

# ISLINGTON *news*

*The Journal of the Islington Society incorporating FOIL folio*

## Islington resident retains Mayoralty

*The local elections of 2012 saw significant swings to Labour across the country, but the Mayoral election in London bucked this trend*

### Reduced majority

Islington resident Boris Johnson has retained the mayoralty of London, with a slightly reduced majority. Labour made gains on the London Assembly, but the Conservative group retained sufficient places to ensure that there would not be a two-thirds majority against the Mayoral budget plans as long as they carry the support of that party.

### Opinion polls took away the surprise

The result of both elections, almost down to the last seat, were widely predicted in opinion polls and there was thus no surprise within political circles at the outcome. When the constituencies are as large as these it is very difficult for an outsider to mount a successful campaign in the way Lord Avebury did in Orpington in 1962 or George Galloway in Bradford West in 2012. The press seized on an independent candidate in the mayoral race, in an attempt to generate interest, but all that this may have influenced was the keenly fought race for third place between the Liberals and the Greens.

### UKIP own goal

Perhaps the one surprise was the failure of UKIP to take a seat on the Assembly. For reasons best known to themselves, they chose to use a different strap line on the ballot paper, which made their candidates look as though they were from some new fringe party. After the splits of the past and the jokes about *In Vino Veritas* the name UKIP is now well established as the repository for Euro-sceptic voters or those on the right who despair of David Cameron but do not want to support a racially divisive party.

### Change for Camden

Jennette Arnold was returned in the Islington/Hackney/Waltham Forest seat known as London North-east with an increased majority, so that Islington residents are represented on the Assembly as well as in the Mayoralty. Jennette has been reappointed to the chair of the Assembly and will also sit on the Transport Committee. In

Camden, which is twinned with Barnet for the purposes of forming a GLA constituency, the controversial Barnet councillor Brian Coleman was unseated by former Harrow M.P. Andrew Dismore, in the biggest swing of the night in London.

Pessimists were worried that Coleman might return in another role, appointed by the Mayor, but happily this proved to be wide of the mark. Isabel Dedring, who has brought some grasp of detail to Transport for London, much needed by the present Mayor, retains her place as a deputy Mayor.

### By-election in Holloway Ward

With all the publicity given to the Mayoral election, it was easy to overlook the fact that a by-election was taking place in Holloway Ward. It was convincingly held by Labour's Rakhia Ismail. The election was caused by the resignation of Lucy Rigby after just two years on the council, following her selection to fight Lincoln for the Labour Party in the next General Election. Most of the political debate since the election has been about which party will provide the main challenge to Labour in 2014. The Liberal Democrat position as the place for those who oppose Labour but do not wish to vote Tory has undoubtedly been compromised by the Coalition in Westminster. The Green party has benefitted as a result, but may not attract Conservative minded voters who were prepared to go along with the Liberals but find the Greens a step too far. However, this analysis ignores the fact that increasingly, voters are able to distinguish between candidates from the same party. They are also increasingly minded to vote for candidates from more than one party because they are more interested in a balance of power than which party actually holds it. This can only be good for democracy. Instead of rather cynical targeting of voters in marginal seats, we may see a return to the practice of canvassing support widely. Targeting must be in part responsible for the decline in the number of people voting at all.

## Local News

**Pump house saved**

A scheme to demolish the centuries old grade II listed pump house on the Thames Water site has been blocked. One of the most historic buildings in London - dubbed a "Globe Theatre of engineering" - was dramatically plucked from the jaws of developers after a saga of blunders almost led to it being turned into luxury flats.

The Grade II-listed Pump House, between Rosebery Avenue and Amwell Street, Clerkenwell, was described as a heritage site of national importance at Tuesday's planning committee. It is the site of the New River Head, an artificial waterway bringing fresh water into the city.

Built by Sir Hugh Myddelton and completed in 1613 the river and the industrial buildings at its head laid the way for the growth of London into a world city and the creation of Islington. Yet in November planning officers were all set to allow the building to be turned into flats. They had forgotten that when Thames Water began selling off the complex 20 years ago - many other buildings have been turned into flats - the utility company had promised to hand the Pump House over to the council as a heritage centre once no longer in use.

Instead, in 2009, Thames sold it to a private developer who wasn't told about the pledge. A spokesman for the developers, Turnhold, said on Tuesday that through all their dealings with Islington's planning officers over the past two years there had been no mention of the promise of a heritage site.

In their report to the elected councillors who make final planning decisions, Town Hall civil servants claimed that the promise of a heritage centre was not legally enforceable. Turnhold had, however, agreed two weeks ago to create a narrow path around a wind pump base and on to an upstairs room for public access.

A passionate appeal not to allow the development to go ahead from conservation groups - including the Heritage of London Trust and the Islington Preservation Society, who are working on plans to create a museum at the site - led to councillors throwing out the plans. Hugh Myddelton - an ancestor of Sir Hugh Myddelton - also spoke out against the plans, arguing that his relative would be "turning in his grave". Opposition also came from the Amwell Society, Clerkenwell Parochial School and the Islington Society.

Speaking on behalf of the Amwell Society and the Parochial School, David Sulkin said that previous promises by other developers to allow public access to the gardens had proved false as they were "rarely open".

"Sir Hugh Myddelton was a master of engineering," he said. "A heritage centre should be opened to celebrate that. The New River Head is a Globe Theatre of Engineering." Lib Dem Councillor George Allen, who represents the area, said that in his 30 years in the community he had never "felt the sense of outrage as I have looking at this application". He added that to allow the proposal would destroy the reputation of Islington Council. "There has been no public consultation whatsoever," he said. "This application will wreck the chances of a heritage centre. Will anyone take seriously our planning briefs again? Developers will think that if they leave things long enough we'll forget and officers will slag off their predecessors." David Gibson, chairman of the Islington Society, told the committee that plans were being drawn up by the Heritage of London Trust and Islington Preservation Society to create a proper museum.

Islington's former legal officer Deborah Cluett argued that the council was within its legal rights to refuse the application because the heritage value of the building was of national significance.

The councillors on the planning committee were vehement in their denunciation of the proposals. Councillor David Wilson said it was "disappointing that Thames Water was the lineal descendant of the people who built the New River Head. They don't seem to have any idea what they've got here. There is no affordable housing and no benefit to the public." Labour councillor Robert Khan added that the site had huge potential for a heritage centre. "This is a site not just of regional significance but national significance," he said.

In a letter of objection, Islington's former conservation officer Alec Forshaw, wrote that Islington's officers "simply didn't understand" the importance of the New River Head. "I simply don't believe that the officers understand the significance of the heritage assets they are dealing with. "The implication is that officers consider the application site to be a heritage asset of local importance, when in fact it is of London-wide, regional, indeed national importance."

## Islington Green - what's in a name?

The Council seems to have stirred up a hornet's nest by proposing to rename Islington Green as Islington Memorial Green. A number of businesses and residents have the Green as their address, and would pick up not insignificant costs if the highway were to be renamed as well. It is unclear if this is part of the proposal: Alec Forshaw, our former conservation officer, is anxious that it should not.

The proposal bucks the trend of making every name shorter, and perhaps should be applauded for that, but the emphasis on the war memorial ignores the many other activities which have been enjoyed in the park. It also has implications for the perception of Spa Green as an equal place of remembrance.

Changing names which have stood for centuries will always arouse controversy, although place names have moved with time. Farringdon Station, which many believe would more relevantly be named Clerkenwell, was originally Farringdon and High

Holborn whereas we now think of High Holborn as being adjacent to Holborn station. Renaming the Angel station as "Angel, Islington" would have brought clarity and familiarity for non-Londoners who play Monopoly. It was rejected by London Underground as too costly, even though it could have been introduced gradually. Transport for London has taken to rename bus destinations with names which are completely unfamiliar to local people and confusing to passengers destined for intermediate stops. Whoever thought of Enfield Island for Enfield Lock, or Fish Island where there is no water and no fish.

These bus routes are of relatively recent creation but Islington Green has been around for centuries. Most people still think of the nearby school by that name and it will be many years if at all before a new name gains widespread currency.

## Islington Society Design Awards

Nominations are now being sought for the Design awards for buildings newly created or renovated in 2011. The panel will be sitting at the end of this

month and the results will be announced in the next newsletter.

## Basement excavations

Karen Buck (Labour M.P. for Regents Park) secured a Parliamentary debate on the worrying impact of basement excavations, following a particularly distressing case of disruption to neighbours in St. John's Wood. Her concerns were shared by Mark Field (Conservative, Cities of London & Westminster).

Some conservationists believed that expanding below ground would be preferable to building mansard rooves or on the back of properties in conservation areas, but some excavations have proved catastrophic. The subject is to be aired at a London Forum meeting on July 24th - see back page.

### CURRENT OFFICERS

President : Lord Smith of Finsbury

Vice Presidents: Mary Cosh, Harley Sherlock

Chairman: David Gibson,

35, Britannia Row, London, N.1

☎ 020 7-226 2207; e✉ mail@dgibarch.com

Secretary: David Trillo

45, Ellington Street, London, N.7

☎ 020 7-607 9325; e✉ david@trillo.net

Treasurer: Robert Coyle,

Wells House, Upper Street, London, N.1 2UQ

☎ 020 7-354 3663; e✉ Robert.Coyle@colmancoyle.com

Newsletter: Andrew Bosi,

The Croft, Wall Street, London, N.1 000

☎ 020 7-354 8514; e✉ AndrewBosi@aol.com

### Society publications

*Twentieth Century Buildings in Islington*, by Alec Forshaw, £14.99, photographs by Richard Leeney, ISBN 0-9541490-0-9

*The Story of Day Flats in and around Islington*, by Andrew Bosi, photographs from C.F. Day Limited and Oliver Craxton, £5, ISBN 0-9541490-1-7

*An architect in Islington*, by Harley Sherlock, £14.99, ISBN 9-78-0-9541490-2-4

[all of the Society's publications are available from the Society at 35, Britannia Row, London, N.1 or from local bookshops]

## VAT on heritage buildings: no U-turn yet

*Although the tax relief on charitable donations is no longer to be capped, and £30m. has been allocated to the Listed Places of Worship Grant scheme, Heritage Alliance remains concerned about the heritage tax which was introduced in the last budget.*

Over the past few weeks, The Heritage Alliance has generated and co-ordinated the growing anti 'heritage tax' campaign calling for a reversal of the Government's proposed measure to revoke the zero rating of VAT on approved alterations to listed buildings.

The call to Alliance members to forward news of the consultation and its extension to 18th May brought a huge bag of e-mails, each illustrating how the measure would impact on past, present and future projects affecting all sorts of buildings and owners. The Alliance was grateful to have received copies of members' letters to MPs, and to see how quickly and effectively its campaign toolkit was 'viralled' out. It demonstrated just how much an active network can do in an emergency.

Following our earlier briefing, a second Alliance briefing went out with covering letters to around 400 MPs on 9th May. This summarised the case against the removal of zero rating, and asked MPs to consider the impact on their constituencies and to bring their concerns to the attention of the Chancellor. Replies from MPs indicate many of them have done so.

The Cut the VAT Coalition, of which the Alliance is a member, had a letter in the Daily Telegraph on May 18th. Non-heritage bodies are also adding their voices to the campaign, including: Charity Finance Group, Charity Tax Group, the Oxbridge Colleges, the Tourism Alliance, Locality (formerly the Development Trusts Association) and many more. And a special service was held at St Bride's Church Fleet Street on 13th May. The e-petition has attracted over 11000 signatures and continues to grow.

The Budget 2012 announced the withdrawal of the zero rate of VAT for approved alterations to listed buildings, from 1st October 2012. This equalises the VAT rate for repairs and maintenance to listed buildings and for approved alterations to them, as is already the position for work to unlisted buildings.

The Listed Places of Worship Scheme will be extended to offset the financial impact of the VAT change on listed places of worship undertaking alteration works. The Government will provide an additional £30 million of funding a year for the

Listed Places of Worship Grant Scheme for the duration of this Parliament, following the introduction of the change to the VAT rate applied to alterations to listed buildings.

The Government is confident that this will cover the additional costs borne by listed places of worship following the VAT change. It is also confident that the additional resources will enable 100% compensation for repair and maintenance costs eligible under the current Listed Places of Worship Grant Scheme.

This announcement yesterday of an extra £30m for the Listed Places of Worship Grant Scheme is very welcome news for listed churches. But it does nothing to address the 'bigger picture' of the Government's decision to levy VAT on approved alterations to all listed buildings. Churches are a very important part of the historic environment and they face acute challenges, but secular listed buildings - such as community centres and village halls - face similar challenges in raising money to alter their buildings to give them a viable twenty first century lease of life.

Chief Executive of The Heritage Alliance, Kate Pugh, said: "Whilst an extra £30m for listed churches is of course good news, it does not address the big picture of the potentially disastrous impact of the Government's VAT proposals on all listed buildings. Failure properly to address this issue threatens to undermine the positive initiatives in the Penfold Review and the National Planning Policy Framework, and leaves a question mark hanging over a range of Government initiatives, from the asset transfer programme and the philanthropy drive to the Big Society agenda.

"The Heritage Alliance will continue to call on Government to reverse entirely this misguided proposal for all listed buildings, irrespective of type or ownership. I believe a proper review of the policy objectives behind the measure, using an adequate evidence base, is vital before such an important change - which is irreversible under EU law. I look forward to discussing with Government how they intend to address the needs of all listed buildings."

## Borchester Land decision another blow for planning system

Millions of radio listeners will have tuned in to the live broadcast of Borsetshire County Council's planning meeting on April 17th. Unfortunately, it did little for the reputation of the planning system.

One of the few points in favour of the draft National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) is that it brought the planning system to the front pages of the quality newspapers, thereby increasing public perception of what is involved. For all too many people, the first experience of the system is when a High Speed Rail link or the next door neighbour's proposed rabbit hutch threatens the vegetable patch at the bottom of the garden. All too often, people with a good case fail adequately to prosecute it, wasting their three minute speech on irrelevancies and failing to highlight the crucial planning issue which the committee report has overlooked or underplayed.

In a widely publicised meeting on April 17th, Borsetshire County Council considered an application from Borchester Land to create a mega dairy close to the banks of the river Am. Opponents were concerned that the scheme compromised animal welfare, threatened the livelihood of small scale farmers and therefore reduced employment levels rather than enhancing the opportunities for work.

There appeared to be little evidence to support a rejection of the planning application on planning grounds. There was some suggestion that the scheme might have an adverse impact on the local environment, possibly leading to pollution of the Am itself, but a key document from the

Environment Agency had not been supplied by the date of the meeting.

Regrettably the chair of committee was less than even handed, having clearly decided before the meeting that he would support the officers' recommendation for approval. More seriously, the planning officer saw fit to interrupt one of the elected members speaking against the recommendation and to argue with him. Even Camden's officers have the grace to wait until members have finished their speech.

It was clear that a majority were minded to grant approval and this should have been their decision, subject to consideration of the Environment Agency report. Instead, at the suggestion of the chair, they agreed to delegate the decision to the officers once the EA report is received, leaving themselves no room for manoeuvre should the report prove contentious.

Information subsequent to the meeting has been rather sketchy, although it appears that the Environment Agency report has raised any matters of concern. Regrettably a physical assault in the course of attempted theft of farm equipment has diverted attention from planning matters. The media are always more interested in violent crime than in planning.

## Draft Housing SPG Part 1: Housing Supply

*Comments by the London Forum of Amenity and Civic Societies*

Policy 3.3: Increasing Housing Supply is designed to provide additional homes for Londoners, improving housing choice and affordability whilst providing better quality accommodation for Londoners.

The London Forum strongly supports the Mayor's approach to establishing housing capacity using the mid-point of the relevant "appropriate density range", but is very concerned about the approach in Opportunity Areas and Areas of Intensification where, through either disregard or manipulation of the SRQ Density Matrix, the outcome "almost always yields higher capacity than initial estimates" (to the extent that the maximum of the appropriate density ranges for sites within these areas is regularly exceeded when no "additional reasons to justify exceeding the top of the

appropriate range can be demonstrated rigorously".

The London Forum supports Opportunity Areas and Areas of Intensification being developed at higher densities where appropriate - e.g. because of their setting, high public transport accessibility and capacity and their context. However, we are increasingly concerned that the Draft SPDs for these Opportunity Areas do not recognise that it is essential that the density of development of these areas do not exceed these ranges unless there is very strong evidence for doing so. Reaffirm that the density matrix and the appropriate density ranges should be applied in Opportunity and Intensification Areas. Clarify that site area for considering density should be the net site area, excluding roads and railways.

### Residential Conversions

The London Forum supports the approach taken to conversions, including the need to take account of the losses due to deconversions being deducted from the any additional provision from both new build or conversions in order to arrive at the net addition to annual supply. (1.2.17)

In addition, it should be recognised that deconversions can have the effect of accelerating the loss of small, relatively affordable units which, if widespread, would accelerate the disintegration of mixed and balanced communities.

Where previously-residential buildings have been converted to non-residential uses, consideration whether to they should be reconverted to housing should also consider the effect of squeezing out these uses and avoiding the loss of diversity of uses that make a difference between communities and homogeneous areas of housing.

### Flats above shops

In main town centres the space above shops is perhaps best used to meet the need for small, affordable office units rather than flats. This should be recognised (1.2.32)

The need for intensification of use of land in Outer London could be met, in part, by redevelopment or additions on parades of shops to increase the number of floors towards the number more often seen in Inner London.

Action is needed on empty homes or business units above shops.

### Density

Density is a key issue for the SPG to put across clearly, to reflect:

- the major change in policy in the 2011 London Plan from "maximising" to "optimising" the potential of sites (London Plan Policy 3.4);
- the significance of the "appropriate density ranges" which reflect the main factors which define the range within which the density of development should normally fall; and
- the key performance indicator for optimising density which contains the target that "over 95% of development to comply with the housing density location and the density matrix Table"

This SPG should resolve the status of the policy, the density matrix and the key performance indicator target and indicate how the GLA will and Boroughs should apply the policy

The London Forum strongly supports the use of the density matrix for:

- defining the appropriate density ranges for developing housing based on the setting of the site, public transport accessibility;
- defining the capacity of potential housing sites, by the mid-point of the density range;
- guiding Boroughs on their density policies
- defining the housing capacity and potential densities for Opportunity Areas through their Opportunity Area Planning Framework; and
- assessing major housing applications.

The London Forum strongly supports:

- the London Plan Policy 3.4 for optimising the housing potential of sites through ensuring that developments have a density within the appropriate density range;
- the Mayor working to ensure that significant progress is made to deliver the target of over 95% of housing schemes being within that range;
- rigorous testing of any proposals above or below the density ranges to help maximise the proportion of housing schemes with the appropriate densities;
- the proposed indicative minimum density of 35 dwellings per hectare - this is a continuation of the 1976 Development Plan policy; and
- the need to deduct non-residential floorspace from the floorspace that would be indicated by the housing density matrix in vertically-mixed schemes to avoid massing that is significantly out of scale with its context. However, the threshold of 35% should be reduced to 30%, to include 3 non-residential storeys of a 9-storey building.
- the encouragement of reduced car parking provision and, in CPZs, permit-free housing in areas of high public transport accessibility, which will allow higher densities without compromising residential quality. (1.3.45)

The London Forum welcomes:

- the definition of net residential density, but would like further explanation of how this definition should be used in Opportunity Area Planning Frameworks, in the borough SPDs that relate to them and for applications for major housing sites.
- the section on density and dwelling type.

The London Forum is concerned that:

- the density of development within Opportunity Areas and Intensification Areas should be optimised within the appropriate density range of each site within the area - net residential densities for the sites in these areas should be kept within the appropriate density range for each site.

## Transport News Round-up

### New bus for London

A fourth New Bus for London entered service in the last week of May between Hackney Central and Victoria on the 38 route. This is 50% of the eight vehicles promised by the end of May. The late arrival of some buses, and the prolonged absence of the prototype, plus a gagging order on Wright the bus builder may be side issues, but the gagging order is also outrageous. A whistle-blower reports that the absence of LT1 was because the body work is so robust it has caused one of the window panes to crack, and the bus has gone back to Wright's for remedial work.

The windows that are not cracked attracted some adverse comment as people felt passengers were old enough to be trusted to open or close windows. If the heating/air conditioning is so wonderful open windows are not needed that would be fine, up to a point. Anyone who has travelled on a 158 train knows the down-side. The last time we had a heatwave a guard was heard expressing delight at having found the only 158 with air conditioning that worked. Another aspect of the lack of windows is the rather stale smell.

The big issue is the bus conductor, who has been permanently stationed by the open door to prevent anyone jumping off into on-coming traffic. Bus conductors are very popular, especially with people of limited mobility. However, their popularity stemmed from chatting to passengers in less busy periods, going upstairs to collect fares and to monitor the availability of seats on the upper deck, not to mention helping people aboard, which was more significant when there was a step. The cost of a conductor with so limited a remit inevitably attracts criticism, and it does not achieve the popularity craved by the Mayor. (S)he does not even ring the bell (2 for start, 3 for full, 4 for emergency stop) although there is an alarm to operate when people are boarding or alighting at the open platform. Some in the industry are rather lukewarm about the whole project, and seem to want to operate the vehicles as close to conventional opo as possible.

The cost of the whole project is an issue in times of austerity, although so little attention has been paid to developing bus design from a passenger's point of view that some spending in this area is long overdue. One wonders what the trials

will prove, given the high density of driver only buses on the 38. Conventional wisdom has always been that crew operation is most cost effective when applied to all operations on a route. However, it has shown that people have lost the habit of boarding at the back - in any case, since there is only a one in fifteen chance of the new bus arriving the head of the queue must be at the front - which means that the middle and rear points of entry are underused. There is though a big time advantage in alighting at the back compared with waiting for doors to be opened. As expected, there is considerable scope for fare dodging.

The seats are harder than those on Arriva's other hybrids, but the ride is smooth and quiet, and the fuel consumption is minimised. Alighting is a lot easier than on conventional buses when crowded. The high backed seats are particularly welcome, just as the last ones are being phased out from the Underground. It beggared belief that Boris could claim in the course of the election campaign they would cost no more to purchase than conventional hybrid buses. The whole idea was to have a higher quality product - you might reduce fuel costs as a result, but you would have to pay more at the outset. The use of curved panels and curved glass is bound to increase the cost, even on a large production run. Pretending otherwise clouds the debate about the importance of the appearance of the bus. Many architects were strong supporters of the routemaster because it was such a permanent feature of the London landscape. They considered its appearance as important as that of heritage buildings. There is of course no protection of buses remotely comparable to that afforded St. Paul's Cathedral.

### Overground switches information screens

The information screens on the Overground have been altered to indicate the number of minutes to wait, rather than the time the next train is expected. This makes them more like tube trains and less like the National Rail network, which has a published timetable. I find the existence of the timetable reassuring, and as it is still available in printed form the new system is less informative. Others may view this differently.

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## *From the Society*

Current officers are listed on page 2

### *What we do*

- we support conservation planning work to preserve the borough's historic fabric and individual buildings of distinction
- we campaign for a high standard of design in new buildings
- we encourage best practice through awards for good architecture in new or refurbished buildings
- we organise a varied programme of events including talks, walks and site visits
- we campaign for better public transport and for priority for people travelling on foot or by bike
- we produce publications that celebrate Islington's history and its social and cultural diversity
- we publish neighbourhood walking trails to foster exploration awareness and pride of place
- we build links between residents officials and councillors
- we publish a regular newsletter
- we send advisers to Council groups dealing with development, the environment and transport
- we are represented on the London Forum of Civic & Amenity Societies, which takes up cross-borough issues and is a member of Civic Voice

### *Future Society events*

*The Society gives reminders by e-mail of meetings about a week before they are held. Please let the Secretary have your e-mail address if you are not on the existing mailing list.*

June 22nd, 2012: Annual Bill Manley Memorial Pub crawl, from 6.0 p.m..

This year commencing at the Queen's Head, followed by the Wenlock & Essex, in Essex Road. Then the Winchester Arms, and finally the Earl of Essex in Danbury Street. As is now customary, we plan to move on the hour so that the later pubs will be reached at 7 p.m. 8 p.m. and 9 p.m.

Our monthly Meet the Officers meetings have been restored to the Marquess Tavern, 32 Canonbury Street on the first Tuesday each month at 9.0 p.m., on Tuesdays 3rd July, 7th August and 4th September 2012.

### *Other Events in or around Islington:*

**Archaeology & History Society** (8.0 p.m. Islington Town Hall)

20th June 2012 - David Flintham "Lines of Communication. London's English Civil War defences 1642-1647".

10th September 2012 - Caroline Shenton "The Day Parliament Burned Down".

### **National Gardens Scheme**

Local gardens open on Sunday 10th June, Saturday 30th June and Wednesday 4th July.

### **Canonbury Society**

Summer Garden Party - contact [www.canonburysociety.org.uk](http://www.canonburysociety.org.uk)

### **London Society of Civic & Amenity Societies**

Meetings at 77, Cowcross Street, commencing 6.30 p.m.

July 24th: London Basements

July 31st: Transport issues

### **Islington Museum & Local History Centre**

Until 23rd August 2012: Exhibition "Shooting Cripplegate, Clerkenwell and Finsbury" - City of London and Cripplegate Photographic Society

### **Estorick Collection of Modern Italian Art,** 39a Canonbury Square

18th April - 17th June 2012: Exhibition of Giuseppe Cavalli: Master of Light.

27th June - 9th September 2012: Exhibition "Abstraction in Italy 1930-1980".

### **Almeida Theatre,**

Almeida Street, N.1 0207 359 4404

Monday-Saturday 7.30 p.m., Saturday matinée 2.30 p.m.

Until 30th June 2012: World Premiere of "Children's Children" by British playwright Matthew Dunster.

2nd-28th July 2012: Almeida Festival, which includes productions from new and emerging theatre companies.

4th August - 3rd November 2012: "King Lear" by William Shakespeare as part of the World Shakespeare Festival.