



THE ST MARYLEBONE SOCIETY NEWSLETTER

Spring 2022 Number 364

www.stmarylebonesociety.org

Registered Charity 274082

NEW CHILTERN CONTRACT SIGNALS A GREENER TRACK



The Society's campaign for cleaner trains was supported wholeheartedly by Westminster Council and our MP, Nickie Aiken. In awarding Chiltern Railways a six-year contract, the Department for Transport (DfT) signalled a desire for its operations to become greener over the duration with a roadmap to decarbonisation and improved emissions monitoring and reporting to inform longer term decisions.

The new contract is structured flexibly in the context of DfT's post-Covid Emergency Recovery Plan. The initial focus is on a 15-month business plan after which a new one will be agreed

annually with DfT. This contract can be concluded as early as April 2025 if the DfT thinks the market is ready to invite bids for Competitive Passenger Service Contracts.

Chiltern's first diesel-battery hybrid Class 168 train started routine service on the Marylebone – Aylesbury route on 10th February 2022. The first diesel-battery hybrid Class 165 train is undergoing factory trials with operational trials expected to start in summer 2022. The contract requires Chiltern to present a business case for hybrid conversion to DfT in March. Real world performance and costs data from early hybrid trains will be

essential to assess the role that this technology could play in future.

Chiltern's longer term Fleet Plan has to be developed in the context of the government's target to decarbonise railways by 2050 and the fact that the Marylebone line is not suitable for electrification. Hybridisation is one option for the fleet; brand new trains, re-deployment of greener rolling stock released from other parts of the national network, or renovation/refurbishment of the existing fleet are other options*. The costs and benefits of all options will have to be weighed up against each other. Ultimately, every option will

continued overleaf

depend on sufficient funding from the government.

The Leader of Westminster Council grasped that the inherent delay in getting clean rolling stock meant train emissions in Marylebone would continue unabated. Cllr Rachael Robathan wrote to the Rail Minister when the contract was awarded: "We understand that replacing the fleet with a greener alternative cannot be achieved overnight but are particularly disappointed to hear that you have not opted to make the straightforward change to convert all existing stock to the less polluting GTL fuel. This option does not require engine conversion, has only a 5 per cent price difference compared to diesel, and would lead to an immediate drop in NO₂ and PM_{2.5} emissions."

Clear evidence of how polluting the trains are may oblige DfT to act on her advice more quickly. DfT has funded the Rail Safety & Standards Board (RSSB) to monitor pollution at 105 stations

nationally, including five on Chiltern's network – Marylebone, Aylesbury, Banbury, Leamington and Birmingham Moor Street. NO₂ diffusion tubes will be used in some stations, small low-cost sensors will be used at others and two will have large reference monitors. At the time of writing no information was available when or if the data for Marylebone will be shared with those affected.

Fortunately, Westminster Council installed a Breathe London air quality sensor on Boston Place in October 2021, and live data from it are accessible on the website. The data plots from 6th to 28th January show NO₂ levels in this quiet residential street are similar to those on Marylebone Road and, even more worrying, that PM_{2.5} levels are often 10µg/m³ higher. And this at a time of reduced train services due to Covid restrictions.

Chiltern Railways is appointing a Sustainability and Environment

Manager to gather data on key environmental parameters and improve fuel consumption and energy use year on year. We hope that they will also work with DfT officials to examine the costs and benefits of alternative fuels like GTL and biodiesel and share their findings with the Council and local residents.

Westminster Council says that cleaner, quieter trains for Marylebone remains a "live issue" and Cllr Robathan has asked to meet the new Rail Minister, Wendy Morton MP, to pursue it.

Footnote:

*It seems that Chiltern cannot stop using the noisy Class 68 locomotives as many demanded because no suitable alternatives are available to replace the 61 carriages hauled by them. Taking these carriages out of service would massively reduce Chiltern's total passenger-carrying capacity. Chiltern will gladly replace these engines when better replacements become available from electrification of lines or cost-cutting measures elsewhere.

CHANGING CHAIRS

At SMS's first Council meeting this year, Gaby Higgs announced her decision to step down as Chairman. Mike Wood and Cynthia Poole have agreed to co-chair for a year, and we will review the situation at the next AGM. Cynthia stepped down as Planning and Consultations Co-ordinator two years ago, but has been keeping things going, with much less involvement than previously, during the pandemic.

Our Planning and Consultations Committee met on Zoom at the end of January and has agreed that Gaby Higgs should be Planning Co-ordinator/chair this year. This arrangement will be discussed again in 2023.

Things have changed significantly for amenity societies over the years: we have had no WCC funding for years, consultations are often entirely online, and we often struggle to find meeting rooms (with Wi-Fi etc.,) where we can look at incoming issues and comment as a representative local group. Our Planning and Consultations Committee is currently discussing how to proceed and what new arrangements will be necessary in order to continue effectively.



Cynthia Poole representing the Society on Remembrance Sunday at Marylebone Station.

OFFICERS OF THE SOCIETY 2022

Patron: Lord Montagu

President: Lord Adonis

Co-Chairs: Cynthia Poole
and Mike Wood

Hon. Secretary: Mo Parkes

Hon. Treasurer: Liz Queenan

Council Members:

Gaby Higgs (Planning Co-ordinator)

Cynthia Poole (Planning)

Robert McAulay

(Newsletter and Membership)

Mike Wood (Local History)

Irene Martin-Smith (Events)

Ian Wylie (Planning)

Patricia Kleinman (Planning)

CORPORATE SUPPORTERS

Able Homecare

Alan Higgs Architect

Altiplano Finance Ltd

Baker Street Quarter Partnership

Blandford Estate Residents' Association

CAMBARD RTM Ltd.

Chiltern Court (Baker Street)

Residents Ltd

Clarence Gate Gardens

Residents' Association

Crown Estate Paving Commission

CWC Enterprises

Fellowship of the School of
Economic Science

Howard de Walden Estate

Ian Wylie Architects

Kubie Gold

Lisson Gallery

Mac Services

Old Philologists

Portman Estate

Royal Parks

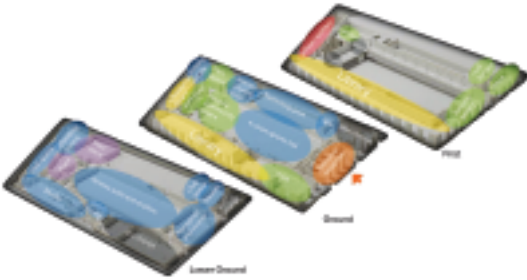
St Marylebone Parish Church

The Chiltern Firehouse

The Fruit Garden (TFG)

York Estates

PLANNING MATTERS



Seymour Centre Project

Westminster's recent consultation on the improvements people would like to see at the Seymour Centre attracted 600 responses. The council has a £25million capital budget for the project and WCC and the architects will now develop designs for the building which will be consulted on. The building is to be "flexible" and accommodate many and varied uses including the new Marylebone Library. Sadly, the lost large pool is unlikely to be reinstated. The current pool is more likely to be refurbished and a smaller, learner pool created.

A more legible version of the current schematic proposals can be found here:
www.westminster.gov.uk/leisure-libraries-and-community/seymour-centre-project

Or at QR Code:



26-44 Lisson Grove.

This 1950s office building, located between Hayes Place and Harewood Row, houses the local Job Centre and a much-used Tesco on the north corner. A new building is proposed, with some of the fabric reused, with the possibility of a much more active street frontage than at present, including cafes and shops, as well as an extra storey. Existing pavement trees are to be preserved or replaced, and the current occupants may return on completion. The architect is Allford Hall Monaghan Morris (AHMM)

Link: www.26lissongrove.co.uk/



26 Lisson Grove looking south from Ashmill Street.

Dark Supermarket in Boston Place



Residents were recently alerted to a proposal for a Jiffy Digital Grocery Store at 24-28 Boston Place. This service promises the delivery of groceries and alcohol ordered online within minutes. The delivery times are achieved by using bike couriers, increasingly a problem for residents, given that the couriers tend to hang about outside talking, many of them use noisy mopeds, and that groceries are delivered late into the night. This location is completely unsuitable for such a business: Boston Place is a very narrow, one-way street. It is in a densely residential area, and there is no loading bay outside the premises, so the narrow pavement would be entirely blocked during a delivery or pickup.

Access to these premises will be via Ivor Place and Taunton Place, thus affecting residents throughout the immediate area. In addition, as the site is near the southern end of Boston Place, the likelihood is that some couriers will perform an illegal turn from Melcombe Place north into no-entry Boston Place. The proposed licensing hours (Mon to Sat: 08:00 to 23:00 Sun: 09:00 to 22:30), and the proximity to Marylebone Station, raise the possibility that street drinkers may find a way to access alcohol as well. The Society has put in an objection to this application. At the time of writing WCC confirmed that planning consent is required to change from a car showroom/repair shop to a retail grocery distribution centre.

STOP PRESS: The licensing application has been withdrawn.



The demise of *The Pontefract Castle* public house

There is an application to demolish the Georgian public house at 48 Chapel Street, (*The Chapel*, formerly known as *The Pontefract Castle*) and replace it with a hotel, pub and retail space.

The pub is one of the last surviving buildings retaining the obligatory 50ft setback of buildings on either side of the "New Road", which was constructed starting in 1756 and is now known as Marylebone Road (and Old Marylebone Road). The setback clause in the Act was obtained by the Duke of Bedford, who was vehemently opposed to the construction of the road.

Ironically, although the pub is not listed, there are two listed red telephone boxes just in front of the pub, which are to be moved from the corner, 10 metres west along Chapel Street!

Paddington Green Police Station proposal called in by the Mayor of London

This residential scheme, with a 32-storey tower, featured in our last issue.

The Mayor of London has now called in the plans, which means that the Mayor will become the local planning authority for this application.

Deputy Mayor Jules Pipe queried the council's record on delivering affordable housing stating "that while Westminster Council has taken a positive approach to delivering new homes in the borough ...the proportion of affordable housing secured relative to the overall housing consented during the period is significantly below Westminster's Local Plan target of 35% and represents a significant undersupply of affordable housing in the pipeline".

Link: www.london.gov.uk/what-we-do/planning/planning-applications-and-decisions/public-hearings/paddington-green-police-station-public-hearing

Cynthia Poole

Existing Paddington Green Police station building is 17 storeys high, ie., about half the height of the proposed residential tower. Image from Google StreetView.



THE ST MARYLEBONE SOCIETY 73RD AGM HELD AT ST CYPRIAN'S CHURCH, NOVEMBER 2021



Mike Wood giving his talk to members.

The meeting was chaired by Gaby Higgs and Mike Wood. There were 36 attendees and 21 apologies.

Father Michael Fuller welcomed the SMS to St Cyprian's Church.

CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

Gaby Higgs thanked Fr Michael and welcomed all the attendees, expressing pleasure at being able to meet in person to review highlights from the Society's year. Having become the Events Manager in the Spring, Irene Martin-Smith had recently organised a very successful piano recital at St Cyprian's. Unfortunately, Covid restrictions meant that the 70th anniversary of the Festival of Britain could not be appropriately celebrated during the Summer. As the Memorial Garden, which was created as part of the Festival, was finished in 1952, we hope to hold a celebratory garden party this summer. The Frieze Exhibition went ahead and was a success. In the Autumn, the imminent end of Chiltern Railway's franchise at Marylebone Station engendered an excellent campaign to get air quality issues addressed in the new contract. Roger Hart, Cynthia Poole and Sheila D'Souza were thanked for their efforts on this. In addition, Claire Buckmaster had campaigned for a street closure at Hampden Gurney School and Johan van der Merwe kept up his tireless work to stop cars idling.

Sadly, the Society lost two notable members during the year – Joe Hegarty, a former Labour councillor for Church Street ward and Professor Michael King, the local neighbourhood watch co-ordinator.

Thanks were extended to Cllr Barbara Arzymanow for her consistent support over the year.

The Society needs more active volunteers to carry out its work. Nominations of suitable people or suggestions of how we may find them would be most welcome.

ELECTIONS

The following Officers of the Society were all re-elected without objection.

Mo Parkes (Hon. Gen. Sec.), Robert McAulay (Membership Sec.), Liz Queenan (Hon. Treasurer)

The following Council members were all re-elected without objection.

Gaby Higgs, Mike Wood, Cynthia Poole, Patricia Kleinman, Ian Wylie, Irene Martin-Smith.

Anthony Alford was re-appointed as External Auditor

TREASURER'S REPORT

Liz Queenan reported that the Society's accounts were very simple as there had been little activity. The main income was derived from subscriptions which had increased slightly. Income also came from the sale of publications and interest from an NS&I account. Total income for the year was £4,455. Expenditure was largely the cost of producing three newsletters during the year. Other expenditure included administrative sundries, website costs, subscriptions (including a new one to Zoom) and the independent Auditor's fee. Total expenditure for the year was £3,986. The net income for the year was £469. The Society's net monetary assets were £22,084.

PLANNING MATTERS PRESENTATION

Cynthia Poole explained that she had "caretaken" planning co-ordination as no one else had taken over that role since she stepped down two years ago. There had been fewer planning applications as a consequence of the pandemic. Planning Committee had not met in person or virtually and all issues were dealt with via e-mails. Social interactions were missed and resulted in fewer comments.

Rachael Robathan, Leader of Westminster Council, and Nickie Aiken MP, had held monthly virtual meetings. Those mainly dealt with Covid-related challenges and efforts to reinvigorate the West End.

The Oxford Circus Piazza scheme has been shelved by the Council.

A Cycle Quietway around The Landmark Hotel has been suspended.

SMS had opposed it on the grounds that that stretch of road was already overcrowded. The scheme was approved nonetheless although it is not now proceeding due to lack of money.

A proposal to pedestrianise the roadway on the north side of Manchester Square has been approved.

Church Street regeneration proposals included one to replace existing low buildings on the south side of the street with 10-storey blocks which will leave the market in deep shadow. A hoped-for consolation is that the replacement library could be made bigger.

CLEANER TRAINS CAMPAIGN (see page 1)

Sheila D'Souza took members through the campaign, mentioned above, to get air quality and noise issues addressed in the new rail contract. This involved a letter writing campaign, securing extensive press and TV coverage for residents' demands, and organizing a petition with nearly 300 signatures, which was presented to Parliament and handed in to No. 10 Downing Street.

WCC had embraced the campaign and got support from Oxfordshire and Birmingham Councils for a joint letter to the Department for Transport and Department of Health.

Sheila thanked Cynthia Poole, Roger Hart, Barbara Arzymanow, Rachael Robathan and Nickie Aiken, together with all the residents who wrote letters.

WCC had installed a Breathe London sensor on Boston Place to monitor pollution levels. The records from this sensor showed slightly higher pollution levels than from the sensor located on the Marylebone Road, confirming that diesel trains were a major determinant of poor air quality locally.

GH thanked Sheila and then introduced Mike Wood, who gave an illuminating talk entitled *'The Hidden Hand of James Gibbs in the Design of the 1742 St Marylebone Parish Church'*

ANY OTHER BUSINESS

Liz Queenan distributed a leaflet about a fund-raising project for the restoration of St Marylebone Parish Church. People are invited to donate £25, which allowed them to dedicate a roof slate, which would then be installed in the church's new roof.

MARYLEBONE FORUM - FUNDING FOR COMMUNITIES

Do you know of a local community project or group that needs funding? Do school facilities need upgrading? Could a pavement buildout ensure traffic keeps to the 20mph limit and perhaps provide secure parking for cycles or a pocket park in your street? Would you and neighbours like space in your street allocated for greening to improve air quality and enhance wellbeing?



Photos 1-4. Examples of street greening in Camden and Lambeth.

The Marylebone Forum is seeking to identify and support applicants who would benefit from CIL funding, and is looking for ideas and applications from people who live, work or study within the Forum Area (Figure 1).



Fig. 1: Boundary of the Marylebone Forum Area.

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

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

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

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

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

Ideas could include local projects to improve

- Educational facilities;
- Health facilities;
- Parks and Open Space;
- Public Realm improvements;
- Social and Community facilities;
- Sports and Leisure facilities;
- Transport and Highways;
- Utilities;
- Waste;
- Crime and anti-social behaviour infrastructure.



Photo 5: Upgraded Science Labs at St Marylebone CE School Sixth Form Centre.



Photo 6: Rooftop garden and teaching space at the Sixth Form Centre.

Recent funding successes

Despite the complexity of the process, Marylebone Forum has already supported successful applications for repairs to St Marylebone Church (new disabled WCs and roof repairs), as well as three projects at St Marylebone CE School (air filtration units, refurbishment of science labs and creation of a new rooftop green space – see Photos 5 and 6). Work at the school was carried out over the summer holidays and students are already benefitting.

Please visit:

www.maryleboneforum.org/cil-funding

The Marylebone Forum is inviting local communities or individuals to nominate projects that would benefit from CIL funding. Can you help? If you have any ideas please get in touch via the website or email contact@maryleboneforum.org A number of partners and previously successful applicants are willing to discuss projects and help develop applications.

The Forum welcomes new members and ideas.

Please visit: www.maryleboneforum.org

Courtesy of St Marylebone CE School.

Courtesy of St Marylebone CE School.

A HOUSE THROUGH TIME

Trustees of the British Museum (CC BY-NC-SA 4.0).



This view of the reservoir by Chatelain c1756 shows it as a place for public recreation.

The Howard de Walden Estate Office is a corner building taking in 23 Queen Anne Street and 35 Harley Street. Extensive rebuilding and refurbishment in 2020 and 2021 provided opportunity to reconsider the history of the building over 300 years. Detailed research had been carried out by the authors of the “Survey of London” vol 51, which has been supplemented by the HDWE’s own records.

Edward Harley, Earl of Oxford began to develop his Marylebone estate in 1717 and commissioned the surveyor John Prince to draw up a layout of the proposed estate, encouraging builders and landowners to lease blocks of land marked out on what was still fields. Cavendish Square was the centrepiece of the new Estate, with a grid of streets spreading north from it. In 1719 when Elias Cole took a lease on the land on the corner of the proposed Queen Anne Street and Harley Street he built a pub called the “Blue Posts”. This is the first building that occupied the site that is now the Harley St side of the Howard de Walden Estate Office. On the opposite side of Queen Anne Street there was already a pub called the Halfway house, reputedly because it lay halfway between Oxford Street and the Marylebone Pleasure Gardens. Although we have no picture of the Blue Posts, there are several other public houses of that name built in London in the first half of the 18th century, several of which are still standing. The precise meaning of the name is uncertain, although the most attractive theory – but sadly unsubstantiated – is that it was a stopping off place for sedan chairs, a bit like a modern taxi rank. However, we do know it was a place of “publick

entertainment”, probably of the more vulgar kind, for it met with the disapproval of the estate. Wanting to build more respectable residences north of Cavendish Square, the estate tried to buy Elias Cole out, but was overtaken by the financial problems that came in 1720 commonly known as the South Sea Bubble collapse. The estate Surveyor, William Thomas, recalled the incident in his “Survey” of 1737 but regrettably says nothing of two other features in the neighbourhood which are clearly shown on Rocque’s map of 1746: a fashionable Cold Bath on Harley St and



Rocque’s map of 1746 clearly shows the reservoir and cold bath as well as Marylebone’s fields. Other buildings were there or being put up – including the Blue Posts – but sadly these aren’t shown.

a large reservoir built by the Duke of Chandos in 1725 on the site of Mansfield St to provide a water supply for the new residences.

The “Blue Posts” did not survive long. From the 1750s the streets round about were being built up in the

pattern we see today. A succession of boarding schools occupied different parts of the corner block and in 1799 one of Britain’s most famous artists, Joseph Mallord William Turner took rooms in part of it, although the precise location is hard to pin down. The school finally closed in 1803 and Turner acquired the old schoolroom which ran the length of the upper floor and this he used as a gallery to display his



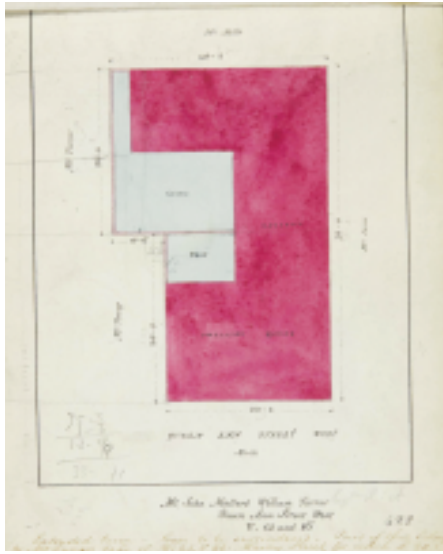
Exterior of Turner’s house at Queen Anne Street in 1880 shortly before demolition.

paintings. He was only 27 when he took the lease and had just been elected to the Royal Academy, but he was already making a name for himself. He attempted some rebuilding, but it was not until 1820 after Elias Cole’s original lease was up for renewal, that he was able to carry out some substantial rebuilding to his own satisfaction. Domestic rooms were added, but the gallery remained. He was his own architect, so it is perhaps surprising that the surviving photograph of his house shows a singularly unattractive and plain exterior. From 1846 Turner lived in Chelsea but his gallery remained at Queen Anne Street and contemporary paintings at the Ashmolean Museum show it filled with the artist’s pictures, most of which can be identified. The mind boggles to think of the many masterpieces that were hung on the walls. After his death in 1851 his body was brought from Chelsea and laid out in the gallery, by then sadly dilapidated and leaking.

Wrangles over Turner’s will meant that 23 Queen Anne St remained vacant after his death until 1873. For a brief time, it became home to the Society of Helpers of the Lonely Souls, a Roman Catholic order of nuns founded in Paris in 1856. The nuns visited the sick, held services and provided for destitute and

working girls. Turner's gallery was converted into a chapel and services were crowded. However, in 1882 the lease expired and the sisters moved to new premises in Gloucester Road, Regent's Park.

The building was demolished and a purpose-built estate office for the Portland Estate was erected in the Queen Anne Revival style. With the Portland Coat of Arms stamped on the front, it was one of a number of buildings built on the estate during the time of the



Ground floor plan taken from Turner's lease of 23 Queen Anne Street (then no. 47) in 1820.

estate surveyor, Charles Fowler, and Lucy Scott-Bentinck, daughter and heiress of the Duke of Portland and widow of Lord Howard de Walden. This was a time when the estate was re-establishing its identity, even its authority, and taking an active part in providing public buildings like hospitals, schools and social housing as well as the more familiar residential and commercial buildings. Turner was not completely forgotten, however, and the new front had a portrait relief to remember him by.



The first official Estate Office on the estate, then known as the Portland Estate, shortly after completion in 1882. The estate name changed to Howard de Walden in 1901.

In 1936 the decision was taken to demolish and rebuild the estate office so that it could accommodate Lord Howard de Walden's staff from offices in Victoria. A separate company known as GREIT had been formed in 1919 to be responsible for the delivery of 900-year leases on the Marylebone estate and to encourage enfranchisement within the estate. It made sense to combine the enlarged workforce into one place, so a new building in stripped-Classical style with an Art Nouveau interior was erected. Faced in Portland stone it blended nicely with neighbouring Harley St and the Portland Arms were replaced with those of the Howard de Walden estate. Turner's portrait relief was retained but recarved. Of the



Lucy Scott-Bentinck, daughter of the 3rd Duke of Portland, Lady Howard de Walden. She inherited the estate with her sister after the death of her childless brother, the 4th Duke of Portland.

original 1880s estate office only the basement strongroom remained, used for muniments and filing.

With a growing business and staff, further expansion of the building was



Architect's drawing of the exterior of the rebuilt Estate Office in 1937.

made in the second half of the 20th century. First the attic storey, hitherto home to the caretaker and his wife, was converted to office use. Then the Howard de Walden Estate Office began to expand into neighbouring 35 Harley Street. This had been twice rebuilt since Turner's Day: in 1850 it had been rebuilt in the Italian style and in 1910-11 it was rebuilt again in the Beaux Arts style we see today. It was intended to provide large residential apartments but they proved difficult to let. In the 1960s the fourth floor was knocked through to 23 Queen Anne Street and by 2010 the Howard de Walden Estate had annexed the whole building.

In 2020 the building was closed for two years to allow for a complete internal refurbishment. The growth in the number of staff and old-fashioned layout of the floors rendered it no longer fit for purpose in the 21st century. Reopened in Summer 2022 there is an additional top floor and the offices are now open plan, although historical features have been retained and there is little change to the exterior.

*Sarah Charlton
Howard de Walden Estate*



The Howard de Walden Estate Office in 2022 after extensive refurbishment. No 35 Harley Street became part of the office in the second half of the 20th century.

EVENTS IN MARYLEBONE

Cultural events are springing back to life now that Covid restrictions have been lifted. This listing is merely a sampler of what there is to do in our immediate neighbourhood and via Westminster Libraries and Archives. The websites list many more events plus information about how to book and ticket prices.

THE ROYAL ACADEMY OF MUSIC www.ram.ac.uk

The Academy has an extensive programme of concerts and master classes during term time. All are open to the public. Tickets must be booked in advance. The following examples illustrate the diverse music on offer:

3rd March at 1pm. The vocal faculty and guitar department will perform a concert inspired by Spanish folk music and dance.

4th March at 1pm. Trevor Pinnock will conduct the chamber orchestra in a programme of Schubert and Mendelssohn.

11th March at 1pm. Symphonic Brass performance of pieces by Strauss and Pils.

20th March at 12 noon. Eamonn Douglas will direct an opulent Bach cantata for Epiphany,

23rd March. Writer/Director John Caird will give a masterclass in Musical Theatre.

24th and 31st March. Concerts by the jazz ensemble.

THE COCKPIT THEATRE, Gateforth Street, NW8 8EH www.thecockpit.org.uk

Below is a selection from this venue's programme of plays, music, dance theatre and more. All tickets must be booked in advance.

9th – 19th March at 7.15pm. *The Tempest: Such stuff as dreams are made on.* An extraordinary new version of Shakespeare's hymn to the imagination. The time shifting production by The Bridge Theatre Training Company mixes the Elizabethan world with the 1950s painter's studio that is Prospero's desert island.

25th March at 4.00 and 7.30pm. *Like a Butterfly* is based on the life of Muhammad Ali. West End choreographer Ryan Lee Seager mixes boxing, dance and theatre to celebrate a charismatic and inspirational figure.

THE NEW DIORAMA THEATRE 15-16 Triton Street, Regents Place NW1 3BF www.newdiorama.com

8th – 19th March at 7.30pm. *Passion Fruit* is a new coming-of-age comedy-drama from Dior Clarke and Stephanie Martin, brimming with joyful movement, brutal honesty and tender insight.

29th March – 30th April at 7.30pm. *Project Dictator or Why Democracy is Overrated, and I don't miss it at all* is a darkly comic world premiere about artistic

expression, complicity and the power of a damn good state-censored variety performance. It was created collaboratively with artists living under authoritarian regimes. Directed and performed by Matt Wells and Julian Spooner with live music by Syrian, Kaled Kurbeh.

REGENT'S PARK OPEN AIR THEATRE www.openairtheatre.com

The theatre is celebrating its 90th anniversary this year.

13th May – 2nd July. *Legally Blonde*, the musical, is directed by Lucy Moss who co-wrote and co-directed the smash hit musical *SIX*, currently running in New York.

12th July – 28th August. *101 Dalmations*, a new musical adaptation packed with puppetry, of the story written by Dodie Smith which was set in Regent's Park.

3rd – 24th September. *Antigone*. This retelling of the epic story of a torn family by Inua Ellams, who wrote *The Barber Shop Chronicles*, is directed by Max Webster.

LISSON GALLERY, 27 Bell Street, NW1 5BY www.lissongallery.com

9th February - 22nd April. The gallery has two exhibitions on. In *Art in You*, the Japanese installation artist and sculptor, Tutsuo Mijama, unveils three new bodies of work. *Portals* is a group show about portals of one kind or another.

From April to May there will be another two exhibitions of works by Rodney Graham, an artist and musician associated with the Vancouver school, and Helio Oiticica, one of the most innovative Brazilian artists of the 20th century.

HELLENIC CENTRE 16-18 Paddington Street, W1U 5AS www.helleniccentre.org

Now until 30th March. The exhibition *1821: Visions of Freedom* continues the rare opportunity to see famous and much praised images of scenes from the Greek War of Independence.

7th March – The Kathara Deftera is a social event to celebrate the beginning of Greek Lent with live Greek traditional music performed by Kourelou and the London Greek Collective. A small plate of traditional halva, taramosalata, olives and a special flat bread is included in the ticket price. Book tickets online.

9th March – Ruth Padel will give an illustrated talk on her novel *Daughters of the Labyrinth*, set in West Crete. Kalia Baklitzanaki, Cretan singer and musician, will perform music mentioned in the book.

LONDON ZOO www.zsl.org

The Zoo has welcomed two new arrivals

– a baby two-toed sloth in October and a precious Sumatran Tiger cub in December. The latter is a huge success for the Zoo's work to conserve critically endangered species. Now it's fully open, take your family on an educational outing and get close to gorillas, monkeys, meerkats, penguins or a Komodo Dragon through the "Experiences" offered by the Zoo. Every visit helps to repair the financial damage inflicted by the prolonged Covid restrictions.

WESTMINSTER LIBRARIES & ARCHIVES

Register for their monthly Newsletter which list lectures and live recitals on offer. Events are usually free but you have to book a place through Eventbrite. www.eventbrite.co.uk/o/city-of-westminster-libraries-amp-archives-30532755584

Here's a sampler:

24th February 6.30pm. *At the House of the White Witch* with John Callow.

Online lecture on witchcraft in the age of industry

28th February 6.30pm. *Lodging in Georgian London* with Gillian Williamson
Online talk about landlords, landladies and their lodgers.

16th and 23rd March 6.30pm. *Casablanca*: An 80th Anniversary Celebration of the film with Steven Smith (for Parts 1 and 2). Online event, free but register via Eventbrite.

You are warmly invited to:



MARYLEBONEFORUM ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Monday 14 March 2022
at 6.30pm

Do you live, work or study
(or have a child at school)
in the area?

Do you know a local project
that could use Neighbourhood
CIL funding?

Come and join the Forum
(it's free) to shape the future
of Marylebone.

Please visit
www.maryleboneforum.org
for meeting papers, venue
details and online links.