

## **CHISWICK'S CULTURAL CONTRIBUTION TO THE LONDON BOROUGH OF HOUNSLOW**

From the frivolous, lighthearted humour of Tommy Cooper to the shocking, shaking impact of a V2 bomb; from scandalous love affairs to the blossoming delight of the royal family; from a country idyll to a vibrant metropolitan hub, Chiswick has a centuries-long tradition of cultural diversity at the eastern gateway to Hounslow. We hope that highlighting the most significant aspects of Chiswick's local culture, in its broadest sense, will add significantly to Hounslow's bid to become the London Borough of Culture 2021.

We have defined culture as anything that contributes to the cultural well-being of our society, the local community of Chiswick, and Hounslow as a whole. Taking in history, music, architecture, art, faith, literature, languages, cuisine, painting, antiques, interior design, media and sport it shows fundamentally an integrated pattern of human knowledge, belief and behaviour through the outlook, attitudes, values, morals, goals and customs shared by our people. There is a cornucopia of culture to celebrate and enjoy.

We have included many (but, inevitably, not all) of the events, markers and assets that enrich our lives. With so much already on our doorstep, it is imperative that we highlight a few cultural aspects that could enhance the interwoven threads of Chiswick's history, historical figures and contributions to the arts of all forms as well as look beyond to what is needed for the benefit of all.

When considering how we would want to prioritise mayoral funds that might come to Chiswick, we have been circumspect and mindful of the whole borough. Better funding for the dramatic arts and making it easier for young people to access music and drama is one request. Investing more in our sporting facilities and green spaces is another. Various trails in and around Chiswick – enhancing our reputation as a destination for food and drink, shopping and entertainment, exploring history, art and literature – are an obvious and inexpensive ambition that could be realised with a little kick-start funding. We want to honour our unknown heroes, whether they are battlefield heroes, documentarians of life, or pioneers lost to the winds of time. The list could go on – we have so much to celebrate and promote.

However, we want to make sure that, whatever money comes our way, we use it in a manner suitable for a 21st century Chiswickian, for the tourist who visits inspired by an Instagram post, or those lucky few who happen to stumble into this town in London accidentally.

For that to happen, we need a central focal point.

### **Restoring the focus of our community**

Our handsome Grade II listed Town Hall, with stunning stained glass and impressive wood panelling, is a logical suggestion. It needs modernisation as well as sensitive renovation, making it attractive for today's needs while conserving its 1930s heritage. Its value as a source of revenue must be enhanced; it should also be available for community use at a lower rate.

### **Promoting our cultural events in a modern age**

Chiswick's existing cultural offering is strong but it can and must be made stronger. In a world where we are inundated by information and choice, we need to make Chiswick a place where people want to spend their time and money. We would like to create a culture and events map, for residents, the 12,000 or so people who come to work here, and visitors who stay in our hotels and clubs encouraging everyone in Chiswick to celebrate Chiswick. This, of course, should also be supported by an online resource, including an interactive map and suggestions wall.

## **Bridging the divide**

Ever since the extensive bombing of Chiswick during the second World War, which destroyed the residences joining north and south Chiswick, the town has been divided. Today, the A4/M4 acts as a central artery for those travelling through Chiswick, with very few aware they are in Chiswick, and a semi-permeable barrier for those who live either side of it. We would like to develop a new programme of events, and extend those already part of Chiswick's culture, to include all parts of Chiswick to improve community cohesion.

## **Involving the emerging generation**

Our teenagers are significantly under-represented democratically, socially and culturally. If they aren't interested in sports, there is very little for them to do here. There are challenges – their spending power is limited – but we have strong ideas for how Chiswick could be made more attractive to this overlooked generation. Similarly, pre-teens are less well supported culturally and we have suggestions for change for that age group, too.

## **Supporting Hounslow's bid to be London Borough of Culture 2021**

As you can see, we fully support Hounslow's bid to be London Borough of Culture 2021. Chiswick has a long and rich cultural history providing many opportunities to establish itself long term as one of London's diverse cultural focal points within Hounslow. We have charted Chiswick's cultural heritage below and given more details of our ambitions for Chiswick and the borough.

## **FAITH**

For centuries, Chiswick has been a centre of worship. St Nicholas Church in the heart of Old Chiswick sits on the site of a pagan shrine that was converted in the 7th century. Today, we are proud that there are eight faiths or denominations in Chiswick:

- Baptist
- Church of England (including a convent)
- Elim Pentecostal
- Iranian Christian Church
- Methodist
- Muslim prayer hall
- Roman Catholic
- Russian Orthodox

Just over the borough border on the Avenue, the London Buddhist Vihara was the first Sri Lankan Buddhist monastery to be established outside Asia.

These places of worship add a vital aspect to our community by hosting cultural events including jazz, choral, classical, modern and country music, and educational talks and groups. Through their parochial work they create a much valued support network for the community, especially homeless and older people.

St Michael and All Angels in Bedford Park sets a standard it's hard to match having for 52 years run the hugely popular Bedford Park Festival - two weeks of concerts, performances, talks, walks, trails and competitions starting with Green Days, a traditional fete and craft fair. The festival raises money for local charities and the work of the church. It also runs the Chiswick Book Festival, now in conjunction with the Chiswick Cookbook Festival, bringing highly acclaimed authors to Chiswick. It frequently hosts music concerts and performances.

## **CHISWICK IN WAR**

Much like old Father Thames which meanders along the southern border of Chiswick, the history of Chiswick has been steady. Starting as a small agricultural hamlet, the town and area have grown steadily, as shown in the broad ranges of architectural styles seen here.

However, there are two notable times where the peace in this idyll was interrupted.

The first of these significant occasions, the Battle of Turnham Green, took place on 13th November 1642. Towards the end of the first campaign season of the First English Civil War, 37,000 Royalist and Parliamentary troops assembled to fight for London at Turnham Green. The Royalist army was outnumbered by almost 2:1, having annoyed a lot of Londoners the day before in Brentford. The 24,000 strong Parliamentary army had swelled on their march from Chelsea, along the Great West Road, with the intention of blocking the road to London. Thankfully, losses were light and the Parliamentary army was able to secure the field and stop the Royalist force's route. This would prove to be the closest they got to London in the entire campaign, and the third biggest battle fought on British soil.

The second notable occasion was on 8th September 1944 when the first V-2 bomb of the Second World War changed the landscape of Staveley Road permanently. The bomb killed three people, injured 19, destroyed 11 houses and left a crater 30 feet across. The bombing during this period didn't finish for a while; the whole of Chiswick was bombed extensively until the end of the war. A map showing bomb damaged houses is included in the Chiswick Timeline mural at Turnham Green underground station.

## **ARCHITECTURE AND STRUCTURES**

Chiswick is home to over 150 listed buildings and structures and its varied architectural styles including Norman Shaw's Arts and Crafts houses in Bedford Park, the unique Georgian houses lining Strand-on-the-Green and Chiswick Mall, Sir Giles Gilbert Scott's K6 phone boxes, Christ Church on Turnham Green, and Art Deco buildings in Power Road. Older buildings in Chiswick include the oldest shop on Chiswick High Road, Foster's Books, and the now defunct post office on Church Street. The 18th century Chiswick House and grounds is a sought-after venue. It is one of the earliest buildings in Britain to be constructed in the hugely influential Neo-Palladian style. Its gateway was designed by the renowned Inigo Jones. It attracted from its earliest days, and still attracts, architectural students from around the world. Some other notable buildings or structures:

- JL Pearson's St Nicholas Church
- the Lamb Brewery
- the Griffin Brewery
- Hogarth's House
- WD Caroe's Church of St Michael, Sutton Court
- The George and Devonshire Public House
- William Kent's design of the gardens of Chiswick House
- Christ Church Turnham Green
- Russian Orthodox Church
- Voysey House and the Barley Mow Centre, both formerly Sanderson factories
- 2 Belmont Terrace, original location of Women's Aid now known as Refuge
- Chiswick Business Park
- Our Lady of Grace Catholic Church
- The Presbytery of Our Lady of Grace
- The Crown and Anchor pub
- Walpole House, Chiswick Mall
- The Icehouse, Grove Park
- Zoffany House
- St Mary's Convent & Nursing Home
- Polytechnic Stadium
- Chiswick Railway Station
- University of London Boathouse
- Little Sutton Cottage
- The Bulls Head Public House

## **ENTERTAINMENT**

Due to its impressive architecture and beautiful landscapes, Chiswick can often be seen by those who have never physically visited. The 2018 TV adaptation of William Makepeace Thackeray's *Vanity Fair* was filmed in Chiswick Mall. The popular ITV series *Harlots* was filmed in the grounds of Chiswick House. And Dirk Bogarde's 1961 *Victim* was set and filmed in Chiswick.

Aside from being a regular filming location for international blockbusters, such as *The Theory of Everything*, and the smaller screen, such as *Dave's Taskmaster*, Chiswick is known for its vibrant entertainment scene. It is of no surprise therefore, that it is also home to many actors, musicians, comedians and performers. Its role in the entertainment world spans festivals, the performing arts, television, music, comedy, literature, journalism and art.

### **Festivals**

The number of festivals keeps increasing; it seems there is no limit to the good ideas local people have. The work done behind the scenes to bring to life what happens in the area is truly admirable. Festivals held in Chiswick include:

- Artists at Home
- Bedford Park Festival
- Chiswick Dog Show
- Chiswick Book Festival
- Chiswick Cookbook Festival
- Green Days
- Great British Food Festival
- The Grove Park Music Festival
- Pub in the Park
- Super Sports Saturday
- Thames Tidefest

### **Performing arts**

The most notable connection with the theatrical arts has to be the presence of the Arts Educational School on Bath Road. Not only does the Arts Ed train future thespians and dancers, it provides a top-rate education for those whose careers may not go as planned. It has recently expanded to Dubai. There are many notable alumni including Angela Lansbury and Julie Andrews as well as Nigel Harman who played *EastEnders* heartthrob Dennis Rickman and appeared in *Hotel Babylon* and *Downton Abbey*.

The Chiswick Playhouse puts on performances of an extremely high standard in a relatively small theatre above The Tabard pub on Bath Road. We are delighted that construction is currently underway for a new modern cinema in Chiswick, The Chiswick Cinema, and look forward to its opening and undoubted success.

Performances take place in various churches, as we have noted above. There are numerous amateur dramatic societies. At St Michael's Elmwood Road, The St Michael's Players puts on several plays throughout the year culminating in their extremely successful Christmas pantomime.

For many years the contemporary dance company Ballet Rambert was based in Chiswick and, although it is no longer based here, its legacy of dance lives on. In many different forms, there are schools of dance providing training for all ages and abilities and all styles of dance, ranging from Ballet4life to the regular Salsa dance nights held at the Gunnersbury pub.

### **Music**

The Gunnersbury deserves a second mention. It used to be known as The "world famous" John Bull from its heyday of supporting rock and roll with acts such as The Who, T Rex and Thin Lizzy.

Regardless of your musical tastes, if you are keen to hear some live music there is something for everyone, and some of the notable regular performances include:

- Jazz at the George IV pub on Chiswick High Road
- Friday night at The Bull's Head on Strand-on-the-Green
- Irish Traditional Sessions at Connolly's pub every Friday
- A variety of musical events are held regularly at the Old Station House in Grove Park
- Live music performances regularly take place at Rhythm & Brews at Fromow's Corner
- There is scope to reinstate performances at the bandstand at Duke's Meadows
- Many other concerts take place in churches, as described in the Faith section above.

For those who would prefer to show off their vocal stylings, there are several choirs and singing groups that are open to all, such as the Chiswick Rock Choir which meets regularly at Strand-on-the-Green Junior School. Karaoke nights are held at The Hothouse Cafe every Thursday, Friday and Saturday on Chiswick High Road. For those who want to take their musical styling to the next level, many recording studios available for hire.

### **Television**

Those who have a keen eye will notice that, on *Strictly Come Dancing*, they have filmed on the roofs of the buildings in Chiswick Business Park and often rehearsed in the Virgin Active gym in Chiswick Business Park or on Dukes Meadows. Many other BBC productions such as *Miranda* starring Miranda Hart were also filmed in Chiswick.

The wider connection with the BBC and Chiswick continues to this day, many employees from both in front of and behind the camera have lived, and continue to live, in Chiswick - for example the creators and writers of BBC3's "People Just Do Nothing" attended Chiswick School. Various locations have been used to film parts of BBC's *The Apprentice*. In the first series, the apprentices lived at Said House on Chiswick Mall. Losers were sent to Chris's Fish & Chips on Turnham Green Terrace to contemplate their failures.

### **Comedy**

The Chiswick Playhouse, in its former life as The Tabard, has been the trial ground for many stand up comedians wanting to test their sets before setting off for the Edinburgh Fringe. Local resident Al Murray, The Pub Landlord, often tried new material on local residents. The Unexpected Items comedy troupe, which became a viral success with the skit "Gap Yah" was formed in Chiswick. Regular comedy nights are held in the Boston Room of the George IV pub on Chiswick High Road.

### **Literature and journalism**

Many writers have lived in Chiswick including Nancy Mitford, Harold Pinter, EM Forster, Dame Iris Murdoch and JG Ballard. A scene in Alain Fournier's *Le Grand Meaulnes* was inspired by a works fete at Voysey House, when it was Sanderson & Sons and where he worked as a translator. Georgiana, Duchess of Devonshire, lived at Chiswick House. Many contemporary authors and journalists live here too, of course. And Chiswick features in many historical books and novels.

The list is too long for this document. They have been catalogued by Torin Douglas here: <http://www.chiswickbookfestival.net/programme/chiswick-timeline-writers-books/chiswick-timeline-250-writers-listed-subject-1/>

## **Art**

Numerous local artists and makers take part in the annual Artists at Home weekend, opening their studios to the public and showing the immense talent there is in Chiswick whether from well-known established artists to the emerging next generation.

The view of Chiswick from the other side of the river is a constant source of inspiration, whether it is photographers or painters capturing the skyline as the light changes or as the tide rises and falls. It has inspired many for centuries. Arguably the most famous was Pissarro who was commemorated here for years, providing the name of a riverside restaurant now unfortunately closed. The German neoclassical painter Johan Zoffany lived here, and Zoffany House is a listed building.

The Chiswick Calendar, one of our news websites, hosts an annual Chiswick in Pictures art exhibition at the Clayton Hotel on Chiswick High Road. St Michael and All Angels Church is the venue for an art exhibition and a photography exhibition, all works by local artists and photographers, as part of The Bedford Park Festival.

## **LOCAL ENVIRONMENT**

### **Horticulture and trees**

Historically, Chiswick has a strong agrarian tradition, due to the fertile lands surrounding the Thames. Much of the area that is now Sutton Court was originally set up as market gardens, providing a wide range and steady supply of fresh produce to London. Growers would often use Wellesley Road to avoid the toll roads.

From 1821 to 1904, what we know now as the Royal Horticultural Society was based in Chiswick. Joseph Paxton, the renowned gardener, architect and MP, was employed at the RHS' Chiswick gardens and has a street named after him. The first recorded flower show in Britain was held by the Royal Horticultural Society in Chiswick on 25th May 1833. This became one of the main events of the London season with carriages to Turnham Green lining the road from Hyde Park Corner.

The cherry blossom trees that line Staveley Road are a fan favourite, and it is rumoured that the Queen Mother used to instruct her drivers to take Staveley Road instead of the A4 on her journeys between Buckingham Palace and Windsor.

The oldest wisteria in England has been creeping up the side of the walls of Fuller's Brewery since 1816, outlasting a partner clipping that burned down in Kew Gardens. Several ancient trees still grow in Chiswick, carefully protected from the public, or lining our roads including a Paulownia tomentosa, a species known to be very tolerant of atmospheric pollution.

Today, enthusiastic residents work hard at their allotments with some locals running allotment societies to support each other, guide amateur gardeners and sell produce within Chiswick. Seven of the borough's allotment grounds are in Chiswick.

### **Open spaces**

Chiswick's green open spaces are home to a huge amount of biodiversity. No doubt the parakeets we often see and hear have to be the first to be named. Supposedly released after filming The African Queen up river in Twickenham, they came to roost in the trees of Grove Park and the wider Chiswick area and are distinctive in the sky, swooping around our skies as the day ends.

The nature reserve at Gunnersbury Triangle is an unsung hero, squeezed between the train tracks yet a peaceful and magical escape from rushed daily life.

Other open spaces include Dukes Meadows, Chiswick House and Gardens, Turnham Green, Chiswick Common, Chiswick Recreation Ground, Strand on the Green Recreation Ground, Harvard Hill Recreation Ground, the lake and surrounding open landscape in Chiswick Business Park and two cemeteries.

## **The river**

As already stated, Father Thames is Chiswick's southernmost boundary, without which we may not be a unified borough.

Keeping all users of the river safe is the role of the RNLI who we are proud to have based at Chiswick Pier. The Chiswick Pier Trust holds events and celebrates the river with watercolour painting workshops, talks, lectures, nature walks, cruises and mudlarking.

The annual Oxford and Cambridge Boat Races end in Chiswick at Chiswick Bridge. The Great River Race passes Chiswick. During summer, impressive Dutch barges and hand built wooden boats travel past Chiswick to and from the Traditional Boat Rally at Henley-upon-Thames. Several rowing clubs and other river sport societies line Chiswick's riverside. The river provides houseboat moorings at Chiswick Pier offering a way of life unlike any other. Walking along the riverside is a regular source of cultural calm.

Chiswick was a centre for shipbuilding. Thornycroft shipbuilders was based at Church Wharf in Chiswick from 1864 to 1904 and launching ceremonies were great social occasions with crowds lining the Surrey banks to watch. One of these boats, a torpedo gunboat the HMS Speedy, was launched on 18th May 1893 by Lady Hamilton, the wife of the First Lord of the Admiralty. HMS Speedy was later sunk by a mine in the North Sea in September 1914.

At the end of the 19th Century in Strand-on-the-Green, at the boatyard of Messrs Sargeant & Co called Strandworks, William Sargeant launched the Viscountess Bury, one of the largest passenger electric launches in the world, coupled with Thornycroft three-bladed propellers. Launched in 1888, she was on charter to the Prince of Wales from 1889 to 1894 and was in regular use up and down the Thames until her move to East Anglia.

## **Road names**

It is, of course, common for roads to be named after significant people or buildings and Chiswick is no different. However, it seems to have an exceptionally rich collection of road names drawn from notable people and places, as described in this article by former Chiswick reference librarian Winifred M Heard: <http://www.chiswickw4.com/default.asp?section=info&page=conhistory01.htm>

## **FOOD AND DRINK**

Chiswick is a food and drink destination, home to a broad range of culinary styles from the Michelin star of La Trompette to the family favourite Fouberts. Residents and visitors can try cuisines from all over the world:

- American
- Argentinian
- Chinese
- English
- French
- Greek
- Indian
- Italian
- Japanese

- Malaysian
- Middle Eastern
- Persian
- Polish
- Singaporean
- Spanish
- Thai
- Vegan
- Vegetarian
- Vietnamese

With its wide tree-lined pavements and village charm, Chiswick is well-known for its cafe culture with outdoor eating along Chiswick High Road, side roads and other shopping streets. Among its numerous independent cafes, bars, pubs and restaurants, it has three ice cream bars, three delicatessens, two butchers, two chocolatiers, two greengrocers and a fishmonger. Family-run fruit and veg stalls sell top quality produce which you can choose yourself and take home in brown paper bags.

Not only do people come here to sample its fantastic food, but Chiswick is also home to several cookery schools so aspiring chefs can put their skills to the test.

On the river stands the impressive Griffin Brewery, home of Fuller's London Pride. A short walk away, behind a quiet residential road, is the Sipsmith Distillery linking Hogarth's influence back to this corner of west London. Several pubs in Chiswick are Grade II listed including The Old Packhorse and the Crown and Anchor on Chiswick High Road.

Linked to the farming past of Grove Park and Dukes Meadows, the weekly farmers market at Dukes Meadows is a constant reminder of the superb local produce available. With traders selling fruit and veg, local honey, preserves, fish and meats, you can also try some of the more exotic foods from Italy, Spain, Japan and El Salvador that are available to eat from the food stalls.

Behind closed doors, enterprising Chiswickians make various foods and drinks including Chiswick Chillies hot ketchup and sauces, Duckworth's Chiswick Honey (and soap) and Chiswick Tea.

## **SPORT**

Sport in Chiswick has been as steadfast as the Thames, upon which many rowing clubs train. The stretch of river passing south of Chiswick Eyot and Dukes Meadows forms part of what is often called the Championship Course from Mortlake to Putney, and has been home to the world famous Boat Race since its inception in 1829. The Olympic rowers James Cracknell and Peter Reed (whose 2012 win is commemorated by the golden post box outside Chiswick Town Hall) are both locals and have rowed locally.

Apart from rowing, there is a diving school – the London School of Diving where Sandi Toksvig was a regular scuba diving – and many state-of-the-art sporting facilities scattered across all three Chiswick wards. These clubs are proud to call Chiswick their home:

- Chiswick Rugby Football Club
- Chiswick Cricket Club
- Chiswick & Latymer Cricket Club
- Barnes Hockey Club
- Old Salopian Football Club
- London Welsh FC
- Old Meadonians Football Club
- Little Kickers Football Club
- Chiswick Gators Basketball Club
- University of London Boat Club
- Team Keane Sculling School
- Quintin Boat Club
- Tideway Scullers School
- Westminster Boat House
- Thames Tradesmen's Rowing Club
- Cygnet Rowing Club
- Emanuel School Boat Club
- Barnes Bridge Ladies Rowing Club
- Rocks Lane Multi Sports Centre
- Active 360
- Chiswick Tennis Club
- Virgin Active



- The Hogarth Health Club
- Ten Health & Fitness
- W4 Fitness
- West4 Gym
- The Gym Clinic
- Roko Health Club
- Chiswick Sports and Fitness
- Dukes Meadows Golf, Tennis & Ski Club
- Gunnersbury Triangle Sports and Social Club

Aside from these numerous clubs, there are plenty of opportunities for all to enjoy some aspect of healthy living, from taking part or volunteering at a park run, to practising yoga, pilates and barrecore, dance classes, martial arts and using public swimming pools and tennis courts.

The facilities at Active360 under Kew Bridge allow for the more adventurous of us to take part in water activities, including stand-up paddle boarding and kayaking. The Rocks Lane Multi Sports Centre provides top-quality five-a-side football and netball courts for over 4,000 people a week.

Our open spaces host various events each week including the Hounslow Good Gym, Fullers London Pride 5K, and the Chiswick Half Marathon. Chiswick is part of route of The Prudential RideLondon-Surrey 100, a legacy of the London 2012 Olympic and Paralympic Games.

## **VOLUNTEERING**

There is a richness of organisations and societies throughout Chiswick, set up to encourage and support a sense of civic duty including:

- 20th Chiswick Scouts - Beavers, Cubs, Scouts, Explorer Scouts, Network
- Chiswick Sea Cadets
- 11th Chiswick Brownies
- 6th Chiswick Brownies
- 6th Chiswick Rainbows
- 6th Chiswick Guides
- 3rd Chiswick Scouts - Beavers, Cubs, Scouts
- TS London Naval Cadet Corps
- Hogarth Youth and Community Centre
- Age Concern Chiswick
- The West Chiswick and Gunnersbury Society
- William Hogarth Trust
- Dukes Meadows Trust
- Chiswick House Kitchen Garden
- Chiswick Catenians
- Chiswick House Friends
- The Friends of Turnham Green
- The Friends of Chiswick Common
- Abundance London
- Brentford and Chiswick Historical Society
- Chiswick Lifeboat Station
- Chiswick Horticultural Society
- The Bedford Park Society
- The Victorian Society

## **DIVERSITY**

Not only does Chiswick have places of worship for people of eight faiths or denominations, so is it home to people from around the world. Much like London, Chiswick is home to many people who aren't originally from London, or the UK, as is illustrated in the tapestry "Chiswick Without Borders" which now hangs in Chiswick Library.

This is also demonstrated in the ethnic diversity of its residents. Sixty per cent of the population of Chiswick identify as either Black and Minority Ethnic (BAME) or not "White UK", and the languages heard on our streets include those from the Indian Subcontinent, Asia, the Middle East and Europe, with many bilingual households. Twenty-five languages are taught at the International School of London in Turnham Green ward; many of its students live in Chiswick. Chiswick is home for people in every socio-economic group.

## **NOTABLE RESIDENTS – PAST AND PRESENT**

Throughout its history, Chiswick has been home to a great number of individuals who have contributed to local society and culture. A few of these are commemorated on English Heritage blue plaques. Of the 10 blue plaques within Hounslow, nine commemorate Chiswick residents:

- Jack Beresford, 19 Grove Park Gardens, Olympic rowing champion
- Tommy Cooper, 51 Barrowgate Road, comedian
- EM Forster, Arlington Park Mansions, novelist
- Joseph Michael Gandy, 58 Grove Park Terrace, architectural visionary
- Patrick Hamilton, 2 Burlington Gardens, novelist and playwright
- Private Frederick Hitch V.C., 62 Cranbrook Road, hero of Rorke's Drift
- Lucien Pissarro, 27 Stamford Brook Road, painter, printer, wood engraver
- Alexander Pope, 110 Chiswick Lane South, poet
- Johann Zoffany, 65 Strand-on-the-Green, painter

Other residents who have had a connection with Chiswick include:

- W.B. Yeats, poet
- William Hogarth, artist
- Barbara Palmer, 1st Duchess of Cleveland, Countess of Castlemaine, former mistress of King Charles II
- Charles Holland, 18th century actor
- Georgiana Cavendish, Duchess of Devonshire
- William Makepeace Thackeray, novelist, author and illustrator
- Henry Francis Cary, poet
- Jean-Jacques Rousseau, philosopher, writer, composer
- Francis Ronalds, inventor of the electric telegraph
- John Edward Thornycroft, engineer
- Patrick Hamilton, playwright and novelist
- Montague Dawson, painter
- Ugo Foscolo (Italian revolutionary)
- Camille Pissarro and family, painters
- Lewis Pinhorn Wood, landscape artist
- Daniel O'Connell, Irish Politician
- Harold Pinter, playwright, screenwriter, director and actor
- The Hon Thomas Walpole, MP
- Patsy Hendren, cricketer
- Jack Robertson, cricketer
- Aubrey Manning, zoologist and broadcaster
- Frederick Vine, marine geologist
- John Entwistle, musician
- Pete Townshend, musician
- Peter Brook, theatre and film director
- Thomas Layton, collector and local councillor
- Edith Humphrey, chemist, first woman to obtain a doctorate in chemistry
- Mike Selvey, cricketer
- Donald Pleasence, actor
- Phil Collins, musician
- Kim Wilde, musician
- Clifford Harper, illustrator
- Derek Ridgers, photographer
- Kate Beckinsale, actress
- James McNeill Whistler, artist
- Beatrix Whistler, artist
- Mel Smith, comedian
- Florence Farr, West End leading actress, composer and director.
- Dimitri Mascarenhas, cricketer
- Anthony Burgess, novelist
- Peter Blake, pop artist
- James Murray Grant, artist
- Hugh Grant, actor
- Bruce Dickinson, singer
- John Thaw, actor
- Sheila Hancock, actress and author
- Kate Humble, TV presenter
- Elizabeth McGovern, actress
- Simon Curtis, film director
- Colin Firth, actor
- John Lowenthal, American lawyer
- Cara Delevigne, model and actress
- Mike Reed, musical director of Jesus Christ Superstar, Joseph and the Amazing Technicolour Dreamcoat, Cats and Bat out of Hell
- Michael Frayn, playwright

- Rebecca Frayn, filmmaker and novelist
- J.G. Ballard, novelist, short story writer, and essayist
- Anthony Burgess, writer and composer
- Jeremy Vine, TV journalist
- John Edwards, musician
- Rageh Omaar, TV journalist
- Fergal Keane, TV journalist
- Phyllis Logan, actress
- Clare Balding, TV presenter
- Sarah Greene, TV presenter
- Gavin Campbell, TV presenter
- Angellica Bell, TV presenter
- Tim Vincent, TV presenter
- John Leslie, TV presenter
- Beverley Turner, TV presenter
- Davina McCall, TV presenter
- Mary Nightingale, TV presenter
- Alice Arnold, journalist
- Anthony McPartlin, TV presenter
- Declan Donnelly, TV presenter
- Peter Osborne, journalist
- James Cracknell, Olympic rower
- Peter Reed, 2012 Olympic rower

In our graveyards:

- William Hogarth, artist
- William Kent, landscape architect
- Philip James de Loutherbourg RA, painter
- Thomas Bentley, business partner of Josiah Wedgwood
- Mary Fauconberg, daughter of Oliver Cromwell
- Barbara Palmer, 1st Duchess of Cleveland, Countess of Castlemaine, former mistress of King Charles II
- Private Frederick Hitch VC, hero of Rorke's Drift
- Percy Harris, Liberal Party politician
- James Abbott McNeill Whistler, artist
- Sir Charles Tilston Bright, electric engineer responsible for the laying of the first transatlantic telegraph cable in 1858 from Valentia Island, Co. Kerry to Trinity Bay, Newfoundland. Later a Liberal MP

## **ENHANCING CHISWICK'S CULTURAL LIFE**

### **Chiswick Town Hall**

We have already noted the potential of the Grade II listed Chiswick Town Hall as a significant cultural hub for Chiswick. It is a much under-used resource and should be celebrated. Sensitive and prudent renovation and improvement are needed. An in-house PA/AV system, discreet enough to be unseen when not needed but effective enough that when events are held here there is atmosphere, is a must-have. So is good lighting. The principal should be to improve its place in the heart of Chiswick as a sought-after venue for special celebrations, retaining its value as a source of revenue, and to encourage its use for community events at a lower rate.

With appropriate investment, it could become an important local asset: for shows by local schools, dance and theatre groups; performances or competitions for a much-forgotten group of residents – teenagers – for some of whom sport is not an attractive pastime; lectures, discussions, exhibitions on our impactful history; events that promote our many hidden makers; a food festival (The Cheese Wick, perhaps, or A Taste of Chiswick) where our existing local food and drink traders can showcase the best of what they offer and give talks or workshops to pass on knowledge and skills. Perhaps its renovation should be the subject of a competition among local Chiswick architects some of whom have won prestigious awards for their work.

By regaining this public asset for the community, we can weave the tapestry of Chiswick to become as richly textured and vibrant as all the different threads that make its culture so unique and valued.

## **Chiswick Library**

Another under-valued resource, our library, is in need of proper attention to make it more appealing. It needs a lift. The public lavatory is inadequate. The meeting room needs an upgrade. It, too, could become a community hub with an exciting programme of events attracting residents of all age groups from all over Chiswick, north and south of the A4.

## **The emerging generation**

Young people - particularly but not only those below voting age - have few routes to influencing their local areas and what they provide for their cultural entertainment. Often without much money, the pound in their pockets has less influence on what should be available for them to buy or spend time doing. There is scope for several locations in Chiswick to become hubs for them - providing places that appeal to them where they can socialise with each other outside their homes - and we are actively exploring these possibilities.

The Hogarth Youth and Community Centre needs more funds; we would like them to receive funding specifically to support a cultural programme.

## **Promoting to the many not the few**

Chiswick's existing cultural offering is strong but it can be made stronger by promoting all that happens much more widely. One frequently made complaint is that events, consultations and news are not heard of by residents until the moment has passed. Residents either need to be extremely tuned in or to persistently check the council website, or be one of the lucky few whose opinion is sought, to be aware of what is on offer.

By advertising on banners along our High Road and other significant roads, at bus stops and maximising advertising in our shops - in all cases, on both sides of the A4 - we can increase awareness within Chiswick and make Chiswick a destination of choice.

This needs to be supported by - but not left entirely to - an online resource including an interactive map, advertising Chiswick's cultural events and activities. It should be available in print, too, to be distributed to residents and the 12,000 or so people who come to Chiswick to work and to acknowledge that a large proportion of our residents are not online but have as much right to take part in our cultural activities. Information, including the printed map, should also be made available in hotels and clubs encouraging everyone in Chiswick to enjoy all that it offers culturally.

These initiatives to promote cultural opportunities and activities would work across the borough. Further, there should be much more intra-borough promotion of cultural events and activities to bring together and celebrate our many communities and cultural opportunities.

**Councillors Patrick Barr, Joanna Biddolph, Michael Denniss, Gabriella Giles, Ranjit Gill, Sam Hearn, Gerald McGregor, Ron Mushiso and John Todd**  
**London Borough of Hounslow**  
**27th October 2018**