



# Marylebone Association

## Newsletter April 2023

Dear {Contact\_First\_Name},

The month of March has marked both International Women's Day and Mother's Day. These occasions looked to recognise different aspects of the contributions that women make to our lives and communities and were celebrated in different ways in Marylebone.

On International Women's Day, the Harley Street BID and St Marylebone Church hosted a Women's breakfast with talks given by some of the women who manage the Marylebone Project (a refuge for women) and Marylebone HCC. In the afternoon, the Baker Street BID hosted a 'Women in Business' lunch with a Q&A with a panel of women who work in Marylebone. In the run up to Mother's Day, flower shops in the area were doing a roaring trade and it was hard to find an empty table in the restaurants and café's on the High Street on the day itself.

It was wonderful to be part of these special events and celebrations but it made me remember the huge contribution that women that live and work in Marylebone make to our community day in day out, throughout the year. There are too many to mention but a few that I would highlight are Gaby Higgs and Cynthia Poole of the St Marylebone Society, Yael Saunders who leads the Marylebone Forum, Tushna Ghadially who runs the Marylebone Mums and Dads group and the MA's very own Rosemary, Lois, Niamh, Linda and Lis and local resident Ann Marie. PCSO Hayley Gadian, PC Charlotte Render and PC Alice Harman are helping keep the streets and homes of Marylebone safe for us and we have Cllr Barbara Arzymanow and Cllr Karen Scarborough working hard on Marylebone's behalf as local councillors on Westminster Council.

On a personal note, I am very inspired by the work of the great social reformer Octavia Hill who campaigned tirelessly to improve housing for the poor in Marylebone and throughout London. To me, celebrating women means remembering the work of people like Octavia Hill. She strived for social equity and worked to bridge the gap between the haves and have nots and, much like the MA, never stopped believing that we can all make a difference!

Julie Redmond

Chair Marylebone Association

## Oxford Street - Latest Plans





City of Westminster

# OXFORD STREET DISTRICT FRAMEWORK

FEBRUARY 2021



Last month's Finance, Planning and Economic Development Policy and Scrutiny Committee heard from Cabinet Member Geoff Barraclough and Deputy Chief Executive and Planning and Economic Development lead, Bernie Flaherty on the subject of the latest plan for Oxford Street.

Cllr Barraclough told the committee that after 12 years of the council trying to deal with Oxford Street, they had decided "that we needed a different approach." There is still the need to refurbish Oxford Street he said, with building in safety features and bearing in mind the change in footfall patterns "with the Elizabeth line, Tottenham Court Road is now busier than Oxford Circus."

So now a more streamlined plan is being developed with far fewer schemes and more engagement. The new refined plan is to focus on the delivery of Oxford Street itself from Marble Arch through to Tottenham Court Road. It includes the permanent widening of the street, improved lighting, green spaces and extra

permanent widening of the street, improved lighting, green spaces and extra seating areas.

Three complementary schemes on James Street, Davies Street, and Grosvenor Square are also proposed. Traffic changes are contemplated at Oxford Circus and on a number of surrounding roads, "to provide diversion routes and improve traffic movement and capacity" yet to be fully detailed. Completion is targeted for Spring 2026.

The budget for the Oxford Street makeover appears to have risen now to £120 million, from the £60 million announced at the Council's budget meeting last month. This is because the council is seeking external third-party funders to match its own capital funding and is in discussions about contributions from the New West End Company, the Business Improvement District covering the whole of Oxford Street.

However, it was again confirmed that, as previously promised, the street would stay open to traffic. Bernie Flaherty said, "previous proposals for Oxford Circus looked at pedestrianisation, piazzas and no east to west traffic movement through the Circus. She confirmed: "However, the Oxford Street Programme will allow designated traffic to move east to west through the Circus and north to south up and down Regent Street. The wording was deliberate as the present idea is not to allow any vehicular turns, either left or right at Oxford Circus, which will obviously mean a certain amount of diversion for buses presently turning at the Circus and displacement to other routes for taxis doing the same. However all proposals are in early stages of development and will be subject to "engagement and stakeholder discussions."

Indeed improved engagement was something much emphasised. In December 2022 the council spoke to 200 people at an event looking at how it could improve Oxford Street. According to the report, most respondents said they liked the shopping experience and thought it had good transport links.

Respondents generally have complained about overcrowding, how hard it can be to move around and the amount of litter. They also asked for more seating and greenery. Interestingly their wishes for the street appeared to almost exactly coincide with the council's present proposals. Pedestrianisation did not appear to be any longer on the shoppers wish list - in contrast to the TfL findings a few years ago.

Cllr Geoff Barraclough, obviously cognisant of the array of previous shipwrecked Oxford Street plans, said he remained cautious about the present plan but believed that the controversial elements of the previous plan had been removed and, reassuringly, felt that there was little left to go wrong: "to make this programme deliverable we have deliberately descoped all the proposals we thought would be controversial and the wider changes in the traffic arrangement should be win-wins".

He went on to say: "There are risks remaining. I don't want to underestimate that. One of them is private sector contribution. If we are going to make this work traders and landowners on Oxford Street who benefit will need to pay their share... There is a risk of inflation with building materials and there is a risk when you go digging in Oxford Circus when you are so close to wires and other infrastructure."

He added: "I am confident we have the finances under control so we won't be exposed to the same magnitude of risk as previously."

A further Cabinet Report is due to be submitted in May which will recommend a drawdown of funds from the overall budget once the revised business case is approved and initial designs for Oxford Street are completed.

A more detailed plan for the Oxford Street project and a public engagement strategy is due to be published shortly.

# Oxford St Review - Lessons Learnt?

The article above dealt with the present plans for Oxford Street, meanwhile the wreckage of the previous attempt to deal with it is still being cleared away and the scene of the accident tidied up- and paid for.

In order to learn from this set of mistakes, one of the first actions taken by the new administration was to commission a review of the previous efforts to close Oxford Street-the Oxford Street District plan.

Accordingly, former Camden Chief Executive Mike Cooke was brought in to review the whole project and find out just what had gone wrong - to look at the "Mismatch in expectations on progress of OSD and what has happened." Namely - how the council had managed to spend a total of £34 million and achieve so little- and how to avoid a recurrence.

This report was issued in February 2023 and Mike Cooke subsequently appeared in front of the March Planning Scrutiny Committee to answer members' questions on it. It was a condition of the Review, that he would focus on the constructive lessons that could be learnt - and he certainly appeared to have taken this advice to heart.

He told the committee that the council had entered into an extremely complex contract, design and build: "I think this is a unique set of circumstances - other programmes are far more positive." Since then the council had "refreshed its governance programme. It now appears to be in a "significantly different place in terms of process and governance."

He did sound the warning that "the council's programme staff have experienced a considerable amount of change in the officer leadership of the programme since its inception. This could affect the confidence that the organisation and its key staff have in the future of the programme." It must certainly be the case that many officers have, over these years, been unwittingly caught between the political pressures to make something happen and the realities on the ground.

Mr Cooke went on to advocate that a period of calm and continuity would now be advisable otherwise, "There is a risk that the Oxford St Programme does not integrate effectively all areas of the council that are essential to the successful development of both Oxford St and the wider district."

As for the past errors and the slip-ups with the whole OSD programme, Mr Cooke adopted a very understanding approach. His view being, yes, it was a little unfortunate that £34 million was spent to achieve so little benefit, but these things happen in times of crises like Covid and the Council was doing its best under difficult circumstances.

Even Mr Cooke however found it "surprising that a significant procurement exercise for such a complex and ambitious project was begun before the consultation on the draft plans had finished and before the plans had been approved by Cabinet". Surprising, and just possibly totally inappropriate?

"Going to the market knowing there were going to be 96 projects seems to have warranted just holding fire until consultation had finalised" he ventured. Also by the time the procurement process was underway there was no agreement on the final package of work to be undertaken "It is therefore likely that there was uncertainty within the market for this contract."

It now also seems that during that time the senior officer or officers with day-to-day responsibilities for the Oxford Street District Programme failed to report comprehensively and accurately on the progress of the wider programme. This in turn meant that the Executive Leadership Team were not aware of the scale of the lack of progress and the need for intervention. Most of the reporting was done to



the Programme Director directly, on his instructions. One would have hoped someone might have picked up on this along the way, but apparently not.

Mike Cooke said “During the time of Covid there appears to have been a lack of transparency and failure to communicate from the senior officer(s) with the day-to-day responsibility for the programme as to the extent of the programme slippage”.

“In summary the main lessons I have pointed to can be categorised as being organisation developmental in nature”. There were apparently lots of good intentions and the council ran into a very complex project in great haste - whereas they should have taken breath and drawn back, undertaken more analyses and planning-“by short circuiting some of the planning and analyses, you think you are getting to delivery sooner, whereas in fact it can take longer - this is a case in point- it took longer.”

As for the future, it appears that WCC need not worry, the present council it turns out, is doing just fine. The essential wider engagement with the community, partners and stakeholders seems to have re-commenced and if it carries on with its present path everything should run smoothly. It is “an example of a strong council recognising the need for self improvement.”

In general then, there was little criticism of anyone but the officers and the project manager, now gone, who took the bulk of the blame. The officers were found responsible for the procurement errors, failure to fully report the true state of affairs to the Executive Leadership and failing to relay their concerns.

But it wasn't the officers who pushed the OSD project though - they were only doing what they were told. And it was not the officers who appointed the Project Manager. The officers didn't decide to spend all this money - and the officers didn't decide that Oxford Street needed this particular set of projects, neither did the Project Manager, he was only brought in to secure their implementation.

The existence of the entire project was clearly a political decision, following from the collapse of the previous joint scheme with the Mayor - The Transformation (ie pedestrianisation) of Oxford Street and the need to be seen to be doing something - as we were repeatedly told, “doing nothing was not an option.”

Who's mistake then was it? Who was the person, or persons who took the initial decision to go forward with it all, the decision which resulted in an awful lot of money being spent for awfully little result? Well, the answer after this report is - that we don't know, it wasn't in the terms of reference of the report to find that out apparently. But if we don't know, how do we know that it won't happen again?

## OSD - What the £34 million went on



So where did that £34 million go? The report above, although weak on

So where did that £34 million go? The report above, although weak on conclusions does contain some useful background and details on the broad sums spent to date - although Mr Cooke warned the costs below are those from the officers involved- and apparently, "Identifying the allocation of the costs between the various elements of the programme has proved to be very challenging for officers." No independent audit has been undertaken and "further- those figures could change quite dramatically."

With these caveats, we are told that up to July of 2022, approximately £34 million was spent by the council on the Oxford Street District programme, that is including approximately £6 million which was spent on the Marble Arch Mound (which has already had its own separate investigation).

Removing the money spent on the Mound, that leaved £28m, which falls into the following broad categories:

Costs associated with work completed (including permanent and temporary works): £16million (£6.1million to the contractor and £9.8million incurred by the council).

Design and preparatory work not completed and likely to be useful in future: £3.1million (£1.37million to the contractor and £1.73million incurred by the council).

Design and preparatory work not completed and unlikely to be used in future - £0.86million.

Contractual operating costs to the contractor (contractually agreed and charged monthly) - £8 million.

So it can be seen that a high proportion of the spending - around £24 million has been in respect of just 2 completed works, specifically the Soho Photography Quarter and temporary changes on Oxford St west. But, "It has not proved possible to ascertain whether such elements could have been undertaken at a lower cost for the same benefit." Others will arrive at their own view with regard to whether that was a worthwhile way to spend the majority of that budget.

With regard to what remains - Mr Cooke states "It will be important that the council benefits from the £3.1million investment already made on design and preparatory work to date in regard to other schemes that are still in scope." These are then listed as: Hill Street - Poland Street; Berners Street; Mortimer Street; Davies Street; Orchard Street; Holles Street; Wigmore Street and James Street.

## Pay by Phone

The Sunday Times reports that Councils throughout England are scrapping pay-as-you-go parking machines, leaving motorists to wrestle with up to 30 smartphone apps to pay the charge - or face a significant fine. The removal of parking machines, which give motorists the option of paying on the spot using cash or a card, is particularly difficult for elderly or vulnerable motorists who may not have a smartphone, and pretty difficult even if they do.

Of course Westminster Council adopted this particular economy early on and have had no pay and display machines since 2019. This, combined with the removal of so many of the area's car parks has resulted in multiple problems for the many out of town visitors to Marylebone. They are often here for medical reasons and with no choice but to use a car.

We have received many letters on this problem over the years. It was with some surprise then that we saw that WCC told the Sunday Times that it had received "no reaction whatsoever, not one letter of complaint" since the pay meters were removed. Maybe that is because these disappeared but it thought that these

removed. Maybe that is because those disenfranchised by it thought that there was no point in writing in, it wouldn't change anything.

All this is rather a shame, as if so much money had not been wasted on abortive grandiose plans on Oxford Street detailed above, the council would have had more than enough money to spend on a more humane system of parking over the last 4 years.

Anyway we would like to amend the record - WCC have now got a letter of complaint about Pay by Phone - from us.

## Conversion to Virtual Permits

From Saturday 1 April 2023, the WCC resident permit scheme will become digital, or 'virtual'. This means that for new applications, renewals, replacements and changes from this date, they will begin issuing only virtual resident permits and will no longer be issuing physical, paper resident permits.

Marshals will be able to distinguish whether your vehicle has a valid permit from the database held on their handheld devices, we are assured. It is the case that many of the existing permit types are already virtual, for example trades permits, motorcycle permits, yellow line dispensations etc.

You will still be able to apply for and renew your permit in the same way as you have been, permit criteria and applicable proofs will not change and changes you might need to make to any permit details can still be made in the same way too.

From 1 April, any valid paper permits in use will still be recognised on-street and accepted up to their expiry date.

## WCC Undertakes Licensing Consultation

Westminster City Council is the largest Licensing Authority in the Country. The Council processes in excess of 9,000 applications per year ranging from alcohol and entertainment premises licences under the Licensing Act 2003 to Street Entertainment licences under the London Local Authorities Act 2000.

The main and most significant licensing regime for the Council is the regulation of premises that sell or supply alcohol, provide regulated entertainment and/or late night refreshment under the Licensing Act 2003. The Council has over 3500 licensed premises, the highest number of licensed premises in the Country. The Council's Licensing Service processes over 2,300 premises related applications per year, in addition to over 2,900 Temporary Event Notices under this Act.

Due to the high number of licensed premises in a relatively confined area, parts of the West End have a special policy associated with Cumulative Impact within the Council's Licensing Policy. The Council published its first Cumulative Impact Assessment (CIA) in October 2020 following a change in the law which made this a statutory requirement.

The CIA provides the evidence base to support the Council's Cumulative Impact Policy. The only CIA we had in Marylebone was the Edgware Road CIA and this was removed after failing to justify its retention on the existing evidence base. The Council's CIA is due to be revised this year and they are already starting work on this revision. They would welcome input in this particularly were supported by data and evidence.

If you would like to engage with WCC relating to evidence associated with the CIA and/or put forward a representative for a working group on the future of WCC Licensing Policy please email: [licensingconsultation@westminster.gov.uk](mailto:licensingconsultation@westminster.gov.uk).

## McDonald's Application for 24/7 Operation Refused

On Thursday 9th March, residents - supported by Citizens' Advice - attended, alongside the Met Police and a local councillor, Westminster's Licensing Committee hearing into the application by McDonald's franchisee Capital Arches Group (CAG) to extend the hours of operation of their Edgware Road branch.

Counsel for CAG highlighted the strategies they had in place to mitigate all local concerns about public nuisance and ASB emanating from the premises and, in particular, from delivery riders. They also sought to cast themselves as a "good neighbour" that engaged the local community and deployed litter-pickers across the local area. We were asked to accept London as a 24-hour city and, as such, recognise the economic and employment benefits of a fast food operation till 05:00.

Following a very strong submission by the Met, which all parties considered pivotal, and which included plenty of data highlighting the ASB and crime pressures on the area already and a statement by a ward P.C. As to impacts on residents, residents themselves were invited to offer oral evidence. Taking a cue from the applicant's counsel's own presentation, it was suggested that while residents didn't have strategies to guide them, they did have real, lived experience. This suggested that every problem highlighted in written objections - from delivery riders on pavements through to noise and litter on the side streets - would only be exacerbated by an extension in McDonald's operating hours.

London was, indeed, a 24-hour city, in certain parts, but more importantly, it was a patchwork of neighbourhoods, which varied between vibrant and peaceful; residents in our area were entitled to quiet amenity and a decent night's sleep. There had been no approach from CAG to local residents' representatives until the application was already lodged [the team present at the hearing indicated they would like to address and improve upon this] and there had certainly never been any evidence of litter-pickers in the streets. The council's own street cleaners did an excellent job in trying to keep on top of the rubbish, but would it not be better to prevent this from accumulating in the first place by limiting late-night fast food consumption.

Residents' objections were championed by Harrowby & District Residents' Association and a resident of Brendon Street, immediately behind the subject premises and underpinned by excellent legal representation from Richard Brown at Westminster's Licensing Project (CAB).

In reaching their decision, the Committee agreed with the objectors' assertions that problems currently apparent before midnight would, in all likelihood, continue into the early hours and the application was refused as not contributing to the council's licensing objectives.

## Up to a Quarter of London Commercial Space 'Unlettable' under New Rules



According to a recent review, which is inclusive of buildings that are currently eligible for exemptions, it is estimated that: "Up to 24% of inner London commercial stock could be unlawful for new lettings and unlawful to let from this April 2023 because they do not meet Minimum Energy Efficiency Standards (MEES)", according to BNP Paribas Real Estate analysis of government data.

Up to 27% could, under proposed MEES regulation changes, be unlawful to let from April 2027. Just over 26% is rated C and could be unlawful to let from April 2030

Only 23% of inner London stock is rated A+, A, or B and is currently fully MEES-compliant according to current legislation

Stephen Wolfe, head of commercial at BNP Paribas Real Estate, said: "This will only get worse as the government continue to tighten standards."

One thing is certain, we will be hearing a lot more about this. These rules are on course for creating a massive problem which is going to grow and grow once the new requirements start biting. It will also have an equally dramatic effect on residential properties, both to let and for sale.

## WCC Crackdown on Empty Homes

Westminster City Council has launched a crackdown on empty homes in the capital and vowed to free up more property for private rent and affordable homes. Interestingly they may find that much of this property will not be legal to let anyway soon under the new EPC rules coming in - see above.

Between 2021 and 2022, the number of homes on the authority's council tax database declared as long term empty residential properties (LTEP) rose by 123% to 1,150 properties. The real number is expected to be higher, due to the previous reliance on self-reporting.

The council has now published a new strategy introducing a range of measures, focused on properties vacant for more than 6 months, which could pose issues for some of our more affluent Marylebone occupants who prefer to winter in more amenable climes.

Westminster will introduce an "empty property" officer to help fully unpick why so many homes in prime locations have been left vacant in recent years.

"The new approach aims to bring homes back into use, increase housing supply, especially in the private rented sector, and to improve knowledge of LTEP and how to tackle them, through an alliance of stakeholders. Where there are opportunities for empty homes to be used for temporary accommodation or affordable housing we will look to take them".

Adam Hug, Leader of Westminster City Council, said: "In some respects, having some of the country's most desirable postcodes is a good problem to have. It's great that people from across the world invest in our city but the rise in vacant homes is alarming and we know the current figures are likely to underestimate the problem."

"These measures are an important first step in tackling the issue of empty houses in Westminster, where absentee international investment can hollow out our communities and waste a vital supply of homes".

"Our current powers are blunt instruments. We need to gain a better understanding of the problem and make it desirable to rent vacant property while penalising those who leave much needed homes empty."

# Lights Out for City of London

Concilio report an announcement from the City of London Corporation to office occupier turn your lights down to reduce visual pollution and save energy. The Corporation is consulting on planning guidance which means developers will be required to submit a detailed strategy for how their buildings are lit.

During the evening curfew - starting 10pm for residential and heritage areas, 11pm for cultural and tourist areas - occupiers will be asked to turn off or dim all external illumination other than that required for safety or crime prevention. Whilst this would only apply to new buildings, existing occupiers would be required to agree to the plans as well.

If passed, it will be interesting to see if London's boroughs follow this approach to reduce the impact of artificial lights and help reach carbon net zero goals.

## Kyiv Road



**Westminster City Council leader Adam Hug with the new Kyiv Road sign (Image: Westminster City Council)**

Westminster Council have changed the name of part of Bayswater Road - that part nearest to the Russian Embassy to Kyiv Road, and there can be no mistaking that message.

Leader of Westminster City Council, Adam Hug, said the new road name was "a fitting gesture" to commemorate Ukraine's inspiring bravery.

He said: "The request for a new place name has come from the Ukrainian community itself. Westminster is home to Ukrainians displaced by the war, and our residents have opened their hearts and their doors to those fleeing Putin's war machine

war machine.

“As the centre of an international capital, it seemed to us entirely fitting that part of our city should carry a torch for the unbowed defenders of Ukraine. It’s a small stretch of road, but we want to show the people of Ukraine that their struggle has a visible place in our city.”

The change of street name is supported by Bayswater councillors, and was paid for from existing ward budgets, meaning there is no additional cost to residents.

Vadym Prystaiko, Ukraine’s ambassador to the UK, said that renaming a part of Bayswater Road is “a reminder of the struggle of Ukraine”. He said: “Kyiv Road is a symbol of solidarity with the Ukrainian people and a tribute to their unwavering spirit in the face of aggression. It is a reminder that the struggle of Ukraine has the attention of the international community.”

## Deregulation of Alcohol Off Sales

A warning below from Richard Brown of Citizens Advice Westminster on proposed permanent deregulation of alcohol sales:

In July 2020 the Government deregulated ‘off sales’ of alcohol as a temporary measure to address the effects of the Covid-19 pandemic. The deregulation was initially intended to last until September 2021 but was subsequently extended to September 2022 and then to September 2023.

The deregulation enabled premises with no current permission for off sales to nevertheless provide off sales to 11pm in an open container. Premises which have permission for off sales but restricted by condition e.g. an earlier terminal hour/restricted to a certain area/in sealed containers etc would nevertheless be able to provide off sales to 11pm in an open container.

The deregulation of off sales was linked to the temporary ‘pavement licence’ regime, which was originally a temporary measure but which the Government intends to make permanent in the Levelling Up and Regeneration Bill.

When the deregulation of off sales was extended to September 2023, the Government committed to consulting on whether and how to make some form of deregulation permanent. The consultation is now live.

The Government is also as part of the consultation seeking views on permanently increasing the number of Temporary Event Notices (TENs) permitted per year.

See Institute of Licensing summary [here](#), and [link here](#).

My view is that the deregulation should not be made permanent whether in whole or in part. The consideration of applications on their own merits taking into account the views of local residents is fundamental to the Licensing Act 2003. Concerns about applications for licences often centre around outside activity (whether customers drinking outside or dispersing at the end of the night) and it seems to me to be a retrograde step to sweep away the regulatory process for permitting off sales when there are no longer exceptional circumstances pertaining (i.e. the circumstances which pertained during the pandemic).

You are of course entitled to respond to the consultation yourself, and I would encourage you to do so. The consultation closes on 1 May.

Richard Brown  
Licensing Advice Project  
Citizens Advice Westminster

## Long Time Chair of Mayfair Residents Group Dies



Ron Whelan, long-time chair of Mayfair Residents Group has died after a long illness.

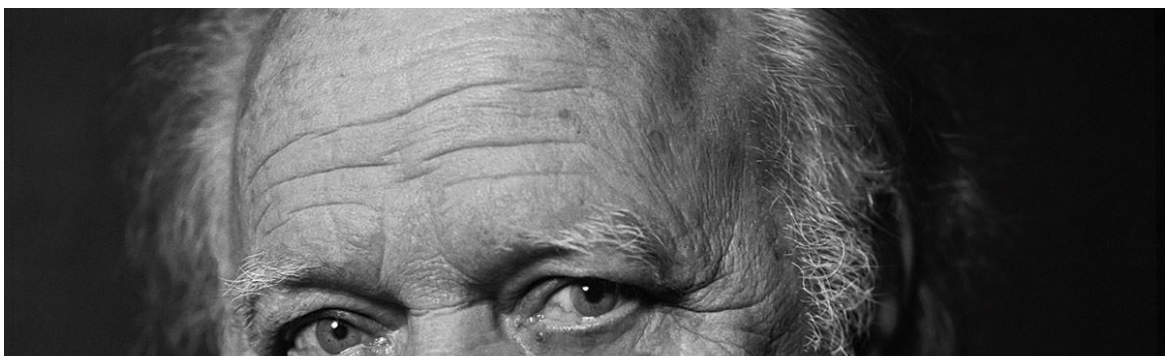
Ron for many years specialised in New Product Development and ran his own advertising consultancy. He moved to Mayfair in 1975 where he married and raised a family and Mayfair has been his home ever since.

In 2008 he became a founding member with Mike Dunn of the Mayfair Residents Group (MRG) and was the chairman for many years. The MRG has been very active in promoting the residents' causes in crucial areas such as planning and licensing.

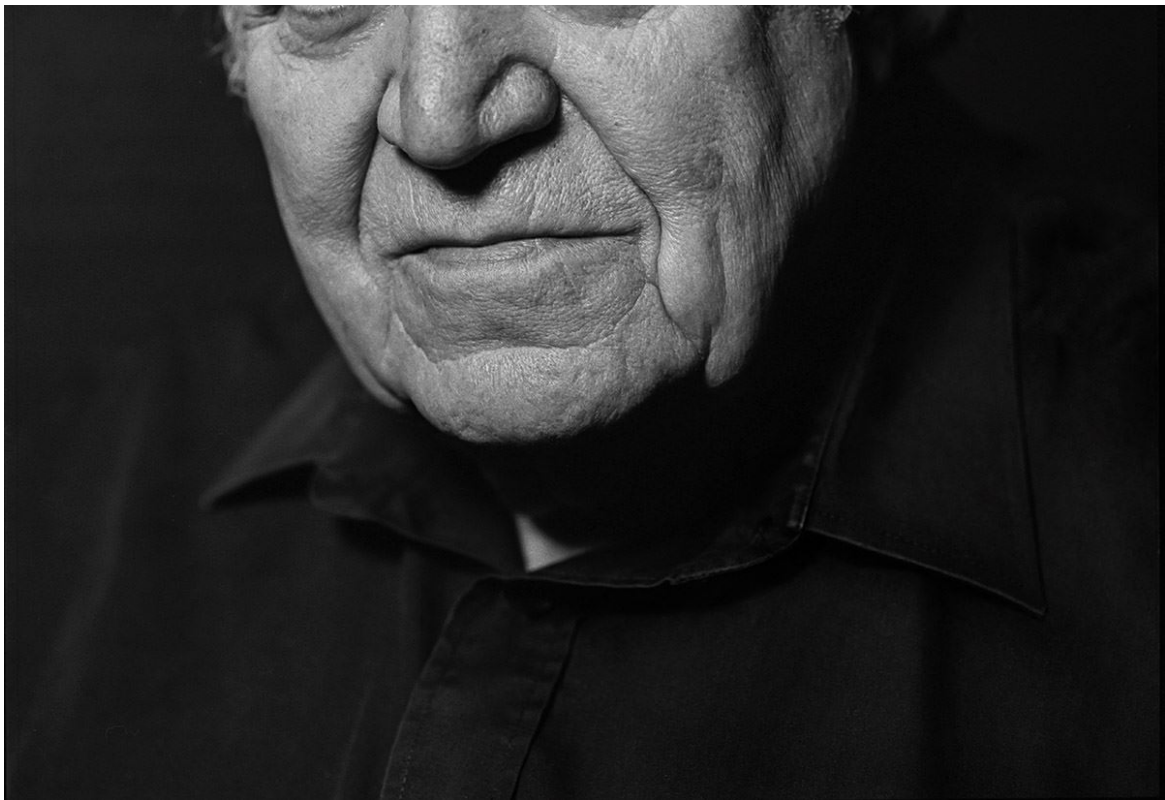
In 2018 Ron stood as candidate for the Campaign Against the Pedestrianisation of Oxford Street in the West End Ward, and was thus pivotal in persuading WCC to drop their support of the TfL pedestrianisation programme. Even though Ron had been standing on a single issue which the council had conceded at the last minute, he still returned a very respectable amount of votes at the subsequent election.

Ron was a good friend and servant to the residential cause in Mayfair over an extended period and he will be sorely missed by all who knew him

## Soho Society Honorary President Dies







Also this month, Soho has lost their longstanding and prominent member of their community, Honorary President of the Soho Society, Leslie Hardcastle. He was founder of the Soho Housing Association, news presenter of the Soho Society Hour, honorary chairman of the British Film Institute (BFI), the BFI's film festival programmer for 23 years, deviser, founder and curator of the Museum of the Moving Image and BAFTA winner.

The Soho Society reported that Leslie's "energy, commitment, humour, intelligence and kindness is woven into the fabric of the Soho Society and we will have much to do to carry on the work he started over 50 years ago. Leslie will be greatly missed."

The BFI has published an obituary for Leslie, which you can read [here](#).

## Seven years of Closures on Euston Road

HS2 works that will be taking place on Euston Road for the next seven years. In order to build the new high-speed station and London Underground (LU) interchange at Euston.

These works include utilities diversions that will move services away from the area of the new HS2 station and London Underground ticket hall, and excavations for new LU passenger tunnels.

Survey works are currently taking place on Euston Road which require localised closure of pavements and bus lanes in some areas. Further works will involve lane reductions on Euston Road between North Gower Street and Eversholt Street.

The works will start on 20 February 2023 with the removal of the central reservation and will last for around seven years.

We are assured that works can be carried out while maintaining traffic flows on Euston Road in both directions, with at least four lanes in operation- which is

more than the London Mayor had managed over Covid and beyond- with no road works.

## Paddington Green

In March Westminster's (Major Applications) Sub Committee, met to formalise their consultation response for the redevelopment of Paddington Green Police Station following its call-in last year by the Mayor of London. The meeting was chaired by Cllr Ruth Bush.

Following Westminster's original decision in 2021 to refuse the application, the Deputy Mayor for Planning, Regeneration and Skills, issued a direction to the Council that the Mayor of London will act as the Local Planning Authority and determine the application.

Amendments to the scheme were subsequently submitted.

These changes included a decrease in the lower-level footprint to create more public realm space, creating narrower but taller buildings more separated than before. The removal of office floorspace, an increase in the level of affordable housing, the reconfiguration of residential layouts, an increase in dual aspect flats, complete stopping up of Newcastle Place and improvements to the Harrow Road subway.

The applicants highlighted the significant quantum of affordable housing and public benefits that would be provided by the application. Little Venice Councillors - Cllr Lorraine Dean and Cllr Melvyn Caplan spoke against the application citing daylight/sunlight concerns, impact on the townscape views from additional height and the architectural quality. Officers recommended that the committee agree to object to the revised application.

The committee then discussed a number of issues including the benefits of additional affordable housing, loss of office accommodation, the revised height, mass and design, materiality, loss of daylight/sunlight, the quality of residential accommodation, sustainability & biodiversity and the stopping up of Newcastle Place.

The committee unanimously agreed to submit an objection on behalf of Westminster City Council in line with those outlined by officers. The application will now be determined by the Mayor of London at a hearing on Friday 17th March. Find out more [here](#).

## Save Out Buses Campaign Continues

An update from our MP Nickie Aiken:

Last week, I sat down with officials from Transport for London to continue pressing the case to save our vital buses; the 211 hospital bus and route 11 to the City.

The 211 is Westminster's hospital bus route, connecting us to St Thomas', the Royal Brompton, the Royal Marsden, Chelsea & Westminster, and Charing Cross hospitals. But the Mayor of London's plan will see this critical route cut from Westminster altogether.

Route 11 connects us to the City, allowing a seamless, accessible connection between our Town Office

between our two cities.

Both routes are critical for our neighbourhoods, and I am working day in, day out to stop the Mayor in his tracks and Save Our Buses. Thousands of local people have already signed my petition, but if you haven't, now is the time."

Sign my petition to Save the 11 and 211 here. And ask your neighbours, friends and family to sign the petition too.

**Meanwhile our analysis of what the changes mean for Marylebone, below:**

Route 16 - is being withdrawn from Cricklewood to Victoria via Edgware Road.

Existing route 332 which parallels the route between Cricklewood and Paddington Green - terminating at Paddington - is being renumbered from 332 to 16.

To replace the 16 to Victoria, route 6 is re-routed to Victoria - so it is being withdrawn at Hyde Park Corner from turning left to Piccadilly and onto the Aldwych.

Route 23 - is replacing the 16 between Hyde Park Corner to Aldwych, but withdrawn from the section between Hyde Park Corner to Hammersmith.

So the only loss of a direct route is the 23 to Hammersmith via Knightsbridge.

There were plans for route 98 changes, but that route remains as it is.

## Cost of Public Transport

For many Londoners however, whether the buses are there or not - they are too expensive. A third of Londoners say that the cost of public transport puts them off, and over half would support higher road taxes to improve the service, according to a survey by Hitachi Rail.

Although high ticket prices deter one in three Londoners from travelling by public transport, commuters here are still more likely to travel to work by bus or train than counterparts around the world, the survey of commuters across the world reports.

Residents in eight cities including London, Paris and Washington DC were asked about their commutes. Commuters in most cities drive to work but Londoners bucked the trend with only 38% reporting commuting by car and 27% saying they never drove in the city.

Almost half of all Londoners say that they use buses to commute, the highest percentage of bus use in any city surveyed, whilst 35% travel by train and 20% by the London Underground.

There were signs of tension possibly being driven by the cost of living crisis, with more than 1 in 3 (37%) Londoners citing the cost of public transport as a factor which discourages them from using it. Over half (54%) of Londoners surveyed even said they would be likely to support increased road charges in order to fund a better-connected public transport system.

Ludmil Neykov, Chief Digital Officer at Hitachi Rail, said: "Mass adoption of public transport for journeys currently made by car is vital if the world's global cities are to meet sustainability targets and improve air quality."

The fieldwork for the survey was conducted by Savanta ComRes in August 2022 and included 1009 respondents from London.

The full report is [here](#).

## Creeping Pedestrianisation?

The Soho Society reports that the council is proposing to pedestrianise Great Chapel Street and parts of Hollen and Dean Street.

The Soho Society is concerned that if pedestrianised it will automatically become available for al fresco dining once a pavement licence is granted which the council is obliged to do under national legislation. They say: "Our working assumption is that if traffic is removed then we get pavement licences until 11pm 6 nights a week."

"It is really disappointing that this sort of thing is still happening under the new administration. It destroys trust."

The survey is now up can be found on the link [here](#).

## Readers Letters

This month we have a letter from a member impressed with the rejuvenation of Great Portland Street:

'Can I urge residents to try a rejuvenated Great Portland Street. It used to be just rag trade wholesalers, now it's a really useful shopping street, and it's got wide pavements, lots of proper crossings, and doesn't attract tourists.

Go along Wigmore Street and cross Portland Place, and there's a mirage! A post office - which is gloriously empty at weekends, and the staff have the patience of saints. Look up Great Portland Street towards Euston Road, and amongst the eateries and pubs, you've got a Ryman's, two hardware shops for the plastic bucket of your dreams, and for forty somethings, a bike shop and another for motorbike spares.

You can have your hair done, your nails done, your teeth shone, or have a cricket net at Sixes, buy cook's knives, or whisky, or if you're elderly you see what it's like to be a thirty something and buy a vegan sausage roll from Greggs, or just admit your age and get biscuits from the minuscule Sainsburys.

Why has this revolution happened? Because the cross streets between Great Portland Street and Tottenham Court Road have become massively residential, with new and renovated flats which people really live in - and why not? Two, soon to be three, tiny, but RHS Gold Standard garden squares filled with mature trees have been introduced, and all of these shops have arrived to accommodate residents; Tottenham Court Road has even captured the only Lidl in the West End, and you can get three buses right back here. It's not ideal, there's no bank, but there are no crowds either.

## The Marylebone Diary







## **The Portman Estate**

Lord and Lady Portman hosted a wonderful evening in The Portman Estate offices to launch the book 'From Somerset to Portman Square' written by Richard Bowden and Tom Mayberry. The book, which was published in late last year, tells the fascinating story of the Portman family from its West Country origins in mediaeval times to the creation of the great London estate that bears its name in Marylebone. Many Marylebone residents were in attendance. The Marylebone Association and St Marylebone Society came together for the evening, providing a great opportunity for the two societies to meet and share their passion for the history of the area. We are really looking forward to SMS committee member Mike Wood's book on the history of Marylebone later in the year!





### **Chiltern Firehouse**

Our thanks go to the Chiltern Firehouse for hosting a community event for local residents to consult on its proposals for street planters and an extension to the licensing hours for its outside courtyard. The event was an opportunity for residents to meet, hear more about Chiltern Firehouse's plans and share their concerns or support. Balancing the interests of businesses and residents in our area is notoriously difficult and generally requires some compromises on both sides. However, the fact that the Chiltern Firehouse took the time to meet and listen is encouraging in itself.

### **Wendover Court**

Representatives of the MA met with Wendover Court Management, a group of Chiltern Street residents to discuss the planning application for further development at 19-35 Baker Street. Wendover Court Management and the MA oppose this application in its current form due to concerns as to the impact it will have on the quality of life and well-being of Chiltern Street residents.

### **Fairer Westminster**

Westminster City Council hosted a Fairer Westminster lunch in the Hellenic Centre for business in Marylebone. It was great to catch up with Cllr Adam Hugh, Cllr Geoff Barraclough and Mark Kildea from Howard De Walden and many local business and the BIDS.

The focus of the event was on Climate Change and Zero carbon 2040 plan. Non domestic buildings in Westminster contribute to 71% of greenhouse gas emissions. WCC also presented case studies on the North Paddington High Streets project. One such was the new Enterprise Space initiative. A notable example of this was The Rebel Business School which was launched on 29 November 2022 and marked the transformation of the previously vacant council property at 470 Harrow Road into a new 2,000 sq. ft. community enterprise space and business school with Rebel having taken on the first 5-year lease. Rebel will be running regular start-up and growth courses offering free business training to new start-ups, young people and local entrepreneurs.

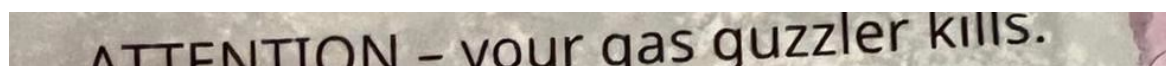
### **Crime in Marylebone**

In Marylebone there were 245 crimes reported in December 2022 and 255 in January 2023 (+4.1%). Data for February of this year shows a jump in reported offences to 300 which is a 17.6% increase from the previous month. The most commonly reported crimes this year have been Theft, Vehicle Offences, Burglary and Violence Against the Person. Detailed crime statistics for your postcode can be found on the Metropolitan Police website ([www.met.police.uk](http://www.met.police.uk)). You can also follow the Marylebone Police Twitter account for local updates (@MPSMarylebone).

The next Ward Panel Meeting for Marylebone will be held on April 24th from 6:15pm - 8:15pm at The St Marylebone CE School in room CO2.

### **Be Aware car owners:**

There have been reported incidents from Marylebone Residents of a group letting air out of car tyres and leaving a note on the windscreen for the owners titled 'Gas Guzzlers'. Please call 911 and/or report it @MPSMarylebone.





ATTENTION

We have deflated one or more of your tyres.

You'll be angry, but don't take it personally. It's not you, it's your car.

We did this because driving around urban areas in your massive vehicle has huge consequences for others.

Car companies try to convince us we need massive cars. But SUVs and 4x4s are a disaster for our climate. SUVs are the second-largest cause of the global rise in carbon dioxide emissions over the past decade - more than the entire aviation industry.

The world is facing a climate emergency. According to the UN, millions of people are already dying from climate change-related causes - drought, hurricanes, floods, forced migration, starvation. So far, the impacts on you have probably been minimal. We need emergency action to reduce emissions immediately. We're taking actions into our own hands because our governments and politicians will not.

Even if you don't care about the impacts on people far away from you, there's also consequences for your neighbours. SUVs cause more air pollution than smaller cars. SUVs are more likely to kill people than normal cars in collisions. Psychological studies show SUV drivers are more likely to take risks on the road. SUVs are unnecessary, and pure vanity.

That's why we have taken this action. You will have no difficulty getting around without your gas guzzler, with walking, cycling or public transport.

(Driving a hybrid or electric? These are still polluting, dangerous and cause congestion. See more on our website)



## The Tyre Extinguishers

[www.tyreextinguishers.com](http://www.tyreextinguishers.com)

### Winter Wonderland Woes

On the subject of crime, it would seem that Winter Wonderland rather puts Marylebone in the shade- according to the Daily Mail - they relate how the festive family event in Hyde Park has been plagued with 492 thefts, 139 assaults, 15 sex attacks and 30 gun possession offences over five years

Assaults, sex attacks, robbery, drugs and firearms possession are among the 790 offences recorded by police at Winter Wonderland over the last five years it has run. In the last year alone, the Metropolitan Police recorded 135 offences at the festive family-friendly attraction in Hyde Park, data obtained through freedom of information requests has revealed. This was up six from the previous year, which saw 129 offences reported, although from 2018 to 2021 the number had been falling.

### Canvas to convert Oxford Street retail unit into five-storey flexible workspace

Property Week reports that Canvas Offices plans to repurpose 321 Oxford Street, which has been utilised as a ground-floor retail unit and accompanying storage space, into a modern flexible workspace. Canvas Offices' plans for the building come after a report by Savills late last year showed almost 1m sq ft of retail space

Some other reports by online real estate portals suggest that retail space on Oxford Street would be converted to offices within the next five years. Read more

### **Capco and Shaftesbury merger cleared by CMA**

Property Week reports that The CMA has “unconditionally cleared” the all-share merger between two of Westminster’s largest landholders, Capco and Shaftesbury, following the phase one review of the proposed deal. The deal, which is valued at £3.5bn, was agreed by the two companies in June 2022. Read more

The company will be known as Shaftesbury Capital and has a portfolio primarily focused on Covent Garden, Seven Dials, the opera quarter, Carnaby Street, Soho, and Chinatown. The company will dominate the Soho and Covent Garden area of central London.

### **What’s on?**

#### **The Marylebone Theatre**

The Dry House by Eugene O’ Hare is showing from 31st March- 6th May

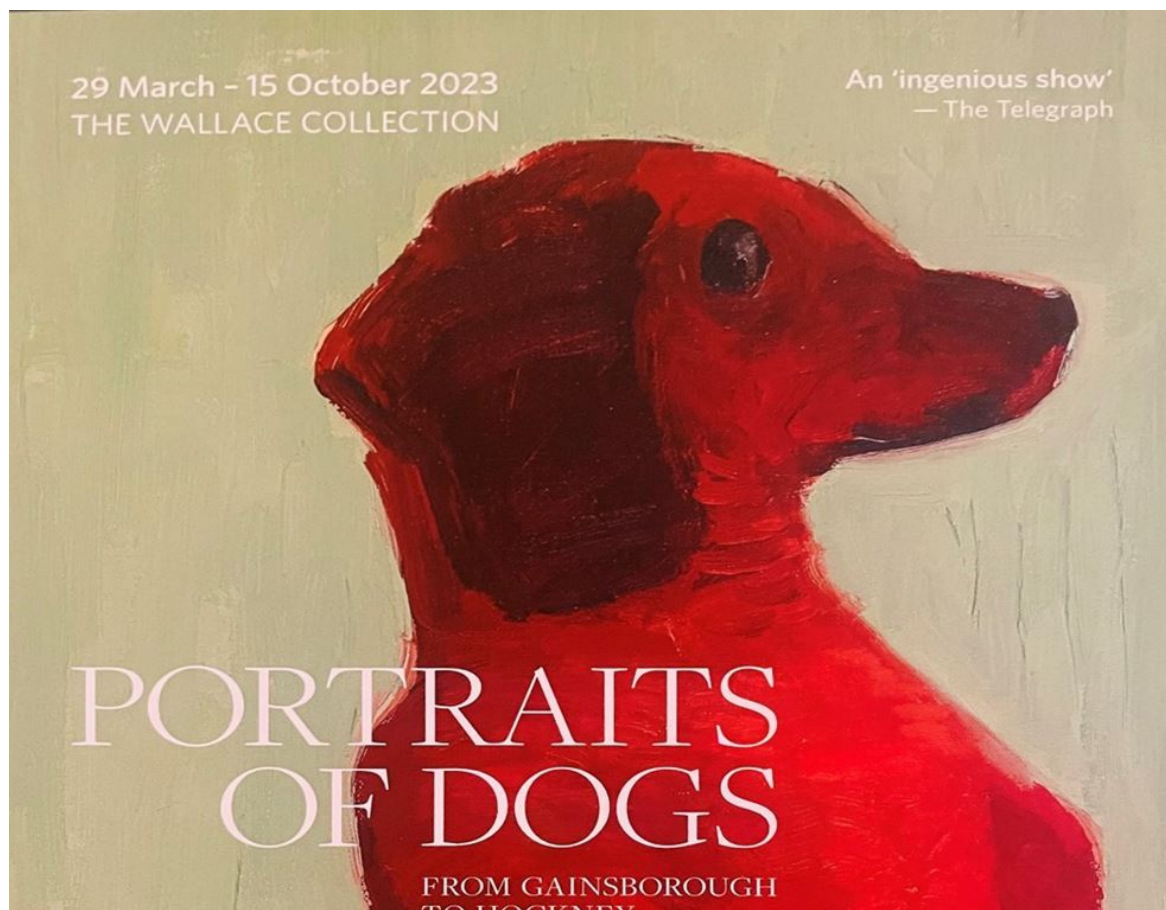
Get your tickets now!

#### **Wallace Collection**

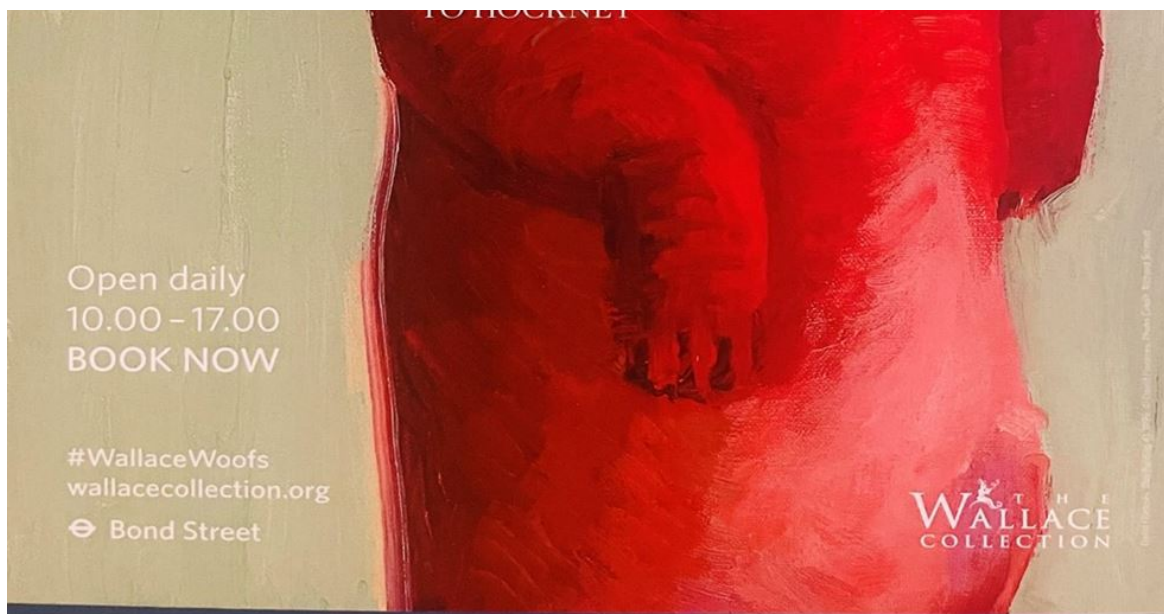
Portrait of Dogs

29th March-15th April

Bringing over 50 works of art the exhibition presents a broad range of dogs with each painter challenging themselves on how best to represent mankind’s most faithful and fearless friend. There are some beautiful photographs of the Queen and her Corgis.







## New Business Member

# THE LUCKY SAINT<sup>W1</sup>

**The Lucky Saint 58 Devonshire Street, W1W 5EA**

We are delighted to welcome The Lucky Saint as new members. Previously the much loved Masons Arms pub, a Marylebone institution for over 170 years, now reimagined as a base of operations for the UK's number 1 independent alcohol free beer brand. The pub is serving Lucky Saint beer and other no/low alcohol drinks alongside more usual alcoholic offerings.

## Announcements

### Mansfield Park at St Marylebone Church

Mansfield Park, is an opera by Jonathan Dove after the famous Jane Austen novel. This is the only London performance of this opera that is taking place this year and, as it will be held in the heart of Marylebone at St Marylebone Church. We are hosting this performance with the Waterperry Opera Festival as part of their ten-date national summer tour of this opera. The opera is directed by Rebecca Meltzer, with Music Director Ashley Beauchamp accompanying on piano and 10 singers forming the ensemble cast. This production has received widespread critical-acclaim, receiving a myriad of positive reviews and selling out three runs at Waterperry over the years.

This period-perfect opera brings Jane Austen's world to life with charming wit and stunning music. This production has received widespread critical-acclaim and has had three sold out runs at Waterperry over the years. This intimate production brings audiences right into the centre of the action. Perfect for Austen and music lovers alike, be prepared to be whisked away.

The link to the event booking is [here](#).

Duration: Approx. 2h15m, includes a 20 minute interval.

## Connaught Village Green Consultation Artwork

Westminster City Council is consulting on exciting proposals to create Connaught Village Green, a new social space and focal point for the community on the Hyde Park Estate, at the junction of Connaught Street and Kendal Street. Proposals include safer crossings, new trees, seating and cycle parking.

If the scheme is supported and a decision is made to go ahead with the proposals, work could start on site in January 2024.

The consultation closes on Sunday 2 April 2023. Marble Arch BID will be supporting the proposals. You can complete a questionnaire [online](#), or feed your comments in through us.

## Portland Place Engagement Sessions

The [Howard de Walden Estate](#) in conjunction with Publica, and NRP began public consultations on the above public realm project on 24th February and will host the next session at 6pm on 9th May.

## The Hellenic Centre

20 April 2023 at 7pm at the The Hellenic Centre

TICKETS £10/8 concessions | Booking via [Eventbrite](#) or 020 7487 5060

Presented by pianist Christos Marantos, the programme Tradition and Vision takes the audience on a journey through time from the Baroque to the present day. Facets of human life such as grief, hope and joy, become illuminated by different genres of music, bridging different epochs.

The scattered piano works from classical music literature throughout the programme are in dialogue with contemporary music of the Lower Austrian composer Herbert Lauermann and his Greek colleague Giorgos Koumendakis. Central to the recital and premiered by Christos Marantos is the piece Triptychon by Anestis Logothetis, whose memory was celebrated in the festival Wien Modern 2021.

Supported by the Austrian Cultural Forum London and the Embassy of Greece in London.

## Visit 10 Downing St Garden

There's a chance to visit the private garden behind 10 Downing Street in June, as it will be open as part of Open Garden Squares Weekend.

Unsurprisingly, tickets are being allocated by a ballot, so you can't just romp up on the day for a look.

Constructed in 1736, the garden is dominated by an open lawn with rose beds commissioned by the late Baroness Thatcher, and is home to a bronze sculpture by Barbara Hepworth. Expert gardeners will be on hand to answer questions about the half acre site, and offer insights into how the garden is becoming increasingly sustainable and a haven for wildlife.

The ballot is free to enter, and there will be two tours on Saturday 10th June 2023, each for 24 people.

You can enter the ballot, which is open until 5th April from [here](#).

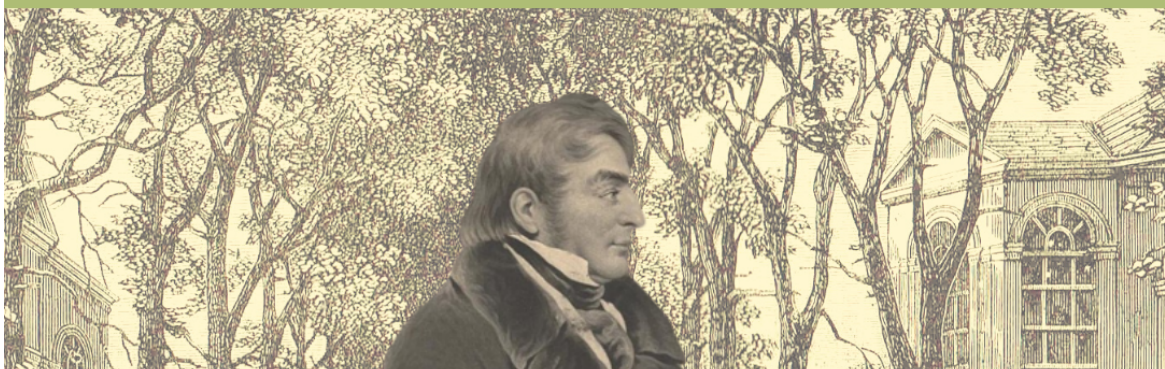
Up to two tickets per applicant, and you will need to bring a photographic ID for each named person in the ballot.

The tours of 10 Downing Street's garden will take place over the same weekend as Open Garden Squares Weekend, where over 100 normally private gardens are open to the public.

Although the Downing Street garden tours are free, the other gardens require an entry pass, which lets you into all the gardens all weekend, and can be bought from [here](#).

## Turner in Marylebone

**J.M.W. Turner**  
*With Catherine Parry-Wingfield*







**Free entry**

**6:30pm, 3rd May 2023**

The art historian Catherine Parry-Wingfield will be talking about J.M.W. Turner at St Marylebone Church. Tickets can be booked on our new website: 2023 Lecture Series: J.M.W. Turner - St Marylebone. Tickets can be booked on our new website: [2023 Lecture Series: J.M.W. Turner - St Marylebone](#).

## St Marylebone Church



St Marylebone Church Celebrates its Changing Lives Project and all that it has achieved.

The event will take place on Thursday 25th May.

## Cartoon Exhibition

Since taking office, Boris has been THE MOST cartooned politician in the history of our country. To celebrate - or mourn that fact depending on where you fall - The Cartoon Museum has collected a diverse selection of political cartoons detailing the different phases of his career and the wider societal impact on Britain over the last four years.

This exhibition runs from Tue, 11th Oct 2022 to Sun, 16th Apr 2023.

From the 2019 Election to Brexit to Covid (and Partygate) to Ukraine and finally his early exit from office. The nation's favourite newspaper cartoonists have provided excellent work the Museum is excited to add to their collection. But a public call-out was also made to try and contact some of the more marginalised



voices in cartoon and comic art. No matter the race, orientation or political affiliation, cartoonists of all creeds have had LOTS to say about Boris - good and bad - these last few years and The Cartoon Museum wants to show it all.

Cost: £8.50

The Cartoon Museum wants to show it all.

Contact and Booking Details

More information at this [website](#).

No need to book tickets - just turn up on the day.

Location  
Cartoon Museum, 63 Wells Street, London, W1A 3AE

## Association Events

### **COFFEE MORNING**

Wednesday 12th April at 10am.

Howard de Walden Estates Office,  
23 Queen Anne Street, London, W1G 9DL

The Howard de Walden Estates will once again host our Coffee Morning in their Queen Anne Street headquarters, home to Howard de Walden since the late 1800's. Come and enjoy coffee, tea and pastries in the lovely space of the hub area on their top floor. Many of us did attend a coffee morning here last February and had requested a return visit. Places need to be booked before 10th April, to allow for catering, so to reserve a place please email Lois German on [lois.german@marylebone.org](mailto:lois.german@marylebone.org) or telephone 0207 487 2706.

### **IBERICA MARYLEBONE**

Tuesday 30th May at 7pm

195 Great Portland Street, W1W 5PS (Corner Devonshire Street & Great Portland Street)

Come and join us for dinner at Ibérica Marylebone and enjoy one of the most authentic Spanish dining experiences in London. Under the guidance of Michelin-starred Chef Director Nacho Manzano, we will have a collection of Iberica favourites including appetisers, main tapas and deserts, all served on a sharing basis. The cost per person is £45.00 to include 12.5% service, payable in advance. There is an extensive drinks list and you will therefore be able to select and pay individually for drinks on the night.

To book please email [lois.german@marylebone.org](mailto:lois.german@marylebone.org) or telephone 0207 487 2706.

### **FUTURE DATES FOR YOUR DIARY**

#### **COFFEE MORNING**

Wednesday 14th June at 10.30am  
The Wallace Collection Details in May Newsletter

## Regular Association Events

### **BOOK CLUB**

Monday 3 April at 6.30 pm

The King's Head, Westmoreland Street, W1G 8PJ

April's book: The Promise by Damon Galgut

May's book: The Gift of Radio by Justin Webb

Book Club now meets on the first MONDAY of each month, upstairs at The King's Head pub in Westmoreland Street. All book choices are available in paperback and on e-readers. For further details – and anyone interested in joining us - please contact Liz Queenan (liz.queenan@marylebone.org) or tel: 020 7486 3709.

### **SCRABBLE CLUB**

Tuesday 11 and 25 April 2023

The Duke of Wellington, 94a Crawford Street, London W1H 2HQ

The Scrabble Club normally meets in the private dining-room at The Duke of Wellington pub in Crawford Street on the 2nd and 4th Tuesdays of each month, from 5 until 7, with Scrabble sets and dictionaries provided – and all levels of players very welcome. Anyone interested in joining and/or wanting further information should contact [rosemary.forgan@marylebone.org](mailto:rosemary.forgan@marylebone.org) or 0788 789 1977.

### **PUB EVENING**

Monday 17th April at 6.30 pm (Please note change of date due to Easter)

The Larrik, 32 Crawford Place, London W1H 5NN

Continuing with our regular bi-monthly pub evenings at this cosy, warm and welcoming gastro pub with great food, wines, beers and cocktails. Everybody is welcome so do come along whether you are a regular or new to our pub evening, where you will be greeted by our hostess for the evening - Anne Marie Johnson.

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*Mailing Address: Marylebone Association, 6 Wimpole Street, London, W1G 8AL*

If you have news get in touch by emailing [news@marylebone.org](mailto:news@marylebone.org)

[Unsubscribe](#)