

The

BELGRAVIA SOCIETY

Magazine

ISSUE 112 | SEPTEMBER 2024

**THE ONLY
INDEPENDENT
VOICE FOR
BELGRAVIA**

THE BELGRAVIA SOCIETY



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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Front Cover: Eaton Square

Chairman's Message



George Waite
Chairman of
The Belgravia Society
and ESRA

Proposals to widen the pavements around Sloane Square

Some may remember, in early 2007, a consultation to change the road layout at Sloane Square. The resultant observations that showed over 65% were opposed.

At that time the proposal from Kensington and Chelsea Council was to return to the Square's pre-1930s layout.

The Council favoured the crossroads scheme following two earlier consultations which indicated a significant majority of residents in favour of the idea. However, when a local group dedicated to keeping the existing gyratory layout emerged, the Council funded its ideas, allowing them to be worked up into an alternative scheme. It then commissioned a third consultation so that the alternative scheme could be presented alongside the Council's preferred crossroads scheme.

The Council's position was that their preferred scheme provided greatly increased accessibility and usable pedestrian space, however, local opposition won the day and the matter was shelved.

Fast forward to today – actually 7th August 2024 – and the Council are once again considering proposals for Sloane Square. This time the consultation (which closes on 16th October) is to widen the pavements around Sloane Square, with funding for the changes provided by Cadogan.

Reportedly the objective is “...to create an improved pedestrian experience and a welcoming environment for everyone who lives, works or visits Sloane Square...”

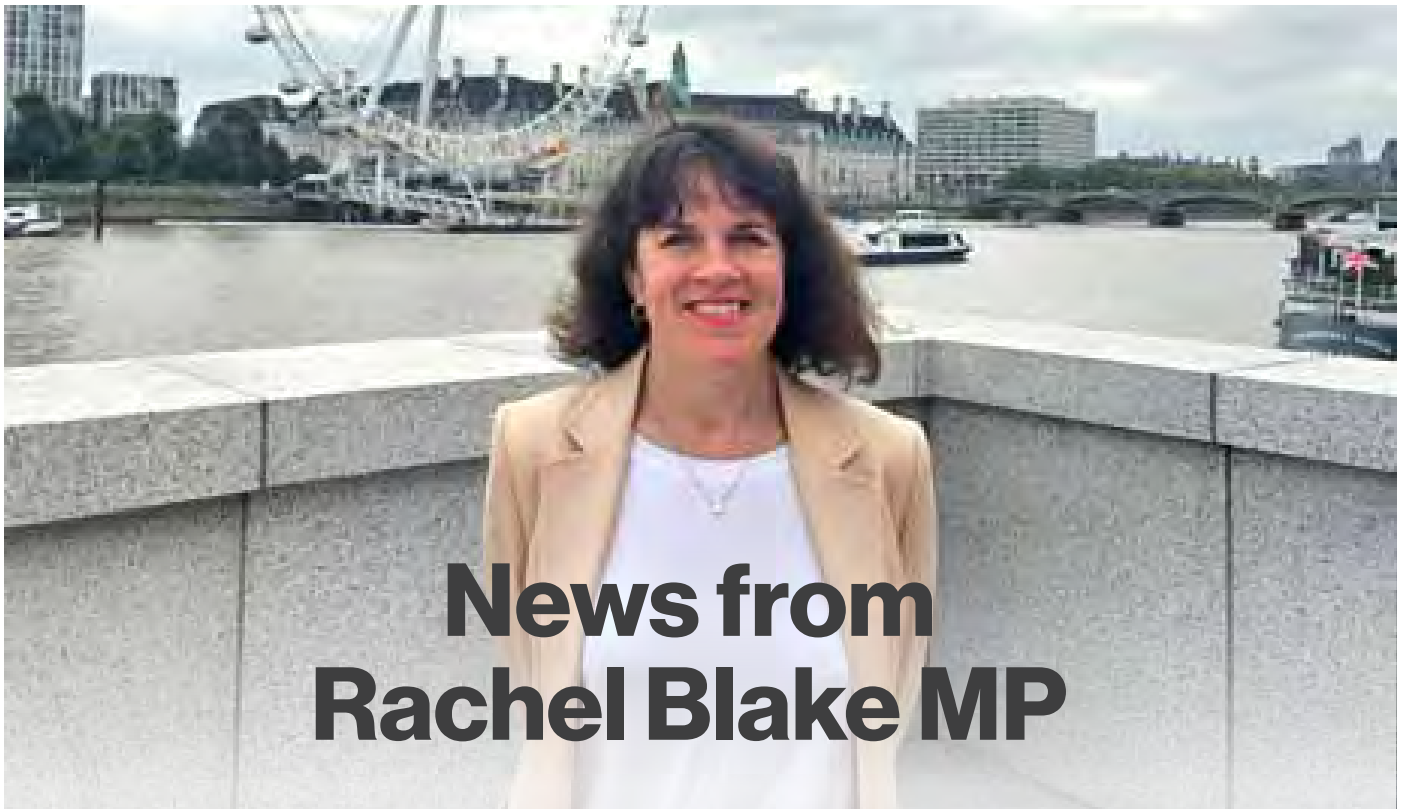
The following are extracts from the public consultation:

“...Areas for improvement... While much of Sloane Square functions well, certain areas experience uncomfortably high numbers of people moving through at once. This often necessitates the use of informal crossing points, which can impede vehicle movements, create navigation challenges, and make pavements feel too crowded at peak times...Our proposals are centred around five principles:

1. Widen pavements
2. Realign pedestrian crossings
3. Reduce street clutter
4. Reuse materials from Sloane Street
5. Ensure traffic flow is not impacted...”

For more information on the scheme, including images: consult.rbkc.gov.uk/communities/sloane-square/consultation/subpage.2024-08-01.2918389311.

The consultation is open to residents, businesses and visitors, therefore, please take the time to review and respond to the consultation, and please let us know your thoughts on the matter (info@thebelgraviasociety.com). ▲



News from Rachel Blake MP

In September, I led my first debate in Westminster Hall on the regulation of short-term lets. This is something I have heard a lot about from residents. An increased number of short-term lets in small geographic areas hollows out our communities and creates all kinds of practical issues. It can also mean there are fewer homes available for local people to rent, worsening the housing crisis. It was good to hear that the Government are reviewing the options for regulation of short-term lets.

I met with two companies which provide e-bike and e-scooter hire in London, to talk about what more they could do to prevent dangerous parking. Cycling is a key part of our transport mix, and there is of course a place for new technology in encouraging more people to use bicycles to get around, but they have to be managed in a way that works for the local area. At the moment, that's not happening, so I will continue to call for councils to have the powers to fine riders who park dangerously, and to fine the companies who fail to remove hazards.

I continued my regular resident surgeries, this time at the Cardinal Hume Centre, speaking to

local people about the challenges they face in accessing the support they need, from housing to flood insurance to healthcare. I can be reached on rachel.blake.mp@parliament.uk and my team and I will always help where we can.

Another issue that comes up repeatedly is the urgent need to reform leasehold in the UK. I know this is something that Nickie Aiken did a lot of good work on as the Member of Parliament, and I will be looking to continue to raise this issue and make lasting change.

This month, I also had a lot of fun joining pupils from Harris Academy Westminster at the Google Academy to talk about how young people can get involved in politics. I went along to the wonderful 50th anniversary garden party for the Mayfair and St James' Residents' Association, I spoke at the Soho Housing Annual General Meeting, I welcomed the Knightsbridge Partnership to Parliament for a roundtable meeting, and I met with local residents for an area walkabout at Queen Anne's Gate. I continue to be struck by the vibrancy of our local organisations in the Two Cities. ▲



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 | Storytellers

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



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

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

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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



The Fourth Plinth

There is a plinth at each corner of Trafalgar Square. Two plinths have sculptures of individuals. The northern plinths are rather larger and were designed for equestrian statues. The north eastern plinth has a statue of George IV. The other statues are of Henry Havelock and Charles James Napier, and it was intended that the fourth plinth, built in 1841, would contain a statue of William IV on horseback.

However, the fourth plinth remained empty for want of money. For 150 years debate took place as to what should actually be on the fourth plinth. The Royal Society Encouragement of Arts Manufactures and Commerce (RSA) commissioned three contemporary statues. There have been a

number of proposals for permanent statues but none seemed acceptable. Candidates ranged from Nelson Mandela to Alan Turing. After opinions from the public, art commissioners and members of the public, a final report recommended there should be a continued rolling programme of commissioned temporary artworks rather than a settled permanent figure.

The plinth was empty until 1999 when it became the location for the ongoing series of temporary artworks, including pieces by David Shrigley, Rachel Whiteread and Antony Gormley.

In 2003 the ownership of Trafalgar Square was transferred from Westminster City Council to the Mayor of London and marked the



beginning of the Mayor of London's Fourth Plinth Commission as it is now known.

The artworks are replaced in a rolling programme. The latest Fourth Plinth artwork contains hundreds of plaster casts of transgender and non-binary people. The sculpture was created by Mexican artist, Teresas Margolles. 728 faces are featured. The casts are arranged around the plinth forming a skull rack that featured in Mesoamerican civilisations used to display remains of war captives or sacrificial victims.

The story of the Fourth Plinth seems strange when looking at the artwork, and comparing it with the beautiful buildings and artwork in the nearby galleries and museums surrounding Trafalgar Square. The remaining statues and friezes seem inappropriate to this most important and famous Square. Nelson's Column with its surrounding artwork and lions, provides us with a splendid memorial.

...the Fourth Plinth would be the perfect place for an equestrian statue of the late Queen, who devoted her life to the nation for 70 years.

We can understand a rolling programme, but our view would be that it should reflect the achievements of many of our people. Some of the art is amusing, but it does not seem appropriate. Your editor thinks that much of the artwork on the Fourth Plinth should be shown in galleries where the public, who understand and appreciate the objects, can see them and leave the rest of us to enjoy the great beauty of more conventional art.

We set out for you some photographs of the subjects which have been placed on the Fourth Plinth. It has been said that it was intended that the Fourth Plinth should in due course be the perfect place for an equestrian statue of the late Queen, who devoted her life to the nation for 70 years. Perhaps this is the time for that to happen and the Mayor's Plinth Commission be closed for good. ▲



Star, News and Standard!

Vendors of evening newspapers shouting their wares



The last London evening newspaper, *London Evening Standard*, has printed its final paper. The paper will become a weekly edition under a new title, *London Standard*. The newspaper launched its original incarnation in 1827 and became free of charge in 2009, seeing particular popularity with the capital's commuters. Our wonderful local newsagent, Mayhews, delivered *The Standard* from the day before with our morning papers.

The Standard's parent company has also struck a deal with *City AM*, a free daily, which focuses on business and finance, to take up *The Standard's* distribution slots.

The paper's daily circulation had dropped from 850,000 to 275,000 in the past five years, and it has lost £84.5m over the past six years.

The landscape for distribution of news has hugely changed over the centuries. Some of us are old enough to remember that there used to be three evening newspapers in London: *The Star*, *The News* and, of course, *The Standard*. The latter paper's forerunner, named *Standard*, launched 197 years ago with an evening version added in 1859.

The first issue of *The Star* appeared on the streets of London on 17th January 1888 as a



four-page broadsheet published six-days-a-week. It was priced like other evening newspapers at one halfpenny. It didn't take long for *The Star* to attract a huge readership in the capital. In February 1888 the average daily circulation stood at 125,000 copies. In the years to follow the circulation of the newspaper rose dramatically. By the summer of 1895, *The Star* was achieving a daily net sale in excess of 150,000 copies.

At its height, *The Star* sold 1,414,660 copies featuring the marriage of Prince Philip and Princess Elizabeth. Its final issue was published on 17th October 1960.

The London Evening News and Post was an evening newspaper published in London from 1881 to 1980. Obviously, it was in competition with its above mentioned rivals. Although it had been the biggest evening paper in London over several decades, by the 1970s *The Evening News* was struggling with financial problems and falling sales as television was eating away its market share. It finally closed in October 1980.

This is clearly the end of evening newspapers in the big cities as they used to be in many places apart from London. Other local newspapers are no longer published. The reality is that people rely on their news either from a daily newspaper, often via the internet, 24-hour television, news garnered from mobile phones, or daily, unreliable news from social media.

However, the veracity of news is undermined. The different media have different standards when it comes to speech and truth of reports. Television is controlled and requirements of balance are made, though not entirely followed. Newspapers, on the other hand, are free to print subjects according to their political views. There is a degree of control in that where untrue matters are presented, complaints can be made to the Independent Press Standards Association (IPSO).

Social media is entirely different. There is a free-for-all. The so-called platforms that generate information, while claiming to moderate it are under no legal obligation to do so. We can only hope that the Government finds a way of ensuring "news" is distributed in a way which follows our nation's belief in free speech and truth. ▲

INVITATION TO THE NEXT SOCIETY COMMITTEE MEETING

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

**8th October at 5.30pm
at The Caledonian Club**

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



Oxford Street shock

In the last couple of years Westminster City Council has spent a lot of time and, indeed, funds to upgrade Oxford Street. It is work in progress and we all welcome that and the end of ten years of considering making the street a pedestrian-only area.

WCC has its own £150 million programme for making Oxford Street pedestrian friendly, but crucially not traffic free. However, Sadiq Khan, the Mayor of London, wants to take over Oxford Street and pedestrianise it, excluding all forms of transport including bicycles. It also seems that the new Government is giving the Mayor powers to force through the pedestrianisation irrespective of local people, both residents, businesses and, crucially, Westminster City Council. All the damage it will do in terms of denying the elderly, the disabled, mothers with prams, shoppers

with heavy parcels, etc., the ability to traverse through Oxford Street is ignored. This is not a large piazza, it is a road in excess of a mile long. Only the healthy and most hearty will be able to benefit. Instead of having an inclusive set of proposals, they are very exclusive of a significant proportion of the population.

As for the residents in the area, they will be negatively affected by the redirected buses, taxis, cars and cycles as they will have to move through the already narrow and congested surrounding streets.

We understand that WCC only heard about this around 12th September and it has shocked our former MP Nickie Aiken, who has accused the Mayor and Government of seeking to remove local democracy and railroad the scheme without support.

Mayor Kahn is quite happy to damage the whole area and undermine democracy...



Apart from ignoring those who will not be able to traverse a lengthy street, Mayor Khan seems to think that visitors will be more than happy to walk long distances. Oxford Street is slightly over a mile long. It has been mentioned that there are four underground stations along the street. However, at least two of them are not step free. The disabled will therefore be totally excluded from these as will others who need lifts or escalators.

The pedestrianisation is likely to be opposed by residents in Marylebone, Mayfair, Soho and Fitzrovia. The opposition goes beyond those immediately disadvantaged. Westminster amenity societies, including ourselves, The Belgravia Society, 15 in all, have already registered our views.

Mayor Khan will try to secure his powers by designating Oxford Street a “Mayoral

Development Area”. The move seems to have the Government support without them ever considering the people, both residents and businesses, and all those who use Oxford Street.

WCC believe that the fortunes of Oxford Street were being turned around after one in five units was left empty after the pandemic and hit by high profile departures. HMV has reopened and a former Topshop and Waterstones is returning.

The Mayor is quite happy to damage the whole area and undermine democracy without any care at all and certainly no consultation. However, I could add that consultation to the Mayor probably means that whatever the outcome, he will disregard it. This would follow his patterns of consultation of the past. ▲

The Royal Parks



Top things to do at The Royal Parks this Autumn

We always look forward to the monthly information from the Royal Parks. We are so privileged to have four in close proximity. London parks for autumn walks are wonderlands well worth exploring. Discover where to go, what to see and what to do during this colourful season. It is not that difficult to get to Richmond Park or Bushy Park and they are certainly worth a visit too.

Royal Parks tell us it is celebrating the Harvest, getting spooky for Halloween, or simply marveling at the beauty of the changing leaves; there's something for everyone this Autumn. They suggest you join them for one of their guided tours to get exclusive access to areas usually closed to the public, or discover some of the beautiful botany and wildlife that call the parks home.

We have not been aware of their walking tours which seem to be a new innovation and offer an exclusive look at areas normally closed to the public. The Royal Parks charge for the guided tours; most cost £15, but some are free.

On 3rd and 17th October there is an after dark storytelling in St James's Park, and on 4th October, also in St James's Park, there is a walk through the park learning the history of the incredible wildlife.

On 11th October at 2-3.30pm, there is an opportunity of getting behind the railing of the Albert Memorial for an exclusive close-up. Another walking tour in Hyde Park will take you with exclusive access to the hidden pet cemetery on 18th October at 11am-12.30pm (there are other tours available).



There will be a series of early morning creative writing workshops in the Royal Parks this autumn. Writer, Gemma Seltzer, will guide you through a range of creative exercises to prompt new ideas, poems, stories and life writing.

One thing we are not able to enjoy in our local parks is deer. However, Richmond Park and Bushy Park is home to over 1000 free roaming red and fallow deer. The red deer is the UK's largest wild mammal. At the end of September each year, the rutting begins and lasts until early November. There is a very good article on the Royal Parks website about this and well worth reading. We cannot finish this article without providing one of the Royal Parks photographs (below) showing a red deer stag looking over his hinds. ▲

In September The Royal Parks organised the half marathon which has become an annual event. They are getting ready for the seasonal events like Harvest Festival and deer rutting (breeding), welcoming schools back to the parks.

The Royal Parks' shop is open from 10am-7pm, seven days a week. It is located alongside the Boat House by the Serpentine. You may recall the shop opened in 2023 with a range of gifts. We understand the shop is now going online.



© Jules Cox

No solution for parked e-Bikes



Councillor Hitchcock addresses the WCC

There is no denying that e-bikes are a fantastic way to get around our city. They are easy, clean, green and relatively affordable. But there is a price to pay – street clutter and obstruction to our pavements, and the people paying the price are often the elderly or disabled. When e-bikes are dumped on our pavements it poses obstacles for the disabled as well as those with mobility issues, who are left to navigate around these obstructions in what must be accessible public spaces.

E-bikes and the dangerous way in which they are left has become the number one issue in many parts of our city including Knightsbridge & Belgravia. Residents have sent numerous emails and countless photos over the past couple of years showing the ever-worsening situation

caused by e-bikes. Although we are pleased that the Council has taken action on e-bikes in other locations in the ward, they refuse to address the Ebury Street bay which, due to overcrowding, is a significant risk to residents.

As a council, we support those who are disabled or those who have mobility issues. But there is a huge contrast between the rigorous measures which are rightly imposed on developers to ensure DDA accessibility compliance and the lack of enforcement on e-bikes – it raises important moral questions. We extract heavy financial S106 payments from developers to limit street clutter, improve pedestrian movement and provide bike racks. Yet the regulations regarding e-bike providers are opaque at best, not complied with and are minimally enforced.



When it comes to licensing, tables and chairs will normally only be allowed directly outside a premises at the back of the footway. We will require sufficient space on the pavement to allow pedestrians, wheelchair users, disabled people, the elderly, and those with prams and buggies to pass along safely and easily. But however diligently we may enforce licensing and planning regulations, it becomes meaningless when a few feet down the road there are dumped e-bikes.

We have asked that the Council provide more e-bike parking bays, as the number currently available is clearly insufficient to cope with the number of e-bikes in the city. ▲



Autumn Rituals and Royal Parks

BY SARA OLIVER

As I write, summer is well and truly over and the swifts, swallows and other migratory birds have long gone, having left these shores for warmer climes; from now on the nights will be drawing in. Autumn has arrived!

Equinox and Solstice

Twice a year the earth's axis is tilted either toward or away from the sun, resulting in nearly an equal amount of daylight and darkness at all latitudes. These are known as the equinoxes. The Autumnal Equinox occurs around 22nd September, where day and night are of equal length marking the start of Autumn. This event hails the changing of the seasons. The 21st March Spring Equinox also results in the nearly equal amount of daylight, bringing the promise of new life and warmer days. The June Solstice

occurred on the 21st where the earth tilted closest to the equator, making it the longest day of the year and the start of Summer. The December Solstice, by contrast, is farthest north or south from the equator, resulting in the shortest day of the year and the start of Winter.

Autumn Rituals

Autumn is the season of change, reflection and gratitude and what better way to celebrate than to partake in some rituals that connect with nature, ourselves and the changing world?

- Bring in the light, by lighting a candle and let the warm glow illuminate your space.
- Bring inside the beauty of Autumn by collecting colourful leaves, and other autumnal touches, such as scented candles and infusers to delight your senses.

“

To Autumn
 Or by a cider-press,
 with patient look,
 Thou watchest the last oozings,
 hours by hours.”

John Keats (1795-1821)

”



- Recite the perfect poem (see above)
- Write a journal and reminisce about your summer experiences.
- Invite friends and family for a gathering and celebrate with a glass of cider and a harvest of seasonal vegetables on the menu; a healthy way to connect with nature and savour the flavours of the season.
- Embrace the crisp, colourful days of Autumn by taking a brisk walk or a leisurely stroll, extolling all the virtues of the changing landscape in The Royal Parks.

The Royal Parks Volunteer Updates

Wildlife Watch – Royal Parks Citizen Watch
 are launching an exciting range of science projects. Research diverse species such as moths, small reptiles and mammals; everyone is welcome to get involved.

**Bumblebee Citizen Science
 – Hyde Park and Kensington Gardens**
 Spare an hour or two a month to walk a set route of around 2km and help count the bumblebees that call our parks home.

Find out more at volunteer.royalparks.org.uk/volunteers/opportunity/10218124

Citizen Science – Moths, Mammals and Reptiles in Bushy and Richmond Parks

Participants can expect to join a team and gain hands-on experience with projects such as moth surveying; finding out about the key roles small mammals play in helping to maintain healthy ecosystems and preserving biodiversity. Roles include collecting mammal traps set up from the previous evening before counting, potentially sexing then releasing the captured mammals.

Find out more about these unique experiences by signing up for the Wildlife Survey Collection. All sessions are free.

Sources

<https://volunteer.royalparks.org.uk/index-classic>

<https://volunteer.royalparks.org.uk/volunteers/opportunity/10228749>

<https://volunteer.royalparks.org.uk/volunteers/opportunity/10228757>

<https://volunteer.royalparks.org.uk/volunteers/opportunity/10228758>

Contact the Volunteer Team on volunteering@royalparks.org.uk

Local News

The Post Office



The post office is closed. No decisions have been taken in terms of opening a new one either locally or elsewhere. It is quite clear that it would be some time before we have any news and even Grosvenor cannot get any information from the Post Office which would be helpful.

Empty shops



Looking around, it is obvious that many shops are empty and have not been taken up. You will see from our photograph that the exterior of *Memories of China* has now hugely changed in terms of its windows and is an advertisement for a new restaurant, which we expected. The changing windows seems unnecessary and does not in any way enhance the area which the old windows did.

Cleo – new restaurant?



As you know, many people objected to the new proposals for what was *Baker and Spice*. We understand no decision has yet been taken by Westminster City Council as to whether to allow the alterations which were proposed. Watch this space.

Further empty units



We counted six empty shops between Buckingham Palace Road and Ebury Steet. That excludes the former post office site but includes *Memories of China*. From the notices in the windows it seems that three businesses are likely to take up shops.

How long it will be before they are all occupied remains to be seen. We are particularly concerned about the *Memories of China* unit

which Grosvenor told us they wanted to make into a vibrant restaurant. We cannot help wondering how noisy that vibrance will be and how late it will stay open.



These included motor theft from Lowndes Square; robbery (includes element of force) in Elizabeth Street; theft from *Pret* in coach station; theft in Buckingham Palace Road (early hours). They also reported Hyde Park Corner Station was a hotspot for problems.

Problems in the streets



It seems there have been missed household rubbish collections. Don't forget that you can contact the WCC to report problems. The following is their "Report it" line: www.westminster.gov.uk/report-it.

The following reports follow a meeting held by Grosvenor to deal with policing on 19th September 2024 and our Committee member, Andrew Newton, attended a meeting on our behalf:

Policing

On policing and homelessness, Police officers Paul Willey and PC Aadil Baqar were present to report on local incidents.

Homelessness



Representatives from The Passage and St Mungo's were present. We were told that Westminster spends more than any other borough on homelessness (perhaps for 20% of London's homeless population). The situation has deteriorated markedly over the last year, with St Mungo's seeing a 98% year on year increase in numbers. The Passage remarked that up to 65/70 homeless had found shelter in Victoria Coach Station, until the coach station introduced a ticketing system recently. Some of the local shops (*Tom Tom*) were reaching out to the homeless, for others there is a daily matter of clearing up in the mornings outside premises. For assistance see Streetlink at St Mungo's; CIT at The Passage.

These are sad figures and much work is being done to help deal with the problem by WCC, the local organisations, businesses and others. ▲

News from our Councillors



News from our local Councillors,
Elizabeth Hitchcock, Rachael Robathan and Tony Devenish

Eccleston Street Post Office

Despite our efforts and those of the whole 'Save Our Post Office' group, the post office was closed in Eccleston Street at the end of August. This is a huge setback for our community and the Councillors recognise that the Belgravia community is being left without the most important parts of the postal services that the Crown Post Office has to offer. They tell us they will continue to pressure the Post Office to ensure an alternative site is set up nearby as soon as possible.

Tents – Lower Grosvenor Gardens and Elizabeth Street



Many of you will have seen tents set up on Grosvenor Gardens and Elizabeth Street over the summer and, in both cases, they were associated with problems of antisocial behaviour. Following an excellent piece of joint working between our local police team, led by PC Paul Wyllie, and council officers working with our Knightsbridge and Belgravia city inspector John Whelan, both groups of occupants have been persuaded to move on.

All had already been contacted by Outreach teams and offered help. The Veolia were on standby, cleared the rubbish quickly, and did a great job cleaning up both areas while police stayed to prevent any problems. Our thanks to all, but this also demonstrates the amount of time and resources needed to deal with this.

The current WCC and Mayor Khan are taking far too long to act, despite the international media coverage of our capital city.

Rutland Gate – rough sleepers



Over the summer, there were reports of rough sleepers both on public and private land. Our City Inspector and Outreach teams engaged with those in question to move them away from the area and connect them to support. There have been no further reports of them returning. Should you see rough sleepers and are concerned for their welfare, or they are causing antisocial behaviour, please contact us and also report it to StreetLink who will engage and connect rough sleepers to services. It is also important that people do not give money to people on the streets, which is most often spent on alcohol or drugs and also deters people from seeking help elsewhere. ▲

Our Councillors tell you about their forthcoming Street Surgeries



Cllrs Rachael Robathan and Tony Devenish will be holding street surgeries next month, as follows:

10.30am on 8th October at Bonhams on Montpelier Street

12pm on 8th October at St Paul's Knightsbridge

10.30am on 10th October at Ebury Square by Fountain Court

12pm on 10th October on Gatliff Road by Sainsbury's



Cllr Elizabeth Hitchcock asks you to sign up for emails from the Councillors, for people living in Knightsbridge & Belgravia Ward.

Their contact details are:
ehitchcock@westminster.gov.uk
tdevenish@westminster.gov.uk
rrobathan@westminster.gov.uk

Belgravia Neighbourhood Forum

It's now six months since our Belgravia Neighbourhood Plan was adopted by Westminster City Council following its overwhelming endorsement at the local referendum in February this year, when 94% of those voting, voted "yes". As a community, we must be grateful to all of those who turned out to vote and secure the neighbourhood plan for Belgravia.

The Chairman of the Neighbourhood Forum, Monica Lucas, has reported to us, and to the members of the Forum, that they have been:

- Monitoring all planning applications to ensure that they comply with the Plan, and where they do not, we have been submitting objections to Westminster City Council.

- Engaging in an active campaign to ensure that everyone involved with planning in the Belgravia area is aware of the Plan, and its associated Design Codes, and takes them into account when preparing plans. To this end, we have been liaising with Westminster planning officers, local architects and planning consultants, as well as local landowners and developers.
- Networking with other forums in Westminster to ensure that we have a stronger voice together. This includes forums in Knightsbridge, Pimlico, Soho and Marylebone.
- If you would like to know more about the Plan, you can see all the documents on Westminster City Council's website [here](#).

We must be very thankful for all the work which was put into the creation of the Neighbourhood Forum and the Statutory Plan which protects the area with all its listed buildings, both grade 1 and 2, as well as the design features to be used in the area to maintain and protect its unique nature. ▲

'Fat Shatterer of Kent' London clinic

Joanna Birch Jones is a leading, award-winning, expert aesthetics practitioner and her *Goddess Aesthetics* business is the go-to practice for skin rejuvenation and inch-loss treatments. Due to the popularity of her clinic in Kent, frequented by various celebrities, and all the press and publicity she has had, news of her success has spread and demand for her treatments has led to her opening a clinic at the sumptuous *Neville's Hair and Beauty* salon in Pont Street, Belgravia.

Her most popular treatment is the incredible Lipofirm Pro non-surgical body contouring and Liquid Lipo fat dissolving gels, which target problem areas where often all else has failed. Clients report an inch-loss of at least four inches with the first treatment, but a course is recommended for optimum results. The "before and after" photos on her website (www.goddess-aesthetics.co.uk) and reviews about this quick and painless treatment for men as well as women speak for themselves.

Joanna also offers anti-wrinkle treatments using state-of-the-art products, Azzalure, Alluziance and Dyspot, skin boosters Prophilu, Sosum and Revs Pro, vitamin injections, Dermaplaning, Microneedling, Sclerotherapy, Polynucleotides, and Geneo + facials making her London clinic the one-stop shop for face as well as body.

To book an appointment call 07774 600700 and to find out more read about the treatments on www.goddess-aesthetics.co.uk or @goddess_aesthetics1 on Instagram.

'My waist and hips have been reduced, tightened and sculpted ... I feel lighter, healthier, and more energetic.'



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Campaign Launch



As a member of The Belgravia Society, I am proud to announce the launch of a campaign against phone snatching, not only within the elegant precincts of Belgravia but across the entire city of London. This initiative stems from a deep-seated belief in the importance of community safety and the preservation of public trust. Phone snatching, a crime that may seem minor on the surface, is emblematic of broader issues in urban safety and public order, and it is our responsibility to address it head-on.

The decision to initiate this campaign was driven by the alarming increase in phone snatching incidents across London. The Metropolitan Police reported a 66% rise in phone thefts between 2019 and 2022, with the crime becoming increasingly brazen and violent. These crimes are not only financially damaging but also emotionally traumatic for victims, often leaving them feeling vulnerable and unsafe in their own neighborhoods. This is particularly concerning in areas like Belgravia, where residents and visitors alike should feel secure.

Belgravia, known for its historic charm and affluent residents, might seem like an unlikely target for such crimes. However, its picturesque streets have become attractive to opportunistic criminals, aware that the area is frequented by individuals carrying high-value smartphones. The Belgravia Society, with its deep roots in the community, is uniquely positioned to spearhead this campaign. By leveraging our network, we can raise awareness, educate residents, and work closely with local law enforcement to develop strategies to combat this menace.

The campaign will focus on three key areas: education, prevention, and partnership. We will begin by educating the public on the risks of phone snatching, encouraging simple yet effective measures such as being mindful of surroundings and keeping phones out of sight in public spaces. Prevention strategies will include working with the Metropolitan Police to increase patrols in hotspots and advocating for the installation of more CCTV cameras in vulnerable areas.

Lastly, we will foster partnerships with local businesses and community groups to create a united front against crime.

Our goal is to make Belgravia, and by extension London, a safer place for everyone. This campaign is more than just a response to rising crime; it is a reaffirmation of our commitment to protecting the values that make our community special. By standing together, we can ensure that the streets of Belgravia remain as secure and serene as they are beautiful, setting a standard all London can follow.

ALEXANDER (AGED13)

Editors Note:

We congratulate Alexander on his campaign and wish him a great future and success. He is also putting in hand a petition. Please support him by following his instructions to sign it:

How to sign the Belgravia Society's Petition on **change.org**:

1. Open a browser
2. Type in www.change.org/phonesnatching
3. Press the red 'Sign the Petition' button
4. Type in your full name, email and postcode
5. Go to your email and confirm the signature
6. You will see other campaigns – press 'skip' every time
7. You have signed our petition successfully, thank you.

You do not have to pay money to our petition for marketing and promotions unless you wish to.



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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

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The Belgravia Society Magazine
The only independent voice for Belgravia

Number 112
SEPTEMBER 2024



REGISTERED CHARITY NO: 1168619
www.thebelgraviasociety.com