the Gargoyle Club. It is certain that in the last years of his life, alcohol had taken a terrible grip on him.

In his final years, Minton was overwhelmed by the realisation that his painting was not what he hoped it to be. He wanted above all to be recognised as a painter of international significance. He could see the new interest in abstract painting; the Tate showed American painters such as Rothko and Pollock in 1956. The contrast with John's figurative, English neo-Romantic paintings was very clear and Minton felt out of fashion.

Aside from his painting, Minton worked prolifically and successfully in several fields, such as book illustrations, wallpaper and

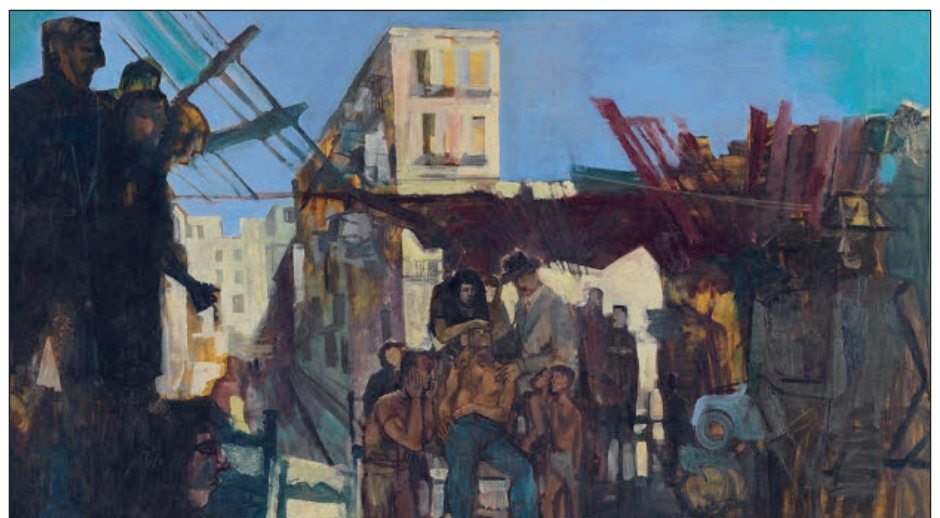
textile designs, posters and large murals for the Festival of Britain. But painting was where he wished to leave his mark, and he came to believe that he would never join the very front rank. Minton concluded that it was pointless to continue, as Picasso and Matisse had said it all, and he gave up painting completely, giving away his pictures and taking a sabbatical from his job teaching at the Royal College – although he did make a brief return to painting in 1957.

On one level it is possible to agree with Minton's assessment of his own painting, which was firmly based in that English neo-Romantic figurative style. He was a fine painter of portraits but once more rooted in figurative reality. His paintings of young men, many of them his friends and lovers, can seem strikingly advanced, prefiguring what has now become something of a clichéd style in Gay imagery.

Despite finding himself lacking the recognition of the most renowned avant-garde painters, Minton was still an exceptionally talented artist. His tragedy was to be unable to enjoy what to many others would seem an enviable life; successful one-man shows, a private income, secure home and studio in Chelsea, an interesting teaching job, exotic foreign travel and as much work in illustration as he wished to take.

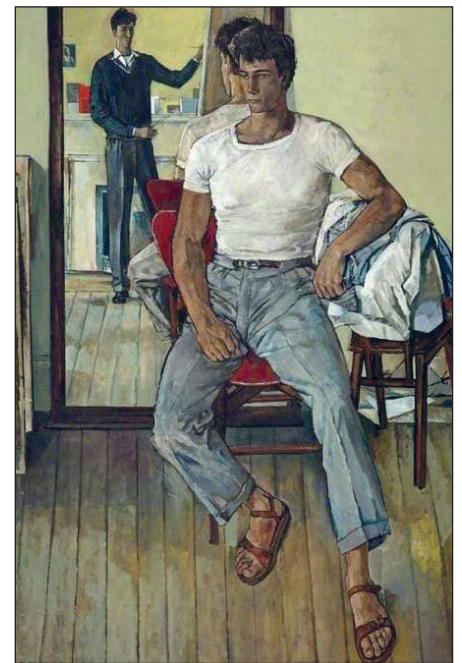
His increasingly desperate efforts to find a painting style and subjects for the new era was a major cause of his unhappiness. Alcohol and depression took hold of Minton's mind and overwhelmed him. On the 20th of January 1957, aged thirty-nine, he took a fatal overdose at his home in Apollo Place.

Below: 'Composition: Death of James Dean' 1957 Image Courtesy Tate Britain, © The estate of John Minton



The painter Ruskin Spear had visited John there on what was the day before his suicide. There was a large, unfinished painting on the easel – it is now in the Tate collection – and is generally thought to represent the death of James Dean. It was reported that Minton did not feel he would do much more work on this picture as he did not wish it to turn into "another Johnny Minton painting".

There is the contrast, the dark side of the Muse. Most people would have been delighted to have had both John Minton's talent and his freedom from financial difficulty – but what he had was not enough for Minton himself. His cruel and rigorous self-knowledge did not allow him to pretend that he could reach the highest level, and 'ordinary' achievements were no longer good enough for this extremely troubled, bohemian Chelsea artist.



Above: John Minton, 'Painter and Model', 1953. Image: Russell-Cotes Art Gallery and Museum

The River Thames Conservation Area and the fate of Chelsea Reach

An update by CWT Chairman David Waddell



From this...



*To this... now five megaboats are moored, with more on the way,
blocking river views and dwarfing traditional houseboats.*

The Cheyne Walk Trust (CWT) with The Chelsea Society (TCS) and the Chelsea Reach Boatowners' Association (CRBA) have since 2017 sought to persuade the Council for RBKC to exercise planning control of moorings and moored vessels to protect the Riverside against significant damage to its historic and conservation character.

This has been threatened by ongoing pressure and attempts by the mooring licensees of Cadogan Pier Ltd and Chelsea Yacht and Boat Company (CYBC) to introduce huge, unsightly and uniformly monolithic moored residential vessels at both Cadogan Pier and Chelsea Reach in conflict with long-established RBKC planning guidance, notably the RBKC Battersea Reach Houseboat Design Policy Guidelines 1976, the RBKC River Thames Conservation Area Statement 1983 and its succeeding guidance: the Thames Conservation Area Appraisal (TCAA) and the related draft Thames Conservation Area Management Plan (TCAMP).

Surprisingly, Council planning officers were reluctant to enforce action to remove the mega houseboats that had been moored without the appropriate planning applications required by the established planning guidelines. This we hoped would be resolved in August 2023 at a very welcome meeting called by the Leader of the Council for RBKC, Cllr Elizabeth

Campbell, at which the respective KCs engaged by RBKC and TCS/CWT/CRBA were requested to review the legal planning powers that could be exercised by RBKC with a common agenda of appropriate use of powers to protect the area. That meeting took place indicating a high degree of alignment between the engaged counsels on the relevant legal powers open to the Council.

Before the meeting took place, the CYBC had removed some traditional houseboats and replaced them with three very large box-like floating structures or megaboats, each containing two flats. They did this without any application for planning permission. The position of the CYBC was that provided the vessels were houseboats it did not matter how big they were, or how unsuitable their design. They maintained that these structures were not significantly different to the boats already there, but you have only to go to Chelsea Reach to see that they are enormous, and quite unsuitable to be located among the traditional smaller boats.

The Leader of the Council and the then Lead-member for planning, having been properly advised on the law, referred the matter to the elected Councillors on the Planning Applications Committee, and we were very grateful to them for that. On 19th December 2023, the Committee unanimously decided that mooring each

of the 3 new boats without planning permission was in breach of planning control. However, the Council's officers then argued that even if there had been a breach of planning control the presence of the boats was not sufficiently harmful to justify taking enforcement action. This issue was brought back to Committee, and the Committee decided, again unanimously, on 27th February 2024, that there was sufficient harm and that an enforcement notice must be served.

CYCB then removed one of the boats, enabling the Council officers to argue that whilst three boats might be sufficiently harmful, two were not. The matter was brought back to Committee for a third time. The Committee again unanimously rejected their officers' advice and insisted that an Enforcement Notice be served. This was done on 8th May, but curiously the officers allowed the CYBC eight months to comply with the ruling.

CYBC then appealed against enforced removal to the Secretary of State, and the appeal was heard by an Inspector on 8th October 2024. It turns out that it had been quite clever for the developer to remove one of the boats, because the Inspector at the Appeal could consider only two boats, not the three that were actually there when she made her site visit. Local people were all very disappointed to learn on 1st November 2024 that the appeal had been allowed.

The Planning Inspector accepted that the Council did have planning powers over the boats even though they were not buildings, and that the question whether the introduction of the megaboats constitutes a change in the fundamental character of Chelsea Reach is a matter of opinion for the decision-maker. However, the inspector saw fit to substitute her own opinion for the unanimous opinion of fifteen elected Councillors of both political parties, and for that of the Chelsea Society and The Cheyne Walk Trust, The Lots Road Neighbourhood Forum, the residents of the houseboats, and very many other local people who submitted written objections.

This demonstrated that the planning laws will not adequately protect Chelsea's Riverside and the houseboat community. We therefore propose that the PLA does so, by including in any River Works Licence (a) a requirement to comply with the RBKC 1983 Design Guide or its successor, and (b) to include a requirement to obtain permission from both the PLA and RBKC for any new or altered boat.

Since the Appeal, CYBC has evicted a further number of traditional houseboats moored at Chelsea Reach and replaced them with three more twin apartment megaboats. CYBC is also understood to have further megaboats in hand to add to that number. It appears that the mooring operator intends to move to a new operating model based on short-term apartment lets on megaboats rather than the established practice of mooring privately owned traditional houseboats under a licence provided by CYBC on behalf of the PLA.

Sadly, the impact of this shift is twofold. Firstly, it will destroy the established traditional and much loved, bohemian river-borne houseboat conservation area that countless artists, residents of and visitors to Chelsea have known and loved since the middle of the last century. The massive multi-unit megaboats that the operator appears determined to introduce will create a wall of oversized block-shaped vessels dominating the riverside, obscuring views of the river and totally dwarfing the varied, interesting and charming houseboats that

essentially represent the character of the riverside that must be safeguarded. Secondly, it will decimate the artistically rich historic houseboat community that is so unique and treasured in its established form. This is a particular problem because houseboats as legal chattels do not provide their residents or owners with any of the conventional security of tenure provided under household freeholds or tenancies.

In July 2025, after some three years delay, the Council for RBKC issued for consultation a second draft Thames Conservation Area Management Plan (TCAMP). This welcome document should give effect to the planning guidance fulfilling the intent of the Thames Conservation Area Appraisal 2020. Together with the Chelsea Society, the Lots Road Neighbourhood Forum and the Chelsea Reach Boatowners Association, the Trust has proposed updated planning guidance and terms for the effective protection of the conservation area and the historic riverside community. We will make every effort to resist the cavalier desecration of this unique Chelsea quarter.



Two residential megaboats moored by Cadogan Pier, in conflict with RBKC guidelines.

Police Report

Making Chelsea's streets safe is our priority, says Sergeant Tyler O'Hare

It's a great privilege to lead policing across Chelsea and to have been invited to contribute to this year's annual Cheyne Walk Trust newsletter. When I arrived in Chelsea in 2024, I was met by a community that felt disenchanted and let down by their local policing team: ward priorities were ignored with inconsistent approaches across the four wards; experiencing regular leadership changes; lack of community consultation; increased officer abstractions; clear demand for greater accountability, partnership, and accessibility. These factors resulted in under reporting of crime, lack of intelligence led policing, and increased anti-social behaviour.

It was clear to me that the community of Chelsea were willing: willing to provide guidance; willing to provide advice; and willing to work with my team and I to ensure the safety and security for this unique community. Consultation with community leaders, residents, business, and visitors to Chelsea began, and the 'Pan-Chelsea Policing Plan' was developed by you, for you. It established innovative approaches to drive down crime; it continues to use evidence-based decisions to secure additional officers and funding for Chelsea; and, by utilising streamlined communication methods saw increased reporting and police accessibility - policing teams now recognise that criminals did not see the ward borders, as bureaucratic systems do, meaning we can gather intelligence across borders to develop bespoke policing operations to tackle the

crimes of the greatest impact to you.

Recent Initiatives include the launch of the Chelsea Police Enquiry Line, (0207 004 5552, Mon, Weds, Fri 11am-1pm), a dedicated phone line staffed by your ward officers. Callers can speak to their officers about matters of concern, provide information on crime or anti-social behaviour and access updates on investigations.

If you are a resident of Chelsea, and a victim of crime in Chelsea, you will hear from us. We support our partners in Kensington & Chelsea Council to obtain court orders that stop criminal behaviour. Earlier this year, we saw the courts issue three unprecedented orders that now give us the power to arrest those that cause anti-social behaviour. We are utilising powers that significantly disrupt and disable criminal activity through transport restrictions, bank accounts and prevention orders.

We are pleased to note that crime reporting is up. In summer 2024, a review into crime and intelligence rates identified under reporting leading to lack of police action. Streamlined communication, bespoke reporting initiatives, and greater relationships have seen an increase in reporting. Work is needed - if you see it; hear it; or know about it, share it with us! We've increased our presence on the streets. Dedicated officers for Chelsea are now on-duty 7 days a week.

We are bringing Police Officers back to Chelsea. With increasing protest and demonstrations, we saw a loss of Chelsea officers to police other parts of London. We have been proactive to reduce their abstraction rate, and officers are now spending more time in Chelsea. We have designed specific operations for Chelsea to tackle vehicle crime, including

cycling offences; theft of and from vehicles; and began targeting cyclists who commit theft. We have also seen the existing 'Op Marshall' implemented into Chelsea to tackle anti-social behaviour & shoplifting.

Today Crime in Chelsea is down; offenders brought to justice is up; engagement is far greater; and intelligence continues to grow. This year alone we have seized 18 bags of cocaine from the streets of Chelsea, leading to the disruption of a drug supply group; we have arrested high harm & prolific offenders, included three individuals involved in phone and vehicle theft, closed addresses and removed occupants who were exploiting the vulnerable for criminal gain, and are currently developing intelligence to conduct search warrants on several addresses across Chelsea to disrupt criminal groups.



Sergeant Tyler O'Hare, Chelsea Riverside & Royal Hospital Local Policing Team

Chelsea Police Enquiry Line

The Enquiry Line has been launched to provide residents, businesses and visitors to Chelsea with a dedicated phone line, open at dedicated times, connecting the community to Chelsea's Dedicated Ward Officers.

The Enquiry Line will be staffed by both Police Officers and Police Community Support Officers. Callers can expect to speak to their Officers about matters of concern, provide information on crime or anti-social behaviour and access updates on investigations.

The Enquiry Line:

Operating 11AM to 1PM | Monday, Wednesday & Friday.



0207 004 5552

There may be occasions when the Enquiry Line is engaged. Officers are likely to be helping others so please be patient and call back later.

In an **emergency** always dial **999**. For non-emergency reporting dial **101**.

The Enquiry Line is **not** a crime reporting line.

Ward Phone Lines:

0207 004 5553 - Redcliffe & Stanley

0207 004 5551 - Chelsea Riverside & Royal Hospital

0791 793 9888 - Chelsea Police Mobile



**MORE
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Thank you for your continued support, guidance, and advice. Keep up the reporting, inform of us your concerns, and be reassured we are doing everything we can to maintain your safety and security.

Chelsea Reach Saxon Fish Trap At Risk

Roddy Mullin explains

As long ago as 750 AD, King Offa, the first ruler to be styled 'King of the English' and one of the most powerful kings in early Anglo-Saxon England built a fish trap on the River Thames to feed his courtiers. Sadly, this rare piece of our ancient history may someday be washed away forever because it has no legal protected status.

Remains of the fish trap can be seen at low tide from Battersea Bridge as a series of wooden posts in a double V formation embedded in the riverbank at Chelsea Reach, between the houseboats and the river. The cause of the danger to the Fish Trap is the high speed of some UBER Thames Clipper boats at low tide, which causes a wake that washes over and erodes the fish trap posts.

After a series of reports were sent to the Port Authority of London from the houseboat residents moored at Chelsea Reach, the clippers have reduced their speed at high tide, when the posts are under water. Local residents have suggested to the Port of London Authority (the 'PLA') that the speed of the clippers should be reduced at all times (not just at high tide) when passing the fish trap. Support for this initiative is crucial to the preservation of the fish trap.

If you see wake from an Uber Thames Clipper washing over the exposed fish trap at low tide, please file a report with the PLA by using their website: pla.co.uk. Click on 'Make a report', under 'Incident Reporting' then scroll down and select 'Non-urgent navigational or environmental issue'. Help save our Saxon Fish Trap!



A reconstruction of a Saxon Fish Trap. Image: Wikipedia



Portrait of King Offa on a silver penny struck during his reign, 757-796. Image: Wikipedia



A photo showing the fish trap in 2012. It has eroded significantly since then. Image: R. Mullin.

For more on the history of this important site visit <https://chelseasociety.org.uk/saxon-fish-trap/>

On the Case

Hallie Swanson finds The Chelsea Detective in Cheyne Walk



Adrian Scarborough plays Detective Inspector Max Arnold, who dwells on a houseboat moored in Chelsea Reach. Photo: H.Swanson

SW3's own super sleuth was busy this summer solving crimes for the next season of *The Chelsea Detective*. The cast and crew have been filming on location around Cheyne Walk. The hugely popular series will air on Acorn TV in 2026.

While taking a break from shooting in Chelsea Embankment Gardens the star kindly allowed us to take a photo and get his opinion on the local scene. Scarborough enjoys filming in Chelsea: "I never knew this part of London before; it's opened up a whole new world. I usually am in North London. I've loved getting to know Chelsea. The houseboat community have been fantastic." All too soon the Director beckons, and with a cheery wave Adrian returns to being the intrepid detective.



The Chelsea Detective cast and crew filming at Chelsea Embankment Gardens in August. Photo: H.Swanson



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Love Anthea x



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Committee Members - Charles Donlan, Richard Jacques, Dr May Maguire, Charles Mayes, Roddy Mullin, George Nicholson, Denis Strauss and Anthea Turner

The Cheyne Walk Trust represents the interests of Chelsea Riverside residents in maintaining and enhancing the historic area in which they live. We welcome wider member representation on the CWT Committee, in particular if you are interested in planning issues and/ or involvement with our newsletter and website. We meet informally every two months or so.

If you are interested, please contact David Waddell on 0207 352 9353 or by email to chmn@cheynewalktrust.org. The Cheyne Walk Newsletter is issued to Cheyne Walk Trust members.

Website: www.cheynewalktrust.org