



The Marylebone Association Newsletter August 2020

Dear Tim,

ASSOCIATION NEWS

Association Annual Report

Following the Association's decision to forgo an attended AGM event this year (in view of current government guidelines we in fact had little choice) the Annual Report has been made available to all members by way of PDF on our website with a printed version sent to those requesting this.

As we were unable to hold a live event we have included many more articles this year, from local councillors, the Lord Mayor of Westminster, the Leader of Westminster Council and our local MP as well as those from members of the committee. If you have not received or downloaded this yet, you can do so [here](#).

Association Events

Note: All events listed are subject to current government guidelines at the time of the listing

Ishtar Annual Wine Tasting lunch

Engin Servi – the owner of Ishtar is happy to continue holding an annual August Wine Tasting lunch, social distancing style

annual August wine tasting lunch. social distancing style.

This will be the tenth year. He has re-arranged the lower dining area to follow the necessary guidelines.

The event will be held on Sunday 23 August at Ishtar, 10-12 Crawford Street. There will be a selection of summer rosé and white wines, plus light reds. Wines will be available to purchase, from a single bottle to a whole case.

Cost per person including wine, lunch, tea/coffee & service £35 payable on the day. Please contact Sheila Green at sj.green125@btinternet.com or 0207 262 7157

MARYLEBONE NEWS

Cycle Lanes and Car Parks



While there are no plans to close the Marylebone cycle lanes to cars, there are plans to

Whilst we can understand the Mayor's desire to encourage more people to walk and cycle, with the obvious benefits to health, any support rapidly disappears on seeing the consequences of its implementation so far. The methods by which he has set about this have been profoundly counterproductive and represent the triumph of ideology over reason.

Marylebone is now surrounded by number of key routes through the city that have been crippled by ill-thought-out "temporary" pavement extensions and cycle lanes. By reducing the previous three available lanes to one on these vital trunk roads for cars and commercial vehicles it has had the ridiculous but predictable effect of massively increasing congestion and pollution through the creation of permanent daytime traffic queues. In addition, the creation of these artificial bottlenecks must be costing businesses millions of pounds a day in needless delays at a time when many are struggling to survive.

If these designated lanes had been filled with cyclist and pedestrians utilising their newly allocated space this would just possibly be an acceptable price to pay. However this is not the case and what makes these politically driven changes totally unacceptable is the sight of vast empty area of road space now evident on Park Lane, Euston Road, Edgware Road and elsewhere. Whilst these acres of vital road remain mainly un-utilised, all non-bus and taxi traffic is pushed in to a single lane, with the result a 5-10 minute journey turns into a 40 minute one or longer.

Having witnessed the dramatic failure of this piece of social engineering, one may have thought that the mistakes would have been recognised and steps taken to rapidly rectify them. But of course in spite of this continuing yet pointless disruption to much of London's traffic, no mistakes are admitted and nothing done to stop the chaos.

If ever there was a graphic illustration of why running London's vital road network should be removed from the hands of politicians with their own agendas to satisfy, and restored to civil servants who are employed to fulfil a brief, untrammelled with the concerns of producing sound bites for the purpose of re-election, then this is it. The irony of Traffic for London's slogan- " Keeping London Moving " cannot be lost on many.

Why not put the bike lanes where people live. This would allow safer neighbourhood cycling rather than displacing trunk road traffic onto local streets; which in turn makes local cycling journeys more hazardous.

Covid-19 De-Regulation

measures

It has become increasingly apparent that much of the de-regulation that has come in the wake of Covid-19 to help business will be problematic for many residents.

As previously reported, the street trading and off-sales changes in the Business and Planning Bill will allow developers to extend construction working hours to 21:00 (or later), which will be extremely disruptive, especially when so many are at present spending more time at home.

The Draft Guidance issued by the Government does not give Local Authorities much scope to refuse applications and they can't adjust them without the Applicant's agreement. This is a deemed consent measure and so if the Planning Authority doesn't decide the application within 14 days the developer gets what they applied for.

There is now a pilot scheme in the City to assess the impact of licensing E-scooters for use in London, so the battle to get these outlawed seems to be doomed. Under the proposals E-scooters will have to be rented from an approved supplier and riders will need a full or provisional driving licence.

Meanwhile dramatic changes to the use classes regulations will allow far greater flexibility to change commercial buildings uses within town centres without the need to obtain planning permission. They will make current shop frontage planning policies obsolete or toothless, restricting the ability of local planning authorities, including Westminster, to control the mix of uses.

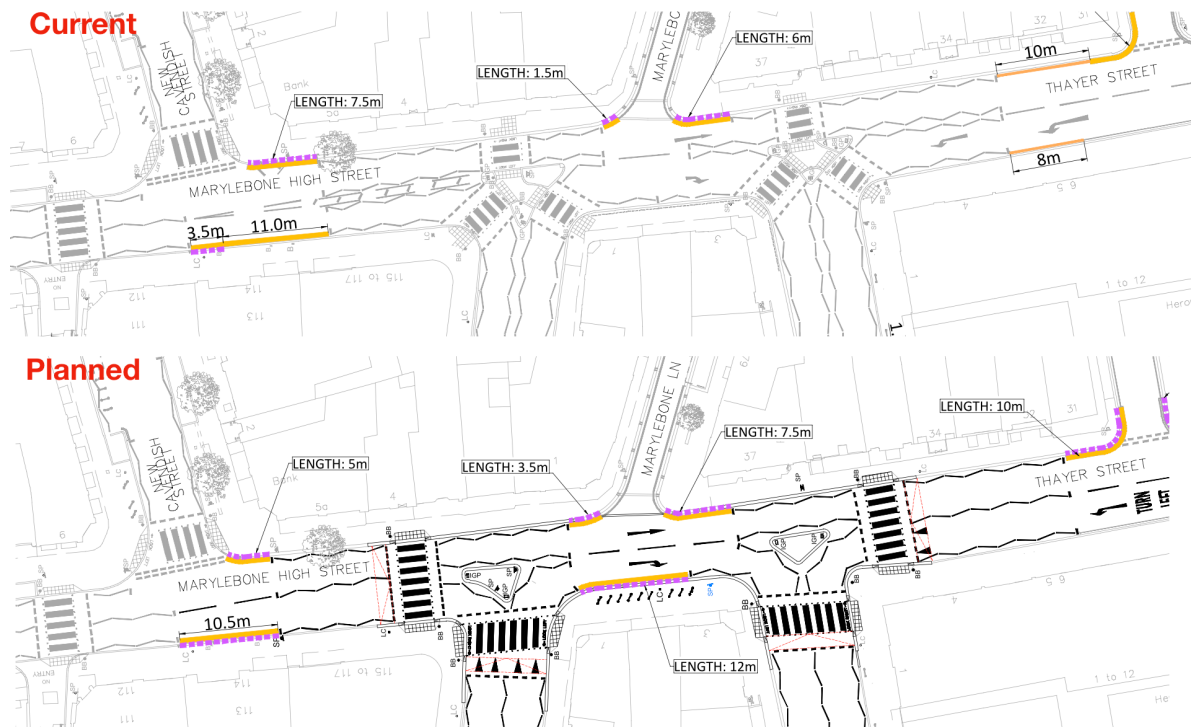
The changes will combine: Shops (A1), financial/professional services (A2), cafés/restaurants (A3), indoor sports/fitness (D2 part), medical health facilities (D1 part), creche/nurseries and office/business uses (B1) will be subsumed into a new single Use Class E.

This increased flexibility will be welcomed by many landlords and fund managers with vacant premises. It remains to be seen whether this 'let the market decide' approach has harmful unintended consequences. However one very obvious consequence is that now anyone living by, over or near an office or shop has absolutely no protection or say in a sudden change of use into, say, a restaurant or cafe.

There is some good news on the regulations front- the Business & Planning Bill which had threatened to inflict an uncontrolled al fresco drinking bonanza in the streets of the West End into the early hours has been removed by a timely proposed amendment to retain the 11 pm closing time for the on/off site sale of alcohol. This was driven through by, amongst others our local MP and members of the Soho

and Covent Garden community groups supported by Westminster and other local authorities. This will not however affect the al fresco dining proposals in the areas outside restaurants.

More disruption planned for Marylebone High Street



Westminster City Council are planning yet more roadworks on Marylebone High Street (see plans above). How long will the disruption and noise last? Do you think that this will be an improvement, or a pointless waste of public money?

Any objections or other representations about the proposals should be sent in writing to the Council's agents, WSP, Room 603, 52 Grosvenor Gardens, London, SW1W 0AU, or by email to: tmo.westminster@wsp.com quoting reference 7499/LH, by 19th August 2020. All objections must specify the grounds on which they are made.

Westminster News

Westminster Council facing £91m

funding gap from Covid-19

It has been reported that Westminster Council is forecasting a £91 million shortfall from the coronavirus pandemic. WCC has lost huge amounts of revenue from commercial rents and business rates, and from road and parking charges. At a cabinet meeting on July 13 councillors were told there will be a funding gap of £29m by the next financial year, rising to £91.3m by April 2023. No details have yet been given about which services might be cut and regardless of this, it is still planning to build 2,400 new homes by 2023.

Busking - WCC back to drawing Board

Over the past year WCC have been engaging with residents, businesses, buskers and others to develop a new policy that supports responsible street entertainment, whilst protecting the local community from adverse impacts.

The results of the consultation however showed that the majority were not in favour of the current proposals; it was felt by many the policy so far produced did not strike the right balance.

The Association had made it clear in the consultation that the voluntary measures, including self-regulation and a busking code of conduct, would not do enough to control noise levels, and expressed concern about the effect of displacement.

We are pleased therefore that Westminster Council has listened to representations made and is now considering changes to the policy that will include strengthened measures to regulate busking, by broadening the areas where they will seek to adopt licensing.

The Council has therefore shown that it does not take the introduction of regulation of busking and street entertainment lightly, but considers it necessary to protect residents and workers from detrimental impact.

Updated proposals will be published in October, but we will continue to keep you updated on any progress.

The Crown Estate offers switch to turnover based rents

Property Week reports that the Crown Estate has written to some tenants offering a switch to turnover based rents. In one case the Crown Estate asked for 9% of turnover or a percentage of what it would normally receive in quarterly rents, on a scale starting at 0% for the current period and rising to 75% by next month. The Estate said it was focusing its help on small and independent businesses

Piccadilly mosque plans withdrawn

Plans to convert part of the Trocadero building at London's Piccadilly Circus into a mosque have been withdrawn. The Aziz Foundation, an Islamic education charity, submitted plans in February to turn two basement floors into a mosque for 1,000 worshippers. Westminster City Council received 6,100 comments in support and 2,800 objecting, a high volume were "racist". When the plans were submitted, the Islamic education charity said a mosque would help provide prayer space in a location where there was "a significant shortfall in places of worship"

Age UK Westminster

A message from Ronald Jacobson of Age UK Westminster "The intense national reaction to the **Black Lives Matter** campaign has made the Board of Age UK Westminster re-think the make-up of our Board of Trustees.

At present we have no Black or Asian members and, with the ethnic diversity of Westminster, we would welcome the addition of anyone from those communities who would like to help in the assistance and support of the older members of our diverse population.

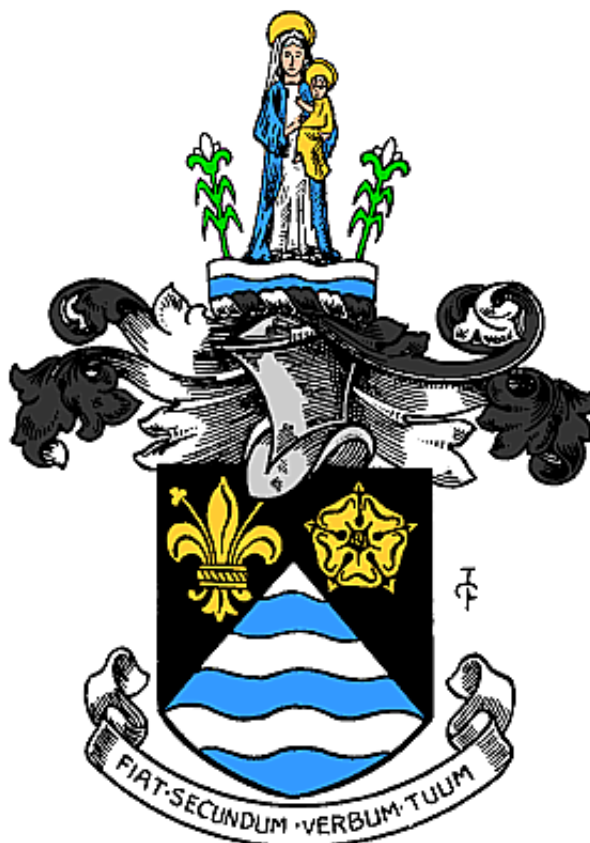
We would be most grateful if you could send this message to members of your community and, if interested, ask them to email our Joint Chair, Fiona Healy-Connelly, on fhc@ageukwestminster.org.uk."

This Month in Marylebone History

The Marylebone arms were granted by the College of Arms on 17 August 1901. The name is derived from a chapel, dedicated to St

Mary, and founded by Barking Abbey, the holders of the Manor of Tyburn. The chapel was named St Mary-le-Bourne, for the *bourne*, or River Tyburn. In the borough's coat of arms, the blue and white waves represent this stream; the lily and rose, derived from Barking Abbey, represent the legend that when the Virgin's tomb was opened it was found to contain lilies and roses.

The motto: *Fiat Secundum Verbatum Tuum*, is from the Gospel of Luke Ch.I v.38 and translates as *Be it according to Thy Word*.



Events

Regular Association Events

(For more details click on the event)

BOOK CLUB

Tuesday 4 August 2020 at 6.30 pm

Members normally meet at The King's Head pub in Westmoreland Street – although sadly this is not possible right now. Instead the meetings are via Zoom so anyone who is interested in joining in should contact Liz Queenan. Meetings on the first Tuesday of each month at 6.30 – but our Zoom meetings start at 5

...month at once – but our Zoom meetings start at 6.

This month's book is: Rules of Civility by Amor Towles.

All books read are available on paper and on e-readers. For more information contact Liz Queenan (liz.queenan@marylebone.org) or tel: 020 7486 3709.

SCRABBLE CLUB

Normally meets on the second and fourth Tuesday of each month (11 and 25 Aug) at The Natural Kitchen in Baker Street. Sadly this is not possible at the moment but we hope to be able to get together again soon. Some of our members have taken up Words With Friends 2 – a game somewhat similar to Scrabble but which can be played on a