

The

BELGRAVIA SOCIETY

ISSUE 104 | JANUARY 2024

THE ONLY INDEPENDENT
VOICE FOR BELGRAVIA

Magazine

HISTORIC ENGLAND

IS IT "LIGHTS OUT" FOR OUR
TRADITIONAL GAS LAMPS?





Registered Charity No: 1168619

Patron: Lord Fellowes of West Stafford DL

Welcome to The Belgravia Society magazine, covering all aspects of village life in Belgravia and beyond.

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This magazine has been independently produced by the Committee of The Belgravia Society on a voluntary basis with regular contributions from local residents and other authors in and around Belgravia.

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Chairman's Message



George Waite
Chairman of
The Belgravia Society
and ESRA

An update from Grosvenor

As reported in our last month's edition we are now meeting with Grosvenor and Westminster City Council on a regular basis which gives us the opportunity to consult regarding ongoing and current issues affecting Belgravia.

Grosvenor's retail offering has been the subject of much discussion, especially after the loss of Ken Lo's Memories of China, and the imminent relocation of Issy's hair salon.

Jane Macdiarmid is Grosvenor's Retail Director for Belgravia. Jane's responsibilities include strategy for retail, leisure and hospitality including new retail lettings and she is this Society's key contact and has kindly provided us with the following retail update:

- Grosvenor have let 12 Buckingham Palace Road to Kesman Grooming, which is a male grooming brand focused on high quality haircuts, beard trims, cut-throat shaves, and facials.
- Pop-up letting to Coco De Mer at 24a Motcomb Street for at least 3 months.
- Under offer on the former Fine Cheese unit to an all-day restaurant. The new operator will serve breakfast through to dinner also with takeaway coffees available. Grosvenor expects to complete the lease imminently anticipating a Spring opening.

- Zuber have closed their store at 67 Pimlico Road at lease expiry following their acquisition by Pierre Fray. The unit will be marketed and some basement tanking works taking place over the next couple of months.
- Grosvenor will be submitting a planning application for a new shop front at 63 Ebury Street shortly.
- Common Breads, a Lebanese bakehouse, will be opening at 110 Buckingham Palace Road in January 2024.
- Works to the garage at 10-12 Eccleston Place have commenced and Grosvenor will be hoping to complete works in early March 2024 to create a new retail unit.
- Grosvenor will be submitting a planning application to move the residential use from the upper floors of 23 Eccleston Street to the upper floors of 7a Eccleston Street, providing a much better quality and large family size residential unit. The upper floors of 23 Eccleston Street will form part of the ground floor commercial unit due to a single access point.
- 12 Eccleston Yards is under offer to Amie Wine to expand the existing concept and Grosvenor will be submitting an alcohol license on the same basis as the existing very shortly.

Jane reports to Amelia Bright, Grosvenor's Executive Director for their London Estate, and I am pleased to report that, under Amelia's watch, we are making progress. ▲

Editor's note: We see the Planning Application for 63 Ebury Street is for a new shop front. We sincerely hope it will not mean opening windows previously applied for and likely to disturb the residents living above.

INVITATION TO THE NEXT SOCIETY COMMITTEE MEETING

We would be delighted for you to
join our next meeting in person on

**13th March at 5.30pm
at The Caledonian Club.**

Please let us know by emailing
info@thebelgraviasociety.com
if you wish to attend.

PLANNING ADVICE

If you get a notice of a planning
application near you and you want
advice, telephone our dedicated
helpline: 07578 969509

CAF
Charities Aid Foundation



If you have a CAF account, it is an easy
way to donate to the Society. Please
do help us to maintain our work for
Belgravia and our community magazine.

Wanted!

Writers | Historians | Story tellers

Do you enjoy writing? We would be
delighted to receive articles and short
stories about Belgravia / our neighbours
/ London and beyond – all voluntary, of
course. Discuss your ideas with us at

info@belgraviasociety.com



Registered Charity No. 1168619

Building a strong community

**To celebrate the past, improve
the present, and engage the
future**

The more members we have, the
louder our collective voice will be

JOIN US TODAY!

Benefits include:

Monthly magazine

Opportunity to join us at any
of our monthly meetings

Have your say on local matters

Advice where possible
on planning issues

Invitation to our AGM
and opportunity to vote

[www.thebelgraviasociety.com/
online-membership-form](http://www.thebelgraviasociety.com/online-membership-form)

Please fill in the online form by
clicking on the link above link.

Alternatively, print the application
form on page 23 and post your
completed form to

63 Belgravia Court
33 Ebury Street
London SW1W 0NY



Working on what matters to you

NICKIE AIKEN MP

It's so important Belgravia continues to be the wonderful place it is to live, work and visit. Part of Belgravia's success is its shops. For centuries, brilliant small and independent businesses have been proud to call Belgravia their home and make it the thriving neighbourhood that it is.

These businesses have invested in Belgravia. They've put down roots in the neighbourhood every *Belgravia Society Magazine* reader is proud to call their home. Of course, high streets must evolve, but it's equally important those businesses that have invested in the area are supported by the community, and critically by Grosvenor. The news that the owners of Issy's, a hair salon which stands on Elizabeth Street, have been told that they won't be able to extend their lease is a step in the wrong direction.

That's why I'm working with The Belgravia Society, the Belgravia Residents' Association, the Belgravia Traders' Association, and local people to hold Grosvenor to account for their decisions. We held a walkabout in the summer, and I will continue working together.

Whilst locally, I'm holding Grosvenor to account, in Parliament, I'm continuing to work on critical legislation that will make a real difference for Belgravia and the Two Cities. After years of behind-the-scenes discussions with the Government, I welcome that leasehold reform is now making its way through Parliament. The Leasehold and Freehold Reform Bill aims to make it easier and cheaper for property owners to extend their leases or buy their freehold.

To shape the Bill, I set up a Leasehold Working Group with local people from right across our neighbourhoods including Belgravia



Society's very own Mary Regnier-Leigh. I'm also continuing to meet regularly with ministers. In my most recent meeting, I made the case for the onerous 50% participation threshold for Right to Manage to be reduced to at least 35%. This would make a vital difference as too many local people report having struggled to secure the necessary 50% of signatories due to flat owners based overseas, who sublet or live in large developments. Find out more at [nickie.news/LeaseholdReform](https://www.nickie.news/LeaseholdReform).

And lastly, a referendum on the Belgravia Neighbourhood Plan will be held on Thursday 22nd February. Please turn out to vote and ensure your voice is heard. You can make a difference. Find out more about the plan at thebelgraviaforum.org.

If I can be of any help on any issue, please get in touch. Email me at nickie.aiken.mp@parliament.uk or write to me at Nickie Aiken MP, House of Commons, Westminster, SW1A 0AA.

Keep up to date and be the first to know what I'm up to by following me on Facebook, Instagram, X and YouTube @TwoCitiesNickie. Also sign up to my newsletter to get the latest community news directly to your inbox at www.nickie.news/SignUp. ▲



Memorial Garden for the late Queen

HTA Design given the memorial garden for commemorating the late Queen Elizabeth II

HTA Design has unveiled proposals for a new memorial garden commemorating Queen Elizabeth II in London's Regent's Park after being selected for the job.

The Royal Parks appointed the Hackney Wick based practice to draw up plans for a two-acre slice of Regent's Park alongside Tate + Co, which is working on architectural features, earlier this year. The designs, which were made public on Wednesday 20th December, as part

of a five week long public consultation, show how the currently inaccessible site will be overhauled.

HTA's proposals include new landscaping and the creation of a tranquil space that it says will deliver significant benefits to nature, including plant species significant to Queen Elizabeth II's life. Hedges, a meadow and a new pond will feature alongside planting that will attract wildlife, HTA Design said.



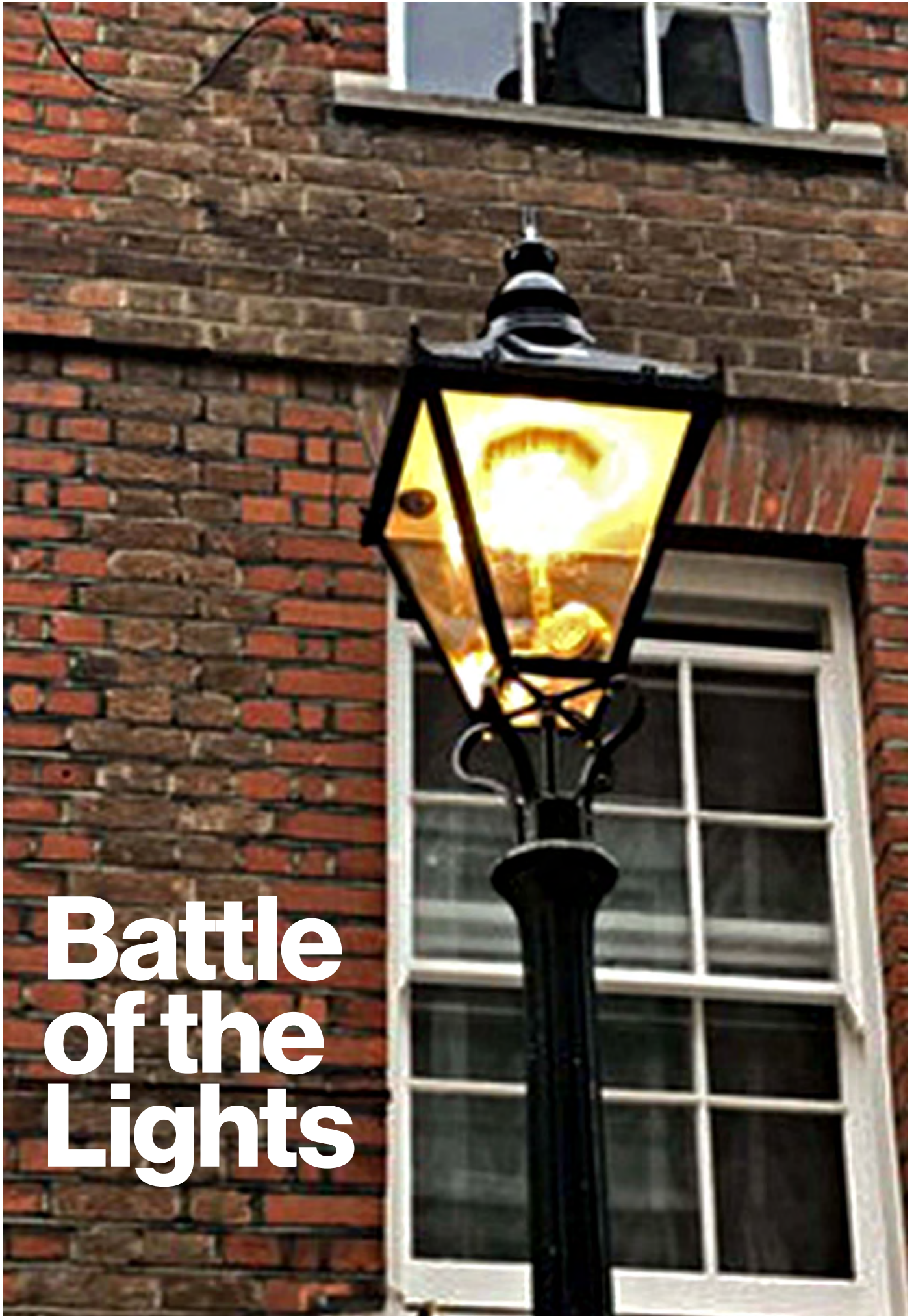
The planting will also be adaptable to the UK's changing climate. An accessible viewing platform created from a disused water tower and a pergola feature are among several structures proposed for the garden.

The Royal Parks charity, which manages eight of London's parks, is aiming to re-use concrete, brick and steelwork from the demolition of a former plant nursery on the site, which was decommissioned in 2018.

Oliver Rock, Landscape Design Director at HTA Design, said: 'We are honoured to be working with The Royal Parks on the design of this beautiful new garden at the heart of Regent's Park to commemorate the life of Queen Elizabeth II and to be transforming this brownfield site into a special, biodiverse, wildlife-attracting and climate-resilient new public garden.'

Andrew Scattergood, CEO of The Royal Parks, said: 'This garden is a unique opportunity to transform grey to green and return two acres of beautiful green space to central London. The garden's design will deliver horticultural excellence along with significant benefits to nature. It will be a tranquil and reflective garden, the antithesis to the hustle and bustle of the city, and we hope that people will come and spend some quiet time there, enjoying the natural landscape and the wonderful year-round colour that the garden will provide.'

The consultation on the early designs ran until 28th January. The park is due to open in 2026 to coincide with what would have been the late Queen's 100th birthday. ▲



Battle of the Lights

The battle was won [in 2022] but it has come back to life: WCC officials have taken up the matter again and want to swap traditional lights to ECO-friendly ones powered by LED lights.

Many of you will remember some two years ago Westminster City Council proposed to change Westminster's streetlamps that remained powered by gas to be updated using LED replicas. As you will also remember local residents, businesses and others living in Westminster objected to this proposal. Gas lights have been here for 200 years. The battle was won but it has come back to life: WCC officials took up the matter again and want to swap the traditional lights to ECO-friendly ones powered by LED lights.

MPs and many in the community object and describe it as cultural vandalism. One of the objections to the WCC plans says the gas lights provide a unique glow which cannot be replicated by LEDs. Victoria Societies Conservation Adviser, has said that WCC cannot convincingly replace the Victorian lanterns to replicate the Victorian designs that they will replace.

These gas lit lamps will be found in such sites as Trafalgar Square, Victoria Embankment and other central London places. Apparently, removing gas powered lamps is part of measures to contribute to reaching the WCC's zero carbon top target by 2030.

We cannot honestly imagine that the ECO friendly replicas will make any significant difference to achieving net zero. The Victorian Society, which advocates the preservation

of 19th century architecture, forced WCC in 2022 to pause its replacement plans after only around 30 lamps had been altered. Campaigners, including the Victorian Society, and senior politicians want each lamp to be given grade listing to prevent the alterations.

It seems that WCC did not expect the battle to save the gas lights which are still in use in Westminster. WCC has not committed itself to guarantee their survival. As a result of the campaigning, they have indicated that they await the view of Historic England following its inspection of the gas lights. It is not clear whether they will only preserve those which are given listed status or whether they are prepared to preserve the others as well.

Councillor Paul Dimoldenberg has indicated that the WCC awaits the results of the Historic England inspections and, depending on their recommendations, he says they will only consider installing replacement lamps that meet the highest possible standards of historic authenticity. WCC also issued a statement to the effect that if Historic England inspect the remaining gas lights and make the recommendation that they will be granted listed status, WCC will keep and maintain all of them.

We can only hope that Historic England do list the gas lamps so that we can continue to enjoy the unique light that they provide. ▲



Victoria Tower Gardens as it is today

Holocaust Memorial Victoria Tower Gardens

You will recall that eventually it was agreed by the proponents of the scheme to build the Holocaust Memorial in Victoria Tower Gardens and proceed with it despite multiple objections. It had already been turned down by Westminster City Council when it was called in by the Government. Then, the proponents discovered that there was an Act of Parliament that prevented any change in the use of the Victoria Tower Gardens.

Now there is a Select Committee of MPs to consider the Holocaust Memorial bill which would clear the way for the Memorial to be

built in Victoria Tower Gardens. The Select Committee considering it is listening to objections; four outspoken survivors have opposed the project.

Anita Lasker-Wallfisch, the 98 year old cellist who was part of the women's orchestra of Auschwitz, said that we are unlikely to learn now what we have not learnt in the last 80 years. She added, "Especially in the current climate of escalating anti-Semitism". She also objected the felling of the trees which were hundreds of years old, the serious risk of flooding and the overshadowing of the Buxton Memorial.



CGI of the Gardens after the Memorial is built

“We are unlikely to learn now what we have not learnt in the last 80 years, especially in the current climate of escalating anti-Semitism...”

Dr Stern, survivor of two concentration camps, thought the idea was disastrous. The Memorial was, for what it was for, “ridiculously small”, but too big for the site in any event. He took the view that serious academics should research into how such education should be done to identify best practice.

Others who gave evidence against the bill referred to the design as an unsightly “toast rack”. Baroness Ruth Deech, who is a crossbencher objected to many aspects relating to the Memorial and reminded MPs that the National Audit Office had raised concerns about the £138 million project and it has been deemed undeliverable. UNESCO has also rejected the scheme.

Baroness Deech has long campaigned against it. She said that the Jewish community had not been consulted. We know that the Board of Deputies of British Jews have said they support the idea, however, we also know, as a matter of fact, that the matter was not discussed by the Member Deputies (some 300) and when it was recently again raised as an issue to be debated, the debate was refused. Baroness Deech made many further points. The Memorial, she concluded, was “toxic, and that’s not what a memorial should be”.

Later, Sir Richard Evans, the greatest living British historian on the period, said the

proposals for a learning centre “would only be an embarrassment” for this country. It would be “smaller and less effective” than the Imperial War Museum’s Holocaust Galleries and only divert attention from them, he said.

The Select Committee also heard evidence from architects, a terrorism expert and groups who oppose the placing of the Memorial in Victoria Gardens. Those connected with the Gardens’ Buxton Memorial Fountain, dedicated to the parliamentarians and others who fought to abolish slavery, have expressed concern about the size and location of the plans for a Holocaust Memorial so close by.

The project initiated by the UK Holocaust Memorial Foundation was set up by David Cameron in 2015. We have seen the *Jewish News* which previously supported the proposals. It says, “This newspaper believes that a fitting national memorial to the Holocaust is indeed a sacred and vital task. It also believes that it would be a mistake to build a memorial that is resented by its neighbours, and by survivors themselves.”

The proponents of the scheme should recognise and accept the views expressed to the Select Committee and the *Jewish News* as well and many Jewish people who were not asked for their views that the scheme should be abandoned. ▲



Belgravia Neighbourhood Plan – Local Referendum

The Belgravia Neighbourhood Plan has finally reached a very exciting stage: the referendum by local voters to agree whether the Council should adopt it. Referendum day is Thursday 22nd February 2024, and the referendum question is, ‘Do you want Westminster City Council to use the Neighbourhood Plan for Belgravia to help it decide planning applications in the neighbourhood area?’.

If the Plan receives a majority of YES votes in favour, it will be adopted by the Council and all planning applications in the area will need

to take its policies into account. It will give us greater say over what is built, what it looks like, and how it will affect the lives of local people. More importantly, it will give us a much stronger voice when challenging development and building which could damage the unique character and living environment of Belgravia as it exists today.

Voting YES will also increase Belgravia’s share of CIL money from 15% to 25%. This is the Community Infrastructure Levy the Council collects from new developments which can be spent on local community



projects in Belgravia. Our schools, including St Barnabas and St Peter's, have already benefited from this fund, as has the Pineapple Project at St Mary's Bourne Street.

The key mission of the Plan is to conserve and enhance Belgravia's unique character, promote its historic architecture and heritage, and ensure it remains an agreeable 'village' for residents, workers and visitors in the heart of London. The Plan covers such areas as building design, sustainable building, construction disruption, traffic, streetscapes and trees and green spaces. You can learn more about the Plan on [Belgravia Neighbourhood Forum's website](#).

Anyone who lives in the defined Belgravia Neighbourhood Area and is on the Electoral Roll (i.e. is registered to vote in local elections) can vote in this referendum. If you are not sure, you can check your eligibility and then, if appropriate and necessary, register at www.gov.uk/register-to-vote by 6th February.

The polling station will be at The Caledonian Club, 9 Halkin Street, SW1W 7DR which will be open from 7am to 10pm on referendum day, 22nd February 2024. If you will be away at that time, please register for a [postal or proxy vote here](#). We need as many votes as possible to demonstrate community support for the Plan.

Please VOTE YES on 22nd February 2024 to adopt the Plan. ▲



A Journal in Belgravia

We are lucky in Belgravia to have local magazines. Obviously, there is our own which we circulate electronically. Then there is Grosvenor's Magazine. We are pleased that *The Belgravia Journal* has joined us. It is a quarterly journal, and is distributed free.



It is the brainchild of Cecile Sealy who both produces and edits it. *The Belgravia Journal* covers local interest and is an excellent addition to the community. ▲

George Moore

BY PETER WYETH



George Moore lived on Ebury Street from 1911 to 1933. Considered ‘The first great modern Irish novelist’, he influenced James Joyce, and was outside the mainstream of both British and Irish literature.

Among the first English-language authors to absorb the lessons of the French realists, he originally wanted to be a painter and studied art in Paris during the 1870s, befriending Monet, Renoir, Degas, Pissarro, Mallarmé, Turgenev and, above all, Zola. He abandoned art and

moved to London in 1881, publishing *Pagan Poems* and, in 1886, *Confessions of a Young Man*, a memoir of his 20s in Paris and London among bohemian artists, and ‘the passionate revolt of English literature against the Victorian tradition’.

He came from a landed Catholic family in County Mayo, whose home of a former century was burned down by the IRA in 1923 (see *the picture of ruins*). His father’s estate extended over 5000 hectares. He



was renowned as a fair landlord, fighting to uphold the rights of tenants, a tradition his son followed when in Mayo where, as a child, he and his brother became friendly with Willie and Oscar Wilde, who later quipped that Moore 'conducts his education public'.

He attended a Catholic boarding school near Birmingham, contracting a lung infection for a year. Hungry and unhappy there, he refused to follow the curriculum, reading poems and novels, and was expelled for 'idleness and general worthlessness'. His father feared he and his brother were 'stupid', which proved untrue for all four sons.

When his father died, Moore left Mayo for Paris, publishing a first book of poems, *The Flowers of Passion*, whose depravities attracted malicious reviews. During the 1880s he produced 'realist' novels, beginning with *A Modern Lover* (1883), banned by the circulating libraries in England due to the explicit portrayal of the hero's amorous pursuits. *A Mummer's Wife* (1885) which W H Smith refused to stock, the controversy leading to fourteen editions. *A Drama in Muslin* (1886), which Smiths and the libraries banned, Moore accusing them of profiting from salacious

popularism while refusing serious literary fiction.

Tackling prostitution, extra-marital sex and lesbianism caused scandal, which subsided with the growing taste for realism. Moore's art criticism introduced Impressionism to an English audience, and he was finally able to live from his writing. In 1894 he wrote *Esther Waters*, the story of an unmarried housemaid, pregnant and abandoned by her footman lover, a book still in print.

Moore returned to Dublin in 1901 to help Yeats establish the *Irish Literary Theatre*, part of the Celtic Revival. His *The Bending of the Bough* introduced realism and nationalism into Irish literature, and with *The Untilled Field* collection, the birth of the Irish short story.

Moore quarrelled with everyone: 'Impossible to be a friend of his, he was incapable of gratitude'. Back in London from 1911, his relationship with Maud Cunard had him rumoured to be the real father of Nancy Cunard. *The Brook Kerith* (1916) had a non-divine Christ not dying on the cross, and repenting, declaring himself Son of God. Moore kept on writing novels until 1930, and died at 121 Ebury Street in 1933. ▲



Beat the Winter Blues



Take a Walk in the Park

BY SARA OLIVER

For those of us living in London and Belgravia over the winter months, sometimes the dark and gloomy weather may affect one's mood. If you are away skiing in the afternoon sunshine of the Alps, or enjoying warmer climes, then lucky you!

However, for those of us at home, there are plenty of things to do to keep one's spirits up, such as participating in the RSPB The Big Garden Bird Watch. This event occurs each year to monitor the number of birds over wintering and to build a picture of how garden birds are faring. The Garden Bird Watch is the world's

largest garden wildlife survey and many nature lovers across the UK have taken part over the years. If you have not done so already, please make a note of it, especially if you love birds and care for their wellbeing.

You can watch from a balcony, garden square or head over to Royal Parks. Why not join a bird walk such as a tranquil, slow-paced walk in Richmond Park or Belgrave Square? Simply spend an hour counting the number of birds that land on the patch (not the ones flying overhead) and record the highest number of each bird species at one time.

Even though the dates for the RSPB Garden Bird Watch may have passed for this current year, the results of the survey can be found on the RSPB website. For further details visit rspb.org.uk/birdwatch.

Highlighting Kensington Gardens Volunteer Work

Volunteers are always welcome to help with tasks and make an enjoyable day. There are several volunteer opportunities to get close to nature. Kensington Gardens is one of the more ornamental Royal Parks, where there is a strong focus on improving biodiversity and creating space for nature.

Long Water is surrounded by woodland and there are extensive reedbeds in the Long Water itself; Buckhill has been managed as a meadowland for over 30 years. The park's current management team are keen to keep developing this aspect of the park and are happy to see volunteers get involved.

Interesting tasks may include a meadow cut using Austrian scythes, undertaking preparatory work on stream-cum-bogland habitats, and improvements to the Forest School area in the woodland by the Long Water.

2023 finished with a couple of days where volunteers helped to revive a pair of veteran Sweet Chestnut trees near the Serpentine Gallery. 2024 promises more great sessions, including some reedbed maintenance, fruit tree planting and the continued development of the stream/bogland project. An enjoyable day is on offer, learning about running a hazel coppice with Russell Stevens, the Kensington Gardens' Head Gardener. Further information can be found on their website royalparks.org.uk.

Volunteer numbers are steadily increasing, but there are still spaces if you fancy joining the excitement of immersing yourself in nature with good company. No more winter blues! ▲





Concerns from Cllr Tony Devenish AM

Our London Assembly Member



Crime: The number one concern right across London. “Please report all crime”, says Cllr Tony Devenish AM

In my seventeen years as your local ward Councillor, my two colleagues (Cllrs Elizabeth Hitchcock and Rachael Robathan) and I can rarely think of a time when crime or the fear of crime, has been so high up local people’s very real concerns. We have reached one million crimes a year in London (up from 780,000 just seven years ago).

First the good news. After seven years as your constituency GLA Assembly Member and local Councillor, holding Mayor Sadiq Khan and the Met Police to account, we have record numbers of Police in London (part of the 20,000 more police) within the 2019 Government Manifesto: a promise that has been delivered! In addition, I do think Sir Mark Rowley, the new Met Commissioner “gets it” far more than recent holders of that office, as do recent local Borough Commanders. I sit on the Police and Crime Committee for London.

Secondly, the bad news. We have a long way to go to achieve what Sir Mark summarised as, ‘more trust, less crime, higher standards’. The proof will be in the results.

Positive change will take several years. Last November a new Met For London event took place in Pimlico. I was there. I attended the first rounds of such events over the summer. I was impressed that the Met was in listening mode.

However, from car crime to burglaries, to visible drug dealing in broad daylight. and the very worrying every-weekend protests on Israel/Gaza, there is much to do. Our only police station locally is in Charing Cross, after our Belgravia station was closed in 2019 by the Mayor.

There is ONE MESSAGE I cannot stress enough: please report EVERY CRIME on 101 or 999.

Our police continuously measure performance. If more crimes are reported elsewhere, there is a very real danger that the number of police officers will be moved to where reported crime is greater. Only recently a council colleague in the North of Westminster obtained another PCSO (Police Community Support Officer) to support low level police work, backed up (I stress) by rising local crime figures in his area.

Do please drop me a line anytime on email: tony.devenish@london.gov.uk; full updates are on social media: X @tony_devenish (or Google me if you don't tweet!).

Finally, without in any way being party political, did you know 2024 doesn't only include a likely General Election, but a fixed Election for London's Mayor, whose remit is Policing, Transport, Planning/Housing and the Environment, on Thursday 2nd May. Whether you live in Belgravia full-time or part-time, and whether you vote in local elections elsewhere in the country, you can also vote here in London (note at a General Election it is illegal to vote in more than one address).

Voter link to register: [Westminster.gov.uk bit.ly/WCC-Vote-Reg](https://www.westminster.gov.uk/bit.ly/WCC-Vote-Reg)

It is a huge honour to represent Belgravia – thank you from Elizabeth, Rachael and me. ▲

Change of Leader of Conservative Councillors

After four years as Leader of the Conservative Group and for four years, Leader of the Council, Cllr Rachael Robathan announced in December that she intended to step down from the Leadership.



Cllr Rachael Robathan said, 'It has been a great honour to lead the Conservative Group at the Council, but now is the right time to hand over the reins and I leave the group in very strong hands. For people

living in Knightsbridge & Belgravia, I hope you will notice no difference in your local representation as I remain fully committed to working with you and hope – voters allowing – to stand again at the next election.'

We all know and appreciate the work Rachael has done for a us. We are delighted though that she will continue to be our Councillor with her colleagues Elizabeth Hitchcock and Tony Devenish.



Conservative Councillors in Westminster have selected Councillor Paul Swaddle OBE to become the new Leader of the Westminster Council Conservatives. Paul lives in

North Marylebone and runs a software company in central London. He has lived in the St John's Wood and North Marylebone area for seven years, serving as one of our local Westminster Councillors since 2018.

The new Deputy Leader is Caroline Sargent, a mother of two girls, who has lived in Westminster for over ten years. She is self-employed and has volunteered in many roles including one as a Westminster Health Champion and representing claimants at the social security and employment tribunals with a legal charity. ▲



New parking charges

We received the following information on 27th January from Westminster City Council relating to new parking charges affecting motor vehicles.

Given the very short consultation period, we reproduce the proposals here so you have a chance to comment as well.

Residents and visitors who drive into Westminster will be able to provide their opinions on and ask questions about the changes via a Traffic Order consultation we are running over a three-week period until 14th February 2024. We would greatly encourage your participation.

www.westminstertransportationservices.co.uk/ebc

The City of Westminster has some of the highest carbon emissions and worst air quality of any national local authority. Therefore, we propose to change the way we charge for both pay-to-park casual kerbside parking and resident parking permits to incentivise cleaner, less polluting vehicles.

The reasons the Council are doing this are:

- To reduce air pollution in Westminster as part of Westminster City Council's ambitions to meet its net zero emissions by 2040. The proposals align with the Fairer Westminster Strategy and complement a number of our environmental policies and commitments. The improvement of air quality is an important priority for the council and these policies support this aspiration.
- To introduce a fairer and more proportionate charging structure so vehicles are charged in accordance with the level of emissions they produce.
- To accommodate the growing number of electric vehicles and the different range of hybrid vehicles.
- Because emissions-based charging is now commonplace and Westminster City Council is undertaking an action that many neighbouring London boroughs have already implemented.

The following charging structure is proposed from 1st April 2024. In what is a change to the current structure, no vehicles will be granted a resident permit free of charge, including electric vehicles (which would classify as band 1A or 1B).

Band	CO2 emissions (g/km)	Proposed permit charge (per year)
1A	0 (small 1-69 kwh battery)	£40.00
1B	0 (large ≥ 70 kwh battery)	£80.00
2	1-90	£90.95
3	91-131	£123.05
4	131-150 or pre-2001 ≤ 1200 cc	£139.10
5	151-255 or pre-2001 > 1200 cc	£214.00
6	≥ 256 or unknowns*	£321.00
M	Motorcycles	£60.99

* 'Unknowns' are vehicles which are not on the DVLA database.





Registered Charity No: 1168619
An amenity society recognised by the City of Westminster

Membership Application

Membership is open to residents and non-residents and is free

Name email

Second name (if any) email

Address.....

.....

Telephone: Home..... Work

Mobile Date

By signing this Application I CONSENT and AGREE to The Belgravia Society sending emails to me until I unsubscribe or resign from the Society.

Signature(s):

Please let us know if you have any special interests, concerns or queries:

PLEASE RETURN THIS APPLICATION FORM TO THE PERSON WHO GAVE IT TO YOU OR EMAIL TO: info@thebelgraviasociety.com
OR POST TO: **63 BELGRAVIA COURT 33 EBURY STREET LONDON SW1W 0NY**

Gift Aid declaration – for past, present and future

Please treat as Gift Aid donations all qualifying gifts made:

Please tick all boxes you wish to apply.

Today In the past 4 years In the future



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Boost your donation by 25p of Gift Aid for every £1 you donate. Gift Aid is reclaimed by the Charity from the tax you pay for the current tax year.

I am a UK taxpayer and understand that if I pay less Income Tax and/or Capital Gains Tax than the amount of Gift Aid claimed on all my donations in that tax year it is my responsibility to pay any difference.

SIGNATURE(S) DATE

ADDRESS

Please notify the charity or CASC if you:

Want to cancel this declaration Change your name or home address No longer pay sufficient tax on your income and/or capital gains.

If you pay Income Tax at the higher or additional rate and want to receive the additional tax relief due to you, you must include all your Gift Aid donations on your Self Assessment tax return or ask HM Revenue and Customs to adjust your tax code.

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