

Vaccination Roll-out at Lord's



| | SCORE | | BOARD | |
|---------------------|-------|---|-------|---|
| DAYS VACCINATING | 1 | 2 | .5 | |
| HIGHEST DAILY TOTAL | 2 | 0 | 5 | 2 |
| TOTAL | 2 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| HIGHEST DAILY RUNS | 2 | 5 | 1 | |



Lord's Cricket Ground became a COVID-19 vaccination site for many local surgeries last month. Clockwise, from top left: NHS Nurse Mary McMahon from St John's Wood Medical Practice administers a dose of the vaccine; posters highlight the site's cricket connection; former Prime Minister Tony Blair praised the organised efforts of the NHS on Twitter after receiving his jab at Lord's; patients wait to enter the Thomas Lord Suite; Dr Saul Kaufman from St John's Wood Medical Practice was one of many NHS essential staff on hand to assist with the vaccination roll-out; staff keep track of the progress, keeping in line with the cricket theme. See page 5.

Let's capture the moment for High Street plans



Dick Schumacher

It is time to think about the longer-term design of our High Street.

The temporary one-way scheme on the High Street is to be extended to the end of September to facilitate more outdoor eating capacity through the spring and summer, as (fingers crossed) the current coronavirus restrictions are progressively eased. It was helpful last year in making residents and others feel more comfortable about coming out to shop and dine locally after the

first lockdown, and we hope it will be again.

The prospect of steady steps toward more 'normal' lives creates an opportunity to consider a permanent re-design of the street. Keep it one-way? Widen the pavements? Restore it to two-way? Pedestrianise it fully? Are there other options?

The Society will work with Westminster City Council in the coming months to help foster a community discussion about the possibilities. Between funds set aside for St John's Wood through the so-called Community Infrastructure Levy and other Council resources, it may be feasible to do something bold, if there is a neighbourhood consensus for it. This process will need to take into account the views of both businesses and

residents. For retailers and restaurants, any loss of parking spaces is likely to be a red line given the absence of much other 'pay and display' parking in the immediate area.

A discussion about the High Street is more urgent now because proposed national government regulatory changes may mean that before the end of this year the owners of retail and restaurant locations would be permitted to convert them to residential units without needing any planning permission.

Additionally, there is uncertainty about what retailing will be like when social-distancing restrictions are a less central aspect of our daily lives. In this period of flux it is particularly appropriate actively to consider change. Let's not allow it to slip by.

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The views expressed are those of the writer and not necessarily those of the Society.



Remember this? It's a 1969 picture of **Daleham and Waverley Lawn Tennis Club** on the site of what is now the American School in London. The club was opposing the sale of the land by the owners, British Rail. The St John's Wood Society would love to hear your memories. Email: info@stjohnswoodsoc.org.uk

THE
ST JOHN'S WOOD
SOCIETY

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SOS: Support our School in tablet appeal

David Tomlinson
Head Teacher

Barrow Hill Junior School in St John's Wood (Bridgeman Street, NW8 7LE) is a well-loved and successful local school that has a very proud history of well over a hundred years.

Lockdowns have proved very testing, and I am really pleased with how our children and the community have rallied. Modern education has come a long way from the chalk boards of the 1880s and we are looking to invest further in the current equivalent: tablets, such as iPads, for classroom use.

We have already invested in a good number of laptops for home use and have had donations. We have closed that

appeal now and are focusing on tablets and increasing Wifi in the school – a big challenge to any school budget!

If you can help us achieve our goals we will be very grateful. Here's how you can help:

- If you have a spare iPad/ Samsung tablet or similar: please donate it by contacting the school office on 020-4506 1530. Please remove any personal information first if you can. If not, don't worry: we will make sure it is all wiped before we load school apps.
- If you can spare a cash donation towards our Wifi 2021 fund: we plan to upgrade

Wifi in every corner of the school building. You can donate via this link: <https://friendsofbarrowhill.co.uk/donate>

We will add your name to our donors' wall in the school computer suite. If you'd prefer us not to, just let us know.

We really appreciate anything you can do for us. If you are interested in what the school looks like inside and how we have progressed since the 1880s please take a look at our prospectus filled with photos – including our school swimming pool, science lab, computer suite and sports pitch – at www.bhjs.co.uk.

Hospice under pressure as pandemic bites

St John's Hospice faces challenges of more patients and increasing loneliness, says Assistant Director of Nursing Sue Hutton. With a third lockdown, a new COVID-19 variant, and an ever increasing number of patients, the Hospice has been working around the clock to find new ways of providing care.

Being part of your community for nearly forty years, we at St John's Hospice are here to provide medical, emotional and practical support, free to those who need it. We serve and care for over 4,000 patients and families every year. As a charity, continued support from within the community is essential.

We have been doing all we can to keep everyone healthy and protected both on the ward and at home. Increasing isolation and loneliness are

growing problems and the Hospice is working on ways to help, with around half the patients living on their own.

To help combat loneliness, last Spring the Hospice set up the Community Befriending Scheme, which has gone from strength to strength. Now twenty-five volunteers regularly call isolated patients, and visit when allowed, to offer much needed care and company. A volunteer will call a patient once or twice a week, to chat and check how they are. These calls are often the only conversation a patient will have during the week.

To date we have been able to provide more than 250 hours of this most simple but most important human connection – especially important through the additional isolation that the winter lockdown meant for so many.



Assistant Director of Nursing Sue Hutton

- Become a volunteer – contact Sophie.Gray@hje.org.uk.

- Donate pre-loved items to our shop: The Hospice shop on St John's Wood High Street will be open as soon as restrictions are lifted

- The Hospice has a number of places available at prestigious events, including the London Marathon 2021 – contact Claudia.Sandu@hje.org.uk



St John's Hospice
St John & St Elizabeth Hospital

- Garden Safari – get involved by opening your garden this summer! Contact Claudia.Sandu@hje.org.uk.

- Cook-along with celebrity chef Cyrus Todiwala, 22 April, streamed live from the Hospice kitchen. For further information please email ali.floe@hje.org.uk

- To make a donation go to www.stjohnshospice.org.uk/donate/

- To find out more about the Hospice go to www.stjohnshospice.org.uk/

Stronger community emerges from tough times



Virginia Newman

St John's Wood architect Virginia Newman takes a reflective look at a year of COVID lockdowns and sadness and sees a positive legacy of neighbourliness and trust.

After a year of pain, struggles, isolation and loss, we at last feel as though we are emerging from a nightmare and life can start to get back to normal. But this got me thinking, what have we learned or gained from the last year that we should make sure we do not lose?

Getting to know your neighbourhood

For many people, the last year has been the longest time that they will have spent in this neighbourhood. They will have got to experience the rhythms and personality of the area, supported local shops, gone out for walks, and even met their neighbours!

Working from home

It was a lucky person who was able to choose when to work from home prior to the pandemic. It was generally considered that if people were WFH (as we now call it) then they would not put in the hours, would not be able to work effectively, and would spend their entire day playing video games. Last March many of us were forced to set up an office in our home and carry on working. It was not always an ideal solution, but it did clearly demonstrate that WFH was possible in many cases. This should leave a legacy of a more flexible working style.

Communication

18 months ago, if I had suggested we have a Zoom, most people would have looked bemused or called the men in white coats. But now many of us are familiar with programmes such as Zoom, Teams, Skype, FaceTime, etc., which have enabled us actually to see people while we are talking. It does not replace a real-life hug, but there is something comforting about actually seeing people when you chat. This fabulous technology allows us to 'meet up' with people all over the world, which would have rarely happened prior to the pandemic.

Working together

As the reality dawned that there were many people who could not go out as they were shielding, a community support structure spontaneously arose. People started offering help with shopping or befriending. Our local heroes continued to collect the rubbish, provide medical care, open shops, drive buses, and keep the world turning.

Keep calm and carry on

The new world that we found ourselves in certainly threw up challenges, but people and businesses were imaginative and found ways to carry on. The local art club continued to meet and paint together, with Zoom connecting them all with their live model posing in South America. Restaurants turned themselves into takeaways overnight; choirs met remotely; religious ceremonies were held remotely; walking in the park became the thing to do.

What the virus has taught me is that we are a caring and resilient race. The pandemic has been tough but there is a positive legacy. We engage more with our neighbours and neighbourhood, we can be trusted to work where it best suits us, we can meet up with people all over the world, and we know that we can survive if we help each other.

From SAD to SAD-DER, but stoicism will win



Kevin Kilkenny

Kevin Kilkenny of Kent's Butchers takes an optimistic look at post-pandemic local business.

As this last year has lolloped on by I've noticed a change in myself and the local populace, some of which I attribute to the condition known as Seasonal Affective Disorder (SAD).

The NHS website says of SAD: 'Seasonal affective disorder is a type of depression that comes and goes in a seasonal pattern.'

Well, there's a new variant in town, SAD-DER: SAD-Delayed Economic Recovery.

VIEW FROM THE HIGH STREET

I miss my High Street neighbours!

The hubbub of service at [The Ivy](#), [Soutine](#) and [The Gate](#).

Elegant ladies and gents to-ing and fro-ing between [Ozzy](#), [Trend](#) and [Studio 66](#) hair stylists, [Beck's Barber](#), the [Face Gym](#), the [Core Collective](#), [EF Medispa](#) and [Space NK](#) while clutching bags from [Joseph](#), [Viva](#), [Bruno](#), [Tara Jarmon](#), [Regal Shoes](#), [James Lakeland](#), and many more of our excellent retailers on the High Street.

We know you're all chomping at the bit to get back trading, and we're equally eager to see you :-). And when you do you'll see we have a new beauty store called [Keo](#) and [Beauchamp](#) estate agents opening on the High Street, with the continuing refit of the former Gap into Maggie's Nursery with eatery and another new addition with [Maido Sushi](#).

It's been a tough year for the High Street but there's a bright future. Our new traders see it! Our current traders see it! Even I see it!

The Government roadmap has non-essential shops opening from 12 April at the earliest. In the meantime you can collect prepaid goods from stores. However, no entry and no browsing. If we follow social distancing and wear face masks where appropriate we will be fully out of these restrictions by the end of June. HAPPY DAYS :-).

I miss my pint of Guinness at the [Duke of York](#) and [New Inn](#) pubs with pub opening allowed at the earliest from 12 April outside and 17 May inside.

So, riding on the back of Government jingoism, let's beat the SAD-DER variant together and support our stoic SJW retailers.

Lord's COVID centre is a model for the NHS

You may have seen the signs and queues for a COVID-19 vaccination centre at Lord's and wondered how it was arranged and run. Clinical lead **Dr Saul Kaufman** explains.

Lord's opened as a COVID-19 vaccination centre at the beginning of January, organised by a network of local GP surgeries. On its busiest day it treated more than 2,000 people.

The Lord's model is so successful it has been shown to NHS teams who plan to adopt some of its practices for NHS mass vaccination sites.

Patients are booked in by their Westminster GP who sends a text message allowing them to book a time online.

Once at Lord's they are ushered in by our team of marshals and can either be vaccinated outside if they wish or in the Thomas Lord Suite where we have 10 or 12 vaccinators. At our busiest time we are able to vaccinate around 400 people per hour i.e. one every eight seconds or so.

As some of you may have seen we have our own scoreboard and the figures currently on it are shown in the photo on page 1. The highest daily run count refers to the number of vaccines given by one



COVID vaccination centre in action at Lord's as a patient gets his jab. (Photo from MCC)

person over a day. The current figure of 287 is pretty amazing, as that translates to an average of around two minutes per vaccination over a day!

Our vaccinators are a combination of nurses, healthcare assistants, hospital doctors, pharmacists, physiotherapists, midwives, non-medical vaccinators and the odd GP (as well as normal GPs). The vaccinators each work with an administrator who enters the data onto the national system in real time. There are six receptionists, three pharmacists who

dilute the vaccine, along with floor marshals and a small management team on site. In total there are around 70 people working on site when we are vaccinating so this really is a team effort.

We are working very closely with local organisations to try and increase the uptake for vaccine where people are vaccine hesitant. I would strongly encourage anybody who is in the eligible cohorts to contact their GP so that they can get booked in, and we'll be more than happy to see you soon at Lord's. We are also working closely with roving teams who are vaccinating the homeless population and the housebound in Westminster.

The emerging real-world evidence is very exciting and shows the vaccinations are working to decrease severe disease and hospitalisations, so I hope we're on the precipice of getting back to something like normal.

We do not have spare vaccines and we do not allow 'walk ins'.

On behalf of all the Westminster GP practices who are able to book their patients in at Lord's thank you to MCC chief executive Guy Lavender and ground superintendent Jeff Cards for their huge and continued support.

Wanted: St John's Wood memories

Bridget Clarke

In 2010 Westminster Archives asked the St John's Wood History Group to run a website recording memories and photographs of the St John's Wood area.

Jane Leaver, Louise Brodie, Jeanne Strang and I volunteered to have a go as editors, and we encouraged as many local people as possible to research topics that intrigued them or send in memories of their childhood (with photos if possible). The Victorian censuses proved invaluable in discovering what sort of people lived here in the 19th century – not only well-known artists, writers and actors but people supporting those careers – an interior decorator, an artists' colourman, an artist's model. It was surprising to discover also the percentage of young inhabitants: so many households had not only large families but young domestic staff working for a few years before marriage. We have articles on famous people – some good and some criminal – and sites like Lord's and Abbey Road, churches and schools and general

architecture including a surprisingly good haul of 1930s buildings. There are various walks/trails that can be followed, including four that cover the Blue and Brown plaques commemorating famous St John's Woodites.

Memories of Barrow Hill School have led to old friends being reunited, and people remember the shopkeepers who used really to know their customers. I was delighted when the son of Mr Swatland, the well-remembered butcher in Charlbert Street, emailed from Canada where he is now a Professor of Meat Science.

There are memories of two World Wars with descriptions of people

sheltering in the Underground, and a particularly gratifying online meeting between the granddaughter of our George Medal winner, George Peerless, and the granddaughter of the baby he rescued from a bombed house in Aquila Street. After months of detective work we were able to produce a photograph of Pilot Officer George Herbert to send to a village in Holland which was commemorating six planes shot down there in the War on their way home from Germany.

All these stories and hundreds more can be found on stjohnswoodmemories.org.uk, and we look forward to receiving a contribution from you.

Monitoring local planning for you



Christine Cowdray
Planning Committee
Chair

Planning Applications 1/12/2020–28/02/2021

Westminster City Council decided 71 planning applications for St John's Wood during this three-month period. Of these, 54 were permitted, 6 were refused and 11 withdrawn.

The Council consulted the Society on 75 applications during the same period. We objected to 12, raised no objections to 44, and made comments/requested conditions on 29 applications.

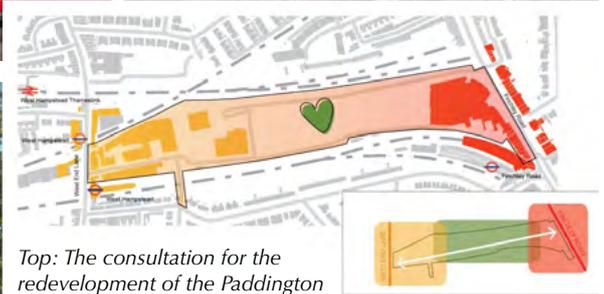
Applications which raised significant concerns for residents were:

- Oslo Court, Prince Albert Road: Installation of twelve 30m high antennas, three 3m dishes and six cabinets at roof level. (Pending)
- Russell House and 51–53 Allitsen Road: Erection of mansard roof extensions (Permitted after amendments to original scheme)
- St John's Wood Car Park, Kingsmill Terrace: Loss of two floors of parking converted into storage space. (Pending)
- 14 Ordnance Hill: Demolition of an unlisted building of merit to create four new four-storey terraced buildings with off-street car parking. (Pending)

Government Consultation: 'Planning Reform – Supporting Housing Delivery and Public Services Infrastructure'

The Society responded in January to this latest consultation on planning reform which proposes to use extended Permitted Development Rights (PDR) to enable a change of use from the newly created Commercial, Business and Service (Class E) to Residential (Class C), without planning permission. We are concerned that the proposals undermine the emerging City Plan Policies and Neighbourhood Plans and negatively affect the collection of community infrastructure levy.

We are acutely aware of the challenges



Top: The consultation for the redevelopment of the Paddington Green Police Station ends 12 March

Above: Residents can have their say about the future of the O2 Centre before 6 April

Left: 14 Ordnance Hill, where permission was sought for demolition of the existing structure and the construction of four new four-storey terraced buildings shown here

facing our High Street, and although we understand the need for planning reform, we fear further deregulation will diminish the ability of the Council and the local community to influence a cohesive, positive strategy for change. We are concerned that the new PD rights allowing shops to change to residential will be exploited by landowners and developers alike and will be harmful, rather than helpful, in achieving a thriving and diverse high street. There is at least reassurance that prior approval is likely to be required to convert street level shop fronts to residential units within Conservation Areas. In its response to the consultation, the Council has requested an Article 4 direction to restrict the new rights in some parts of Westminster. We can only hope that the Government will acknowledge the key role that high street shops play in creating the character of a Conservation Area like ours.

In dense urban environments like St John's Wood, large public infrastructure sites such as schools and hospitals are embedded within residential areas. Under the extended PDR, the Government proposes to allow 250sqm

of additional development, or a 25% increase of the cumulative footprint, and up to 6m of additional height. This could significantly affect the amenity of neighbouring residents. The hope is that Conservation Areas will be excluded, but this is not made clear in the proposals.

Other consultations which may be of interest - have your say

- Camden's contentious Road Changes around King Henry's Road, Elsworthy Road and Primrose Hill Road. Consultation extended to 21 March. [King Henry's Road area Safe and Healthy Streets consultation - We Are Camden - Citizen Space](#)
- The redevelopment of the Paddington Green Police Station. Consultation ends 12 March. [yoursay.online/paddington-green-police-station](#)
- The future of the O2 Centre: Consultation ends 6 April. [Have Your Say Today – West End Lane To Finchley Road – Commonplace](#)

St John's Wood icon a pandemic Islamic hub



Tom Thomson

We report how a St John's Wood religious landmark has met the challenges of the pandemic to sustain London's Islamic life. This is the first in a Newsletter series looking at the different religions represented locally.

With its towering 44-metre white minaret and golden dome, London Central Mosque has dominated the Regent's Park landscape since it opened in 1977.

It is a major Islamic centre for London, hosting up to 6,000 worshippers at normal Friday prayers delivered in Arabic and English and up to 30,000 on the two main Muslim annual festivals.

Closed by COVID-19, the mosque had to adapt.

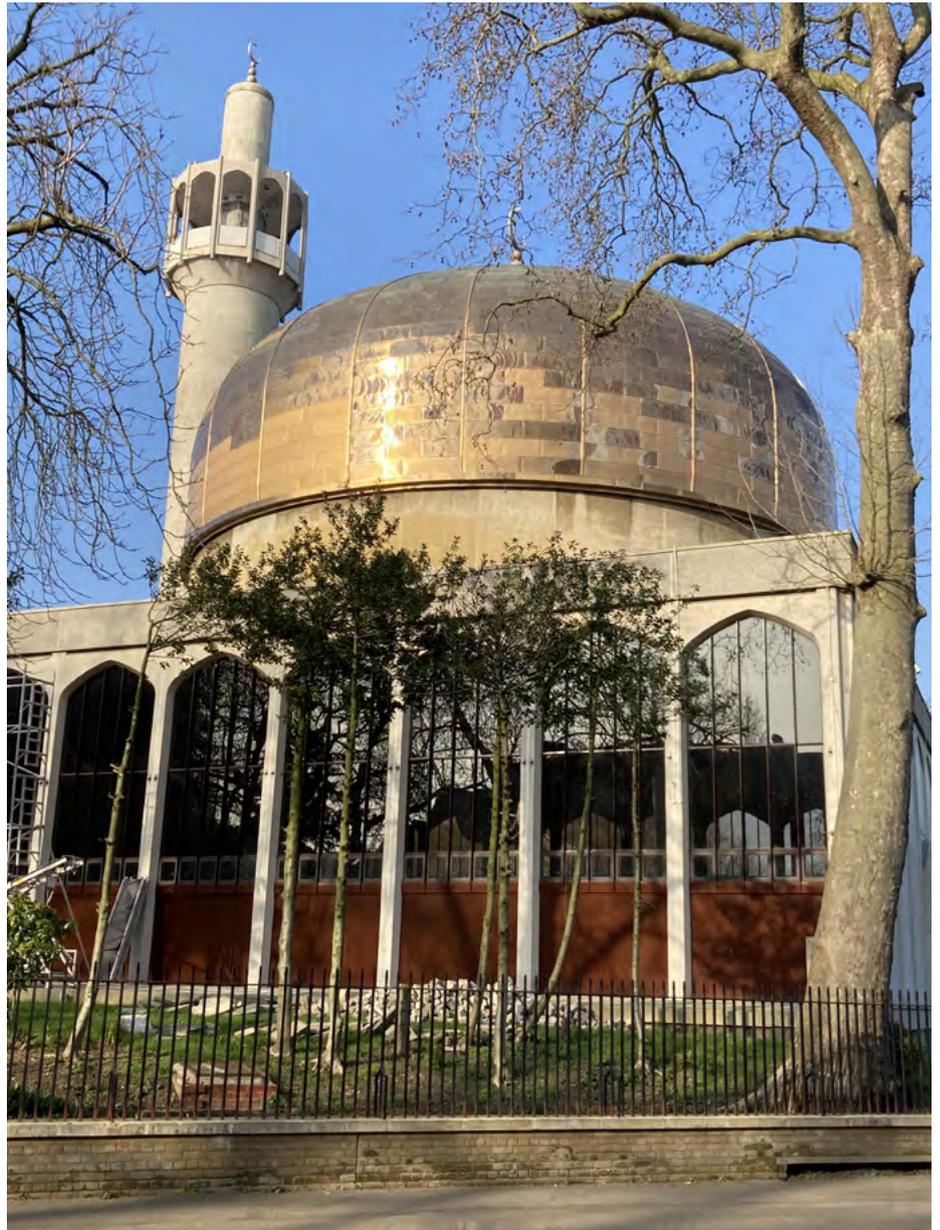
It provided thousands of meals and other help for poor families. The normal Zakat fund – a Muslim's duty to give to the poor if able – continues.

But physical religious services stopped, and activities moved online along with new events.

These include 'Find your spouse' for those looking for a husband or wife and the Commission of Fatwa and Islamic Affairs concerned with interpreting Islamic law. It has links to Cairo's Al-Azhar University, the pinnacle of Sunni learning, and ministries of Islamic affairs in other countries.

Events that existed before but moved online include Islamic Circle, explaining the religion for Muslims and non-Muslims alike, a Tawheed programme about this monotheistic religion, and Arabic language teaching. A weekend school, normally with over 350 students who are taught Arabic, Islamic studies and subjects from the national curriculum, moved to King Fahad Academy in East Acton to give space for social distancing.

Of particular interest to non-Muslims is the Mosque's interfaith work. It hosts Zoom meetings across the whole interfaith community and is working with the American Embassy on a series of 'Conversations' with representatives of



London Central Mosque has been located on the edge of Regent's Park for more than forty years.

different faiths taking part. The Mosque also has close links with churches and synagogues locally.

Part of the campus is the Islamic Cultural Centre, housing the 17-strong administration, conference rooms, a shop, a café, an Islamic exhibition, and one of the oldest and largest Islamic reference libraries.

Until lockdown, Anders Berquist, vicar of the nearby Church of England parish church, and other Christians and Liberal and Orthodox Jews met regularly in the Centre.

In normal times the Mosque receives some 17,000 visitors a year, including police, government departments, and the Ministry of Defence.

The Mosque made headlines last year

when a Muslim convert stabbed a prayer leader. He was sentenced to more than seven years in prison.

The day-to-day running is overseen by Director General Dr Ahmad Al-Dubayan with trustees comprising the Muslim ambassadors to Britain. Dr Al-Dubayan is a distinguished academic with degrees from universities in Indonesia and Germany; he also worked as a diplomat at the Saudi Arabian Embassy in Bonn.

The Grade II*-listed Mosque was built three decades after Churchill's war cabinet authorised the acquisition of the site, recognising the importance of Islam in an increasingly multicultural Britain.

The £6 million project was financed by Saudi King Faisal and United Arab Emirates President Sheikh Zayed.

Managing nicely, thank you!

Greg Phillips reveals how he and his team keep things running smoothly in the elegant Edwardian mansion block – one of many in St John's Wood – that overlooks Regent's Park at the bottom of St John's Wood High Street.

The Newsletter invited him to describe managing North Gate, a building more than a century old with 164 flats, since he started almost forty years ago.

Can you tell us about North Gate?

It was built in three stages, the first in 1907, the second we think after the First World War, and finally two more in the mid-1930s.

Mansion flats were being built with the invention of the lift, meaning residents wouldn't have to walk up too many stairs. Their staff, however, had to use the rear iron staircase. No lifts for them.

The design by architect Edward Prioleau Warren imitated the Parisian look, with slate mansards and dormer windows.

How do you run such a large building?

North Gate has always been self-sufficient and employed staff direct. We have fourteen porters who cover 24/7, four cleaners, a plumber and a carpenter, a self-employed electrician, four maintenance men and a contract gardener.

How is North Gate governed?

The North Gate freehold is owned by Lordsgate Properties Ltd which has fifty shareholders (all North Gate lessees), each owning one share. A board employs me as estate manager – the third since the management company was founded in 1969, succeeding David Rapson.

What about maintenance?

North Gate is most definitely like the Forth Bridge: we are always painting or renovating some part. There are a lot of parts of the building and windows to maintain. We are currently looking at ten-year cycles for painting the exterior and common areas.

And the major challenges?

Infrastructure, and complying with current standards. There are water, gas, electrical and fire regulations, all of which are being changed/updated.



A qualified carpenter who makes furniture in his spare time, North Gate Manager Greg Phillips has worked at the mansion block for nearly forty years.

Trying to apply these to a building well over a hundred years old is not easy. The other major challenge is managing the expectations of residents, who are so diverse in faith and origin. The same could be said of the staff: you end up being a friend, a father, a brother and a boss – oh, and sometimes a primary school headmaster!

Any incidents over the years?

I was on the roof when President Ronald Reagan visited the UK and stayed in Winfield House, in Regent's Park. As the US helicopters flew low over North Gate I raised my broom in a Day of the Jackal type pose. Minutes later several men in black armed with pistols and rifles pinned me to the floor, raised me above their heads and carried me down the fire escape. I was quizzed by the US secret service and the police in front of David Rapson. I was seventeen, and an idiot. Now when the POTUS is in residence no one is allowed on the roof.

David went to help a resident with a water leak. The formidable Russian woman answered the door, dragged him to her bedroom and flipped him on to her bed. She said that for a woman to get anything done by a man she had first to get him into her bed. She was going to take a photo of David and use

this to get him to do work in her flat.

The cinema advertising company Pearl & Dean had a flat at North Gate, and co-founder Dickie Pearl proudly parked his latest Jaguar on the drive. The plumber was sitting on the wall nearby when a young man walked up and said: 'I have to take this car.' Thinking he was a mechanic, he told him to carry on. Dickie appeared and asked where his new pride and joy was – it had just been stolen.

What about you?

I am from Enfield and have worked here full time since 1982. I'm a qualified carpenter. When David retired, I was maintenance supervisor and was appointed estate manager in 2006. My hobby is making furniture, mainly for friends and family.

Any well-known residents?

Joe Loss, the band leader, and Mantovani, the conductor/composer, lived here. Someone told me Bud Flanagan did, but there are no records. Tom Cruise visited to see about renting a flat while making a movie in the UK (he never did move in). Margaret Thatcher visited a few times as she sat for one resident who was a sculptress/artist.

- Tom Thomson

A glimpse of outdoor dining an exciting prospect

'Melbourne Girl'

Our secret restaurant critic can't wait to start socialising again.

With outdoor seating well established from the first lockdown, I cannot wait to sit and socialise again. Save the date and book ahead, I say. Tag me in your pics ([@melbourne_girl_lost_in_london](https://www.instagram.com/melbourne_girl_lost_in_london)): I would love to see where you hang out!



Tea House

One morning when I decided to take a longer route on my walk, I stumbled upon this cart (a pretty one!) parked outside the Colonnade Hotel in Little Venice. Its array of luxury pastries is very enticing and makes a perfect accompaniment to your morning coffee. They also offer freshly made crepes – a great ending to your walk/jog. I cannot wait to sit down on a chair and have tea and cake and watch the world go by.

[@teahouse.london](https://www.instagram.com/teahouse.london)

2 Warrington Crescent, W9 1ER

Supermarket of Dreams

When I first sighted this new kid on the block I wasn't sure what to make of its bright pink sign declaring 'St John's Wood Fish Shop – Supermarket of Dreams'. But once I stepped inside the shop, I was sold! What a wonderful addition to the High Street. With the tempting cake and pastries in the front window, Allpress Coffee made with care, handmade sushi and fresh bread, artisan groceries and a fish shop towards the back, it has the whole package.

The staff can make great recommendations: have you tried the Spanish dark chocolate with roasted almonds or the delicious tiramisu? On a Saturday morning the jam- and custard-filled donuts are arranged on a tray that is hard to resist.

They deliver, too, which is handy.

[@fishshopsjw](https://www.instagram.com/fishshopsjw)

45 St John's Wood High Street,
NW8 7NJ



Fuel, Boundary Road

If there's anything positive to take away from lockdown, it is to discover new places in the neighbourhood.

With the emphasis on healthy eating and lifestyle, this is the place to eat and feel good. They serve fresh smoothies and drinks to please even the fussiest of health gurus. A huge selection of homemade breakfasts using organic and free-range produce is on offer.

The first time I visited, I was given a tour downstairs of the gym and told about the classes they have on offer. It was a surprise to discover that there was something like this with a café upstairs serving healthy options – sounds too good to be true!

When I went in the summer I sat outside in the sunshine. If you are a dog lover like me (unfortunately I don't own one here in London) there's a dog grooming place next door and a vet across the road, where you can enjoy the comings and goings of the locals' pets and maybe get to pat a few.

Monmouth coffee is prepared with the same gusto as in the famous Monmouth in the Borough Market. They sell the beans as well.



Staff are friendly and always have time to chat. During lockdown grab a takeaway coffee – and remember to visit when it's over, and sit outside in this cosy place and take your time enjoying brunch.

[@fuelnw8.cafe](https://www.instagram.com/fuelnw8.cafe)

97 Boundary Rd, NW8 0RG

Heat pumps help fight climate emergency



James Hewitt
Environmental Consultant

There is much interest in heat pumps among those keen to stop or reduce their use of carbon-dependent fuel for heating and hot water.

Typically, heat pumps deliver three to four units of energy as heat per unit of energy that they consume as electricity. That ratio depends on the design of the heat pump (located outdoors, with heat obtained either from the air or pipes in the ground), the indoor heating system, the space to be heated, its insulation, the temperature required indoors, the outdoor temperature, and how 'smartly' the system is used. Careful design and installation are crucial.

Choice of refrigerant may be a concern.

The pumps operate in a way which is the reverse of a fridge or air conditioner. The technology (widely adopted in Northern Europe) is particularly suitable for properties which are well insulated.

In order to minimise cost, the property should have been designed to suit the heat pump and related installations (hot water tank, radiators, etc.). Sizes, notably of radiators, may need to be larger than those installed for systems with gas-fired or electric boilers, because the water temperature produced by heat pumps at their optimum is lower than that produced by boilers from electricity or carbon-based fuel.

Ideally, heat pumps should be located at ground level with good drainage (given the need for defrosting). Their noise might be a nuisance. The number of trained installers remains much too small to meet targets for deploying

heat pumps around the UK. The 'Green Homes Grant' scheme, which sought to ease the up-front cost of heat pumps and related installations, has run into trouble.

Hydrogen is being promoted as an alternative to natural gas as a fuel source in domestic appliances. However, the production of hydrogen is energy intensive. Given what little of the UK's carbon budget remains, the generation of that energy should not be from carbon-derived fuel. Further, hydrogen would be allocated first to industry and transport.

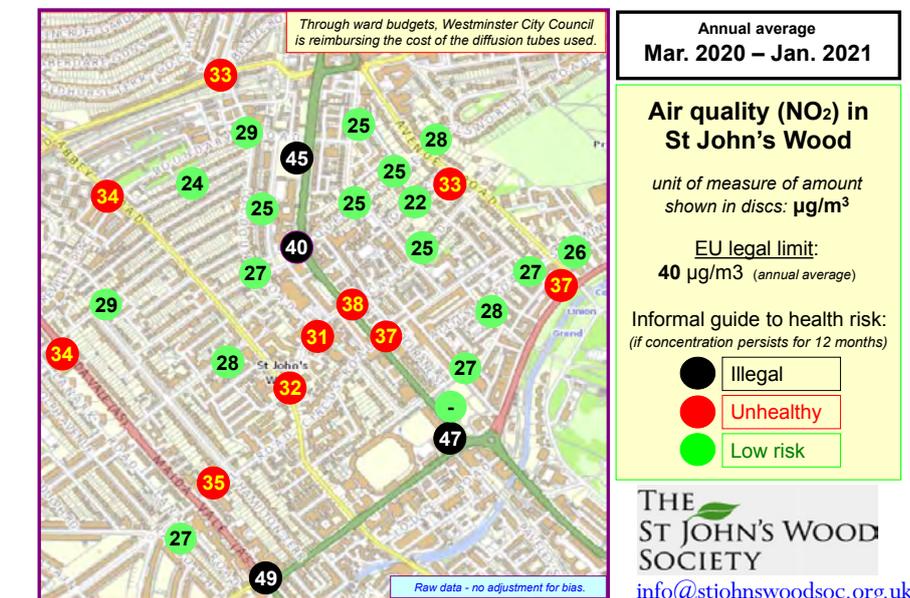
Much of St John's Wood comprises freehold and leasehold properties which are not owner-occupied, hampering residents' preferences concerning heating and insulation. Regardless of ownership, some residents might prefer to minimise the amount of heat they use. Others choose to use more than they need – despite the climate emergency.

A breath of fresh air

Good news – the concentration of nitrogen dioxide pollution measured along the Finchley/Wellington Road by the Society (with financial support from the City Council through ward budgets) has for the first time declined to below the legal limit. As the chart here shows, it has done so between the tube station and Circus Road. A full set of the measurements is available if you click [here](#) or from a link at the foot of the Society's [air quality webpage](#).

The response to COVID-19 will have contributed much to this. Concentrations are likely to decline further as Summer approaches and as motorists prepare for 25 October (when the Ultra Low Emission Zone is to be extended to the North and South Circular roads).

But is Spring really in the air? The improvement pertains to one of the two leading air pollutants. Concentrations of particulate matter, specifically PM2.5, have declined only slightly across London during the last few years. The recent ruling that air pollution can be listed as a causal factor on Death Certificates provides a reminder that all is not yet well. Earlier this year, a request to deport an asylum seeker living in Bordeaux was refused because air quality in that per-



son's home country (as distinct from his hometown there) was deemed too great a threat to his life.

Air quality is also likely to improve given the Climate Emergency. This necessitates both a rapid decrease in the use of vehicles having engines which burn fossil fuel and minimal use of electric vehicles if their batteries are recharged using power from carbon-based fuel. Through electricity, road transport is

easier to decarbonise than a number of (hitherto) carbon-dependent industries, including steel, cement, aviation and shipping. Since the first UN's Earth Summit in Rio de Janeiro (1992), the evolution of sectors shaped by those industries and road transport has in turn been shaped by the self-evident, global preference of the powers-that-be to ignore those sectors' impact on the planet.

- James Hewitt

A view from the House



Karen Buck MP

Westminster North Labour MP Karen Buck says vaccination has been a huge success, but the chance to 'build back better' must not be squandered.

We emerge blinking into the early Spring light, at last hopeful that a year of sickness and lockdown may be coming to an end. In contrast to the hit and miss experience of the Test and Trace and quarantine processes, the NHS vaccination rollout has been an extraordinary success story.

Admittedly it appears that Westminster is struggling with the lowest vaccination rate in the country, with wealthier and poorer neighbourhoods alike trailing even by inner city standards. This is something I have spent a lot of time on: understanding why it is and correcting it is a priority, as we have a shared interest in making sure vaccination

rates are high enough everywhere to offer wider protection and minimise the risk of new variants taking hold.

More generally there is every reason to hope for a strong national recovery, and many reasons to be grateful to the NHS, the scientists and the frontline workers who have got us through.

Yet the changes the pandemic has forced upon us have to be confronted too. We have experienced a combination of the worst death rate, the deepest economic shock, and one of the longest and most severe lockdowns anywhere, and while few are immune from the consequences it is painfully clear that members of the poorest communities, and especially Black and minority ethnic communities, were hardest hit in every way.

Millions have lost their jobs or part or all of their income. Unusually in this respect Westminster has seen a sharper percentage rise, in for example Universal Credit claims, than many other areas, with over 4,100 people needing support this year and a massive increase in numbers needing help from our North Paddington Foodbank – reflecting the importance of the retail, hospitality, cultural and similar sectors which have been particularly

hard hit. There have been, and may well remain, transformations in how we work, shop, travel and live that will have huge implications – further risking the viability of shops in the local high street, increasing the volume of delivery vehicles on the street, creating some new job opportunities but potentially destroying others.

In my view as the pandemic hit the Government was right to spend big on the furlough scheme and on help for businesses. The mistake would be to remove that help too quickly, or to cut corners when it comes to getting society and the economy back on track.

From transport to policing, from business support to investing in catch-up help for children and young people who have lost vital months of education, from maintaining the incomes of people who have lost work and earnings in this most dreadful of years to making sure the NHS can now deal with the backlog of non-COVID health conditions – too little help, withdrawn too fast, would be a disaster. We will be living with COVID-19 for a long time to come, and it is far from the only major future challenge we face. The ambitious opportunity to 'build back better' mustn't be squandered.

Back the High Street, Councillors urge

As the days have gotten longer since our last article, so has our hope that there is light at the end of this very long tunnel.

The Government's vaccine rollout programme has been, by global standards, an incredible success, with more than 20 million people vaccinated to date. Our very own Lord's has been efficiently utilised as a vaccination centre, and we are thankful to the MCC for stepping up.

The current third national lockdown has caused trading on St John's Wood High Street and other local commercial clusters to be even more challenging, with all non-essential businesses again closed. We are delighted that the Government is supporting high streets across the country by extending business rates relief for retailers until the end of June and retaining reduced VAT on hospitality.

We urge you all please to support our local businesses by buying from them online during lockdown. Once they



Local Councillors meet pre-COVID. From left: Cllr Robert Rigby (rrigby@westminster.gov.uk), Cllr Paul Swaddle (pswaddle@westminster.gov.uk), and Cllr Gotsz Mohindra (gmohindra@westminster.gov.uk).

reopen, please shop locally in person.

We are happy to confirm that al fresco dining, the outdoor seating facilities which your local Councillors helped to facilitate last year and which local residents embraced, will be extended through to the end of September, helping our local businesses.

And we will be working with the St John's Wood Society to seek the community's views on what the High Street layout should look like in the

longer term. Please watch out for the consultation on this which we hope to carry out by the summer. Feedback from the community will determine how our High Street will look and feel.

Your local Councillors are here to support our community now and in the months ahead. We continue to work closely with the St John's Wood Society on various local projects including installing more planters and benches, identifying further ways to help our High Street retailers through landscape improvements, and improving access to St John's Wood Church Gardens.

If you have any ideas and suggestions on what your local Councillors can do further to assist our local community, please get in touch with us directly or through the St John's Wood Society. Our Council email addresses are above, or you can contact us via our Facebook page: www.facebook.com/SJWConservatives.

Ahoy, lockdown London!

St John's Wood Society's magazine pictures editor Rob Taggart sacrificed the delights of lockdown London for an assignment on the high seas covering the America's Cup in New Zealand.

Rob, a New Zealander originally from Auckland, is a veteran photographer who has covered major news stories across the globe. His latest pictures have featured in major publications including *The Times*.

He explains: 'Life in New Zealand outside two small recent lockdowns is very much normal except masks are mandatory on public transport and folk are encouraged to use the track and trace app in all public areas and shops.'

'When I point out the death toll of 26 compared with the rest of the world locals realise this is a lucky place to be in, as do I,' he added.

Here we offer a sample of his headline-grabbing images.



Top: A horse is exercised on an almost deserted Muriwai Beach on the west coast, 45 km from Auckland. Middle: Sir Ben Ainslie (right) on the helm of INEOS Team UK's Britannia during the Prada Cup. Above: INEOS Team UK's Britannia, skippered by Sir Ben Ainslie, flies into the air during the Prada Cup final against Italian Luna Rossa Prada Pirelli team.

Lord's looks forward to exciting cricket soon



Guy Lavender
MCC Chief Executive
and Secretary

Before we look ahead to the cricket season, I must acknowledge the remarkable work of Healthcare Central London and MCC staff to create the COVID-19 Vaccination Centre at the Ground. Over 20,000 people have received their vaccination so far, and we were paid a visit by the Culture Secretary, Oliver Dowden, to see the centre in operation. It has been extremely heartening to see the impact of providing this facility, while the rest of the Ground has remained closed.

There have also been positive steps for the approaching cricket season and reviewing the fixture calendar for Lord's this year fills me with optimism and excitement, as there are encouraging indicators that cricket fans will be able to enjoy the live action at the Ground soon. Although attendance will be gradual and limited, I will be elated to welcome spectators back through the gates.

Since the announcement of the provisional matches made last year – a Pakistan ODI and an India Test Match – fixtures have continued to be added to the calendar. We'll see the return of the County Championship in April and our first international Test match is scheduled for early June, when England's men take on New Zealand – it will be the first time the two sides meet on British soil since the epic World Cup final in 2019. We will host four Vitality Blast matches as well as group matches of The Hundred, which will comprise of double-headers with both the women's and men's matches played on the main ground, before the Finals are played on 21 August.

Local residents probably noticed the floodlights at Lord's were on recently for the testing and commissioning required, and with two of the floodlights in their relocated positions owing to the new Compton and Edrich stands. The stands themselves are looking stunning, with the canopies currently being installed. The green wall is being installed to the rear of the Compton Stand and the restoration of the outfield is underway. Work continues inside the stands – the project is in its final innings!

Another addition to the Ground for 2021 is the [Lord's Father Time Wall](#) – an installation behind the Grand and Compton Stands. The wall will exhibit 100 of the greatest milestones ever to take place at the Ground voted for by our Members. Supporter plaques within the installation give cricket fans the opportunity to own a piece of Lord's by purchasing a personalised plaque to commemorate their own cricket memories at Lord's. Of the proceeds of these plaques, 5% goes to the MCC Foundation to support its life enhancing projects at home and abroad.

The MCC Foundation itself has had a busy start to the year, launching the [Virtual Hub](#) – a free-to-access online

platform providing engaging and fun content to help young cricketers stay active while at home. The Foundation recently announced the new [Young Ambassadors](#), who support the charity's drive to make cricket a game for all. The Ambassadors have inspiring cricket backgrounds and are perfect role models for young players.

The return of cricket, both recreationally and professionally, is eagerly awaited and seeing cricket played at Lord's once again will be a wonderful sight. It has been a very difficult year for everyone but we remain in good heart as a Club and greatly look forward to seeing many of you over the summer.

2021 Fixtures

(as of 3 March 2021)

| | |
|--------------|---|
| 8-11 April | LV=Insurance County Championship Middlesex v Somerset |
| 22-25 April | LV=Insurance County Championship Middlesex v Surrey |
| 6-9 May | LV=Insurance County Championship Middlesex v Gloucestershire |
| 13-16 May | LV=Insurance County Championship Middlesex v Hampshire |
| 2-6 June | Men's LV=Insurance Test Series England v New Zealand |
| 10 June | Vitality Blast: Middlesex v Surrey |
| 24 June | Vitality Blast: Middlesex v Essex |
| 1 July | Vitality Blast: Middlesex v Sussex |
| 10 July | Royal London Series: England v Pakistan |
| 16 July | Vitality Blast: Middlesex v Kent |
| 25 July | The Hundred London Spirit v Oval Invincibles |
| 29 July | The Hundred London Spirit v Trent Rockets |
| 1 August | The Hundred London Spirit v Southern Brave |
| 3 August | The Hundred London Spirit v Northern Superchargers |
| 12-16 August | Men's LV=Insurance Test Series England v India |
| 21 August | The Hundred's Finals |

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Daniel Poser

Tom Thomson

Planning Committee Members

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Virginia Newman

John Villiers

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Linda Taggart

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Tom Thomson, Editor

Emily Lane, Copy Editor

Rob Taggart, Pictures Editor

Shannon Miller, Designer

For general information on the Society and to join please contact Supriya Dadlani, info@stjohnswoodsoc.org.uk or write to PO Box 20586, London NW8 0ZU

About the St John's Wood Society

Our objective is to encourage the preservation, development and improvement of features of general public amenity and historical interest in St John's Wood and improve its social and cultural wellbeing.

As a statutory consultee the Society is consulted by Westminster City Council on Town Planning applications and Transport matters. We will advise where possible with local planning issues.

The many benefits of being a member of the Society include a local discount scheme, magazine and e-newsletters, community news updates and events.

Counting down to census 21

Britain had 63.2 million residents in 2011. Now's the time for you to help find out how many we have now with a once-a-decade census set for Sunday, March 21, except in Scotland which will be held next year.

This digital-first count includes new questions on UK military veterans and a voluntary question on sexual orientation

and gender identity.

Everyone should receive a letter with a unique code. Paper questionnaires in English and 48 languages can be requested and telephone support is available.

The census is mandatory with a fine of up to £1,000 if you fail to make a digital or paper return by Tuesday, May 4.



Our secret restaurant critic 'Melbourne Girl' took time off to capture this arresting picture of an icy Regent's Park boating lake.



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*Terms and Conditions apply

We opened in St John's Wood a few months before the first lockdown of 2020 and we have got to know so many of the local residents.

We have been able to stay open and support the local community through these very difficult times. It has been a challenging year and our main aim is to keep our customers safe while shopping in our store.

We pride ourselves by offering an outstanding range of foods from France and Italy, sourced from local artisans. Our range of products has increased with a wider range of grocery products, fruits and vegetables, flowers and many more exciting new products you will be able to discover when you next visit us.

We look forward to seeing you at Laurents and we look forward to all the other shops reopening on St John's Wood High street.

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