



Marylebone Association

Newsletter January 2022

Happy New Year from the Marylebone Association Committee

Oxford Street District Project costs £20 Million to date





Figures disclosed in the Council's Scrutiny Committee Report in late November show that the £150 million OSD project has cost to date £20.2 million, with around £18 million of that in consultancy costs.

The Scrutiny Report states that the only physical outcomes from this expenditure are: "Construction of Oxford Street footway widening, planting and seating, Soho Photography Quarter and Berners Street/Newman Street traffic switch". These came at a cost of approximately £2 million. The bulk of the £20 million was spent on consultancy costs.

The Scrutiny Report reveals that £16.1 million was spent on Oxford Street "feasibility design and staffing costs" and a further £2.5 million was spent "to develop Place Strategy & Concept Design".

In addition, a further £315,000 has been spent by the Council on design work for the proposed Oxford Circus Piazzas which the Council has now put on hold.

In spite of the costs to date Westminster Council remains committed to the OSD project and believes the case for investing in this area is even stronger following the pandemic. However, it has now introduced four key tests that must be met to determine the viability of proposed projects:

1. A Clear Case for Change – The rationale for undertaking a project must be fully articulated and align with the overarching objectives outlined in the existing Oxford Street District business case.
2. Meaningful Engagement and Partnerships – Meaningfully engaging with stakeholders, residents and the wider community is central to all OSD schemes and a precursor to project development.
3. Clarity on Impact for Residents – As a public authority, Westminster puts the needs of its residents at the forefront of its decision-making. Core to a project's rationale is the impact of proposed changes on the day-to-day activities of local communities. Therefore, the benefits of any proposed public realm scheme must be clearly stated and ways of mitigating its negative outcomes outlined.
4. Robust Costing and Investment Perspective – All projects must undergo a detailed cost analysis and investigate additional investment potential to ensure proposals are cost-effective and contribute to delivering the programme's objectives, and that costings are robust.

Interestingly, the impact on residents of these projects therefore now features in the overall assessment, however to what degree remains to be seen.

The Marble Arch Mound was out of the scope of this report as it was discussed separately at the Business and Children's Policy Scrutiny Committee which took place on 27th October 2021 (reported by us in the December Newsletter). Sponsorship costs were not available at that committee, but have since been divulged, see below.

The Mound gets 10k Sponsorship to date

The costs of the Mound, amounted to over 6 million, and it is costing the ratepayer approximately £150,000 per month to keep going. Westminster Council always hoped that some of the expense would be covered by sponsorship. Indeed it was touted as "a unique opportunity for brand exposure in one of the world's leading destinations....Your brand will be on display on one of London's most talked about attractions." Marble Arch Sponsorship proposal

Talked about indeed it was, however business still proved resistant to this opportunity and the derisory amount received to date reveals a lack of enthusiasm for the project. Even the projected total will only cover one months running costs.

Westminster Council have understandably not been too keen to give much detail of the sponsorship obtained, however as a result of a Freedom of Information request the actual sums have now been divulged below:

I can confirm that the information requested is held by Westminster City Council. I

have detailed below the information that is being released to you.

To date (01/12/2021) £10k has been received from sponsors and as per the Cabinet Member report, published on 19th October, the total anticipated income from sponsorship and partnership is £160k. Invoices have been issued for the remaining 150K. M&S Food and W1 Curates are not sponsors.

Please note: When the council published the cost of this project the total costs allowed for the loss of income from sponsorship. Sponsors remain supportive and

we expect to receive more sponsorship from our partners in the coming months.

Westminster County Council.

Crossrail Saga Continues

On the subject of large expensive and massively inflated projects, they don't come any larger or more expensive than Crossrail, although admittedly that at least will serve a useful purpose.

Crossrail has now at last commenced the final stage of testing the line before it can open to the public, only 3 years behind schedule.

TfL's Commissioner, Andy Byford has been clear that the line will only open once they are absolutely certain that it can offer a reliable service. They don't want the same sort of disastrous opening as happened to Heathrow's Terminal 5, which was beset by delays and cancellations when it opened in 2008.

Only once all the tests and drills have been completed will the line be certified

In fact it will probably not be until 2023 that the full service is up and running.



Harley Street Area Boundary

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Business Improvement Districts (BID), the trades bodies for large businesses, are having a boom time in Westminster at the moment.

The latest BID is in Marylebone, centred on the Harley Street medical area.

The Harley Street Area BID joins 16 other established BIDs in Westminster, more BIDs than any other London borough.

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BIDs represent the larger businesses in Westminster and work closely with the Council. They follow the American model of increased public/private collaboration between councils and business and give these businesses a united voice to lobby on big issues impacting on them.

The successful Harley Street Area BID ballot results were announced on Friday 3 December. Of those local businesses that voted, 86% voted 'yes' at the ballot (88% by rateable value).

The BID team issued the following announcement. "Today's successful ballot result has seen the establishment of London's 67th BID and is a promising indication of the growing role that BIDs are playing in London's ongoing development".

"Over £5 million will be invested into the area over the BID's five-year term. As the UK's first BID with a medical focus, the BID aims to use this investment to position the Harley Street area as pioneering and world-leading, ensuring that businesses and the local community benefit from the central location, good accessibility and strong identity Harley Street offers."

"The BID's work will build on priority areas that the local business community have identified, with priority projects including the development of a public realm strategy, improved signage, additional street cleansing, and more marketing and promotion of the area as a key medical tourism destination."

More West End Pavement Widening?

BIDs' are now becoming an increasingly powerful voice within the capital. This is good for business but it must be remembered that residents do not have a voice on them, neither are they obliged to represent their interests.

The Heart of London Business Alliance, is one such example, they have plans to permanently widen pavements along parts of the West End, as that is what their members want.

Subject to planning approvals, the scheme could see both Charing Cross Road and St Martin's Lane pavements widened and new planting added,

They've now outlined 40 potential projects to be delivered by 2027, with five immediate priorities aimed at improving pedestrian spaces in the West End.

The schemes would see the pandemic induced widening of the streets made permanent with wider paving spaces and more trees and planting. It would then become a pedestrian priority road from noon to midnight, allowing time for deliveries in the mornings, and creating space for permanent alfresco dining.

Away from the urgent proposals, other ideas include potentially closing one of the four roads that lead into Piccadilly Circus, improving cycling routes around the area, reducing street clutter, reconfiguring traffic routes to make the area more welcoming to pedestrians, and a lot more greenery to be planted.

The Pedicabs Bill

The latest setback in the attempt to get some control over the nuisance of pedicabs was encountered in December. The Pedicabs (London) Bill, Nickie Aiken MP Private Members' Bill, was listed to be debated on the 3rd December. Unfortunately time ran out for the debate and the Bill will return for its Second Reading on the 21st January.

Nickie Aiken MP commented: "I remain committed to gaining legislation which will ensure the safety of those who use Pedicabs. Sadly, Parliamentary Procedure has meant that my Bill could not be debated so far, but there will be another opportunity in January."

"In the meantime, I'm continuing to work with colleagues across the House to show why we desperately need regulation, and I'm pleased the Government are supporting me. No matter what happens with my own Bill, there are a number of avenues I am pursuing, and I will not give up."

We wish Nickie the best of luck, but fail to understand why the government cannot just take this in hand and get something done about it. There can be few more flagrant assaults on public amenity than these mobile flashing Christmas trees, clogging the streets and blasting out noise wherever they go through into the early hours of the morning. And they have been blighting our capital for over ten years now.

West End Ward Candidates

The new year is here and before we know it the May council elections will be on us. The electoral boundaries have major changes for our area (see article below). BDS Ward will go and be replaced by an enlarged Marylebone Ward, with the rest of our area to be covered by an extended West End Ward, and the councillors here will now be playing a much more significant role in the Marylebone area than previously.

In November we outlined the Conservatives Candidates for the new Marylebone Ward and below are the candidates for the Conservative and Labour parties in the West End Ward. At the last elections in 2018 the vote was very tight between Labour and Conservatives in this ward.

We hope to publish the Labour candidates standing for the Marylebone Ward next month. We will share the full list of candidates from all political parties and any independents candidates closer to the time of the election.





Julie Redmond

Julie was appointed a conservative candidate for the West End Ward earlier this year but has had a long involvement with the area having lived and worked in Marylebone for nearly 20 years. She has a background in A&E nursing and pharmacology and worked as an NHS Covid Vaccinator throughout 2021.

As a committee member of the Marylebone Association and a Health Champion Julie has worked to help residents and families tackle local issues and has provided support to business and charities like the Marylebone Project.

If elected she would seek to work with all across the political spectrum to help the area build a positive and bright future.

Cllr Timothy Barnes

Timothy teaches entrepreneurship at UCL and runs his own business. He was first elected to Westminster City Council in 2018, to represent the West End Ward, where he also lives.

Almost half this time has seen our lives dominated by the Covid emergency and the effects of the pandemic and this has led to council activities now taking a large portion of his work time.

Timothy currently serves as Cabinet Member for Young People and Learning with responsibility for our schools, libraries and weddings, including those at Old Marylebone Town Hall - currently the busiest venue in the country!

Cllr Eoghain Leo Murphy

Eoghain is a familiar face, having lived in Marylebone since 2005, initially by the High Street and, since 2012, by Broadcasting House, in the West End ward, for which he is standing.

Eoghain has recently given up full time employment in asset management, so increasing time for Council and ward work. He retains an interest in his former profession as chairman of the City's pension fund.

Elected in 2018 to BDS Ward, the pandemic made Eoghain's first Council term unusual. He is eager to promote recovery of the West End whilst balancing residents' concerns, including overdevelopment, enforcement (late noise, anti-social behaviour, dumping) and air quality.



Labour West End Ward candidates

Paul Fisher

Paul is a barrister and local activist, campaigning on issues ranging from financial waste to over-development in our city.

Originally from South Wales, Paul has lived and worked in central London for the best part of a decade and, like many Londoners, made it his home. He is committed to enhancing strong local communities in the centre of our city, like Marylebone.

Along with Westminster's Labour group, Paul opposes the recent Conservative Council Tax rise and supports a freeze of Council Tax for next year.

Patrick Lilley

Patrick has lived in Westminster for over 25 years. He stood in the West End Ward, last time round, doubling the Labour vote and coming within 27 votes of being elected.

He currently works on a leading Covid 19 Health Study. Patrick believes short-term letting like AirBnB is out of control and contributes to Anti-Social Behaviour and he wants tougher action on dumping and fly tipping.

Labour's West End team opposes "piazza-fication" of Oxford Circus. Patrick, like many residents, fears the plans are pedestrianisation by the back door that will displace traffic to the residential streets of Marylebone and Mayfair.

Jessica Toale

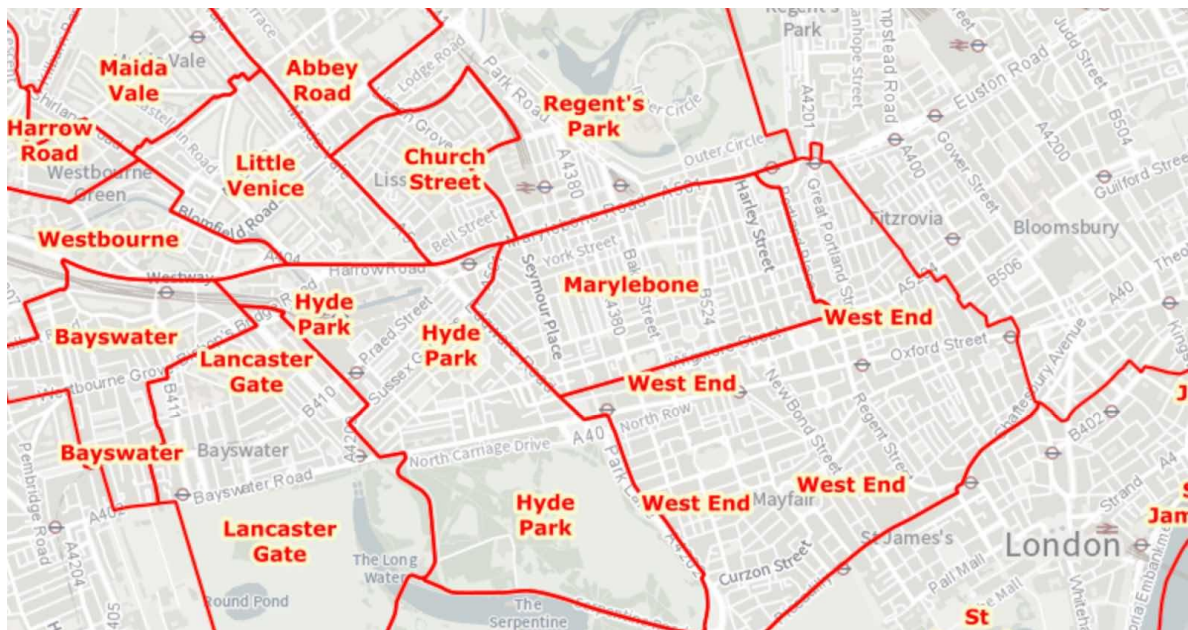
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Jessica lives in Covent Garden and is a human rights and international development advocate.

She is campaigning for the Council to take the concerns of the community seriously - most recently over the need to genuinely consult and listen to residents over the covid al fresco schemes and major traffic projects.

Jessica is also a Trustee of peace-building and conflict resolution charity Concordis International and is currently retraining as a barrister.

Summary of Main West End Ward Boundary Changes



Fitzrovia north of New Cavendish Street and east of Portland Place moves from Marylebone High Street to the West End Ward.

The area bounded by New Cavendish Street, Harley Street, Wigmore Street and Portland Place moves from West End to Marylebone.

Everywhere south of Wigmore Street/Seymour Street moves from Marylebone High Street or Bryanston and Dorset Square to the West End Ward.

The mansion blocks north of Old Marylebone Road move from Bryanston and Dorset Square ward to Hyde Park.

TfL Congestion Charge Changes, Again!

TfL in June last year increased the congestion charge zone hours of operation

TfL in June last year increased the congestion charge zone hours of operation to 10 p.m., seven days a week on the basis of it being a temporary measure during Covid. TfL has now announced that it will revise these hours. Taking effect from February 2022 the following hours will apply to the congestion charge:

Transport for London will apply the congestion charge from 7 am to 6 pm on weekdays and 12 noon to 6 p.m. on weekends and bank holidays. The move is aimed at balancing a reduction in car journeys while also reviving the hard-hit hospitality industry.

TfL had also suspended the congestion charge between Christmas and the first working day of the New Year, as concern over spiralling cases of the Omicron coronavirus variant prompts people to stay away from public transit.

The cost per vehicle will remain at £15 a day.

Sir Simon Milton University Technical College to Close



The Sir Simon Milton Westminster University Technical College is to close. It only opened in September 2017 and specialised in science, technology, engineering and mathematics for 14–19 year-olds. This is sad news as high hopes had been placed on it filling a perceived gap in technical education within Westminster. The school has had about £16 million by way of funding, with approximately £2million being contributed by Westminster Council, according to the Labour Group.

Westminster Council says: “Due to continued low pupil numbers, the Department for Education has now taken a decision to close the UTC in

Department for Education has now taken a decision to close the UTC in August 2022. A listening exercise taking into consideration the views of students, parents, staff and stakeholders has concluded and a final decision will be taken by the Dept for Education. The site will remain in educational use whatever the outcome of the current discussions and a small number of education providers have expressed an interest.”

Selfridges Sold



The billionaire Canadian Weston family, which had been seeking about £4 billion for the Selfridges department store chain, is understood to have agreed terms with Central Group and Austrian real estate group Signa.

Selfridges, founded by Harry Gordon Selfridge in 1908, has 25 stores worldwide including its famous Oxford Street store, Brown Thomas and Arnotts in Dublin, De Bijenkorf in the Netherlands and Holt Renfrew in Canada. It has been owned by the Weston family for the last 18 years.

Central Group is a family-owned conglomerate that traces its roots to a small shop in Bangkok before the founder Samrit Chirathivat took over his father's business and opened Thailand's first department store in 1956. It now has a sprawling global business with 3,700 shops around the world ranging from electronics to book stores and supermarkets and it also owns European department stores. It has had a number of previous partnerships with Signa.

The partnership have plans for a hotel and flats and a revamp of the Food Hall at the Oxford Street store. However the takeover is subject to antitrust approvals in the UK and EU.

Marylebone Forum - Funding for Communities



Do you know of a local community project or group that is in need of help with funding?

The Marylebone Forum is seeking to identify and support applicants who would benefit from CIL funding in Marylebone, and is looking for ideas and applications from those who live and/or work in Marylebone.

The Marylebone Forum was formed in 2015, as a community group of both residents and businesses to take forward neighbourhood planning and to support applications for neighbourhood Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) funding.

The Forum continues its work on a Neighbourhood Plan. It has been a long process as the areas of influence are tightly constrained by the Westminster City Plan, the London Plan 2021, and our local heritage. The Forum benefits from planning expertise from local businesses, as well as dedicated support from local residents and intends to renew its consultation with the wider community on the emerging plan in 2022.

CIL is a tax which local authorities charge developers to enable them to fund the infrastructure needed to support their development. The larger part of CIL collection goes to a strategic fund at Westminster Council which is spent across the borough but approximately 15% is put aside for the benefit of the local area. As we have had a lot of development in recent years Westminster has already allocated over £1,700,000 to the Marylebone Neighbourhood CIL pot for local expenditure - and that pot is growing.

The Marylebone community (people living, working or studying here) can apply for CIL neighbourhood funding through the Marylebone Forum to implement ideas to improve our area and make life better for our wider community.

Expenditure must benefit the public community and be of an infrastructure nature. For example, it cannot be spent on extra road sweepers and staffing, nor can it be used for the provision of affordable housing. Westminster Council has to approve all expenditure and it needs to be supported by your local councillors.

Ideas could include local projects to improve: Educational facilities; • Health facilities; • Parks and Open Space; • Public Realm improvements; • Social and community facilities; • Sports and Leisure facilities; • Transport and highways • Utilities; and • Waste • Crime and anti-social behaviour infrastructure.

Recent funding successes: Despite the complexity of the process, Marylebone Forum has already supported successful applications for repairs to St Marylebone Church (new disabled WCs and roof repairs), as well as two projects at St Marylebone CE High School (refurbishment of science labs, air filtration units and creation of a new rooftop green space. Work at the school was carried out over the summer holidays and students are already

was carried out over the summer holidays and students are already benefiting.

Please visit: www.maryleboneforum.org/cil-funding

The Marylebone Forum is reaching out to local communities or individuals with projects that would benefit from CIL funding. Can you help? If you have any ideas please contact via the website or email contact@maryleboneforum.org.

The Forum welcomes new members and ideas, and has a number of partners and previously successful applicants who can offer help with applications and discuss projects.

Please visit: <https://www.maryleboneforum.org/>

St Marylebone School



St Marylebone School successfully applied for support from Marylebone's Neighbourhood CIL for the much needed refurbishment of the St Marylebone School Science Labs.

The school issued the following statement. "We are grateful for your support in our continued endeavour to improve our school and service to the community. This project has made such a difference to the school already. The improvements have been widely recognised and celebrated by the staff, governors and visitors to the school as a clear transformation of the space."

“Of course none of this would have been possible without the individuals and organisations that funded the project, including the crucial contributions and support from the WCC School Clean Air Fund, the Neighbourhood CIL and the Marylebone Forum”.

The Marylebone Diary



December has been a bright and beautiful display of Christmas lights and hope and much fun. Even though the Omicron virus is hanging over us and everyone who has a cold or sniffle instantly thinks they have covid and the Lateral Flow Tests are building up the community spirit and resilience of our residents and business is truly amazing. The West End is lit with sparkle and magic.

However, visitor numbers are down in the West End, footfall for the traditional Boxing Day sales was down by nearly half compared to the same day in 2019. In the longer term, working from home means commuters are staying away.

The hospitality sector continues to be under great strain, they are struggling in the face of customer cancellations and staff illness, however we continue to do what we can to support our local businesses.

Highlighting this month is one of our Marylebone mums who started her own business in the middle of the pandemic. A fantastic pre or post gift idea.

LIVY is our newest addition to the high street and I think perhaps is a first for Marylebone. The French lingerie brand was founded by Lisa Chavy who has worked with some prominent French fashion houses and she then set up her ultra sexy lingerie label in 2017. Welcome to the high street!

When the vaccine roll out began in January the NHS staff, volunteers and marshals did not think we would be standing here again in a mass vaccination site in December this time fighting the omicron variant.

We have learnt a lot in the year but unfortunately not enough. The feeling is different, some people coming in are getting their first vaccines after having babies, some are dragging their teenagers in, some are just delighted to have the opportunity to get a booster and know they are lucky to live in a society that provides this care.

The question that regularly comes up is 'can I mix vaccines' or 'I want AstraZeneca, why is that not an option'? Another difference is there are now tea and coffee making facilities in the vaccination site so therefore everyone can pause for a coffee or water if they need to at any time.

New Card for Marylebone

The Marylebone Village Privilege Card offers card holders a 10% discount in participating retailers and restaurants, along with additional monthly offers through a designated monthly newsletter.

Marylebone Village now has over 40 retailers and restaurants offering discounts with more joining each month. A full list of the current participating businesses can be found [here](#).

The scheme is accessible to anyone who lives or works in the Marylebone area, and Marylebone Association members are guaranteed to be accepted so they will be able to benefit from these wonderful offers.

To register for your card please complete the short form [here](#). In the box 'How did you hear about us' please put Marylebone Association as a reference.

Once registered you will receive an automated email advising how you can pick up your card.

Any questions please feel free to contact Annette Shiel on annette.shiel@hdwe.co.uk

Announcements

The Omicron Variant

A Message from Westminster Council:

We all recognise the vital importance of raising vaccination rates given the spread of the Omicron variant. A key part of this is making sure that all people

spread of the coronavirus pandemic. One part of this is making sure that all people in Westminster have the information they need to know where and how to arrange a vaccination. We sent out an extra issue of MyWestminster on Monday, setting out all the places where people could access vaccines and how to make bookings where necessary, which you can view here. This is also available on our website here. I am sending this to you in the hope that you will also share this information with your own networks.

It is of grave concern that Westminster has the lowest uptake of vaccination in the country and we are working closely with NHS colleagues to support them in making sure that we can accelerate this. A key part of that is ensuring that people have all the information they need and I am grateful for anything you can do to share this.

Cllr Rachael Robathan, Leader of Westminster City Council

Seymour Leisure Centre Update



The Seymour Leisure Centre is to be updated to provide modern facilities for the community & new home for Marylebone Library:

The Council recently undertook a questionnaire of users of the Seymour Leisure Centre to find out what priorities they had for the refurbishment of the Centre. They had over 600 responses and have been going through these.

The Council say they remain committed to providing improved modern facilities for the entire community to enjoy including a new home for Marylebone Library together with mixed use spaces and services, whilst maintaining the building's distinctive art deco character and architectural features.

There will be an online meeting on Tuesday 18th January at 6pm when they will reveal their findings. As progress has been very slow on this project it is hoped that it will get going in the New Year.

Polish Embassy Exhibition

An outdoor exhibition marking the 100th anniversary of the establishment of the seat of Poland's diplomatic post in London at 47 Portland Place.

The display, titled "100 years of Polish Embassy at 47 Portland Place", presents the history of the building, including its connections to the Polish diplomatic mission, Poland's Government-in-Exile and the Polish community in the United Kingdom, also highlighting the role the place has played in strengthening Polish-British relations.

From the beginnings of the Polish-British relations through the Embassy's wartime history up to the present moment, the exhibition, which features archive photographs, tells of the key moments in the history of 47 Portland Place.

The 20-panel exhibit, which hangs on the railings of 47 Portland Place, is part of the #47PortlandPlace campaign marking the 100th anniversary of the establishment of the seat of the Polish Embassy in London.

Location: Embassy of the Republic of Poland, 47 Portland Place, W1B 1JH

New Business Member of the Month





This month - The Contents Bag

This small business was started by a local Mum, Nancy Bear. She's a home-grown Londoner, originally from Bloomsbury but taking her first job as a teacher just by Marylebone High Street. She fell in love with the area! But romance took her to New York where she spent her twenties. When she returned home to London, there was a husband and family in tow and they happily settled in Marylebone.

Have you noticed many women walking around Marylebone with an extra, EXTRA large, cool tote bag? There are quite a number of them - all users and supporters of a locally grown business called The Contents Bag.

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The idea for The Contents Bag grew from a school-run carrying struggle and a Cornwall holiday packing dilemma.

The Contents Bags are made from UK produced, high quality, waxed cotton which is extremely durable and water-resistant. The bags are proudly stitched in Tower Hamlets by a social enterprise that empowers local women through education and employment. There are currently 4 fabulous styles to choose from ... which one is for you?

You can read more about this on her website thecontentsbag.com, where you are also able to purchase one of these useful and stylish bags.

Association Events

All the Association Events listed below are in accordance with Government rules and recommendations regarding Covid. If anything changes we will alert all those who have booked or signed up for events – and where appropriate provide full refunds. But fingers crossed that won't need to happen.

JANUARY DRINKS PARTY

Thursday 27 January 2022 at 7 pm

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

Join us for our wine and canapés party – the first in two years - 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 all look forward to a very enjoyable evening.

To reserve your place please email Lois German on lois.german@marylebone.org or telephone 0207 487 2706. The cost is £35 per head and payment details will be provided on booking. Please book early as this event was much oversubscribed the last time it was held.

REGULAR ASSOCIATION EVENTS

BOOK CLUB

Wednesday 5 January 2022 at 6.30 pm
The King's Head, 13 Westmoreland Street, London W1G 8PJ

At last members are meeting up again 'for real' upstairs at The King's Head pub in Westmoreland Street. Anyone who is interested in joining in should contact Liz Queenan. Meetings have changed to the first WEDNESDAY of each month but still commence at 6.30. This month's choice is *The Fortnight* in September by R C Sherriff. 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.

PUB EVENING

Monday 10 January 2022 at 6.30 pm
The Prince Regent, 71 Marylebone High Street, London W1U 5JN

Continuing with our regular bi-monthly pub evenings at this popular London pub with plush bar menu 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 11 and 25 January 2022 at 5.00 pm
The Duke of Wellington, 54a Crawford Street, London W1H 2HQ

The Scrabble Club normally meets twice a month 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.

