



# The Marylebone Association Newsletter

## July 2020

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Dear {Contact\_First\_Name},

## ASSOCIATION NEWS

### 2020 Annual Report

With the present exceptional circumstances leading to the absence of a physical AGM this year, we needed to change our procedures for the nomination of this years committee, and aided by the positive feedback received from our membership we feel that we have reached a good working solution.

What has not changed however is the production of an Annual Report, although this year it will be in online format only. This has enabled us to broaden its content to include many more contributions, giving our members the opportunity to hear from some of those who would have been speaking at our AGM, had we been able to hold a live event.

So this year, not only do we have the usual reports on the activities of our committees, but a review of our work since lockdown with the establishment of the Covid-19 Help Group, plus articles from each of the three local wards, our new MP for Westminster, the Leader of Westminster Council, and the newly appointed Lord Mayor.

All members will shortly be sent a link to enable them to download the Annual Report from our website and those without email will be be posted a printed version.

You can find details of the Officers and Committee members for 2020/21 [here](#).

# MARYLEBONE NEWS



## The Perils of Relaxation

Westminster City Council's plans to relax the rules governing outdoor venues were in the news recently. The Council intends to use "temporary events notices" to allow West End premises to put tables outside their frontages onto pavements and roads throughout the summer and maybe beyond. Up to 50 projects are being proposed to make space for al-fresco dining including pavement widening and temporary road closures for part of the day in districts such as Chinatown, Covent Garden, Fitzrovia, Soho and Mayfair, and of course Marylebone.

Consultation on the measures closed the Sunday before last and Westminster have said they are considering responses and will publish any update as soon as possible. The measures are expected to come into force on July 4 now that the government have announced measures to allow the hospitality sector to start up again. Read the full proposals and see the streets to be closed or narrowed [here](#). Our joint response through the West End Community Network can be found [here](#).

No sooner had we absorbed this news than Central Government announced even more radical plans in order to get business moving again with a wide ranging removal of licensing and planning restrictions under the Business and Planning Bill. Amongst other provisions It proposes to allow premises to trade in the street at tables and chairs, authorised under the pavement licence provisions of the Bill, with the aim of helping business to recover and preserving jobs.

Certain aspects of this Bill have provoked concern throughout the West End's Amenity societies. The planning relaxation extends to working hours and it is proposed to remove the hours of work restriction so that building work could go on into the night. The Alcohol Licensing section of the Bill goes much further than is needed to achieve business recovery, it will harm residents and create problems for both the police and local authorities: Alcohol licensing in Section 11 automatically allows all premises with permission to sell alcohol for consumption on the premises to sell it for consumption off the premises, to the same hours as the existing premise licence. In many cases in the West End.

this is too early in the morning. Usually a premises licence prohibits off-sales, to protect nearby residents. Automatically allowing off-sales to the same hours as on-sales will be a disaster for residents in these areas.

We are supporting our colleagues in the West End in lobbying to try and mitigate the worst effects of this by restricting deregulation for outside drinking to within a time window, such as 10:00-23:00 (at the very latest), rather than the time limit on an establishment's existing on-licence. You can see the letter sent by the Soho Society [here](#).

It is understood that Nickie Aiken MP, and Westminster City Council are both seeking a similar amendment.

## Getting the West End Trading Again

The New West End Company (NWECC) is a business partnership of 600 UK & international retailers, restaurateurs, hoteliers and property owners in the West End. They are understandably keen to see the area up and trading again, but safely, and have developed a series of proposals to assist this.

Here is a [link](#) to their latest guidance for West End & Mayfair hospitality member businesses of NWECC opening from 4 July. It follows the national and Westminster City Council guidance and the temporary relaxation of measures over the summer.

Click [here](#) for a map from NWECC showing hand washing facilities and bicycle parking in and around Oxford Street.

## Retail, Food and Drink- Local Update June 2020

After a difficult few months, 4th July 2020 will see the permitted re-opening of restaurants and cafes to patrons to dine-in as well as the re-opening of non-essential retail across England.

Some of our local retailers have already adapted to this new environment with creative solutions such as shopping at the door, where the shop assistant will bring you the items you need at the doorway. Similarly many of our local restaurants have adapted to take-away and delivery business, selling food and drink to patrons. More have re-opened since our last update in June such as Delamina on Marylebone Lane.

Unfortunately the gradual easing has resulted in the breakdown of social distancing in certain streets (Paddington Street and Marylebone Lane have been particularly busy), but it appears that WCC and local police are aware and have spoken to these businesses, based on information on their Twitter feed (@MPSMarylebone on Twitter). We have also seen an increase in

road (with emergency services on Friday). We have also seen an increase in disturbance from delivery drivers congregating, and would encourage use of the WCC Report It tool online to log such issues.

Local businesses, especially independently-owned or small chains, will need support from all of us as they reopen. Unfortunately the increase in Congestion Charge to £15 payable 7 days per week and enforced until 10pm, coupled with the continued guidance to avoid public transport where possible could deter customers coming in from other areas.

At the time of writing, Westminster Council is due to announce their finalised plans for temporarily increasing the amount of outside space available to the hospitality sector. These will include temporary road closures and changes to street layouts to allow for more on-street dining. The Marylebone Association has submitted comments to the plans and is broadly supportive of any help for sector, though we have stressed the importance that all plans should be flexible and WCC should be reactive to any issues that may arise, in particular noise impacting residents in the area.

We continue to encourage our membership to 'Shop Locally and Support Our Local Businesses'.

## Paddington Street Gardens Playground reopening

Playgrounds and outdoor gyms in Westminster's parks reopen on 4 July, which may be more eagerly anticipated by our younger residents and their families than the pubs reopening! Anyone walking past the play area in Paddington Street Gardens will have seen the sorry sight of the play equipment which has been sitting unused for close to 4 months now. Any concerns about the deterioration of the equipment and ongoing safety and cleanliness have been addressed by WCC and should help to ease any concerns local parents may have about allowing children to use the facility once it is reopened.

The Government has set out guidelines for the management of playgrounds which Westminster City Council will be following. Playgrounds and/or gyms in parks are being prioritised for frequent checks by parks staff. WCC will also be deploying two mobile cleaning teams to rotate around these parks to disinfect play equipment etc. throughout the day Monday-Sunday. These teams have been put in place for at least the next three months and will fully follow Government guidance (which can be found online). If any issues arise e.g. over-crowding, WCC will deploy a permanent staff presence at that playground during peak usage times (which vary with school holidays, weather etc.). Equipment safety checks and deep cleaning of all playground areas are being completed prior to opening.

## Families Support

Since lockdown in March unfortunately activities and classes in the area for

children have been cancelled. Many providers are running online classes or sharing activities to engage children. In addition, our supportive community at Marylebone Mums & Dads has been very active helping each other with ideas for entertaining the kids as well as providing the ongoing support and assistance that our Mums & Dads community is known for. As the long summer holidays approach, we will hopefully be able to continue to share ideas to keep the kids busy as well as help parents navigate life in Marylebone.

We are active on all social media channels: on Facebook at Marylebone Mums & Dads; Twitter and Instagram @Marylebone Mums, and we also have very active WhatsApp groups - our community of over 2,500 members is a supportive and friendly place! You can find more information at [www.marylebonemums.com](http://www.marylebonemums.com) or contact [tushna.ghadially@marylebone.org](mailto:tushna.ghadially@marylebone.org) for more information.

## Westminster News

### Pedicabs Bill

The Pedicabs Bill sponsored by our MP Nickie Aiken has passed its First Reading in the House of Commons. The Bill now progresses to a Second Reading scheduled for July 10. Normally at the Second Reading the main principles of the Bill are debated by MPs before a vote is taken. However as this Bill is far down the private members list it is unlikely there will be time for debate, so it will rely on being 'nodded through' without debate. Hopefully it is sufficiently uncontroversial for this to happen.

If the Bill is passed on the Second Reading it will then go to Committee Stage where there will be time for a detailed analysis and where Members of Parliament can offer amendments and make modifications.

### Rachael Robathan Pushes Forward

The Leader of Westminster City Council, Councillor Rachael Robathan in a recent interview in the Estates Gazette outlined her policy and political priorities and how the focus is changing from managing the impact of Coronavirus to getting Westminster back up and running.

The key points include: A desire to 'push forward at pace' in making Westminster cleaner and greener. This will include the development of Westminster's environmental supplementary planning document which sets out measures to make sure the council and developers build in a way that reduces emissions and is more energy efficient; a willingness to foster better relationships with Westminster's development community; a commitment to prioritise the Oxford Street District proposals. A move back to physical planning committee meetings when possible but with the option to incorporate

virtual elements that have proved successful over the past 4 months is being considered.

The council will be 'very much focused on and sensitive to' change of use flexibility' and will anyway probably be given little choice in the matter by Central Government.

## Westminster Wide 20-mph

We are told that Westminster City Council is all set to roll out its city-wide 20mph limit. Although we have no date for this yet, it is meant to coincide with proposals to gradually ease lockdown measures.

Councillor Andrew Smith (Cabinet Member for Highways & Environment) stated *"The way people are travelling around our city is changing, and as more people opt to walk and cycle in light of covid-19, we need to respond and adapt to ensure our streets are safe for all."*

The decision follows a public consultation held in 2019, with over two-thirds of responses showing support for the changes.

## Age UK Westminster - Volunteers needed

Message from Age UK: *Now that workplaces are reopening, many of our volunteers are having to return to their jobs, and we are urgently looking for volunteers to carry on their work.*

*Anyone can volunteer. It can be very rewarding and is a great way to meet new people, gain new or use existing skills, and make a big difference to your community*

*There are lots of easy ways to give your time to help others – from having a cup of tea with an elderly neighbour, to helping with our food distribution. If you are interested you can leave a message at our office tel: 020 3004 5610 (10am - 4pm) or contact [grace.nuttall@ageukwestminster.org.uk](mailto:grace.nuttall@ageukwestminster.org.uk)"*

## Covid Honours

We have been asked to circulate the following:

In light of the exceptional circumstances caused by COVID-19, Her Majesty The Queen has agreed that the Birthday Honours List that was due for publication on 13 June will be delayed until the autumn. Postponing the Birthday Honours means that we have the opportunity to recognise people who have:

- Worked on the frontline of their organisation or in their sector to directly support the most vulnerable members of society and people who have caught COVID-19.
- Provided critical care to COVID-19 patients.
- Made significant innovations in order to support the vulnerable and those with COVID-19 or their communities and sectors.
- Gone to extraordinary lengths to keep critical services going.
- Volunteered in the community or for service organisations in support of those affected by COVID-19.

The Covid-19 national honour is in recognition of those who make an exceptional contribution to their community and who have gone over and above during this crisis. Please consider any worthy local individuals or organisations for nomination.

Details of how to nominate someone for an award with a much simplified form is at <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-honours-nomination-form> . It is especially helpful if you identify a person who should be nominated to encourage those connected with them to do so.

The deadline for nominations is: 24th July 2020.



**Congestion Charge Discount to close to new applications from end**

## of this month

The recent increase in the congestion charge to £15 along with its extension to 10pm on a 7 days per week basis has been well-reported in the news. A brief consultation was held in late May/early June and the proposals were passed effective from 22nd June.

Less well reported was the decision to cease processing new applications for the Resident Discount from 1st August 2020. In effect that means that anyone who moves in to live within the congestion charge zone after this date will no longer be able to benefit from the current 90% discount. This could impact the people's decisions to move to the area in the future.

If you currently hold an authorised discount and fail to renew it annually (as is the current procedure), you will not be able to reapply - so put reminders in your calendar to ensure you do keep any discount you have up to date.

Residents living within the congestion charge zone and wishing to retain the option to own a car in the future (or rent a car) and use this discount should consider applying for a resident discount now. The TfL website does suggest that you can apply without a vehicle attached to the application, though it is advisable to contact TfL before applying in case this has been changed as there is a fee payable for the application.

It is clear that the 90% discount currently offered is in the sights of TfL and the Mayor. Marylebone is a residential neighbourhood with families and other residents who need access to cars for the same reasons people all across the country need cars - to visit and help elderly relatives, to travel with multiple children and/or luggage when other options may not be possible. Cars here tend to be family vehicles owned for utility, not sports cars driven for fun. We should not be seen as an easy target to raise funds.

## Citizens Advice Westminster

Citizens Advice Westminster are not able to meet you face to face at their offices and their outreach centres are closed. However their phone lines are open to offer advice and information, even if their offices are not, and their website carries detailed information on where you can get help during the Covid-19 crisis. If you are worried about money, paying your rent or mortgage, the threat of eviction or have an employment issue arising from the lockdown and closure of your employer's business, they can help you.

Call Citizens Advice Westminster to speak to someone about your problem and concerns: **0300 330 1191**. Check out their website for further information about your rights to benefits or other support during the crisis: <https://www.citizensadvice.org.uk/health/coronavirus-what-it-means-for-you/>. If you need to apply for Universal Credit for the first time Citizens Advice offers free, confidential and independent phone and webchat advice: <https://www.citizensadvice.org.uk/benefits/universal-credit/before-you-apply/Check-if-you-can-get-Universal-Credit/>. Phone **0800 144 8 444**



# This Month in Marylebone History

## Profumo affair

In July 1962 the first inklings of a possible Profumo-Keeler-Ivanov triangle had been hinted at, in coded terms, in the gossip column of the society magazine *Queen*. Under the heading "Sentences I'd like to hear the end of" appeared the wording: "... called in MI5 because every time the chauffeur-driven Zils drew up at her front door, out of her back door into a chauffeur-driven Humber slipped..." Keeler was then in New York with Rice-Davies, in an abortive attempt to launch their modelling careers there. On her return, to counter Gordon's threats, Keeler formed a relationship with Johnny Edgecombe, an ex-merchant seaman from Antigua, with whom she lived for a while in Brentford, just west of London. Edgecombe was similarly possessive; he and Gordon clashed violently on 27 October 1962, when Edgecombe slashed his rival with a knife. Keeler broke with Edgecombe shortly afterwards because of his domineering behaviour.

On 14 December 1962 Keeler and Rice-Davies were together at 17 Wimpole Mews when Edgecombe arrived, demanding to see Keeler. When he was not allowed in, he fired several shots at the front door. Shortly afterwards Edgecombe was arrested and charged with attempted murder and other offences. In brief press accounts, Keeler was described as "a free-lance model" and "Miss Marilyn Davies" as "an actress". In the wake of the incident, Keeler began to talk indiscreetly about Ward, Profumo, Ivanov and the Edgecombe shooting. Among those to whom she told her story was John Lewis, a former Labour MP whom she had met by chance in a night club. Lewis, a long-standing enemy of Ward, passed the information to his one-time parliamentary colleague George Wigg, who began his own investigation.

## Events

### Association Events

**All events subject to government advice at the time**

SUMMER WINE TASTING AND LUNCH

Save the Date - Sunday 23rd August 2020 at 1:30pm

ISHTAR TURKISH RESTAURANT, 10-12 Crawford Street W1U 6A. Subject to government advice permitting this at the time, Engin Servi – the owner of Ishtar is happy to continue holding our 10th Annual August Wine Tasting lunch. 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 [sheila.green@marylebone.org](mailto:sheila.green@marylebone.org) or 0207 262 7157. Note this event is subject to Government Guidance changing.

## Regular Association Events

Book Club continues in 'Zoom form only' and this month's book is The Dutch House by Ann Patchett. For further details contact Liz Queenan ([liz.queenan@marylebone.org](mailto:liz.queenan@marylebone.org)) or tel: 020 7486 3709

Pub evenings, Scrabble Club and coffee mornings will return when Government guidance changes allow gatherings of more than six people observing social distancing.