

Your

Mr A J Smith
6 Courtwell

Westbourne Neighbourhood Association

Newsletter 2.

Chairman's Report

In July the Westminster City Council held an exhibition in the Westbourne Grove Baptist Hall. This exhibition showed the plans for the Great Western Road and the Moorhouse Road school and alternatives for the various proposals.

This type of exhibition is a new method of consultation and communication for the Westminster City Council. It is something to be welcomed and is particularly helpful in the case of proposals likely to be controversial or to give rise to strong local feelings. It depends of course for its success upon a large number of people attending, inspecting the plans, and expressing their views. Some people in our neighbourhood were in favour of the Moorhouse Road site for the school as they were under the impression that the site was in the northern end of Moorhouse Road (north of Talbot Road), which was being demolished anyway. I hope that those under this misapprehension were able to attend the exhibition to see what the proposals were. (Several possible sites were proposed for the school, one of which was on the site of the proposed Great Western Road extension into Talbot Road. This was your committee's preference - which we urged the Council to adopt.) This illustrates the importance of communication and accurate information about planning proposals and also of one of our aims which is to keep people informed of such proposals.

Apart from the road and school site, we have been involved in other matters and proposals, some of which were discussed at the meeting on 2 July. At that meeting the housing of tenants from the St Stephen's redevelopment area was raised as also was the well-discussed proposal that the Council should compulsorily acquire empty houses in Westminster. The tenants at present living in homes to be demolished have now formed their own Association and are bringing pressure on the Council.

We objected to the proposed redevelopment of the Odeon Cinema site and although the plans have been modified the probable difficulties over traffic in Artesian Road are still with us.

Membership continues to increase. The minimum subscription is only one penny - so that no one should be excluded on the grounds of means. I hope that those who can afford it will contribute more (much more) than the minimum subscription.

The officers and committee of the Association were appointed and approved at the foundation meeting of the Association on 31 January 1973. These were as follows:

Chairman: Howard Aplin; Vice-Chairman: Penelope Whiting;
Secretary: Susan Compton; Treasurer: Christopher Meynell;
Committee: Peter Adams, Barbara Anderson, Gerald Cinamon, Stephan Colback, Norman Eveleigh, Father Fullerton, Naomi Honigsbaum, Arnold Linden.

Barbara Anderson undertook the task of Membership Secretary and Stephan Colback that of liaison officer with other organizations. During the course of the year Norman Eveleigh resigned as also did Christopher Meynell on his move overseas. I would like to express my thanks to the other officers and committee for their work over the past months, particularly to our overworked Secretary, who has often been in the front line of the various battles, and to Elaine Grand who has given us indispensable advice and help.

Of necessity, we were a self-appointed and self-approved committee. The coming first annual meeting will provide elected officers and committee.

I would like to thank all members for their support and encouragement and hope that as many of you as possible will attend our first annual general meeting to raise matters of general or individual concern and to correct those omissions which must exist in any committee.

Howard Aplin, Chairman

Meeting

Mark it on your calendar now!

THE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING OF THE
WESTBOURNE NEIGHBOURHOOD ASSOCIATION
19 NOVEMBER 1973 8.30PM

at the Westbourne Grove Baptist Church Hall
(corner of Westbourne Grove and Ledbury Road)
ELECTION OF OFFICERS AND COMMITTEE MEMBERS
NEW BUSINESS
GENERAL DISCUSSION

How You Voted

Almost 400 residents completed the questionnaire at the exhibition held at the Baptist Church in July. The result was an overwhelming response against the proposals to extend Great Western Road, and to demolish most of Moorhouse Road (south of Talbot Road) for the new school.

Results of the questionnaire, as supplied by City Hall, were as follows:

Question 1. Should the proposed Great Western Road extension south of Westbourne Park Road be built?

Yes: 49 No: 292

Question 2. Should the St Mary of the Angels School be extended in Moorhouse Road?

Yes: 92 No: 244

Question 3. Should the St Stephen's Gardens site be used for a school?

Yes: 231 No: 128

(Total of answers vary as some people did not answer all questions.)

Any volunteers? Is there someone who knows shorthand and typing and can help our overworked Secretary for about 3 hours per week? Please contact Sue Compton at 5 Moorhouse Road.

Once Upon A Time

One hundred and fifty years ago your neighbourhood was part of grassy fields that stretched unbroken, apart from a few footpaths, from the few scattered dwellings on the north side of Bayswater (then Uxbridge) Road to the Harrow Road and the Paddington Canal which had opened twenty years earlier. Porto Bello Farm was the nearest settlement to the west. To the east, the Bays Water, the name of the upper reaches of the Westbourne, flowed to the Thames via Hyde Park.

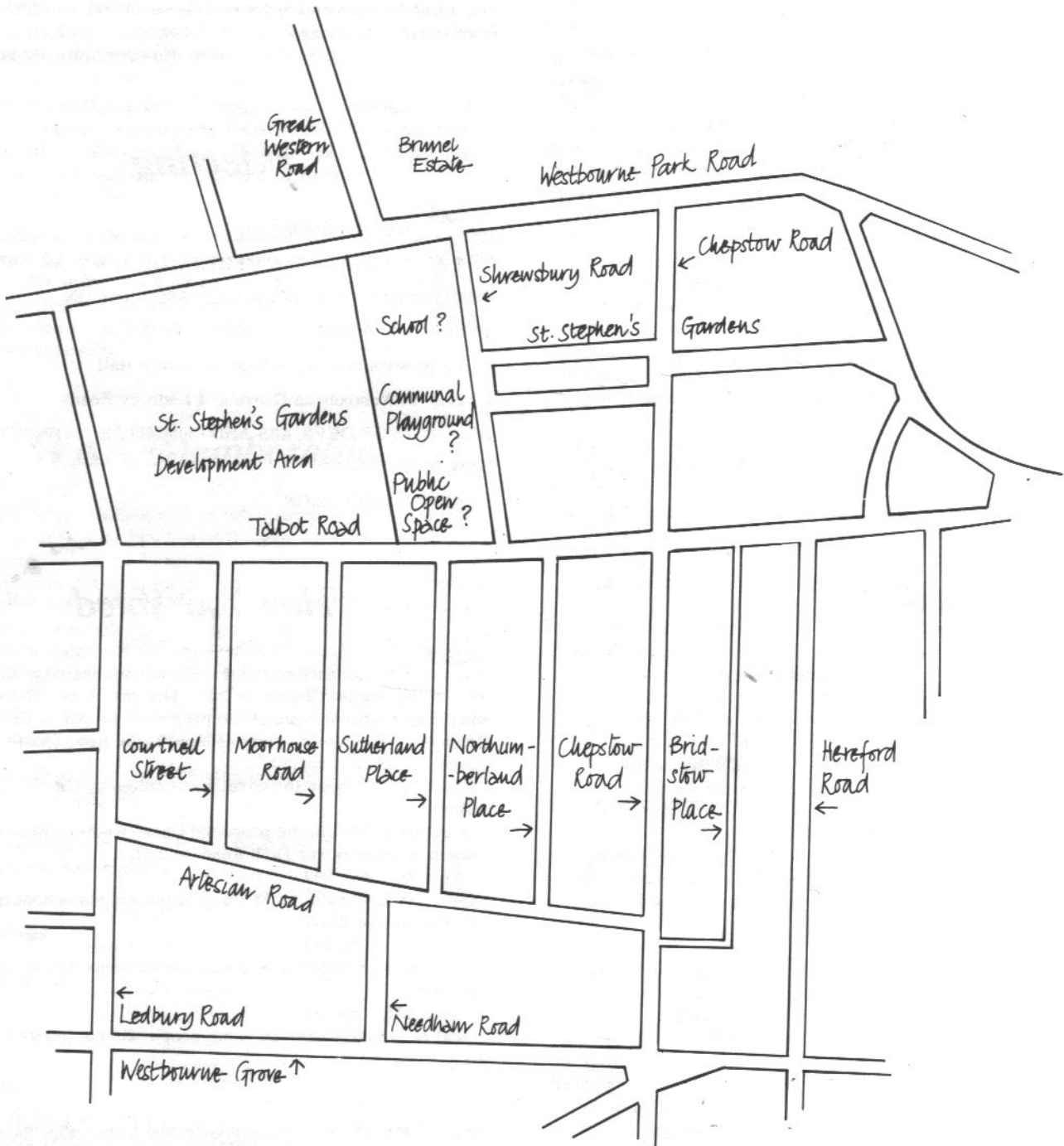
By 1841 a country lane called Westbourne Grove had appeared. Coming from the east, it ended where Chepstow Road was later built in 1848.

The next decade was one of intensive development of the area. Westbourne Grove now extended westwards, the streets between it and Talbot Road, and those between Ledbury and Chepstow roads had been laid out prior to building upon them. Country fields started on the north side of Talbot Road - and Porto Bello Farm could still be seen in the distance.

By 1868 the surrounding fields were gone, smothered under the endless streets and terraces we are familiar with today. Westbourne Grove had become a high-class shopping street of great prestige remaining so at least into the 1920s in spite of Whiteley's moving from its elegant row of shops to its new and present site on Queensway in 1912. Older residents probably remember when Whiteley's and Harrods were mentioned in the same breath.

It was the Second World War that brought gloom to the area. As the air-raid shelters went up at the end of the streets many houses fell into disrepair, and others were left empty (at least one large one was for sale at £250 but there were no buyers). The wrought iron fences were dismantled and carted off to Wormwood Scrubs to lie there unused.

The last decade has seen an enormous change. Once again, as in the earlier part of the century, the area has become a 'desirable' one in which to live. With the invasion of the antique shops we are now on the edge of the tourist route to Portobello Road. Builders



If you live or work in this area
you should be a member of
the Westbourne Neighbourhood Association

are busy on every street, and house prices have risen beyond belief. The vast Brunel Estate has appeared out of the dereliction of the railway yards. Another large development is underway on Talbot Road, and one is planned on Great Western Road.

We would like to hear personal reminiscences from older residents concerning our area in earlier days. Please write to the WNA Secretary, 5 Moorhouse Road, W2. Each letter, however brief, will be appreciated - and will be part of an important record of the area.

Where Are They Now?

Many of the original street names in our neighbourhood were those of local owners of the property, or of their native counties. No prizes for the answer to where the developer of Chepstow, Pembroke, Ledbury, Hereford, and Monmouth Roads came from. And whoever named the four small streets between Ledbury and Chepstow Roads must have had a sentimental attachment to the North. But many of the streets have since had their names changed. Can you guess the present names of these streets? Correct answers are at the bottom of the column, along with the date of the change.

- | | |
|-----------------------|-------------------------------------|
| 1. Cumberland Place | 7. Richmond Rd |
| 2. Cumberland Terrace | 8. Victoria Place |
| 3. St Mary's Terrace | 9. Westbourne Grove North |
| 4. Devonshire Terrace | 10. Alexander Place, Carlton Place, |
| 5. Burlington Villas | Talbot Villas, Talbot Road |
| 6. Westmoreland Place | Villas, Shrewsbury Terrace, |
| | Shrewsbury Villas |

Brunel Report

Michael Halward, play-leader for our neighbours on the Brunel Estate, reports on some of the conclusions drawn after this summer's play scheme on the estate.

In walking around the neighbouring vicinity one encounters the familiar sight of children made apathetic by an environment devoid of any stimuli specifically relating to them. Consequently they drift into hanging around the streets, illicitly playing on building sites and basically looking for something that will interest them.

Vandalism as yet is not a major problem in the area, but we should not content ourselves with this. Experience on estates such as Lisson Green has shown that vandalism inevitably results when children become bored with a densely populated urban situation. Moreover, once vandalism is established among the older age ranges it will soon be adopted by the younger children.

To combat some of these problems before they occur we urge the following:

- an adventure playground which encourages constructive activities, development of their own ideas and is conducive to interaction between children of the same ages.
- the provision of a community / shopping / advice centre. The nearest shopping centre is in the Portobello Road, a considerable walking distance from the estate. Further, there is a noticeable lack of any plans for community facilities which such groups as old people, mothers, the tenants association and youngsters definitely need.
- the need for more contact with local agencies and their activities in the area as well as the possibility of meetings to

discuss the area as a whole with the aim of drawing conclusions for the future.

We're sure you'll agree with these suggestions, and if you would like to help in a practical way, please contact your street representative.

Planning for 2000

Westminster have announced a series of important public meetings where local people can hear what is planned for their area and make comments and suggestions. We are part of Bayswater/Lancaster Gate and our chance was on 24 October at a meeting at the St James' Hall, Gloucester Terrace. If you weren't there you can write to the Director of Architecture and Planning (City Hall, Victoria Street SW1) who will send information on the development plan and a special form to write your views on. (See separate leaflet distributed with this Newsletter.)

Confusion at City Hall

Of course we should all be glad that Westminster takes an enlightened view about its citizens helping to plan their own future - but when we become a conservation area we seem to be going to be a rather vocal one. Surely our natural information place is Porchester Hall - not Lancaster Gate? Results of the exhibition in the Baptist Church were posted in the market stall run by Westminster at Harrow Road. If you feel strongly about this strange location for news that affects us, write a post-card to City Hall.

Closing Your Local

Revised plans for the redevelopment of the Odeon site on Westbourne Grove have been studied with interest by local residents. This is a key site for the whole neighbourhood. Disappointment is keen that all access is still shown sited in Artesian Road - a small residential road which acts as access to other residential roads. Since a one-way system is likely to be imposed by the Highways Department on our area we would welcome very careful thought before the plan is finalized.

Also, as the area becomes more residential with new houses in St Stephen's Gardens West and with all the new housing at Brunel we would have thought there would be sufficient demand for a small cinema to have been included in the redevelopment scheme.

If you feel strongly, write to the Chairman of the Town Planning Committee at City Hall and make your views known.

Free Bus Travel

Westminster City Council announced last month that free bus travel is now available (for women of 60 years and over, men of 65 and over) between the following hours:

Monday to Friday: 9.30am-4pm; 7pm-midnight

Saturdays, Sundays, public holidays: 5.30am-midnight

The journey must start between those hours and must be wholly within the Greater London area. Existing concessionary passes are valid for this free bus travel. New applicants for passes should apply to the Social Services office at Porchester Hall on weekdays between 10am and noon, and 2pm to 4pm.

Any good neighbours who have a car and are at home during the day, might like to provide for their older neighbours a lift or two to Porchester Hall. Could you?

6. Moorhouse Rd (1876)

5. Part of Moorhouse Rd (1864)

4. Part of Moorhouse Rd (1864)

3. Part of Moorhouse Rd (1862)

2. Courtmell St, west side (1872)

1. Courtmell St, east side (1872)

8. Bridgestow Place (1938)

7. Chepstow Rd (1938)

9. Artesian Rd (date?)

10. An easy one! - all were parts

of Talbot Road (1868-1909)

HAVE YOU HEARD... about the formation of two neighbouring tenants' associations? One is the Brunel Tenants Association - the Chairman is Mr Bill Wilson, 8 Derrycombe House, Brunel Estate, Great Western Road. The other is the St Stephen's Tenants Association run by Mr Bruce Birchall, 151 Westbourne Park Road.

HAVE YOU HEARD... The Housing Management Committee of Westminster has sent us the following report: 'The Committee agreed a policy to give priority to middle-aged and elderly tenants in Westminster who are imminently threatened with dispossession by their landlords. Such tenants must fulfil the following conditions: a) they must be on the Council's housing waiting list; b) they must have at least ten years' residence in Westminster; c) the applicant or a member of his family must be aged 50 or over, unless there are children in the family; d) the landlord concerned must have obtained a possession order from the court.

One offer only will be made by the Council, and applicants will in general be expected to accept accommodation anywhere in Westminster, although efforts will be made to rehouse aged persons as near as possible to their own area. The application will not be considered for this assistance if his own action has contributed to his emergency position - if, for example, a landlord has proceeded against him because of arrears of rent.'

HAVE YOU HEARD... about the programme concerning fireworks safety? The events, organized by Westminster City Council at the Health Clinic, 283a Harrow Road, take place between 10am and noon daily between October 22 and October 26.

We have all been suffering from the slowness, noise, dirt, and danger from the slow progress of demolition work on the Talbot Road site. We've written a letter of complaint on your behalf and asked if the land may be used temporarily as a much needed play space once it is cleared. Again, if you feel strongly write to City Hall yourself.

WNA Membership

Your Association now has nearly 400 members, but we would like many more. It is numbers that will make our Association effective and it is in the interests of everyone to join.

The main role of the Association is to know about all developments in the Westbourne district and to communicate and to consult with the people living and working here.

If you are already a member, please persuade others to join. We ask for no more than 1p fee, but larger contributions are welcome.

Please cut and give to the WNA Membership Secretary,
8a Moorhouse Road, W2.

I wish to become a member of the Westbourne
Neighbourhood Association.

My contribution is _____

Signed _____

Address _____

(Cheques to be made out to
'Westbourne Neighbourhood Association')

Useful Addresses

In our last Newsletter we published an article called Tenants! Know Your Rights in which a Kensington Gardens Square address and phone number were given in error. Our apologies to all concerned. For trouble with housing, law, family, or job, your nearest Advice Bureau is -

Paddington Neighbourhood Advice Bureau and Law Centre
465 Harrow Road, W10 (phone: 969 9425)

Emergency phone numbers concerning gas problems:

Gas 828 9878 (day or night)

Natural gas 568 9211 (day); 828 9878 (night)

Natural gas service and conversion problems 568 9211

For advice on harassment, implementation of the Housing Acts, etc.:

City Solicitor
Solicitor's Department
Westminster City Hall
Victoria Street, SW1

For advice on social services:

Westminster Social Services Department
Area 4
71 Queensway, W2 (phone: 727 6464)

Old Peoples Welfare Association
313 Harrow Road, W2 (phone: 828 8070)

Councillors' Advice Bureaux:

First Friday in the month,
6.30-7.30 p.m. at
Beauchamp Lodge
Warwick Crescent, W2

Third Friday in the month,
6.30-7.30 p.m. at
St Stephen's Church Vestry
St Stephen's Crescent, W2

In addition,
all Paddington's Labour Councillors
take it in turns to be at:
39 Chippenham Road, W9
every Tuesday from 7.00-8.00 p.m.

Home addresses
of Councillors for Westbourne Ward:

Alfred Dubs, 56 Westbourne Park Villas, W2
Colin Brown, 12a Westbourne Terrace Road, W2
Serge Lourie, 1 Joanne House, Queensborough Mews, W2

Other Councillors living in our area:

John Whatmore, 6 Northumberland Place, W2
Max Taylor, 44 Northumberland Place, W2
Simon Ashton, 27 Newton Road, W2

We would like to thank the Westminster Information Office for providing us with copies of 'Westminster Plan' for distribution to our members.

Send your news and views on matters of local interest to:
The Secretary
Westbourne Neighbourhood Association
5 Moorhouse Road, W2