



Marylebone Association

Newsletter February 2023

Dear {Contact_First_Name},

From the Chair

As many will know, 2023 is the year of the rabbit. According to Chinese tradition this year is "likely to be calm and gentle, bringing an energy that will help those looking for more of a balanced life."

Given some of the challenges that we have had to face in the last 12 months I am sure many will look forward to that!

But based on my first four weeks of the new year as chair of the Marylebone Association I am not sure that is how the year will go for the Marylebone Association. We have had a very busy January getting out into the community, talking to residents, business and other stakeholders in the area.

We are continuing to consult on the proposed changes to the Marylebone library. We are very aware how precious the resource is to the area and how many people are fearing the impact of changes.

We have spoken to residents about various issues in Harley Place and Marylebone Mews and Chiltern Street as residents' lives are being impacted by development and the potential loss of green spaces. I fear getting the balance right between commercial and residential interests in the area is going to be difficult this year.

We have had meetings with the police about crime in the area, we've toured St Marylebone School and met with head teacher Ms Kathryn Pugh, inspected fly tipping sites, spoken to residents about anti-social behaviour, the list has been long.

Finally, we are really excited about the potential changes and improvements to Paddington Street gardens. This is such a vital green space in the area.

But we are not done! If there is anything you think the Association should be focussing on this year, please drop me an email. This is Marylebone's Association. Without the people living and working in Marylebone we are nothing and without your support we won't be able to achieve anything like what we want to! A big thank you to the committee for all the energy and enthusiasm shown in our first committee meeting. There were some new great ideas, and I am really excited about what the Association can achieve this year.

julie.redmond@marylebone.org

Association January Party



Most people would agree that January is a dreadful month – but one regular ray of light in the gloom for Marylebone Association members is - The January Drinks Party!

Once again this took place at The Oriental Club, Stratford House – such an oasis of old-world calm and charm, it is always hard to believe we are just metres away from bustling Oxford St. On Thursday January 26th some 60 members gathered to celebrate the (now-not-so-new) New Year - and what a gathering it was.

In the beautiful Georgian surroundings of this Grade I listed private members club, the drinks flowed freely and the delicious canapés just kept on coming.

Friends, old and new, mingled happily with our committee members and councillors and we had a good mix of residential and business members. It was a delightful opportunity as well for MA members to meet our new Chair Julie Redmond who took on the role at the end of last year. She outlined some of the issues which need to be tackled in the forthcoming months but added that as an organisation we had accomplished a lot in the last year and had much to be proud of, listing several outcomes which simply would not have happened without the Association's input.

Also present as our guests were Cllr Geoff Barraclough, Cabinet member for planning, John Zamit, chairman of SEBRA and our ward councillor, Barbara Arzymanow who also spoke on some local issues.

A good time was had by all – thanks in no small part to the ever attentive staff at the Oriental Club. We would like to convey a big thank you to them and everyone who came along and helped the party go with such a swing. A special thanks to Rosemary and Lois on our social team for all their work in organising the event.

Once again, a few members had to be turned away as numbers are limited – so do make a note in your diary as soon as next year's event is listed in a forthcoming Newsletter.

Paddington Gardens - a New Vision



A new Stakeholder Group has been formed by Westminster City Council to provide strategic oversight on a long-term vision for Paddington Street Gardens, North & South. The Marylebone Association, and Marylebone Mums & Dads organisation, have representation within the stakeholder group – as do our councillors and other relevant local representatives.

We look forward to working collaboratively within the group to support a new vision for this treasured neighbourhood park. Paddington Street Gardens are a jewel in Marylebone's crown, and we all have a stake in developing an inclusive vision of the whole space – north and south - for everyone in the neighbourhood to enjoy.

Paddington Street Gardens are church-owned consecrated ground, with approximately 110,000 buried on this land. As such, there will be special Church Faculty rules and considerations required for any changes to be made, in addition to the normal planning process. Despite the unique challenges of changing this space, we are optimistic that the stakeholder group will find a positive way forward.

In other more immediate-term news on the park - unfortunately, during January, the playground within the gardens had to be closed - and remains shut for now, due to a temporary health & safety issue which is targeted by WCC to be resolved by 3rd February. We look forward to its re-opening and anticipate the installation of an additional climbing frame at the playground in the next few months – as a short term improvement until a full playground upgrade has been considered for inclusion in the longer term plans and new vision for Paddington Street Gardens.

If you have specific ideas or want to hear more information on how to have your voice heard on the future vision for Paddington Street Gardens, North & South, please contact Niamh O'Keeffe on niamh.okeeffe@marylebone.org

Now There Are None!

It appears that soon there will be no banks left on Marylebone High Street.

Following previous year losses of Barclays and Santander, we are set to lose both NatWest in May and Lloyds Bank at some point soon after that. This will leave our High Street both with no banks as well as no Post Office and represents a further attack on the quality of life for residents and business in the area.

Will we even have an ATM left? We have not yet completely arrived at the cashless society and the lack of ATM's will further hurt business. Certainly, the Farmers Market will not welcome these latest closures as the 'Kightsbridgeification' of Marylebone continues.

Pragmatic Planning

Labour came into power in Westminster pledging to "end the cosy 'business as usual' relationship with developers"- which naturally caused concern to some developers.

Their minds would not have been set at rest by the combative tone of the Labour manifesto: "For decades the priorities of the planning system in Westminster had become dominated by the power of property developers who often set the agenda at the expense of residents".

"It's come at the cost of the social and truly affordable housing we need, with local communities left frustrated when their concerns are ignored. Poorly designed, high-carbon developments are too common, and community and cultural venues are vulnerable".

"A Labour-led Council will drive forward reform of how the council runs the planning system and overhaul its planning policies."

Half a year on from the election result however the developers are finding relations to be rather more cordial than they anticipated, and even the FT reports business is apparently warming towards the new Labour administration. Charles Begley, chief executive of Westminster Property Association, a lobby group, said Labour's manifesto had been particularly "punchy" . . . "but as soon as they got into power they started to talk to us. They seem pragmatic, approachable."

Begley in fact cited WPA research suggesting the number of planning permissions granted by the council — a key measure for developers in the area — was in line with the previous administration.

On a recent tour of the West End, council leader Adam Hug cited Labour's new "pragmatic" approach to business. "We are not revolutionaries," said Cllr Hug, himself a former director of a policy think-tank. "It's a pragmatic, business-like relationship based on mutual respect to get the most out of opportunities. We know that business is a vital part of the city." Cllr Hug however said he wants to see as much change as possible . . . "but recognising "that, in the real world, not everything can happen overnight."

It certainly can't, some might recall that the previous administration under Rachel Robathan came in with some robust comments on halting free-for-all development in Westminster and pioneered the community engagement guidance that would "put residents at the heart of the planning process."

Meanwhile, however, steps are being taken in a different direction....see below.

Affordable in Westminster

Westminster is home to some of the richest and poorest streets in the UK, with a corresponding gap in life expectancy of about 14 years.

For an unspecified period, Westminster Council has frozen council tax to help households struggling with the cost-of-living crisis. Westminster has the lowest council tax in the country at present, at £866 a year for mid-range, band D properties.

The previous administration changed the local plan for taxpayer-funded new homes to aim for 60 per cent "intermediate" housing — or part-owned, part-socially rented properties aimed at low-income workers such as nurses — with just 40 per cent fully social housing.

But the council is now flipping the ratio in favour of social housing, which Cllr Hug said was the typical figure for London boroughs, as well as investing in its own temporary accommodation.

"For decades, the previous administration let developers off hundreds of millions of pounds' worth of affordable housing contributions," he said. "We want a robust, pragmatic relationship with developers and, as construction rebounds, to make sure that they're all paying their fair share."

Nickie Aiken, MP for the Cities of London and Westminster, said thousands of working people would "miss out" on housing because of the change in policy. But Cllr Hug said the change merely took the council back to the status quo before the previous administration.

Oxford Street Reimagined - Again

In May 2022, as reported previously in this newsletter, following the council elections, a review of the Oxford Street District programme was undertaken. This resulted in the focus being switched to Oxford Street only, along with complimentary schemes (subject to external funding).

A report on the new thinking has now been released, signed off by Bernie Flaherty, Deputy Chief Executive, Westminster City Council. She said in a recent budget meeting: "We are in a position at the moment where we are building up a business case and design stage one. By April we will know how much the scheme is likely to cost." She added: "Three or four different elements... will make the street much more exciting and will make the street touristy and commercial."

This report proposes a revision to the Council's commitment to investing in Oxford Street. The programme will look to deliver "a reimagined and revived Oxford Street". The "reimagining" is restricting itself now to Oxford Street only, unlike the previous wider ranging OSD plans, and appears to have more realistic aspirations. As we were previously assured, it also no longer includes the Piazza proposals or any other street closing measures. What we know is on the agenda

are plans to make the wider pavements permanent and planting more trees.

The expenditure to enable the new vision will still be significant - although the exact amount is to be decided, but it is in the region of £60 million, a long way off the £150 million put by for the somewhat grander plans under the previous administration. In addition it is anticipated that the Business Improvement Districts (BIDs) and landowners will be expected to pay substantially towards improvements - which is only right as they will be the main beneficiaries.

However it should be borne in mind that £35.7 million has already been spent on the old Oxford Street District project prior to the review being launched by the previous administration. There appears to be very little to show for such a large sum. Indeed, it seems that there was a jaw dropping degree of recklessness with the way money was being spent. One example the Labour administration has cited is the payment of £80,000 a month for the project's offices. No wonder so much was spent for so little result. Questions need to be asked about this and Camden council chief executive Mike Cooke has been appointed to look into it to see what lessons can be learnt from the way the OSD programme was run.

Meanwhile, WCC say the new plans will focus on far more engagement and will be supported through a new programme governance approach, spearheaded by an Advisory Board with representation from key stakeholders including funders, BIDs, landowners, residents groups, ward councillors, etc. The Marylebone Association is included in this group. The stated aim is to discuss stakeholder strategic ambition and provide updates on project progress – and it does appear that the new administration has no appetite to irritate residents with any repeat of the type of schemes previously visited upon them.

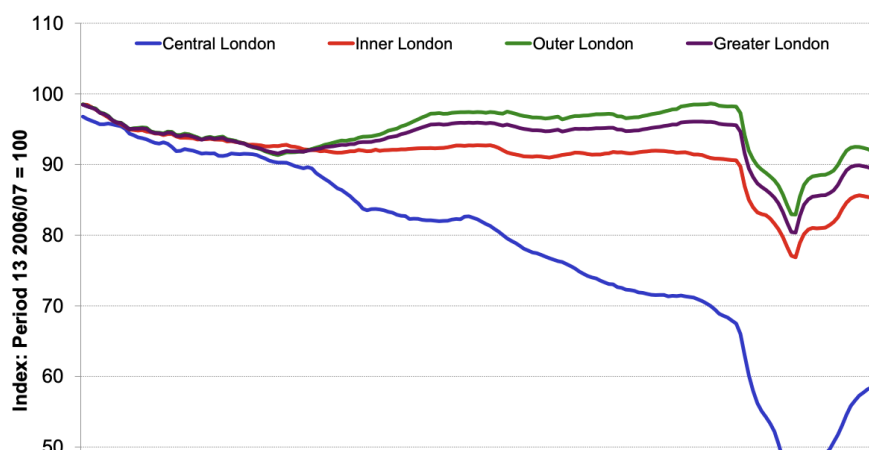
The Advisory Board will be supported by further external engagement including a Partnership Working Group. Project specific consultation and engagement is to be determined over the coming months with support from the WCC Communities team.

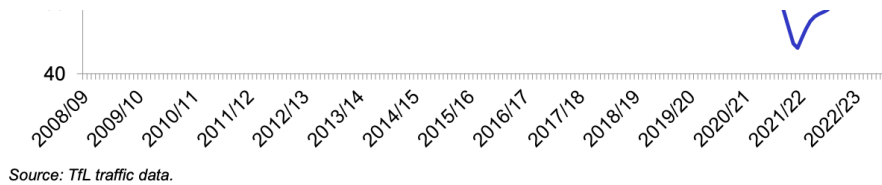
Approval to spend £4.58 million from the Oxford Street Budget has been requested to enable the preparation of a new programme business case, progress design to Stage 1, and to cover other identified costs.

At the same time the Council have applied to make the temporary traffic orders that enabled the current pavement widening permanent. This, we have been assured, is a mere technicality. WCC will need to extend the existing order over the period of the consultation now taking place and this is the only possible way as further temporary extensions are not permitted.

Congestion Khan

Figure 6.2 Traffic flows by area, all motor vehicles, 13-period moving average, 2008/09-2022/23.





Transport for London (TfL) and the Mayor Khan have a road strategy - which is clearly not working - and now we have the figures to prove it. London was ranked the world's eighth most congested city in 2019, bad enough surely, but now it leads the rankings in congestion. The length of time lost to jams in the city is now 5% above pre-coronavirus levels.

Drivers in the capital spent an astonishing average of 156 hours sitting in traffic in 2022, according to a report by traffic information supplier Inrix. This is despite there being less traffic in central London than before Covid. It is the second year in a row that London has topped the global congestion ranking, which covers more than 1,000 cities across 50 countries.

The UK's five most congested road corridors were also all found in London.

Bob Pishue, transportation analyst and author of the report, said:

"We must manage congestion while improving mobility and accessibility in cities to avoid it hurting economic recovery and impacting the quality of life of commuters and residents."

In any other city this would be probably regarded as too obvious as to need stating. One way to do this would be to get rid of the plethora of road restrictions that have emerged post Covid and which are clearly responsible for the current dire situation. But TfL are in fact busy doing the exact opposite - in our area the narrowing of Park Lane to traffic being a prime example.

Far from Healthy Streets, we seem to have unhealthy parking lots with stationary traffic causing more pollution. Can turning highways into parks really be the right use of our roads? This is not about cars versus cyclists - this is about not being the worst city in the world to get about in. Even Paris, where the Mayor there has closed down swathes of the centre's roads, does not come near.

Less miles are now driven in London - 7% down on pre-pandemic levels - but congestion is far greater. No wonder TfL have stopped reporting on their 'Street performance.' Gridlock and delays are so bad TfL do not dare to compare the numbers - their excuse is a good one - as they have conveniently changed the way traffic movements are monitored so they say it is now not possible.

Yet in spite of this increased congestion many are being priced off the road and meanwhile the cost for business and therefore for all Londoners is also going up as a result of the increased time it takes to get anywhere.

TfL do not mind though - at the same time as presiding over historically unprecedented levels of congestion they are increasingly benefiting from the increased revenue from this. ULEZ now represents 5% of TfL total income, Congestion Charge currently 10% of TfL total income.

T-Charge, Expanded ULEZ, LEZ, Cycle Superhighways, Low Traffic Neighbourhoods (LTNs). More and more charges, more restrictions, more bureaucracy - and still more congestion. Meanwhile improving bus reliability seems to have gone out of the window.

Bus Stop Bypasses Berated



On London reports that the TfL bus stop bypasses for cyclists are dangerous for the disabled.

People with disabilities have long campaigned for better access to public transport as part of leading independent lives. In response, London's transport systems have been altered in recent decades to enable this. However, the gains that were made are now being reversed, particularly where buses are concerned.

Boris Johnson's Vision for Cycling in London, published in 2013, brought with it a pronounced focus on the cycling- and with it a generation of effort to create an accessible public transport network was put into reverse.

The first substantial kerb separated cycle track scheme was implemented along Stratford High Street and extended along the A11 to Aldgate. TfL introduced 33 "bus stop bypasses" along the route. These direct cyclists, at speed, through the pavement and around the back of bus stops, meaning that bus passengers have to cross the bike lane to get to the bus stop. Even worse, London boroughs were funded by TfL to implement bike track schemes with so-called "bus boarders". These routed cycles directly through the space in which bus passengers board and alight.

"Bus boarders", implemented exclusively by the boroughs, are much cheaper and more space efficient but far more disliked. Unlike the bypasses they are not included in TfL's bus stop design guidance. These stops mean bus passengers must board and alight their bus to and from a live cycle lane. TfL say they are monitoring these stops.

TfL and the Mayor's Cycling Commissioner have met with many representatives of older and disabled groups and been told of their concerns, but these have gone ignored. Recently the National Federation for the Blind UK presented a petition from 150 groups to Downing Street demanding a change in policy.

Elizabeth Line Now on Track

Finally some good news for TfL. The Elizabeth Line is beating passenger numbers

Finally some good news for ITL. The Elizabeth Line is beating passenger number predictions since it started through-running last November, with averages now exceeding 3.5 million passengers a week, according to the latest figures from the Elizabeth line Committee. Fares income is also £9 million above the revised budget, and the Elizabeth line remains on target to break even in the year 2023/24.

The final upgrade is due for this May, which will see an increase in peak hour trains, shorter gaps between trains on the Abbey Wood branch and ending the temporary pause in the journey that takes place just outside Paddington on trains heading into London.

Pedicabs Bill Delayed Again

The pedicab saga continues. Readers will recall that our MP Nickie Aiken failed to get her private members bill regulating pedicabs through parliament last year, due to the efforts of one MP - Sir Christopher Chope. Following that however, she finally got it included in the Transport Bill - and we are all very grateful for all her work in getting it to that stage.

Unfortunately, the Transport Bill, after being included in the Queen's Speech at the beginning of this Parliamentary session, has now been delayed until the next Parliamentary session, which is not due to start until Autumn 2023.

Meanwhile rogue pedicab riders continue to cause serious disruption for residents across Westminster. They block the roads and pavements and blast out music throughout the night. They regularly rip off tourists and have no insurance.

In spite of this, for 12 years they have been given free rein to do what they want - with some exceptions such as the efforts of West End councillors in partnership with police who have taken a number of drivers to court and obtained fines and ASBOs. But the limited powers at council level are clearly not enough to effectively shut down the menace.

In other major cities in England these pedicabs are subject to proper legal control; for instance, Manchester has banned them for safety reasons, and they are regulated in Birmingham. Only in London are pedicabs allowed to ply their trade uncontrolled, drivers are not criminal record checked or their vehicles inspected. Residents are quite rightly beginning to wonder when will this ever end?

The Crown Estate Sues Twitter

Twitter have been renting their London HQ offices just off Regent Street from the Crown Estate since 2014. However last October the office was left deserted after Elon Musk laid off half the company's workforce and the rest appeared to leave. Any sign that Twitter had occupied the building was removed.

The Crown Estate has not wasted any time in filing a claim against Twitter in the High Court, after previously contacting them about rental arrears over office space at Air Street according to Reuters news.

Westminster - Largest Number of Rough

Sleepers in the UK

Shelter has done some number crunching based on the government's most recent statistics for people living in temporary accommodation arranged by a local authority under homelessness legislation. These are primarily estimates calculated from them- the charity says government data from the second quarter of 2022 has been used "wherever possible"

Westminster appears to have the largest number of rough sleepers and the second highest rate of homelessness- an estimated 187 every night form part of an overall total of 7,280 homeless people.

Approximately one person in 58 in London is without a home according to Shelter's analysis compared with a figure of one in 208 for England as a whole.

Nearly 150,000 people in London are living in temporary accommodation, accounting for more than half the number of such homeless people in the whole of England, according to the analysis.

Almost half of those temporarily housed are children and the overall number of people in the capital with no home is boosted by a typical figure of 640 people a night sleeping rough, Shelter says.

West End Office Sales Drop...

The Evening Standard reports that investors are eyeing up attractively priced central London office purchases after deals slumped to the lowest level since the financial crash.

Preliminary data shows £3.4 billion was spent on central London offices July - December 2022 compared with £8.1 billion transacted in the prior six months.

Central London office values have decreased, down 2.3% in December from November. But have they further to go? With falling values, Fergus Keane, head of central London investment markets at BNP Paribas Real Estate, said "a lot of investors are currently circling." Meaning presumably - they are not buying.

...But Boom in High End Properties

Savills report that a record number of "mansions" were sold in London in 2022, in signs the capitals super rich are shrugging off an economic downturn to secure luxury property with a seven-figure price tag.

Over 600 homes over the value of £5 million were sold in the capital last year, the highest level of property business Savills has seen since records began in 2006.

Frances McDonald, research analyst at Savills, said: "High value properties continue to outperform across the board as unique quality homes remain sought after by buyers, both domestic and overseas."

THE MARYLEBONE DIARY

Portman Square Bus Fire



Firefighters tackled a double-decker bus fire on Portman Square in Marylebone on 10th January.

The fire occurred in the engine bay of the bus. The rear of the vehicle was damaged by fire. All passengers had left the vehicle before the Brigade arrived. One man was treated on scene by London Ambulance Service crews for smoke inhalation. One fire engine from Soho Fire Station attended the scene. The fire is believed to have been accidental, but the exact cause has been recorded as undetermined due to the level of damage within the engine bay.

Alcohol Free Pub

Alcohol-free beer brand Lucky Saint is set to open their first on-site premise outlet in central London, taking over the old site of The Masons Arms on Devonshire Street. It is set to reopen as the Lucky Saint.

Due to open in early March, the pub will be serving up both alcoholic and non-alcoholic beverages, as well as food dishes which have been labelled as 'reimagined pub classics.' They are also planning to use the site to house their new office space, which is supposed to act as a 'hub' for the brand to replace the absence of a physical brewery.

Crime in Marylebone





This month the Marylebone Association met with officers from MPS Marylebone to discuss issues currently affecting residents.

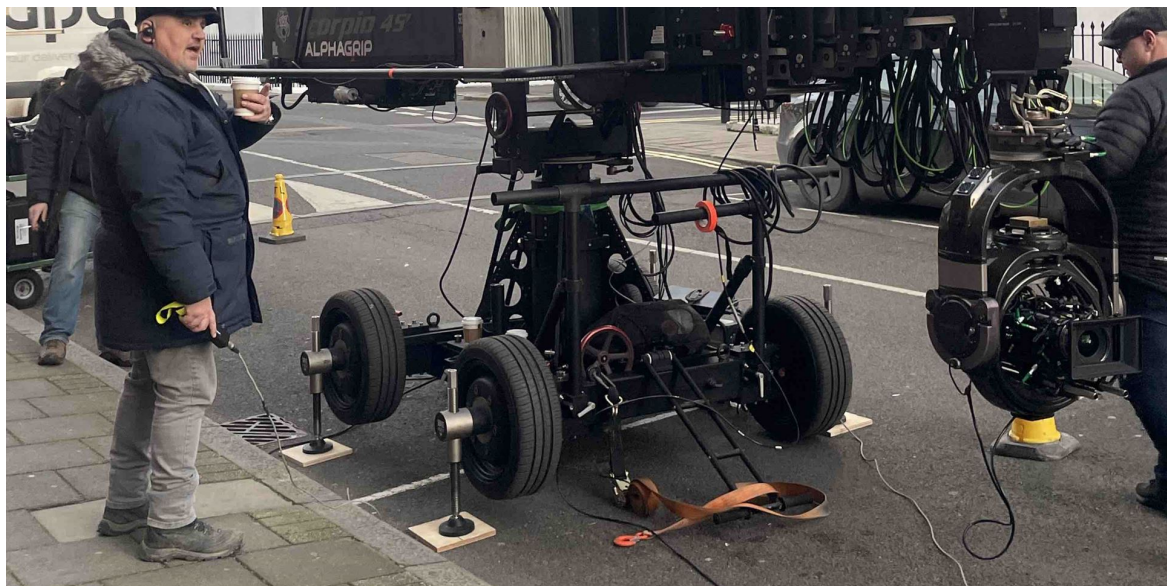
Issues discussed include anti-social behaviour (ASB), nuisance pedicab operators and theft of personal belongings. Officers are committed to making themselves visible and accessible in the community.

Three current priorities are reducing robbery and theft snatch around Marylebone High Street and Harley Street, reducing the ASB caused by illegal scooters and similar vehicle offences and reducing ASB in Manchester Place and Paddington Street Gardens.

The MA also attended Safer Neighbourhood Panel meetings for Marylebone High Street and Oxford Market/Cavendish Square. In Marylebone there were 382 crimes reported in November 2022 which was a decrease of 11.5% from the previous month. Detailed crime statistics for your postcode can be found on the Metropolitan Police website (www.met.police.uk).

Filming on York Street





Filming took place on York Street this week, a new film about the 'Life of Bob Marley' will be screening in cinemas in around two years time. Bob Marley was a Jamaican singer-songwriter whose distillation of early ska, rock steady, and reggae musical forms blossomed in the 1970s into an electrifying rock-influenced hybrid that made him an international superstar.

A Precious Jewel - in Harley Place



Below, one in the series of occasional articles from Marylebone Association members. This month from a resident concerned with the loss of green spaces:

A Much loved Garden Under Threat

Marylebone has many attractions - the unique village-like feel of the area, the

Marylebone has many attractions - the unique village-like feel of the area, the numerous interesting people, the wonderful independent shops and the elusive quality of being somewhere special. However, what it does not have, due to its central situation, is much in the way of green space, either by way of parks or indeed private gardens. However there are a few scattered around and those we have are much valued.

One such space is a 65 ft by 55 ft garden hidden behind Harley Street in Harley Place, which is home to bats, blue tits, robins, wrens, dunnocks and blackbirds. There are butterflies and bees in the summer with insects galore for the birds and bats to feed on, after the former have themselves feasted on lavender, ceanothus, anemones, foxgloves, jasmine and much more. The dawn chorus wakes the surrounding residents in the morning, and all this in the very centre of London. The garden is overlooked by 26 flats, houses and offices and is a little haven in the midst of our busy city. It is an oasis of peace and quiet to all who are lucky enough to witness it, the value of which cannot be measured in any conventional way.

However, the landlords of this garden now have plans to cover the majority of it to provide private medical facilities. This will remove trees – including crab apples, camellias and magnolias – birds' nests, bat roosts, shrubs, ivy and other climbers. The development, if it goes ahead, will destroy this ecosystem, including the birds, the bats, the bees and the butterflies and all of the plants.

The plan is to plant a green roof over part of it (garden birds do not nest, and bats do not roost, on the ground), and replace some of the garden with shade-loving plants, the rest being turned over to gravel. The remaining garden will be a whole storey below ground level - so good luck to anything planted there. There will be less than 6m remaining between the north and south side of the proposed development.

Further, due to the layout, which would link Harley Street with the mews behind, the character of the mews, where the main entrance is to be located, would be permanently changed. It is at present exceptionally quiet in view of its location. We understand there may be eight or nine consulting rooms which, depending on occupancy rates, could increase the cars and footfall into the mews considerably.

The mews is also an area where children from Queen's College assemble away from traffic in emergencies, such as fire, or fire drills.

In short, there is nothing in this development that is beneficial to the local ecology, or to residents who are simply collateral damage.

This is but one example of a worrying trend towards overdevelopment and infilling of every area of green space in central London, with little thought for residents, their upsets or concerns. It is often notably at odds with what the developers actually claim for the environment. They are all too keen to jump on the Green bandwagon and claim sustainability when it suits them but in the end the result is still the same - the development goes ahead with some gesture to greening but with the loss of another part of historic Marylebone. In this case it would be with the loss of a mature established garden.

Announcements

Philippa Roe RIP

It was with great sadness we heard of the death of Philippa Roe, a former Leader of Westminster Council. Below is part of the obituary published by Westminster Council:

Council.

Philippa Roe lost her long battle with cancer in December 2022 and will be greatly missed by all who knew her.

A long-time resident of Belgravia, in 2006 after a very successful career in the City, Philippa was elected to Westminster City Council for the ward of Knightsbridge & Belgravia. Deeply committed to the area of Westminster in which she lived,

Philippa's abilities saw her progress very rapidly in the Council. Promoted to the Cabinet first in 2008 with the Housing portfolio, where she developed innovative ways to deliver the much needed regeneration of our Housing stock, she then took on Strategic Finance in 2011. In this role her acute grasp and understanding of financial detail helped ensure the financial stability of the Council which was one of her key legacies.

She was elected Leader of the Council in 2012, a role she held until she was elevated to the House of Lords in 2016. Her passions were helping young people to have the right opportunities and improving employment and growth – both areas where she achieved a huge amount.

Collegiate in style, she was particularly good at involving all colleagues in the workings of the Council and bringing together all spectrums of opinion.

While Leader, she also played a key role in London-wide politics where she demonstrated her ability to work with people of all political persuasions and backgrounds in order to deliver the best.

St Marylebone Parish Church Lectures

The St Marylebone Parish Church is this year running a free lecture series!

Each lecture will focus on an influential individual from the nineteenth-century associated with St Marylebone, examining the significance of their work at that time and the relevance of their ideas today. This will include:

Thomas Hardwick (1st February), Mary Seacole (1st March), JMW Turner (3rd May), Elizabeth Garrett Anderson (7th June), Sake Dean Mahomed (4th October), Octavia Hill (1st November).

The talks will be led by acclaimed historians and authors. They will be on Wednesdays at 6:30pm and last about an hour, including a short period of time for questions.

Westminster Abbey Tours

There's a chance to explore behind the scenes of Westminster Abbey on a guided tour of some areas not usually open to the public.

The 90-minute tours will take in the lost mediaeval sacristy, recently revealed during one of their biggest ever archaeological projects, and the library, formerly part of the monk's dormitory with a magnificent 15th-century oak roof and majestic 17th-century bookcases. The tours will also include the Jerusalem Chamber where Henry IV died in 1413.

The tour also includes the Queen's Diamond Jubilee Galleries which opened in

The tour also includes the Queen's Diamond Jubilee Galleries, which opened in 2018 and displays many of the Abbey's treasures – which is normally open to the public for an extra £5 on their normal entry charge.

Although photography is now allowed inside the Abbey, it's not allowed on the hidden highlights tours. Also, children are not allowed on the hidden highlights tours as part of the tour covers an excavated burial site.

The tours are an add-on to the existing Abbey entry price, so you need to book a normal adult entry ticket which is £27, then add the Hidden Highlights tour, which costs £15.

Alternatively, by joining the Abbey Association, which costs £40 per year, you get unlimited visits in the year, which saves you £27 per visit and gets you some extra events thrown in for members.

You need to book both entry tickets and tours at the same time, from [here](#).

Trinity Laban Conservatoire of Music

London Trio is putting on a Cafe Concert on a Sunday 12th February, just before Valentine's Day with a delicious programme of French music, entertainer, coffee and biscuits.

Tickets can be obtained from the link below. Association members have been offered a discount- the code for this is PARIS2- Available on the link [here](#).

Other Events

Beat the winter blues with a celebration of the Big Band era of Swing and Jazz!

Ensemble Reza perform compositions by Duke Ellington, Gershwin, Strayhorn, Berlin, Brubeck, Jobim and others, all specially arranged by Anna Cooper for strings, accordion, clarinet, piano and percussion. The evening will also feature original compositions by Anna Cooper and Pavlos Carvalho. £14, concessions £12 | RSVP via Eventbrite or 020 7487 5060

Save the date - Marylebone food festival 25-30 April 2023

New Business Members



globe apartments

Globe Apartments

Established in 1981, Globe Apartments are based in Marylebone and are one of London's longest established and independently owned specialists in lettings and property management. They are also regulated Chartered Surveyors.

They consist of a small and friendly, driven team who believe in quality over quantity. They are always looking to expand their portfolio within Marylebone and the West End – so local landlords note, Globe would be very happy to hear from you, even if it is just to talk things through with one of their team. For more information and contact details go to Globe's website: www.globeapt.com

Association Events

COFFEE MORNING

Wednesday 8th February from 10am to 12 noon
Home House, 20 Portman Square, W1H 6LW

Join us for the first coffee morning of 2023 in the sumptuous surroundings of the Bison Bar at Home House, the celebrated private members club in Portman Square. Coffee, tea and pastries will be provided at a cost of £7.50 per person. There is a limit on numbers so booking is essential.

PLEASE NOTE This event is now **FULLY BOOKED** so please do not turn up without a confirmed reservation but if you wish to go on the waiting list (for cancellations) contact lois.german@marylebone.org or telephone 0207 487 2706.

REGULAR ASSOCIATION EVENTS

BOOK CLUB

Monday 6 February 2023 at 6.30 pm
The King's Head, Westmoreland Street, W1G 8PJ

'The Maid' by Nita Prose

In future Book Club will meet 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 – at least that is normally the case but with The Maid paperback publication has been postponed until April. However it is available in hardback or e-readers – and some members, who have read the book already, are happy to lend theirs. For further details – and anyone interested in joining us - please contact Liz Queenan (liz.queenan@marylebone.org) or tel: 020 7486 3709.

PUB EVENING

Monday 13th February at 6.30 pm
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 evenings, where you will be greeted by our hostess for the evening Ann Marie Johnson.

SCRABBLE CLUB

Tuesday 14 and 28 February 2023

The Duke of Wellington, 54a 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 Tuesday 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 or 0788 789 1977.

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

If you have news get in touch by emailing news@marylebone.org

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