

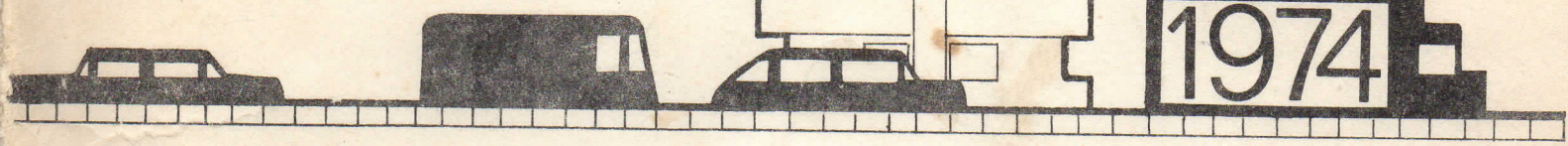
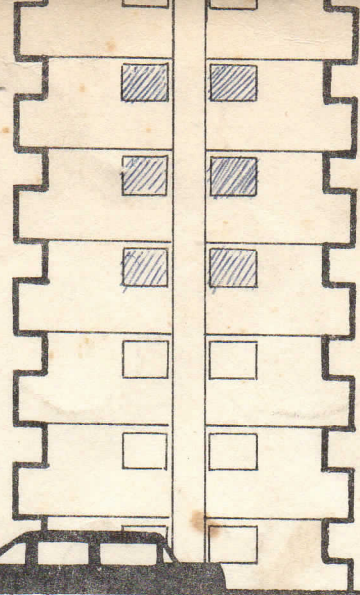
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Westway Nursery Association

First Annual Report

1974



CONTENTS

	<u>PAGE</u>
1) Introduction	1
2) North Kensington and the Motorway	3
3) Under-fives' provision in North Kensington	4
4) Pre-school playgroups' Survey and First Public Meeting	5
5) Urban Aid Application	5
6) Siting	6 - 8
7) Grant for Research and Development	8
8) Second Public Meeting	9
9) The Appointment of a Job Brief Architect	10
10) Research Worker	10
11) The Survey - Survey Introduction	11
Survey Techniques	11
Survey Analysis	12 - 15
12) Planning and Co-ordination of the Centre	16
13) Management of the Centre	17
14) Financing of the Parents' Centre	18
15) Further Developments with the ILEA	18
16) Second Urban Aid Application	19
17) Lead Pollution	19
18) Research Worker as Information Officer	20
19) Conclusions	20 - 21
20) Recommendations	22
21) Tables	23 - 26
22) Explanation of Urban Aid	26
23) Breakdown of Costs	27 - 29
24) Constitution	30 - 33
25) Acknowledgements	33
26) Press Coverage	34

INTRODUCTION

Mothers and children need some form of nursery education or care for a variety of reasons.

Some mothers must go out to work as the breadwinner or to supplement the family income; their primary concern must be hours of child-care to match their working day. Many mothers appreciate the educational benefit provided by nursery schools, others the parental involvement provided by some play-groups.

But day nursery waiting lists are long and often working mothers have no option but to use childminders as a second choice. The hours of nursery schools and playgroups are too short for them.

A comprehensive centre of the type the Association envisages would provide the flexible hours and caring qualities of a day nursery combined with the educational stimulus of a nursery school.

It would also incorporate an information and resource centre for all pre-school interests in the area with possible provision of back-up facilities for childminders.

Current research indicates that it is crucial that the pre-school child receives education as the brain is developing fastest at this stage. If this is indeed the case, then it is imperative that the children of working mothers should also be allowed access to trained nursery school teachers as well as trained nursery nurses.

We feel that it is necessary not only to provide an integrated day nursery and nursery school, but to build up additional facilities giving parents the opportunity to play with their pre-school children in a specially built and fully equipped room and also to meet other people in a relaxed atmosphere.

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NORTH KENSINGTON AND THE MOTORWAY

North Kensington has long been recognised as an area of acute social deprivation. The population of Kensington and Chelsea, like other inner London boroughs, substantially declined in the decade 1961 to 1971. The population fell by 30,301 to a total of 188,277. However, there is still substantial statutory overcrowding and a high proportion of households are without basic amenities. The 1971 Census established that in Kensington and Chelsea 11.7% of all residents were living at more than 1.5 persons per room - a total of 19,300 people in overcrowded conditions. This is the highest percentage of all London boroughs.

Of the 77,900 households in the borough 11.2% shared their hot water supply, 24.4% shared a fixed bath or shower and 26.9% shared an inside flush toilet. In all only 63.4% of households had the exclusive use of these amenities, a figure exceeded only by Westminster at 68.2% and Camden at 63.8%.

The housing problems of North Kensington have, during the last eight years, been well documented - for example in the Milner Holland report of 1966 and more recently in the Notting Hill Housing Trust Interim Report. Attendant problems such as lack of social amenities for both young and old, exacerbate the problems facing many families living in North Kensington. Furthermore, the plan to build the elevated Westway motorway through the area - carried through by the G.L.C. - split the community in half.

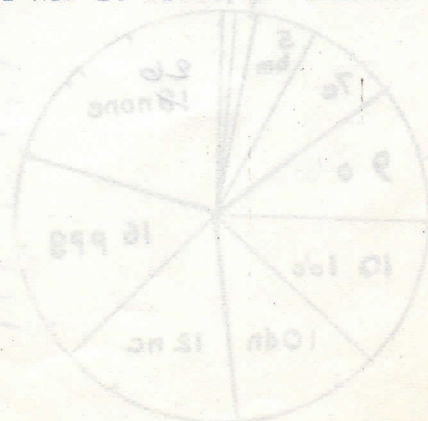
A variety of social work agencies and community groups have attempted to rectify the inadequacies of existing provision, either by giving help to the 'casualties' or by fighting for more social amenities. Some of the most active local groups have been concerned with provision for children, particularly playgroups for the under-fives and playspace for the older children.

However, local campaigns for more amenities, whether for playspace for the young or day centres for the elderly, have not only been confronted with a reluctance by the Borough to allocate sufficient funds but also by lack of space in this densely populated area.

It was against this background that groups began to see Westway as perhaps having some advantages for the area in providing 23 acres of land under, and in some cases adjacent to, the motorway. After a lengthy campaign both the G.L.C. and the Borough Council agreed to scrap the original plan to use the space for car parks and bus garages.

The North Kensington Amenity Trust was set up to "develop the land under Westway for the benefit of the people in the area by advancement of education, the provision of facilities for recreation or other leisure-time occupations and the assisting of other charitable institutions with similar aims" (2nd Annual Report of the N.K.A.T. 1973)

The first successful scheme was an adventure playground. Space under Westway immediately seemed to offer tremendous possibilities for playspace, although what sort of provision was needed and how it would be financed demanded further investigation.



UNDER-FIVES' PROVISION IN NORTH KENSINGTON

The total number of under-fives in the 4 wards of North Kensington at the time of the 1971 Census was 3,986. This does not, however, indicate the present situation. At the time of the Census, areas of North Kensington were being cleared and rebuilt - eg. the G.L.C. Silchester Estate and the Borough Lancaster West Development. The present figure is likely to be around 4,500 and will rise as Lancaster West is gradually occupied.

The four Borough day nurseries in the north of the Borough cater for 235 children and have a total waiting list of 152 children (see Conclusions). Of the two nursery schools in the area one has a possible 25 full-time and 50 part-time places and the other school has 60 part-time places.

Four of the nursery classes take 30 children full-time and the remaining class, Thomas Jones, takes 56 children on a part-time basis.

Ainsworth nursery school has ~~no~~ waiting list for its part-time places, but ~~does~~ have a waiting list of about 200 children for its full-time places (see Conclusions). Thomas Jones nursery class, which has part-time places, is moving to its new premises at the beginning of December and has no waiting list. Neither do the 13 local playgroups who take about 150 children.

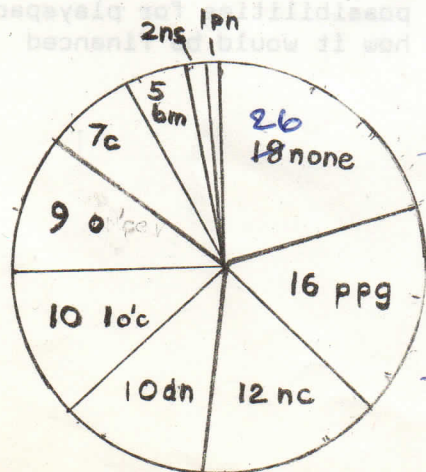
The 66 legal childminders in the north of the Borough care for about 140 children. However, it seems likely that there are far more illegal childminders operating. Brian Jackson, of the Childminding Research Unit, for example, estimates there are fourteen illegal childminders for every legal one. (Press Release - June 1974)

The few fee paying private nurseries cater for approximately 100 children (precise figures are not available)

Throughout the Borough 177 children are "in care" - 21 of them under five. This figure is, however, dropping, since the Borough is making arrangements for more of these pre-school children to join day nurseries and return home for the rest of the time.

Finally, a survey at present being carried out by the Borough Social Services Department provides some indication of the arrangements mothers make when they are unable to place their children in nurseries. The figures are provisional since the survey has not yet been completed but of 90 parents who had their children on waiting lists for day nurseries, 40 kept the children at home with them, 19 used registered childminders, 26 used friends or relatives, while in four cases the children could not be traced.

Altogether 916 children - excluding those in care - are in some form of pre-school provision, or about one in five of the children under five in the area. So some 3,800 children in the area are without any form of provision, no matter how much their parents may need or desire this.



- 90 children surveyed. 18 in provision.
 72 places of which:
- Private nursery - 1
 - Nursery school - 2
 - Babyminder - 5
 - Clinic Creche - 7
 - Other (Relatives or friends) - 9
 - 1 O'Clock club - 10
 - Day nursery - 10
 - Nursery class - 12
 - Pre-school playgroup - 16
 - None - 18

In mid 1972 as a result of pressure from the Powis Playgroups, the North Kensington Amenity Trust commissioned a playgroup survey in North Kensington.

The survey concluded that there appeared to be a need for a centre for the whole pre-school movement where those involved in pre-school play could meet and discuss problems and work, and where there could perhaps be a central pool of large equipment, staff, information and ideas. Playgroups then might feel less isolated and more aware of what was being done for the Borough's pre-school child.

In April 1973 the first public meeting was called to "look at the urgent needs of under-fives in North Kensington". The meeting was well attended and showed that there were people in the area determined to do something about this need.

The main considerations arising from the first public meeting were:

- 1) Recognition of the need for expansion of all under-fives provision in the area.
- 2) The problem of the isolation of many parents of under-fives - particularly the mother.
- 3) The need to co-ordinate playgroup resources and at a meeting place for playgroup workers to exchange ideas.
- 4) To build a nursery centre - i.e. an integration of day care and nursery education - possibly associated with a women's workshop and activity centre and communal laundry.
- 5) The possibility of using land under the motorway was also discussed.
- 6) The question of research to back up a campaign to force the statutory authorities (the Borough and the ILEA) to provide adequate pre-school finance and facilities in North Kensington was discussed at length.

At the end of the meeting individuals and representatives of groups interested in under-fives' provision were asked to attend a further meeting.

At this meeting a fortnight later a group of people composed of community workers, nursery nurses, nursery teachers, childminders, mothers and women from the local women's liberation group met to discuss the outlined recommendations.

It was the first time in North Kensington that a group with such a wide variety of interests and ideas on the care and education of the pre-school child had come together to work for a project which incorporated all their individual campaigns.

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URBAN AID

In the light of recommendation (4) of the public meeting it was decided that the group should submit an urban aid application.*

The North Kensington Amenity Trust had a group of community based architects who were asked to adapt a scheme which they were already working on for a low cost community building to make it suitable for an under-fives centre.

The capital cost of the building was estimated at £28,000. A cheap form of construction was envisaged using telegraph poles with infill cladding and using the underside of the motorway as the roof.

The nursery section of the centre would be open from 8.00am to 6.00pm and would cater for the whole under-five range bridging the present division of functions between playgroups, nursery schools and day nurseries.

It was decided that the nursery centre would initially provide for 30 children in the 3 - 5 age range, 20 from 1 - 3 years, and 10 aged under 1 year. Also that there should be an emergency section for a further 10 children of all ages up to 5, where children could be left for varying periods of time in the event of domestic crises, fire, ill-health, marriage difficulties etc., rather than be taken into care.

It was thought that the women's centre would fulfil three functions:

- a) to bring together women with problems of isolation by offering them a place to meet.
- b) to provide a medical and legal advice centre for women given by women.
- c) to provide a women's activity centre.

The Urban Aid application was approved by the Council and forwarded to the Home Office but it was pointed out that as far as an application via the Borough was concerned, the financing of the educational element would have to come from the local education authority, which is the ILEA.

Members of the group met with the Assistant Education Officer to see whether the ILEA would be prepared to provide financial backing for the nursery school element. She indicated that they were interested in the scheme but suggested that it should be enlarged to include a 40 place nursery school so that it could have its own head teacher and be independent of the local infants' school. (Our original scheme to have only 30 nursery school places was seen by the ILEA to be a nursery class and the staff would therefore be responsible to the head of the nearest infants' school).

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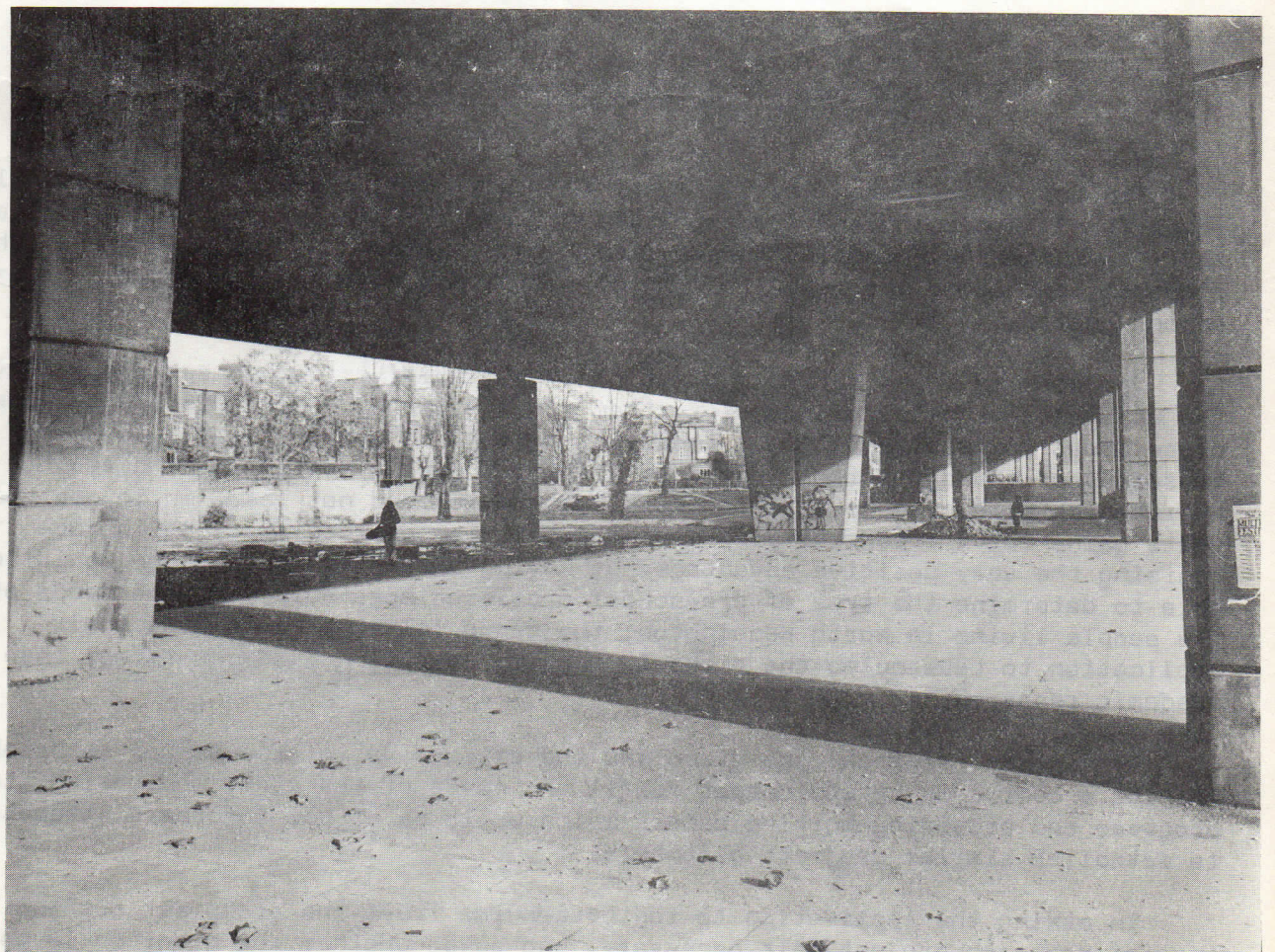
Just where the centre would be sited was not decided at the time of submitting the Urban Aid application, but was particularly important because all members of the group felt that the centre should serve a fixed catchment area. Within that area it was felt that every parent who wanted their child to use the centre, either on a full-time or part-time basis, should have access.

There were two possible sites - Maxilla Gardens and Portobello Green. Though the two are within half a mile of each other, they are quite different in character.

In the area around Portobello Green much of the housing is privately rented and multi-occupied and lacking in basic amenities. There is little Council property and some Housing Association property. We were aware that in that area a large number of families with children under five were living under

* The facing photographs depict two aspects of the Maxilla Gardens site and the surrounding area.

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considerable stress and many children were being looked after by childminders, both legal and illegal. Although served by several playgroups the area has no day nursery provision.

In the Maxilla Gardens area the housing is largely G.L.C., Housing Association and a scattering of owner-occupied property. The Borough Council's Lancaster West Development is nearing completion.

However, many families are new to the area and face the problems of not knowing neighbours and being separated from relatives. In terms of need, Portobello Green was the obvious choice; but the site would only allow a limited development as the bays were smaller and lacking light, with no easy access to playspace. The main advantage of the Maxilla Gardens site was that there was a larger area of open space and the bays were longer and lighter.

To a certain extent, the decision to go ahead with the centre on Maxilla Gardens was forced on the group by the North Kensington Amenity Trust officers, who felt that the scheme would best be suited to the type of development they envisaged at the western end of the motorway. They were anxious to integrate the scheme for a community centre, a public laundry and a nursery and women's centre so that Maxilla Gardens would become a "Community Village".

The Trust later set up the Maxilla Gardens Working Party on which the Westway Nursery was represented along with the other interested groups. The brief for this working party was that they should attempt to link four separate projects by the sharing of facilities and ensuring that there was no duplication of resources.

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THE GRANT FOR RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT

The North Kensington Amenity Trust had previously applied to the Leverhulme Trust for "a general grant for the Trust activities" and Leverhulme had replied that they would be "prepared to consider a good research project". One of the proposals submitted was research into the different examples of nursery and pre-school centres.

The Amenity Trust representative on the under-fives' group suggested that the work of the group could qualify them for the grant. Much discussion took place about the desirability of employing a research worker. The group was conscious of the criticisms raised at the first public meeting of the amount of research already done in North Kensington which had not resulted in any concrete gains for the community. Therefore, it was decided that, while recognising the very positive advantages of having a research worker who would be able to determine the type of pre-school provision most suited to the needs of the people living in North Kensington, the group felt that in making their application to Leverhulme the emphasis must be on action research rather than academic research.

By 'action research' the group saw the primary job of the worker as establishing a centre which would best fulfil the needs of the area, monitoring its progress and providing working papers which would be of use to others attempting to establish similar projects elsewhere.

In making the application to the Leverhulme Trust the group set out the type of research project felt necessary, and asked whether the grant could be

made available to pay the salaries of the action research worker plus assistant and to cover expenses including the cost of travelling to visit other schemes, survey material, reports and a small office.

The grant was approved in June 1973.

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SECOND PUBLIC MEETING, OCTOBER 1973

Since the first public meeting in April the group felt that a great deal had happened. An application had been made to Urban Aid via the Borough, the ILEA involved, a decision had been taken about the site and a research grant from Leverhulme had been offered. It was felt essential that the progress should be reported back to the community and a formally constituted Association set up. A second public meeting was arranged for the beginning of October 1973.

Posters and leaflets explaining the work of the Westway Nursery group and advertising the public meeting were distributed over a wide area.

Those present at the meeting were informed of the progress of the group since April, a draft constitution was discussed in detail and some amendments made.

The following resolutions were proposed and passed:

- 1) That an association be set up to promote the benefit of children under five in Kensington and Chelsea and the immediately adjacent neighbourhood; to associate with the inhabitants, the local and educational authorities and voluntary organisations in a common effort to provide nursery centres and associated facilities for under-fives and their parents.
- 2) That a register of members be opened and a decision taken on the time and place for a general meeting at which a name and constitution could be finally agreed and an Executive Council elected.
- 3) That a research worker should be appointed and the terms of the advertisement and job brief be settled.
- 4) That an architect should be appointed to prepare a brief for the ILEA committee for a first centre.

At the general meeting, held a fortnight later, it was agreed that the name of the group should be the Westway Nursery Association and that it should apply for charitable status. This was finally gained in the summer of 1974.

An Executive Council was elected, composed of 5 parents with children under five living in the benefit area, 5 representatives from the membership, and 5 co-opted from groups having special interest in under-fives' provision.

An interviewing committee was set up to select the research worker (this committee included the head of the Borough day nurseries and a researcher into child development at the University of London) and a job description for the post agreed upon.

The research worker, Judy Wilcox, was appointed in December and a part-time assistant, Rosie Fisher, was appointed in March - who at the same time became secretary to the Association.

SECOND PUBLIC MEETING, OCTOBER 1973 cont....

It was at this time that the Association learned that its Urban Aid application had been turned down. Since the group had just been formed when the original application was submitted, which was therefore inevitably hurried and lacked detail, this was not particularly surprising.

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THE APPOINTMENT OF A JOB BRIEF ARCHITECT

The ILEA Assistant Education Officer suggested that the Association contact Mr. Brian Goldsmith, one of the Authority's architects, who had designed the Hackney Community Centre.

In the middle of October 1973, several members of the Association went to see Mr. Goldsmith at the County Hall. No-one present having had any experience previously of employing an architect, the visit was primarily intended to clarify the type of brief an architect would need from the Association.

As time was so short because the brief had to be submitted to the relevant ILEA committee in November, Mr. Goldsmith suggested that he took the job on himself, which offer was welcomed.

The North Kensington Amenity Trust offered the Association a loan of £50 to pay for the professional fees which was accepted.

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THE RESEARCH WORKER

The full-time worker began work in January 1974 and besides co-ordinating the planning of the nursery centre, has also acted as an information officer.

THE SURVEY

SURVEY INTRODUCTION

Members of the Association felt that the centre should include nursery provision with educational content, hours to suit working mothers, and parental involvement. But it was felt essential to determine precisely the hours, just what parents wanted from the centre, and to learn something of the families' present circumstances.

Since the Association's policy was to establish a fixed catchment area rather than only take priority cases over a wider area, the survey just covered families in the locality.

SURVEY TECHNIQUES - The Sample

The survey was conducted in an area within 10 minutes walking distance of the projected centre. Major roads were, where possible, used as 'natural' boundaries. Within this area there is a large new G.L.C. estate - Silchester Estate - comprising 4 tower blocks and some low-rise housing. There are also pockets of run-down council and housing association property. In the Cornwall Gardens area there is some privately rented multi-occupied housing, some housing association property and a small amount of owner occupied housing.

Every household with children under five was included in the survey - 134 households and 153 children.

- Terminology

For the purposes of the survey a household was defined as mother plus children irrespective of accommodation.

During the briefing of the interviewers great stress was put on the importance of clearly defining the terms used, such as day nursery, nursery school, playgroup, childminder, clinic creche. Each time these terms were used they were accompanied by a definition.

- The Questionnaire

The questionnaire aimed to obtain systematic information about:

- a) the numbers of children using present provision
- b) whether or not the existing provision was adequate
- c) the type of provision that would best meet the needs of the family.

At no time during the interview were mothers asked which form of pre-school provision they preferred since it would be difficult to distinguish whether preference was related to hours, educational content and ratio of staff to children. Instead, needs and preferences were deduced from specific questions on unsuccessful attempts to get nursery places, hours and other issues.

- How the Survey was carried out

Four women interviewers were employed by the Association. A letter was sent to each household prior to the interviewers' first visit to make an appointment. The letter simply stated that a local group, the Westway Nursery Association, was conducting a survey into under-fives' provision in the area and their help in completing the questionnaire would be of the greatest assistance. Of the 134 households in the sample, 74 households containing 90 children responded.

One important factor contributing to the failure of just under 50% which only emerged during the course of the survey was the reluctance of women, alone in the house with small children to open their doors. This was particularly true of the Silchester Estate. It was the mother who was interviewed in all but one case - where a child was living without the mother in an extended family.

At the end of the interview a leaflet was given to the respondent which described the work of the Association and sketched in the type of provision the centre might provide. The parents were asked if they would be interested in becoming members of the Association and attending the meetings. Nearly everybody said they would be interested and wanted to be kept in contact.

THE SURVEY ANALYSIS

Both father and mother were present in 80% of all households. The parents came from a wide range of backgrounds - 31 of the men and 44 of the women were U.K. born, the next most common point of origin being the New Commonwealth or Ireland. Only two of the men were unemployed, three were students, while the other 58 were in a variety of non-professional jobs, including electricians, transport workers and building trade employees.

Family size ranged from mother and one child, to parents with eight children. The majority of children - 34 - were in households of four and in all but three instances this represented a family of two parents and two children.

Particularly relevant to the survey was the extent to which women worked to provide additional family income, how they provided care their children while at work, and whether they would wish to work more - or begin work - if further facilities were available. Of the 74 mothers, 31 were in employment part or full time. Details of the hours worked are given.....but broadly 10 were in full time employment, 16 part time, 2 worked shifts, while there was doubt about how to categorise the hours of the remaining three. (see Table 1)

Generally the working mothers had made reasonably adequate arrangements to suit their hours of work - only five of the 31 in employment said they would work more if there were appropriate facilities for the children available. However, 18 of the mothers not working said they would do so if there were somewhere for the children to go.

Forty of the women - both working and unemployed - said they had difficulty with their day to day jobs. Housework was top of the list, followed by shopping. Overwhelmingly the mothers said that some form of pre-school provision or drop-in centre where they could leave their children at some point would be of most help.

PAST PROVISION

Some mothers indicated that their children had in the past been to a variety of different types of pre-school provision, and had moved for a number of different reasons. In some instances the child was not happy at a particular nursery, or the mother felt there was insufficient educational provision. In the case of the pre-school playgroups, the hours did not always suit the mother, and alternative arrangements were made. No consistent pattern emerged.

Overall, and including instances where the child went to more than one type of provision, six had been to Council day nurseries, two to a private day nursery, six to a nursery class, eleven to playgroups, nine to baby-minders, nine to clinic creches, two to one o'clock clubs, and one had been in care. (Table 2)

UNSUCCESSFUL ATTEMPTS

Unsuccessful attempts had been made in the past to get 20 of the children in the sample into some form of pre-school provision. By far the largest number related to attempts to gain places in either Borough day nurseries or nursery schools and classes. (see Table 3)

PRESENT PROVISION

The mothers who were in paid employment outside the home tended to use day nurseries and nursery classes which provided care for their children during much of the day. However, arrangements also included babyminders, and leaving children with relatives or friends. In these instances mothers left their children as early as eight in the morning and returned up to six in the evening.

The cost to the mother varied considerably. The maximum a mother may be charged by a Kensington & Chelsea Council day nursery is £9.50 a week. However, none paid this full amount, being eligible for different levels of assistance. 6 of the 10 children attended free. Of the other forms of provision, nursery classes charge only for lunch, and playgroups varied from nothing to 55p a week. Babyminders charged between £3 - £4 a week, although in 2 cases the mother had to provide food for the child. Creches cost only 2p a day.

In six cases it was the children of working mothers who gained places at day nurseries. In one of these cases there was no man in the household, and in three the men were students. Of the other four cases, where the women were not working, men were not present in three cases and in the other instance the children had previously been in care.

The breakdown for all households was:- day nurseries 10 children, private nurseries 1 child, nursery school 2, nursery class 12, pre-school playgroup 16, babyminder 5, creche 7, 1 O'Clock club 10, other forms 9; with some double counting involved. 64 children used pre-school facilities in 72 cases. (Table 4)

Health visitors, social workers and doctors were the most frequent sources of information or recommendation leading to children attending day nurseries and clinic creches. In the case of playgroups, contact usually resulted from direct visits, through leaflets distributed by the playgroups or from information gained from other parents - as is the case with 1 O'Clock clubs. Since nursery classes are attached to local schools, parents generally gained places for their children by putting them formally on the waiting list of the infant school.

OTHER ARRANGEMENTS

In the case of 13 children private arrangements were made for someone to look after the child - frequently the grandmother, but also other relatives and friends in order that the mother could work, go shopping or just have a break from the child for recreation, hobbies or social activities.

ATTITUDES TO PRE-SCHOOL PROVISION

Mothers were asked why they considered pre-school provision important, and where appropriate, how they felt they and their child might have benefitted from past or present provision.

The response to the general question of why pre-school provision might be important produced mainly concern for the child's social and educational welfare. The question was open ended: of the total responses - some mothers producing more than one - 67 referred to improving the child's ability to mix with

others, 41 to learning, 32 to increasing self-sufficiency, while only 16 were on the theme of "getting rid" of the child and 5 on allowing the mother to work. Four referred to the importance of play. (see Table 5)

A typical response was: "The youngest child in the family gets very lonely at home when the others have gone to school. I think the last one tends to get very attached to the mother....I think it does both good to have a break...if I didn't get a break I think I would go mad. They want so much of your time and you simply don't have it to give. It does them good to mix with other kids".

Mothers clearly valued nursery provision not simply because it provided "escape" from the difficulty of trying to care for the child and do housework - they also felt that the child achieved a self-sufficiency, and was likely to be less dependent. This was not only seen as an important part of growing up, but in itself made life easier for mothers anxious that their children should not become too clinging.

However, it was evident that there was, in many instances, a conflict in the mother's mind between concern for the child's welfare and the struggle to provide an adequate income for the household by going out to work, or simply to get through the household tasks.

Another question, directed more at the mother than the possible benefits to the child, drew a variety of reasons why pre-school attendance made life easier. Broadly, mothers were grateful for a break from the child so that they could get on with housework, go shopping or, of course, go out to work. There were several comments about separation easing friction - because, for example, the mother could concentrate on a second child. They felt a break improved their relationship with the child. One mother said "I can get my housework done quicker, I'm less irritable with the children - more serene when the children are around less often".

Mothers were asked specifically whether present and past attendance of children had benefitted the child, whether the mother liked the provision, and whether attendance made life easier for her. The response was similar to the more general question on pre-school provision, although it was possible to distinguish that the mothers valued nursery school and playgroup provision for its educational content, while with day nurseries more reference was made to mixing with children and good care.

Apart from the conflict between the mother's role in caring for the child while also carrying out household tasks, or earning, some indications emerged of the frustrations felt at being unable to undertake hobbies or other activities, particularly outside the home.

Mothers said they would like to go to night classes, tackle a range of subjects from yoga to crochet, chess to karate. Inevitably the tie of looking after children emerged as the strongest constraint - with husbands on shift work or a dependent relative in the house as further complications in some cases. Some mothers commented there was, in any case, nowhere locally that they could hope to pursue their hobbies.

Longer nursery school hours, babysitters - some form of arrangement where children could be left - was, not surprisingly, the main way mothers felt they could gain some freedom for other activities.

Beyond provision to enable mothers to pursue hobbies, a wider question was asked on what was needed for both mother and children. Again, nursery provision came high on the list, as did play centres and playgrounds. Some mothers clearly felt it would be helpful to have a "drop-in" centre where children could

be left while, for example, they went to the shops. Others wanted a creche linked to their place of work. There was also widespread enthusiasm for a centre where women could meet, and for organised outings for mothers and children.

Further detailed questioning concentrated on two areas: first, what sort of provision might be made in a centre for mothers and children, or where children could be left for a few hours; second, for what hours would mothers like their children to attend a professionally-staffed nursery school.

In the first instance three questions were asked:

- a) How often would you use a place where you could take your child and meet other mothers ?
- b) How often would you use a place where you could take part in various activities for a couple of hours whilst your child was involved in supervised play ?
- c) How often would you use a place where you could leave your child for a couple of hours whilst you went shopping, visited the doctor, a friend, etc?

Detailed responses are set out in Table 6 but in each of a,b, and c over 35 mothers said they would use such a centre twice a week or more.

On the second question, hours for a nursery school, analysis is inevitably somewhat arbitrary depending on how flexibly hours are matched to typical types of provision. The criteria adopted here are that anything before 9.00am and after 3.30pm falls outside nursery school and nursery class provision - and should be counted as day nursery hours. On this basis mothers wanted 36 children to attend what amounted to a day nursery. Another 15 wanted attendance at a full time nursery school within these hours; a further 18 wanted part time provision - 10 of them in the morning, 8 in the afternoon.

In all, mothers of 69 out of the 90 children involved in the survey responded indicating the hours they preferred. Others said that either their children would soon be at school, or they were satisfied with the provision at present. Most of the latter were in nursery classes. (see Table 7)

PLANNING AND CO-ORDINATION OF THE CENTRE

The original proposal for the centre, involving a cheap form of construction, was costed at £28,000 and an Urban Aid application was made for this amount. However, after this application was turned down in November 1973, the Inner London Education Authority expressed interest in the scheme, and it was rethought to higher standards.

The revised project was costed at £200,000. The ILEA agreed to pay the cost of the nursery school element - £65,000. It was hoped that the Borough would fund the day nursery, and that money for the parents centre could be raised privately.

While the ILEA have continued their support for the scheme, and £50,000 has been promised by a charitable trust, the Borough now feels unable to contribute in any way. In early 1974 the research worker arranged meetings with Borough officers, and the Borough Deputy Director of Finance reported to the Council's Board of Management in June 1974. A full report and feasibility study was sent to the Borough Social Services Committee by the Association's research worker and the Committee told the Association in July 1974 that it had agreed in principle to the proposals. Provision was included in its budget for 1975/76 and 1976/77.

However, final approval was needed from the Policy and Co-ordinating Committee of the Council, and this was not forthcoming. By September 1974 the scheme had been cut from Council estimates. While a major disappointment the decision was not a complete surprise. The Deputy Director of Finance had indicated informally that the cuts in public spending might affect the scheme, and that it would be wise to apply for Urban Aid.

During this period the ILEA maintained its support for the scheme, and discussions were held with the Assistant Education Officer on the choice of an architect. The Education Authority was prepared to either provide an architect of its own, or allow the Association to appoint its own. Flexibility of design integrating the three elements of the project was a key consideration.

Since the Authority's architects were clearly most experienced in designing facilities to meet the needs of children, the Association accepted the offer of an ILEA architect. Fees for the day nursery element, should it be built, were to be paid by the Borough.

The Authority's architect, Barry Wilson, has worked closely with the Association, attending both its own meetings and those of the Maxilla Gardens Working Party. His brief has been extended to include the parents' centre in a design which will also relate to the nearby community hall and laundry.

The aim is to ensure that, wherever possible, common services like kitchens can be used by each part of the centre and that, for example, parents might easily leave their children at the nursery centre, drop off their laundry, visit the parents' centre or go shopping.

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MANAGEMENT OF THE CENTRE

The Westway Nursery Association held several policy meetings in mid July to reach a consensus of opinion on how the integration of a day nursery and nursery school could be achieved.

Everyone agreed that it was most important that each child using the centre should be able to form a stable relationship with a particular member of staff. It was felt that this could best be achieved by consistently keeping children in groups, but whether these should be mixed age "family groups", or groups of children the same age, was not decided.

In the day nursery section, a small number of children might be grouped around an adult, while in the nursery school the group might, it was felt, be best organised around an activity.

On this basis it was decided that the building would need small linked rooms, together with larger rooms which could be sub-divided.

Assuming the centre would be open from 8.00am until late evening, the staff needed during the day might be:-

Day Nursery

8 - 9 am 2 part timers (perhaps parents, with some training)

8am - 6pm Day nursery staff working staggered hours. With 40 children, and a staffing ratio of 1:4 this would mean 5 nursery nurses and 5 untrained nursery assistants.

8am - 6pm Staff for 0-1 year olds again working staggered hours. On the recognised ratio of 1:3 this would involve 2 nursery nurses and one nursery assistant.

Nursery School

9am - 4pm With 40 children and a 1:10 ratio 2 nursery teachers and 2 nursery nurses would be needed.

Drop-in centre

During both the morning and the afternoon 2 playleaders, aided by parents, would be needed.

Further, from 3pm - 6pm 2 part timers would be needed.

Further Staff

The Association feels that a director of the centre will be necessary to take overall responsibility. A matron is essential for the running of the day nursery, and a head teacher for the nursery school in addition to the four other members of staff. If a resources centre is established, one person would be needed for its running.

During the evening adult classes and other activities are envisaged, with possibly some classes on subjects like child development during the day. These would have to be staffed by the ILEA.

On the basis of these staffing arrangements, a child aged 2½ staying the maximum time from 8am - 6pm would be in the charge of one part timer, then 2 day nursery staff and finally another part timer. A child of 4, staying the same length of time, would also be in the care of 2 part timers, as well as 4 nursery school staff.

Some discussions were held on the possibility of the centre being used for the training of staff e.g. part time training for local people who wanted qualifications.

FINANCING OF THE PARENTS' CENTRE

The scheme for the women's centre was amended because the Association felt that it might be more appropriate to have a broader-based parents' centre.

The ILEA had expressed an interest in this element of the project but indicated that it was unlikely they would also be able to provide the capital cost for this as well as the nursery school.

The Association thought that it might be possible to raise the capital cost from charitable sources. This would then enable the development of the centre to proceed independently of constraints imposed by statutory bodies. In June 1974 the Association heard from the ILEA that they had been approached by Miss V. Lowndes, who wished to put a substantial amount of money into a pre-school scheme, and the Assistant Education Officer suggested that she paid for the capital cost of the parents' centre of the Westway Nursery.

After several talks the donor's Board of Trustees agreed the grant on June 28th, 1974.

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FURTHER DEVELOPMENT WITH THE ILEA

In July 1974 the ILEA wrote to the Association suggesting that the capacity of the nursery school should be increased from 40 to 60 places. The Association considered this request carefully and the members were not immediately in agreement.

Some felt that a 60 place nursery school would unbalance the scheme, since the original idea was equal provision of day nursery and nursery school facilities.

However, other members pointed out that the Borough had not confirmed support for the day nursery element and therefore, it would be wise to accept the ILEA's offer. A final decision depends on the outcome of the Urban Aid application and further discussions with the ILEA.

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THE SECOND URBAN AID APPLICATION

As already stated, the Borough's Deputy Director of Finance had indicated that it might be wise to submit an Urban Aid application for the capital and running costs of the day nursery element of the project in case the Borough's Policy and Co-ordinating Committee turned it down. This proved to be the case.

An application was prepared, but as the capital cost for the day nursery had been assessed previously at £85,000, and the maximum capital grant given by Urban Aid is £80,000, the kitchen and the laundry for the day nursery were removed from the application since both these facilities would be available in the adjacent schemes.

The application was submitted in July 1974, approved by the Council in October, and forwarded to the Home Office. The results are expected in December of this year.

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LEAD POLLUTION

During planning of the nursery considerable concern was being expressed nationally about the effects of lead pollution on the children, particularly those under five. Lead from vehicle emissions was identified as one possible source of pollution - blood levels in families living near the Gravelly Hill "Spaghetti Junction" motorway were reported to have increased considerably. (Sunday Times, March 10th 1974) Fears were expressed that lead pollution could produce poisoning and subsequent brain damage in small children.

Contact was established with the Department of Health and Social Security, where Dr. R. St. J. Buxton agreed to discuss undertaking a study of the impact of lead pollution through local physicians. The Association pointed out that an immediate assessment of the situation was needed since construction was due to start shortly on the nursery centre. Rather than pursue the matter through the DHSS, the Association, through the Amenity Trust chairman Mrs. Jennifer Jenkins, approached the Medical Research Council Toxicology Unit. Mr. J.M. Barnes replied "I am sure that you can disregard carbon monoxide and other gaseous emissions from vehicles on the overhead road. Lead, however, might present a different problem and you need an expert's opinion."

On Mr. Barnes' suggestion the Association contacted Dr. Donald Barltrop, Assistant Director at the Paediatric Unit of St. Mary's Hospital, Paddington. While Dr. Barltrop was most helpful and willing to undertake a study, this would have involved raising £3,000 to pay for a laboratory technician, and the Association was not able to do this. In Dr. Barltrop's opinion, the research at Spaghetti Junction was of dubious relevance, and continuous sampling would be needed over at least six months near Westway. Suspended material, dust fall and soil should be tested. Past experience, Dr. Barltrop said, suggested that lead paint and other sources in the home were likely to prove more dangerous than vehicle emissions - but that a safeguarding study should certainly be done.

Despite contacts between Dr. Buxton and Dr. W.E. Kearns, the District Community Physician, and the G.L.C. Scientific Department, no coherent testing programme has emerged. The Association is continuing to press the various parties concerned to review urgently the lead pollution threat, but cannot undertake its own research programme.

INFORMATION

The research worker's responsibility has been first, to contact people living in the area, especially parents of under-fives, talk to them about the centre and generally encourage greater community participation. Secondly, to cope with enquiries about the scheme from other interested groups both in London and throughout the country.

It was recognised early on by the Executive and the worker that while the Association was reasonably representative of various groups and individuals interested in under-fives, it still had to encourage far more participation from parents of under-fives in North Kensington, particularly those living near the proposed centre.

As a first step to greater local involvement the worker early in 1974 visited clinics in the area and talked about the outline proposals for the centre. A leaflet was also prepared which was sent to other community groups and distributed at an exhibition of the work of various locally based projects.

There was limited response, however. While some mothers felt that they would be interested in coming to meetings, the fact that the Association meetings were held in the evening was a barrier. The Association decided that some day-time meetings should be held, both to discuss the centre and discover what parents wanted there.

In May, June and July three day-time meetings were arranged and with creches provided. Two of these meetings were to talk about the parents' centre and one about the whole scheme. None of these meetings attracted many parents and the Executive felt that parents could best be involved when the project was nearer realisation. It was also felt that more emphasis should be placed on informal contacts through visits to 1 O'Clock clubs etc., than on formal meetings.

There has been considerable interest in the scheme from other groups outside the area. The first Westway Nursery document was circulated in January to all the directors and chairmen of social services in London, all other nursery centres in the country as well as various voluntary agencies and groups specifically interested in under-fives provision. So far the research worker and other members of the Executive have been invited to talk about the scheme at the ILEA conference on under-fives last January, to the Brent Community Relations Council, various women's conferences and at seminars of those with a professional interest in under-fives.

CONCLUSIONS

As indicated earlier, many families in North Kensington live in overcrowded conditions and lack the basic housing amenities. Further, those living in high-rise blocks have little social contact and are, in consequence, often lonely, depressed and frustrated.

On these grounds there would seem to be a good case for a vast injection of compensatory resources for under-fives provision into the area. However, allocation of such resources must match the community needs. Simply to create more part time nursery school places for example, would not help the working mother.

CONCLUSIONS cont....

A local headmistress of a nearby nursery school said: "There are rarely waiting lists for part time places in nursery schools because parents wanting to do even a part time job need a full time nursery place. Consequently, my waiting list for this school's 30 full time places is about 200".

This impression is borne out by a check of local pre-school facilities. Day nurseries and full time nursery schools and classes had long waiting lists, whereas part time nurser classes and playgroups had none.

It can also be argued that to simply expand day nursery provision will not overcome the isolation of a mother at home with a small child.

Our survey was an attempt to ensure that the facilities in the nursery centre would be sensitive to the needs of the families living in the catchment area. From the survey we were able to conclude that there would be a great demand for full time places. Fifty-one of the mothers indicated that they would want their children to have full time care and education.

Many of these mothers were not on the Borough day nursery waiting list because, in most instances, they realised that they would not be classified as a priority case - a situation they frequently regarded with some resentment. Most mothers recognised that their children were better able to mix with other children and became more independent after having attended some form of pre-school facility. Only two mothers actually made the comment that "it prepares the child for school".

The significance of this, in a totally working class area, would seem to be that mothers are becoming increasingly aware of the need for, and benefit to be derived from, pre-school provision.

There also seemed to be a positive bias towards nursery education, as distinct from merely care. This can be seen by the numbers of children who moved from playgroups to nursery schools, and in some cases from day nurseries into nursery education.

One of the most important survey findings was that many mothers were dissatisfied with present nursery school, playgroup and clinic creche hours, split as they are into morning and afternoon sessions.

It is apparent from the survey that the nursery school hours most desired would be from 10am to 3 or 4pm, including lunch.

Mothers also indicated that they would be particularly interested in a "drop-in" element, where children could be left for a few hours while the mother for example, went shopping. There was also considerable interest in a parents' centre providing everything from somewhere to meet for coffee to more formal education programmes.

In view of the wide range of activities suggested by mothers surveyed, further discussions are needed to define the main areas of interest.

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RECOMMENDATIONS

- 1) Parents interviewed in the survey should be revisited to establish greater community participation in the further developments of the scheme.
- 2) The Borough Council should be urged to put the scheme back into its Capital Budget if the Urban Aid application fails.
- 3) Particular attention should be devoted to the organisation of the parents' centre, through discussions with local people and groups who have attempted similar schemes.
- 4) A sub-committee should be set up to discuss and raise funds for a pre-school resource unit, which would provide information and equipment for all those interested in under-fives. The extra funds would cover equipment and possibly extra space within the centre.
- 5) Close contact should be maintained with the District Community Physician and the G.L.C. Scientific branch to ensure that relevant research is conducted into possible lead pollution.
- 6) Since mothers stressed the need for full time nursery school provision, representations should be made to the ILEA to change the balance of the scheme. Instead of 30 full time and 60 part time places, the Association thinks that the number of full time places should be increased to adequately meet the demand.
- 7) Careful consideration must be given to the management of the Centre, to ensure that interested groups are represented and that local people are fully involved in the running and control of the Centre.

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TABLE 1 Mothers' work hours and whether these would increase with more pre-school provision:

	<u>Mothers in work</u>	<u>Would work more if possible</u>
Full time	10	1
Part time	16	3
Shift	2	1
Unemployed	43	18
Unspecified hours	3	

TABLE 2 Past attendance - by places:

Council day nursery	6
Private day nursery	2
Nursery school	0
Nursery class	6
Pre-school playgroup	11
Babyminder	9
Clinic creche	9
1 O'Clock club	2
Any other	1
TOTAL	46

Some double counting was involved - in that 34 children had at some point taken up the 46 places. Generally, children who attended more than one form of pre-school provision had been to creches or 1 O'Clock clubs as well as playgroups. It seems likely this was because of the need to supplement the limited hours of playgroups.

TABLE 3 Unsuccessful attempts to gain pre-school places:

Council day nursery	9
Private day nursery	0
Nursery school	4
Nursery class	6
Pre-school playgroup	4
Babyminder	0
Clinic creche	1
1 O'Clock club	0
TOTAL	24

Some mothers made more than one attempt - 20 children were involved in the 24 applications.

TABLE 4 See text page 4

TABLE 5 Why pre-school provision is important - mothers' responses:

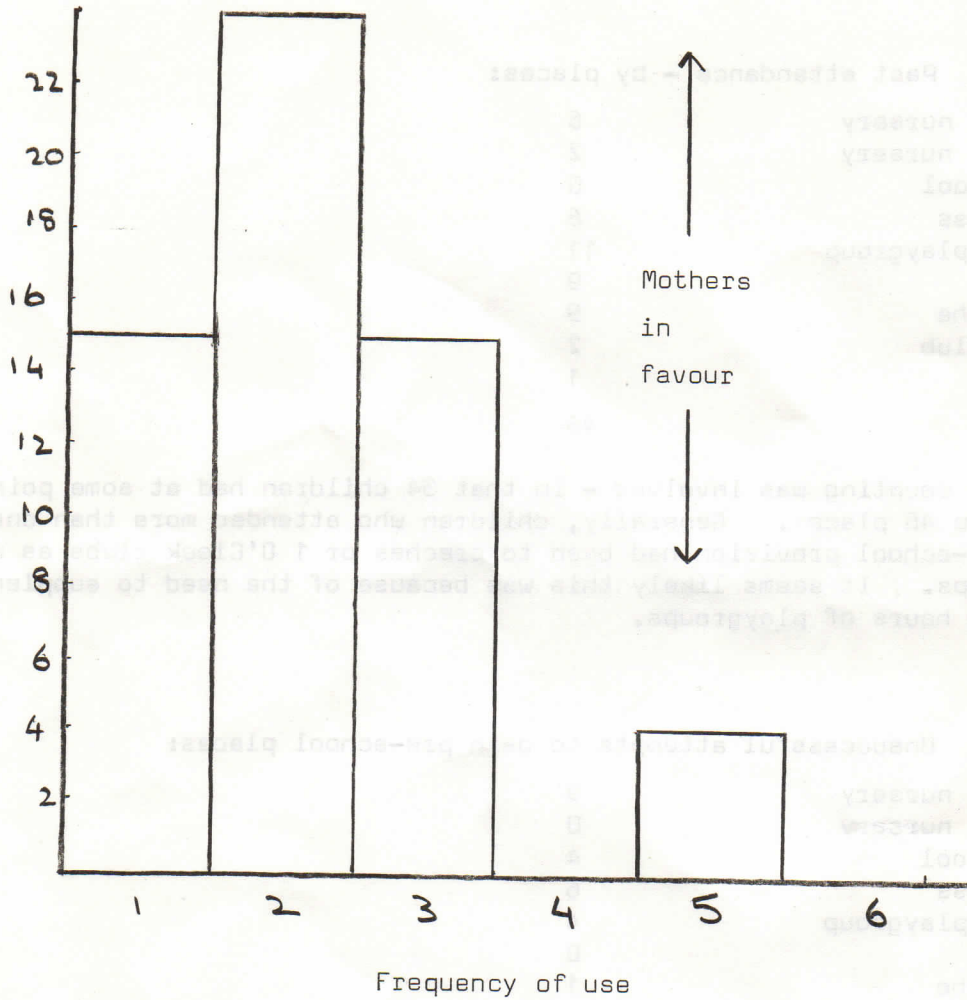
Helps children mix	67
Frees mother	16
Encourages self-sufficiency	32
Helps child learn	41
Allows play	4
Allows mother to work	5

Numbers indicate positive responses - many mothers mentioned social benefits.

TABLE 6

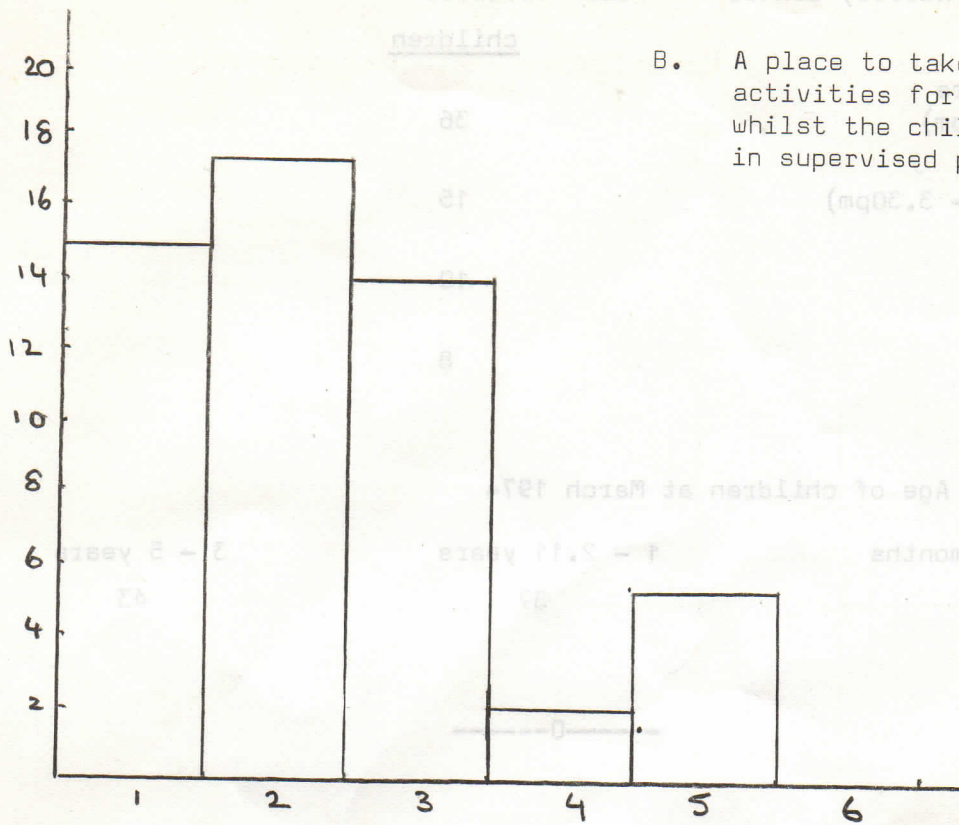
Use of Parents' and "Drop-in" Centre

A. A place to take the child and meet other mothers:

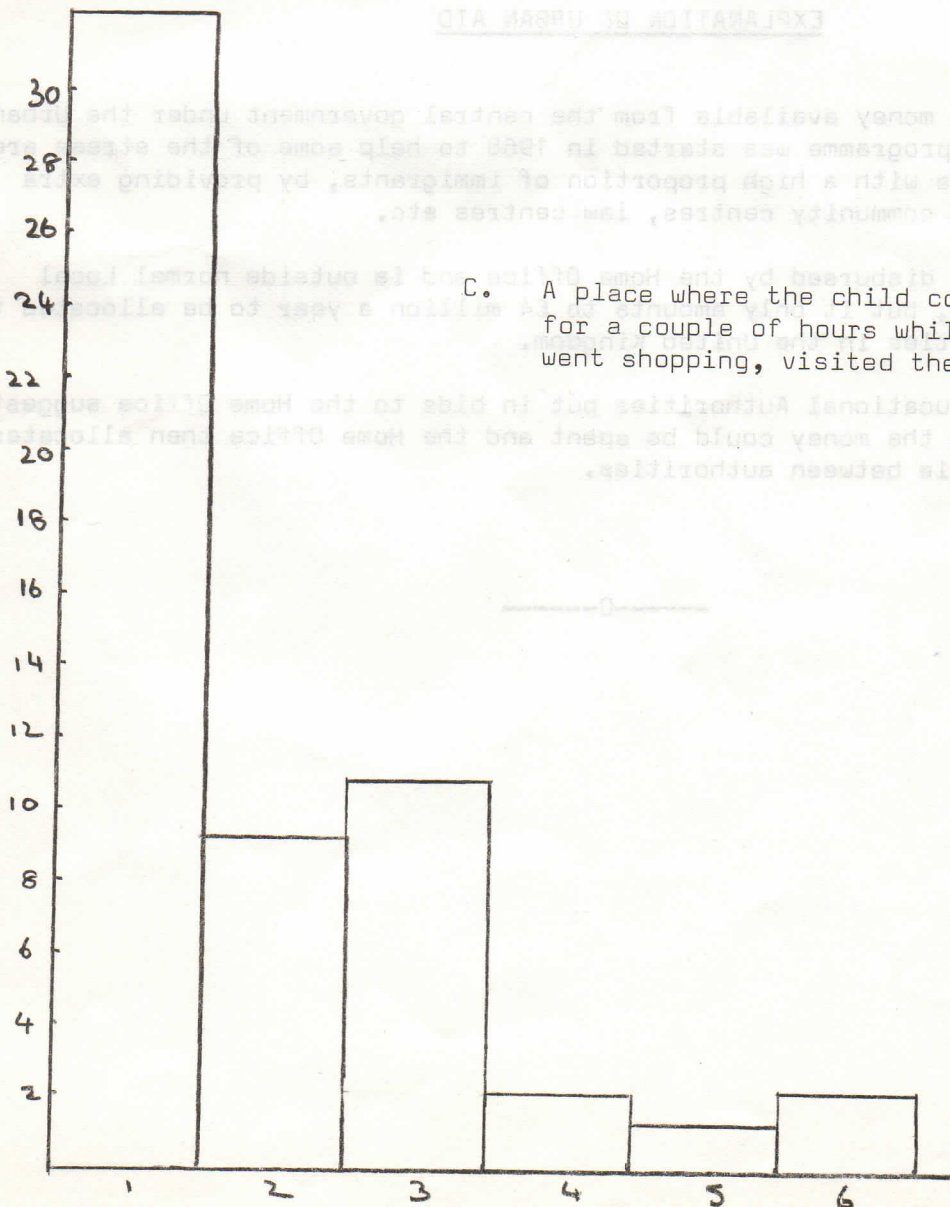


KEY

- 1 = More than twice a week
- 2 = Twice a week
- 3 = Once a week
- 4 = Twice a month
- 5 = Once a month
- 6 = Less than once a month



B. A place to take part in various activities for a couple of hours whilst the child is involved in supervised play.



C. A place where the child could be left for a couple of hours while the mother went shopping, visited the doctor, etc.

TABLE 7

Nursery Centre - hours desired:

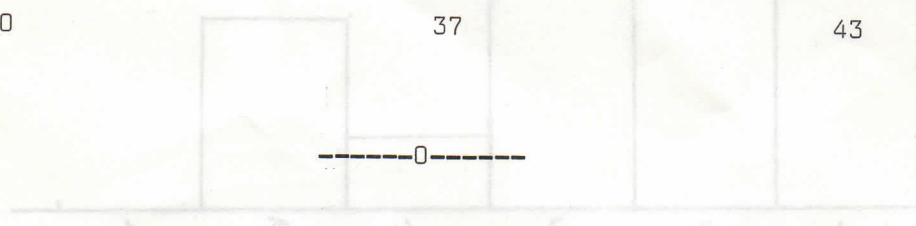
	<u>children</u>
Day nursery hours (8am - 6pm)	36
Nursery school Full time (9am - 3.30pm)	15
Nursery school Morning only	10
Nursery school Afternoon only	8



TABLE 8

Age of children at March 1974

0 - 11 months	10	1 - 2.11 years	37	3 - 5 years	43
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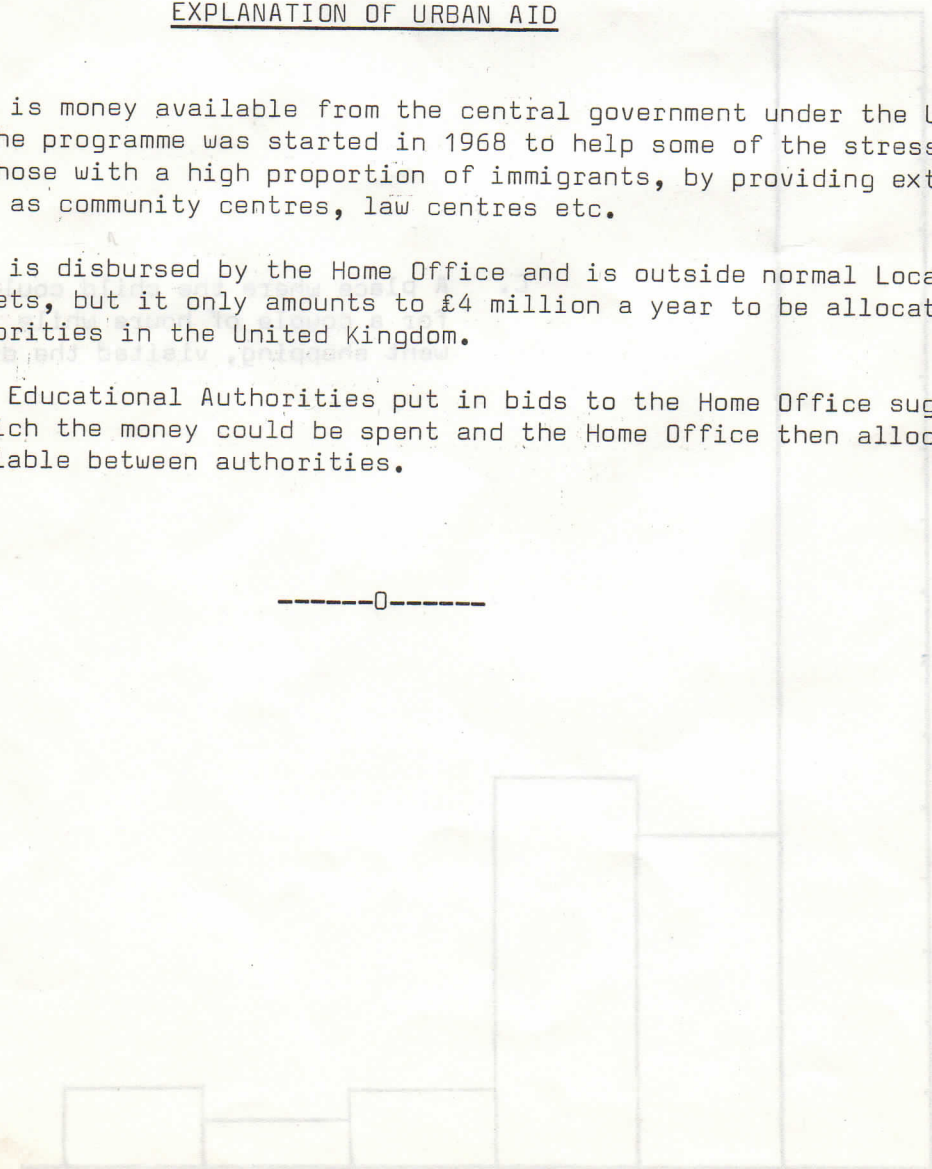
EXPLANATION OF URBAN AID

Urban Aid is money available from the central government under the Urban programme. The programme was started in 1968 to help some of the stress areas, particularly those with a high proportion of immigrants, by providing extra resources such as community centres, law centres etc.

The money is disbursed by the Home Office and is outside normal Local Authority budgets, but it only amounts to £4 million a year to be allocated to all local authorities in the United Kingdom.

Local, or Educational Authorities put in bids to the Home Office suggesting projects on which the money could be spent and the Home Office then allocates the funds available between authorities.

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WESTWAY NURSERY CENTREBOROUGH CAPITAL COST

Estimated cost of £170 per sq.m.

	<u>Area</u>	<u>Cost</u>
Day Nursery element: 20 children 1 - 3 years	75 sq.m	£12,600
Day Nursery - 10 babies 0 - 1 year	45 sq.m	8,200
"Emergency Room" 10 children 0 - 5 years	20 sq.m	3,700
2/5 Staff & Utility (explanatory note)	66 sq.m	11,220
2/5 External Works		12,400
Site Preparatory Work		4,400
		<hr/> £52,520
Equipping of Day Nursery Element (+ relevant proportion of kitchen equipment eg. cookers, fridges, etc.)		8,000
		<hr/> £60,520
+ approx. 25% increased costs - inflation		15,130
		<hr/> £75,650
+ 12½% professional fees		9,456
		<hr/> £85,106

The Borough will be asked to pay two fifths of the staff and utility costs as above. These will include:

- a) Kitchen to produce, say, 100 meals a day
- b) Laundry, drying and utility room - full cost
- c) Co-ordinator / Director's office
- d) Research and Community Worker's office
- e) Staff room
- f) Toilets - including those for disabled people
- g) Room for medical purposes
- h) Schoolkeeper's / Cleaner's room
- i) Electrical intake room
- j) Boiler room

WESTWAY NURSERY CENTREBOROUGH RUNNING COSTS

<u>ITEM</u>	<u>COST</u>
<u>For 20 1 - 3 year olds</u> - 2 Nursery Nurses	£2,840
2 Nursery Assistants	1,960
(both including N.I. stamps, superannuation, and London Weighting)	
<u>For 10 0 - 1 year olds</u> (ratio 1:3 child/staff)	
- 2 Nursery Nurses	2,840
1 Nursery Assistant	980
<u>Emergency Unit</u>	
For 10 children ages 0 - 5 years	
- 1 Nursery Nurse	1,420
1 Nursery Assistant / playleader	980
<u>ALSO</u>	
½ Director / Co-ordinator's salary (£3,500)	1,750
2/5 Caretaker (minus usual free rent, subsidised heating and lighting)	540
Food - 40 children at £2.50 per child per week	5,200
½ Secretary (£1,500)	750
½ Cook	600
½ Cook's assistant	570
<u>EXTRA STAFF</u> - 2 Nursery Nurses	2,840
(to cope with approx. 10 3-5 year olds coming in at 8.00am and staying after 3.30pm & staying in the school holidays)	
1 full time cleaner (40 hours a week at 55p per hour + N.I. Stamps)	1,340
1 part time cleaner (10 hours a week at 55p per hour)	285
Inflation of salaries (as advised by the Social Services Department)	2,000
2/5 of rent, rates, equipment renewal, and admin. expenses	2,200
	£29,095

WESTWAY NURSERY CENTRE - NURSERY SCHOOL ELEMENT

CAPITAL COST - ILEA

School : 3 - 4 years (125m ²)	£21,000
2/5 Staff & Utility (67m ²)	11,390
2/5 External Works	12,400
2/5 Site preparation work	4,400

+ approx. 14% increased inflation 7,027

(though inflation % may well be 25 by April 1975)

£56,217

+ 12% professional fees 7,027

Total Capital Costs £63,244

Costs based on £170 per m²

STAFF AND UTILITY AREAS

	<u>Total</u>	<u>ILEA</u>
1) Kitchen to produce say 100 meals a day (min. 10m ²)	35	14
2) Laundry, drying and utility room	15	6
3) Director / Co-ordinator's office	10	4
4) Head's office (min. 9m ²)	10	10
5) Research and Community Worker's office	14	6
6) Staffroom (min. 15m ²)	22	9
7) Toilet for staff, helpers, visitors. Combined toilet including 3m ² toilet for disabled people. 3 W.C.s & 3 L.B.'s	10	4
8) Room for medical purposes (min. 12m ²)	18	8
9) Schoolkeeper's / Cleaner's store	3	1
10) Electrical intake room	3	1
11) Boiler house	10	4

150m²

67m²

CONSTITUTION OF THE "WESTWAY NURSERY ASSOCIATION"

(as adopted by inaugural general meeting 17.10.73)

1) NAME

The name of the association shall be the "Westway Nursery Association (hereinafter called 'the Association').

2) OBJECTS

The Objects of the Association shall be:

- a) To advance the education of children under five living in Kensington and Chelsea and the immediately adjacent neighbourhood (hereinafter called the 'benefit area') without distinction of sex, race, religion, political or other opinions.
- b) To associate with the inhabitants, the local and educational authorities, and voluntary organisations in a common effort to provide for parents and children within the benefit area facilities in the interests of social welfare with the object of improving their conditions of life.

In furtherance of the above objects the Association shall:

- a) Establish nursery centres which may incorporate:
 - 1) day care provision
 - 2) educational nursery classes
 - 3) drop-in facilities
 - 4) emergency facilities
 - 5) an information and resources centre for local pre-school interests
 - 6) a health and welfare clinic for users
 - 7) a centre to promote the needs and interests of adults
 - 8) facilities to support the parents' role in their childrens development
 - 9) such other facilities as support the general objects of the centre and as the members shall from time to time agree;
- b) Undertake such research as is necessary to further the objects of the Association.

The Association shall have the power to affiliate to other charitable organisations with similar objects.

3) MEMBERSHIP

Membership of the Association shall be on an individual or group basis and shall be open irrespective of sex, nationality, political affiliation, religious beliefs, colour or race to all persons who live or work in the benefit area and support the aims of the Association upon payment of subscription (Clause 9 below). Membership shall not automatically be terminated through moving out of the benefit area.

4) THE EXECUTIVE COUNCIL

In furtherance of the objects of the Association, the policy and general management shall be directed by an Executive Council in accordance with the recommendations of the general meeting and with the responsibilities set out below:

- a) Responsibilities of the Executive Council:
 - 1) To carry out the policy of the Association in accordance with the wishes of its members.

- 2) To hire or maintain such premises and to engage such staff as are necessary to the objects of the Association.
- 3) To establish nursery centres and other facilities for under fives and their families.
- 4) To direct research.
- 5) To be represented on the management committee of any centres that have been established by the Association.
- 6) To raise such monies as are necessary to pursue the objects of the Association.
- 7) To expend such monies as are received from any source.
- 8) To appoint such sub-committees as it may from time to time decide and to determine their powers and terms of reference.
- 9) To do all such other things as are necessary in the pursuance of the objects of the Association.

b) Membership of the Executive Council:

The Executive Council shall consist of:

- 1) Nominated members - the following bodies shall have the right to nominate one member of the Executive Council:

Inner London Education Authority, Kensington & Chelsea Pre-school Playgroup Association, Save the Children Fund, Nursery Schools Association, Royal Borough of Kensington & Chelsea Social Services Department, Powis Playgroups, Inner London Teachers Association (NUT)

and such other bodies as the Annual General Meeting shall decide provided that the total number of nominated members shall not exceed the number of elected members.

Any failure by these bodies to nominate a representative shall not invalidate the operation of the Executive Council.

- 2) Elected Members

The users of the centres established by the Association shall elect 5 members to the Executive Council in accordance with procedure laid down by the Executive Council. Until centres are built, the General Meeting shall elect 5 parents of children under five.

The membership of the Association shall elect 5 members from among their number at the Annual General Meeting of the Association.

- 3) Co-opted Members

At the first meeting of the Executive Council after every Annual General Meeting the nominated and elected members may co-opt such members as it decides provided that the total number of co-opted members shall not exceed 5. Co-opted members shall have full voting rights on the Executive Council.

5) OFFICERS

- a) Honorary Officers:

Chairman - the Chairman of the Association shall be elected by the Annual General Meeting. The Chairman after election shall not fulfil the role of a nominated member.

Other honorary officers:

The incoming Executive Council shall elect from among their number such other officers as are necessary for the functioning of the Association.

- b) Paid Officers:

The Executive Council shall have power to appoint and dismiss such paid employees of the Association as it may from time to time determine.

The Council may determine which persons employed by or seconded to the Association shall be members ex-officio of the Association, the Executive Council and other committees.

6) ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Once every year in the spring the Executive Council shall convene an Annual General Meeting of the Association which all members of the Association are entitled to attend.

Only members of three months' standing or more shall be entitled to vote at these meetings.

The purpose of the Annual General Meeting shall be:

- a) To receive and approve the annual report of the Executive Council
- b) To receive the annual audited accounts
- c) To appoint an auditor or auditors
- d) To elect 5 representatives to sit on the Executive Council
- e) To make recommendations to the Executive Council
- f) Wherever necessary to vote on proposals to alter this constitution in accordance with Clause 13 below.

7) SPECIAL GENERAL MEETING

The chairman of the Executive Council may at any time at his discretion and within 21 days of receiving a written request so to do signed by 15 members having the power to vote and giving reasons for the request call a Special General Meeting of the Association for the purpose of altering the constitution in accordance with Clause 13 below or for any other purpose relating to the business of the Association.

8) RULES OF PROCEDURE AT ALL MEETINGS

- a) Voting - Subject to the provisions of Clause 13 all questions arising at any meeting shall be decided by a simple majority of those present and voting. No member shall exercise more than one vote notwithstanding that he may have been appointed to represent two or more interestes. The chairman shall not be entitled to vote except in cases of equality when he shall have a casting vote.
- b) Quorum - One-third of the members shall form a quorum at meetings of the Executive Council. Twenty members shall form a quorum at General Meetings of the Association.
- c) Minutes - Minutes shall be kept by the Association, Executive Council and other committees and the appropriate secretary shall enter therein a record of all proceedings and resolutions.

9) SUBSCRIPTIONS

All members shall pay any such subscriptions as the Executive Council shall from time to time determine.

10) FINANCE

- a) All monies raised by or on behalf of the Association shall be applied to further the objects of the Association and for no other purpose.
- b) The Honorary Treasurer shall keep proper accounts of the finances of the Association.
- c) The accounts shall be audited at least once a year by a qualified auditor or auditors who shall be appointed at the Annual General Meeting.

- d) An audited statement of accounts for the last financial year shall be submitted by the Executive Council to the Annual General Meeting.

11) TERMINATION OF MEMBERSHIP

The Executive Council shall have the right to suspend membership for a good and sufficient reason provided the member shall have the right to be heard by the Executive Council before a decision is taken. The Annual General Meeting of the Association shall have the right to terminate membership.

12) DISSOLUTION

If the Executive Council by a simple majority decides at any time on the grounds of expense or otherwise it is necessary or advisable to dissolve the Association it shall call a meeting of all members of the Association and inhabitants of the benefit area aged 18 and upwards of which meeting not less than 21 days' notice shall be posted in conspicuous places in the benefit area and advertised in a newspaper circulating locally and given in writing to the Charity Commissioners.

If such a decision shall be confirmed by a simple majority of those present and voting at such a meeting the Executive Council shall have power to dispose of any assets held by or in the name of the Association. Any assets remaining after the satisfaction of any proper debts and liabilities shall be applied towards charitable purposes for the benefit of children under five in the benefit area as the Executive Council may decide and as may be approved by the Charity Commissioners.

13) ALTERATIONS TO THE CONSTITUTION

Any proposal to alter the constitution must be delivered in writing to the Secretary of the Association not less than 28 days before the date of the meeting at which it is first to be considered. An alteration with require the approval of both:

- a) a simple majority of members of the Executive Council present and voting at a Council meeting
- b) a two-thirds majority of members of the Association present and voting at a General Meeting.

Notice of each such meeting must have been in accordance with normal procedure but not less than 14 days prior to the meeting in question and giving the wording of the proposed alterations. No alterations of Clause 2 may be made without the consent of the Charity Commissioners.

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I would like to thank all those people who have given help, advice and support during this year, particularly:

The Westway Nursery Executive
David Head
Ann Holmes
Rosie Fisher
Wendy Kinch
Beryl Foster
Anne Treasure
Vanessa Lowndes

and officers of the ILEA and the Borough Social Services Department...Judy Wilcox

Plan for a new nursery underneath the arches

By MARY MACPHERSON

A NEW nursery complex is to be built beneath the arches of The Westway, in North Kensington.

The controversial motorway which blighted a corner of London and brought misery to hundreds of families, will have a new role to play when work on the £200,000 scheme begins next year.

The site chosen by the Westway Nursery Association is overshadowed by the vast flyover which spans the mile

between Paddington and White City.

The centre will provide a new focus for run-down North Kensington, for besides a nursery school there will be a parents' centre where adults can carry on with their own hobbies, a "drop-in" service where mothers will be able to leave their children for short periods. A day nursery for even younger children is also planned.

Link

The project near Maxilla Gardens is being designed to link with a nearby community hall and a public laundry.

It is among the first schemes built beneath the Westway, under the auspices of the North Kensington Amenity Trust, who aim to develop the desolate land

beneath and around the motorway.

The plan is for the building, liberally sound-proofed, to be open from 8 a.m. to 6 p.m. so that children of working mothers can be cared for all day.

Facilities

The money is coming partly from the Inner London Education Authority, who are providing £65,000, and partly from a charitable trust with a donation of £50,000. The Westway Nursery Association is hoping for the remaining £80,000 from the Government under the Urban Aid Programme, or Kensington and Chelsea Council.

Local people will be asked to help decide how they want the nursery to be run and what facilities they would like at the parents' centre.

Mr David Head, chairman of

the Westway Nursery Association said: "Many mothers in North Kensington have to work, either to provide full support for their families, or to help the family budget because wages are generally low in the area.

"We are not only concerned that children in families with special difficulties should be catered for but that all under-fives in the catchment area would be catered for and parents would feel that they had a strong support in bringing up their young children."

← **Evening Standard**

November 21 1974

Nurseries

FEW of the people whose lives were so shatteringly disrupted by the opening of Westway three years ago could have anticipated then that they might one day have a good word to say for it. Yet in the gloomy shadow of the motorway there has grown up one of the most spontaneous and effective community action groups in London.

The local people successfully fought GLC plans to use the waste space under and around Westway for car-parking, and instead set up the North Kensington Amenity Trust to develop community uses for the area. With today's announcement that work is to begin next year on an imaginative new scheme to provide nursery facilities for children in the neighbourhood, it appears that their energies are to be amply rewarded.

The particular attraction of the plan is that it would be a combination of both nursery school and day nursery—provided Kensington and Chelsea Council can find the money for the latter, either from its own resources or through Urban Aid.

Unique nursery plan to beat M-way blight

WORK is due to start next year on a revolutionary nursery scheme in North Kensington, built beside Britain's most controversial urban motorway. Local parents will be asked to help run the centre.

A £50,000 private donation, and help from local authorities, has made it possible for the people of the area to turn the Westway motorway, which has disrupted their lives since 1971, to positive advantage in a unique way.

The Lowndes Charitable Trust has agreed to give £50,000 to the Westway Nursery Association, a group formed last year to provide nursery care and education for children in one of the most deprived areas of London. The Inner London Education Authority will provide some £65,000 and Kensington and Chelsea Council is supporting an Urban Aid application.

Plans are now being drawn up by an I.L.E.A. architect for the centre, which will provide 60 nursery school places, 40 day nursery places, a parents' centre and a "drop-in" centre where mothers will be able to leave their children for an hour or two while, for example shopping.

The project, near Maxilla Gardens, is being designed to link with an independently-funded community hall, and a laundry, which will be the first schemes built beneath Westway under the auspices of the North-Kensington Amenity Trust.

The Trust was set up by local groups and the borough council to develop Greater London Council land beneath and around the motorway after local people successfully fought plans to use this space for car parking and pressed for community uses instead.

News of the Nursery Association's success in raising funds,

BUILDING TO BEGIN IN APRIL 1975

and details of the project will be given to a public meeting next Wednesday (November 27th) at 8 p.m. at the Luncheon Club next to Ladbrooke Grove tube station.

Local people will be asked to help decide how they want the nursery run, and what they would like to see at the parents' centre. The aim will be to provide opportunities for parents to pursue hobbies and also become involved in the running of the nursery.

Mr. David Head, chairman of the Westway Nursery Association said: "Many mothers in North Kensington have to work, either to provide full support for their families, or to help the family budget because wages are generally low in the area.

"We believe that this is the first time a nursery supported by statutory bodies with trained teachers, and hopefully long hours, has emerged from the efforts of local people.

"We are not only concerned that the needs of families with special difficulties should be met, but that all under-fives in the catchment area should be catered for and parents would feel they had a strong support in bringing up their young children."

Building can begin after April, provided planning permission is granted, because of the firm commitment of Vanessa Lowndes to the £50,000 donation, and of the I.L.E.A. The Nursery Association hopes to raise another £80,000 from Government Urban Aid — or from the Borough Council — to add a further nursery element to the scheme.

While the I.L.E.A. will finance a nursery school open from 9.30 a.m. to 3.30 p.m., mothers working to supplement low family incomes need longer hours for their children and the additional £80,000 would provide day nursery places and allow hours to be extended from 8 a.m. to 6 p.m.

At present, council day nurseries provide long hours, but do not employ trained teachers to provide the pre-school educational environment acknowledged to be particularly important for children in a deprived area.

On the other hand, nursery schools and classes run by education authorities do not provide hours long enough for working mothers. Both types of nursery have long waiting lists which tend to exclude all but priority cases.

The Westway Nursery Centre will take any child within about 10 minutes' walking distance of the Maxilla Gardens site. A precise catchment area will be decided later — but already a detailed survey has been carried out of families in the area with small children to establish their needs.

Kensington News-Post
← Friday, Nov. 22, 1974

