

Dear Resident

Thank you to all who were able to attend the recent Maida Vale Area Forum and help us make decisions that affect your local area. Your views are important to us, so I'd like to take this opportunity to let you know what we are planning to do in response to your feedback. If you would like more detail on the workshop discussions and ward budget spending, visit www.westminster.gov.uk/neighbourhoods or contact our Area Forum Team.

The City Management Plan

The workshop looked at the new planning policies within the City Management Plan. The plan will replace the 'Unitary Development Plan' and will be used to determine planning applications in the future.

You expressed concerns about a number of issues, including: building on gardens and green spaces; loss of local services such as post offices, pharmacies and churches; disruption caused by development; correct notifications not being made in relation to party wall issues and developments being undertaken without the benefit of planning permission.

The City Management Plan can only address some of the issues you raised as it is a planning document and many of the issues you raised are the subject of legislation. All the views you expressed will be considered in the development of the new policies. Where these cannot be specifically mentioned in policy, it may be possible to 'signpost' relevant guidance and information in the plan so that people's rights and responsibilities are clear, even where they are not directly controlled by planning. Councillors suggested that the Council seek to lobby changing primary legislation, in particular to address the lack of linkage between planning and relevant legislation.

Street Management

Darren Pickup, Neighbourhood Crime Reduction Manager, explained how the council is making its street based service more efficient and effective.

The council will be introducing the ward based role of Street Management Officer (SMO). This role combines the best elements of the current City Guardian and City Inspector roles. The SMO will be a visible presence in each ward and will be able to act and enforce, where City Guardians previously could not. The change will result in a 48 % reduction of posts.

Overall you felt that a localised officer is a good idea as they will build relationships with stakeholders, build local knowledge of the community and be accountable. In relation to communicating the changes to residents and businesses you felt that a household mail out was the most effective means of raising awareness. The website was not identified as an effective communication tool because some of you said that it is not clearly laid out and often crashes. Visibility of the SMO was the main point of the discussion. Questions were raised as to where the SMO would be based, how they would be contacted and how they would be able to maintain being on the ground 80% of the time. These questions and comments have been taken back to the Street Management team.

Open Spaces

Rebecca Cloke, Parks Project Manager, led the workshop for open spaces. The workshop discussion was supported by a large map and photographs showing all the open spaces in the area.

The key issues you raised about managing open spaces were: that the Paddington Recreation Ground should be a key priority area for development, particularly the Bowling Green and the Pavilion; St Mary's Church in Paddington Recreation Ground is under utilised; a lack of play space in the area; the introduction of educational walks focussing on tree species; and the importance of improvements to small areas, such as introducing bench seats.

In relation to play space, it was explained that Paddington Recreation Ground operates a policy whereby if the space is not booked, then local children can use the space for free. To address your concern of the under utilisation of the Paddington Recreation Ground, Rebecca Cloke explained that a new college with a café will open in the area which would bring more people to the area.

Services for Older People

Bill Davis, Adult Services North West Manager, and Kevin Williamson, Head of Housing with Care Services, explained how older people's services had changed following the Government White Paper '*Our Health, Our Care, Our Say*' which moves the focus from reactive services to services that offer more choice and independence.

Westminster has changed their services to be more personalised, to enable people to achieve more independence and be in control of any support needs that they have. The services ensure that vulnerable people feel safe and are protected from harm. For more information on Services for Older People, please visit

www.westminster.gov.uk/services/healthandsocialcare/adultservices/older/

£50,000 for your ward – Ward Budget Updates

Maida Vale, Queen's Park, Little Venice and Harrow Road

Councillors are currently deciding how to spend your ward budgets, valued at £50,000 in each ward this year. Suggestions were put forward at the Maida Vale Area Forum and further suggestions can be made through the contact details at the bottom of this page. If you would like to find out about how ward budgets were spent last year, please follow the link www.westminster.gov.uk/wardbudgets

To find out which electoral ward you are in, please visit www.westminster.gov.uk/wardfinder or contact the team.

Your next Maida Vale Area Forum

I look forward to welcoming you to the next Maida Vale Area Forum on Wednesday 10th November 2010, from 6.30-8.30pm, agenda and venue to be confirmed. For more information, please contact the Area Forums team using the contact details on the front page of this letter.



Clr Ian Adams
Chairman of the Maida Vale Area Forum

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