

# LUROT BRAND

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## MEWS NEWS

AUTUMN 2007

ISSUE 3/4

# MRS. MEWS' MEWS

A continuing tale of planning and building and disagreements with Mr. Mews.

Oh Mrs. Mews is bound to have a smooth ride when modernising and enlarging her house. The architect will want everything to be perfect because he wants lots of recommendations; the window man, the electricians, the plumbers, the decorators, the kitchen people, the bathroom people must be thinking the same. HOW VERY WRONG – I HAVE TRIPPED AT THE FIRST HURDLE.

Since the last Mews News, my new windows have gone in. They are beautiful sash windows and yet when I first saw them in-situ I could not understand why I HATED them. At first I thought they looked like plastic windows (this was because they were spray painted and had such a perfect finish). The shower room window which was supposed to be sandblasted had horrible bobbly glass and there seemed to be absolutely no pretty architectural detail to them.

When Mr. Mews first saw them he also hated them but out of sympathy said nothing. Sensible Man!

It took me 2 weeks to realise what I hated about them – it was like an awakening. My windows had been put in flush with the outside wall instead of inset with concrete sills. When my lovely window man, Karl, arrived to try to temper my hysteria, he explained that my house did not have stone sills. "I don't care – why didn't anyone explain this to me etc etc" said I. Karl sighed and said he had taken instructions from my architect and he really preferred to meet with new clients to discuss their preferences blah blah blah.

So, now the windows have come out (with all the mess this entailed), sills have been created and the windows set back. They have also fitted some nice beading and decorative horns (yes, horns) and repainted the frames to make them look less like plastic. The bobbly glass has been replaced. I LOVE MY NEW WINDOWS.

LESSON NUMBER ONE: Do not put your faith in anyone else's visions. If you can't, like me, express yourself correctly and technically (what's a horn?), go and find a house where the windows, or whatever, are just what you want and point your finger and say "I want mine like that".







# MEWS IN BLOOM

CONGRATULATIONS TO OSTEN MEWS, SW7  
**WINNER OF MEWS IN BLOOM 2007!**

...and also to Albion Mews W2 and Sussex Mews East W2  
 who were worthy runners up.



Featured on the front cover and above right is the house in Ennismore Gardens Mews which was chosen by Candida Lycett-Green as being the best planted within the short-listed mews. We hope it is an inspiration to all mews house owners.



# ENNISMORE GARDENS MEWS SW7

Ennismore Gardens Mews, particularly the stretch overlooking the gardens of Holy Trinity Brompton is possibly the most desirable mews in London. There are many other very pretty mews – Lennox Gardens Mews, Pont Street Mews, Kynance Mews, Hyde Park Gardens Mews – but none that offer an outlook quite like this.



We were fortunate enough to be instructed on one of these houses earlier this year and achieved the asking price of £3,500,000 (within minutes) which equates to £2,500 per square foot – by far and away the highest pounds per square foot ever achieved for a mews house in the area.

As luck would have it, we have now been instructed on another of these houses – please see below.



View of Brompton Oratory



Ennismore Gardens Mews SW7, Freehold £3,500,000



## SOUR GRAPES - THE BLAIRS MOVE IN

One of my colleagues brought me in a copy of the Mail on Sunday Property Magazine dated 24th June 2007 which featured an article entitled “Blair Square grumbles aside, we’re living in a premier area.”

So the Blairs paid £3.6 million for their house in 2004 and it’s a little bit close to Edgware Road. It’s 4443 square feet. The writer of the article states that similar homes in Connaught Square have recently sold for £2,600,000 (No. 22). What a load of twaddle. The £2,600,000 house was much smaller at 3257 square feet. He fails to mention that No. 25 sold in May of this year for £4,000,000 and we all know that prices have continued to rise. We have recently sold two mews houses in Hyde Park Gardens Mews for £2,420,000 and £2,475,000 and they were only 2,000 square feet – less than half the size of Mr. and Mrs. Blair’s house. So, Mr. and Mrs. Blair, you are doing just fine.

The Hyde Park Estate has, for a long time, been a prime Central London area. It’s not, pounds per square foot, in the Knightsbridge and Chelsea league but as far as quality of life is concerned it’s much better. RBKC is congested. Wall-to-wall cars down every street. Nightmare to find a parking spot – Residents’ Parking or otherwise.

The Hyde Park Estate is if anything, under-populated. Parking, for such a central location is easy for the residents and equally easy for visitors. There’s plenty of Residents’ Parking and lots of Pay and Display and parking meters for others.

It borders Hyde Park and therefore, the air quality is not too bad.

The Hyde Park Estate is a lovely place to live and I am sure the Blairs will be happy here.



# MEWS RADAR

## HOME INFORMATION PACK UPDATE

If you are not intending to sell your house in the foreseeable future, this article may not be of interest but – it does make fascinating reading.

In June of this year, when the Home Information Pack was due to be launched, the Government spent a fortune of tax-payers money advertising the Packs in all the glossy magazines and newspapers – countrywide.

The announcement that the launch was to be delayed to the 2nd August was made even before the advertising commenced making a laughing stock of the Government.

Now, with absolutely no advertising or fanfare, HIPs, in its diluted form, came into effect on the 2nd August – for 4+ bedroom houses only.

On the 22nd August, mortgage lenders announced that they have no faith in the Home Information Pack and are asking for more thorough searches. This event is likely to occur well into the conveyancing and is therefore likely to slow down the process rather than speed it up.

We were tempted to order a HIP on Mrs Mews' house but after speaking to the Government "Hotline", we decided against it.

We asked the "Hotline" whether a derelict property required an Energy Efficiency report. The answer came back as yes. Now, imagine the house which we have recently sold in Pindock Mews, Little Venice. The house had not been lived in for 10 years, there was a hole in the roof, mushrooms growing on window ledges (see the last issue of Mews News) and as close to being a dangerous structure as we have seen in recent years. Fortunately it was on the market before the 2nd August otherwise the vendor would have had to throw away £350 for the Report.

So why not include flood risk within the HIP? Well probably because it might embarrass someone. It is the Mayor's aspiration to create "at least 120,000 new homes in the Thames Gateway". We think that Mr. Prescott may have had some involvement in this plan too. Of the new homes, 91% will be in the Thames floodplain. What madness is this? This will have an immense impact on the insurance premiums for those homes – or will the owners be bailed out from the public purse again? Who knows – but certainly the HIP should include this. At least energy efficiency we can do something about.

Why will the Government not let this pathetic piece of legislation die a natural death?



Turnchapel Mews SW4, Offers in excess of £2,400,000 Freehold

## SEE HOW THEY GROW

### HOLLAND PARK MEWS, W11

Although there are a very few larger houses, generally, the houses in this incredibly pretty mews are around 1,300 – 1,400 square feet in size. In each of the figures given below, we have taken the highest price achieved in the year in question for the standard size houses.

1860 .....	£ 147
1988 .....	£ 350,000
1991 .....	£ 402,000
1992 .....	£ 290,000
1993 .....	£ 395,000
1994 .....	£ 395,000
1996 .....	£ 444,000
1999 .....	£ 550,000
2001 .....	£ 900,000
2002 .....	£ 875,000
2003 .....	£ 930,000
2005 .....	£ 962,500
2006 .....	£ 1,250,000



Radnor Mews W2, Freehold £1,400,000

## THE STATE OF THE MARKET

As we have predicted previously, the Mews market is proving to be remarkably resilient. This is largely because central London property is holding up well. The normal rules of supply and demand dictate that greater demand and reduced availability will continue to force prices up. How long will this last?

Who knows? But unlike the rest of the market which is studied hard by the doom and gloom merchants, the demand in prime central London is influenced not so much by mortgage interest rates and unemployment levels but by overseas purchasers, UK investors, and the accumulated wealth of high net worth individuals. We are not alone in this view. The largest agency in the country expressed the same view (about prime central London property) last month. The lettings market is also holding up well. We have seen average rentals being achieved rising steadily. Not, however, as steadily as capital values.

While we can achieve a superb return on prices paid last year – the yield as a percentage of today's value has slipped a little as the values have shot ahead much faster than rents over the last year. We think it likely that the pace of increase in the price of prime central London property will slow – but for the time-being it would have to be a cataclysmic event to make values drop. Meanwhile rental values will continue to increase until they again deliver a good yield on the value of the property.

# DID YOU KNOW THAT...

Dame Margot Fonteyn  
lived in RUTLAND GARDENS MEWS SW7  
and ASTWOOD MEWS SW7

James Hunt live in  
NORMAND MEWS W14

Jason Donovan  
lived in PEMBRIDGE MEWS W11

Baroness Faulkender  
lived in WYNDHAM MEWS W1

Michael Grade and Nicholas Witchell  
both lived in CLARENDON CLOSE W2

Dame Thora Hird  
lived in LEINSTER MEWS W2

Will Carling  
lived in QUEENS GATE PLACE MEWS SW7

## CLASSIFIED

### COLLINGE HINGES

We have been contacted by Charles Collinge who has sent us a price list for his cast iron garage door hinges. These range in size from 18" hinges to 60" hinges. If you are intending to change your garage doors, we will be happy to put you in touch with him. Collinge hinges are really the only ones to use on a mews house.

### NATALIE VILLIERS

Specialist Paint Finishes:  
Decorating: Trompe L'Oeil  
Natalie has done some lovely paint finishes on a pair of display cabinets for Mrs. Mews (see picture) and lots of internal decorating for clients of the company.

She can be contacted on  
07899 790 908



## MEWS TO LET



Lancaster Mews, W2 £900 pw Unfurnished



Lancaster Mews, W2 £1,150 pw Unfurnished



Hyde Park Gardens Mews, W2 £1,500 pw Unfurnished/Furnished



Wigmore Place, W1 £1,450 pw Unfurnished/Furnished



Princes Gate Mews, SW7 £2,200 pw Furnished



Bourdon Street, W1 £2,750 pw Furnished SHORT LET

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