

# FitzWest Plan

Fitzrovia West Neighbourhood Forum

[www.FITZWEST.ORG/wordpress](http://www.FITZWEST.ORG/wordpress)



***Our mission: to ensure that Fitzrovia develops as a habitable, sustainable and neighbourly community through all means available including planning, collaborative working and community enterprise.***

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## Introduction

### Purpose of the Neighbourhood Plan

In 2011 government introduced a bill that gave more support to local, community led planning initiatives.

During 2012 some of Westminster's amenity Societies started to discuss forums, but unfortunately these discussions were not widely publicised. Societies spoke to societies, rather than to the residents and businesses that made up their area. By the time the people of Fitzrovia became aware of the situation an extremely large Marylebone focused forum was being proposed.

After discussions with the Fitzrovia Neighbourhood Association (FNA), a cross border Fitzrovia bid was launched. Several of our current steering group were involved in that bid. Once it became clear that there was likely to be some opposition to the cross border proposal from Westminster City Council, the Fitzrovia group decided to split into two, a Camden side and a Westminster side.

### PUBLICITY

The consultation period commenced almost at once and the steering group set about ensuring that consultation on the proposal was widespread and well informed. Initially a small public meeting was arranged and individuals who we thought might want to take a more active role were invited.

The City Council has, through its *Statement of Community Involvement*, set out a comprehensive schedule of consultation and engagement techniques which are:

Informing stakeholders by:

- Coverage through the media such as local newspapers and radio
- Posters, leaflets and information
- The internet

and

Consulting stakeholders via:

- Questionnaires
- Public meetings
- Discussion groups

The group has achieved the following:

- Set up a website
- Attracted subscribers and supporters to that website
- Regularly updated the website with information
- Undertaken a survey of residents and businesses
- Contacted as many residents and local businesses as possible via a whole area leaflet drop
- Placed advertisement posters in local shops, cafes, business and residential block noticeboards.
- Continued discussions and negotiations with neighbouring groups and amenity societies
- Held two public meetings
- Issued articles and information to the local newssheet and internet news providers.

From the very beginning we published a set of values that we still adhere to:

- *We are transparent, democratic and inclusive*
- *We deal constructively with everyone*
- *We recognise that we may not agree with everyone and every organisation, but that should not stop us working with them*
- *We welcome business, residential members and representatives of institutions and organisations*
- *The facts are important to us*

## SUPPORTERS

We have also set up an automated supporters list. People can sign in via the website. This list currently contains over 200 residents and businesses from across the area, including more than twenty small businesses, landlords and landowners, local developers and some of our big employers like Westminster University.

We have also kept in touch with the following organisations:

1. Fitzrovia Community Centre
2. Fitzrovia News
3. Fitzrovia Neighbourhood Association
4. St Charles Ogle Street\*
5. All Saints St Margaret Street
6. Fitzrovia Lates
7. All Souls CofE School
8. Westminster University\*
9. Fitzroy Court Sheltered Housing\*
10. Middleton Place Residents Association\*
11. Holcroft Court Residents Association\*
12. Fitzrovia Apartments Leasholders Association\*

13. Soho Society
14. Marylebone Neighbourhood Forum
15. Marylebone Association
16. Portland Village Association
17. All Souls Youth Project
18. Mayfair Neighbourhood Forum
19. Soho Neighbourhood Forum
20. St James Neighbourhood Forum

Starred organisations are represented by residents. The list represents our local organisations and residents' groups, as well as neighbouring organisations.

### LANDOWNERS

We have held meetings with some of our larger landowners. This area is not inhabited by large estates as much as other areas are. In Fitzrovia we have a group of smaller landowners. There are no exceptionally large swathes of single ownership.

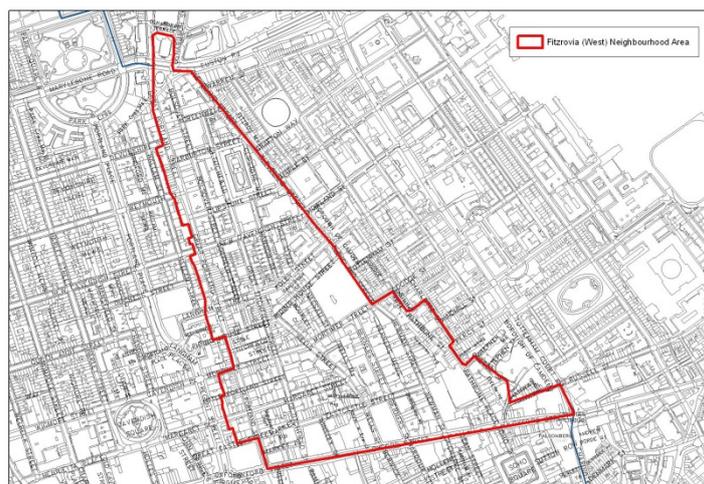
Landowners who we have had positive and cordial meetings include:

- London Central Portfolio
- Howard de Walden Estate
- Langham Estates
- Ridgeford Properties
- Derwent London

All these organisations have expressed a willingness to work with us and to support and/or become members of the forum.

### BOUNDARY

At the beginning of our process a number of different boundaries were discussed. It became clear that whilst Great Portland Street remained an area of debate, west of that street was considered by most people to lie in Marylebone and East of that street was definitely Fitzrovia. Our proposal was for a boundary that ran down the middle of the street, but Westminster City Council decided that Great Portland Street should be considered in its entirety. On balance they decided to include the street within Fitzrovia. Thus the boundaries of the area have been fixed:



## CONSULTATION

Even before designation we commenced discussion with the local community in a series of meetings and exhibitions to establish a direction for the work. A number of clear priorities have emerged. At the inaugural meeting of the forum in April 2014 the following issues were agreed:

1. a) The topics to be considered in more detail by the Executive Committee (and in respect of which the Executive Committee shall propose policies/policy options and report back to the members of the Forum via topic group meetings and emails and in future Forum meetings) shall include the following: (See Appendix 2)

Priorities for The Plan:

- Liveable Neighbourhood
- Nurture Young and Independent Businesses
- Urban Realm
- Environment

To include policies on:

- Pressure for development
- Affordability of housing
- Importance of independent businesses
- State of streets and squares
- Traffic, parking, deliveries, cycling and walking
- Rubbish collection
- Greening the area
- Night time uses

These priorities and the issues and objectives that lay behind them were further defined in a public exhibition held in January 2016. (See Appendix 3) After studying the consultation report the executive determined that they would concentrate on policies for the following:

- Reducing Pollution
- Improving Green Space
- Planning for a better rubbish collection and storage system
- Improving walking and cycling

In addition they wished to analyse the conservation areas both architecturally and spatially in order to provide better advice to those who wish to develop or refurbish.

The executive recognised that other bodies already held policies that we supported, though these policies were not always adhered to. In particular in reviewing Westminster City Council, Greater London Authority and national policies we wished to support them to:

- Encourage affordable housing
- Prevent degradation of existing residential
- Encourage independent shops
- Reduce Pollution

We also recognised that some issues we wished to introduce could not be achieved by planning policies. The executive committed to campaign to ensure that the relevant authorities comply with their own existing policies on;

- Housing and affordable housing
- Architectural quality of conservation areas
- Maintaining small and independent businesses
- Pollution

Public greening emerged as a very important issue within the area. The executive resolved to take immediate steps to start a programme of public greening. With this aim a grant has been provided by Tesco and the committee is embarking on a pilot project in the spring of 2017.

#### STRUCTURE OF THE NEIGHBOURHOOD FORUM

Our forum is composed of about 200 members who live or work within the area. The forum meets once or twice a year. Membership is free. The forum elects an executive committee who meet regularly to work on the plan and have executive authority to collect and expend funds for these purposes. It is an unincorporated community organisation. The constitution can be viewed at <http://fitzwest.org/wordpress/about-2/draft-constutution/>

## Acknowledgements

The forum is grateful for the work of the executive committee who have done so much to bring this plan to fruition:

Forum Executive 2015 - 2017

Roger Allen Resident & Holcroft Court Residents Association

Nick Bailey Resident & University of Westminster

Sharon Banoff Resident

Yoram Bluuman Resident

Daniel Castle LDG Ltd

Barbara Corr Resident

Peter Dore-Smith Kaffee Ltd

Ben Everest LDG Ltd

Gwilym Harbottle Resident

Julia Haythorne Resident

Vivien Hughes Resident

Edwina Lonsdale Mundy Cruising plc

Alison Matthews Resident

Steve Medway New West End Company

Ian Milne Langham Estates

Chris Shaw Resident and Shaw International

Marci Shaw Resident

Wendy Shillam Resident and Local Business

Andrew Slee Resident & Holcroft Court Residents Association

and to our consultants:

Tony Burton

Tom Kimber

We would also like to thank Westminster City Council officers, members, portfolio holders and our ward councillors for their help and assistance.

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## Structure of the Plan

Plan policies are set out as follows:

Our neighbourhood:	A description of the neighbourhood now, its history, background and key characteristics.
Plan timescale:	This takes us to the early 2030s which is the date for the planned opening of Crossrail 2. By that time Crossrail 1 (The Elizabeth Line) High Speed Link 2 and Crossrail 2 will likely have been completed, transforming our area.
Vision and Objectives:	This outlines how we as a community wish to see the neighbourhood evolve over the life of the plan which is to cover the next 30 years.
Policies:	<p>Policies are broken down into the following headings:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Liveable Neighbourhood</li><li>• Businesses</li><li>• Urban Realm</li><li>• Environment</li><li>• Access and Transport</li></ul>
Site Allocations:	This section highlights particular sites where we wish to encourage change and development, or where we feel more direction is required.
Delivery and Implementation:	This section covers a delivery plan and discusses how Community Infrastructure Levy and other initiatives should dovetail with this plan.
Design Guide	Whilst not defined as policies, we have discussed with the community what they cherish about the area. This section gives practical design guidelines for architects and developers, as well as occupiers and owners
Appendices:	A list of evidence documents accompanying the neighbourhood plan and longer term ambitions can be found in Appendices A1 and A2.