

spring  
2019

NO. 172

THE CLARION  
CALL OF  
THE SOHO SOCIETY

# SOHO

# clarion

The Soho Society's Free and yet Priceless Magazine

**INSIDE: THE JOHN JAMES STORY**  
**PLANNING AND OXFORD STREET UPDATE**  
**THE COACH AND HORSES UNDER THREAT**  
**SOHO SQUARE MEDICAL PRACTICE**  
**FETE, FOOD FEAST, AND AGM**  
**AND BEES IN SOHO**



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# CONTENTS

Notice of the Annual General Meeting .....	2
Editorial .....	3
Soho News	
Note from the police on knife crime in Soho .....	4
CCTV Update .....	4
Statement from Ward Councillors on policing .....	4
Building Works Update .....	4
Planning Report .....	5
Plan for Soho .....	6
Licensing Report .....	6
Oxford Street Update .....	7
Ward Panel - Safer Neighbourhood Team .....	7
Councillor Ian Adams on the Police .....	8
Soho Square Practice .....	9
Fashion Week Round Up .....	9
Soho Food Feast .....	10
New Beginnings .....	10
Fete .....	11
Coach and Horses .....	12
John James' Interview .....	13
Patisserie Valerie .....	15
Licensing Lessons .....	16
Restaurant Review - The French House .....	18
Bees in Soho .....	19
Tap Charity .....	20
20 Year Memorial of the London Hate Bombings .....	21
Mark Field MP .....	22
Ward Councillors	
Pancho Lewis .....	24
Tim Barnes .....	25
Message from St Annes .....	27
Steve Muldoon .....	28
Soho Bakers Club .....	29
Tasmania - Margaret Bloomer .....	30
Obituary - Peter Boizot, Peter Zander .....	31, 32

### THE SOHO SOCIETY

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### LIST OF ADVERTISERS

GLP Inside Front Cover | Gerrys 17 | Med Cafe 17 | Membership 18 | Soho Society Beer 19  
Andrew Edmunds and Soho Housing 23 | My Place and Biistro 1 26 |  
Meaby 29 | Watsons 30 | Soho Estates Back Cover

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Jane Doyle

# THE SOHO SOCIETY

## ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

*The AGM of the Soho Society will be held in  
St Anne's Community Hall, 55 Dean Street, London  
W1D 6AF  
on Thursday, 21 March 2019 at 6.30pm.*

The AGM provides you with an opportunity to voice your thoughts/opinions/concerns/hopes/dreams for Soho's future and speak to groups who are working to make Soho a great place to live, work and visit.

At the meeting, we will be reporting on the work of the Society.

Including:-

Planning and Licensing

the Coach and Horses and the Landlord vs Manager debate with Fuller's

the Soho Village festival and Waiters' Race 2019

The future of Oxford Street

The future of The Hospital for Women in Soho Square

Our concerns over the loss of independent businesses in Soho

Pollution and Residential Amenity

the Soho Society Beer and other fundraising activities.

We plan that the evening will be enjoyable and interesting for all.

We will also be electing our Executive team for the coming year. Each year, one-third of the Executive stands down, and we are always keen to have the involvement of new blood, bringing new energies and new ideas. So if such a role may be of interest to you, please do get in touch. As a first step, email [admin@thesohosociety.org.uk](mailto:admin@thesohosociety.org.uk) and we'll send you a short pack telling you what would be involved. If you are a member and would like to vote by proxy please complete a proxy form. Papers for the AGM (including proposed changes to our planning mandate) are on the Society's website [www.thesohosociety.org.uk](http://www.thesohosociety.org.uk).

All members are invited. If you would like to come but are not yet a member, please do come and join on the door. We'd love to see you. And everyone is invited to stay on after the formakl for a glass of wine and a longer conversation.

## EDITORIAL

Key reminder that all members are invited to the AGM (as are non-members who want to see what we do and are thinking of joining). Thursday, 21 March, at 6.30 in the Community Hall.

Fuller's are planning to replace the landlord at the Coach and Horses with a manager in June, presumably in order to make more money. We asked a series of questions:-

1. What is the motive for the change from tenant to manager?
2. Have you got a manager in mind?
3. What are his or her connections to Soho?
4. What is the upside in your view?
5. What will customers experience that is better than now?
6. What are your plans in a bit more detail?
7. Any plans for live music for example?
8. Are you changing the food offering?
9. A refurbishment?
10. What additional benefit will it bring to Soho?
11. This is one of the most historic pubs in London. What is your plan for reflecting the historical status of the pub?
12. Do you have any documents you can share about what is driving the change and your plans?

Fuller's replied:-

*"Thanks for your email. I can't answer all your questions, but I can elaborate a bit beyond the statement I gave you. The Coach & Horses is a real Soho institution and we were very pleased when we were able to buy it in 2011. We always knew that we would want the pub to be a jewel in our managed estate. I'm sure you know some of our other managed pubs - like The Harp, The Lamb & Flag and The Churchill Arms in Kensington. We pride ourselves on ensuring that each pub retains the individuality that makes it stand out from the crowd and we hire managers with personality who are encouraged to put their own stamp on the place.*

*While I understand the loyalty to the team that purchased the lease on The Coach & Horses, we know that this great Soho institution will continue to thrive under a great manager - a manager who we would expect to retain the quintessential essence of The Coach & Horses. We don't take full responsibility for the pub*

*until June, so it is a bit early to guarantee the specifics, but my team will be charged with protecting what's great (quite possibly including the sing a-longs and live music), and fixing what's not (much of which may well be behind the scenes, as at The Harp). The team and the incoming General Manager will want to spend some time to understand what's really important to the pub and her customers, and how each individual part can contribute to the right long term vision.*

*With regards to any refurbishment of The Coach & Horses, we certainly don't intend to lose its position as a proper pub in the heart of Soho. I wonder if I could challenge you to look at our refurbishment of The Lamb & Flag, or The Harp - where we removed all of the famous bric a brac that adorned this great pub, cleaned it, cleaned underneath it and then replaced it exactly as it had been before! You will have to trust us in that we have carried out many sympathetic refurbishments and pride ourselves on ensuring that the character and charm of the pub is not lost in the process."*

If you are unconvinced sign the petition [www.change.org/p/save-coach-soho](http://www.change.org/p/save-coach-soho) and/or make your feelings known to the managers in one of the other Fuller's pubs in Soho - The Sun and 13 Cantons and the Ship. One way of letting your feelings be known is to stop going to Fuller's pubs until they announce a change of heart. If you want the Soho Society to organise a campaign then e-mail us, join and volunteer.

Fuller's is not alone in making much of Soho's history and culture in seeking to maximise its profits in the short term. Its actions in removing the well liked landlord that is connected to the history of the pub will further undermine Soho's claim to be either different or interesting. Economists call it the "Tragedy of the Commons", a term used to describe a situation where individual users acting independently according to their own self-interest behave contrary to the common good of all users by depleting or spoiling the resource through their collective action. Its a market failure.

Once the history is gone it won't be coming back anytime soon and we will all be worse off (including, at the end of the day, the companies that own pubs in Soho).

## FROM THE POLICE KNIFE CRIME

In Soho we have had two assaults with a knife this year. One on Romilly Street last weekend (2/3 March) and one on Old Compton Street just over three weeks ago.

Our thoughts clearly remain with those victims and the families of those who are injured. Both assaults have been targeted assaults and are not random within the Soho community. The second assault has seen two persons arrested and one of those charged with attempted murder. The male charged was charged with this offence and another attempted murder in University Street in Camden. At present the first investigation remains open. However this investigation has not been supported by the victim.

We will continue to deploy officers in hi-visibility to the area effected, we will also use numerous tactics available to us to target knife crime such as use of a knife arch, working with the TSB, the violent crime reduction task-force and deploying our own officers into areas.

We use stop and search regularly and will use this tactic to search for various things including knives and drugs. This will continue to be used by officers from the units mentioned.

Local ward officers are continually searching areas within Soho where knives could be left or discarded. To date this year no knives or other dangerous weapons have been located.

We want to reassure the public that knife crime is extremely rare across Soho and the West End but all officers deployed remain

vigilant and will deal with any offences that come to light.

## CCTV UPDATE

Police are continuing to investigate the recent incidents of serious injury in Soho using a number of lines of enquiry. One of those is working with our partners and businesses to either capture the incidents or the suspects, leaving or entering the area, on CCTV. There are extensive privately owned CCTV networks to complement the growing public realm police CCTV networks in the West End. These networks are continually monitoring and capturing images from the area on a 24/7 basis. Police have an excellent working relationship working with our partners, stakeholders and businesses and are able to use images from either networks to help identify any suspects and ultimately support the evidential threshold to bring them to justice.

## STATEMENT FROM WARD COUNCILLORS ON POLICING IN SOHO

As the West End ward councillors, Timothy Barnes, Jonathan Glanz and Pancho Lewis, we are in agreement that local policing has been under-resourced in the past but are encouraged by recent statements from the Metropolitan Police that there will be a significant increase in the future, something Westminster councillors and residents groups have lobbied for over many months.

Lewis commented that, "I one hundred percent agree about the need for more police in Soho, the West End and indeed all of

London. People want to see more bobbies on the beat. It helps people feel safe and means when problems do occur, they have someone to turn to."

"The focus for drug dealing and anti-social behaviour remains Cambridge Circus, as it has been for many years. But we are making progress and recent changes will mean the Council is now able to manage the use of phone boxes and other street furniture used by drug dealers and rough sleepers in ways that we have been prevented from doing before and that will compliment the new police officers," said Glanz.

All three councillors agreed that it was part of their role to ensure local residents receive correct information about incidents and that social media can be unhelpful when they often contain details that later prove to be wrong but cause undue concern to those nearby in the meantime.

Barnes added, "Soho is a safe place to live and work by comparison with many areas of London without the problems of gangs or regular knife crime. The most common issues are anti-social behaviour and drug-related. The key is for local people to report what they see. If it's not reported, it is hard for the police or the council to act or use that evidence to argue for more policing."

7 March 2019

## BUILDING WORKS UPDATE

Following the last Clarion, the three main building works are continuing

The Ilona Rose development (the

## NEWS

old Foyle's) is progressing, but is not due for completion until 2022, so there's very little to be said on that at this stage.

8-14 Meard Street/Richmond Mews. They have completed the demolition and removed the resulting rubbish. This required numbers of very large trucks in Richmond Mews, but it is believed they did it reasonably sensitively. They still have huge hoardings at the end of the Richmond Mews, but this has not encouraged any additional ASB - although it has not reduced it either. To be fair to the builders, it is thought they are trying quite hard to minimise disturbance, which is positive.

21-23 Meard Street is worthy of mention as it has been ongoing for some time. However, the scaffolding is now down at 23 and but it looks as though progress is being made. It is unclear what's happening at 21, but we're watching this.

Walker's Court - this development is due for completion later this year. Soho Estates have conducted several tours of the site, and the theatre development is coming on apace, looks very impressive and we look forward to seeing it in its finished state, which is scheduled for later this year. We also saw the shell for Madame Jojo's, and look forward to seeing that when it's completed.

The old Zest Pharmacy site on the corner of Broadwick and Berwick Streets (due to become yet another hotel) is now a big hole in the ground, and we will be watching and updating on the progress of this.

We save the worst until last, and that is 90-104 Berwick Street, which has been and remains a fiasco of epic proportions. How the residents of Kemp House have retained their sanity is a mira-

cle, and it has had a devastating effect on the market, and other businesses in the near vicinity, with some traders going out of business. In the last issue of the Clarion we said that we had heard that completion was expected in mid-May 2019 (but no one was holding their breath). Surprise, surprise, the timings have drifted and it's now looking like August at the earliest for both the building works and the Co-Op. However, we're told it's 2019. We will update. The lessons to be learned are now many and varied.

As to the vaults in D'Arbly Street and Poland Street, the situation is still as before. Nothing appears to have been done, with D'Arbly Street still inaccessible between Berwick Street and Poland Street.

There is another development starting, Soho Place (formerly known as 1 Oxford Street) on Charing Cross Road, which is a mixed-use development. This will comprise offices, retail and a 40,000 sq ft theatre which has been designed in conjunction with Nimax Theatres.

Jane Doyle

## WE'RE WATCHING PLANNING REPORT

Having said in our last issue that there were not many major schemes affecting Soho suddenly they all appeared like London buses. First, we saw the detailed proposals for the building at the west end of Broadwick Street notable for the huge concrete wall with a replica 13 amp plug on it on the Marshall Street frontage. Shaftesbury have bought it back from Legal and General and wish to carry out a refurbishment which will see the number of flats increased from 11 to 15, sadly none of them

affordable, better laid out servicing for the large electricity sub-station that lies behind the concrete wall, retained offices and shops, a proposal for a gym and last but certainly not least three quite large restaurants, one in the basement and two on the first floor overlooking Carnaby Street. We weren't in favour of any of the new restaurant space as Soho is a stress area with a recognised over-concentration of restaurant uses so we have objected to them but recognise that WCC may still agree to some restaurant use but we strongly objected to the largest which is above the council's policy limit so if they follow their own current policies strictly they should refuse it. The planning group said it much prefers office use to restaurant use and we will have to see if we have been listened to.

Next, we had a presentation on a potentially exciting scheme right up in the north east corner of Oxford Street and Soho Square close to the TCR Crossrail station. For a long while Falconberg Mews has been a neglected hideaway for drug dealing and taking, rough sleeping, street fouling and rubbish dumping. A scheme has been put forward by Element Capital to provide an office and retail scheme which brings a number of dilapidated buildings together into a co-ordinated rebuild behind some retained facades. What's exciting about that, you may ask. Well the exciting bit is at rooftop level where there is a proposal for a new publicly accessible roof garden themed around the work and plants of Sir Joseph Banks, the Soho Square famous resident who accompanied Captain Cook. We have been lobbying, hopefully successfully, that priority use goes to local residents! So we shall be keeping a close eye.

Third, Land Securities have finally found somewhere in Wardour Street to replace the housing they are removing from the site of their big scheme behind all the neon in Piccadilly Circus which goes back to Denman Street. And the housing is going to be affordable, so that's good news.

Then there was a massive scheme at the top of Berwick and Wardour Streets fronting on to Oxford Street for a largely replacement building behind some retained facades to provide big Oxford Street shop units and floors of offices above. In the basement is a small live music venue. This latter provision is the first response from councillors and planners to the draft Soho Neighbourhood Plan's emerging policy to encourage a few more carefully located live music venues in Soho so that this aspect of Soho's character doesn't disappear.

Residents of the Marshall Street complex (alongside the Leisure Centre and extending back towards Poland Street) are currently in discussion with Shiva Hotels who plan to demolish 54, 55-57 Great Marlborough Street and 47, 48 and part demolition of 49-50 Poland Street in order to build a part five/part six storey hotel, some retail, a restaurant and a bar around a central courtyard, including a public route through the site. Whilst residents agree that this long derelict site needs sorting, they are strongly opposed to this development. Their opposition centres on the adverse noise effects of external dining and drinking in the courtyard and the break-out noise from a proposed roof-level bar, restaurant and lounge, something which they consider totally inappropriate in a residential area. Residents and Shiva are currently

working in a spirit of co-operation ahead of this application being considered by WCC, perhaps late April onwards, in the hope that some mutually agreeable solution might be reached. Residents met with the Society's Planning Committee on Monday 4th March to express their views. Contact number for Marshall Street residents: Helen, 07840 265434).

Finally, the Government is consulting on some 'reforms' to the planning system nationally to help deliver more homes and to make planning more flexible to help 'save the high street' in the face of the challenge from internet shopping. It proposes to make it much easier to convert premises formerly used for other uses to become housing, even potentially unsuitable places like former hot food take-aways or amusement arcades and, more worryingly for Soho, proposes to unite retail A1, financial services A2 and restaurant A3 into a single use class. All the amenity societies of the West End Community Network (WECN) wrote supporting the stance of the West End Partnership who considered these changes would have an adverse impact on the West End and put forward a number of reasoned amendments. However, WECN also went further and opposed any relaxation of the A1 use class.

### **PROGRESS REPORT ON THE SOHO NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN 'PLAN FOR SOHO'**

What progress you might well ask! We are still waiting on receiving further support and help in finalising our draft plan from WCC planning officers and also from the Government's support in kind service provided by the consultancy AECOM to review and tidy up the reasoning and evi-

dence base for some of our plan policies. Once we have all this feedback and help we will finalise and format the plan and hold a final extensive public consultation exercise for all those who live and work in Soho to make sure everyone knows the key policies of the plan and to take on board any final amendments and comments before submitting the plan to WCC. Once they have held their own consultation on it, it will go for independent examination and then WCC will hold the business and resident referendums to check that it is supported before formally adopting the plan.

Matthew Bennett  
Planning Committee

### **LICENCING REPORT**

Regular Clarion readers are no doubt bored of me going on and on about how Soho's delicately balanced residential/commercial ecosystem is the result of careful negotiation between licensed premises and domestic residences. But this truth needs to be repeated again and again as I am constantly meeting Soho residents who feel powerless against bars and clubs whose operations are causing them to feel miserable in their own homes. When domestic peace is disturbed by late-night music from a nearby venue, or a persistent electronic beat carried up through the building from the basement nightclub, or patrons talking, laughing or hailing cabs throughout the night, many Soho dwellers feel unable to do anything about it. Indeed, they often feel not only completely powerless and sometimes intimidated, but also killjoys for even being annoyed.

The fact is that no resident of this neighbourhood should ever feel inconvenienced, disturbed or threatened by a commercial premises operating in their vicinity. If the noise of a venue or



## NEWS

its customers feels too loud, any resident can either approach the management directly and open discussion or call Westminster Council's Environmental Action Line on 020 7641 2000 and report the problem. Usually, either of these two courses of action will resolve any issues, but on the occasions it does not, further steps are possible. Persistent problems can lead to a request for a venue's licence to be reviewed by Westminster Council's Licensing Department, and if they are found to be breaking the terms and conditions of the licence, it can be revoked.

Licensing Committee

## OXFORD STREET LATEST

In his 2016 electoral manifesto, Sadiq Khan made proposals for the pedestrianisation of Oxford Street. In late 2017, the then new Mayor, jointly with Westminster City Council, put forward a set of ideas for how this might be done. Despite their provenance, they were not well thought through. In essence, they focused on Oxford Street alone, with ideas for various forms of leisure and entertainment facilities along it, but with little attention paid to the implications for the smaller side streets which would absorb the erstwhile Oxford Street traffic (including all buses and taxis). In fact, the implications for the four neighbourhood 'villages' bounded by Oxford Street (Fitzrovia, Marylebone, Mayfair and Soho) were hardly examined at all - and could have been awful. The Soho Society, and local groups from each of the other 'villages', as well as many others, made strong objections.

At the same time, TfL conducted

an (initially flawed) public survey about the proposals, described as a 'public consultation'. The results showed a small margin in overall favour of the proposals, but a closer analysis showed that a significant majority of those respondents who either lived or worked in the area affected were opposed to the ideas. Intriguingly, a significant number of people in favour were in Scotland. As a result, and to the annoyance of the Mayor, WCC withdrew its support from the hitherto joint proposals. The scheme could not then proceed as WCC 'owns' Oxford Street - although the Mayor has some (financial) leverage over WCC and the buses and bus routes are the Mayor's responsibility.

WCC then developed its own proposals for the 'Oxford Street District', published in late 2018. This did not only consider Oxford Street, but included streets on either side and so was more comprehensive. WCC also dropped the idea of pedestrianising the full length of Oxford Street, although it did still include the full pedestrianisation of Oxford Circus and short distances along the roads in all four directions around it - with similar, although smaller, traffic implications.

The WCC proposals were put to consultation, with a closing date in mid-December. As their proposals were more thought through, the Soho Society made creative points for how the proposals could be improved, rather than simply raising objections. The Society's response, on our web site ([www.thesohosociety.org.uk/oxford-street-proposal?rq=Oxford%20Street%20proposals](http://www.thesohosociety.org.uk/oxford-street-proposal?rq=Oxford%20Street%20proposals)) outlined a vision for the area, along with

specific ideas including: more active planning and licensing policies; more ambition on tackling traffic and its pollution; better arrangements and consolidation of waste collection; encouragement of all stakeholders to play their part; updated retail experiences, but not at the expense of residents; active approach to air, noise and light pollution; promotion of small, interesting shops and cafes; electric shuttle buses on Oxford Street and other zero emission policies; strong enforcement powers for the new policies and also for tackling anti-social behaviour.

As the Clarion goes to press, WCC has issued its response to the consultations on its website: <https://committees.westminster.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=130&MId=4647>. At a quick first glance, it looks as if WCC has at least recognised some of the points that The Soho Society made in December - although there still seems to be a fair amount of 'working towards' rather than clear targets. We have not yet had time to digest its 177 page document, but will do so before the next issue of the Clarion - watch this space.

## WARD PANEL

The year seems to be flying by. The last ward panel meeting had to be cancelled due to a mix-up with the police, who hosted a meeting for all ward panel chairs in Westminster to tell us about policing once the 'merger' with Kensington & Chelsea and Hammersmith & Fulham takes place later this month. This means that there will be one Borough Command Unit ('BCU'), which will

be based at Charing Cross Police Station when the refurbishment is completed. There will also be police stations in the other two areas and one public desk in each area (ours is at Charing Cross Police Station). The Leicester Square Impact Zone team has been disbanded, as has the Oxford/Regent and Bond Street team, with the officers being deployed as and where they are needed to give a more streamlined approach. Time alone will tell whether this is the case. We are watching this and there will be updates in due course.

The Safer Neighbourhood Team will remain the same, so we will still have Steve Muldoon and Will Heaton as our dedicated officers. Over the last few months there has been less drug dealing and drug related ASB in Soho in the daytime and there have been some improvements in the Cambridge Circus area (again certainly during the daytime) due to the efforts of the police, for which we thank them, but the main protagonists are never far away - there have been reports of the same problems in Chinatown, Covent Garden, Bloomsbury and Holborn in what I call the Cambridge Circus 'circle'. This has added problems in that it comprises four police wards (excluding Soho) and two boroughs, Westminster and Camden.

Reports of on-street begging in Soho have gone down slightly, but that is probably due to the winter months and is likely to increase when the weather improves.

There are still reports of robbery connected with the clubs and late night venues, with those on the look-out for easy pickings targeting those who may have had too much to drink and are therefore likely to be less aware of what's going on around them.

There is little residential burglary in Soho, but people should always be careful about not letting unknown people into buildings on some pretext (a pizza delivery, their friend is expecting them, and so on), and should also be careful not to be followed into a building. There is more theft from offices as people tend to leave laptops and portable items in view which are tempting to those on the look-out for quick 'spoils'.

Soho has a new neighbourhood problem solving co-ordinator, Mary O'Connor, who will be working with Steve and Will. Pedicabs of course continue to be a menace and it is to be hoped that at some time in the near future (though I don't hold my breath) there will be some legislation so that they're not as easily able to do what they like when they like, park where they like, charge what they like and play loud music on a whim.

## **COUNCILLOR IAN ADAMS ON THE CHANGES TO POLICING IN SOHO**

As the new policing model comes into force in Westminster, I am pleased to be writing with some positive news.

As you know, over the past year we have met with and written to Commissioner Cressida Dick to highlight our concerns about the reduction of officers on our streets, which I know many of you share. Last month, you helped drive forward our campaign on this issue by writing to key police contacts with evidence of inadequate responses to local issues.

Thanks to this campaign and all your efforts, the police are mak-

ing some positive changes.

- Plans are underway to make Changing of the Guard a London resourced event, which will free up to 26 officers a day in Westminster;
- The Territorial Support Group have been tasked to Westminster for 8 weeks to provide high visibility patrols in the West End, this will supplement the local policing teams;
- Westminster will gain two extra inspectors. This will include a dedicated West End Detective Inspector who will oversee pro-active crime operations as well as one other inspector who will oversee the Integrated Street Engagement Unit (ISEU) and West End night time economy activity;
- ISEU police officers will combine with a neighbourhood tasking team to provide 20 police officers dedicated to tackling crime and anti-social behaviour in Westminster.

Of course, we are still seeing a significant reduction in police numbers and we remain concerned about the impact of the merger. Myself and officers will continue to meet regularly with the Metropolitan Police to monitor the situation and hold them to account on behalf of our communities.

These changes are an incredibly positive first step and show the police's willingness to work with us to make improvements. The council's relationship with our local police remains as strong as ever, and we continue to work in partnership. We are also implementing new initiatives to help reduce demand such as the Soho Angels - a team of volunteers

# NEWS

helping to keep people safe on Friday and Saturday nights, and providing high visibility patrols in one of our busiest night life spots.

Once again, thank you for your support in this campaign.

## SOHO SQUARE GENERAL PRACTICE UPDATE

The surgery has gone through a turbulent two and a half years since a commercial company, Living Care Medical Services Ltd., won the contract to manage the Practice, during which there have been several changes of doctors and support staff.

Patients, through the PPG (Patients' Participation Group), have fought hard to protect patients' interests and endeavour to bring the Practice back to the high popularity levels it achieved previously.

The Practice was put into Special Measures following a visit by CQC Inspectors (Care Quality Commissioners) just under a year ago, requiring Living Care to improve the service in all areas. Inspectors are returning shortly to check if they can now take the practice out of Special Measures. Patients have continued to raise a number of serious concerns about healthcare at the Practice.

There continues to be a very high turn-over of doctors and other staff. The Practice was originally set up in the early 1990s to support the large Cantonese speaking community in Soho, and a major concern has been the loss of all Cantonese speaking doctors and nurses, so the substantial number of Cantonese speaking patients, many of whom are elderly and frail and have little understanding of English have difficulty in accessing health care. They find the

telephone translation service unsatisfactory. So if there are any Cantonese speaking clinicians or receptionists, who would be interested in working for the practice, do get in touch with Living Care.

We are committed to maintaining our surgery, which has always been a very happy one, and very much embedded in the community, as was demonstrated when the NHS tried to close it down five or six years ago, and the local communities came out in large numbers to support us. Living Care have handed back contracts on all their other Practices in and around London, and will now be concentrating on their one remaining contract. The PPG will continue to work with them and make sure the patient voice is heard.

Anyone who would like to know more can contact the PPG on [sohosquareppg@outlook.com](mailto:sohosquareppg@outlook.com).

Soho Square General Practice PPG

## LONDON FASHION WEEK POPS UP IN SOHO

This March, The Clarion goes 'Fashionista' interviewing LDC Concept store's - Steph Fleming Blink and you may have missed it! In February, Soho's Greek street played host to 15 cutting edge designers over London Fashion Week, courtesy of cutting-edge luxury retail concept store, Lone Design Club, at 59 Greek Street between 13 to 26 February.

The concept was founded by designer Rebecca Morter, frustrated at the lack of support for start-up fashion brands created by the decline of the UK High street. It has certainly evolved from their first outing housed in the basement of (now closed) member's club -

Lights of Soho on Brewer Street in 2016. "We certainly learnt some lessons" laughs Steph, as she recounted their Brewer Street birth. LDC's business partner Steph sees Soho as the ideal place to launch the store having spent her student days in Soho whilst studying at UCL, "designers are looking at how to reach their consumers and cut out the middle man."

So why Soho, Steph? "Soho is the centre of everything, it has great buzz the clients are fashion-forward & looking for something unique!"

The store gives indie designers an opportunity to showcase a selection of their merchandise for a limited period. Each brand rents space, 2 rails/a table and collectively benefits from a combined customer base. Designers take turns to staff the concept daily and meet customers. This NEW collective RETAIL enables online brands to reach a fresh audience and experiment with bricks and mortar in central London, without the full-time costs of running their own store.

Stocking 15 designers with a curated mix of women's fashion, accessories, jewellery and beauty brands, pricing errs to a luxury consumer, starting from £50 to £500.

The concept offers shoppers experiential events over the fortnight from networking, to an evening of inspiration and entrepreneurship. As Steph explains, "These events are great for developing the commercial experience of the start-up designers as well as the general public." There are free beauty treatments on offer in store, courtesy of Urban, a start-up offering beauty treatments in your own home

which can be booked online. Sustainability, the buzz word at Fashion week with British Fashion Council Chief Executive Caroline Rush citing it her launch speech, features heavily amongst LDC pop up store garments. From silky dresses made of recycled bottles, and air washed denim using less water in manufacturing, designers have clearly thought long and hard about environmental impact and incorporated it into their ranges. As Steph says, "Through LDC's pop up stores we can celebrate high quality products, slow down fashion and more importantly, shop more consciously."

Jessica Kruger, Luxtra handbags offers a non-leather bag made of Pineapple leaves for vegan shoppers, whilst clothing designer Esther Knight, Fabric for Freedom makes her garments in the UK so she can monitor the entire process and ensure it is entirely ethical; the brand partners with charities who help women exploited in the fashion industry. Also environmental concerns, illustrated in Gung-ho's designs, directly benefit the causes they feature from bees to plastics and Coral Reefs.

The store connects offline to online via QR codes which flash up as you hover your smart phone over brand signage and cleverly links to the back story of each designer as well as self-check-out.

The Clarion can reveal that future Pop-ups are in the pipeline in Milan and Shanghai, Lone Design Club is going global, fast becoming another great Soho Start-up success story.

*Gutted you missed the Lone Design Club in February? Never fear the concept will be popping up once again for London Fashion Week in September and Steph*

*has promised to keep The Clarion updated on future plans.*

## SOHO FOOD FEAST 2019

Originally started by Margot Henderson of Arnold and Henderson and Anita Moir from the healthy eating kitchen at Soho Parish, this event was created to raise money for the severely underfunded Soho Parish School. Now in its 9th year it has become a weekend food and entertainment extravaganza comprising of the best restaurants in Soho.

The chefs provide tasters of two of their signature dishes in exchange for tokens, and with over 50 restaurants involved it is a great way to sample some of the finest offerings in the area.

The event was initially created to help support the school's healthy eating kitchen and in latter years to provide financial help for playground renovations. With increasing budget cuts and lack of funding this festival is now a crucial part of the school's income and its success is a credit to the incredible community spirit that exists in Soho.

Held in the grounds of St Anne's gardens on the 8th and 9th June, there are also cooking demonstrations, cocktail competitions, a great raffle as well as live music and the infamous vegetable sculpture competition.

Tickets go on sale on 1st March, day tickets are £15 in advance £20 on the door. Weekend tickets are £30 including £10 of food tokens. More details can be found on the website [www.sohofoodfeast.com](http://www.sohofoodfeast.com)

If you are interested in becoming involved in the Food Feast or want some more information then e-mail Anna

at [anna@sohoparish.co.uk](mailto:anna@sohoparish.co.uk).

## NEW BEGINNINGS

Yeni, a Turkish restaurant with a short menu, has very recently opened at 55 Beak Street.

Soderberg, at 36 Berwick Street, is a Swedish bakery, and is open for breakfast through to dinner - everything looks delicious.

Wild Rice and Mamasan - two Thai restaurants in the same building - 28 Brewer Street.

Also, hidden in Smith's Court (just off Brewer Street) is a small and friendly independent coffee house. Visit and support them when you're in the area.

Corbin and King are rumoured to be opening a new restaurant at 1-8 Bateman's Buildings, which can only be an improvement for this area, as Bateman's Buildings is currently in great need of love and attention. Watch this space.

Two members of the Street Food Union, Rupert Street, one a resident of Soho, are to set up a new stall doing middle-European type food - so they deserve our support. It is hoped to be up and running by the end of March/early April.

A restaurant based on the DC comic book universe is rumoured to be opening in the heart of London. Mash Steakhouse, at 77 Brewer Street, will be redeveloped into a restaurant "rooted within the DC Multiverse", if planning permission is approved. So Soho could have a dining experience with superhero residents such as Batman, Superman and Wonderwoman ...

Watch this space!

Jane Doyle



## THE SOHO VILLAGE FETE

### 30 JUNE 2019

#### SOHO NEEDS YOU

Are you a Racing waiter, Mad Hatter, Raffle Prize donor, Snail Race Gambler, Spaghetti Eating Competitor or simply love bric a brac?

***The forty-fifth Soho Village Fete takes place this year on Sunday 30th June 12.30 - 6pm in St Anne's Gardens, Wardour Street.***

Bigger, madder and badder! Originally created in the 1970's as a tongue-in-cheek rural Fete in central London complete with Drag Queens, Morris dancing Soho-ite bohemia, this year's event features the much-mentioned and seldom seen spectacle of the

#### ***Soho Police vs. Soho Firemen TUG OF WAR***

It's been four years since the last contest and rumour has it that Soho policeman PC Steve Muldoon is already in training. Gasp and cheer as Soho's finest meet head to head in a battle of might and shoe grip.

The Clarion, is pleased to report that Soho's usual crowd pleasers -The Human Fruit Machine, Snail Racing, and a cracking entertainment line-up will also feature.

Soho restaurants and bars, it's time to start limbering up for  
***World Famous, Soho Waiter's Race.***

Forty Soho waiters will be under starter's orders at 3.30pm from the French House, Dean Street, round Soho Square and back to Gerry's on Old Compton Street, balancing a tray, bottle of champagne, glass and ashtray. Dashing organiser, Film producer and Soho resident, Takashi O'Rourke will be in touch to sign up your entrants. Sign up on the website. We're looking for Volunteers! To get involved email Lucy Haine and Rachel Waddell,

[fete@thesohosociety.org.uk](mailto:fete@thesohosociety.org.uk)

For Fete updates follow us on Twitter, Facebook & Instagram! [@SohoSocietyW1](https://twitter.com/SohoSocietyW1)



## COACH AND HORSES

JANE DOYLE

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The Coach and Horses, as we know it, is under serious threat as Fuller's are still intent on taking it into their 'managed estate', by not renewing Alastair Choat's lease at the end of June.

Alastair and Hollie are working non-stop to renew their lease and retain the pub which is very much a part of Soho. There is an online petition at [www.change.org/p/save-coach-soho](http://www.change.org/p/save-coach-soho). Please go online and sign it. The petition so far has (at the last count) nearly 6,500 signatures online and over 3,000 in-house, so there is strong feeling about this. Alastair and Hollie really need the support of the community, as do Earl and Grey (who do not wish to be made homeless).

They would also like to see a change in the legislation so that pubcos can't just take back pubs purely in order to put in a manager and thereby increase their revenue, with seemingly little thought for those who have invested large amounts of both money and time and effort in order to create a pub that the local community (and visitors alike) want to be a part of. Hollie and Alastair have certainly done that. Norman Balon can't have been an easy act to follow, but they have made it their

own (as have Earl and Grey).

It is testament to their efforts that Norman (aged 92) is still a regular visitor to the pub, and last week said that he fully supports them and "hopes Alastair keeps the pub, but if not a part of London will go with him", a sentiment with which few will disagree. He also feels that Alastair and Hollie are "worthy successors" to him, praise indeed, and again few can disagree!

Alastair and Hollie have the support of all three local councillors, and are hoping to get 'asset of community value' status, but they need the continued support of the community as well, so make sure you sign that petition.

Alastair was a guest on the Soho Society Hour on Soho Radio on 24 January of this year, which, due to a technical hitch, was repeated on 21 February with an update from Hollie.

Follow their progress on [www.coachsoho.co.uk](http://www.coachsoho.co.uk),

on Facebook and on twitter @CoachSoho, and also @earlandgreysoho, who have their own take on the events unfolding beneath their paws.



# INTERVIEW

WITH JOHN JAMES OF SOHO ESTATES

*The founder of Soho Estates, Paul Raymond, acquired his portfolio of properties mainly in the 1970s, 1980s and 1990s. The properties were to him local investments, or investments in his area due to their proximity to the Windmill Theatre. He said he wasn't going to buy anything he can't walk to from the Windmill Theatre. It was rumoured that he wouldn't buy anything north of Bateman Street. Another reason for that, of course, was that those properties weren't shops with flats above.*



John James

Soho Estates now owns a significant number of properties in clusters, as opposed to the more historic landowner, such as Grosvenor and Portman, who have 'grass' estates - i.e. they were bought as farms in far off days and then developed into the properties and squares they are today. This resulted in Paul Raymond amassing an extraordinary amount in one lifetime. These were typical Soho buildings, e.g. shops with flats above that were run-down and poorly repaired and those flats could probably be regarded as 'slums', which now need maintenance, repair and renewal. Soho is a conservation area and Soho Estates respects this when undertaking the modernisations.

As everyone knows, Soho is the entertainment area of London - restaurants, bars and clubs, which attract large numbers of people to the area, and much of the creativity is driven by the very nature of the area. 'Liberal' and 'tolerant' are Soho's watchwords, which has gone far to give it its colourful reputation. Any buildings for sale in Soho don't remain on the market for long.

Soho Estates has played its part in saving and regenerating Soho. For instance, following the total destruction by fire of 76 Dean Street, a house originally built as Admiral Lord Hamilton's residence in 1732, it was empty for seven or eight years. Soho Estates redeveloped and restored the building in partnership with Soho House. They also acquired the building at the back and in order to save the historic building at the front, all the kitchens, the plant, etc, are at the back of the building. The Grade II listed building, was thus saved and has been beautifully restored in co-operation with Historic England, at the same time conforming to the regulations and respecting the conservation area.

Another major Soho Estates investment was the

redevelopment with Soho House of the Soho House and Kettner's site, which is on three streets and is actually 15 buildings, 11 of which are listed. In the middle was a yard full of plant, etc, which is now updated and restored for today's use and into hopefully the next century. Kettner's has also been beautifully restored, lavishly furnished, and still has the restaurant, the champagne bar and there is Kettner's Townhouse, a 33 room hotel on the upper floors.

Another example of restoration and development is the building on the corner of Wardour Street and Old Compton Street, which was five small buildings, five different levels, originally owned by five different people. The building has been redeveloped to make it fit for purpose for a modern let, but is at present Soho Estates' HQ.

In times past the film industry, which was an important part of Soho's character, was traditionally in Wardour Street and its immediate surrounds, and those involved would take almost any available space. However, with the digital age the post-production businesses don't need the large spaces they once occupied as most things can be done remotely and on a laptop. Most of those premises have changed hands.

John James' view is you couldn't really change Soho by design, as Soho reinvents itself. If you look back to the days between the 50s and 70s and the sex industry Soho was a pretty run-down area - the sex shops, the strip clubs, clip joints, etc, were mainly run by gangsters (all black economy) - but it welcomed all-comers. There were all sorts of skilled workers, such as goldsmiths, tailors, as well as unskilled workers. They were all tolerant of each other. Indeed, when Meard Street, now one of the most fashionable streets in Soho, was created in 1732 the occupants of

## INTERVIEW

JOHN JAMES

the buildings, which had no 'facilities', the occupants included a harpsichord maker, a Reverend, a writer, a painter, a composer and a drunk.

Soho Estates is basically a family owned business which is, in itself, the owner of properties in Soho and as such the company is a stakeholder in the future. They don't try to dictate it or manipulate it, but to improve it in such a way that it is fit for modern occupation. John feels his 'job' is to look after the properties for the next generation and generations to come, and as such Soho Estates has updated many of the buildings (for instance, many of the buildings didn't have bathrooms or indoor toilets at the time), It's very rare that the actual properties themselves are sold, but businesses within may come and go.

The building that now houses Balan's on the corner of Old Compton Street and Frith Street was purchased in the mid-1980s, a run-down building, the upstairs of which consisted of what was supposedly controlled tenants but in actual fact was full of Chinese waiters housed several to a room in what could best be described as "dormitory" conditions, including the bathroom and kitchen, since completely refurbished for the 21<sup>st</sup> century. It was divided into four little shops, which was a fairly traditional Soho method of dividing a building - there were originally four shops, a coffee shop, a clothes shop, a hairdresser - originally there was a greengrocer's shop on the corner in which the Jack Spot gangster fight ended up.

If Soho Estates has a building they don't wish to do anything with at present, they will often help new start-up businesses, such as within the creative industries. This is done on a temporary basis thus at below the market rent. The building is therefore occupied, paying its way at the same time as hopefully helping new businesses. A prime example of this is 58 Old Compton Street, previously a post-production premises.

Soho Estates currently has two major ongoing developments, Walker's Court, which is nearing completion and Ilona Rose House. Ilona Rose is an acre of land, which covers the old Foyle's site on Charing Cross Road and goes through to Greek Street via Manette Street. This is going down four floors and going up nine floors. When the building is complete there will be eight affordable flats which will front on to Greek Street. There will also be restaurants, retail space of 25,000 sq ft, and 115,000 sq ft of offices and

green spaces. Warner Brothers, who had been going to remove their business from the De Lane Lea building in Dean Street to the Harry Potter World in Leavesden, will also be in the building, thus keeping a large part of the film industry in Soho. Soho Estates have agreed to build them a huge sound-proofed area at the first, second and third basement levels. The building is expected to complete in 2022, at which time Soho Estates will let the rest of the space.

There is a lot of building work going on in this 'Crossrail' regeneration area, including on the East Side (Camden), but also the site on the corner of Oxford Street and Charing Cross Road (to include a theatre to replace the Astoria). Once Crossrail opens the footfall is expected to increase by 250,000 a day. Who knows how this will affect Soho, but change it will.

The Walker's Court development is due to finish in the spring. The scaffolding is down, the interiors are ongoing and hopefully will be finished later in 2019. The development will house a new theatre, the Boulevard, with the UK's only revolving auditorium. Madame JoJo's will be returning, there will be a restaurant and shops. The Raymond Revue Bar sign is once again lighting up Brewer Street, so watch this space.

### LESLIE SEEKS VOLUNTEERS

The Clarion needs designers, writers, photographers and an advertising sales person. We are particularly keen to find an extra

someone with experience of page layout using Adobe InDesign. If you would like to help get in touch at [clarion@thesohosociety.org.uk](mailto:clarion@thesohosociety.org.uk).

If you want to comment on any of the articles in this quarter's Clarion send us a letter please contact us on the [clarion@thesohosociety.org.uk](mailto:clarion@thesohosociety.org.uk).

The Society is always looking for volunteers to help with events and to join our planning and licensing groups. [admin@thesohosociety.org.uk](mailto:admin@thesohosociety.org.uk)

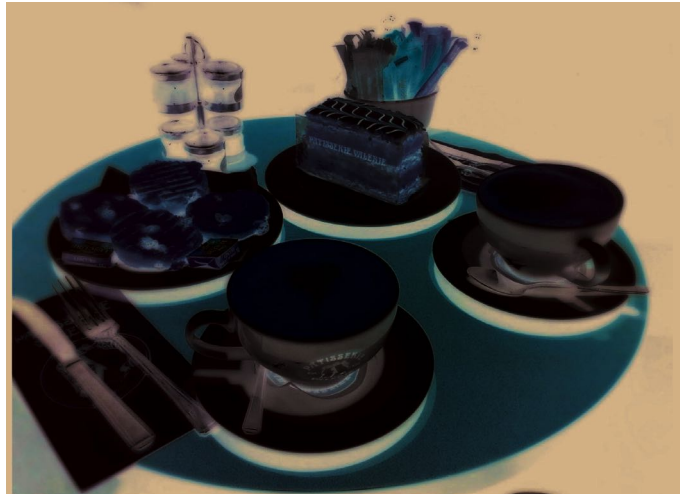




# PATISSERIE VALERIE

DAVID GLEESON

If you're a regular reader of The Clarion, or even just a frequent neighbourhood visitor, you will have heard all about the recent chaos at Patisserie Valerie and how a last minute deal in the middle of February saved some of their cafes. Immense relief at the saved venues (surely I'm not the only one?) goes with sadness over the (almost) original Old Compton Street branch being one of those lost. The appearance of a strip of yellow and black 'CRIME SCENE DO NOT ENTER' tape stuck over the window seemed an apt comment on the loss of this beloved venue, which was, after all, the setting for meetings, trysts, gossips, and general good times throughout much of the last century. Compton Street's Pat Val was always so much more than a temple of calorific enhancement – and there were, frankly, better croissants and coffee to be had in Soho – but there was something about the place itself that felt like it had absorbed decades of good times and was a singular Soho pleasure.



The simple history of Patisserie Valerie starts with its founding in 1926 by Belgian caterers Theo Vermeirsch and his wife Esther van Gyseghem, aka Madame Valerie, on the corner of Dean and Old Compton Streets. Bombed in the war, it soon reopened on the north side of Old Compton Street, between Dean and Frith Streets (this was the recently closed branch). Theo died in 1947, and Esther ran it alone until she retired in 1965. Bought from Esther's family by the Scalzo Brothers in 1987, it grew to nine branches. In 2006, they sold Patisserie Valerie to food entrepreneur Luke Johnson (who also owned what he called "successful food and drink concepts" Pizza Express, Strada and Giraffe) and by 2017 those nine London branches had become almost 200 across the country.

A typical grand success. Until last October, when "a multimillion pound black hole" was discovered in the company accounts. Temporarily plugged with

£20M of Johnson's ready cash, their finance officer was meanwhile arrested, bailed and resigned. It nosedived in January, almost revived in February with a possible takeover bid from Sports Direct (eek) which was withdrawn two days later (phew). On Valentine's Day, it was announced that an Irish company, Causeway Capital Partners, had acquired Pat Val's. Which means some of their cafes will continue, but some will remain closed, and – at the time of writing – the beloved Old Compton Street branch is still in darkness.

My first experiences of Patisserie Valerie happened before moving to London, when Esther's family still owned the flagship café. A trip to Soho for what then felt like the most fabulous croissants and smoothest cappuccino I had tasted, followed by mildly agonising indecision over chocolate slices,

fruit gateaux or perfect macaroons enhanced every trip to the capital. After relocating here, Pat Val's was still very much a favourite place to meet, and its modus operandi under the Scalzo regime seemed much the same, cake-quality-wise. Over the last decade or so, there have been noticeable changes. It seems inevitable that when a small, local business suddenly becomes a big corporate industry it will lose something, and the gently rising prices, shrinking croissants and rapid staff turnover (coupled with an unwillingness to display Soho Fete posters without licence from Head Office), were presumably all symptoms of this. But Patisserie Valerie was still a great Soho business, and a welcome refuge. If the flagship branch remains closed, I'll miss the spectacular array of cakes – one of the many things that made Old Compton Street a wonderful place – and some members of staff whose names I cannot remember and one I can - Isabella. Thank you and goodbye.

David Gleeson

## LICENSING LESSONS

RICHARD BROWN



My last article focused on the role of residents under the Licensing Act 2003 regime, which deals with the regulation of sale and supply of alcohol, provision of late night refreshment (hot food and hot drink, licensable between the hours of 2300 and 0500) and 'regulated entertainment' such as music and dance. However, not all music and dance is regulated under Licensing Act 2003. Premises which provide 'any live performance or any live display of nudity which can reasonably be assumed to be provided solely or principally for the purpose of sexually stimulating any member of the audience (whether by verbal or other means)' (i.e. lap-dancing clubs and similar) are providing 'relevant entertainment', and require a separate licence under the snappily titled Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1982.

Such premises are known as 'sexual entertainment venues' (SEVs). The term 'sexual entertainment venue' came into official being only in recent years to close a loophole in the Licensing Act 2003, but describes the types of venues which have operated lawfully for many years in the West End, under what was known as a 'rule 4 waiver'.

The landscape for SEV operators lacks the certainty of other licensed operators, as the SEV licence is subject to an annual renewal process, to which residents and the authorities can object. The grounds of refusal are extremely wide. Indeed, the legislation was amended in 2010 specifically to reflect the feeling in Government that local residents and communities should have more say in these types of applications, and authorities the wherewithal to reflect these concerns in their decision-making.

The content of objections is not constrained at all by the legislation. When I advise residents who have concerns regarding new SEV licences, renewals or variations, I always advise that although in theory they can object on any grounds whatsoever, it makes sense to focus objections on the relevant grounds for refusal which include, as far as residents are concerned, that the grant or renewal of the licence would be appropriate, having regard: (i)

to the character of the relevant locality; or (ii) to the use to which any premises in the vicinity are put. Another ground is 'that the applicant is unsuitable to hold a licence by reason of having been convicted of an offence or for any other reason.' The words 'inappropriate' and 'unsuitable' are capable of many interpretations.

Anyone can be an objector on an SEV licence application. Similarly, anyone can make a supportive comment on an SEV application. This has resulted in some interesting jostling for position as operators have to become more creative to stave off objectors who are opposed to the idea of strip clubs. To some, strip clubs are exploitative and degrading to women. To supporters, they are empowering and a legitimate source of income and entertainment.

Alcohol licensing, gambling licensing and SEV licensing all mirror societal trends to some extent, but SEV licensing perhaps distils contemporary trends and mores into much sharper focus than other areas of licensing. There is a sensitivity towards the idea of SEV premises which does not apply to pubs and bars and restaurants to anything like the same degree.

In addition, a Council in its capacity as Licensing Authority has a duty to have regard to its public sector equality duty under section 149 of the Equality Act 2010. They must, in the exercise of its functions, have due regard to the need to:

(a) eliminate discrimination harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under this Act; (b) advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it; and (c) foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristics and persons who do not share it.

'Relevant protected characteristics' are age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, and sexual orientation.

# LICENSING LESSONS (CONTINUED)

RICHARD BROWN

And so SEV licensing seems to have become a conduit for wider issues in society in a way which individual alcohol licensing applications rarely do. Objections can be, and are, made by equality groups, womens' rights groups and feminist groups. It is a reminder of how quickly prevailing attitudes and narratives change. It was not long ago that Formula 1 - a major largely male worldwide sport heavily dependent on advertising and television money - used 'pit girls'. It was not long before that when 'page 3 girls' were a staple of the nation's best-selling tabloid.

Local residents can become aware of licence applications in a number of ways. Firstly, an application must be advertised at the premises, on

an orange A3 notice. Secondly, the City Council writes to residents within a certain radius of the applicant premises to inform them of the application and how they can make their views known, in much the same way as they do with planning applications. Thirdly, the City Council produces a weekly bulletin, Licensing News, which details all applications within the consultation period. Fourthly, the City Council has an online system called 'MyWestminster' - see [www.westminster.gov.uk/licensing](http://www.westminster.gov.uk/licensing) - which upon registration can be tailored to notify a resident of applications made in a defined area.

We can be contacted by email:  
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## RESTAURANT REVIEW

### THE FRENCH HOUSE



The first time I ventured into The French House it was a glorious summer's day in the late 80s. Attracted by the raucous and colourful crowd spilling on to the pavement. I enjoyed a thoroughly boozy day, followed by a hangover to match. This Soho institution has served all manner of legends, Freud, Bacon, Plath, and de Gaulle, the so called Godfather of Brexit.. It is where culinary legends Fergus and Margot Henderson first plied their trade before St John's fame. Florence Knight was also there with Polpetto. So it was with great anticipation when it was announced that the first floor dining room would reopen under the auspices of acclaimed chef Neil Borthwick, a man who, having spent three years cooking in Laguiole, knows a thing or two about French cooking.

The dining room is small, intimate and welcoming. If, like me, your preference is an earlier luncheon you will probably find Neil at the bar handwriting the daily menus. The staff are effortlessly cool, while being attentive and friendly. There was an adequate selection of interesting starters to get me going - calves brains, brown butter, capers, and parsley, or pigs head terrine with pickles. Both were ordered, and were magnificent. The calves brains were delicate, enriched with the butter and the sharpness of the capers. The pigs head was flavoursome, and set off beautifully with the tanginess of the pickle. The mains were equally enticing. Sea bream, braised fennel, chili and green sauce, or roast pork chops, turnip tops and lentils. I again got to try both. Sea bream was firm and succulent, the fennel setting off the flavour of the fish with the spice of the chili and depth of the green sauce. The pork was just too good, cooked to perfection and the perfect choice for a winter's day aided by the crunch of the turnips and the uncomplicated homeliness of the lentils.

The pudding was not needed, but that didn't

stop me. Poached pear, cream and meringue, what a combination - the pear with a hint of crunch, doused liberally with cream and set upon a meringue. What more do you need to round off a superb lunch, other than the fact that the bill is not going to ruin you? With wines reasonably priced, it would seem that Neil and The French House have hit upon a winning combination.

Philip Antscherl



#### Membership Matters

To join the Soho Society please go to our website where you can sign up and pay with a credit card.

<https://www.thesohosociety.org.uk/shop/>

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Lifetime £250

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## BEES IN SOHO

BY LUKE DIXON

Soho might seem an unlikely place to find beehives but some of the finest honey to be produced anywhere in the world comes from the bees on the rooftops here in the heart of London. There have been hives in and around Soho as far back as records begin. In the 18th century Europe's most famed beekeeper, Daniel Wildman, sold bees, hives and honey from his shop on High Holborn. Curious to know where his bees foraged for the nectar they transformed into honey, he would sit at the front of his hives and dust his bees with flour as they left in search of forage. Watching the direction of their flight, he would mount his horse and gallop off behind them. If his luck was in, he would come across a flour covered bee sucking nectar from a blossom, or packing pollen from a flower into the sacs on her back legs. He tracked them as far north as Hampstead Heath four miles away. Wildman's book, 'A complete guide for the management of bees', published in 1773, was a bestseller, running to numerous editions and being published in French and Italian translations on the continent.

Writing about beekeeping in London in 1866, Alfred Neighbour, who kept his bees on Regent Street, noted that, 'many persons now in this noisy city pent....should doubt even the possibility of bees feeding themselves amidst such an "endless meal of brick".' And 150 years later, people are still surprised that bees can feed themselves amidst the brick and concrete of this noisy neighbourhood.

When I began keeping bees back at the turn of the millennium, there were just a handful of members left in the London Beekeepers Association. Social antipathy to having bees in the city, the encroachment of oil seed rape the nectar of which produces rock hard honey of no use to man or bee, and the coming from the East of the varroa mite (Varroa destructor) had seen a rapid decline in the population of the amateur beekeeper. Things turned around a year or two later when media coverage of the decline of the honeybee, and increasing awareness of human dependency on the honeybee for around a third of all the food we consume, led to a sudden upsurge in interest in beekeeping not just in London but in cities around the world. A new, young, ecologically aware generation took up the ancient crafts of keeping bees.

Hearst Magazines hosted hives on the roof of their HQ in Broadwick Street for ten years until last sum-

mer when the company moved to Leicester Square. The bees needing a new home, landlords Shaftesbury Estates came to the rescue and offered a new roof on Ganton Street where, despite a day or two when the confused bees kept returning to their old abandoned rooftop, the colonies have settled at their new location and have survived the winter. As the weather warms and the multitude of forage in the squares, gardens, window boxes, roof tops and trees of our shared little piece of London start producing the best and most varied forage in the country, they will be out once more bringing pollen back to their hives and making honey.

Luke is Director of Urban and Community Beekeeping

his book 'WILD: Encounters with the natural world in London and the Isle of Sheppey' can be ordered through [www.urbanbeekeeping.co.uk](http://www.urbanbeekeeping.co.uk).



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## TAP LONDON

As many readers of the Clarion will know, homelessness is a huge problem in London and in Soho there are large numbers of vulnerable people on the streets with a range of problems such as drug and/or alcohol abuse, many of whom also have mental health problems. They ask for money for 'a cup of tea and a sandwich', but it is very often to fund an addiction. Whilst people want to help, perhaps giving cash is not the best way.

A new initiative has been set up by TAP London, a non-profit organisation, who in November 2018 launched a new charity fundraising drive in partnership with Greater London Authority. The Mayor of London, Sadiq Khan made the first public donation at City Hall where one of the iconic building's windows was transformed into a donation point. Other donation points are popping up across Central London, with venues such as Vodafone, Gentleman Barista, Curzon Cinemas and WeWork participating in the initiative.

TAP London is a volunteer-led organisation, founded in 2017 by two young Londoners (Polly Gilbert, and Katie Whitlock), who sought to find new and innovative ways to tackle London's homelessness issue using technology. After two years, and two pilot initiatives, they were awarded funding and partnership for this project through the Mayor of London's Rough Sleeping Innovation Fund. The project invites Londoners to give a one-off £3 donation through a contactless device - installed either on a countertop or in a window display. All donations are processed in less than half a second, donor's details are encrypted, and 100% of every donation made goes to the 22 charities in the London Homeless Charities Group. The technology has been supplied by fintech start-up GoodBox. In the first few days it made over £2,000 with over 600 people donating through the initiative.

The Mayor of London, Sadiq Khan, said at the time: "Londoners care about rough sleeping and want to do their bit to help. Contactless payment technology has been embraced by Londoners - with 17m tube and rail journeys made using contactless cards every week - and these new payment points will allow the public to donate to this cause even if they are not carrying cash." Polly Gilbert, Co-Founder at TAP London, said: "We believe that small acts of generosity can add up to meaningful change. If we each made just one 'TAP' to tackle homelessness - we can create radical, lasting impact on expanding and sustaining vital services for homeless people. TAP London are thrilled to be partnering with the

Mayor of London on this project, and look forward to sharing news of the campaign's progress with Londoners.." Katie Whitlock, Co-Founder at TAP London, said: "It's a common point of conversation - how on earth do you help, especially when you don't have change. Our pockets are getting lighter; many of us just don't carry change anymore. We have to act quickly in creating new ways for people to give to those in need." Francesca Hodgson, COO of GoodBox, said: "Homelessness in London is a problem we can't ignore and ahead of what could be one of the coldest winters yet, we're pleased to support such a deserving cause. Our contactless technology solution will allow all Londoners to support those in need through a simple tap of their card on their way to work, or when out and about."

In November 2017 35 contactless donation points were launched across London, with others to be installed in locations across London, including Curzon cinemas, Westfield Shopping Centres, coffee chain Gentleman's Baristas, Vodafone, WeWork, Protein Studios, Harold Pinter Theatre and more. TAP London has received vital support and funding from the Mayor's Rough Sleeping Innovation Fund, Berkeley Foundation, GoodBox and Heart of London Business Alliance. The Mayor's Rough Sleeping Innovation Fund aims to stimulate new and innovative approaches to tackling rough sleeping in the capital. It offers grant funding to local authorities and organisations tackling rough sleeping, to pilot new ideas and develop new services in the sector. Projects to benefit so far include TAP London, Change Please coffee kiosks and the award-winning Beam initiative to crowd-fund training for homeless people.

The London Homeless Charities Group is a coalition of 22 charities providing direct services to homeless people across London. This coalition offers Londoners an easily accessible, single donation point with all donations split between the charities and going towards vital services.

At the time of writing this TAP London has so far raised approximately £50,000, engaging over 16,000 donors, and there are 85 donation points live. You can see the current locations of the machines on the map on their website: [www.taplondon.org](http://www.taplondon.org)

TAP is currently looking for hosts. If you would like to be a host or know of someone who would and you would like more information, please contact Polly Gilbert, Co-Founder, TAP London: [info@taplondon.org](mailto:info@taplondon.org) and <https://www.taplondon.org>.

# 1999 BOMB ATTACKS ON BRIXTON, BRICK LANE AND SOHO

## 20 YEAR MEMORIAL

17-24-30 represents the combined dates of the three London nail bombs targeted at Brixton (17 April), Brick Lane (24 April) and Soho (30 April) in 1999.

To mark the tenth anniversary of the establishment of 17-24-30 we are evolving from a small charity to a Community Interest Organisation. Our new name is 17-24-30 National Hate Crime Awareness Week.

The new organisation has four trustees; Mark Healey (Chair), Pedro Bengla, Clizia Cataldo and Tony Collins-Moore. For more information see [www.nationalhcaw.uk](http://www.nationalhcaw.uk), or contact [info@nationalhcaw.uk](mailto:info@nationalhcaw.uk).

### APRIL ACTS OF REMEMBRANCE

This April we are marking the twentieth anniversary of the London Nail Bomb attacks on Brixton, Brick Lane and Soho with three acts of remembrance.

We have been running a public consultation to find out what people think we should do. You can find the link to this on our Twitter feed [@NationalHCaw](https://twitter.com/NationalHCaw).

We are currently working on a Press Release and welcome statements from our key partners; Metropolitan Police, Lambeth Council, Tower Hamlets Council, Westminster Council, St Anne's Church, Admiral Duncan, Tower Hamlets No Place for Hate Forum.

We plan to organise outreach activities in Brixton, Brick Lane and Soho in a lead up to the anniversaries.

17 April – Brixton Remembers 17-24-30

We will be meeting at the side of the Brixton Store at 6 pm, to hold a short vigil between 6 pm to 6.30 pm. We have invited the local Mayor, will light the three candles, talk to people about their experiences and hand out anti-hate crime information.

24 April – Brick Lane Remembers 17-24-30

We will be meeting at Sticky Wings Restaurant, Brick Lane at 6 pm, to hold a short vigil between 6 pm to 6.30 pm. We have invited the local Mayor, will light the three candles, talk to people about their experiences and hand out anti-hate crime information.

27 April – Fundraiser at the Admiral Duncan

From 6 pm to 11 pm we are holding a fundraising event at the Admiral Duncan in Soho. We aim to raise funds to ensure that the April Acts of Remembrance can continue for at least another five years. We are currently appealing for raffle prizes. If you can donate a prize for the raffle, please contact [mark@17-24-30.org](mailto:mark@17-24-30.org).

Crowdfunder

We are developing a crowdfunding campaign which we hope to launch at the beginning of April. This is to raise funds to enable 17-24-30 to continue over

## SOHO CLARION



next five years.

The Heritage Lottery

We are applying for Heritage Lottery funding to create an archive about the London Nail Bomb attacks.

### 30 APRIL – SOHO REMEMBERS 17-24-30

17-24-30 is liaising with The Admiral Duncan, St Anne's Church and the Metropolitan Police to organise the annual gathering in Soho.

17-24-30 plans to have a team of stewards on site in Soho from around 2 pm onwards, and the programme is as follows:

5 pm – family, friends and survivors gather at the Admiral Duncan.

5.45 pm Lord Mayor of Westminster, Lambeth and Tower Hamlets Mayors along with other invited representatives arrive at St Anne's Church.

6.10 pm Procession from Admiral Duncan round to St Anne's Gardens.

6.27pm Short service in St Anne's Gardens including;

- \* Speakers representing St Anne's Church, 17-24-30, Switchboard, and the Moore family.
- \* Poem by Trudy Howson LGBT Poet Laureate
- \* Performances by Diversity Choir and London Gay Men's Chorus. The Gardens will remain open for people to pay their respects.

Afterwards there will be cabaret at The Admiral Duncan.

Press and Media enquiries

Please direct enquires to [mark@17-24-30.org](mailto:mark@17-24-30.org). There is a mailing list for survivors who want information.

Mark Healey



## RT HON MARK FIELD MP

MP FOR CITIES OF LONDON AND WESTMINSTER

The all too brief oasis of calm that was the Christmas break is now a regrettably distant speck in the memory. The Brexit debate is again front and centre, picking up where it left off in December and finding ever more creative ways to wrong-foot MPs on both sides of the House. The unpredictability of modern politics will quickly make a fool of anyone unwise enough to forecast the possible permutations of our departure from the EU, so you will forgive me for sparing myself the near-certain embarrassment of speculating on events that I am sure will have long since moved on by the time this edition goes to print!

Away from the daily whirlwind of Westminster, readers will recall that in my last contribution to the Clarion I paid particular attention to the troubling crime issues we are facing in pockets of the city – not least Soho – and promised to keep everyone updated with any developments that arose.

Following our letters to the Met's Commissioner, in which we stressed the urgent need to arrest and reverse the city's worrying increase in drug and rough sleeping-related anti-social behaviour, I and our Council leader secured assurances from the Commissioner that she is taking a personal interest in these complex problems, particularly in the West End. Ongoing close collaboration between the Council and Westminster's chief superintendent was also promised, as well as local intelligence sharing in partnership with Soho's businesses and residents' groups.

Of course, for the police to be as effective as possible it needs to be properly resourced, which is why in the months leading up to December's police funding announcement I wrote to the Policing Minister and met with the Prime Minister to make the case for an enhanced funding settlement for the Met. Pleasingly, an additional £172 million has now been made available for 2019/20, which reflects the unique crime pressures faced here in the capital.

Though important, more funding alone will not solve the problems we see on our streets and it is up to the Commissioner and the Mayor of London to decide how resources and frontline police are best deployed. The Met acknowledges that it will not be able to meet the challenges of policing a global city like London without significantly changing how it manages its resources. Accordingly, it has taken the decision to streamline its 32 borough-based policing models into 12 Basic Command Units (BCU); the hope being that this will provide greater resourcing flexibility while also reducing demand for its services.

Consequentially, the issues we are seeing in Soho, and the city as a whole, are set against a backdrop of significant transition for the Met. By the time this has gone to print, the merging of Westminster's, Kensington & Chelsea's and Hammersmith & Fulham's three policing models into the Central West BCU will have 'gone live', and this was the main topic of conversation when I met with Chief Inspector Andy Brittain in the middle of January.

A significant concern of mine about the merger not easily assuaged is that we will have 243 fewer officers across all three boroughs as a result of the consolidation, at a time when we want to see more police out patrolling our streets on foot. Central West has successfully argued for extra Dedicated Ward Officers in the West End, which is welcomed given the importance of community-focused policing. Nevertheless, the fact remains that once the BCU is in operation the West End's daytime policing teams will see a significant reduction in officer numbers, which is troubling when one considers just how large a demand generator the area is.

Likewise, I was particularly interested to know the Met's plan for dealing with the West End's night-time economy – so vital to Soho – and Chief Inspector Brittain was quick to reassure me that we would see an increase on the police numbers that the Met was able to provide during the prior period of transition, and that these officers will



# RT HON MARK FIELD MP


MP FOR CITIES OF LONDON AND WESTMINSTER

be dedicated to patrolling the West End on foot. Will this be substantial enough to also cope with the significant residential population too? Time will tell.

It has been readily accepted by the Met that this project will be very difficult. Being the last group of boroughs to undergo this merger has meant that Central West is beneficiary of all the lessons learnt from previous experiences and hopefully means we avoid many of teething problems that beset other BCUs. There will also be a minimum three to six month period of 'stabilisation' from when Central West becomes operational, which will entail close monitoring of performance indicators and the offer of additional support until

the BCU consistently performs to expectations.

Chief inspector Brittain assured me that a very close eye will be kept on the crime situation around the West End and that his commitment to keeping the area safe is shared just as strongly by the Met hierarchy. This is commendable and I am extremely grateful to the chief inspector for making himself available to address any persisting concerns that I receive in the months after going 'live'. However, when public safety is at stake, commitments and public meetings alone will not be enough. What is important at this critical time is that the police deliver results for the residents and businesses of Soho, and I will be watching its performance with great interest indeed.



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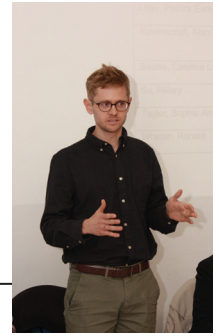
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Soho Housing Association works to provide well managed affordable housing to enhance and sustain the diverse communities in the heart of London.

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

## PANCHO LEWIS LABOUR WARD COUNCILLOR



### KEEPING SOHO SPECIAL: A NEW 'SPECIAL POLICY AREA'

Last year Westminster Council announced they would adopt one of Westminster Labour's key manifesto pledges – a Soho 'Special Policy Area' (SPA) to protect and conserve Soho's character. This is an important step forward and shows Labour is a strong voice standing up for the people who live and work in Soho.

The Soho SPA is part of Westminster Council's draft City Plan – a framework that sets out the guidelines developers should follow. It will help protect and preserve Soho's character by restricting the development of large hotels. This is crucial because the Conservative Council has given the green light to the development of mega hotels in places where they are totally inappropriate, like Film House and elsewhere.

The SPA will also aim to protect and conserve smaller shop front units – and smaller units are more likely to house independent businesses rather than chains.

The announcement marks a welcome U-turn by the local Conservatives, who last year said a Soho SPA was impossible to implement!

Perhaps decision makers in the Council are starting to wake up to the depth and extent of discontent among the local community. Rightly so, people are angry about the way elected representatives cosied up to developers instead of representing the concerns of the community.

I am proud Labour has begun to make a real difference to life in Soho. I'll continue to stand up for Soho and work to hold developers to account.

\* It should be noted the details of the SPA may still change. At the time of writing, the Council hasn't yet approved a final City Plan, which means its contents are still being revised.

### HOLDING DEVELOPERS TO ACCOUNT: BERWICK STREET

The 90-104 Berwick Street development approved by Westminster Council has been a massive blow to the community. The constant disruption of diggers, fires and floods has been a constant source of disruption and many local businesses

have closed since the development works started.

A big power cut on Berwick Street at the end of last year felt like confirmation that something urgent had to be done. I called for the Council to launch a formal and independent investigation to get to the bottom of the Berwick Street development debacle.

I was pleased when hundreds signed my petition but disappointed when Soho councillors Tim Barnes and Jonathan Glanz didn't join me and the rest of the community.

The review called for the Council to uncover:

- Any financial links between developers and their agents and public authorities.
- What measures could be put in place so the project is finished as quickly as possible.
- What compensation the local community is entitled to.

The Council chose not to support my community backed campaign – they said they would return to reviewing the proposal this year. I will continue to lobby them to respond to the needs of the community.

### RUBBISH BAGS AND BLOCKED GULLIES

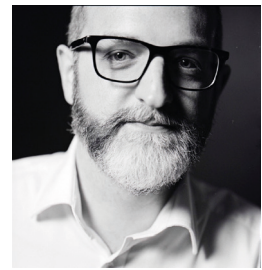
One of the issues residents raise with me is the issue of rubbish bags piling up on Soho's streets. In fact, improving how rubbish is collected was one of the key requests made by the Soho Society to the Council as part of a recent consultation.

I'm keen to explore what can be done to improve the current system – I think there needs to be a better way. I can hardly believe it when I see spots like Meard Street and others where pedestrians have to dodge large mounds of bags to walk past. This is Soho, the centre of London, after all. I'm meeting with officers and Soho Society members to see what can be done.

I'm also working with residents to fix blocked gullies. Blocked gullies mean that when there is heavy rainfall large ponds form on Soho's streets. Two places are the corner of Old Compton Street and Greek Street, and St Anne's courtyard - there are many more. *(continued page)*

## TIM BARNES

### CONSERVATIVE WARD COUNCILLOR



In the Christmas issue of the Clarion, my colleague, Councillor Jonathan Glanz, provided updates on many of the big issues that dominated local politics as 2018 came to an end.

In particular, after the local elections of last year, the council had embarked on a series of consultations over the ideas presented in our manifesto and the new initiatives that were proposed: a review of the way our markets operate, the plans for Oxford Street following the council's rejection of the Mayor's plans, bringing City West Homes in house and the new Westminster City Plan, among them.

2019 has started with us reviewing the responses and listening carefully to what residents of Soho and all of Westminster have told us and proposals, on Oxford Street for example, have been amended to incorporate the comments and ideas that have come from those that live and work locally.

This builds on the new approach that the Council has taken to Soho, recognising some of the problems with how the area has been represented and listened to. Immediately after the elections in May 2018, I was appointed as the lead council member for Soho, a post that has not existed before. There was also a section in the City Plan specifically for the area; another first. Westminster Council is changing, with a new generation of elected councillors being part of that, and Soho looks well set to benefit on the ground where a number of big and small initiatives are bringing improvements.

#### Local Housing

There can be no one who lives in Soho, as I do, who believes that the redevelopments of Ingestre Court and Kemp House could not have been managed better, particularly in the repeated delays to the timelines and the poor communications with those living there. Jonathan and I have pushed hard for improvements that could help, even at this late stage in the work, and are delighted that since

January we have had a full-time liaison co-funded by Westminster Council, City West Homes and the developers as single point of contact for residents' issues and local street works.

In another problem area, the squatters who had occupied space at the bottom of Ingestre Court were evicted in December and a new community space and work facility targeting creative businesses is due to open there by early May.

**Inclusion in the Night Time Economy Task Group**  
A number of incidents in 2018 were covered by mainstream news outlets as well as social media, with accusations of discrimination on the doors of some of the West End's major clubs and late-night bars. Westminster Council has responded with the creation of a Task Group to look at inclusion in the Night Time Economy, which I am leading. We have already begun to collect details of experiences from club visitors, managers and security and hope to report in the summer. If you would like to take part, we are keen to hear from you.

To contribute, please see: <https://openforum.westminster.gov.uk/westminsteratnight>

#### Policing in Soho

While crime and anti-social behaviour remain a key concern of many local residents, new proposals by the Mayor of London include plans to further reduce police numbers by up to 12%, despite not spending the additional funding the national Government gave to London for new recruits.

The leader of the Council, Cllr Nickie Aiken, has lobbied the Mayor's office and Commissioner Cressida Dick with our concerns about the planned changes and we have launched a petition to allow residents across Westminster to express their opposition to this plan: <https://tinyurl.com/BackOurBobbies>

#### Residents Participation in Planning Decisions

## TIM BARNES (CONTINUED) CONSERVATIVE WARD COUNCILLOR

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The move of City Hall back to Victoria Street after a long refurbishment has allowed us to make use of better public meeting rooms and introduce changes to the planning approval process that will include more opportunities for residents and those effected by planning proposals to take part in the meetings where the decisions are taken. The first of these meetings are taking place in February and while the system may need some tweaks, it represents a real and symbolic change in the way local people can get involved directly in the decisions that affect them and something I am delighted to see us introduce. If you want to comment directly on any planning application, the Council has guidance here:

<https://www.westminster.gov.uk/planning-committee>

### Let's Talk

If I have not met you already, I look forward to doing so soon. Jonathan and I hold a councillor surgery in Soho on the last Friday of every month at St Anne's on Dean Street from 5pm. You can just turn up and drop in - no appointment needed - and all local residents and businesses are welcome.

Meanwhile, please feel free to contact me via phone on 020 7641 3411, @CampaignTim on Twitter or [tbarnes@westminster.gov.uk](mailto:tbarnes@westminster.gov.uk) if you prefer.



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Lifestyle award for the best Coffee Shop 2017

To those who we are lucky to call regulars, we thank you for your ongoing support. To those who are yet to visit us, we look forward to welcoming you soon.

## MESSAGE FROM SAINT ANNES THE REVEREND SIMON BUCKLEY



If an old friend was to invite you on an all-expenses paid, three-week trip to Thailand, flying business class and staying in a luxury private villa a short walk from the beach I doubt you'd turn it down. I didn't and can confirm that Koh Samui is a beautiful place to be in January! Far from the grey skies of London, the sirens, pedicab sound-systems and the relentlessness of the Brexit debate, I settled back feeling not just 6,000 miles but a world away.

One of my holiday books was *The Crossway*, partly serialised last year on Radio 4. It is the travelogue of Guy Stagg, a young man who sets out one New Year's Day to walk from Canterbury to Jerusalem in the hope of finding healing from the mental illness that has plagued his youth. It's a terrific read for anyone with an interest in travel, adventure and, perhaps above all, people - especially those whose lives, experiences and homes are far from our own.

Amongst the many hospitable and colourful characters Stagg met was Fr Constantin, a monk in a small monastery on Mount Athos who regaled him with stories of his past life:

*And what stories they were! As we drank tea a decade of anecdotes came bubbling out. We toured around Soho in the early eighties, shared liquid lunches with painters at the French and evenings at the Coach with Jeffrey Bernard...*

How can it be that there I was in Thailand, reading about Greece, only to be pulled back again to our beloved square mile? I'm not going to suggest that, whereas mediaeval maps put Jerusalem as being the centre of the world, today's cartographers should make it Soho, but there is a feeling at times that 'all roads lead to Soho' and our small community has a reach and a draw which extends beyond what might naturally be expected.

At St Anne's we regularly pray not just for those who live and work in Soho "but all for whom Soho is home". Its hospitality, down the centuries, to those who have not felt welcome elsewhere is well documented; and it remains the case that our crossword puzzle of streets is held in great affection by celebrities and down-and outs alike; and clearly the occasional monk in a remote monastery, too.

Serving the *whole* community, all who call Soho home, will, for a small church such as ours, inevitably be an aspiration rather than something that

will be fully realised during my tenure. But I hope that as the Parochial Church Council embrace a new Mission Action Plan (a requirement of the Diocese) that amongst other things you will see us extend our support for children in Soho, deepen our care for all who are elderly or particularly vulnerable, continue in supporting Westminster's Night Hub to help those of varying ages whose good night out has turned sour and hopefully give a home to a rough sleepers fortnightly hot meal, complementing the great work of our neighbours St Patrick's.

Soho is not blessed with beaches of golden sand and our sunsets are glimpsed reflections in the glass of surrounding office blocks rather than in the azure waters of the Andaman Sea. But it's a much-loved home for a many.... May it long be so, and may we each play what part we can in keeping it so.

## ADVERTISING IN THE SOHO CLARION

Our magazine is generally published in March, June, September and December. We print around 3,000 copies that are distributed across Soho and the wider West End to businesses, community spaces and residential premises along with online publication at [www.thesohosociety.org.uk](http://www.thesohosociety.org.uk)

### ADVERTISING RATES

Full Page: 210mm x 297mm = £495 for 1 ad or £1400 for 4 ads (£350 each)

Half Page: 210mm x 148mm = £275 for 1 ad or £800 for 4 ads (£200 each)

Quarter Page: 105mm x 148mm = £150 for 1 ad or £420 for 4 ads (£105 each)

Double box: 74mm x 105mm = £100 for 1 ad or £260 for 4 ads (£70 each)

Box: 74mm x 52mm = £50 for 1 ad or £160 for 4 ads (£35 each)

Payment can be made online through our website <https://www.thesohosociety.org.uk/shop/>

Advertising artwork to be supplied as print-ready PDF with the following specifications:

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## STEVE MULDOON OUR LOCAL WARD OFFICER

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Thank you once again for giving me the opportunity to write and thanks again for the comments and emails received after the last one. They were greatly appreciated.

As I write we have just gone through the biggest change in policing within the Met in recent times. We have as a borough merged with Kensington & Chelsea and Hammersmith & Fulham. So what changes for you the general public? The simple answer is nothing. You will still have officers attend your calls for assistance and will still have myself and PC Heaton as your local officers. The reason I have mentioned this first in the article is because over the last few weeks I have seen countless posts regarding police numbers and police on the streets in Soho. With our merger all posts have been looked at and, where necessary, officers have been redeployed to other roles. We have also had task-forces created. I believe we now for Soho actually have more officers we can call on to patrol than we had before. These officers will be tasked by myself and PC Will Heaton and will focus on the issues we have.

In relation to the current issues we have successfully managed to get our TSG back to the area to patrol for eight weeks again. These officers will again focus on our problem areas.

I have also seen lots on twitter recently regarding Cambridge Circus. We do understand this is a problem and has been for some time. I can assure you we are focusing on the area at all times of the day and will continue to do so now we have merged. We also know that working with Camden is key to tackling this issue and again I can assure you this is happening. Camden have been through some huge staff changes and have effectively got a whole new team in the last six weeks. I have met them all and they have the same attitude as us in relation to tackling this issue.

Since I last wrote, for the first time we took part in a joint op with Westminster Council to target Pedicabs committing offences in relation to noise. This lasted two nights and over the two nights over 20 riders were dealt with by the council for various offences. We have plans to continue this and make this a regular operation.

We have had some great results at court with two new CBOs being granted and four still going through court. The CBOs were both for people who were committing burglaries to business properties in Soho. They are now banned from entering the area with one banned for life (or until a further order is put in place) - look out on twitter for details.

Following a successful trial in December, the Soho Angels start again on Friday nights. They will be looking after the visitors to Soho who need their help following a successful trial in December. They have recruited some fantastic volunteers, all giving up their time to help visitors to the area ensure they have a safe night. They will be patrolling the streets on a Friday night initially and then adding in Saturdays once the staff are all fully trained. We will be doing what we can to assist them.

Preparations for Pride are well underway and again please do contact me should you have any concerns/suggestions or advice for this year's event and I will pass this on to the organisers.

As always should you need us please do contact me via [P228880@met.pnn.police.uk](mailto:P228880@met.pnn.police.uk) or send a message on twitter to [@MPSSoho](https://twitter.com/MPSSoho).

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*continued from Pancho Lewis*

### SAVE THE COACH AND HORSES

Finally, we all know how much of a cherished pub the Coach and Horses is. Pub landlord Alastair and his daughter Hollie do a sterling job of managing the pub - it's a historic place which stretches back to the days of Norman Balon, who proclaimed himself "London's rudest pub landlord". I love the fact that they run good old fashioned piano sing-alongs twice a week.

I'm working with Alastair and Hollie to try and save the pub from being taken over and managed by Fuller's. We want it to remain a community pub.

# SOHO BAKERS CLUB

## ALFAJORES



Classic Argentinian Biscuits inspired by a recent visit.

*130g corn flour*  
*100g plain flour*  
*1 teaspoon baking powder*  
*1/2 teaspoon soda bicarbonate*  
*1/4 teaspoon fine salt*  
*112g unsalted butter at room temperature*  
*70g granulated sugar*  
*2 large egg yolks*  
*1/2 teaspoon vanilla extract*  
*1/2 tin Nestle Carnation Caramel or Dulce de Leche*  
*Icing sugar for dusting*

Oven Gas 4, 180c

Line two baking sheets with baking parchment. Place the corn flour, plain flour, baking powder, soda bicarbonate and salt in a bowl and combine.

Place the butter and sugar in a bowl, mix using a whisk on medium speed until pale and fluffy, about 3 minutes.

Add the egg yolks and vanilla and mix until incorporated.

On a low speed, gradually add the flour mixture and mix until just incorporated with no visible white pockets - about 30 seconds.

Turn the dough out and shape into a smooth disk, tightly wrap in cling film and place in the fridge for 1 hour.

Lightly flour the work surface, roll 1/4 inch thick, the dough will crack but can be patched together.

Stamp out 24 rounds using a plain or fluted 2 inch cutter.

Cook until firm, golden and pale on the bottom, about 12-14 minutes.

When cool, flip the biscuits over and sandwich two together with caramel or Dulce de leche and dust with icing sugar.

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## TASMANIA BY MARGARET BLOOMER

Flying down on the last leg of my epic journey to the other side of the planet, the Melbourne to Hobart hop was refreshingly short, and spacious - the seat next to me was vacant. From 30,000 feet however, palls of smoke wafting upwards from Tasmanian wild bushfires were plainly visible and worrying. The Antipodean Summer is threatening to be a scorcher: "45 in Melbourne, 46 in Adelaide...." the tv weather forecaster in the Melbourne departure lounge proclaimed. Welcome to Australia.

My hosts in Tassie live in a small, blissful rural village some ten or so kilometres as the crow flies from Hobart. The surrounding eucalyptus trees complete with resident huntsman spiders present no small challenge for this arachnophobe, but I heroically took them on - even making close acquaintance with a particularly splendid redback specimen. There was a baby scorpion watching me intently as I tried to relax in the bath. Kookaburras laughed as wallabies came down to the door eagerly awaiting their evening kitchen scraps.

Within twenty-four hours however, we found ourselves packing our overnight bags, passports and little treasures. Bundling into cars, we absquatulated to the city seeking refuge with relatives. Alarming clouds of smoke were drifting down over the trees and into the valley. On one occasion, ash rained down on us, even in the city. A friend co-incidentally in New Zealand, reported that the smoke was even reaching them 1,500 miles away.

Tasmania is drying out. Of course, wild bush fires are normal, but this current crop are unusual. Apparently, they have been burning since

December and many are uncontrollable. With roads closed, we were sadly unable to visit much of the ancient, virgin forest that is unique in the world and tragically, under imminent threat. A depressing, sad indictment on climate change though all this may be; Tasmania nevertheless, is just wonderful.

The Tasmanians I met were friendly, straight-forward, open and honest. The echidna we screeched to a halt on a county road to avoid, was less friendly. He was extremely shy. Curling up into a small prickly ball in the relative safety of the roadside, he refused to budge. These strange egg-laying mammals are as cute as it is possible to be. With their long, pointy snouts, they resemble our hedgehogs. Other Tasmanian treasures include their devils. The Tasmanian devil is about the size of a badger. They are scavengers, mainly preying upon roadkill it would seem, and there is an important conservation programme underway to preserve these amazing little carnivores as they are under threat from an as yet, incurable infectious facial cancer.

A visit to the Grote Reber Radio Telescope was of particular interest to me as an amateur astronomer. Its unique position in the southern hemisphere and proximity to a vineyard, satisfied two of my foremost interests in one fell swoop. Hobart's MONA (the Museum of Old and New Art) is a subterranean wonderland. And of course, Hobart is a very important jumping-off point for the Antarctic...

A welcome relief from the heat methinks! For now...



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# PETER BOIZOT MBE

16 NOVEMBER 1929 TO 5 DECEMBER 2018



Peter Boizot MBE was born in Peterborough but he was a true man of Soho.

His MBE was awarded for political and public service.

After leaving school he travelled extensively in Europe, where he developed his entrepreneurial skills, selling religious pictures and souvenirs to American tourists, and where he came across and enjoyed pizza.

Returning to the UK, and finding no-one selling pizzas, he set up, with a £100 loan, his first pizza restaurant in small premises in Wardour Street, which to this day still sells the Pizza Express brand of Italian pasta and pizza 365 days a year. From such small beginnings it developed into the multi-million pound empire of today with Pizza Express outlets in almost every town, which amazingly retain the same quality as in those early days. He created a pizza – the Veneziana to raise money for the Venice in Peril charity. Peter took over Kettner's and for many years this was his flagship, with live piano and classy paintings on the walls.

Peter was also a lover of Jazz, organizing the first Soho Jazz Festival, bringing to Soho the veteran players of the Jazz world – and putting them up in a penthouse of doubtful previous usage which he temporarily rented to accommodate the musicians.

Peter was a flamboyant (in an under-stated way),

astute, and interesting man. He was a great supporter of the Soho community – fellow restaurateurs, businesses and residents alike. He housed the first office of the Soho Society in a tiny room in those original Wardour Street premises normally used for receiving supplies.

Peter took a leading role in the Soho Society's annual festival, organising the Waiters' Race, compering the event and presenting prizes wearing a native American's chieftain's war bonnet for no apparent reason – but that was Peter.

Back in his birth place, he was equally dedicated to the community there, enthusiastically buying and developing the Great Northern Hotel, the local Odeon and adjacent department store – and the Peterborough Football Club. He was particularly proud of providing a home for a branch of Loughborough University in one of his properties. Peter twice stood for Peterborough as a Liberal Candidate, losing by a small margin.

Peter loved to hold parties for his many, many friends. One I remember, to celebrate one of his birthdays, started in London with champagne on the train that he had laid on, then at the Great Northern there were tables laden with oysters and all manner of other goodies, a giant chocolate fountain (not seen in the UK before) and, of course, plenty more champagne.

Peter was a Soho entrepreneur who was proud never to have drawn up a business plan, and who never lost his love for the Soho village, its business community, and its people. Peter loved life – he was always enthusiastic. He was a seeker of quality and good service and fun in everything he did. He was idiosyncratic, impossible at times, indefatigable, and a lovely man in every way. He wrote about his life in *Mr. Pizza and All That Jazz*.

Peter we miss you.

Leslie Hardcastle

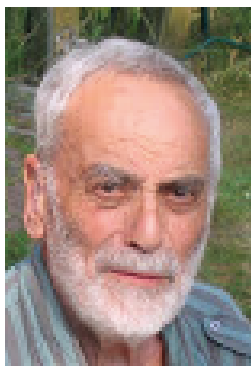
## PETER ZANDER

9 JULY 1922 - 18 JANUARY 2019 - A LONG TIME  
RESIDENT OF SOHO.

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Peter Zander was born in Germany and emigrated to England in 1933, eventually settling in Welwyn Garden City. He never forgot his German roots, visiting most years. In the 1950s Peter moved into a flat in Romilly

Street, where he lived until he had a stroke in 2012, after which he lived in a care home in Sussex, where he died.



Peter was a wonderful 'character,' always in and around Soho, where he would talk to anybody, and was always cheerful. He led a colourful life. He was involved with the theatre for over 50 years, during which time he worked as an actor, stage manager,

lecturer, teacher, and director of theatre and film. He established numerous artistic projects, including Romilly Productions, the Central London Opera, Portsmouth Festival and Richmond-Upon-Thames Arts Festival. He founded the Portsmouth International String Quartet Competition, with Yehudi Menuhin as Music Director, which later became the Wigmore Hall London International String Quartet Competition. He was also

a Churchill Fellow.

He was involved with many areas of the arts (of which he had an encyclopaedic knowledge), including the concept of an opera house in a cave, in the mountain in Gstaad, Switzerland, a plan which was never realised for lack of money.

Peter also travelled extensively and would have been a great travel writer. He wrote wonderful pieces on his travels and each year instead of a Christmas card would send a 'potted history' of that year, where he had been, what he had done, and so on, all in very small typeface! He also wrote a blog for too short a time entitled "Thoughts of a Berliner", which tells you more about the man than I ever could.

He was always busy and celebrated his 90<sup>th</sup> birthday in Germany, and I quote from his blog, "I keep busy and I celebrate my 90<sup>th</sup> birthday in my father's sailing club on the lovely Wannsee lake in Berlin in July. Here I spent my wonderful childhood weekends, sailing, rowing, watching the regattas, and picnicking on board my father's racing yacht, with my mother ..."

Peter, you will be missed.

Jane Doyle

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Our Featured Cocktail:

## TITIAN COSMO

King of Soho Variorum Gin • 15ml Cointreau  
10ml lemon juice • 3 strawberries • 20ml Cranberry Juice

Muddle the strawberries in a shaker, add the other ingredients and shake well with ice. Fine strain into a chilled coupe and garnish with a strawberry.

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