



Marylebone Association

Newsletter January 2024

Dear {Contact_First_Name},

Wishing you all the best for 2024 from the newsletter team.

New Year Drinks Party

We are delighted once again to have our annual wine and canapés party on January 18th in the elegant atmosphere of the Library at The Oriental Club, Stratford House, 11 Stratford Place, W1C 1ES.

This Grade 1 listed private members club is one of the most impressive surviving examples of Georgian architecture in this part of London. All residential and business members are welcome with the opportunity to meet old friends and new, along with members of the Committee. We can look forward to a most enjoyable evening.

To reserve your place please email lois.german@marylebone.org or telephone 0207 487 2706 - for further details, please see under MA Events below.

Neighbourhood CIL Threat





When Westminster announced that the Seymour project was to proceed and our local library was to be incorporated into it, the general view was it was not what we wanted or where we wanted it, but after all the delay, let's just get on with it. However, the decision to locate the library in this space has not been a popular one. It is going there only because the most viable option was for WCC to put all their leisure services into one place. We were at least assured that it was fully funded and the long-awaited project was ready to go.

It has now emerged that WCC has a shortfall in the budget assigned to the Centre due to increased costs from inflation and is looking to secure a £1.25 million contribution from our Neighbourhood CIL fund to help plug the gap. This fund is made up of a small portion of the tax that developers pay the council for the benefit of carrying out their various projects. 85% of this goes to the council to use as they see fit, anywhere in the borough and 15% is allocated to be used locally on projects perceived to be of local value.

Our Neighbourhood CIL portion presently available from this is 15% of the total - a little over £1.6 million - so the £1.25 million contribution would represent most of the fund. It would be a disaster for other projects that are looking for CIL contributions, and many will have no alternative sources of funding.

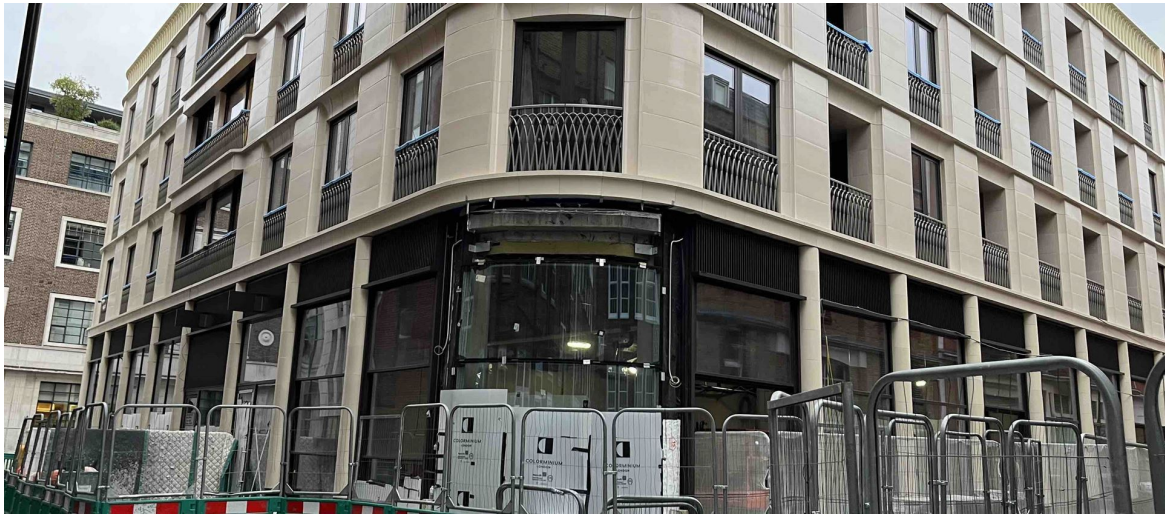
This CIL fund represents some small compensation to residents for the years of disturbance, noise and disruption from the seemingly endless development in our area - and it does not seem right to us that WCC should be able to just use it toward the capital costs of the Seymour Centre fit-out. Allocating nearly all our neighbourhood CIL money to a scheme which is in the wrong place and is so severely lacking in commitment to sustainability, and to the heritage of this listed building, would for many be unpalatable.

And for what? It will not even obtain identifiable improvements to the existing scheme, it will just go to help reduce an accounting shortfall due to projected cost increases. But the council is doing quite well enough out of rising prices. Unlike many private enterprises, its services have a captive audience - so it has just loaded up all its charges by at least the amount by which the purchase index has increased for the year to compensate itself. With low-interest rates fixed on most of its borrowings and inflation-protected income, the council can therefore afford to adjust its capital budget upwards somewhat. There is therefore no excuse to divert our neighbourhood CIL funds to subsidise them for this project.

Further, until last year it would have been the Marylebone Forum which had the final say on where and how much of our neighbourhood CIL money would be spent on any particular project in Marylebone. The Forum can and will be making a submission on this but due to changes brought about by the current administration, the ultimate decision is now made by the council - by a single cabinet member (on amounts up to £1.5 million). This in itself appears to be an extremely retrograde step - as although the local Forum is still consulted, whatever they say can ultimately be ignored and overridden by the council.

Certainly, some much more modest level of contribution to the Seymour project could be entertained - but even that should only be for an identifiable add-on that WCC would not otherwise be providing. Anything else simply represents an undemocratic appropriation of our neighbourhood CIL to subsidise the council's capital budget.

The Marylebone Hall - Our Proposals



The Marylebone Hall space in the Marylebone Square development (Moxon Street) is shortly being signed over to WCC. The Marylebone Association feels this space is of fundamental importance to the community, and as such it is vital to get things right from the beginning. It is for this reason that the Association has felt it necessary to put its own proposals forward for the Hall.

The idea is to set up a charity, or community interest company, to run the space for the whole community. The Association would act as the facilitator to bring together as many talents within the community as possible to enable this.

Our proposals are based on a simple and overriding principle - that the new Hall should be used for all the residents of Marylebone, to provide meeting spaces for those who cannot otherwise afford to meet anywhere, never mind in a convenient central location. We would seek to utilise this once-in-a-generation opportunity and to take it and ensure that the chance is not lost to provide a truly useful community space for all.

St Marylebone School and St Vincent's School are each putting forward their own proposals to run the Hall, but they naturally concentrate on utilising the space primarily for their schools, during the weekdays with other community uses being subordinated to them. There is therefore a difference of emphasis between those tendering for the space - between school use with some community use and our proposal which is community use primarily, with some 3 days offered to school use.

No matter who is selected to take this forward we should remember that the real victory has already been won, by having secured this space for community use of some sort. Only a few months ago it looked very likely that the entire ground floor space would revert to the developer and any community use, whatever it was, would be swapped into the basement. That would have represented a huge loss to the community, not just over the next decade or so, but for the next 125 years, as that is the length of time that the lease is to be granted to the council. This was a very real possibility and that was only averted at the last minute.

Concerning our proposals, we have worked through the design and running costs as far as we are able at this stage in the short time we have had available. We have concentrated on finding the funds to get the Hall operating and to generate an income to be able to subsidise the various community uses that we envisage. What we do not, and cannot deal with, is the funding to convert the Hall from a semi-outside space to a useful fitted-out community hall. The funding for that has to come from elsewhere - and the only obvious place is the Neighbourhood CIL - the very same pot of money that the council now proposes to use for the Seymour Centre (see article above).

Whoever takes on the Marylebone Hall will encounter the same problem. They will need to spend a substantial amount of money to get the space up to community hall standards before it can be used for anything, and the only place funding for that is likely to come from is the Neighbourhood CIL. It therefore

follows that if most of this is to be taken by the Seymour project it will gravely undermine the prospects for Moxon Street.

So the council's proposal to divert our Neighbourhood CIL to the Seymour Centre could hardly have come at a worse time. Without this CIL money there is little chance that any proposals will get off the ground- either from us or the schools. That is a statement of fact and neither the CIL committee nor Westminster Council need a detailed presentation to make that connection.

Now James Street to Close?



The original scope of the James Street scheme was set out in the previous Oxford Street District programme, which included James Street, Barrett Street, Picton Place and Bird Street. During the pandemic, temporary footway build-outs were introduced on James Street south and Picton Place to support social distancing, with a view to ultimate closure. None of this was at that time consulted on but the scheme was retained in the current programme which now does propose the complete closure of James Street to traffic at its junction with Oxford Street.

It comes as no surprise that it is being pressed for by the local Business Improvement District – the New West End Company (NWECC) as their desire seems to be to get as many roads closed in the area as possible. So much so that they are prepared to facilitate this by way of a 50% contribution to the total cost of £16.3 million which this intervention will cost.

The continual lobbying for these piecemeal closures puts increasing pressure on our remaining roads, and after years of this, it is hardly surprising that there are only a few north-south routes left. If you exclude the two major road arteries to either side of Marylebone - Edgware Road and Regent Street, both now virtually unusable, the latter due to recent lane removals, there are just three left in the whole of Marylebone: Vere Street, soon to be narrowed, Orchard Street soon to be replaced by Portman Street - and James Street. If James Street goes or is rendered practically useless - we will then be left with only two southbound routes.

We put these concerns to WCC at the time of the last consultation and their response was as follows:

“Neither James Street or Gilbert Street are appropriate for through traffic as they are narrow and have pedestrians walking within the carriageway areas. The other southbound routes via Park Street and Bond Street are able to accommodate the very low levels of displaced traffic.”

On this reasoning, nearly every narrow street in Westminster should be closed. Obviously whoever wrote this had no idea, or does not care, just how much traffic uses this route at certain times of the day - and yet it is suddenly, “not appropriate for through traffic.” But where is the evidence for this? Where is the evidence that there will be very low levels of displaced traffic? And where is the evidence to show that the remaining routes can absorb this?

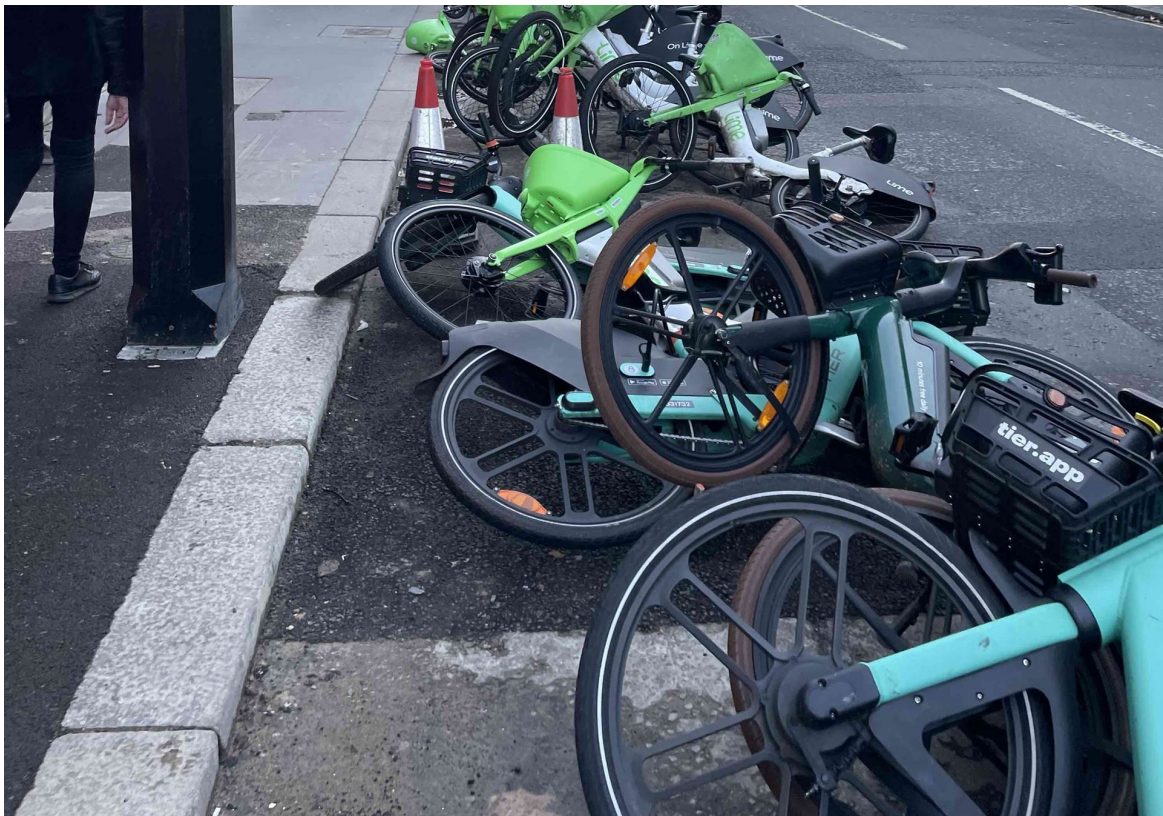
That evidence has not been produced, whereas we know for a fact that James Street is a continuation of a main route southwards through Marylebone High Street and Thayer Street. All this traffic wanting to continue south would now have no choice but to discharge into the already overburdened Wigmore Street resulting in more jams and tail-backs.

So the response sounds authoritative but it is entirely unevidenced. It is no more than wishful thinking and merely self-serving. Unfortunately, this type of casual dismissal of any objection that gets in the way of the desired overall scheme in these type of 'consultations' is all too common.

The fact is that this change is damaging, and unwarranted and would result in more unnecessary journeys through Marylebone to satisfy the BID's insatiable desire to prioritise shopping at the expense of increasing traffic congestion. Further, if the NWECC was not offering to pay for half of the cost, it would not be happening.

Dockless Bikes





The docking of dockless bikes has met with very mixed results - with a number of areas experiencing overcrowding and clutter. The police say that the concentration of bikes in and around the West End has at times been reported to obstruct the free flow of pedestrians - with the potential to impact on crime and disorder.

Superintendent Beth Pirie says: "there is a significant footfall within the West End, and there has been an increase in reporting that discarded bikes are impacting the safety of both visitors and residents in these areas. The potential blocking of vehicular traffic and the impact on pedestrians across the City is also of particular concern."

Clearly, something needs to be done. But the solution is not simply bigger bays in areas where there are already many competing road uses. Neither should they be located in residential and conservation areas where the resulting clutter creates more nuisance and yet another potential eyesore, of which we already have too many. They are also often not in areas where most of the users want to be in.

Also, more onus should be put on those places that generate a large amount of e-bike use such as stations to accommodate them within their estate. Equally, institutions which attract these bikes such as universities should help with provisions for the parking of them. The main demand and obvious place for dockless bays is on, or immediately adjacent to, the main through routes in areas where those using the bikes want to go.

Clearly, all this needs a great deal more joined-up thinking than it is presently receiving, this would be best achieved by central government legislation. The ideal opportunity for this would have been with the pedicab bill when an amendment to give necessary powers to London to tackle e-bikes and e-scooters was proposed but rejected. It took 10 years to get a pedicab bill, will it now take another decade before we see the proper regulation of these e-bikes?

Meanwhile - problems with dockless bays, e-scooters and e-bikes should be reported to dockless@westminster.gov.uk

Thayer Street



The development on Thayer Street on the site of the old post office is finally reaching completion and now there is a proposal to re-asphalt the pavement outside. The rationale presumably is that at present the whole of Thayer Street and Mandeville Place is covered in asphalt- so it will match. This is true, but it is unsightly old and worn -and lets the area down. We have been asking for many years, both generally and under the annual carriageway review (PPM) process for the Yorkstone paving to be extended down Thayer Street and Mandeville Place.

We have pointed out to the council that their own Westminster Way document specifies that pavement replacements on the main north-south routes in Marylebone should be in Yorkstone paving.

In addition, the whole of the High Street just to the north of this point has recently been renovated with Yorkstone paving, so it seems short-sighted to cover this part in asphalt. As the developer who has proposed this is Howard de Walden, the main estate owner in the area, we would have thought they would have wanted something better for the area. They are the freeholders of the majority of the shops in the High Street and Thayer St. As such it is surely in their own interests to ensure the infrastructure around their holdings is in the best possible shape. And this development provides the opportunity to do something jointly with the council to ensure this.

Our submission to WCC was therefore that the existing specification should be altered to take into account the Westminster Way advisory and that WCC take this opportunity to replace the remaining asphalt, at least on the east side of Thayer Street, but preferably both sides and down to Mandeville Place in Yorkstone paving at the same time.

Gas Lights Row



Westminster City Council are the custodians of a historic collection of about 300 street lamps, going back as far as 1807 and some are still gas-lit. Following the engagement review in November 2022, in which their removal was proposed, the council listened to the widespread objections and 174 of the gas lights were allowed to remain, with the remaining 94 unlisted assets to be changed to the gas effect LED.

But even though WCC have now committed to keeping the majority of these street lamps they do not appear to be in any particular hurry to draw up a plan to secure their long-term future. They have a responsibility to secure the protection of these precious heritage assets for future generations to enjoy and this requires a plan for their care and maintenance. To date, most of the lamps have been patched up in situ since they were installed.

And now there is a further threat to their integrity. We understand that to get around safety concerns with the lighting levels of some of the existing lamps the

council propose to have additional infill lamps to improve lighting in streets with moderate and high crime reports, "to help reduce fear of crime and the nighttime economy." This will undermine their setting and produce an undesirable visual mess.

Meanwhile, whilst the remaining 94 unlisted lamps are subject to the ongoing unlisted asset review by Historic England, the council planning department is seeking financial approval for the sum of £870,000 for works in 2024/25 to progress with unlisted gas electrification of these same lamps - and the column infill programme.

Those interested in protecting these lights feel that the cabinet report has proposed electrification without any consideration of how the efficiency of the existing gas lamps could be improved. WCC wish to replace them with LED lookalikes, without doing any research on this. If it is possible to increase their lighting efficiency at a reasonable cost, as claimed by their adherents, then this could be an answer - not only to preserving unlisted lamps but to the infilling proposals as well.

There is both local and widespread public support for retaining all the historic lights and the proposal is that there be further applications to list all the remaining ones. We hope that the council will prove that it is still listening to residents and other interested parties and give this serious consideration.

Oxford Street Turns the Corner



Things are finally looking up for Oxford Street after seemingly nothing but bad news since Covid struck, with the exit of Debenhams and House of Fraser among others, the row over the M&S building, the spate of tacky stores and reports of greatly increased crime levels.

But now it seems that a significant turning point has been reached and it is apparent this Christmas that the crowds are already back in numbers not seen

apparent this Christmas that the crowds are already back in numbers not seen since before Covid.

In recent months, there has been a run of retailers signing up to lease shops and a shedding of the tatty stores picked up during the pandemic. Since the start of the year, 19 new stores have been opened, including HMV and Footasylum. The restaurant franchise Kebhouze opened what it claimed is the UK's biggest kebab shop on the street in December. Paris St Germain, the French football club is coming and Ikea is due to open its Oxford Street flagship in the Autumn of 2024.

Furthermore, there is much activity behind the scenes at the contractual stage and therefore not yet visible on the street itself. More deals were struck to rent Oxford Street shops last year than in 2020, 2021 and 2022 combined- by early December, a total of 27 lettings on Oxford Street had been completed since the start of the year with a total of 200,000 square feet worth of space has been taken since this year- with more in the pipeline.

There remain some doubts over retailers' desire to incur the large costs of trading on Oxford Street given the blow to overseas spending from the government's refusal to reinstate VAT-free shopping, but this appears to have hit Bond Street harder with its more upmarket retailers, such as Mulberry and Fenwick who are now abandoning their stores there.

Further, as we have reported throughout the year, the council is progressing with a major financial investment on the street. The cost is widely reported at around £90 million, but in fact, taking into account related changes in the immediate area, WCC's figures show that the expenditure budget approved by Full Council in March 2023 is £124.4m for 2022/23 onwards. The total budget allocation is £127.592m taking into consideration costs incurred prior to 2022/23 which can be utilised by the new programme.

The budget covers works on Oxford Street and Oxford Circus, as well as enabling highway and complementary schemes - mainly to go on pavements upgrades, new pedestrian crossings added and better lights. WCC hope to obtain 50% of the funding from the retail sector and are working with the New West End Company on the project, although it is uncertain as to how much, if anything, has actually been contributed by business to date.

The council aims to move away from just retail and attract a host of different businesses to the street. Councillor Geoff Barraclough, Head of Planning and responsible for Oxford Street said: "Collectively, it's going to deliver a canvas upon which traders can create new interesting experiences for shoppers to generate the footfall that we're all looking for - and the tax revenues that we'd like as well."

In that case, it is to be hoped that other issues that have been dragging down the street can now be rapidly brought under control, although that has proven extremely difficult to date. Preachers outside Bond Street Tube station blaring out religious chanting, illegal buskers with massive loudspeakers, the noise and disruption from the ever-present tacky pedicabs- these all give off a somewhat anarchistic air - of an area not really under anyone's control, unsupervised and slightly menacing. It certainly does nothing for the overall shopping experience.

No matter how much the council chooses to spend on improving the infrastructure unless they can get to grips with this, a large number of ordinary families will choose to avoid the area and spend their money elsewhere.

The construction works themselves will of course bring with them significant disruption to the residents around Oxford Street as traffic is diverted through the surrounding streets whilst this work is being carried out and to retailers and other businesses who are bound to see footfall affected, just as things are starting to pick up.

The works are due to commence in autumn 2024 and to finish in early 2025, but on previous experience, they will continue at least until the end of that year, if not into 2026.

Office Occupation Back to Pre-Pandemic Levels

The story of business revival goes far wider than Oxford Street. New research from Savills has revealed that occupancy rates across the West End have risen to 62 per cent up from 50 per cent in the last six months.

The report found that the take-up reflects demand from finance companies, excluding insurers, who are recording a 63 percent average occupancy rate, due to the sector largely favouring a return to a five-day working week in the office - contrary to many predictions that part time office working was here to stay.

Planning Service Advice

The Council is in the process of developing an advice service for residents to support them in responding to emerging planning proposals that may have a significant impact on surrounding communities.

The service will be focused on major developments and will provide residents with support in understanding the proposals, the scope of material planning considerations, and what development plan policies are relevant, so that they are better able to respond to complex and larger consultations that occur at pre-application and application stage.

It is expected that the service will initially be piloted for a fixed period to enable it to be reviewed and refined before further rollout. Its introduction on a pilot basis is due in the spring of 2024.

The service may be run along the same lines as the existing advice available to residents on licensing applications, which is widely acknowledged to work very well. However, scaling up of this to deal with major planning applications would involve rather more in the way of resources.

New Bins for Marylebone





The shape of bins to come

We will shortly be seeing new styles of litter bins on our streets.

The WCC Waste and Cleansing team has been engaged for several years in actively testing different litter bins. Apparently the failure of any 'off-the-shelf' models to successfully satisfy Westminster's high standards has led to the need to design an entirely new litter bin: a process that has fully involved internal stakeholders, the industry, and operational partners, Veolia.

Westminster say that the new design will take account of flaws identified in the current bin stock, whilst what can be recycled will also need to fit an industry standard. WCC say the new litter bin will conform to the principles of the Westminster Way guidance document, which specifies that litter bins should be simple black bins designed to withstand the harsh conditions of Westminster Streets and increase the amount of material recycled.

At first sight, these bins do not appear to be the simple black bins advised by Westminster Way, nor, having strayed from that guidance, do they appear particularly inspiring. There will no doubt be many factors in arriving at these shapes that we are unaware of and at least there is less of the coloured plastic trim around their openings than before.

Several purchase options were considered and it was finally decided to purchase them via Veolia, who under their contract with WCC, will be responsible for the bins and equipment and their maintenance. This option was preferred due to Veolia's significant buying power: "Utilising Veolia creates benefits without creating any additional advantage to Veolia at point of service re-procurement in 2027." We assume this means that although Veolia purchases them, WCC will have ownership, otherwise there could well be a problem if subsequent contracts were to be awarded to another supplier.

The bins will be procured to replace the existing 'duo bins'. The project would procure 2,000 litter bins and then 50 per year thereafter to backfill stocks. The cost comes out at £850 for each bin at a total cost of £1.7million, allowing for a contingency of £0.3million. The bins will be replaced as part of the washing schedule so the additional cost of delivering the bins to the site is expected to be minimal and will be covered within the contingency with no impact on revenue budgets.

The New Plan on Demolition



The revised City Plan has changed the way that the council will be looking at demolition and retrofitting in the future. The policy is divided into two parts.

Part 1 of the policy, for sites involving substantial demolition and major development, seeks to control instances where demolition will be permitted and requires that developers explore retrofitting first.

Three exceptions are given to the control on demolition- namely where the whole life carbon (WLC) assessment suggests demolition is the most suitable option; where there are bespoke operational requirements that cannot be achieved by repurposing the building; and where significant public benefits are proposed.

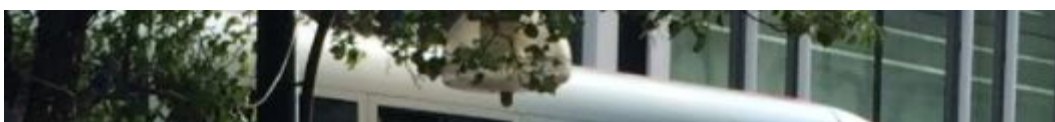
For major schemes, and where substantial demolition is proposed, a target embodied carbon budget for the development will be imposed.

Part 2 of the policy seeks to facilitate retrofitting through two principal mechanisms: firstly, enabling officers to consider the environmental impact of a development on climate change alongside heritage, design and townscape considerations; and secondly encouraging and supporting retrofit schemes to meet best practice.

WCC emphasises that the purpose of the policy is to not prevent redevelopment but to establish more rigorous tests to ensure that retrofit is meaningfully explored. It seeks to achieve the goal of encouraging more applications to adopt a retrofit approach to development.

However, it remains to be seen whether these exceptions given to retrofitting will provide sensible alternatives in exceptional cases - or will be developed by expensive experts into a means of procuring as many demolitions as we have at present.

Street Entertainment Policy?





A resident writes:

Please could you explain the 'emerging street entertainment policy'. As far as residents are aware, it emerged a while back and seems to be failing. We had heard that there might be WCC changes even further degrading the liveability of this area: Is this the emerging Street Entertainment Policy?

Five years ago WCC downgraded the excellent and essential 24-hour noise service, melding it into street management, reducing the number of properly qualified and experienced noise officers. There was nominal 'training' of some street management officers which did not transform them into competent, experienced, committed noise officers.

While many officers do provide a good noise service, overall there has been a downgrading of the service. This is unavoidable if qualified Environmental Health Officers (EHO'S) are replaced with officers who do not have the training, experience and qualifications to measure and judge whether or not a noise is a nuisance, and to manage recalcitrant and evasive buskers.

There is no point in having street entertainment licensing, or a policy, if it is not to be properly enforced, with orders, with prosecutions, with confiscation of instruments and amplifier equipment. Qualified and experienced EHOs are essential for witnessing and enforcing environmental protection legislation, and street management officers need to be properly trained and motivated to deal with Street Entertainment Licensing violations.

Police presence with WCC officers is essential: As many buskers are threatening and aggressive when asked to stop, and they won't give real names and addresses to WCC officers on their own. It is useless to have any policy or licensing without committed police involvement on the street with the WCC officers when they are dealing with buskers face-to-face. But only very rarely is it possible for a noise officer to get hold of police officers to help them deal with a busker. Phones are not answered, rapid contact and response are seemingly

buskers. Phones are not answered, rapid contact and response are seemingly impossible.

Before the Covid pandemic, some kind of initiative was said to be happening that would enable fast communication between noise officers and the police, for dealing with buskers. This never materialised, and neither the street management officers nor the noise officers get police help when they need it.

Restoration of full good standard 24/7 EHO noise service after the last WCC elections was expected and is essential. Buskers are not the only noise nuisance problem in this area.

Covid lockdowns temporarily reduced busking and pedicabs: pedicabs returned first, now busker numbers are increasing. Buskers are now gaining in confidence, frequency and numbers, because they are realising that there is no effective enforcement of Street Entertainment Licensing, or of noise from busking.

Some of the aggressive buskers are with the gangs that also run pedicabs, street beggars, rose-selling, street entertainers, pick-pocketing and illegal street gambling. Residents get the impression that street management officers, and any security people on Oxford Street, see no point in stopping buskers as they just return time and time again - as do parked pedicabs.

The Oxford Street Programme Business Case ignores the negative impacts on residential communities next to Oxford Street, and fails to redress loss of liveability caused by previous OS schemes. It offers no mitigation for this degradation of 'amenity' either. It just repeats the failures of previous Oxford Street projects and the BIDS to acknowledge that there is a residential community adjacent to Oxford Street West, thus avoiding having to take measures to protect residents from the negative impacts.

It is not enough to just add the word 'residents' to those cited as beneficiaries of the Oxford Street Programme. Changes to Oxford Street, from the urban design itself and resulting increases in footfall and Oxford Street retail and other uses, have increased traffic, noise and air pollution, and have damaged the community itself.

There is no practical reason for this to happen. Protective measures for this community are entirely feasible.

Announcements

St Marylebone Film Club

The St Marylebone Society is launching a film club with special emphasis on 'local talent':

'Our upcoming film club which will be showcasing the film adaptations of some of the best authors of the Marylebone area, including H.G. Wells Things to Come and Arthur Conan Doyle's Hound of the Baskervilles.

We're kicking off the series on the 9th of January at 6pm with a classic – A Room with a View, starring Helena Bonham Carter, Julian Sands, and Maggie Smith. We'll be screening the films in our atmospheric Crypt and at only £5 a ticket for one film, or £15 to buy tickets to all four screenings,

The link to buy tickets is [here](#).

Emilia's

www.emiliaspasta.com

Emilia's are pleased to announce the opening of their new restaurant:

Our new restaurant will have a 2-week launch starting 8th January, with 50% off the total bill! Please mention MA membership when booking.

Please note that:

- The 50% discount will be available .
- Between 26th December and 7th January normal menu prices will apply.

More information and the link to book a table can be found on our website www.emiliaspasta.com. See more [here](#).

Marylebone Station 125th Anniversary

If you have unusual or interesting personal stories relating to Marylebone station, we want to hear from you.

- Did your relatives work at Marylebone station in its early years?
- Did your relatives work on the station's construction?
- Do you have any personal stories connected to the early years of Marylebone Station?
- Do you have photos of the construction or early years of Marylebone Station?

As part of **Marylebone Station's 125th anniversary**, The Baker Street Quarter Partnership is reimagining the Harewood Avenue station exit. This project will focus on celebrating history and the local community and we would like to include local personal accounts relating to Marylebone station.

Please contact us by **12 January 2024** if you want to be part of this exciting project:

- Email address: 125marylebonestation@bakerstreetq.co.uk
- Phone number: 020 3056 5916

The phone number will direct you to a voicemail, where you can leave your name and phone number so that we can call you back.

Our website: bakerstreetq.co.uk

10% off Stays at The Bo Tree



The BoTree is Marylebone's newest luxury hotel. An exciting addition to London's hotel scene, which opened its doors in September 2023, it promises a unique and memorable stay.

The hotel rooms feature contemporary décor created exclusively for The BoTree and thoughtful extras like Jasper Conran Wedgwood tea sets, eucalyptus Tencel bedding, and vegan and eco-friendly Jo Loves toiletries, whilst the various suites feature spacious, separate living areas.

The largest and most luxurious of these is The BoTree Suite, with spectacular views across central London and featuring its own guest entrance and a balcony, the space can be combined with adjoining suites to create a large wing for a private stay.

In addition to the vibrant rooms and suites, The BoTree has the first-ever UK branch of Italian restaurant, LAVO, serving elegant Italian dishes in a sophisticated but relaxed restaurant.

The BoTree Bar, with its beautiful ceiling installation and curved teal-marble bar, is the perfect spot for drinks or pre-dinner cocktails.

From January 1st, The BoTree are offering 10% off on both hotel rooms and in the Italian restaurant LAVO to Marylebone Association members. Book via this link to redeem the hotel offer. For the restaurant MA membership should be mentioned when booking.

Art of Banksy Exhibition



- Final Opportunity -

The Art of Banksy - a major exhibition which has brought Banksy's era defining works to visitors in 15 cities across the globe - is now in its last few days at Regent Street.

The Art of Banksy is the world's largest collection of original and authenticated Banksy artworks showcasing more than 110 pieces including prints, canvases, unique works and ephemera, many of which are on display for the very first time.

See the seminal pieces that brought the anonymous artist international acclaim - 'Girl With Balloon' in three colour variations, 'Flower Thrower' and 'Rude Copper' alongside unique works including hand-drawn sketches and personal artworks which Banksy created for friends, colleagues and lovers. The exhibition also focuses on Banksy's Dismaland, the Walled Off Hotel in Bethlehem and recent artworks which comment on the ongoing war in Ukraine.

For this first time, close associates of the artist share personal stories giving a unique insight into some of the world's most famous images, engrossing background on how those headline grabbing street art stunts were devised and how, with their irreverent wit and a biting political edge, this visionary took the art world by storm without ever revealing their identity.

Visit the Art of Banksy's new 2,000 sqm Regent Street home to discover the iconic works of one of the world's most important current artists and what their work reveals today; the power of art to affect social change.

The Art of Banksy is not curated or authorised by the artist.

The Art of Banksy exhibition, 84-86 Regent Street, London, W1B 5HB

Dates This exhibition runs from Wed, 5th July 2023 to Sun, 7th Jan 2024.

Cost: £21 Contact and Booking Details

More information at this [website](#).

Reserve tickets at this [website](#).

Association Events

ANNUAL NEW YEAR DRINKS PARTY

Thursday 18th January 2023 at 7pm

The Oriental Club, Stratford House, 11 Stratford Place, W1C 1ES

Places remaining but the event is expected to be fully subscribed, so if you do want to attend please book now.

We are delighted once again to be having our annual wine and canapés party in the elegant atmosphere of the Library at The Oriental Club. This Grade 1 listed private members' club is one of the most impressive surviving examples of Georgian architecture in this part of London. All residential and business members are welcome with the opportunity to meet old friends and new, along with members of the Committee. We can look forward to a most enjoyable evening.

To reserve your place please email lois.german@marylebone.org or telephone 0207 487 2706. The cost this year is £40 per head, payable in advance, with payment details provided on booking.

PLANNED FUTURE EVENTS

Coffee Morning - Wednesday 21st February

Details of the location will be in our February Newsletter.

Regular Events

BOOK CLUB

Monday 8 January 2024 at 6.30 pm The King's Head, Westmoreland Street, W1G 8PJ

January's book is: Traitor King: The Scandalous Exile of the Duke and Duchess of Windsor by Andrew Lownie

Book Club 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.

PUB EVENING

Monday 8th January at 6.30pm

The Prince Regent, 71 Marylebone High Street, W1U 5JN

Continuing with our regular bi-monthly pub evenings at this popular London pub, with plush barmen and real ales.. 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 Anne Hamilton.

SCRABBLE CLUB

Tuesday 9 and 23 January from 5.00 pm

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

What better way to start the New Year than to try something completely new? Or revisit an old friend? The MA Scrabble Club fits the bill on both counts and it's free. Members normally meet 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 are very welcome. Anyone interested in joining and/or wanting further information should contact rosemary.forgan@marylebone.org or 020 7916 9353. Why not come along and just watch, to see if you enjoy it?

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

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

[Unsubscribe](#)