

The **London Forum** of
Amenity and Civic Societies



working to protect and improve the quality of life in London

London Forum *Insights*

Issue 13, February 2023

Editorial

The ongoing consultation on National Planning Policy and NPPF revisions has occupied the Forum since the start of the year. An e-bulletin from our chairman, Peter Eversden, summarised our main concerns: unlimited scope for the Secretary of State to specify **National Development Policies** which will trump local policies, the replacement of S106 obligations and Community Infrastructure Levy by a new **Infrastructure Levy** payable on completion, **inadequate resources in Local Authorities** to transition to the new planning regime, and the retention of the **35% uplift in housing targets** for England's 20 largest cities. Should the last mentioned be read as an attempt by the Government to keep its 300,000 annual housing target afloat after the climb-down on housing density demanded by its own (largely rural) MPs? The first article below describes these concerns in greater depth.

Meanwhile the **Levelling Up and Regeneration Bill (LURB)** has entered its committee stage in the House of Lords with numerous amendments scheduled for discussion over a 4-week period.

As well as national planning policy, this issue of London Forum *Insights* reports on the well-attended Open Meeting on **Early Community Engagement**, introduces the **Brockley Society**, and reminds members of what is expected of their **London Forum Main Contact**. We also have our usual round-up of transport news, and items of interest from local societies. We also carry a tribute to **Marion Harvey**, the Forum's first Chairman, whose death was announced in the December 2022 issue.

Finally, well-informed readers will already be aware that my prediction that Housing Minister Lucy Frazer would remain in post until the next general election proved to be hopelessly wide of the mark. Rachel MacLean is now the 6th incumbent inside a year!

Proposed Changes to National Planning Policy Forum's response is Work in Progress, says Michael Jubb

The Government issued this [consultation document](#) just before Christmas. The London Forum is preparing a detailed response, and we outline some of our key concerns below. We encourage member societies to submit their own responses, to contact their MPs, and to add their voices to the issues we have raised – and any other matters of concern – in whatever ways they wish. The deadline for responses is 11.45pm on 2 March.

The consultation covers two separate but closely related issues. First, it seeks comments on some short-term changes to the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) which will be introduced 'in the spring'. The changes are shown clearly [here](#). Second, it seeks views on further reforms to policy once the Levelling up and Regeneration Bill (LURB), which is currently at its Committee stage in the House of Lords, receives the Royal Assent.

Our first key concern is the proposed creation of National Development Management Policies (NDMP), which will replace the existing parts of the NPPF which apply to decision-making as distinct from plan-making. The driver for this proposal is the Government's desire to establish a set of national policies with statutory weight. The reasons for splitting the NPPF into two documents and thus abandoning the benefits of including all national policies in a single document are unclear. But worse, any conflict arising between policies in a Local Plan and those set out in the NDMP would be resolved in favour of the NDMP. The diagram illustrating how the NDMP "would work with the different components of the development plan" in making decisions on planning applications might best be described as confused and confusing. Overall, the proposal amounts to a national centralisation of planning policy, with policies determined by the Secretary of State having precedence over those determined through a local democratic process. This, combined with the unrealistic constraints to be imposed by restricting the timetable for making Local Plans to 30 months, will be contrary to the Government's stated objective of devolving powers to local level. It will be particularly damaging in London, where the scope and status of the London Plan will be diminished, thus weakening London's strategic development framework, and the power for both the GLA and local planning authorities to meet its development needs.

Our second major concern relates to the proposals for an Infrastructure Levy (IL) to replace the current Section 106 and Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) used to deliver infrastructure and affordable housing. They present a number of risks. Boroughs will face increased financial exposure, since IL payments will be made on completion rather than at the start of developments. And the flexibility that boroughs now have in using CIL payments may, as a result of overall financial pressures, divert the funding needed for development schemes. It will therefore be important to ensure that the proposals do not jeopardise the gains that have been made in delivering the affordable housing for which there is an acute need.

Our third major concern is that the 35% increase in the target for new housing in London is retained, to be met by increased densification, with a requirement that this uplift is, “so far as possible”, met by the towns and cities concerned rather than exported to surrounding areas. The proposal is that London and other cities should “capitalise on opportunities to further densify in already-developed urban areas, using local design codes to do so in ways that take account of the existing environment”. Although the target is “an advisory starting point”, most boroughs have limited capacity to take increased housing targets without resorting to high-density, high-rise developments. There is a risk that housing need not met locally will be passed on to other London boroughs. The implied total of 93,000 new homes annually for London as a whole is more than twice the number achieved in any year this century.

A fourth concern is that while there is renewed mention of a further consultation on an increase in planning fees, the Government fails to recognise the huge pressure that Planning Departments are facing, with many losses of experienced staff to the private sector. Funding for planning and development services has been cut by more than 60%, mainly because fees have not been set at a level to meet full costs. As a result, costs have fallen to local taxpayers to cover, and this should not be allowed to continue. The Government’s proposals will add to the workload and the pressures, and the risk is that the planning system will collapse under them.

We shall address a number of other issues in our response, including the Green Belt, Street Votes, Neighbourhood Planning and Neighbourhood Priority Statements, and the changes to the ‘soundness’ criteria against which Local Plans are to be assessed. On this last point we recognise that the four current criteria – positively prepared, justified, effective and consistent with national policy – are poorly drafted and unclear; but we believe that it is wrong to remove completely the ‘justified’ criterion - that Plans are based on appropriate evidence.

Open Meeting on Early Community Engagement

John Allen reports

A satisfactory method for civic societies and other representatives of local communities to be involved at the crucial early stages of the preparation of plans for major development has become the holy grail of positive community involvement in planning. As **Michael Bach** explained at the Forum's open meeting on 31st January at Cowcross Street, what normally happens is very different. The community finds out late in the day that a planning application is about to be submitted with officer support, opposition to the proposal is mobilized, the application is rejected at Planning Committee, the applicant appeals, frequently unsuccessfully. We are back at square one, having wasted a great deal of time, money and energy. There must be a better way.

Westminster Council came along to present on their newly adopted (one year ago) Early Engagement policy, which strongly encourages developers to engage with the local community prior to seeking pre-application advice. It's fair to say that there is much to admire in the intentions behind Westminster's initiative, and the personal commitment of both Deirdra Armsby and Oliver Gibson to the policy was clear. The policy is only guidance however, and, despite the positive response both speakers were able to report from one or two major landowners in the borough, it remained too early to tell if a significant improvement had occurred.

Next up, the **Kew Society** shared their experiences of collaborative planning for the Kew Retail Park redevelopment. The work commenced in late 2021/early 2022 where a redevelopment of the retail park is proposed, which would involve the retention of the Marks and Spencer store with a significant residential development likely to increase the local population by 4000. John Ricketts, Kew Society planning trustee, was yet to be convinced that the pursuit of the essence of 'Kewness' in the new development was going to be fully achieved. The process had started very well with a full weekend of open engagement of up to 200 local people and representatives in early 2022 followed by a jointly undertaken coach tour and visits to other developments. However since August/September 2022 it had all gone quiet. Expected further liaison in December 2022 had not taken place, leading to speculation that some of the financial parameters underpinning the proposal had changed.

Charles Champion, a founding father of community visioning and engagement practices on behalf of both public and private sector clients, responded to the situation at Kew Retail Park and more generally. He pointed out that the sort of vision making work undertaken through design and planning charettes had a long history starting in the United States 20 years ago. Large developments are shaped and delivered over many years, and it is not unusual for them to progress in fits and starts.

Questions and contributions from the audience focussed on whether there could be templates for high quality early community engagement for schemes of different sizes, could they be enforced by local Councils, could developers be expected to be free and open with information about viability and could one of the Government's latest ideas for Neighbourhood Priority Statements help in communicating clearly to developers what the local community wanted to see for their area from new developments. Meeting Chair, Paul Thornton, noted that no member society had been able to come up with an exemplar for how consultation should be conducted for medium-sized developments of, say, 10-50 housing units.

Overall there was enthusiasm for new and more effective methods of early engagement and the Forum will be keeping a close eye on how these latest initiatives play out. The Westminster and Kew slides used in the event are [here](#) and [here](#) respectively.

Introducing the Brockley Society (or re-introducing for those with long memories)

Brockley was a Saxon settlement in 952, mentioned in the Domesday Book as a small hamlet. It remained agricultural until the early 19th century when the Croydon Canal and railways brought industrial and residential development. The land south of today's Lewisham Way was laid out by 1851 with wide streets and large Italianate villas, respecting field patterns, footpaths and streams. This enclave has survived almost intact, rich in High Victorian and Edwardian domestic architecture, historic trees,



original lanes and mews. 1950-60s buildings indicate WWII bomb damage. Large houses falling into disrepair after the war faced threats: piecemeal attack by property speculators; council plans to build on rear gardens; GLC plans for a four-lane highway; proposals for the Channel Tunnel Rail Link under Brockley - fiercely resisted by community action.

Brockley Conservation Area was designated in 1973, Brockley Society was formed a year later. From the beginning it organised an annual midsummer fayre (sic) on Hilly Fields. Our planning group monitors planning applications with the interest and frustration common to other conservation societies. We incubated a street-tree project, now the successful and exemplary Street Trees for Living. In 2015 we recreated a 1918 mass photo of 6,000 on Hilly Fields. In 2017 we organised an Innovation and Conservation conference. We campaign to protect Brockley's quirky mews: unmade service roads combining leafy lanes and industrial units, with Victorian and interesting modern architecture, a cherished public right of way. We produce a printed newsletter three times a year, distributed free to all houses in the CA, funded by advertising.

To update our 1974 constitution we have registered a new constitution to become a Charitable Incorporated Organisation. We will celebrate Brockley Conservation Area's 50th anniversary with events, articles and displays at the midsummer fayre.

Clare Cowen, Chair

Transport Round-up

Andrew Bosi reports

As reported in *Round the Societies*, the changes to southeastern rail services have given rise to considerable angst. The reasons given for the changes were firstly that the Elizabeth Line had taken custom away, and secondly the conflicting movements across a flat junction outside Lewisham station contributed to unreliability.

The Elizabeth line argument is rather undermined by the way the changes have made it more difficult to reach it at Abbey Wood or Woolwich. The issue of trains crossing the path of other trains exists on the Northern line at Camden Town, and from time to time all Bank branch trains go to Edgware and all Charing Cross ones to the High Barnet branch. However, the interchange at Camden Town is relatively easy to traverse. The changes on Southeastern require more people to change at London Bridge, and although the station has been recently enhanced there has been severe overcrowding when anything goes wrong. Trespassers and points failures can never be eliminated.

Access to the Elizabeth Line by bus has also been compromised. Cuts agreed before the big consultation on cuts that were largely abandoned are only now taking effect. So just when Dalston found a quick route into the West End using the Elizabeth line, making up for the lost link to Highbury Corner, half the bus service has been taken away.

The Elizabeth Line was not open when those cuts were devised. Although TfL had some idea of its likely impact, it has attracted far more passengers than they envisaged. As with the Overground, if you replace a shabby service with a Rolls Royce level, all the demand suppressed by waiting times or delays comes to the fore. Seats are usually still available however, if you travel in the middle of the train or wait for one starting or terminating at Paddington.

The Silvertown Tunnel continues to attract opposition. In the course of securing planning permission, promises were made about additional bus routes when the first tunnel opens. Now that formal proposals have emerged, the one new route and one route extension fall short of the minimum promised, though TfL now say increased frequencies will be provided if demand dictates. As on the railways, additional road capacity leads to additional traffic, and it is not impossible that TfL has underestimated that as well.

Outer London councils are threatening not to co-operate with the ULEZ expansion planned for August this year. Some argue more time is needed. An assessment of its effects suggests that it will generate income for three years, when TfL finances are under strain, but that this will dwindle to zero in 2027 as the scheme has its desired effect on air quality.

Are you your Society's Main Contact with London Forum? **If so, please read on.**

Each London Forum member society has a nominated **Main Contact**. If you are the Main Contact, we ask you to carry out a handful of tasks to ensure that your Society gets maximum value from its London Forum membership.

1. Please ensure that we have up-to-date contact details for you – your role in the society, email address and phone number. We will only call you if we need to contact you urgently, e.g. because an event has been cancelled at short notice.
2. In addition, each society may nominate up to 5 additional contacts. In each case we need the role in the society and email address. We strongly recommend that each society should have at least one other nominated contact.
3. The Main Contact receives all London Forum communications and may not unsubscribe. All other contacts will receive all e-mail communications unless they unsubscribe. The Chair and Treasurer will receive communications relating

to Forum General Meetings and to membership renewal respectively, whether or not they are subscribed for email communications.

4. The Main Contact should check from time to time whether the contacts for their society are still appropriate and whether we have the correct details. Please contact membership@londonforum.org.uk if you are in doubt.
5. The most important role of the Main Contact is to ensure that Forum communications are distributed appropriately within their society. We recommend that our *Insights* newsletter should be circulated widely, especially to all committee members, and to those specifically concerned with Planning matters. The same applies to emails on specific topics such as invitations to online or in-person Open Meetings, or briefings about consultations from the Mayor or Central Government.
6. Unless there is good reason not to, the Main Contact should try to ensure that their society is represented at Open Meetings and at the summer reception. They should also check the News/Updates page on the London Forum website from time to time and pass on any relevant information within their society.
7. Main Contacts and Treasurers will receive the annual membership renewal notices each January. Most members pay promptly, for which many thanks. If yours is one of the societies that doesn't (or hasn't yet paid for 2023), please try to get this dealt with. The Forum's membership secretary spends a disproportionate amount of time chasing up the last dozen or so late payers, time that could be better spent promoting members' interests.
8. Finally, Main Contacts are the Forum's main source of information about what is going on in member societies. If you have an email newsletter, please add newsletter@londonforum.org.uk to your distribution list. Or contact the same email address to let us know about anything that could be of interest to other members.

Thank you!

Street votes and the LURB

John Myers fills in the gaps

The Levelling-up and Regeneration Bill now contains detailed provisions enabling Street Votes. London Forum has previously expressed its support for the idea of community-led development and for trials to gauge the appetite for street votes and to assess the benefits for communities and housing provision.

The new provisions in the LURB exclude a range of areas from eligibility for street votes. Excluded areas include green belt, local green space and metropolitan open land, national parks, and world heritage sites. Also excluded from the ambit of street votes are listed buildings and scheduled monuments.

If a sufficient number of residents on the street agree on a street vote proposal, the proposal will proceed to independent examination to verify whether it is compliant. If so, the Bill then provides for a referendum.

The Bill gives powers to set out the requirements for the minimum proportion of residents required to propose a street vote; requirements for voting procedures and minimum approval thresholds for the referendum; and what development may be permitted through a street vote, including rules to protect other residents. We understand that the voting threshold required for the referendum to pass is intended to be at least 60%. London Forum also suggested that the referendum should be deemed to have passed only if a resident from each of at least half of the homes on the street has voted in favour.

If the referendum passes, the Bill provides for a street vote development order (SVDO) to be made, with similar effect to a local development order or neighbourhood development order. The order would grant permission for the development set out in the street votes proposal. The Bill extends the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) regime to development carried out pursuant to an SVDO, and further extends the CIL regime by providing that councils may use CIL receipts from SVDOs to fund the provision of social housing.

Trials of street votes have most recently been endorsed by Owen Edwards of the Better Planning Coalition, and the current head of the Green Alliance and former head of CPRE, Shaun Spiers. The Forum will continue to monitor developments closely.

Briefly Noted

Launch of Ben Derbyshire's *Home Truths*

In this beautifully presented new book, *Home Truths*, Forum President, Ben Derbyshire compresses 50 years of architectural and place-making experience into 250 pages of *relentlessly thought-provoking* analysis of how we got where we are now, arguing powerfully for *more collaboration and pragmatism along the way*. [Home Truths](#) is obtainable from RIBA Books in hardback for £45. *Italicised text taken from reviewers'*

comments.

London Plan Guidance published

Forum members may be interested to know that the Mayor of London has adopted four new pieces of London Plan Guidance (LPG), which set out guidance on Sustainable Transport, Walking and Cycling, Urban Greening Factor, Air Quality Neutral and Air Quality Positive. Each of these topics has been the subject of consultation in the recent past.

The guidance documents support the Mayor's priorities and implementation of London Plan 2021 policies T3 Transport capacity, connectivity and safeguarding; Policy T1 Strategic approach to transport and Policy T2 Healthy streets as well as policy G5 Urban Greening and policy SI 1 Improving Air Quality.

All of these guidance documents, and many others can be found [here](#), on the london.gov.uk website. However we remain in the dark about when the long-awaited London Plan Guidance on Design and Housing will see the light of day.

Government to legislate for Holocaust Memorial

In a speech on Holocaust Memorial Day, the Prime Minister announced that the law will be changed to allow the Holocaust Memorial and Research Centre to be built next to the Houses of Parliament in Victoria Tower Gardens. The original planning consent was quashed because of a private 1899 Act which requires the Gardens to be maintained in perpetuity as such, with public access. In common with many civic and amenity groups, the London Forum believes that there are better sites for the Holocaust Memorial, e.g at the Imperial War Museum, ones that will avoid the need to do serious harm to a rare and much-loved open space in Westminster.

Pride in Place is central theme for Civic Societies APPG



(l-r) Jack Shaw, Ed Dorrell, Julia Parnaby, Craig Mackinlay MP and Griff Rhys Jones

Griff Rhys Jones, renowned broadcaster, TV personality, and Civic Voice President, delivered a powerful and passionate speech on the importance of pride in place at the recent All-Party Parliamentary Group (APPG) for Civic Societies meeting.

Representatives from key heritage and civic society organisations, including Historic England, Architectural Heritage Fund, and the Heritage Fund, attended the meeting. Craig Mackinley, MP, and APPG Chairman, chaired the event, and experts from Public First, the Bennett Institute, and the National Lottery Fund spoke about their recently published reports on the subject of 'pride in place'.

"Communities have pride in place, but they lack power," Jones said, emphasising the significance of empowering communities to shape their own futures and take ownership of their surroundings.

Many attendees agreed with Jones' quote, including Jack Shaw, of the Bennett Institute, who stated, "We need onward devolution - not just government giving local councils more power, but local councils giving communities more power!"

"Government need to realise that civic pride is more than just liking where you live" Jones explained. "It's about giving communities the tools and resources they need to make a genuine difference in their high streets and towns." He then referred to Public First's Heritage and Civic Pride report: "It is critical for the government and local councils to recognise that the vitality of our town centres is directly related to the vitality of our communities. By investing in our town centres, we also invest in our civic

pride "Jones went on to say.

The meeting also discussed the critical role that civic societies play in encouraging community engagement and empowering citizens to take action on issues that are important to them. The All Party Parliamentary Group for Civic Societies is committed to continuing this important conversation and working toward a future in which all communities have equal access to resources.

"Our goal is to support Civic Voice to empower communities to take ownership of their surroundings and shape their own places," said Craig Mackinley, "and this meeting was an important step towards achieving that goal. I encourage anyone who cares about their community to become a member of Civic Voice and participate in National Civic Day on June 17th."

A School of Place?

Built environment heavy hitters at odds

At the turn of the year, Michael Gove endorsed [a paper](#) from the Government's favourite think-tank, Policy Exchange, proposing that UK government should encourage, promote or establish a new school of architecture and urban design dedicated to placemaking, writing that "we must do all we can to ensure a new generation of built environment professionals are armed with the best skills and techniques possible to enable them to go out and build beautiful, sustainable places in which people and communities can thrive."

In supporting the notion, **Ben Derbyshire**, RIBA Past President and London Forum President states "His school should rehabilitate the legitimacy of democratically accountable planning as society's means of delivering good in the built environment, with its own history rooted in nineteenth century reform. It would be right to instil respect for a successful, compact model of the great European city based on streets and squares lined with commodious and flexible housing typologies – exemplars of long life, loose fit and low energy."

Dr Claire Bennie, Director of Municipal and former Development Director at Peabody agrees that "crap places happen" but suggests that this has little to do with the education of architects or other built environment professionals. Instead, she identifies three causes "land economics, planning impotence and consumer apathy, all of which lead to the fourth cause: developer philistinism." Thus "a limited pool of big developers is faced with a cost squeeze, masterplan and design policies with no real teeth, and a customer who will buy whatever they build." In her prescription good new places like urban Kings Cross or suburban Cambridge will only emerge if they feature three key things: enlightened developers, hands-on planning leadership and public land control.

To read more from Ben and Claire, click [here](#) and [here](#) respectively.

Round the Societies

Selected highlights from members' newsletters

N.B. As always, a fuller, more comprehensive version can be found [here](#)

The **Barnet Society** report that a fourteen-year dispute about the former gasworks site redevelopment has reached the High Court. Developers Citystyle Fairview will try to overturn an Appeal dismissal of their proposed 13 blocks of 4 to 7 storey flats (Editor's note - we understand that the developers have failed in their attempt).

The **Highgate Society** continue to despair about their local authority Haringey, who received the second greatest number of complaints to the local government Ombudsman during the period 2016-22, runners-up only to Birmingham! For example: the Council itself demolished a building before a Demolition Management Plan had been submitted and planning conditions approved; and it was the only London borough not to have required any archaeological excavations in advance of development during 2021!

Over in **Greenwich** societies report that owners of the 13.8 acre Morden Wharf site, are putting it on the market, just six months after gaining planning permission. The outline plans for 1,500 houses (with 4 high-rise towers) in the designated Opportunity Area is highly contentious. The question asked is how developers may view the site's viability and whether it might be 'land-banked'?

The **Greenwich Society** also report that the area is attracting logistic companies on the back of the surge of on-line shopping. Getting such permissions is easier than for 'residential' because there is no change of use, and the developers do not have to provide any public realm improvements as 'logistics' is zero-rated for CIL. The Council appear to have no strategy for addressing how the impact of a central distribution centre will conflict with their Carbon Neutral Plan which aims for a 45% reduction in road traffic.

The **Blackheath, Greenwich and Westcombe** societies are fighting (with Councillors and MP support) to have the recently introduced South Eastern train cuts on their lines over-turned. With a combination of cuts to the number of trains, and the removal of through trains to Waterloo/Charing Cross, huge numbers now have to change trains at London Bridge. The **Sydenham Society** report with a degree of relief, that a last-minute agreement between the Transport Secretary and TfL hopefully maintains local overground and bus services for the next two years.

The **Wimbledon Society** is concerned about dockless bikes (Lime, etc) being

thoughtlessly abandoned by their users. The **Richmond Society** say their experience shows that a Council agreement, with designated drop zones makes a considerable difference. Bikes causing an obstruction can be reported to Lime at london-ops@li.me The **Knightsbridge Association** is concerned that Kensington & Chelsea's updated Licensing Policy sets no core hours for licensed activities with chairs and tables on the pavement.

The **Mill Hill Preservation Society** as members of the London Green Belt Council, refer readers to the 2022 report '[Safe Under Us'? The continued shrinking of London's local countryside](#). Whilst the loss of Green Belt to housing has speeded up in recent years, the Office for National Statistics projects a clear downward trajectory in population and household growth. See <https://londongreenbeltcouncil.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2022/08/220821-Safe-Under-Us-report.pdf>

The **Friends of Greenwich Park** report that improvement works on the Flower Garden Lake have started. A borehole will provide a sustainable water source, eliminating reliance on the mains water supply, which is full of nitrates and phosphates that cause algal blooms.

Peckham Vision announce that Southwark Council is seeking nominations for their Local List of heritage assets. Southwark's Criteria can be seen at <https://southwarkdraftlocallist.commonplace.is/en-GB/proposals/all-about-local-listing/step1>

The **Dulwich Society** have installed defibrillators in the area and give a useful link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ULF0QFZ35fc>

The **Richmond Society's** 'Annual Awards' (projects that improve urban amenity, distinguish one place from another and lift spirits) range from refurbishment by the Council of a K6 telephone box to English Heritage's restoration of Marble Hill House. They have also published *Richmond's Trees: An Exciting Trail of Discovery*, a fully illustrated handbook. Sir David Attenborough has called it a "delight". It can be bought from theopenbook@btconnect.com, cover price £10.

The **Wimbledon Society** announce with pride the reopening (free admission) of their Wimbledon Museum, following many months of refurbishment. <https://wimbledonsociety.org.uk/museum/>.

Southgate District Civic Voice invite you to join in the 90th birthday party for Southgate Station on 12th March, 11.30 am to 3pm; Happy Birthday will be sung at 2.15 pm. Lastly congratulations to the **Sydenham Society** for their 50th anniversary and 2023 is the **Wimbledon Society's** 120th year!

Marion Harvey MBE

Peter Pickering and Andrew Bosi pay tribute to London Forum's first Chairman

Marion Harvey, who died shortly before Christmas, became chairman of the London Forum shortly after it was formed in 1988, and with her collaborator and eventual successor Peter Eversden has the credit for making it, after a shaky start, into the successful and well-respected organisation it now is. Her base was in Islington, where she had been a councillor and was from 1985 to 1996 Chairman of the Islington Society. She saw the need for an umbrella group of Amenity Societies in London, particularly after the demise of the Greater London Council had left it the only capital city in the developed world without a city-wide local government. She was made M.B.E. in the New Year's Honours List for 1999 for services to the environment, in recognition of her leadership of the Forum.



She was adept at persuading civic and amenity societies to join the Forum, and at cajoling people to take responsibilities for Forum activities under her guidance. She initiated surveys of the views and experience of member societies. She was at the helm when the Forum absorbed LATA, the London Amenity and Transport Association, that, with the expert knowledge of Harley Sherlock and Michael Bach, had successfully resisted the incursion of motorways into central London. She arranged a joint conference with Paris in November 1990 - 'A Tale of Two Cities - Paris and London'. It concentrated on strategic planning matters, contrasting the approaches of the two cities. It involved planning representatives from both cities, including from London boroughs. The conference informed the Forum's support of the

campaign to bring back a London-wide government and its input to the first London Plan of the Greater London Authority.

After her retirement to Walterstone on the Welsh border of Herefordshire, as well as going on many impressively strenuous walking holidays and learning Spanish, she served the London Forum for many years as a Vice-President and active member of the Executive Committee, continuing to visit London for Forum and Islington Society events.