



Friends of St. James's Park and The Green Park
www.thorneyislandsociety.org.uk Registered Charity No. 1000751

ANNUAL REPORT 2017-2018

The year ending September 2018 has seen a welcome development in the Society's range of activities.

As an official consultee for Westminster City Council planning applications, the Society commented on 73 proposals. We responded to the consultation on the draft New London Plan with particular reference to heritage and culture and met with the organisers of The Illuminated River project. Committee members have attended meetings and public exhibitions associated with major planning issues including the re-development of Christchurch Gardens and the proposal for a holocaust memorial and learning centre in Victoria Tower Gardens. The Society is part of The Westminster Community Network.

We ran a varied and successful local visits programme including to Watts & Co, Ecclesiastical Furnishers and Outfitters, The Institution of Civil Engineers, the Purcell Musical Tour of Westminster Abbey with drinks in the Society's archives, the St. James's Park Tree Walk and in September The Queen's Jubilee Galleries at Westminster Abbey. Write-ups on visits as well as other news are published on the website which is regularly updated by our secretary, Jules Shellabear. We have 682 followers on Twitter, a healthy increase from last year and would like to thank Lucy Peck for taking over as the new editor of the newsletter.

The Archives in Old Pye Street are the Society's most precious resource and the committee made the decision to retain only material relevant to Thorney Island. Over the past year we have worked hard to sort through files and boxes of accumulated material. We responded to requests for information and were delighted that local organisations visited the Archives for research purposes. We note particularly our help to St. John's Smith Square. Our collaboration with Chelsea School of Art continued throughout the year culminating in an exhibition of student work based on inspiration taken from books, maps, illustrations and artefacts in our collection. Discussions are underway for a new joint-project for the 2018/19 academic year.

Our closest neighbour on Old Pye Street is the St Andrews Club. We held an initial discussion with a group of older people who use the club's facilities for a dance club and plan to discover more about their memories of the immediate locality, particularly our Archives which used to be a much-loved corner sweet shop. William Gibbs Hall also on the Peabody Estate continued to be the venue for committee meetings as well as the vibrant series of Thorney Tales for residents and society members. We value our relationships with local organisations and companies and intend to grow these in future.

The Society faced increased costs during the year as have most charities and the committee decided to raise membership fees by a small amount, the first increase in about ten years. We were pleased to be informed of a legacy and encourage all members to consider safeguarding The Thorney Island Society's future in this way.

Sue Ball
Chair