

SUMMER  
2018

NO. 170  
THE CLARION  
CALL OF  
THE SOHO SOCIETY

# SOHO clarion

VILLAGE FETE - 1 July at St Anne's Gardens

GAY PRIDE - 7 July All over Soho

BASTILLE DAY - 14 July at the French House



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 The King of Soho Page 23 | Watsons Pharmacy Inside Back Cover  
 Gerry’s Inside Back Cover | Mediterranean Cafe Inside Back Cover

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# FROM THE TOWER

## EDITORIAL

*Welcome to the new look Clarion, care of Tim at Colourview and the indefatigable Jane Doyle.*

First of all, apologies from the Chair that we missed an edition of the Clarion this Spring. We had high hopes of producing an election edition but the written responses to our questions from each of the candidates were of such varied lengths that it would have been somewhat one sided to publish it. We did push the candidates' responses out in the e-newsletter and followed that with a very successful hustings event.

Having had a gap there is a lot to cover in this edition.

First of all a big welcome to our two new ward councillors Pancho Lewis and Tim Barnes. We were sad to lose our previous councillors, Glenys Roberts and Paul Church, who were both well liked and supported Soho in their own unique and valuable ways. In Glenys' case for many, many years. We miss them, but we hope that they will stay involved with both Soho and the Society.

The new councillors have made a very promising start and, together with the re-elected Jonathan Glanz, offer a fresh opportunity for the West End Ward. Pancho is a social activist and has done much to help the homeless. Tim worked on Kenneth Clarke's leadership campaign and runs a tech innovation business to help the public sector use technology more effectively. Pancho and Jonathan have written something for the Clarion on pages 10 and 11. Our hope is that our ward councillors get on with and support one another, come to the Soho Society events and help us talk to the Council - whose decisions, from planning to licensing and everything else have a huge impact on our community.

Richard Piercy and Rob Jennings have been very busy preparing the decorative hoardings for the new Tottenham Court Road station at the top of Dean Street. In August the new station will be handed over from Crossrail to TfL and will then open in December 2018. It will take another 2 to 5 years before the upper floors of the building are completed which means that the shops on the ground floor will remain empty for some time. The shop fronts will remain closed and the Soho Society has been asked to design "decorative hoardings". Richard is doing a photography project featuring all the people that live and work in Soho using beautiful film photography. Rob is working up several art projects for the northern building which we hope you will like. It's rather a good thing that the largest hoardings on Oxford Street will be art and information about Soho delivered by the Soho Society.

The Council has started the process of drafting a new city plan. A consultation will be out later this year. Matthew Bennett, the Society's Chair of Planning, has already been working away on the Soho Neighbourhood Forum plan together with a many people from our community in Soho. It is possible that some of the ideas will be adopted directly in the City Plan thus allowing the Forum to deliver early. An unlooked for opportunity which should not be missed.

We also note Councillor Richard Beddoe's recent comments that the new City Plan "will set out in policy a clear vision for Soho that protects and nurtures its unique character and functions." As you probably know, the Society has for some years expressed its concerns about over development, the loss of office space to hotels, the impact of rent and rate increases on our independent local shops, loss of social housing and the "blandification" of the retail estate. There is an opportunity with the new plan to have some of these concerns addressed. Although the Soho Society is only one way for you to get involved in many ways it can be the best one as we have an impressive history on planning issues and we provide a forum for them to be discussed with like minded people who care about Soho. If you have not already done so - join the Society and come to our meetings, volunteer and get involved.

It is often easy to give up and feel that there is nothing we can do about decisions that appear to be made by people at some distance from Soho and with little local knowledge or love for the place in which we live. However, I think its worth noting that sometimes if we stick together - much can be achieved. Last November we met with the other amenity societies because of our shared concerns over the misguided proposals for the pedestrianisation of Oxford Street. A plan was hatched to oppose the scheme. On 7 June this year the leader of the Council confirmed that the scheme would be abandoned. There is of course the risk that we will have to fight again - the Orwellian mantra "no change is not an option" is bandied about. But for now we have managed to stop something that would have done real harm to Soho and the West End. The key is that we need to act together, to meet, to talk. It can be messy and time consuming but its also fun and you learn a lot.

Some good news is that the John Snow pump is coming back later this summer (next to the pub this time) probably on 20 July. We were disappointed that 21 Great Windmill Street has been scheduled for demolition despite it being an unlisted building of merit in the conservation area. We continue to investigate the mystery of why the public toilets in Broadwick Street are closed. One day we may find out.

Following the AGM in April we have two new members of the exec. Lucy Haines and Quentin Thompson. Lucy is doing sterling work and helping with the organisation of the fete and has plans for our loyalty card. Quentin's wise counsel has already proved valuable in our discussions with the Council. Welcome to them and we look forward to working with them both.

Finally there is of course the fete on 1 July. Lisa Sheehy has been unfailingly cheerful, optimistic and hard working. We have sponsors - PMB, Shaftesbury plc, Soho Estates, Rotary and Broadwick Street Holdings and the Crown Estate, we have snails and waiters to race, we have a human fruit machine and the vicar will be serving tea. What more can one ask - 12pm on Sunday 1 July in St Anne's Gardens. Look forward to seeing you there.

*Tim Lord*, Chair, The Soho Society

### WE'RE WATCHING

Among the many planning applications we have been consulted about since the last issue the following stand out as ones we objected to. At Film House, 142-150 Wardour Street WCC regrettably granted planning consent for a new hotel. Although this new use if implemented will create a certain number of new jobs, it involves the loss of many jobs and small businesses associated with the film industry that have occupied that building for many years. Despite a wide range of objections from residents and neighbours the council granted consent because the Mayor's London Plan and the council's own plan have policies supporting the provision of hotels in the central activities zone, of which Soho is a core part. Unless these policies can be changed or modified we are likely to see more steps towards the 'hotelification' of Soho where hotels drive out the very mixed use and quirky character which is what tourists hope to find in Soho.

Another example of this loss of diversity and character was the granted consent at 127-143 Oxford Street, 53-55 Berwick Street and 201-205 Wardour Street. This block was granted consent for a scheme behind retained facades of retail with offices above. Whilst the new building will provide more modern open plan floor plates and improved environmental performance once in use this has to be set against the wasted energy and materials in demolition, the disturbance, dust and nuisance during development and the fact that these newly created spaces will be likely to be occupied by large single use occupiers rather than a multiplicity of smaller occupiers which has typified Soho's character.

Talking of loss of character, Meard Street is facing change in that the old film laboratory space below Royalty Mansions is to become retail and a basement gym. There is another fiercely opposed application to bring retail into 23 Meard Street which we hope will be refused.

Meard Street is one of Soho really characterful and predominately residential streets and it is sad to see it becoming more retail in character. That said the scheme has allowed the preservation of Royalty Mansions with a new 999 year lease for Soho Housing and protecting this residential block is a real plus for the area.

We objected to a scheme for a large new basement restaurant in the Trocadero on the Coventry Street side with a ground floor retail shop. Its large size would have made it against WCC's policy and so it should be refused but it appears that the applicant has been advised to make the case that the two uses together make it 'sui generis', that is in a class of its own, and therefore the restrictive policy does not apply. Whilst it is not easy to see how large spaces beneath the Trocadero can trade successfully we do not support manipulating the planning system to get round restrictive policies when those policies were put in place to respond to the fact that Soho is saturated with food and drink uses and is a declared 'stress area' in that regard.

Besides these applications we have continued to object to a string of applications for new phone kiosks which are designed in such a way as to be, in reality, just a large advertising hoarding to the rear of where the phone is located. The phone boxes we have are unmaintained eyesores covered in stickers and graffiti and unused for phone calls but more often used for drug dealing and urination, so we certainly don't need more! Tables and chairs spring up outside every venue and whilst we understand and support the idea of being able to sit outside, we keep a beady eye on how much space is left to allow pedestrians to pass safely. Even now at various times of the day and evening pedestrians are having to use the carriageway because pavements are too congested or obstructed. It just strengthens the case for the area to become a 20 mph pedestrian friendly zone to slow traffic down and allow people to move about safely.

*By Matthew Bennett*

### REPORT FROM THE SOHO WARD PANEL

For this issue of the Clarion Steve Muldoon, our Dedicated Ward Officer (DWO), has written a report for us.

There are one or two things I would like to add. One is that there is still a lot of begging around the area, Soho being seen as an area with potentially rich pickings, and people should not give money to those asking for it as it is more often than not to buy drugs, and sometimes alcohol. I've seen instances where people have bought food which has just been thrown away! If people want to give money to help the disadvantaged, they should do it through a recognised charity.

There have been issues with tents which create problems for those living in the immediate area. One particularly 'trying' incident was a tent in Hollen Street, the occupants of which treated the area as their own drug den/toilet/waste bin regardless of those living and working in the area. The process is that the council serve a highway notice, giving a month to quit and can then go to court to get an 'eviction' order. The process then starts again elsewhere. But that's the law!

Issues with tents and homelessness can be reported through an app called Streetlink.

I think there is still confusion over what is and isn't a crime when dealing with drug abuse and drug related anti-social behaviour. People walking and talking in the street (although you may recognise them as dealers/users) are not committing a crime. Also, once someone has taken drugs that is not a crime as they could have taken anything, although we all know it is likely to have been drugs. The dealers invariably have very small quantities of drugs on them, so that if they are searched the chances are they can only be charged with possession rather

than intent to supply, which carries much lighter penalties. This is very frustrating for the public as it is often perceived that the police are turning a blind eye to the problems. They're not. It is also very frustrating for the police. It is also worth noting that the courts have limited powers and are often not fully aware of the circumstances.

Westminster City Council have launched a new Unit, the Integrated Street Engagement Unit, which has a dedicated team from the council, together with charity support workers who, with their specialist skills and knowledge, will be able to speak directly to those on the street with mental health issues and/or addiction to alcohol or drugs. They will be supported by the back-up provided by more traditional services. With both charity outreach workers and council officials working together in the unit, those on the street will be directly helped through advice about accommodation options and what council services or public funds they can access.

As part of the unit there is a dedicated police team led by an inspector, a sergeant and five officers.

Lastly, as many people will know the police in Westminster are merging with the boroughs of Kensington & Chelsea and Fulham & Hammersmith to make one 'super' borough. Our ward officers are, I am told, going to remain the same, so there will be that consistency. When we have more information we will report further. Our ward priorities still remain drugs, antisocial behaviour and begging and robberies.

*By Jane Doyle*

## LICENSING

When the Soho Society was taking on aggressive property developers in the early seventies, they were also trying to stop the proliferation of seedy sex shops that were exploitative eyesores in the neighbourhood. Although Soho has long been associated with the

sex industry, the premises that were appearing all over Soho in the early seventies were offensively tacky and increasingly shady. Over the years since then, Westminster has developed a policy that limits sex shops to eighteen licensed premises in the borough, sixteen of which are in Soho, and each of which pays a fee of approximately £30,000 per annum.

One result of this is fewer seedy emporiums. Whilst the sex industry might still be a local attraction, it has become one of many defining characteristics of Soho, rather than the most obvious. Such venues as Sunset Strip, 50 + Dean and Agent Provocateur acknowledge Soho's historically racy reputation, but are far from the tacky operations of old. They now help to define Soho in a similar way that Harrods and Harvey Nicholls define Knightsbridge.

Just last week, I saw a report online of an application for a new sex shop which had been opposed by other commercial premises nearby, who feared the effect it might have on their own business. The Soho Society did not oppose this application as there was no apparent way it could impact badly on residential amenity, and would not be serving alcohol until late at night. Unlike sex shops forty years ago, it is likely to be an individual business with a nicely designed façade that might even enhance its premises. From sordid to desirable, everything changes. Even the sex industry.

We have also noticed an increase in shops, such as Fiorucci, applying for licenses to serve alcohol up to around 8 pm to 'enhance the shopping' experience.

In the meantime, we continue to watch all licensing applications and will oppose those that are outside core hours, particularly those that are likely to have an adverse impact on residents.

*By David Gleeson,*  
Licensing Chair

## SOHO SQUARE SURGERY UPDATE

We also have the following update on the on the Soho Square Surgery...

The CQC (Care Quality Commission) inspectors recently made a surprise visit to the Soho Square Surgery, to assess service levels, following complaints from patients and the departure of both Dr Brassey and Dr Cheung.

They spoke to members of the PPG (Patient Participation Group) during a day long visit. They will report back to the NHS and we await their findings with anticipation. Meanwhile the surgery healthcare operator Living Care, have been tasked with creating an action plan to improve service levels.

### Changes made so far include:-

- The morning drop-in surgery has been partially reinstated, although with a reduced number of available consultations.

### The PPG has requested an increase.

- Doctors' hours have increased back to 60 (an improvement on the 44 hours Living care implemented earlier this year, which we were told was the plan for the future).
- A Cantonese speaking doctor is working one day per week, up from half a day, in addition to the Language Line.

The Soho Society continues to closely monitor the situation and support the PPG in liaising with the operator, Living Care. We will keep you posted on further developments!

*By Lucy Haine*

## PLAN FOR SOHO

Soho's Neighbourhood Planning forum, has been working diligently across the Spring.

For all new readers, the goal of neighbourhood planning is to give more powers to local people to help determine what happens, in

planning terms, in their local area.

We have been working across the past few years to develop a Neighbourhood Plan and importantly, consult with people who live, work and visit Soho. Over the last years we have surveyed over one thousand people in Soho, who told us that housing, the environment and, heads and shoulders above all else, looking after the 'spirit of Soho' that makes Soho the special place we all love, were the key areas for us to work on. Using this feedback, we have been working on ideas, in Policy Development Teams, to draft policies for our final plan. Each team focused on a specific area, (Housing, the Environment and Culture, Heritage and Commerce). We are aiming in 2019 to submit a Neighbourhood Plan for Soho to the local council for designation.

If you want to hear more about our work and how to get involved please do come to our: -

## ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Wednesday 4 July,  
6 - 8pm,  
Soho Walk In Health Centre,  
1 Frith Street,  
W1D 3HZ.

We will be updating on our work over the last year and also providing information on how neighbourhood forums, when designated, have a say on a percentage of the new Community Interest Levy funds that are paid to the local council by new building developers as a way to financially "give back" to the local area.

You can also meet us at the:-

## SOHO VILLAGE FETE

12 - 6pm,  
Sunday 1 July,  
St. Anne's  
Churchyard Gardens,  
Dean Street,  
W1D 3HZ.

You can read more about our organization, what we do, who we are and how to get involved by visiting our website ([https://](https://www.thesohosociety.org.uk)

[planforsoho.org/](http://planforsoho.org/)) and you can keep up to date with our work through signing up to our e-newsletter and following us on Facebook and twitter.

To sign up as a member, or if you have any questions please do email: [contact@planforsoho.org](mailto:contact@planforsoho.org).

## THE LEGISLATION ON PEDICABS



Many people will know that a Bill for the legalisation of pedicabs was put forward under the Ten Minute Rule, and is awaiting its second reading (twice delayed and due to take place in October).

This proposed legislation is very much supported and welcomed by the Soho Society and residents of Soho.

### We would like to see regulations include:

- All Pedicab operators to be licensed following appropriate DBS checks, and to have appropriate licences on display at all times to include photo identity.
- All operators should be appropriately insured and have proof of insurance on display at all times.
- There should be regular safety checks of the pedicabs and

proof of these should be on display.

- Regulated fares (a tariff to be displayed) and to be licensed to operate within time parameters
- No loud music to be played.
- Regulated places to park.
- There should also be sanctions in place for breaches.

### Some of the reasons for the above are (due to past experience):

- Antisocial behaviour, including the blocking of roads and pavements, and heckling pedestrians.
- Possible drug dealing (riders have been seen to pass things hand to hand).
- Parking in the roadway playing loud music up until 3 to 4 am and later (without consideration for residents or other members of the public), leaving litter, etc. This also attracts other people, including the rough sleepers and drug abusers, who are becoming more aggressive.
- They target theatres, bars, clubs, restaurants and other licensed premises (which often stay open very late at night) playing loud music, looking for customers, which is not always welcomed by the premises concerned.
- There is anecdotal evidence of passengers being charged extortionate amounts for journeys, particularly tourists and those who have consumed too much alcohol, which surely cannot be good for the tourist industry or the image of London. After all if someone has enjoyed a night out in the West End and they then get 'ripped off' by a pedicab it is going to spoil the overall effect of an otherwise enjoyable evening out, as that is the thing they will remember.

By Jane Doyle

## SOHO VILLAGE FETE

SUNDAY 1<sup>ST</sup> JULY 2018

I arrived at the Soho Village Fete in the Summer of 2013. Actually, it must be earlier as I didn't live here then but I am beyond hopeless with dates and times.

There was a tug of war between the police and firemen, a human fruit machine and Adam Ant was playing resplendent in a pair of puma slippers. You don't forget that kind of thing - it becomes instantly tattooed on to your psyche!

The first Soho village fete was in 1972 with the birth of the Soho Society.

Developers have always been desperate to knock ten bells out of Soho and back in '72 there were

big plans to concrete the lot.

Moved to action, local people created the Soho Society, pushing the council to create the 'Soho Conservation Area' and succeeded in protecting existing housing and businesses from demolition.

The fete began as a way to raise funds for this important work and to demonstrate to the public and the powers that be, that Soho is a village with a close and thriving community and not just a debauched and boozy playground.

The struggle continues but now in its 44th year - the fete goes from strength to strength.

### LINE UP ON STAGE

12.00	-	Soho Parish school Rock Band
12.30	-	Election of Mayor for the day from Soho Parish School pupils
12.35	-	Spaghetti eating competition
12.35	-	Colliers Wood International Ukele Orchestra
13.00	-	Anke Landeau sings Marlene Dietrich
13.30	-	Belles of London City (female morris dancers)
13.55	-	Doriane Woo
14.15	-	Mama Moonshine
15.00	-	Waiters race announcement
15.05	-	Alpine horn blowing competition
		Announcement of Waiters race winner
15.40	-	Solariss Ade - burlesque
16.00	-	Anne Pigalle
16.30	-	The Red Stripes
17.15	-	Drag Queen Finale
18.00	-	Raffle results





There will be food from around the world from Fourchette Creole (Guadelope), Sandwiche (Argentina), Dod pizza (Italy), Govindas (India), Thelo food (Greek) and Sangucheria (Peru).

The Soho Bakers Club and 'More tea Vicar?' will return to whet those with an appetite for a nice brew and delicious baked goods.

For those who would prefer something a little stronger - the chopped liver bar returns with the debut appearance of our newly brewed 'Soho Society IPA' produced by Mondo brewery.

With a donation from every bottle going to our funds we hope everyone will dig deep and drink up for Soho!

There will be some wonderful art and craft stalls alongside a presence from local charities working hard to keep Soho special plus we will have the beloved human fruit machine, and there will be snail races on the hour.

Don't miss the waiters race at 15.30 outside the French House pub.

50 waiters battle to speed across the finish line while attempting to keep a precarious tray of items intact. An amazing spectacle dating back to the 50s - support in the form of stewarding is most welcome.

We also have a truly fantastic raffle - with prizes ranging from a year's membership at a private members club through to Brazilian bikinis and a night's stay for 2 people at the Ham Yard Hotel!

The fete happens because of the dedicated work of volunteers so if you want to help on the day or would like to donate a raffle prize please contact:

#### Contact for Soho Waiters Race:

Event co-ordinator: Rachel Waddell  
E: [rachel.waddell@thesohosociety.org.uk](mailto:rachel.waddell@thesohosociety.org.uk)  
M: 07735 449 407

#### Contact for Soho Fete:

Event co-ordinator: Lisa Sheehy  
E: [lisa.sheehy@thesohosociety.org.uk](mailto:lisa.sheehy@thesohosociety.org.uk)  
M: 07533 278 019



## INTERVIEW

WITH MARK HIX

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Mark can be described as a proper Soho veteran, associated with the area for more years than he probably would like to recollect. Arriving in London, as so many of us, dreaming of a starry future, and with not a pot to piss in, he began his career in the staff canteen of the Hilton, followed by stints at Grosvenor House, and then the Dorchester. Through the kitchen grapevine, and his mate and fish monger Tony, he landed a place at Caprice, rose to be head chef, and the rest is history. He is the proprietor of a number of HIX restaurants in London, including Hix Soho, and his native Dorset, where he open Hix Townhouse.

Mark actively supports a number of Soho charities and events including the Soho Food Feast. While using his entrepreneurial skills and extensive contacts he has amassed over the years to assist a number of startups based in Soho.

### What were your first memories of Soho?

“Whilst sharing a flat in South Kensington 30 odd years ago, working in hotels in Park Lane, we would go to Berwick Street market to buy fruit and veg.” At that time Berwick Street was a vibrant, colourful and busy market with stalls on both sides of the street (there was also a market in Rupert Street). Soho had four or more butchers, a fishmonger, various bakers, and several delicatessens, and so on, of which only two remain, I Camisa in Old Compton Street and Lina Stores in Brewer Street. Soho was all about the food and the characters that worked the stalls. Bill Bean, also known as Dennis the dog, stood out, with his fruit and veg immaculately presented, and his flowing locks. He, unlike most of his compatriots is still in the business, based in New Spitalfields.

“At around this time I remember I joined Ronnie Scott’s. There were other bars and premises, etc, that stayed open into the early hours, where people in the entertainment industries could get a drink, which we often did in order to wind down after yet another shift before walking home to South Kensington.”

### What role does Soho play in your life today on a daily basis?

“When HIX Soho opened eight years ago, people thought I was crazy as there was nothing in the immediate area. Then Chris Corbyn and Jeremy King of Wolseley fame, opened Zedel Brasserie, Mash opened and then Kiln, amongst others. An area which was seen as somewhat of a backwater, has become a thriving part of mainstream Soho.

“The Groucho Club plays a part, which is a straight line from HIX - along the Brewer’s, down the alley which is Bouchier Street and there you are! You can always find someone to have a drink and chat with and while away the hours putting the world to rights, all of which is quickly forgotten! Duck Soup in Dean Street is another haunt (for a glass of natural wine!) Chinatown still remains very much as it used to be, albeit restaurants change hands and names. You can still get a Chinese

meal at 3 am, should you feel inclined.”

Hix sets great store by sourcing produce locally where possible, “You can still get good ingredients in Soho, whether Italian or Asian.” He adds that he would like to see Berwick Street restored to a “proper” market with good produce, rather than the current produce, much of which is “bowls for £1”.

Currently, a stall on Berwick Street that sticks out is the Soho Dairy, amongst the fast food stalls which don’t have to pay high rents, rates or get vetted by EHO, which must have an effect on local restaurants, although there is a market for these outlets for office workers who are time-short.

### How do you think the identity of Soho has changed?

“I think one of the best things that has happened is that Soho changed back to being the restaurant hub of London, and having turned full circle there are some good restaurants now.”

However, Hix says that huge increases in rents by the main property owners alongside the increases in business rates will undoubtedly have an adverse effect on businesses. Hix thinks that more should be done to support the industry and perhaps rent could be based on restaurant turnover or profit in some way. It will be interesting to see what happens in Berwick Street once the massive redevelopments are concluded, to include hotels, the Kemp House site, Walker’s Court, and so on.

### If you could choose something that was part of Soho identity, what would it be?

“Certainly the hustle and bustle of Berwick Street, where people would come and talk to the traders and pick out their fruit and veg, and also be able to go to a butcher, etc, without going to Marks & Spencer or Sainsbury. The market used to be the centre of Soho.”

Also, Hix thinks if they’re trying to change an area there should be something that says 50 per cent should be restaurants and food, 20 per cent should be fashion,

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the rest should be record shops, market, antique clothes, and the like.

### **Other influences from Soho?**

"I think Alastair Little was an important part of Soho. In fact, when I was applying for the job at the Caprice, Chris Corbyn spotted me chatting to Alastair Little over a glass of wine on more than one occasion, which I think might have been part and parcel of getting the job!

Andrew Edmunds is another important part of Soho, having been in existence since 1986."

Also, Paul Raymond clearly had an influence on Soho as a large property owner, buying large numbers of properties.

### **If you were not able to return to Soho, what would you miss the most?**

"Probably the Groucho! I've been a member almost from the beginning since I started at the Caprice, The ownership has changed over the years, but it's been my 'go to' place. You will always see someone you know, someone you don't know, and invariably end up having a good night (although you may not remember the next day who you met or what you talked about)!

### **Knowing what you now know about Soho, what would you tell your young self if you were coming to Soho?**

Hix's assistant was very quick to say, "Stay away from the Groucho!"



## JONATHAN GLANZ COUNCILLIOR WEST END WARD

“Over the past four years, we have seen significant change in Soho, some of it welcome, but much of it challenging for residents and independent traders. We must build on the positives, and learn from and not repeat mistakes.

On the positive side, Berwick Street was re-laid with granite sets and included much-needed facilities for market traders in the form of water and electricity supply. Broadwick Street was re-laid, and the re-installation of the John Snow pump is imminent. Berwick Street pavement north of the market had been upgraded, as have parts of Wardour Street.

City West Homes buildings had been fitted with ultrafast broadband connectivity, and work to provide fibre to the premises for residents and small business users is now happening.

Drinking-water fountains have become a reality in Kingly Court and Ham Yard, new trees have been planted and green spaces encouraged including roofs and walls.

However, this has been a huge inconvenience to residents, who are, like much of the West End, besieged by long-term and sequential building work. Some of these works have been poorly managed. As they near completion, we can strive to knit back together the fabric of Soho which has been torn asunder by these works.

Although consented schemes are also in place for part of Wardour Street, Soho Square and the new public spaces in and around that part of the Tottenham Court Road station which is within Soho, as well as projects on Broadwick Street etc, we will seek to ensure that they will be less intrusive and better-managed than the

recent wave of development activity.

I hope over the next few years we will continue to provide more housing of all tenures, but with a particular emphasis on affordable properties to maintain Soho’s eclectic mix and attractiveness as a place to live.

Part of that attraction will need to be to improve air quality by reducing traffic through freight consolidation, more trees, and restrictions on the most polluting vehicles.

A big challenge that we will face will be the opening of Crossrail. And any attempt by Mayor Khan to pedestrianise Oxford Street The current scheme has been rejected by Westminster, and no scheme has yet been put forward for how east Oxford Street could possibly be pedestrianised whilst maintaining any kind of buses or service arrangement.

The fight against pedicabs will continue, and it is hoped that the current legislation before Parliament will obtain approval.

There is still far too much on-street criminality and antisocial behaviour and, working with landowners as well as the police and the Council’s new Integrated Street Enforcement Unit, via the Safer West End Team (which I chair), we are looking to provide additional security and enforcement to augment the work that they do.

Looking forward, we must all work together with all the relevant stakeholders including the LGBTQ+ Community in Soho to make it a better place in which to live and work. Greener, cleaner, safer and maintain its unique character and identity.”

The Soho Society are producing our very own beer which will be making its debut at the Soho Fete, so look out for it.

*It will be available for sale shortly thereafter*



*... brewed especially for us by Mondo Breweries*

# PANCHO LEWIS

## MY FIRST MONTH AS A COUNCILLOR FOR SOHO

**Pancho Lewis - the first ever Labour councillor for West End Ward - describes his experience of being elected to represent Soho in the Westminster Council elections on 3 May this year.**

My memory is blurred, but it was about 4am by the time we found out the result. I'd been up for almost 24 hours for an exhausting but also hugely exciting day of campaigning - from 5am the day before when the Labour campaign team began delivering leaflets right through to 9pm when we knocked on our last few doors. Now we were at the count in Pimlico watching officers meticulously go through each ballot, one by one. We could tell from the offset that it was going to be very close. Finally, after hours of a painstaking process which seemed to go on for days, the result was announced. I learned I'd been elected to be a councillor for Soho, alongside two Conservatives - Timothy Barnes and Jonathan Glanz. I felt a mixture of emotions. I was thrilled and honoured to have been elected and at the same time disappointed that my two Labour colleagues Patrick and Caroline, who had also run to become West End councillors, hadn't been elected. The one thing I knew from the offset was that I was determined to do the job justice and get the best deal for West End residents in my new role.

My first month as a councillor has given me the opportunity to get stuck in and begin to champion some of the issues that we focused on in our campaign. One of our key campaign pledges was to stand up to the big property developers and landlords whenever they undermine the local community. Of course, we should welcome the actions of developers and others when they make positive contributions to the community. But all too often it's felt like the opposite has happened in Soho, especially in recent years. So when two weeks ago it was revealed that the Gay Hussar - one of Greek Street's iconic restaurants founded by the legendary Victor Sassie - was threatened with closure, I publicly called for the restaurant's landlords to reverse their decision to increase rents by 30%. I'm now in communication with the Goulash Co-operative, a group of donors who want to see the restaurant remain open, to offer my support in their bid to save the restaurant. We are yet to see what the outcome of this campaign will be but I hope we can do our best to stop it from closure. There are many other challenges facing Soho as a result of decisions by developers and landlords to put profit before the interests of the community. Whenever we see this happening, I will work with the community to show

the developers that another way is possible and that protecting Soho's unique identity and character is critical.

Apart from being involved in local campaigns, an important role for a councillor is to help residents with the day to day problems they face. In mid May I held my first surgery in Danceworks in Mayfair and was pleased it was well attended. Residents spoke to me about many issues, ranging from the unaffordability of housing, poor provision and management of social housing, the lack of community spaces in Soho, and noise and disruption. That echoed many of the issues that residents have written to me about by e-mail and post. Many of these are complex problems which take a long time to address. But my commitment is always to press hard to make sure that the concerns of residents are heard and that the local council and others responsible do their utmost to respond to local people's concerns.

**Please note that my surgeries as a Councillor for West End Ward are being held on these dates:**

- **Saturday 16 June**
- **Saturday 28 July**
- **Saturday 18 August**

They are all being held in: Danceworks, 16 Balderton Street, Mayfair, London W1K 6TN.

They run from: 10:30am-noon.  
No appointment is needed.

For those who aren't familiar with the term, surgeries are an opportunity to speak to me as one of your elected representatives in Westminster Council about any local problems you're experiencing that I might be able to help with.

It's been just one month and it's been a steep learning curve, with a lot to learn and a lot to keep on top of. But I've enjoyed it a huge amount and I want to make sure that in my role as a councillor I can make a difference, working alongside residents and the local community, so that we can keep Soho special and make sure it gets the attention and care it deserves. The one thing I do always say to constituents I meet is please feel free to write to me and raise any issues I can help with. The best way to contact me is by e-mail on: [plewis@westminster.gov.uk](mailto:plewis@westminster.gov.uk)

## REVIEW

### MEDITERRANEAN CAFE

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Comfort can be lacking in Soho. I haven't set an alarm for the last 3 years. Instead of whale sound with gradual light, gently imitating the sunrise I get a pneumatic drill with vibrations violently imitating an earthquake. I could go on for ages about the nerve jangling effects of this but it would probably bore you and I think this column is supposed to be entertaining.

Why am I bashing on about comfort anyway?

Well, it may not be the trendiest concept but I think it is important. Think about comfort food for instance. Everybody has it. If you are from Bangladesh it is 'aloo bharta' (spicy mashed potato) or 'pierogi' for the Poles (moreish potato dumplings) I love a kebab myself.

#### **Where were you born and where did you grow up?**

A small town called Kahramanmaraş situated in the East of Turkey. It was a difficult time to make a living in Turkey. I knew I would struggle even if I went to University and studied hard. So aged just 15 I followed my brother Mehmet to London. It started as a holiday at his flat in Dalston. I learnt English at Kingsway College on Peter Street. Feeling homesick I visited Med café at the end of the day. One day the kitchen porter didn't turn up so I helped them out.

I must have impressed them as I got a full time job. I decided to stay in London permanently and my Soho story began

#### **How did you get into the restaurant trade?**

I worked in Med Café as a porter for 2 years learning so much about food along the way. I got promoted to work as a chef and enjoyed this tough and sweaty job for 8 years. But eventually I become bored and for 4 years worked on the floor serving customers.

For 14 years I secretly dreamed of having my own place. Telling no one I searched for the right venue. I found it in Coventry - a nicely situated fish restaurant run by 2 Greek couples. I told the 2 brothers that owned Med Café that I was leaving. To my great surprise they asked me if I wanted to buy the restaurant. I couldn't believe it! I thought they would never sell. After getting help from my family and the

Which is why today I am reviewing Mediterranean Café on Berwick Street!

From the lofty heights of my vibrating flat in Kemp House I have a birds eye view. It is a reassuring sight in a sea of chaos. In the summer it is magical to watch as lovers and families alike eat alfresco by twinkling candlelight. Friendly local nonagenarian Violet is also usually found outside waving regally to passers-by.

I first visited when I moved here 8 years ago and was impressed with the value - just **£15.95 for 2 courses** of hearty Mediterranean favourites like kebab, moussaka and falafel.

But Med café is more than just cheap eats. In a sea of trends - one type of food (crisps, jackets, toasties, custard

tarts) or hipster trendiness - it stands alone. No nonsense, no pretension, just great food and spectacular service.

It is also the only true locals' restaurant in Soho. What keeps us coming?

Primarily it is owner Ali Aksu. If comfort embodied human form he would be it. Softly spoken, gentle and incredibly good natured, Ali abides no reservations policies, table turning or ruthless upselling.

As the rise of chain restaurants seek to strangle out the originality and personality of the area these qualities are increasingly rare and I wanted to find out more about him and his Soho Story:

*By Lisa Sheehy*

bank, I got the money together and for 6 long months said nothing while the documents were processed. On the 2nd July 2013, I became a restaurateur.

#### **What have been the biggest highs and lows of the last 5 years?**

I bought the French restaurant next door in 2015. I initially allowed a separate team to run a Spanish restaurant there for 3 months but it didn't work out. I thought very hard about my next move. It is difficult to compete with the market stalls at lunch time so I decided to offer gozleme. I recruited a team of ladies skilled in the art of this delicious Turkish flatbread/pancake hybrid and people love to see this authentic food being handmade on a grill by my friendly team. My first queue was 25 people but the love of gozleme continues to grow and grow. I have had to recruit more staff and have now expanded to do salad boxes as well.

#### **What advice would you give to anybody considering going into this profession?**

Lots of people open restaurants with no experience or care. All they have is money. Experience is important - there are so many elements to understand. But the most important thing is heart. You must have passion. Passion, love and experience.

#### **How would you describe Violet in 3 words?**

Violet is a great conversationalist loved by visitors and

staff alike. She is very kind and an excellent confidante. But in only 3 words I would say Queen of Soho!

**In 20 years of running Med Café how have you seen Soho change?**

I have seen many places close. So much investment has brought money and money is power. You cannot stop progress but it is very sad to lose some of the best local characters. Violet is very sad at the loss of the butchers, bakers and possibly the doctors' surgery in the future. These are very difficult changes for older people to cope with.

**What are your favourite things about Soho?**

I love the summer time most. Me and Violet sit outside and watch all the people go by. It is so cosmopolitan. I meet people from everywhere on this planet without having to travel. I also love to see the local people and

watch children grow from tiny babies to adults.

**What do you enjoy doing in your downtime?**

I love to keep fit especially swimming. It is also fun to go and socialise at another bar in Soho.

**Who are your most memorable customers?**

I have so many - Mike and Angela stand out. A Liverpudlian couple who have become good friends - they come in 2-3 times a week!

**What is your favourite dish on the menu?**

I love seafood - I think the baked seafood is my favourite

**What advice would you give to your 21 year old self?**

Go to Soho, otherwise you will regret it!

MEDITERRANEAN CAFE, 18 Berwick St, Soho, W1F 0PU | T: 020 7437 0560 | [www.medcafesoho.co.uk](http://www.medcafesoho.co.uk)

## ARE YOU A BUDDING PHOTOGRAPHER OR SECRET SNAPPER?

Following the success of the St Anne's 2018 Calendar, St Anne's are creating a Soho Calendar for 2019 with the help of the congregation & anyone who loves Soho!

Look out for St Anne's 2019 Calendar Competition launching Sunday 24 June!

The theme is "Soho Village Life", & proceeds will go to two great Soho causes, Soho Parish School & Centrepont.

Email your entries to [info@stannes-soho.org.uk](mailto:info@stannes-soho.org.uk) and title your email **CALENDAR COMPETITION 2019**. Closing date **Sunday 5 August 2018**.

## MESSAGE FROM ST ANNE'S

REVEREND SIMON BUCKLEY

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Recently I had the privilege of speaking in the Speaker's House in the House of Commons, though I wasn't addressing politicians but a gathering of people- clergy and lay people- from a number of churches across this part of Westminster. I'd been asked to speak about inclusivity from the local parish perspective and so I began by going back a few years to 1895, to the days when Henry Cardwell was the Rector of St Anne's and the church was a larger, grander and colder building than it is today. Cardwell was clearly ahead of his time because he invited onto the governing body of the church the local Roman Catholic Priest from St Patrick's together with the rabbi from the synagogue which stood on Dean Street where the Soho Theatre now is. It was a bold and daring move indicating that back then it was possible to attempt things in Soho that might be frowned upon in other places. It suggests that at its heart Soho was a place where diverse people could find common ground and that 'inclusivity' was part of the DNA of this square mile.

Communities thrive when diverse individuals and groups are able to come together in an atmosphere of open acceptance, recognising in one another our common humanity with the needs and longings shared by all, together with the distinctive insights and gifts and quirks peculiar to each. The notion of a 'rainbow people'

popularised by Archbishop Desmond Tutu in Cape Town can take on a monochrome meaning when applied to Soho, and especially at this time of year when the number of rainbow flags fluttering down Old Compton Street naturally increases. The LGBT+ community are only one of the dazzling colours which join with other hues to form the complete Soho rainbow in this community of communities, the loss of any of which would make the rainbow a little less beautiful.

But being inclusive also demands recognising, living with and working through our differences. The Christian Church, throughout its history, has often been less than exemplary in this regard, but Jesus was withering in his condemnation of those who thought they were morally, racially or spiritually superior to their neighbour. One of the ways in which the church seeks to live out being bearers of 'Good news' and the service of the community is by supporting events that bring the community together- whether the School's Food Feast, the Soho Society's annual Village Fete or Pride. But another is surely in joining with other individuals and groups, whether religious or secular, in championing this community of Soho as a place in which all may find a welcome and feel at home and from which no one is excluded whether by bigotry or intolerance, property prices or council bureaucracy.





# GEORGE HUDSON

THE PIANO BAR, 16 CARLISLE STREET, SOHO



Should you be walking down Carlisle Street it would be only too easy to miss The Piano Bar. Number 16 looks like an ordinary townhouse. The ground floor windows have dark wooden blinds which hide this unexpected gem.

George Hudson, of GH London, is the owner of The Piano Bar Soho, 'a private cocktail lounge', which opened approximately two and a half years ago. Later this year he is creating 'Club 16', a club for the music industry, which is aimed to be a daytime venue, and the bar is part of that. Members will be able to make use of the whole premises - the meeting rooms, the recording studios, and so on.

Hudson started his company, GH London, several years ago in Angel, Islington, before coming to Carlisle Street. Hudson is lucky in that his landlord, a former graphic designer, wanted the premises to remain a part of the creative industry that Soho is known for, rather than be turned into something like an investment company, chipping away at one more piece of Soho's character. The upper floors were film and television production offices, two of which remain, as well as a PR firm. Hudson realised quite shortly after the occupants of the floors above moved in that they had a tendency to be in the pub by lunchtime, so thought a bar on the ground floor could be a way to keep them in-house and utilising space. Also his parents were moving house and needed storage for the piano, which went into the reception, and the rest is history.

The Bar itself runs Wednesday through to Saturday with live music each night (Hudson himself performs from time to time), and is open from 6 pm until 11, 11.30, though the live music finishes at 10.30. Hudson tries to keep the premises price-accessible, and caters mainly for a young audience, many of whom have rarely visited live music venues. There is a wide range of signature cocktails

available, details of which can also be found on the website, as well as other drinks. Also within the premises are 'The Snug', behind the piano, also 'The Library' (off the main bar) with live audio streaming of performances.

Hudson's company tries to utilise every square inch of the premises. Within the building is his jointly owned recording studios called EC1 Studios, and the artists from the studio often perform in the Bar. The company can also represent the artists, including providing filming services, with a screening room in the basement. This creates a complete production circle without moving from Carlisle Street. There are two in-house producers who have worked with, amongst others, Paloma Faith. Details of the studios can be found at [www.ec1studios.com](http://www.ec1studios.com)

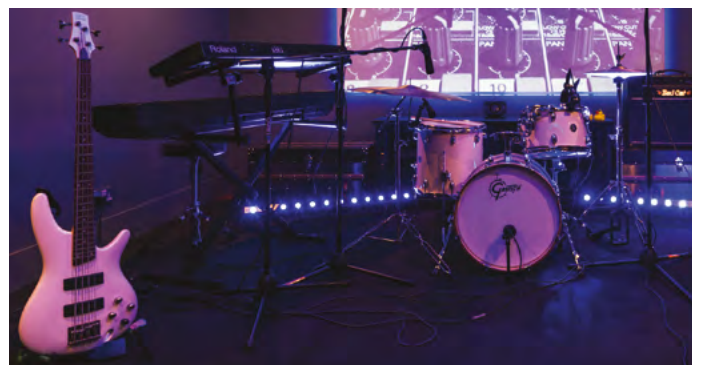
Soho has always had a history of music and jazz in particular - there is Ronnie Scott's, and there was also Peter Boizot's Pizza Express, which hosted live jazz. Peter Boizot also organised the Soho Jazz Festival for many years prior to his retirement. Hudson, using the excuse of his 30th birthday in 2016, created what has now become an annual event known as the Soho Jazz Jam (run in conjunction with Westminster City Council), which this year is taking place on September 8. For those who don't know, this is an open air event in Carlisle Street, with a stage, a bar, and food - there is also a private VIP area. Look out for details of the event nearer the time as, although it is a free of charge, booking is essential (see the website for more details). Hudson is hoping to perhaps turn this into a larger event in 2019, so who knows, the Soho Jazz Festival could be back! We hope so.

*By Jane Doyle*

For details of reservations and membership please visit [www.pianobarsoho.com](http://www.pianobarsoho.com)

The entire premises are also available for hire (details of this are also on the website).

There is also more information on Facebook [[Facebook.com/pianobarsoho](https://www.facebook.com/pianobarsoho)].



## GAY HUSSAR

### ALL CHANGE AT THE GAY HUSSAR (OR IS IT?)

---



Sohoites hardened to old-favourites, disappearing overnight in a puff of smoke, reappearing as steel and glass edifices, sighed at news that the Gay Hussar closed on 21 June.

Uplifting then, to interview Mark Seddon, of the Goulash Co-operative, journalist and former editor of the NY Tribune, to hear of an innovative approach to the rent/rate rise threat.

A slightly shabby red-fronted Hungarian restaurant on Greek street, serving the staple food of Budapest past, the Gay Hussar has been a favourite haunt of politico plotting for over 60 years.

Leading the co-operative is a group of seven from the worlds of politics, media and the arts, who formed the Goulash Co-operative in 2013 to counter the first closure threat to The Gay Hussar. The magnificent include amongst their number, John Goodman former head of policy at Co-operatives with helpful experience. Back in 2013 the group raised £150k, through crowd funding with minimum donations of £500 and although their bid was unsuccessful, they staved off closure.

Wind on 5 years and we're back at the cliff edge. They have already contacted the members of the original co-operative and are restarting the fundraising process, albeit with a sizeable cushion from the first attempt.

These crowd-funding, goulash eating regulars, are both loyal and well-connected. Investors include the current staff and manager, Jon Wrobel alongside Neil Kinnock and Lord Ashcroft. Loyalty and passion for the old restaurant is a massive shared incentive 'how many restaurants can you walk into and feel like you're walking into a party with your oldest friends? That's something unique!'

Mark, who spent time living in New York with the Tribune, says Soho Manhattan faces the same challenges as its London counterpart with gentrification driving out the quirky, creatives and independents. Asked to describe his advice to new Soho visitors - "seek out the different and interesting and make it your own, look for the idiosyncratic."

The Goulash Co are upbeat, with friends in high places, and they are confident they will raise the money with this new fundraising drive. There is talk of a menu refresh and plans to use all floors, a dumb waiter and a downstairs loo are in the plans, (but no poseurs allowed). Of course ironically the restaurant has been fully booked since.

The Gay Hussar Closes on 21<sup>st</sup> June, owner Corus Group are in discussions with a number of potential investors.

As was said of the original Hussars:

*"It is chivalry that has no equal in the world; without seeing it with your own eyes, its vigour and splendour is impossible to imagine."*

- Cosimo Brunetti, 1676

The Goulash Co-operative can be found on Twitter @goulashO - follow them and wait for instructions on how to invest in an initiative that is uniquely Soho. We will!

*by Lucy Haine*

#### **Footnote:**

Mark emailed me the next day to say that Elena's Etoile in Charlotte Street now faces the same fate.

# SOHO BAKERS CLUB

## BLACKBERRY CASSIS CAKE

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175g butter softened  
 175g caster sugar  
 3 eggs beaten  
 2 tablespoons milk  
 125g self-raising flour  
 100g ground almonds  
 250g blackberries (can mix with blackcurrants) fresh or frozen  
 2 tablespoons Cassis  
 Icing sugar for dusting

- Heat oven to Mark 4/180C
- Grease and line the base of a 18 - 23cm tin with baking paper
- Marinate the blackberries / blackcurrants in two tablespoons of Cassis
- Using an electric whisk, beat together the butter and sugar until very light and fluffy
- Gradually beat in the eggs and milk until smooth
- Whisk in the flour and ground almonds
- Spoon the mixture into the prepared tin and scatter with the blackberries / blackcurrants and remaining Cassis
- Bake for 35 to 40 minutes until cooked through completely and springy to touch
- Leave to cool completely in the tin, before dusting with icing sugar and slicing into squares

This can be accompanied by a 'Flapper' cocktail - see recipe!

The cake will be available at the Soho Village Fete, along with many other 'goodies' from the Soho Bakers Club.

# THE FLAPPER

## A COCKTAIL TO ACCOMPANY THE CAKE

---

If there's one spirit that I'm sick of hearing about from every rattle-brained individual I meet, it's gin. This botanical blackguard can swing for all I care; much in the fashion that Oliver Reed's unnerving portrayal of Sykes did in the Oliver musical, who funnily enough stank to high heaven of the stuff as his eyes went pop for the final time.

This drink originates from Claridge's in London and is nothing short of an absolute belter. You'll need a blender for this particular masterpiece, but if you don't have one...well gin and tonic it is I suppose!



### THE FLAPPER

50 mls Strawberry Puree  
 15 ml Crème de Cassis  
 $\frac{3}{4}$  glass chilled Champagne  
 3 healthy sized ice cubes, fresh from the freezer

Throw it all in a blender and whizz away until ready.  
 It should be frothy and cold and delicious.  
 Serve in a Champagne flute and garnish with a strawberry.

CHEERS xx  
*Matthew Bray-Heather*



## STEVE MULDOON

### SAFER NEIGHBOURHOOD TEAM

---



Thank you for asking me to write this article about my time working in Soho.

Hopefully over the next few paragraphs you will have a greater insight into work going on both currently and in the past.

I have been a dedicated ward officer for Soho for 18 months having crossed over the border from Covent Garden. However, I haven't been a stranger to Soho as most of my career in the Met since transferring here 9 years ago has been centered in or around Soho. I spent my first 7 years of my career in Stevenage, Hertfordshire.

Since I have arrived on the ward our ward panel, who we work extremely closely with, have made Drugs the number one priority. This is something our team have really put a lot of effort and time into resolving. I personally wrote a drug Community Protection Notice (CPN) and have since adapted this to make an exclusion area larger and exclusion period longer. A CPN for drugs had never previously been in existence since the change in law in 2014 introduced CPN's.

A CPN allows us to write conditions a person must abide by. If we see a breach we are permitted to issue

a warning; a second breach allows us to enforce a condition against a person. Our conditions include a 6 month exclusion from the area. We now have over 150 people with warnings in Soho and 25 Full CPN's. Any person found breaching the CPN is arrested.

Where a person is suitable we will then go to court and request a full 5 year exclusion from the area using a Criminal Behaviour Order (CBO). We have spent countless days in court over the last few months as often cases get adjourned meaning we have to re-attend - our record is 11 times for the same case!

When I arrived we had huge problems around Rupert St, Archer St and surrounding roads, CPN's were used to target those simply loitering around the area for no reason, or those often in possession of drug paraphernalia which in itself is not a criminal offence. Both however are conditions on the CPN. This allowed officers on the street to have an actual power to deal with those persons stopped instead of simply moving them on. It took a fair few months but thankfully now the issue around those locations isn't as it was then, although I do recognise these streets are not completely clear of anti-social behaviour.

Cambridge Circus and surrounding streets however has been a significant issue for us. We have just finished a 6 week operation known as Operation Atlow, where we had nearly 850 officers patrol the area over shifts every day. We made the commitment to police the issue not committing to simply our area. We recognise that a huge proportion of these issues take place across the Police Borough boundary and are actually in Camden. During Op Atlow our officers patrolled both in Soho and across the border and had some huge successes. The numbers of CPN's previously mentioned were issued during Op Atlow, we also have three court trials coming up for drug dealers arrested and had 7 Full CBO's granted with more still going through court.

We know enforcement is not the only option and work extremely closely with the relevant agencies to ensure help/support and guidance is offered and given to those who need and want this. We also meet monthly to discuss specific people. This is something I obviously can't go into in great detail.

We are working with officers both on the street and at senior level in Camden to ensure we tackle this issue together. We often hold joint contact sessions, these are advertised on our twitter feed and website. We are constantly sharing information and when our shifts match we are occasionally found out on patrol together. Our two wards doing this is something that has never, to our knowledge, happened in years gone by. I was

keen when creating the CPN map to include the part of Camden with the issues, as traditionally I had heard stories of Westminster doing operations moving people across the road to Camden and Camden the doing exactly the same moving them back to us.

We recognise the issues do exist not just at Cambridge Circus but across the rest of the ward. I wanted though to ensure you were aware that we are taking action and we appreciate any assistance you can give us.

I am also aware of the ongoing issue with tents across the ward. We see this on a daily basis and can assure you we do not simply ignore the issue. We are working in partnership with Westminster City Council. However, we both have extremely limited powers to simply move a tent. We have a new integrated street engagement unit who will work with those on the streets. This is made up of Police, Council and outreach services. The advice

is to report any rough sleeper or someone sleeping in a tent through Streetlink. This can be done using a phone app by searching your App Store for Streetlink or call 0300 500 0914. In all cases, if you are witnessing a criminal offence or are in danger then please call 999. If it is not an emergency please call 101. If you wish to report a crime and this is not an emergency then this can be reported online <https://www.met.police.uk/>

For updates on work we do please follow our twitter account @MPSSoho.

Thank you to the Soho Society for the invites to the fantastic local events they run. It is fantastic to see this great community coming together to celebrate Soho.

Thank you for reading.

*by Steve Muldoon*

## SOHO FOOD FEAST

The weekend of 9 and 10 June saw the Soho Food Feast return for its eighth year, with all profits going to the Soho Parish School.

This is a great event with many of Soho's restaurants taking part. It's a ticketed event and once inside tokens are purchased and then redeemed for a 'taster' of the wares of your favourite restaurant.

The weather was fabulous, the food fantastic. The event was, as always, well attended. There was a bar, there was great music and entertainment for all, but what is perhaps not so well known is that the children from the school have a "fruit and veg" stall, from which, allowing their creativity to come to the fore, they create any manner of figures.



Soho Housing Association works to provide well managed affordable housing to enhance and sustain the diverse communities in the heart of London.

[www.sohoha.org.uk](http://www.sohoha.org.uk)

## QUO VADIS

26-29 DEAN STREET, W1D 3LL

Since Karl Marx buggered off to Hampstead in the 1850's, this historic collection of three Georgian town houses has housed many an illustrious Soho resident, even some legally, probably.

In its current incarnation, Quo has become a byword in how to run a quality eating establishment, without the customer being reduced to near penury. There is nowhere else in Soho that isn't a private members club, that feels more like a private members club than Quo. From the moment you pass through the revolving door, you can expect service truly with a smile. Chef Jeremy Lee consistently produces without fail, a superb, unaffected menu of seasonal British fare, without the usual eye watering prices - Hake, red Mullet, crab and mussel broth, or rabbit, bacon, mustard and sage, or smoked cod's roe,

egg and wood sorrel, or Exaltation of Game Pie, whatever you choose from this daily changing menu, the effect will be like winning the culinary lottery, joy.

If you make it through to the pudding menu, having given up calorie counting around three mouthfuls into your main, you will not be disappointed. Les Profiteroles au Chocolat, or a steamed lemon pudding, lemon curd, rhubarb custard and cream, or bitter chocolate mousse, make for a difficult decision, unless you ordered a couple of Poire Willams between courses and ordered the lot...

*By Philip Antscherl*

**Quo Vadis**, 26-29 Dean Street, London W1D 3LL  
Tel: 020 7437 9585



# Food Glorious Food

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or call 01932 252100

   [TheKingofSoho](https://www.instagram.com/TheKingofSoho)

Our Featured Cocktail:

### King in the Green

50ml King of Soho Gin • Dash Absinthe • 2 Teaspoons  
Lavender Sugar • 20ml Lemon Juice • ½ Egg White

Shake all ingredients well, then shake again with  
lots of ice and double strain into a chilled cocktail  
glass. Garnish with an edible flower.

## LONDON IS LEADING THE WAY IN THE FIGHT AGAINST HIV

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For the very first time, London is seeing a remarkable downward trend in the number of people being diagnosed with HIV in the capital. In 2016, there was a record 40% reduction in HIV diagnoses in five central London clinics, including Soho's 56 Dean Street. This far outperformed the rest of the country, and the trend has continued during 2017 and 2018 (figures for the previous year are released in November). Now a signatory to the global Fast Track Cities initiative, London has already exceeded the international UNAIDS targets for HIV diagnosis, treatment and health outcomes.

One factor in these exciting developments is the not-so-quiet revolution that has been taking place in the way London commissions HIV prevention and testing services. On the back of the transfer of public health to local government in 2013, the London HIV Prevention Programme (LHPP), and its public-facing campaign, Do It London, have been playing a major role in London's fight against HIV.

Funded and supported by all London boroughs, and hosted by Lambeth Council, the LHPP has often been cited as one of the best examples of how local authorities, working in close partnership with community/voluntary groups and the NHS, can join forces to deliver services that have a real impact on the challenges they face. With a budget of just over

£1 million per annum (compared to over £3 million per annum before 2013), there are four main elements of the programme.

The first is Do It London, a targeted multi-channel public health campaign encompassing print, broadcast and digital advertising on a range of platforms, as well as regional, local and specialist media. Since its launch, it has delivered 60 million digital display advert impressions on Londoners' mobiles, tablets and laptops and has appeared on 20,000 ad panels inside London Underground Tube trains, just over 18,000 ad panels inside London's buses and on almost 30,000 street-side adverts.

The second is a free condom distribution scheme – 5 million free condoms were given out by the LHPP between 2014 and 2018, alongside free lubricant and information about other methods of HIV prevention. The third involves targeted outreach activities including rapid HIV testing and sexual health advice for people in central London venues such as bars, clubs and saunas; the fourth is a focus on vulnerable groups such as black African communities and men who have sex with men (MSM) who are most at risk from HIV.

By collaborating on HIV prevention, London boroughs have achieved invaluable economies of scale, and not just financially. They are also benefitting from Do It London's messaging remaining consistent throughout



the capital, amplifying the impact of the programme. This is also helpful as people travel in and around London on a regular basis. Outreach activities are synchronised with active phases of the campaign to ensure maximum reach is achieved.

The brand and tone of the Do It London campaign have been uniquely effective, thanks to the creative yet public health-focused development of the artwork and messaging. In the early days of the campaign, adverts recognised the pressures facing sexual health clinics, and encouraged Londoners to get tested for HIV by not only via innovative, non-invasive methods ('Do It with one finger'), but also via new methods which became legal in 2015, such as home testing ('You Can Do It At Home'). And, like people's lives, Do it London hasn't sought to put up false divides between HIV prevention and wider STI prevention and testing, but has sought to deliver strong messages about the importance of combination prevention in reducing and stopping the spread of HIV and STIs.

Independent evaluation of the campaign carried out in after each phase has demonstrated an ongoing increase in its impact. In 2016, over two thirds of respondents who'd seen the Do It London campaign (68 per cent) said it had positively influenced their HIV testing behaviour, and almost three quarters of respondents who'd seen the campaign in 2017 said it had positively influenced their sexual behaviour and attitude towards other methods of HIV prevention.

The latest Do It London campaign, which readers will see again during this summer, has been its best received to date. It encourages Londoners to "Do It Your Way", highlighting that there are now a range of HIV prevention options available and people have a choice about the option or combination of options they use, covering regular testing, condom use and medical interventions.

Moving with the changing times to reflect recent developments in HIV prevention, such as evidence that achieving an 'undetectable' HIV status through sustained anti-retroviral therapy, and the use of Pre-Exposure Prophylaxis (PrEP), are recognised HIV prevention methods, this made Do It London the first government campaign in the UK to inform the public about PrEP and "undetectable" status when many organisations were nervous about publicising this complex science.

Not only has the campaign been cited by leading HIV campaigners and clinicians around the world as one of the best campaigns about HIV to date, earlier in 2018 it won "Campaign of the Year" at the prestigious

national LGC Awards. Linda-Gail Bekker, President of the International AIDS Society publicly acclaimed the "simple comprehensiveness" of the adverts - and its style and message have been copied by UK-wide campaigns and those being developed in Canada, Australia and the USA.

In these constrained times, the London HIV Prevention Programme has been a huge success story, demonstrating how political leadership, public health expertise, strong and unified programme management and a city-wide approach can align to deliver powerful results that benefit residents.

The LHPP has also highlighted that London boroughs can effectively collaborate together to improve the health outcomes of Londoners, working across borough boundaries and political affiliations.

In January 2018, London Councils also became a leading co-signatory (alongside the Mayor of London, Sadiq Khan, and the NHS) to the worldwide HIV Fast Track Cities initiative which includes the ambition to end new HIV cases by 2030 and achieve a city with zero HIV-related stigma. In doing so, London joins other global cities in the fight against HIV, and is being held as a beacon of progress in the fight against this thirty-five year epidemic.

[www.doitlondon.org](http://www.doitlondon.org)  
@doitldn (Twitter)

*by Paul Steinberg*

# PETER STRINGFELLOW

## OBITUARY

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Peter Stringfellow, who died on 7 June 2018 aged 77, was a person of great charm, humour, and generosity; fairly unique qualities in this day and age.

He was a worthy adversary, if that doesn't sound too crass, even hypocritical of me, as we battled each other in front of various Magistrates over the years, he the picture of charm itself, exuding his natural charisma, whilst I was nervous and worried by fear of failure. I won on some occasions, him on others, but looking back at it now, things have changed so much and so radically, that although our views and arguments were valid at the time, sadly they pale into insignificance when you look, if you have to, at the cultural changes and accepted behaviour of our current society. It almost makes Peter's business seem tame! Whilst at the time it was honestly considered unacceptable.

One of Peter's great qualities was being aware of the community around him, recognising the endless work done voluntarily by the locals, and supporting us with generous donations. Even though we had opposed him on issues, it never prevented him from supporting our campaigns and recognising local needs. Every year I had a long phone conversation with him and would often request funds for the Soho Society, or the Covent Garden Community Association and he'd give us a large cheque, champagne for the tombola and all with a considerate and delightful telephone manner.

Both his assistants helped organise it all and deserve our gratitude for their courtesy and kindness in doing so. Peter was a leader, hardworking and a real pioneer. His constant reinvention and years of experience gave him a great understanding of people and how to be a masterful host. Many poor imitations exist, but he set the standard and although many will disagree with me, pointing out the obvious moral dilemmas posed by semi-clad young women, pole dancing for so-called men, Peter did it his way. Never understated, when he saw an opportunity he went with it, and the glamorous over the top way he decorated his club was the height of bling.

There are two sides to this of course and it was always thus in the West End but Peter made a splash like no other and, regardless of the debate on morals, there is no harm in putting some spin on style and with candelabras, gilt and diamante Peter did it in swathes and then some!

We will miss his style, charm, innovation, and sheer joie de vivre.

*by Jo Weir MBE, Covent Garden Community Association*

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# RAYMOND GRANT

## OBITUARY

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The Soho Society is sad to announce the death of Raymond Grant who passed away on 2 January 2018 surrounded by his family.

Many people will remember Ray as the proprietor of The Hobbit, the newsagent and sweetshop in Wardour Street. Raymond had the shop for over 35 years and was during that time a large part of the Soho community, always welcoming and helpful, and always had time for a chat. Raymond had many stories and fond memories of his years spent in Soho, as I'm sure many have fond memories of Ray.

Ray worked in the shop along with his wife Helen, and in the early 80s they were joined by Vic Fielder who remained at The Hobbit after Ray became too ill to carry on. The shop was sold in November 2007 due to Ray's ongoing health issues.

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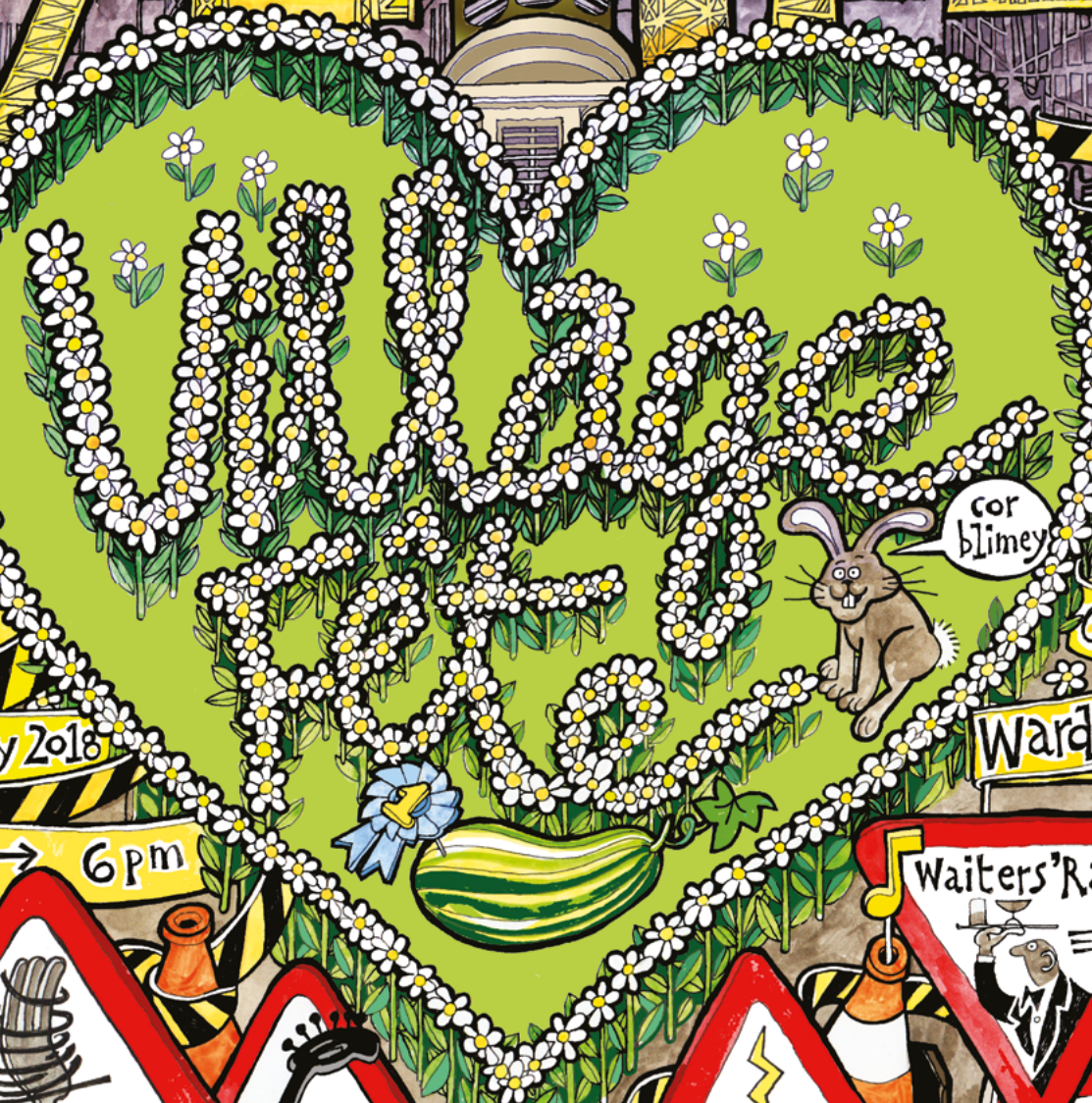
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