

MILTON SOCIETY

FEBRUARY NEWSLETTER



Letter from the chairman

As the New Year begins to roll out it looks like we are going to have a very busy time with lots happening in 2025.



The focus of our attention is undoubtedly Hamlet Court Road (HCR). We have become increasingly concerned about the fire-damaged building at 155 HCR where we await a requested direction from the Secretary of State that would enable the Council to intervene with protective works. This relies upon both the direction and the willingness of the Council to intervene but this is the best that we can do. The former Blockbuster site is now under development (9 flats above commercial units) and it appears that more demolition than approved has taken place. We have raised this with the Council. Then there is The Craftsman site where a Council grant of £17,000 for new windows was reported in the press. We submitted a Freedom of information request and have now heard back that only a £7,500 shop front improvement grant was paid to this business from a publicised programme available to all businesses, subject to an application process. This is fine and well done to the Craftsman for successfully obtaining this grant. The matter of their installing unauthorised uPVC windows in the Conservation Area remains outstanding and subject to Council enforcement action.'

We are very excited about the Cliff Gardens as we are hoping for a national Listing or Listings to be announced soon. We applied for this some months ago and had a site meeting with no less than 4 representatives from Historic England who were assessing the gardens. We got the strong impression from our discussions that the Shrubbery,

the funicular lift and the terraced 1930's gardens will be Listed but it could be more, or the entire gardens. Watch this space...! In the meantime, you can still give support to the campaign by signing-up [here](#).



Following the success of the Christmas lights in Hamlet Court Road we are heavily involved in the work of 'Hamlet Court Calling' and at the moment this includes working on car parking improvements, preparing the groundwork for the idea of bringing a destination, vintage/farmers market to the road and promotional in-road signage with Southend Theatres – as well as other initiatives.

And of course our routine work presses on. This time our consultations have included:

- **179 Hamlet Court Road** – conversion to 13 bed HMO. We have objected.
- **18-24 St Helen's Road** – conversion and enlargement to 7 bed HMO (a further 4 bed HMO has already been agreed at ground level). We have objected.
- Numerous tree pruning projects where we tend not to comment.
- **Fred Laws House** – conversion of sheltered housing to two dwellings. We shall make conditional support comments.

Our works continue to include trying to influence HMO development, which is a national problem at present, and permitted development change of use from shop to flat, which is another problem area often leading to poor quality homes.

I almost feel exhausted writing this! It's going to be a busy 2025.

For more information please email chair@hamletcourt.org

Andy Atkinson, Chairman

History of Hamlet Court Road

In this series, Andrew Zoers delves into the history of Hamlet Court Road



I joined Hamlet Court Conservation group on its inception in 2017, acting as Treasurer. Several years ago, it merged with Milton Conservation Society to form Milton Society and again I am its treasurer. Milton Society looks after Milton Conservation Area and Hamlet Court Road Conservation Area.

I started trying to make a map of the shops in Hamlet Court Road going back through history and it is that which I would like to share with you.

I used Kelly's directories, which were published annually and listed the names of every shop and house in Southend-on-Sea to build the map. They were sorted by address so that made my job easier. I started with the one issued in 1890 and every decade after, up to 1970 when the directories stopped being published. I am going to pick on a couple of addresses and then give you their history.

In the 1900's the bottom of HCR consisted of private houses. In the 1900's 76 Hamlet Court Road (HCR) was a house called Brooklands owned by a Mrs Allanson. Unfortunately, I do not have a photo of the original building.

In 1910's it became Henry Young, coal and coke merchants and in the 1920's a physician Charlotte Shields.

On renumbering it became 116 HCR and stayed as a physicians until 1960s with various name changes. Firstly, it was Shields and Lush who were physicians and surgeons then it became

then it became Joan Lush before becoming Lush and Kemmerling before finally Lush Kemmerling and Welch.

In the 1970's it became Hunter's solicitors who are there to this day.

In 1910 No 77 Hamlet Court Road was the International Tea Store. It is a shame it doesn't show the upper part of the building.



In the 1920 it was renumbered as 133 Hamlet Court Road.

In the 1930s it was Marjorie Ltd selling ladies gowns and in the 40's was Reliable Wear Ltd a ladies outfitters.

In the 1950's to 1970's it became Thomas Cook Travel Agents. It is now Matthew John Hair Studio.



That property is within the Hamlet Court Conservation area which covers both sides of the road, from London Road down to Ditton Court Road on the odd-numbered side and to St Helens Road on the even -numbered side.

I hope you found the above interesting. If you have any stories, information or old photos, please let me know at treasurer@miltonsociety.com.

Andrew Zoers, Treasurer

Keeping the home fires burning

Home is where the hearth is, so it was a no brainer for Mel and Ryan when they decided to install fireplaces in their home



With the cold temperatures still very much with us in February, I'm thankful to be sat here by our open fire; me toasting my toes and the cats outstretched warming themselves on the rug.

When we first moved into our house in 2020, we knew that putting some of the charming period features back into our home was a must (so much had sadly been ripped out by the previous owners). So after we tackled the leaky roof and installed new windows (hardwood sash, so we could keep it authentic to the period), we could finally move onto fun, charming jobs!

We decided on four fireplaces for our home; the two in the front and back living room we would use and the two in the bedrooms would just be decorative. Before we even thought about fireplace shopping, the fires we intended to use needed to be swept. Joe, aka, The Sweep Master (www.thesweepmaster.co.uk), swept and smoke tested the fireplaces for the first time in many, many years. To our relief they were in good working condition so we could move on to picking beautiful fireplaces.

We visited Ward Antique Fireplaces (www.wardantiquefireplaces.co.uk) who specialise in reclaimed, original and antique fireplaces and tiles. They have the largest selection of fully restored original cast iron Victorian, Georgian, Edwardian, Art Nouveau fireplaces within the UK. Based in southeast London they thankfully also cover Essex!

Armed with our chimney breast measurements and guidance from the Ward team, after 2 hours of browsing we had our fireplaces and a fitting date (from choosing the fireplaces to fitting, it was just under a month in all. Not including prep such as





chimney sweeping).

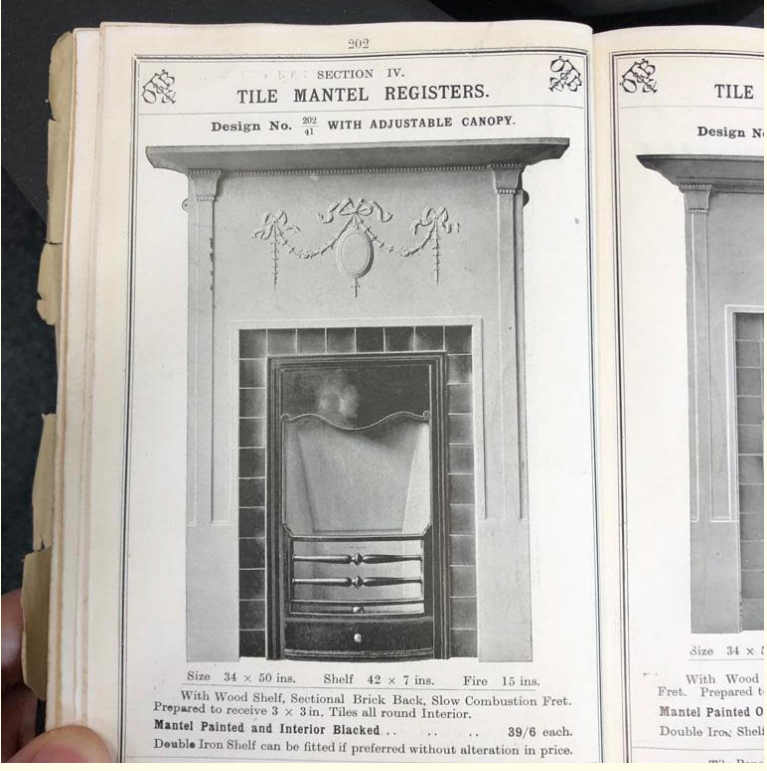
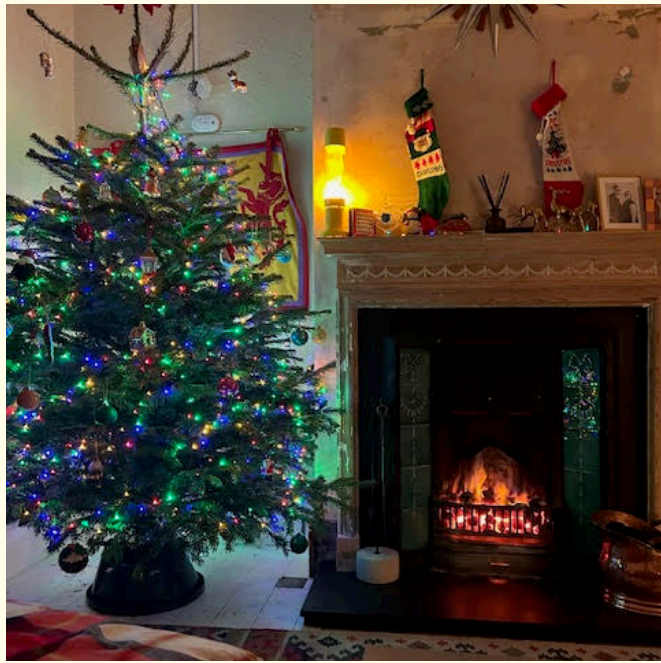
The warren of connecting rooms is filled with an amazing range of fireplaces. Although we had looked at their website before going to the showroom, we chose three out of the four fireplaces we ended up going for (one we'd seen online and was still available so we snapped it up), on the day whilst rummaging. With a huge (huge doesn't quite cover it) array of tiles, for any fireplaces with tile inserts, you can pick and choose what works best for you and your home interior. To my delight, they also had an original fireplace

catalogue to hand, which included one of the fireplaces we picked!

The addition of fireplaces has not just warmed the bones of the home (and not to mention are a firm favourite for our cats) but has brought back some much needed Edwardian charm.

Melonie Philips, Secretary

Insta: @Meloniec_90



Size 34 x 50 ins. Shelf 42 x 7 ins. Fire 15 ins.
With Wood Shelf, Sectional Brick Back, Slow Combustion Fret.
Prepared to receive 3 x 3 in. Tiles all round Interior.
Mantel Painted and Interior Blacked 39/6 each.
Double Iron Shelf can be fitted if preferred without alteration in price.