

ISLINGTON *news*

The Journal of the Islington Society

Mayor re-elected, but voting system under scrutiny.

The elections for the Mayor and Greater London Assembly produced very little change, with Sadiq Khan becoming the first Mayor to serve a third term. The make-up of the Assembly is hardly altered, just one Reform AM replacing a Tory. It is Labour 11, Conservatives 8, Greens 3, Liberal Democrats 2, Reform 1.

Before the election, much was made of the change back to first past the post as the means of electing the Mayor. Previously there had been the opportunity to express a first and second preference. Although every elected Mayor in previous polls has been ahead on first preferences, there was a fear within the Labour Party that votes for left leaning candidates could be split three ways while the right wing vote would coalesce around the Tory candidate. In the event, this did not happen. Reform and other pro-motorist candidates polled enough support to reduce the Tory vote, and enough Liberal and Green supporters were persuaded not to risk voting for their favoured candidate. However, it was frustrating for those who wished to express support for road pricing or opposition to the Silvertown tunnel who could only do so if they were willing to forego a meaningful vote to determine who would be Mayor. The same applied to anyone opposed to the ULEZ within the north and south circular roads.

The discussion of the voting system for Mayor has rather turned the spotlight from the way in which the Assembly members are drawn together. The fourteen super-constituencies comprising two or three Boroughs each have hitherto only returned members from the two largest parties. The eleven top-up places are then filled on the basis of a third ballot for a particular party, using the D'Hondt system. D'Hondt has been described as the least

proportionate system of the many ways of achieving proportional representation. It is said to favour larger parties or pre-election coalitions of parties, but it has been modified in London to encompass the results in the super constituencies. The Party votes are devalued for every AM elected to a constituency seat. This year the Liberals took a constituency seat for the first time. The effect of this was to reduce the value of their Party vote by 50%. Labour gained a tenth seat and the value of its Party vote fell accordingly, but the Tory Party vote was now worth 25% of full value rather than one-sixth as a consequence of their two lost seats. The effect of this was to cost both Labour and the Liberal Democrats a top-up seat, while the Tories gained a top-up seat despite a fall in support. The Labour loss is particularly disappointing to the London Forum because the member concerned had been working with the Forum to understand its concerns about housing policies and the reasons why policies designed for the rest of the country can be counter-productive in the capital.

For the Assembly to have any power requires a two-thirds majority. Any form of PR is unlikely to prevent the Mayor from mustering support from at least nine members, so effectively the role of the Assembly is reduced to that of a Select Committee in Parliament or a Scrutiny Committee of the Council. While a degree of turn over is healthy, this role necessitates a degree of expertise and it is for this reason that voluntary organisations like the Forum give their time to working with Assembly members. The last term, truncated by Covid, was disappointing. With the government calling for tinkering at the edges of the London Plan, and the Forum's firm belief that a new plan must be prepared, we can only hope for more progress this time round. AB

Islington Society News



On a very wet February morning, some thirty members of the Society were treated to a fascinating tour of the former Clerkenwell Fire Station in Rosebery Avenue, controversially closed under Boris Johnson's mayoralty ten years ago. The visit, organised by Kanda Consulting who are retained by the current owners to handle the eventual planning application, was the first time it has been possible to see many aspects of the fire station's history and its architectural legacy. It is nationally listed Grade II*.

The building is one of London's oldest fire stations and is the result of a number of extensions and additions over the years. Although the origins of the fire station go back to 1870, the core of the present building was built in 1912-17 to a design by the London County Council Architects Department. Over the years it saw the move from horsedrawn to motorized appliances and in the first part of the last century was communally occupied by the resident firemen and their families, evidence of this still retained in the top floors of the building where a fascinating wash room (pictured above) and boiler still exist.

After closing in 2014, the building lay empty for several years, briefly being used as a homeless shelter and refuge before being sold by the GLA to a private developer last year with the support of Islington Council. It is a sound, robust building in poor decorative condition *but* the architects face considerable challenges in putting it to new use while retaining its original features. New housing is envisaged for the extensive back yard, currently a car park, with a mixture of office space and possible retail or restaurant development in the main frontage.

Annual Pub Crawl

The Annual Pub Crawl 2024 on June 14th should have taken place by the time you receive this.

Society visits

Visits are often arranged at short notice. Members are notified by e-mail. It is possible to have an e-mail address without any electronic device, and to access messages at the library.

The Islington Society supports Islington in Bloom

The award for the Best Community Garden in this year's Islington in Bloom will be sponsored by The Islington Society.

The annual competition for keen gardeners encourages local people, community groups and businesses to create more attractive, wildlife-friendly green spaces across the borough.

Peter Kilborn, Chair of The Islington Society, said: "Islington is one of the most densely populated London boroughs with little green space – we are keen to see how communities create garden retreats in the dense urban environment for people, wildlife and plants to enjoy."

Results of Islington in Bloom will be announced in September.

For more information on Islington in Bloom <https://www.islington.media/news/islington-in-bloom-returns-for-2024-and-the-whole-borough-is-invited-to-get-growing>

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Society responses to Planning applications

176 York Way: height and public realm

The Islington Society has called on the Council to require the proposed laboratory and office building at 176-178 York Way to be reduced in height to comply with the Islington Local Plan.

The Society objected to the planning application (P2024/0844/FUL) on the following grounds:

HEIGHT OF THE BUILDING

The Council's adopted Local Plan (September 2023), under Site Allocation KC2 identifies: "the north-western part of the site would be an appropriate location for a local landmark building of up to 12 storeys (37m)" And:

Any tall building should be set back from the street frontage on a plinth to avoid the creation of a tunnel effect on York Way.

The submitted Planning Statement at 5.29 states: *Massing was discussed during the pre-application process, with LBI officers accepting a minor exceedance of the site allocation 37m parameter particularly if that element of the scheme was not an occupied floor, e.g. plant floorspace. The final massing solution provides a ground, plus 7 storey unit measuring 43m to the top of the MEP plant screen (36.1m to top of occupied floor).*

The Islington Society would contend that:

- The Local Plan states the maximum height on part of the site could be up to 37 metres. It does not make an exception for plant – the proposed building is therefore contrary to the Local Plan
- The lack of set back from the street, and the excess height not being concentrated in part of the site but spread across virtually the whole site are contrary to the Local Plan

- This is another example of a developer ignoring the requirements of the newly adopted Local Plan and the Council not sufficiently enforcing the policy.

We would ask the Council to:

- publish the comments from the Design Review Panel
- require the developer to reduce the height of the building to comply with the Local Plan.

PUBLIC REALM

Much is made in the application documents of the proposed enhanced public realm on and around the site, including images of landscaping around the adjacent Locally Listed York Road Station.

For example, the planning statement includes: *5.49 Lastly, the public realm details have been designed so that they do not prejudice potential future developments in the area should they come forward (for example York Way Station and 21-36 Outram Place garages).*

If the Council is minded to approve the scheme or an amended version of it, The Islington Society would ask the Council to secure a significant financial contribution from the developer towards public realm and landscaping works directly in front of the disused tube station, as part of the Section 106 agreement.

The planning application is now closed for consultation, although the Council will consider objections made until the application is debated by the Planning Committee.

CURRENT OFFICERS OF THE SOCIETY

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Islington Society: What we do

- we support conservation planning work to preserve the borough's historic fabric and individual buildings of distinction
- we campaign for a high standard of design in new buildings
- we encourage best practice through awards for good architecture in new or refurbished buildings
- we organise a varied programme of events including talks, walks and site visits
- we campaign for better public transport and for priority for people travelling on foot or by bike
- we produce publications that celebrate Islington's history and its social and cultural diversity
- we publish neighbourhood walking trails to foster exploration awareness and pride of place
- we build links between residents officials and councillors
- we send advisers to Council groups dealing with development, the environment and transport
- we are represented on the London Forum of Amenity & Civic Societies, which takes up cross-borough issues and is a member of Civic Voice
- we publish a regular newsletter The views expressed in the Islington Society's Journal are not necessarily those of the Editor or the Society's adopted policy.

Our web site is www.islingtonsociety.org.uk

Next Newsletter

Copy date for our next newsletter is October 6th, 2024. The views expressed in the journal are not necessarily those of the chair, the editor, or the Society's adopted policy.

Books from our President and late Vice-President

Suicide of the West, by Richard Koch & Chris Smith, £14.99 available on Amazon, ISBN 0-8264 9023-9.

A History of Islington, by Mary Cosh, published by Historical Publications at £18.95, ISBN 0-948667-974

53 Cross Street - the biography of an historic house by Mary Cosh & Martin King, published by the Islington Archaeology & History Society

Council's judicial review of Poole's Park decision

The hearing into the DfE decision to allow Poole's Park primary school to take academy status was heard at the start of May and it was hoped that a decision would be made by the end of the month. It is feared that the purdah that followed proroguing Parliament will delay judgement.

Poole's Park was found by Ofsted to be requiring improvement and with the declining birth rate the Council proposed to close it. Parents objected, and secured from the government permission to convert the school to Academy status, insulating it from Council control. As a result (though it may have happened anyway), Duncombe and Montem schools are merging on the Duncombe site and the Edventure Collaborative scheme involving Montem and Drayton Park schools dissolved. Both Duncombe and Montem were classed as "Good" in their most recent Ofsted assessments.

Confusion over legal redress in road safety cases involving cyclists

Following the death of a pedestrian at Old Street, in collision with an e-cyclist, a prosecution failed because it was ruled that road traffic offences by the drivers of motor vehicles did not apply to cycling. It was reported that the e-bike or tracker bike, which could not have been legally ridden, had been travelling at 29 m.p.h. in an area with a 20 mph limit. The maximum legal speed for e-bikes is 15.5 mph.

When this first came to light, the government promised a review of the issue, including the law relating to all road accidents, but eight years later there is no sign of it.

Following a moving interview with the husband of the deceased on the BBC *Today* programme, which had been unable to persuade a government or cycling lobby spokesperson to respond, there was a significant reaction from listeners and two days later they tracked down Duncan Dollimore of the Campaign for Cycling UK. He was aware of the individual case, agreed that the bereaved man had been told prosecution was not possible, but said that there were laws albeit somewhat opaque and outdated which could and had been used. He agreed with the need to tighten the law, and argued that the subjectivity in what constitutes “reckless” or “dangerous” needed to be sharpened for all road traffic offences: a piecemeal review of just cycling offences would not be enough.

Simultaneously, a number of groups representing disabled people have drawn up a petition urging that “floating bus stops” be removed from London’s streets. The Mayor has commissioned a report into their safety and found the accident rate to be low. But the argument that a few accidents from careless cyclists should be compared with the daily death rate caused by motor vehicles is flawed because the latter are the result of the action of individuals whereas the installation of dangerous floating bus stops is the state imposing something that increases risk to pedestrians. The report to the Mayor identified design faults in more than half of the floating bus stops in London.

The petitioners’ groups largely represent partially sighted or blind people or the elderly, and most of the press reports give scant attention

to what may be a larger group of disabled people, neurodivergent people who suffer from confusion or anxiety. People discouraged from travelling altogether will not appear in the accident statistics. There surely has to be an acceptance that excluding these people is an unacceptable price for measures that simply reduce journey times for cycling over other measures equally effective in terms of safety.



The use of the all-encompassing term “floating bus stop” is also unhelpful. In a detailed opinion piece in the latest Future Transport London Newsletter (May 2024), the distinction between the two forms in which these come is made clear. These are more accurately described as Bus Stop By-passes and Shared Use Bus Boarders (SUBBs). It is the SUBBs that are inherently dangerous; with adequate lighting and adherence to the 2022 Highway Code, Bus Stop By-passes could be designed safely for pedestrians. The difference is that SUBBs allow the cyclist between the bus shelter/pavement and the bus stop. Some are proposed for Isledon Road in a current consultation.

Needless to say, it is difficult to get legislators’ minds around the detail. With no sign of the review of all law relating to traffic offences causing death or serious injury, the government agreed an amendment to the wide ranging Criminal Justice Bill. Careless or dangerous cycling would become a criminal offence with a maximum punishment of 14 years in prison. This Bill fell when Parliament was prorogued.

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A walk around Tufnell Park: former Half Moon to Prince Edward

As better weather returns at last, Andrew Clayton resumes his perambulation around the Borough based on the register of Islington's locally listed buildings. This was revised and updated by the Islington Society, and completed in 2021. It is available on the society's website. The walk takes us through the villas and terraces of Tufnell Park.

The walk begins at the nationally Grade II listed pub, **The Owl and the Hitchhiker**. Like many of Islington's pubs it has been renamed more than once. It bears its original name in stone on its strongly detailed frontage. More recently it was the Edward Lear: the great Victorian artist and humourist was born in the then Holloway village in 1812. Built c.1860, it is of rendered brick with painted stone dressings, well preserved inside, with cast iron columns and Corinthian capitals. The bar is elaborately carved with engraved glass.



Mercers Road Villa, classical style

When you leave the pub, turn right into Mercers Road, named after the City livery company which owned the land. On both sides are groups of villas, mostly two stories and mostly linked pairs. They are well preserved and stylish, built in an unusual pale grey stock brick. They are part of a sequence of villas leading as far as Yerbury Road. They have elaborate "art" or artificial stone porches and bay windows and were clearly aimed at comparatively well-off residents. Like the pub, they date from the 1860s. **No. 38** is also of the same date but grander and higher. It has a separate entrance to the side, with paired windows above and elegant steps and balustrade. Towards Tufnell Park playing fields, the character of Mercers Road changes. On the left are rather plain 1870s terraces, but on the right are villas of an altogether different character, **Nos. 43-61**. They have gable ends, with elaborately carved bargeboards, and stone wood and iron detailing. This gives a more gothic or Arts & Crafts façade than the other Mercers Road houses, emphasised by red brick exteriors

contrasting with neighbouring London stock.



Mercers Road villas, Arts & Crafts style

Continue walking until you reach the playing fields and turn left. **Nos. 1-10 Campdale Road** make up a late Victorian terrace of shops with homes above. The most pronounced features are the Venetian windows on the first and second floors and the strongly detailed pilasters and brackets which separate the shopfronts. The design is also used in a similar parade of shops on Junction Road nearby. Less happily the 2010s development opposite on Campdale Road has the Venetian window motif, without the sense of scale of the original model. Turn right onto Tufnell Park Road, and then right again onto Huddleston Road and walk to the end of the road. On the right are **Nos. 142 and 144**, two former railway buildings from the old Junction Road station on the Tottenham and Hampstead Junction Railway. These two buildings stood at the entrance to the Tufnell Park goods depot, which was part of the station.



Nos 142 & 144 Huddleston Road

They are dated 1884 on the front of No. 142, which would have been at the height of the station's popularity, partly because of the nearby Metropolitan Cattle Market. Usage of the station fell when Tufnell Park underground station was opened and it was closed in 1943. Both these buildings have a distinctiveness about them which sets them apart from the surrounding terraces.

Retrace your steps along Huddleston Road, cross Tufnell Park Road, and follow the rather bland 1870s terraces on either side, to the junction with Anson Road, and the Tufnell Park estate, where George Truefitt was surveyor for much of the second half of the 19th century. Turn right, to **No. 24 Anson Road**. This is an imaginatively detailed villa, a fine example of Tufnell Park estate development, perhaps by Truefitt himself.



No. 24 Anson Road

An ambitious and successful architect, his work survives across Britain, from Worthing to Aberdeen. Locally he designed the former St. George's Church on Tufnell Park Road, and the National Youth Theatre on Holloway Road. The detailing on this house is of high quality as are the building materials. Red brick on the stock brick structure is used creatively, both vertically and horizontally. The tiling on the conical turret adds subtle variation and is intact. This house is part of a sequence of villas which extends down to No. 30 at the junction with Huddleston Road. No. 30 has a magnificent corner balcony with fine woodwork and cast-iron detailing. Head up the hill on Huddleston Road to the junction with Carleton Road. The second house on the left, No. 23, is given a much firmer attribution to Truefitt by Pevsner and is unmistakably in his quirky style, with stepped gables, elaborate iron-

work and strong red brick detailing. Next to it was Truefitt's most famous piece of domestic architecture, the Villa Careno. This was illustrated in an influential book published in 1868, *Villa and Cottage Architecture*, and it is clearly by the same architect as No. 23. Villa Coreno was demolished in the mid-20th century.



Villa Careno

Turn back along Carleton Road to an alleyway next to the school sports ground. Go through this with the school on your left, to Hilddrop Road. Turn left and follow the road past the school until it bends round to the right. In the school grounds on the left is one of the best of the London School Board buildings in Islington, the old **Holloway School**. This is a fine example of the Queen Anne Baroque architectural style used by TJ Bailey and his colleagues at the London School Board at the turn of the 19th and 20th centuries. Taken together, these board schools are one of Victorian and Edwardian municipalism's outstanding achievements. This school represents a time when there was an important shift in education from religious to local government foundations. The building, of 1901, has a Queen Anne country house air, with its hipped pitched roof, large windows and symmetrical elevation.

Continue along Hilddrop Road to Camden Road and into Middleton Grove. **No.1 Middleton Grove** is what Truefitt designed as his ideal home. Compared to the Villa Careno, it is a simple building, but with the elaborate porch and window hood that can be found in his other villas in Carleton Road. Return to Camden Road and walk towards Holloway Road. Fork left on Parkhurst Road and you come to the locally listed Prince Edward pub on the right. It is described at the end of the Caledonian Road walk. (Islington News, Summer 2023).

Parliament washed up

Parliament was prorogued at the end of May.

The proroguing of Parliament is marked by a process known as “wash-up” in which Whips from the main parties get together and agree which legislation currently under scrutiny can be nodded through and passed to the king for Royal Assent, and which should fall by the wayside.

With a healthy majority one might have expected the government to do more but in the event very little seems to have been washed up. The Bill to pardon all victims of the Post Office scandal was enacted, and the Select Committee on HS2 phase 2 was repurposed to scrutinize the replacement legislation for part of the Northern Powerhouse Rail scheme. These hybrid Bills do not fall as a result of the election. The procedural aspect of this was controversial but the only opposition came from seven members concerned that a future government might revive the HS2 scheme which they oppose.

As noted elsewhere, the Criminal Justice Bill was a casualty of the decision to call the election. Although the Levelling Up Act was passed some months ago, many parts of it require secondary legislation (Commencement Orders) and have not been implemented. If there is a change of

government some of these Orders are likely not to be made. All politicians advocate housing but how it is to be built remains elusive. When insufficient housing is being built, the Tories like to blame the Mayor and to give the impression that he is responsible for building houses – he is not. The planning system is also a popular scapegoat, ignoring the long list of planning permissions that go unimplemented as developers ensure their profitability by keeping supply below demand and in the hope that an even bigger or taller building might be permitted if there is no progress on the approved scheme.

Another Bill that failed to make the grade was the one expected to secure Rishi Sunak’s legacy: the ban on smoking for everyone born after a certain date. This was despite the fact that the proposal had the support of the Opposition. Yet another casualty was the ending of No fault eviction of tenants by landlords. This was pledged in the Conservative Party manifesto of 2019 and also was supported by the Opposition. Both of these could reappear in the new Parliament.

AB

London Forum Meeting: Thames-side Policy and the London Plan

Peter Eversden opened the meeting by expressing the hope that it would influence the content of the next London Plan and its strategy for the River Thames. Mathieu Proctor of the GLA explained the context of the current London Plan and the work that was going on to prepare its successor, which would have to take account of factors like population growth. The relevant London Plan Policy was SI14, covering flood management, biodiversity, leisure, transport etc. Future work, by the GLA with the relevant boroughs, would cover the four Thames Policy areas. Rebecca Law of the Thames Landscape Strategy explained how SI14 of the current London Plan was being implemented, in collaboration with the GLA and the boroughs. She described the existing (now rather dated) strategies and their intention to have strategies

from Surrey to the Thames estuary, broken down into character areas. Besides SI14, SI12 - flood risk management - was very relevant because it was essential to ensure that London can survive through the century, with flood defences that do not interfere too much with the use and enjoyment of the river. Philip Whyte of the West London River Group and the Wandsworth Society went through all the developments proposed for the stretch between Kew and Battersea and how they exceeded the heights laid down in the relevant plans, and impacted on safeguarded wharves. Tim Catchpole of the Mortlake with East Sheen Society gave a full account of the series of proposals for the Stag Brewery site at Mortlake, for the latest of which a Public Inquiry was imminent. He also drew attention to how many of the tallest buildings close to the Thames had been permitted by

Ministerial decision (appeal or call-in) rather than by the local planning authority. Michael Ball of the Waterloo Community Development Group and of Just Space, observed that the Thames was the only natural feature specifically mentioned in the Act that set up the Greater London Authority, which required its use, particularly for transportation, to be encouraged; but specific Thames policies had reduced considerably over the iterations of the London Plan since the Blue Ribbon Network chapter was removed. Ball described the development that had taken place near the river in Vauxhall and in the Waterloo area, mitigated to some extent by the Views Management Framework; the horrendous proposal for 72 Upper Ground, agreed with reluctance by Michael Gove, could still be overturned through judicial review. There were many Opportunity Areas along the Thames, particularly East London; he was incensed by the threat to the open land they posed; land that could be a 'playground' for the communities if development were further back from the river. Paul Thornton opened the discussion session by saying that the implication of what the speakers had said was that the policy framework for the Thames in the London Plan was not fit for purpose. He asked Mathieu Proctor whether the next iteration of the London Plan, whether completely new or a revision of the existing one, might include a more coherent Thames strategy. Mr Proctor was unable to answer at this stage, since what the GLA team was doing was to look at individual policies in the current Plan to see if they were up-to-date; climate resilience would be a significant feature, with implications for water management. He urged attendees to participate actively in the Plan revision process, and to use the 'Call for Evidence' page on the Planning for London website. Michael Bach observed that the Views Management Framework with its protective effect had no force west of Lambeth Bridge. Patricia Trembath argued that the whole planning process did not take into account that London was in a basin and vulnerable to water and flooding; the Thames Barrier would soon be unable to cope; the balance was not right. Paul Thornton asked Rebecca Law whether the strategies for which she was responsible had any effect on the scale of development along the Thames; she thought these strategies was that though material considerations they were not themselves statutory and so did not have full

force in decision taking; she hoped that eventually they would be more robust and up-to-date. The force of these strategies would be strengthened by association with the statutory London and borough plans, and development did not stop as strategies were being rewritten. Michael Ball said that in numerous planning inquiries with which he had been involved the Thames Strategies had never been mentioned; this must be changed in the future. As for the vulnerability of London to flooding, Rebecca Law was aware that besides water coming down the Thames and up from the tides, there was surface water that made its way into the river. She gave an assurance that this was in their sights as was the short remaining life of the Thames Barrier. The London Forum should put forward significant policies to urge on an incoming government, and the importance of a Thames strategy could be one of them. Peter Eversden observed that some developments along the Thames might so affect the World Heritage sites that they would be delisted by UNESCO. Rebecca Law said that the Coordinator for the Thames Landscape Strategy was a member of the committee for the Kew World Heritage Site. The London Rivers Association had been a useful ally until its funding ended, and could usefully be revived. Law said that there were now some equivalents, such as the Tidal Thames Councils Forum, which concentrated on flooding matters, but also cover planning. Dido Berkeley cited the Aarhus Convention which required meaningful public involvement in major environmental decision making; building on the littoral flood plain was contrary to that. The River Thames was treated far better in the first London Plan than now. Rebecca Law said that the GLA was looking to restart the All-London Green Grid, which had been one of Boris Johnson's initiatives as Mayor, and for it to cover Blue-Green as well as Green infrastructure. Tim Catchpole said that the management of the Thames bridges had been fragmented since the Greater London Council, and ought to be considered in the context of the river. Peter Eversden summed up the meeting. He had found the lack of a policy for the river, indeed the regression since the first London Plan, was depressing. The London Forum's committee would put effort into ensuring that the next London Plan went forward, rather than backward, and would keep Forum members in touch.

Islington Pub news



After five years of closure, something is stirring at the *Admiral Mann*, a pub popular with locals in Tufnell Park. Local residents are to be consulted over a development proposal, which may or may not include restoration of a public house. The pub is in Camden but close enough to have been the local for many Islington residents.

Development is also proposed at the *Calthorpe Arms* in Gray's Inn Road, another Camden pub with a catchment area that includes part of Islington. CAMRA has objected to the proposed extension because of its detrimental impact on the existing listed building.

The lease of the *Jolly Sisters* in N.7 is for sale, and there is a proposal to turn the former *Hare & Hounds* (its original name etched into

the fabric of the building) on Upper Street into a private club. Further down Upper Street, what was most recently the *Dirty Martini* is now *Coffee2Cocktails*. It serves as a café during the day and a cocktail bar at night, following a sister establishment in Harrow. It does not serve real ale, but better news comes from the *Alma* in Chapel Market where ale has been restored. The pub at the foot of the market, which for most of its life was the *Salmon & Compasses*, enjoys a sixth change of name and is called... *Chapel Market Tavern*. It is a gastro pub with no real ale.

The landlord of the *Mother Redcap* (above) at Archway has retired and the locally listed pub closed. Also closed is the former *Prince Alfred* or *Sussex* in Sussex Way, which most recently was called the *Fixer Upper*.

Transport News Round-up

Mayor's third term plans

The Mayor no doubt hopes that after another six months of attrition with central government, a new administration will herald a period of co-operation and growth. The National Infrastructure Commission has lent weight to this, describing the £250m. contribution in 2024/5 as sticking plaster.

Top of the wish list seem to be the DLR extension into Thamesmead and the creation of West Orbital rail on existing mainly freight lines. These are believed to be affordable while extension of Bakerloo line (BLE) and Crossrail2 are not. My personal priority would be resignalling the Piccadilly line. It achieves a significant increase in capacity at relatively low cost.

There is the promise of a doubling of the network of express buses mostly in Outer London, including one covering the BLE. But the Mayor has rowed back on his pledge to introduce a road pricing scheme, claiming that the ULEZ is sufficient. It is likely that we have to await a National scheme which would replace fuel duty once more cars are electric and Sunak and Starmer have moved on.

The Mayor is also hoping that a Labour government would allow TfL to take over more services on Network Rail, including the service from Moorgate to Finsbury Park, but there are reports that they would be given to Great British Railways instead.

HS2 at Euston

The Labour Party continues to ask about the cost of Euston and who might pay, ignoring the feasibility. In one of his recent answers, Huw Merriman refers to "the revised approach to Euston" – it remains to be seen if anyone notices. Government comments on the costs are at best vague and since no-one knows what the cost would be in the absence of a scheme that can be safely implemented that is unsurprising.

Huw Merriman is one of the many MPs to announce they are not standing for re-election. He previously worked in the rail industry and his knowledge (when he is allowed to put it to use) will be missed.

Pentonville Road

It seems that there is no legal impediment to closing the station entrance, which rather makes a mockery of the extensive process by which the closure of the Thameslink platforms there was sanctioned. What is the point of participating if, having secured an agreement that seemed to suit everyone, it can just be ripped up without reference to the petitioners or their successors later on? The station entrance is subject to frequent graffiti and has become an eye-sore, as well as depriving locals of access to the quieter part of the Victoria line.

Bus accidents

May 18th was a bleak day for London Buses, with a fire engulfing a single decker in Southall and a crash in a side street in East Ham. The latter event was filmed from the seemingly innocuous start: no event seems to escape posterity as Sir Keir Starmer is discovering.

It was initially suggested that the bus had strayed from its route (5) but it later emerged that this is a fairly regular short working movement. The bus is seen to be struggling to find a way through between parked vehicles, reversing to do so and then accelerating into a right turn which continues until it pivots into a house.

In some ways a more serious issue than the possible driver error or design or maintenance fault is the use of narrow roads such as this to turn buses which need to recover from late running. Whereas a new railway station is subjected to detailed consultation, no thought seems to be given to facilities for terminating or turning buses and all too frequently (as at Highbury Corner) new traffic schemes ignore buses altogether. The end result is that bus termini are adjusted not to suit the passenger but for operational reasons.

Three day weekend

The trial of a three day weekend in which off-peak fares were valid throughout Friday, along with all freedom passes, came to an end on May 31st. Transport for London will study its effectiveness in promoting either office work on Fridays or the leisure/hospitality industry. AB

Recent and Forthcoming events

Society events and activity

Planning Watch

The Society has recently submitted comments in response to the public consultation regarding **Finsbury Leisure Centre** objecting to:

- building on open space
- reduction of daylight, sunlight and outlook for existing residents
- harm to heritage assets, e.g. St Luke's Church and
- the proposed Tall Building (over 30 metres) which is in clear contravention of the Council's adopted policies.

The Society also objected to the 176-178 York Way planning application, see page 3 above.

In addition, the committee is monitoring sites including: Archway Campus/Holborn Infirmary; shopfronts at 344 & 346, Upper Street and 33 Islington Green facing Camden Passage; William Martin Court, 65 Margery Street; 48 Chiswell Street; Clerkenwell Fire Station; RBS at Angel.

A talk in the Town Hall by the Borough Architect, Fiona Monkman, is/was scheduled for June 10th at 7 p.m. Fiona Monkman is the design team leader at Islington Architects, a part of the architecture department at Islington Council, and winner of the MJ Long Award in 2022 for her work on Centurion Close. She also worked on housing schemes and estate regenerations including the Marquess Estate and Spa Green.

The Bill Manley/ Harley Sherlock Memorial pub crawl will take place on June 14th.
6 p.m. Robin Ale & Cider House, 29 Crouch Hill, N.4
7 p.m. Old Dairy, 1-3 Crouch Hill, N.4
8 p.m. Stapleton Tavern, 2-4 Hill, N.4
9 p.m. White Lion, 127 Stroud Green Road, N.4

Save the date: the **Annual Dinner** returns on Tuesday October 8th at 7 p.m. in Mangia Bene, 18 Chapel Market, N.1

Our web site is www.islingtonssociety.org.uk

London Forum

The next London Forum open meeting will be held on July 8th at the Gallery in Cowcross Street. The topic will be Housing.

Heritage Alliance

19th June: launch of SAVE's 2024 Building at Risk report, The Gallery, Cowcross Street, Farringdon.

20th June Temple Bar Trust – In Search of John Vanburgh, 2 Paternoster Square London, E.C.4
20th-22nd June Victorian Society – George Edmund Street bicentenary symposium and Gala Dinner, St. James the Less, Pimlico, London, S.W.1

4th July: Historic Buildings & Places – Tour of the Lumley Chapel and Whitehall Historic House, Church Road, Cheam, Sutton.

6th July: SAVE Britain's Heritage walking tour along London's Regent's Canal

Islington Council

Meetings in July (Town Hall, 7.30 or 6.30 (*))

2nd: Environment Regeneration & Transport Scrutiny

11th: Full council

15th: *Licensing sub-Committee B

15th: Planning Committee

18th: *Licensing Committee

18th: Executive

25th: *Licensing Sub-committee C

Greater London Assembly

July Meetings in the new City Hall, Kamal Chunchie Way, London, E16 1ZE at 10 a.m. except where stated, also live streamed. (Many June meetings cancelled due to election purdah).

9th: Planning & Regeneration

10th: Transport

16th: Environment

18th: Mayor's Question Time

24th: Housing (2 p.m.)