

Keeping you informed

Albertopolis



This month we thought it fitting to remember another royal love story – that of Queen Victoria and her beloved Albert, founder of Exhibition Road.

The 'Great Exhibition of the Works of Industry of All Nations' was dreamt up by Albert to showcase the wonders

of industry and manufacturing of the modern world and make them accessible to the British public.

Joseph Paxton won the international competition to design an exhibition building and created a fabulous structure of glass and iron, a 'Crystal Palace' as it later became known. The building covered almost 19 acres of Hyde Park, located south of the Serpentine, stretching from what is now Exhibition Road to Knightsbridge Barracks.

The Exhibition was held between May and October 1851 and was a resounding success. There were over 15,000 exhibitors showing 100,000 artefacts from around the world. Over six million visitors – the equivalent of a third of the population of Britain at the time – visited the Exhibition, most of them paying a shilling entrance fee. The Exhibition made a profit of £186,000 – equivalent to roughly £16 million today.



Much of this profit was used to purchase 87 acres of land, around what is now Exhibition Road, to achieve Albert's vision of creating an area dedicated to the arts and sciences. The area quickly developed into a unique cultural centre with the establishment of the South Kensington Museum (now the Victoria and Albert Museum), the Science Museum, the Natural History Museum, the Royal Albert Hall and Imperial College as well as the Royal Colleges of Art and Music. One of the Commissioners, Henry Cole, christened the new area South Kensington, but the area was also given the nickname Albertopolis.

This was Albert's memorial. When he died of typhoid in 1861, his Queen commissioned another – the statue of him, sitting under a gilt canopy opposite the Royal Albert Hall with a copy of the Exhibition catalogue on his knee.

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THE ROYAL BOROUGH OF
**KENSINGTON
AND CHELSEA**

Bus arrangements

Following the South Kensington bus service consultation in January 2010, Transport for London (TfL) is planning to move the bus stand for the 430 service from its current position in Cromwell Place to outside the Victoria and Albert Museum in Cromwell Gardens. If you want to see more or let TfL know your views, visit <https://consultations.tfl.gov.uk/buses/route-430> by 4 May. Subject to final approval, TfL plans to make the change by June 2011.

TfL are also consulting on the proposed new locations for the Route 360 bus stops on Exhibition Road. You can view the consultation and let TfL know your views at https://consultations.tfl.gov.uk/advanced_consultation_finder?st=open

© Amanda Levete Architects



New development at the V&A

Amanda Levete Architects, a two year old British architectural firm, has won the international design competition for the V&A's Exhibition Road development. The £35 million, five year project will create new galleries, a public courtyard for installations and events and an entrance into the Museum from Exhibition Road.

On winning the competition, Amanda Levete said: 'The V&A is a hugely prestigious museum and it has special meaning for me because it's the home of art and architecture. I've dreamt of working on a major public and cultural project ever since I started as an architect, and it doesn't get much better than this. This isn't just about a gallery; it's an opportunity to create a new public space for London – South Kensington's Drawing Room.'



A face on the street

Mahmood Siddiqi is the Project Director. He is responsible for managing the work of the designers, project managers, consultants and contractors and is the main link between the design team and the project's clients. It can be challenging making sure that the architect's original vision is not lost by the time it gets built and he admits that he did wonder whether the paving stones could really be laid the way they were drawn on paper. He needn't have worried – the skilled staff on site have replicated the pattern perfectly.

In addition to the Exhibition Road project, Mahmood is the Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea's Head of Highways and Traffic with responsibility for all aspects of the road network in the Royal Borough; from highway maintenance and traffic management to the refurbishment of Albert Bridge. He has worked in highways and transport for 25 years, with over 11 of those years in the Royal Borough.

"Exhibition Road epitomises the reasons I always wanted to be a civil engineer", he says "the scheme is impressive and will be enjoyed by future generations after I am long gone. In many ways it continues the vision Prince Albert had for South Kensington in 1851."

This newsletter is delivered to all homes, businesses and organisations in the Exhibition Road area. Every month we will let you know how the project is progressing, as well as introducing you to some of the people and the work they are carrying out on this £25 million project.



MAYOR OF LONDON

City of Westminster