

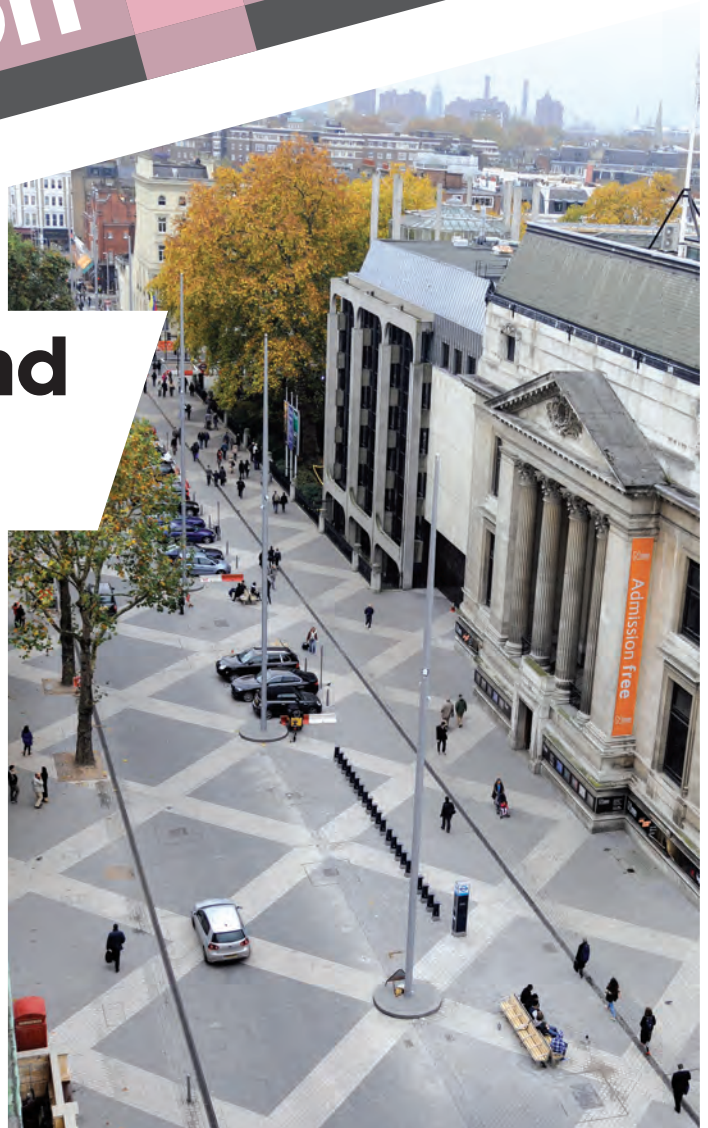
# exhibition road completion

December 2011

## Exhibition Road and South Kensington

Exhibition Road was fully reopened to traffic this morning (8 December) following a two year transformation that has turned it into one of the most exciting streetscapes in the country.

The reopening is being marked by a small ceremony to say thank you to the staff and craftspeople who made it possible and to local people who supported us throughout the project. The official reopening ceremony will take place on Wednesday 1 February 2012.



### The design ingredients:

- a kerb-free single surface
- no barriers or street clutter
- a logical street layout with large pedestrian areas
- a 20mph speed limit
- visual and tactile lines to distinguish pedestrian areas from those used by vehicles
- new high quality street lighting
- a wide and direct crossing in Cromwell Road

Exhibition Road and South Kensington now have a stunning chequered granite design that features a single surface running from South Kensington Station to Hyde Park and the full width of the road from building to building.

Where possible, kerbs, barriers and street clutter have been removed, significantly improving access, particularly for those using wheelchairs, push chairs and motorised buggies.



THE ROYAL BOROUGH OF  
KENSINGTON  
AND CHELSEA





## Partners

The scheme has been developed and delivered by a partnership of the Royal Borough, Transport for London (TfL) and the City of Westminster.

With most of the project area falling in the Royal Borough, Kensington and Chelsea Council took the lead in developing the designs and contributed £14.6m towards the costs. The City of Westminster supported the scheme with over £1m. The support of Westminster City Council has meant that the whole of historic Exhibition Road, from Hyde Park to South Kensington Tube Station has been transformed.

The support of the Mayor of London and TfL have been critical to the success of the scheme with TfL contributing £13.4m. Exhibition Road is the largest of the Mayor's '100 spaces for London' schemes.

## Contractors

**Dixon Jones** – Architect

**Balfour Beatty Regional Civil Engineering** – Contractor

**Schal** – Project Management

**Project Centre Ltd** – Traffic, Highway and Lighting Engineering

**Arup** – Structural Engineering

**Davis Langdon** – Quantity Surveying

**GU Contracts and T&T Groundworks Ltd** – Stonemason/Stone Subcontractors

**Woodhouse** – Street Lighting and street furniture Supplier

**Secure Foundations Ltd** – Trees

**Marshalls Natural Stone** – Stone Supplier

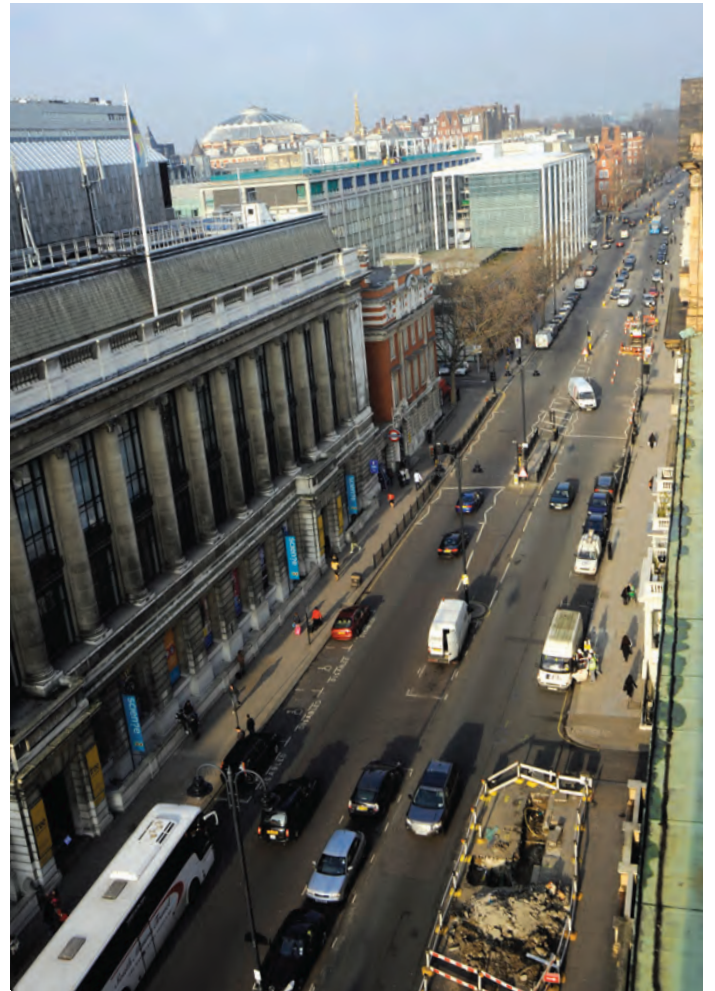
**Steintec** – Proprietary Mortar Products (Bedding and Jointing)



# A bit of history

The huge success of the 1851 Great Exhibition left the Exhibition Commissioners with a surplus of £186,000. Prince Albert wanted to use the surplus to develop a cultural and educational quarter so the Commissioners duly bought 87 acres of largely undeveloped land which today forms the core of the Exhibition Road and the South Kensington museum area.

After the Great Exhibition some of the greatest jewels in our cultural crown set up home in the area but Exhibition Road itself never quite matched the lustre of its addressees which include the Natural History Museum, the Science Museum, the V&A, Imperial College, the Royal College of Art and the Royal College of Music, as well as the Brompton Oratory, English National Ballet, the Goethe-Institut, the Institut Français du Royaume-Uni, the Ismaili Centre, the Royal Albert Hall, the Royal Geographical Society and the Serpentine Gallery.



Exhibition Road and South Kensington were not only somewhat lacklustre in streetscape terms, they were also cluttered, confusing to visitors and unfriendly to pedestrians.

The old street layout was inefficient and the pavements too narrow for the 11 million people who visit the area each year.

Kensington and Chelsea wanted to create a new and genuinely world class streetscape for South Kensington. It wanted to create a streetscape that matched the ambition and reputation of the road's institutions.

Already much praised for its renewal of Kensington High Street, the Council hoped to use the design themes of that scheme – high quality materials and the removal of barriers and clutter – but take them to a whole new level.

In 2003 an international competition to find architects capable of taking that ambition forward was won by Dixon Jones, a practice already renowned for its work on the Royal Opera House, Somerset House, the new wing of the National Portrait Gallery and the Henry Moore Institute in Leeds.



# Consultation

We have been working closely with residents and other stakeholders to ensure that Exhibition Road meets the needs and aspirations of everyone who will use it.

To keep everyone informed we have produced a monthly newsletter sent to 4,500 properties and posted on the intranet sites of all institutions in the area (reaching over 25,000 staff and students).

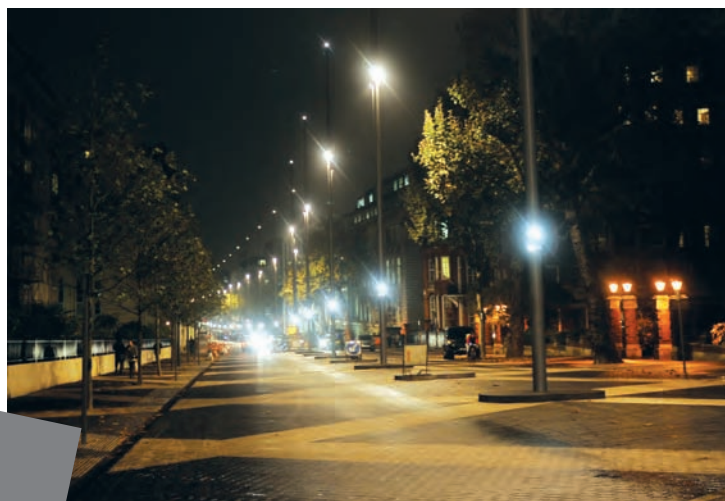
We have over 200 subscribers who receive fortnightly email bulletins and a dedicated website with frequently updated information.

Councillor Nick Paget-Brown, Deputy Leader of the Council and Cabinet Member for Transport, has led a Community Involvement Group which has been meeting regularly with local resident association representatives.

Whenever there were particular work or traffic changes affecting individual properties we wrote directly to them. Leaflets have been available in neighbouring museums and Council officers visited local shops to explain parking and delivery arrangements during the work.



Black cast iron drainage channel covers run along each side of Exhibition Road, about four metres out from the respective building lines. Alongside the drainage channels strips of corduroy tactile warn blind and partially sighted people that they are moving into or out of vehicle free areas.



Tall, sleek street lighting masts have been designed to complement the grand buildings of Exhibition Road.

## Comments

**“It has taken us the best part of ten years to get here,” said the Leader of Kensington and Chelsea, Cllr Sir Merrick Cockell.**

**“But our great institutions finally have the setting they deserve.**

**“For 2012 and far beyond, London now has a unique streetscape that will delight our many millions of visitors and which sets a new standard for urban design.”**

### For further information

**Visit [www.rbkc.gov.uk/exhibitionroad](http://www.rbkc.gov.uk/exhibitionroad)**

**Email [exhibitionroad@rbkc.gov.uk](mailto:exhibitionroad@rbkc.gov.uk)**



**MAYOR OF LONDON**

**City of Westminster**