

Dear Resident

Thank you to all who were able to attend the recent St John's Wood Area Forum to 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, please visit www.westminster.gov.uk/neighbourhoods or contact our Area Forum Team.

The City Management Plan

The City Management Plan Workshop discussed basement extensions and paving over front gardens within the area of St John's Wood. You were particularly concerned about both issues and are keen to see tougher policies in the future to prevent such alterations occurring and impacting on the important character of the conservation area.

Basement extensions are becoming increasingly popular, especially in areas such as St John's Wood where land value is high. You felt that such excavations are having a detrimental impact on the green, suburban character of the conservation area and should be restricted.

You were supportive of proposals to impose limitations on the extent of basement excavations and encouraged the implementation of a minimum soil depth above underground extensions to support the greenery and biodiversity of the area. You considered that any extension below the mature gardens of the conservation area would significantly impact on the mature tree growth in the area and thus development should be restricted to the footprint of the existing building.

The paving over of front gardens to create off-street parking is also a major concern in the conservation area where boundary walls and attractive front gardens contribute considerably to the character. Legislation allows for the paving over of front gardens with permeable surfaces with no planning permission which limits the council's power in this area. You urged the council to toughen their policies to ensure that where planning permission is required such alterations do not impact on the special character of the area.

All of these issues will be taken into consideration by relevant officers in the Planning team as they draft the new policies in the City Management Plan.

Street Management

Matthew Leng, Anti Social Behaviour Coordinator discussed local antisocial behaviour issues with you and explained how the council is making the 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 the 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. The main reason for reducing the number of street management posts is due to a change in service needs, and the increased presence of the local Safer Neighbourhood teams.

CCTV

Maddy Findlay led the CCTV workshop. She explained that CCTV is a shared asset between the Crime and Disorder and Parking Operations. Operation of Council CCTV is guided by criteria that acknowledge the need of both operations, third party and member requests and known hot spots for low compliance. Prior to any camera deployment ward members are consulted and provided with the opportunity to comment on the proposed deployment.

For further information concerning CCTV in the area please contact Maddy Findlay on 02076413354 or at mfindlay1@westminster.gov.uk

£50,000 for your Area – St John’s Wood Updates Abbey Road and Regent’s Park

Councillors are currently deciding how to spend your ward budgets. Suggestions were put forward at the St John’s Wood 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 St John’s Wood Area Forum

I look forward to welcoming you to the next St John’s Wood Area Forum on Thursday 18th 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.



Cllr Lindsey Hall
Chairman of the St John’s Wood Area Forum

Contact your ward councillors by calling 020 7641 3916 or email:
abbeyroad@westminster.gov.uk
regentspark@westminster.gov.uk

