

# EC1 ECHO

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## High water mark



Alistair Spalding, director of Sadler's Wells Credit Jason Dimmock

The director of Sadler's Wells, Alistair Spalding, talks about dance, digital – and how the world-famous theatre is embedded into its locality

• BY OLIVER BENNETT •

Since he joined Sadler's Wells 21 years ago, Alistair Spalding has had a mission – to bring dance to centre stage in British cultural life. "I really want as many people as possible to come and enjoy this wonderful art form that I enjoy so much," he says. "We haven't in the past been a dancing nation but that is beginning to change."

Spalding's focus on dance has reinvigorated the theatre – London's second oldest, with 400-year-old roots in Clerkenwell – and made it internationally famous. In the deep past a rum-bustious place where everyone from clowns, jugglers, wrestlers and singers trod the boards, it is now best-known for contemporary dance but remains true to the promise of a great night out. "From the beginning it has been a people's theatre which depends on the audience coming to enjoy what we do," says Spalding. "We want people from all parts of society to be in that audience – that's in the Sadler's Wells DNA."

The theatre, founded alongside a mineral spring by Richard Sadler in 1683, has had ups and downs across the centuries. Now the term Sadler's Wells refers to a small group of theatres, including the main theatre on Rosebery Avenue with 1,500 seats and a purpose-built dance stage, the Peacock Theatre in Holborn

– where the focus is mostly on family entertainment, including The Snowman every Christmas – and the smaller Lilian Baylis Studio where experimental pieces by emerging choreographers are staged. It's reasonable to say that the current period is a high water mark of its existence.

*"We are really focussed on this and have a number of initiatives to bring new audiences in"*

In the 20th century Sadler's Wells laid the foundations as a dance theatre upon which Spalding has built. "It has always had a strong connection with dance, but it became a much more regular feature when [the impresario] Lilian Baylis took over in 1925," he says. "It then presented a lot of opera, but that changed when Sadler's Wells Opera moved to the Coliseum and the current building, purpose-built for dance, opened in 1998. It made sense to focus on dance and I made that a clear part of my vision when I took over the running of the theatre."

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## NEWS

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## Islington replacing boilers in public buildings

BY JULIA GREGORY,  
LOCAL DEMOCRACY REPORTER

**G**as boilers are being replaced at council-owned offices and other civic buildings in a bid to reduce the borough's carbon footprint.

The move is one of the steps Islington Council is taking to become greener.

It comes as the latest data reveals that carbon dioxide emissions from gas from businesses in Islington have gone up by four per cent since 2005, despite growing environmental awareness.

In October 18th-29th the borough is hosting an environment festival where entrepreneurs and residents can pick up green tips.

Businesses in Islington produce 33 per cent of the borough's carbon emissions, according to the

Department of Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy data. A further seven per cent comes from public sector buildings like the Town Hall and court rooms, while industrial buildings produce just six per cent.

Like many other councils across the UK, Islington declared a climate emergency in 2019 and set a target to become a net-zero borough by 2030.

Burning fossil fuels increases the concentration of carbon dioxide in the earth's atmosphere, leading to increased temperatures globally and more extreme weather.

Islington's carbon emissions dropped by 45 per cent by 2019 – with a 58 per cent reduction in emissions per person – but the council says there is still a long way to go.

It set out its Vision 2030 strategy last year, and is now planning

to start a business audit scheme for small businesses who want to reduce their carbon footprint.

Among the help on offer are grants from the Energising Small Business Fund, for energy efficiency improvements, and from the Islington Community Energy Fund, for innovative energy projects, which include energy efficiency measures for buildings.

Discussing the challenges facing businesses and industrial premises, Matt West, who is looking at decarbonising buildings in Islington, told the environment scrutiny committee the council is working to slash carbon emissions from its own buildings.

This includes replacing gas boilers at the council's 57 corporate

buildings with greener options, improving energy efficiency with insulation, glazing, heating controls, lighting upgrades, passive cooling measures, and by using renewable products.

He said listed buildings like the Town Hall on Upper Street pose particular challenges.

The council is also buying electricity from renewable sources and looking at putting solar panels on suitable buildings. It is also looking at ways to make the 39 council

schools greener and is doing feasibility studies at Beacon High, Drayton Park Primary, New River College using grants from the government's low carbon skills fund.

*"Islington's carbon emissions dropped 45% by 2019 – but the council said there is still a long way to go"*

## NEWS IN BRIEF

## Queen of the stone age

*Building threatened with demolition shortlisted for the Stirling Prize*



The 2016 clash ensued after Islington Council claimed that Taha should have built the façade from brick, but eventually allowed it after a planning inspector over-ruled the council's order. Among the objectors to the live-work building is local group Friends of Clerkenwell Green.

*"15 Clerkenwell Close is noted for its rusticated stone façade"*

The shortlisting follows other RIBA London Award winning projects in the area, including the office block at 160 Old Street by Orms and The Ray in Farringdon, Allford Hall Monaghan Morris, both by EC1-based architects.

The area has a high concentration of architectural practices. The 2021 RIBA Stirling Prize will be announced on Thursday 14 October 2021 at Coventry Cathedral, as part of the UK City of Culture 2021 celebrations.

## Pop up shopping

**T**he latest tech firm to move to Farringdon is fashion marketplace app Depop. The app, which is associated with the under-25 year old Gen-Z cohort, is a trading platform for second-hand clothes and accessories, and has been called an "online thrift store", enabling people to make money by selling items on. With the accent on used items, Depop emphasises its sustainability credentials.

The app is booming, and last year grew over 100 per cent in sales and revenues during 2020. With about 30m registered users worldwide, Depop was bought by online marketplace Esty in July for £1.1bn.

Moving from Shoreditch to new offices at 20 Farringdon Road in October, the brand has about 400 employees globally, the majority of whom are in London. Depop joins other tech companies that have made Farringdon their home, including TikTok in Smithfield and LinkedIn, further up Farringdon Road.

**A**min Taha's controversial stone building at 15 Clerkenwell Close has been shortlisted for the RIBA Stirling Prize, architecture's leading award – a significant accolade for a building that

was threatened with demolition by Islington Council in 2016. One of six schemes in the running for the prize, the five-storey building is noted for its rusticated stone façade and is the work of Amin Taha and Groupwork.

# INTERVIEW

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Now Sadler's Wells is a global dance centre that presents a broad church of the movement arts, from ballet, contemporary European and Latin dance to flamenco, hip hop, South Asian dance and many other styles. "It's very important we reflect different dance styles and cultures," says Spalding. "The great thing about dance is that it doesn't normally use words, so it transcends borders, language and culture and has a unique ability to unite people and enables us to see ourselves in each other."

The last two Covid-afflicted years have been difficult for many arts institutions, but Sadler's Wells has survived in relatively good shape. "The pandemic has had a huge impact on the industry," says Spalding. "We've been fortunate to secure a grant and a loan from the Government which has enabled us to keep ticking over and create digital work, which meant we were able to employ artists and other freelancers while our theatres were closed."

Indeed, during the pandemic, Sadler's Wells rallied around

its online performances – and Spalding found that digital actually opened the door to new audiences, spreading the Wells ethos across the world. "The brilliant thing about Digital Stage [the theatre's term for its online offering] is that it reaches truly international audiences," he says. "Through our digital

platforms and partnerships in 2020, we shared 25 dance workshops, 14 full-length works, eight screen-dance films, four audio works and hosted a global gala. The programme received more than five million views globally and provided work and income to hundreds of artists and freelancers."



Sadler's Wells exterior Credit Philip Vile

It also changed the viewing dynamic, with online no longer being seen as a fall-back. "We found that online is not a 'second best' but a different experience," says Spalding. "In dance made for film there will be details that you may have missed in the theatre, such as the dancers' facial expressions. That said, it's true that there remains something very special about the live relationship between the audience and performers, and the buzz of seeing a performance collectively with other audience members remains magical."

Another vital aspect of Spalding's directorship has been that Sadler's Wells produces new work rather than just staging touring productions. "I was always very keen that we start making it possible to create ambitious and innovative work we could then tour globally," he says. "At the heart of this process are our 17 Associate Artists who are at the very top of their game and with whom we have a close relationship. We've made work together since the programme started in 2005, which was the turning point in us becoming a producing venue and we've now produced or co-produced more

than 80 works." The Associates include names like choreographers Russell Maliphant, Carlos Acosta and Botis Seva and productions have toured the world to Moscow, New York, Beijing, Sydney and Paris.

At the same time, Sadler's Wells is deeply embedded in Clerkenwell and dedicated to bringing in local audiences. "We are really focussed on this and have a number of initiatives to bring new audiences in," says Spalding. "Get Into Dance, for example, is designed to reach new audiences, including people from low-income households, the over-60s, young people and people with disabilities." The theatre also works with community groups so, as Spalding puts it, "we can bring in those who might not think of coming", and uses lower cost ticket price and initiatives like the Barclays Dance Pass for 16–19 year olds to do so. It's part of the history of Sadler's Wells to be a local choice as well as a world destination, and as Spalding says, that attitude continues in its programme. "There really is something for everyone here."

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# Connecting communities – a view from The Peel

It is an absolute pleasure to be taking on the role of chief executive at The Peel Institute. I have joined the organisation at a very interesting time when we are coming out of lockdown, and it's been interesting helping to get everything up and running again while getting my head around the myriad programme, governance and strategic matters that The Peel is involved in.

More than anything, I have been impressed with the depth of commitment that the staff and volunteers at The Peel have for the community, which manifests itself in the wonderful activities they organise. It is quite humbling to realise that I'm at the helm of an organisation that has been serving the needs of the community in Clerkenwell for over 100 years – indeed, in two years time, The Peel will be 125 years old. I feel a real sense of responsibility to ensure that the organisation grows and thrives for the next 125 years.

The immediate priorities for me are to ensure that we place The Peel at the service of the community, so we can address the needs that are emerging, especially given the toll that recent lockdowns have had on people young and old. I really want The Peel to be a smile on the face of the Clerkenwell community – not just a physical space that they can come to, but a dynamic organisation that comes to them in an accessible way.

I also intend to really live the mission of The Peel to 'connect communities',

which won't just include local residents and community groups, but also to connect people to the business community in mutually beneficial ways. We will also be placing The Peel even more firmly at the heart of the community by getting involved in various engagement forums and using our insight and reach to Clerkenwell to inform, challenge and shape policies at local and regional government levels.

I believe that my previous roles have really prepared me for this role – from using the power of sport and physical activity to promote mental and emotional wellbeing, to providing developmental activities for children and young people, to enabling older people to have rich, fulfilled lives and to enabling all ethnically diverse communities to more meaningfully connect through arts and cultural activities. There are so many ways that The Peel can make itself a stronger beat at the heart of this community.

Most importantly, I intend to have a lot of fun. So, if you are in the area, please drop by to say hello, and if you have any great ideas about how you want to make Clerkenwell an even more wonderful place to live, work and play, please do drop me a line. I am really looking forward to working with you.

*Olu Alake, Chief Executive Officer*  
*Email o.alake@peelinstitute.org.uk*  
*Twitter @olu\_peel*

**What's happening at The Peel**

**A gong for Kimberley**  
We're delighted that The Peel's Kimberley Bottomley, our Older Persons Activity Coordinator, was awarded a British Empire Medal (BEM) award for dedicated service to the older people of Clerkenwell.

In September we provided an afternoon of opera to the Over-55 Social Club members, as part of a dynamic programme of activities, classes, entertainment and lunches.

**Snap happy**  
The Peel was proud to be a partner of the Clerkenwell Photography competition, led by Chris Walker. An array of emerging photographic talent was celebrated at an awards ceremony in the Soapbox Youth Centre, Old Street. Congratulations to all the winners, seen above, and thanks to Chris for organising it all. For the wonderful photographic works, and the winners, see [www.clerkenwellphotography.com](http://www.clerkenwellphotography.com)

**Stepping Up**  
A note to remind all that our Stepping Up Youth Club is open for 6 and 7 pupils (that is, 10–12 year olds) at any Islington school. Get in touch and book up on Mondays and Wednesdays at 3.30pm–6pm at The Peel's Three Corners Centre. Our wide range of activities including arts and crafts (including T-shirt design), dance classes, coding, cooking and enterprise workshops and there's also space to make friends, socialise and do homework.

**Contact details for all these activities and more:**  
**Email** [admin@peelinstitute.org.uk](mailto:admin@peelinstitute.org.uk)  
**Call** 0207 837 6082

# Hot pro Clerkenwell

Clerkenwell Fire Station on Rosebery Avenue – closed as a fire station since 2014 by London's then Mayor Boris Johnson – is currently on the market via the London Fire Brigade.

A London Fire Brigade spokesperson said: "Clerkenwell Fire Station has been closed for seven years following a public consultation. During lockdown it was made available as a temporary homeless shelter, however this arrangement has now ended. The sale proceeds from this site will be invested back into our essential services."

The buyer will have to contend with a strict Grade II\* listing, given in 1988 for the many outstanding features of this red brick building. It was built in 1912–1917 to the Arts and Crafts design of HFT Cooper of the London County Council Architects' Department, it incorporated earlier fire stations from 1871 and 1895 respectively (see pictures, courtesy of London Metropolitan Archive).

Within, it has rare laundry fittings in the attic, thought to be the only such survival in the country, and the whole edifice is of a notably grand scale, dating from the Edwardian



# party

## l's distinctive fire station is up for grabs

era when the fire brigade evolved to include petrol vehicles. Sometimes said to be the first fire station in London, it was an upgrade of an earlier station at 27 Farringdon Street. When it was in use, it housed the superintendent's quarters on the second floor, and married quarters on the upper floors. Another feature is a late 20th century drill tower which is not listed, so will be unlikely to stay in a new development.

In April 2019, after an earlier sale fell through, the fire station was occupied by The Outside Project as London's first LGBTIQ+ homeless shelter. In May the Project moved on and the fire station has once again become vacant, bringing the cost to the taxpayer of keeping it shut since 2014 of nearly half a million pounds in security, rates and maintenance.

In early 2020 it was reported that Islington Council were to buy the building and refurbish it as social housing. This fell through in 2020, when the Council reviewed its proposal to purchase it and concluded it could not proceed.

Said Councillor Diarmaid Ward, Islington Council's executive member



for housing and development: "We have taken the difficult decision not to proceed with the purchase of Clerkenwell Fire Station, which we can no longer afford due to the financial pressures brought on by the Covid-19 crisis."

"We will work closely with London Fire Brigade to ensure the site helps to provide much-needed, genuinely affordable homes for local people."

"We remain committed to building more council housing, despite the inadequacy of government funding for new council housing. The money we would have invested in this site will be used to build more genuinely affordable housing elsewhere in our borough."

The photographs are courtesy of London Metropolitan Archives (LMA) and available to view on the London Picture Archive website along with 250,000 historical images and maps of the capital [londonpicturearchive.org.uk](http://londonpicturearchive.org.uk). Located in the heart of Clerkenwell, LMA is London's historical archive, providing free access to millions of documents, films, maps and images from 1067 to the present day. LMA is open to everyone, whether you're researching your family tree or interested in the history your street.

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# Make Bunhill quiet again

*As Old Street's traffic gets pushed into residential streets, Steven Separovich explains why he set up the residents group Better Bunhill*

**A**s a result of major construction works on Old Street roundabout initiated more than two years ago by Transport for London (TfL) and Islington Council, traffic through previously quiet residential streets has increased exponentially – and a constant stream of vehicles circumvent the roundabout by cutting through Bath Street and Peerless Street.

My residents' group Better Bunhill believes that this isn't a good outcome for the area. Both of these streets are an exception to other neighbourhood streets in the Bunhill Ward, as there is a primary school (St Luke's) on one, and the Moorfields Children's Eye Hospital on the other.

Given that Bunhill is the ward with the highest pollution levels and lowest car ownership in the borough of Islington, we're unhappy with this concentration of traffic. This increase in traffic generates pollution, noise and danger of accidents outside both the school and the hospital, which is highly concerning, particularly as a number of scientific studies have shown a link between air pollution and children having smaller lungs, an increase in lung cancer, and other cardiovascular and neurological problems.

In addition, the highest proportion of child fatalities happen as a result of

vehicle accidents. Better Bunhill feels this is highly likely to happen as young children use these facilities, particularly at the Children's Eye Hospital where sight-impaired children use the facilities outside of the School Streets times.

Better Bunhill is concerned with people-friendly streets and has been proactive in campaigning for immediate action to be taken to address this situation. We have been in contact with our local councillors to raise this issue, and have attended a number of the Bunhill Ward meetings regarding the unfinished traffic scheme on Old Street Roundabout. During one meeting TfL outlined plans for two schemes: one for Bath Street to become a School Street – restricting traffic on Bath Street for an hour in the morning and an hour in the afternoon – and secondly, to reverse traffic on Bath Street and Peerless Street. This would be fine but we remain very disappointed that TfL took nine months since the last Ward Council Meeting to offer proposals that will not take effect for months. Neither of the proposals will solve the problem of the pollution issue and dangerous traffic.

It was also mentioned that Scheme 2 construction will not start construction until March 2022.

Despite all the above, TfL and Islington Council see no urgency in addressing this



Traffic jam on Peerless Street in Bunhill Credit Steven Separovich

# Shake, rattle and roll

*It's time to address the reasons why underground train noise has escalated in Clerkenwell, writes resident David Sulkin*



**T**he plan for the Thameslink railway line as we know it today was launched in 1988. A Victorian tunnel from King's Cross to Moorgate was adopted, the terminus at Holborn Viaduct was closed and a through line built, including City Thameslink Station at Ludgate Circus, towards London Bridge. Now Thameslink serves many destinations both north and south of the Thames. There's no doubt the line is convenient and needed.

However, in the EC1 and WC1 areas, the tunnel is between 12-15m below ground (see the picture of it in a cutting). Since 2016, new trains with 12 carriages have been introduced. Trains run often and travel fast along the existing rails, which are

set in concrete. This means that people in their homes are exposed to increased and excessive shaking, rattling and rolling every few minutes, from early in the morning to dead of night.

*“The rumbling and vibrations have increased significantly”*

When the Barbican Concert Hall was being built in the early 1980s, floating slab-track was installed beneath the hall, with anti-vibrating mountings – namely, trains running on rubber. Music making was safeguarded but people living above the Thameslink

harmful and unsatisfactory situation.

The situation is critical. Better Bunhill, local residents, St Luke's school staff and parents and the Children's Eye Hospital staff all demand an urgent solution to this problem and action to be taken sooner ahead of the above schemes. In the short term, we demand TfL and Islington Council immediately introduce measures, including: extending the 'School Street' hours; a 'No left turn' sign at the corner of Old Street and Bath Street, coming from the west towards the roundabout; speed cameras to enforce a reduced speed; a 'low emission zone' and communication from TfL to apps like Waze, Uber and Google to minimise traffic being sent down Bath Street and Peerless Street.

*“Better Bunhill is campaigning to address the traffic situation”*

The Better Bunhill group is concerned about air pollution, traffic and greening with the intent of promoting people friendly streets, while protecting children's and resident's health and wellbeing. Our aim is to tackle these issues and create a safer, cleaner and quieter neighbourhood which will reduce pollution, make our streets safer by reducing through-traffic, support local businesses, cut down carbon emissions and fight climate change. We don't think this is being done at present.

**Find out more about Better Bunhill here:** [betterbunhillclerkenwell.com](http://betterbunhillclerkenwell.com)

**See Better Bunhill's petition to demand action here** [chng.it/2BDWPDjtSj](https://chng.it/2BDWPDjtSj)

line were not. If only Thameslink had installed rubber track on the stretch of line between King's Cross and Farringdon – or at the very least as far as the junction of Farringdon Road and Rosebery Avenue – we wouldn't have this constant banging, rumbling and jangling now.

After a recent meeting with a helpful and sympathetic Thameslink representative, we would like to discuss how the lines can be made quieter for residents and what the long-term plans will be to reducing, or better, removing this interminable noise pollution altogether. So, if you live in Wharton Street, Granville Square, Lloyd Baker Street, Margery Street or Farringdon Road and are bothered by Thameslink train noise and vibration, get in touch. This will be a long hard road, but if we don't make some noise ourselves, Thameslink and Railtrack will think everything is okay – and it's not.

**If you're affected by underground rail noise in the above areas, get in touch with David at** [ds@dauidsulkin.co.uk](mailto:ds@dauidsulkin.co.uk)

# The Years Pass



## Lord Smith of Finsbury on how Clerkenwell has survived – and continues to improve

I was first elected as the MP for Islington South and Finsbury nearly 40 years ago, in 1983. And I was reflecting recently on all the things that have changed in this wonderful corner of London called Clerkenwell since then, and also the many things that haven't. The story of how Clerkenwell has survived the passing years is simply fascinating.

In 1983, I remember, there were hardly any privately owned houses south of Rosebery Avenue. None of the converted warehouses, small blocks of flats, or new developments, that have since appeared almost everywhere. Very few of the bars and cafes and restaurants that make for such a rich pattern of local life. And none of the shops and showrooms of designer office furniture that now form the centrepiece of Clerkenwell Design Week every year (with the exception of the last two, affected by Covid-19). The speed with which all of this has changed and happened has been breathtaking. I'm delighted it has, as I live myself in one of those small blocks of flats standing where once a warehouse plied its trade.

Back then, also, Finsbury Town Hall was still in use as a municipal building, especially serving for marriage registration and as a wedding venue. The great hall on the first floor, with its gorgeous and extravagant Victorian decoration, was still in use for public events and could be hired for private gatherings. Gerry Adams came to speak there, shortly after he had been elected as an MP (though he never took his seat); and I can remember vividly

being booed and jeered by the audience when, after welcoming Gerry Adams to London, I said that I could not accept the use of violence for political ends in Northern Ireland. I came away shaking.

Sadler's Wells, just up the road from Finsbury Town Hall, underwent a major renovation shortly after that period. The Lilian Baylis Theatre was created behind the main building, and the main theatre and front-of-house were transformed. Sadler's Wells' role as London's principal venue for contemporary dance has however continued and has flourished through the intervening years. The theatre has gone from strength to strength.

The enduring quality of what happens in Clerkenwell is in fact one of the persistent themes of life in the area. Take for example the Finsbury Health Centre. It was the first ever comprehensive public health centre in the country. Designed by the great Modernist architect Berthold Lubetkin – whose fundamental philosophy was that nothing was too good for ordinary people – it was filled with light and space and fresh air and was beautifully designed. It featured on wartime posters in the Second World War as the sort of thing we were fighting for. And it is still in use to this day, housing two GP Practices and still fulfilling the role of health centre for which it was designed and constructed.

Lubetkin also designed the Spa Green Estate, which curves gracefully beside the road opposite Sadler's Wells, and where the foundation stone laid by Aneurin Bevan can still be seen; and he designed

Bevin Court just off Percy Circus, which ranks as one of my favourite buildings in the whole of London. The double helix staircase, raising up through the centre of the building from a mosaic-lined entrance foyer, is outstanding. The flats are still loved and lived in. Nothing too good for ordinary people, indeed.

The Covid-19 pandemic has – sadly – affected a lot of Clerkenwell life, as it has everywhere. Cafes and bars have been forced to struggle, and some have gone completely. Sadler's Wells, like all theatres, has stared financial ruin in the face. But survival is strong, and I have every confidence that the buzzing life that formed the heart of Clerkenwell's appeal will return. Indeed, it is already doing so. London is at its best when its component villages develop an identity, a culture, a "feel" of their own; and Clerkenwell has certainly done precisely this. The vibrancy of its life and community enable it to stand out among all the other havens of London's vibrant life.

Clerkenwell has a rich tradition and history, from the Peasant's Revolt through to the Chartists gathering on Clerkenwell Green. From the Italian clockmakers and watchmakers who clustered here 150 years ago through to the Procession of Our Lady of Mount Carmel that still takes place each year from the Italian Church on Clerkenwell Road. From the first purpose-built Health Centre in the country to the first Council Estate built with central heating. From Britain's first Asian MP, elected in the 19th century, to the foundation of the Labour Party in a meeting hall on Farringdon Road. From the ancient lawns and courtyards of the Charterhouse to the Grinling Gibbons carvings in the Oak Room at the old headquarters of the New River Company to the historic buildings and archway of the old Priory of St John. Clerkenwell has history.

Clerkenwell also lives firmly and excitedly in the here and now. It is one of the liveliest, and most congenial, districts of London. Some of that liveliness, alas, was put on pause by the pandemic. But it is coming back, and I have every confidence it will continue to do so. Clerkenwell not only has history; it has a great future too.

*The Rt. Hon. Lord Smith of Finsbury was a Labour MP for Islington South and Finsbury (1983–2005) and Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport (1997–2001). As Culture Secretary, he restored free entry to all national museums and galleries. He stepped down from parliament at the 2005 general election and was made a life peer later that year. He was Chairman of the Environment Agency (2008–2014) and the Advertising Standards Authority (2006–2017), the Wordsworth Trust (2004–2017) and the Donmar Warehouse Theatre (2003–2015). He is the author of Creative Britain (1998) and was Britain's first openly gay MP.*

# The Barbican is due to get a makeover for its 40th birthday next year

BY YVONNE COURTNEY

**T**he Barbican is an outstanding architectural achievement but it's beginning to show its age. Home to three cinemas, two art galleries, a concert hall and theatres, the Brutalist complex is in need of what the City describes as "major renewal".

As the arts centre approaches its 40th birthday, the City of London Corporation has launched an international design competition for a £50-£150m repurpose of the Grade-II listed development.

The challenge will be striking a balance between respecting and preserving its architectural heritage while adapting it to meet the needs of 21st-century audiences and communities.

A revamp was on the cards following the cancellation of a new concert hall (to be situated on the Museum of London site following its move to Smithfield). It is also part of the City's goal to reposition itself as a cultural destination. A modernised Barbican is central to the CultureMile hub, which includes the Museum of London, the Guildhall School of Music and Drama and the London Symphony Orchestra (see page 17).



The Barbican Centre is due a makeover

The plans are intended to be as inclusive as possible; a key part of the brief is to ensure spaces are safe, accessible and welcoming for all, with more people feeling a sense of ownership and belonging. Reviewing its membership fees might help further achieve this, as well as a discount for local residents – of EC1/EC3/EC2 postcodes – who don't currently qualify, unlike their Barbican estate neighbours. The baffling directions, always an issue within the labyrinthine

Barbican, will no doubt be addressed by contestants.

The Barbican currently acts as something of a barrier between the area's cultural zone and Smithfield, so making the entrances more visible and easier to find will be a must. Hopefully this won't involve more surgery of the City's unique pedway – which has been wonderfully reimagined in the area off London Wall by Salter's Hall.

Designed by Chamberlin, Powell and Bon, the Barbican

*"The challenge is to respect its heritage while meeting 21st-century needs"*

Centre was completed in 1982 as the centrepiece of the City's large-scale post-war reconstruction for the Barbican Estate. In recent decades, upgrades have included a £12.6m overhaul in

2006 and a £3.4m street-level cinema complex, renewed shop, and environmental upgrade of the main art gallery in 2019.

Barbican Centre Board chair Tom Sleight said: "The Barbican has been a huge success... adapting it to respond to the creative opportunities and urgent challenges of today's world, ensures it will play a leading role in the recovery of the City, the capital and the nation from the pandemic."

Following the 21 October deadline, five finalists will be invited to develop proposals, with the winning design to be announced next February, just ahead of the Barbican's 40th anniversary.

With the right interventions, the Barbican's car parks and other indoor-outdoor spaces could be adapted to deliver much more to support its creative, civic, and commercial ambitions. Creative solutions that bring these currently under-utilised spaces to life will deliver an exemplar of how a heritage building can be sensitively repurposed for the future.

**Yvonne Courtney is the founder of City-based repurposed clothing start-up [www.collage.london](http://www.collage.london), design/retail PR advisor and commentator**

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# Park that thought

## Clerkenwell start-up Joe's BikeSpace is providing safe spaces for new cyclists

One of the more benign effects of Covid-19 has been a rise in the numbers of cyclists. Many who have never taken to a bike before have tried it out and as Jonathan Stirling, founder of Joe's BikeSpace says, "Cycling is up 68 per cent in the last year with 14 and a half million bikes bought in Britain since the start of the pandemic and 63 miles of new cycle lanes in London." But the flip side of that rise is a spike in bike theft. There's a bike reported stolen every three minutes – hence the need for secure bike parking.

At Finsbury Business Centre at Northampton Road, the first Joe's BikeSpace was established this summer. It's a parking space for bicycles, based around an app that allows access to a storage hub and following Clerkenwell, Stirling is rolling it out across London. It works by signing on with a digital ID verification – normally a passport or driving licence – then is booked online at £2.75 a day, which Stirling says is "designed to be affordable and less than the cheapest bus fare. We didn't want a subscription because people don't cycle every day – even dedicated cyclists." Seasoned cyclists might be happy locking their bike to a lampposts. "Many people who cycle only learned how to ride a bike last year," says Stirling. "So people who have commuted by bike for 20 years

have made it work for them. It's more for the new cyclists."

"This is the first one we've done and we're expanding with other sites across London including Baker Street, the City of London and Islington," says Stirling. "At the moment there's so much empty space and so many unlet shops that a BikeSpace can be operational in eight weeks."

While LTN's have been divisive, there's no doubt in Stirling's mind that commuting by bike is the future – particularly now that the Congestion Charge and ULEZ charge have been extended. "There's been a huge uptick in cycling, and all the research shows that if people have the right facilities, three-quarters of the population would cycle rather than take public transport. Let's face it, after Covid-19, none of us want to go on a crowded tube if we can avoid it."

He adds that many have switched to cycling because they haven't been on a crowded tube for two years and they're conscious that is where disease spreads.

Part of the ethos of Joe's BikeSpace is to help different social groups to become cyclists. "Some people can afford very expensive solutions, or have offices big enough to bring their bicycles into their offices," says Stirling. "But we want to make it affordable for person who works in a café or for workers at Bart's hospital which is full of bikes and

suffers lots of theft. The criteria has to be that it is affordable and accessible." There's no constraint on the kind of bike you can store, unlike some rail companies that only allow folding bikes, and if you wish, you can leave them overnight (with an extra charge) after a night on the tiles.

The two things that stop new riders are, as Stirling puts it, "Scary traffic, which is helped by cycle lanes, and theft. If you're on an electric bike that often costs £1500 or more and gets stolen as quick as a flash." Plus, there isn't enough provision already – just 170,000 free bike racks across London catering for 400,000 bicycle commuters even before the pandemic, and offices with storage for only six bikes. "Going forward we're looking at the best part of 1,800,000 people cycling into London," says Stirling, who used to work in Fitzrovia where if he "got in at 8.30am I'd get one of the eight bike racks. By 9am I'd be wandering around trying to find a tree or lamppost, as there just weren't enough spots for the numbers of people who want to cycle – and then it becomes a sitting duck for thieves." Stirling himself cycles from Hammersmith to Clerkenwell every day. "Cycling is my way to work – and part of my job description."

Further information at [hello@joesbikespace.com](mailto:hello@joesbikespace.com) or visit their website [www.joesbikespace.com](http://www.joesbikespace.com)

## Cyclists protest against EC1's dangerous streets

9  
EC1 ECHO  
No.12

Oct/Nov  
2021

*A cycling fatality in Holborn this summer has thrown attention back onto the notorious cycling corridor through Clerkenwell*

In August, Dr Marta Krawiec, 41, was killed in a collision involving a lorry driver at the junction – the fourth cyclist to be die at the junction since 2008. Last month, London Cycling Campaign supporters cycled from Old Street to the junction to protest at its lack of safety at the junction, and to raise awareness of the dangers of the cycling corridor between Old Street and Holborn.

"It is an infamous stretch for cyclists," says Simon Munk, campaigns manager for London Cycling Campaign. "From Old Street to Holborn via Clerkenwell and Theobald roads is one of the highest flows for cycling in London, with several thousand journeys a day. It is clearly one of the key desire lines for London. But you only have to look at the collision data to see that it is very high risk for cyclists."

Despite an ambitious plan unveiled in 2017 to link east London with the West End, via a route called the London Boulevard, Munk claims that the three bodies that could have made a difference – TfL, and Islington and Camden councils – have dragged their heels.

"It has been mulled over for years and some funding was released to address it in 2019, with Camden Council and TfL announcing temporary measures at Southampton Row to mitigate the risk there. But too little has been done.

"It is complex and difficult, with three different bodies involved, and works would create delays to buses. But it's highly likely there will be more fatalities and we shouldn't tolerate that."

One solution, according to Munk, could be the use of 'wands': plastic poles that create a barrier between drivers and cyclists, and separate signals to allow cyclists to move at a different time through junctions. But while such measures have been promised, they have not materialised.

TfL has said it will work with City Hall and Camden Council to "speed up" improvement but the LCC believes it is now urgent.

"There's always an excuse why it's more important to shove more traffic through a crossing than save lives," says Munk.

See the LCC petition here [www.lcc.org.uk/campaigns/junctions-action](http://www.lcc.org.uk/campaigns/junctions-action)

FEATURES

# Taking a line for a walk



Harry the Pencil sketches of Clerkenwell all the better having been in his lunch hours.

*By Oliver Bennett*

Like many before and after him, "Harry" Harrison worked for a time in Clerkenwell. An architect, he helped set up the company J. Harrison & Co. He is now retired and lives in Clerkenwell. While he was in practice in Clerkenwell at various times during the 1970s and 1980s – on Hatton Garden and Sutton Street respectively – he went out for lunch, like other architects. But rather than sitting with a client on a bench, he took his sketchbook and filled it with quick sketches of the street, usually taking 15-30 minutes. One before returning to the office. With his kind permission, the artist has published them here.

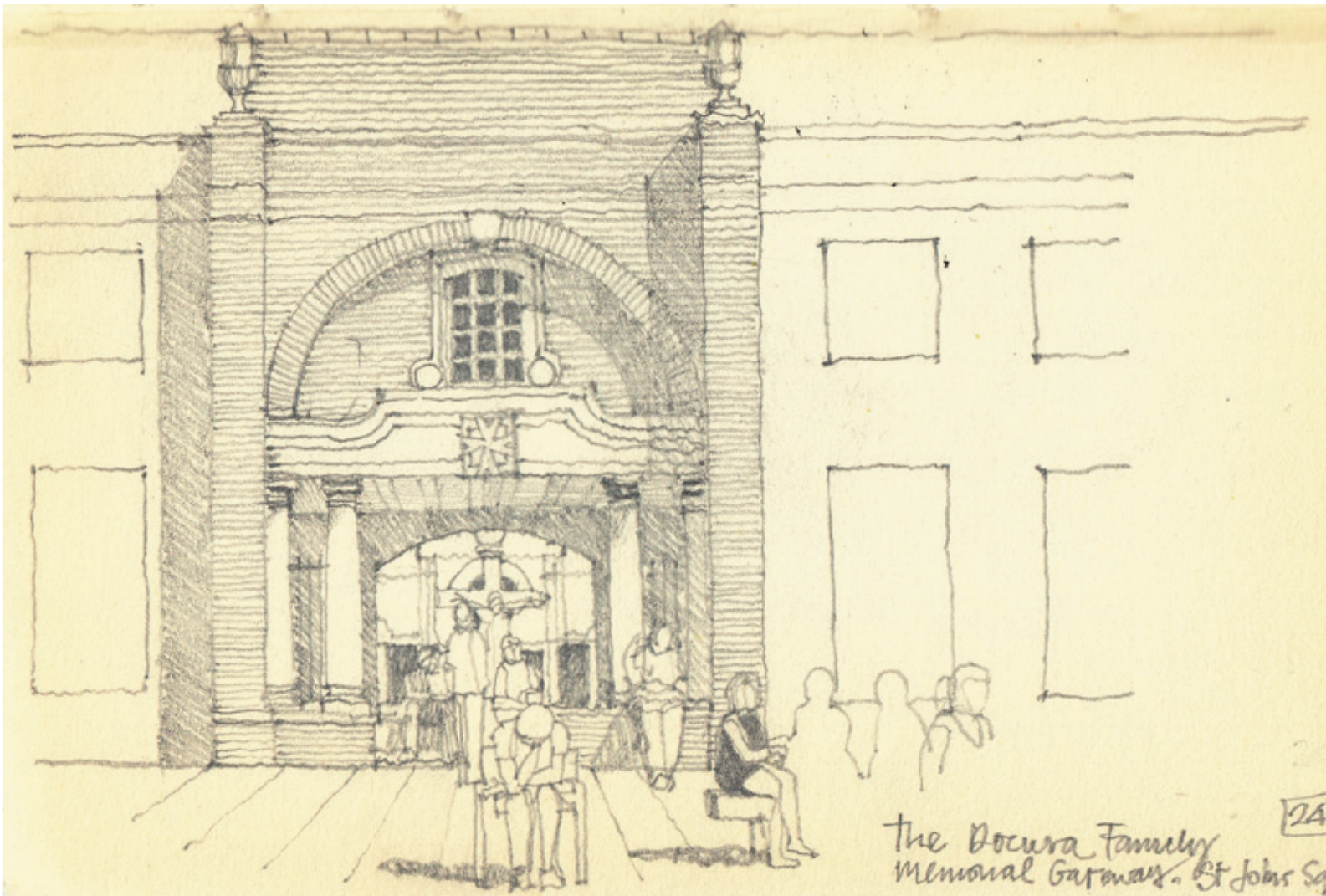
In 2016 Harry gained a degree of fame with a book titled for *de plume*, Harry the Pencil, showing his visualisations and architectural philosophy. It was not until these sketches were noticed by Gentle Author, who runs the blog Spitalfields Life and who has published these photographs of Harry's

"They were just sketches I did at lunchtime," says Harry. "I took my pencil and pad and did them and didn't see them as having anything beyond that." But they add up to a library of Clerkenwell sights, including a tower at the Barbican, St. John's church spire and the late last century Tasty Cafe and its diners.

While he's surprised at the attention, Harry has now framed the sketches and they provide a collection of many well-spent lunch hours in the area and it was a pleasure

**Visit** [www.jtp.co.uk/news-and-views/jtp-launch-limited-edition-harry-the-pencil](http://www.jtp.co.uk/news-and-views/jtp-launch-limited-edition-harry-the-pencil)

"I took out my pencil and pad and did them on site and didn't see them as having much life beyond that"



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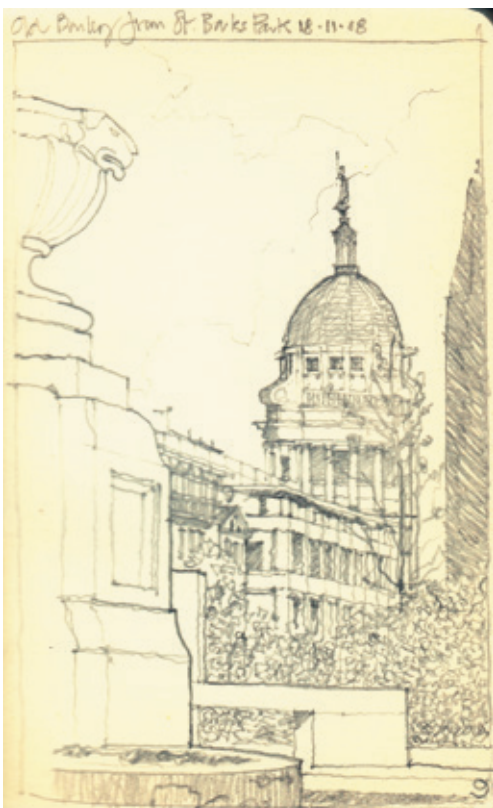
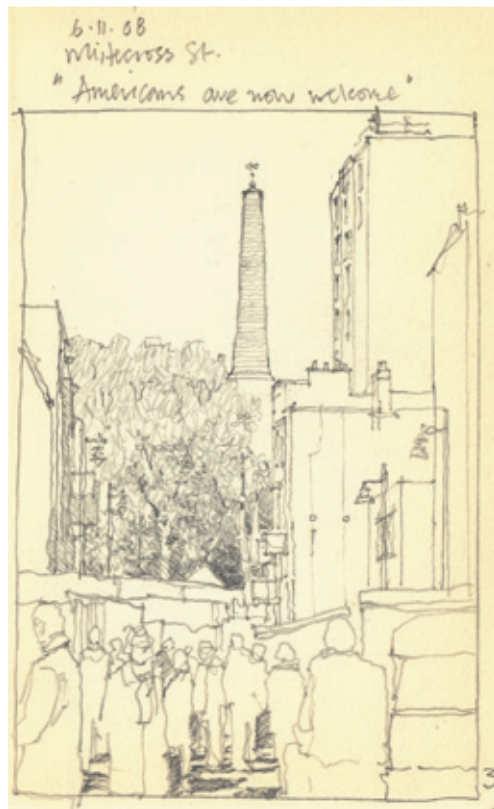
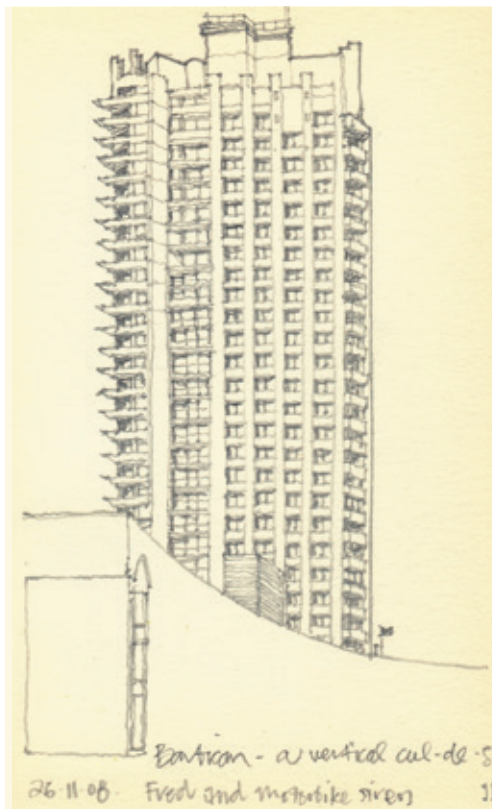
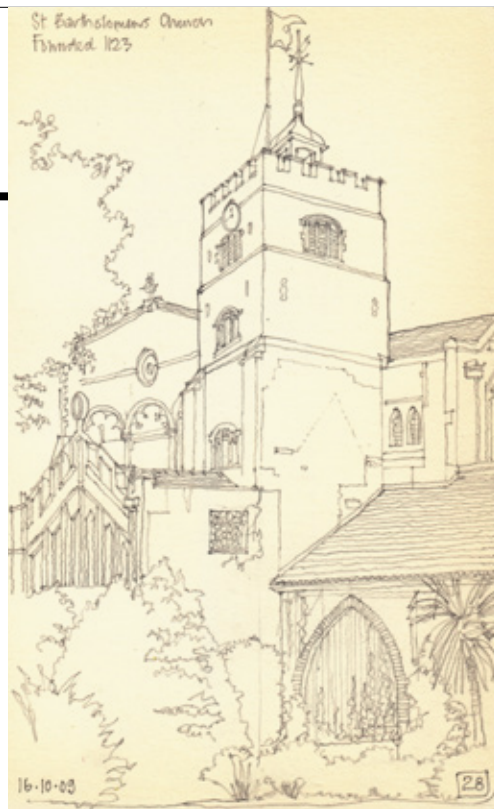
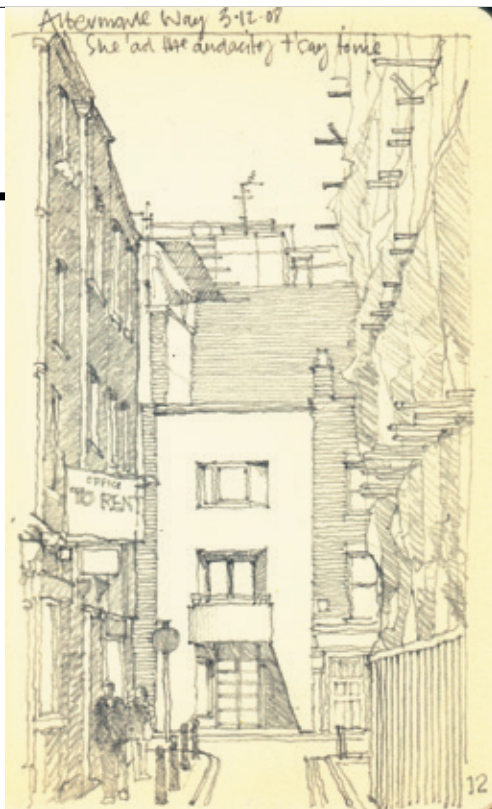
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# Not any old iron

## Historian Cathy Ross tracks the extraordinary wandering bollards of EC1

One of my lockdown discoveries is that EC1 is a bollard hotspot. Walking through empty streets revealed the true extent of the bollard population. There they are. Standing in twos or threes. Guarding the corners. Silently marking their territory.

The City has always been over-populated with bollards. There, the bollards multiplied during lockdown. Thousands now line the City’s pavements, providing extra security for the buildings behind. Here in EC1, bollards seem to be more welcoming. They tell stories about the past. And they move around.

The land now forming the EC1 postcode was originally four Victorian parishes – St James Clerkenwell, St Luke’s at Old Street, St John’s, also in Clerkenwell, and St Sepulchre’s, straddling the border with the City. These parishes were once the basic units of local government but their powers were swept away around 1900 in favour of larger and more democratic borough councils.

Many of EC1’s bollards are marked with the parishes they originally came from and are thus a reminder of the days when it was important to know whether you were in the

is actually a patch of extra-parochial land – a microstate of its own. When it eventually became part of the parish system it was assigned to St Sepulchre. And if you want to see a St Sepulchre bollard, there is a little colony in Peter’s Lane – amazingly, the right bollards in the right parish.

The Charterhouse bollards only arrived in the 1950s, installed by architects Seely and Paget as part of the post-war restoration of the bombed buildings. The two architects were less concerned with historical accuracy as creating a romantic look and thus the bollards are more in the nature of set dressing. The same explanation accounts for the mixture of bollards at St John’s Gate – also done over by Seely and Paget. No doubt the set-dressing impulse still affects today’s designers of public spaces, but reusing historic bollards is far better than sending them for scrap.

EC1’s bollard interest extends into the City. Featherstone Street in St Luke’s was the site of a small Victorian iron foundry belonging to JF Clarke & Sons. The firm supplied general ironwork to the Corporation of London, including bollards. Two examples survive today in the City’s streets, both dated 1878 and both proudly

”  
*Several EC1 bollards have somehow wandered away from their parish*  
“

territory of St James or St Luke’s. Today, this is not critical urban knowledge – which is just as well given that several EC1 bollards have somehow wandered away from their parish of origin.

Thus, the bollards outside St John’s Gate – very obviously in the parish of St John – are from ‘St Luke, Middlesex’ and ‘St James, Clerkenwell’. If you want to see a rare St John’s bollard you have to go back to St Luke’s where one has taken up residence behind the leisure centre. Even the unchanging and timeless Charterhouse has the wrong bollards at its entrance gates. Both are marked ‘St James Clerkenwell’, but Charterhouse

marked ‘JF Clarke, Engineer / London’.

Neither bollard is listed which is a shame as John Farrand Clarke, the firm’s founder, deserves more recognition. An enthusiastic inventor, he patented several ingenious processes, amongst them a device for melting impacted snow – a troublesome issue for the Victorians (see [gracesguide.co.uk/J.\\_F.\\_Clarke\\_and\\_Sons](http://gracesguide.co.uk/J._F._Clarke_and_Sons) for more of his inventions). The Clarke’s foundry in Featherstone Street was going strong in the 1880s but closed just before the first World War, and the site redeveloped. Today, the old foundry yard provides useful parking for neighbouring offices. Sadly, there are no bollards.



‘St John Clerkenwell’ bollard – Norman St



‘St Luke Middlesex’ bollard – King Square Gardens



‘St James Clerkenwell’ bollard – Charterhouse entrance gate



Detail of St James bollard dated 1855 on Clerkenwell Green



‘St Sepulchre Middlesex’ bollard – Benjamin Street



JF Clarke's 1878 bollard – Cutler St, the City

# 13 HISTORY

## In sickness and in health

### Another loss for the City Road healthcare district

BY VERA OWEN

**T**horsesby House, on the boundary of EC1 and N1, is soon to be demolished to make way for a new tower block housing visiting students from Arcadia University, a private US institution. Local residents were unsuccessful in their bid to preserve the local gem, despite its significant local historic interest.

Thoresby House is a 120-year-old nurses' home, built of honey coloured brick and good intentions. It is one of the last surviving building not only of the former Royal Chest Hospital, which was damaged beyond repair in the Blitz, but of the once substantial and historically significant City Road healthcare district.

In the 1800s, the healthcare facilities around City Road covered everything from the isolation and confinement of plague victims to specialist hospitals, such as the Royal Chest Hospital and what we now know as Moorfields Eye Hospital. The facilities were predominantly charities for the treatment of the 'deserving poor', since, as captured by Dickens in an after dinner speech on 10 May 1851 in London: "the air from Gin Lane will be carried by an easterly wind into Mayfair". At its peak, the City Road medical district contained seven hospitals.

The Royal Chest Hospital grew out of a modest East London infirmary, which was started in 1814 by physician Isaac Buxton, who is buried in Bunhill Fields. Buxton's busy specialist practice in 'chest diseases', fuelled by the prevalence of smog and tuberculosis, evolved into a purpose-built charitable hospital. By 1862, the hospital occupied purpose premises on City Road and had earned the patronage of Queen Victoria. It was widely acknowledged as Europe's first specialist chest hospital. Buxton and his

successors oversaw extensive fundraising efforts in support of the hospital, many of which are documented in the hospital's annual reports, now held at the London Metropolitan Archives. The reports record donations from the great and the good of the time alongside modest but no doubt deeply heartfelt donations from ordinary local people.

Purpose-built nurses' homes became more common in the late 1880s, in the wake of Florence Nightingale's campaign to professionalise nursing and to provide nurses with dedicated accommodation. Thoresby House was built as part of this wave of reform. It was similarly financed by donations, including a large legacy from a wealthy estate (which came with a wrangle about a suitable dedication in the name of the

during the 1918 Spanish Flu pandemic. Few records are available from this time, but that chapter of Thoresby House's history feels far more familiar of late.

Between 1927 and 1954, the Royal Chest Hospital was also home to pioneering female doctor Norah Schuster, who worked as a pathologist at the hospital between 1927 and 1954. Her archived papers, also held at the London Metropolitan Archives, glow with affection and pride for the work of the hospital, the lives saved and advances made, sometimes against considerable odds.

What remained of the medical district by the 20th century was damaged or destroyed during the Blitz, including the original eye hospital complex, which was rebuilt in 1946, and the Royal Chest Hospital, the remnants of which were

briefly used for out-patient care after the war but subsequently demolished in 1954, due to the building having been deemed beyond repair.

Thoresby House alone survived the extensive Blitz bombings intact. With it, some elements of the Royal Chest Hospital itself have been preserved, such as the hospital's original railings and side gate. The foundation stone of the Royal Chest Hospital 1876 extension

remains on site and, while not accessible to the public, reportedly reads: *'This foundation stone was laid by Her Royal Highness the Princess Louise (Marchioness of Lorne) on Wednesday the 19th day of July 1876'*. Recent official descriptions of Thoresby House by Hackney Council also record the existence of two 'unusual' timber doors above the ground and first floors, their purpose unknown.

The NHS eventually sold off Thorsby House as surplus to requirements and it came to be owned by Arcadia University, whose proposals to replace the building with a 12-story tower block were regrettably approved by Hackney Council in October 2020.

Perhaps the building's impending demolition is also its last act of public service. Its history has come into the spotlight at a time when we are again grappling with air pollution and a pandemic. Perhaps Thoresby House's story is there to both reassure us and to spur us on.



Thoresby House



'St Luke Middlesex' bollard – Mitchell Street



'St Sepulchre Middlesex' bollard – Peter's Lane



Stie of JF Clarke's foundry on Featherstone Street

# COMMUNITY

Jason Reynolds, landlord of the Shakespeare's Head



## You're bard

The adage “never drink in a flat-roofed pub” has often been attributed to the late comedian Sean Lock, suggesting that they are dubious. But the Shakespeare’s Head pub in Arlington Way, EC1 is bucking the trend, and as well as being a thriving community pub is also becoming a hotspot for fans of 20th century architectural heritage. A recent article from Historic England put it among one of the top ten post-war pubs in the country, citing several original features including its bar counters and panelling.

The proprietor Jason Reynolds, who runs it with his family, is pleased that it is getting its due. “It’s a rare pub in London as the clientele is a real mix including a

lot of the local community. We have race days and charity events, a great relationship with Sadler’s Wells over the road. It just works – and yes, it is a real period piece as well, dating from 1960.”

Indeed, says Reynolds, five years ago a group of regulars tried to get the

pub a heritage listing, which would protect it from further development. “It just fell short,” says Reynolds. “But in any case I think it will survive as there would be a massive public outcry if there was any threat. You can always find a place to drink but London is losing a lot of long-term businesses, so it’s great that it has survived – and it’s good to have that recognition.”

*The Shakespeare’s Head is at 1 Arlington Way, London EC1R 1XA*



# Illustration Centre raising funds

The Quentin Blake Centre for Illustration – due to be built in the New River Head buildings close to Amwell Street in Clerkenwell – is embarking on an ambitious fundraising drive.

When built, the Centre will not only be the UK’s permanent national centre for illustration and graphic arts, but will also be the largest space dedicated to the illustration in the world. As the Centre’s fundraiser Harry Hickmore says, “It will be a significant new cultural landmark in the centre of Clerkenwell, and we expect to be open by summer of 2023.”

The “multi-purpose site”, acquired in 2019, will include two new galleries, a cafe and education centre, a shop,

and a dedicated space for the 40,000-strong archive of its founder, illustrator Quentin Blake. The architectural plans have been completed by Tim Ronalds Architects, whose work include Wilton’s Music Hall and Hackney Empire.

*“The pre-planning has been achieved and local residents have responded positively”*

Currently called the House of Illustration and operating from rented space in King’s Cross, the Centre needs £12m to achieve its aims. “Currently we’re at 28 per cent of that,” says Hickmore, who is optimistic about the funding programme, adding that

it’s important the Centre becomes part of Clerkenwell’s cultural offering. “The pre-planning has been achieved and local residents have responded positively which is good, as we want them to feel engaged,” he says.

The New River Head’s buildings date from the 18th and 19th centuries, and the complex dates back to 1609, when engineering began to bring clean water from Hertfordshire to London. The key building is the late-18th century Engine House, once a 19th century visitor attraction. Earlier still is a round windmill base from the early 18th century (below).

**If you are interested in joining a tour of the Quentin Blake Centre for Illustration:**  
Email [harry.hickmore@houseofillustration.org.uk](mailto:harry.hickmore@houseofillustration.org.uk)



# COMMUNITY

15

## Betty Boothroyd visits Clerkenwell

**B**aroness Boothroyd – better known as Betty Boothroyd during her tenure as Speaker of the House of Commons from 1992–2000 – was guest of honour at the annual dinner for the Sekforde House Trust scholars at the Sekforde on Sekforde Street.

The Baroness, now 91, gave a rousing speech about how to overcome obstacles. From a family of textile workers in West Yorkshire, Boothroyd spoke of how she came to London to be a dancer. “I thought there would be stage-door Johnnies drinking champagne out of my shoes. But my father, whose name was Archie, said that it was not a proper job for a good girl. But my mother said, ‘let her work it out of her system’.”

After a short career as a dancer, Boothroyd returned home, but then began her political career, working for MPs including the former secretary of state for transport, Barbara Castle, and finding herself travelling across Europe, the Soviet Union and China: “I even took the minutes of a meeting with Chairman Mao.” Ms Boothroyd then went to the US to work on JF Kennedy’s presidency campaign and after that,



Baroness Boothroyd with David Lonsdale at The Sekforde

worked on Capitol Hill.

From a Labour background, Boothroyd returned to the UK to work as an MP, trying for a seat in SE Leicester. “I was brought up in politics and came out of the womb into the Labour movement. I became

the candidate for a seat with a 30,000 Tory majority and said, ‘I can sweep that aside’. I got a 2 per cent swing.”

Later the Baroness stood in Peterborough and again, didn’t win. “I understood the democratic process, but there are times when adversity

hurts,” she said. “It’s painful. You have to try to get through it and I got through it the best way I could – by fighting another election.”

**”Adversity will always come your way one must gain the resilience to carry on”**

This time it was in West Bromwich in 1973, and Boothroyd stood against National Front candidate Martin Webster. “It was a really very nasty campaign and as the days went on my language my vocabulary became more colourful.” But she ended up with a 15,000 majority, then became the Speaker of the House – which she now calls ‘the best job in the world’, proving – as Boothroyd said, that while “there are a lot of ups and downs in life and adversity will always come your way, one must gain the resilience to carry on.”

**For information about the Sekforde Scholarship: Visit [thesekforde.com/trust-team](https://thesekforde.com/trust-team)**

## Bake off

**A** cake shop in Clerkenwell has been called “North London’s best-kept secret” and is making waves on social media. Daisy Boutique Cakes in Lever Street is proving a success for post-lockdown treats and as owner Daisy herself says, represents “the harmony of Asian sentiments, French dessert techniques, and British afternoon tea culture. We want to create the best cakes for happy and wonderful moments.”

**”We want to create the best cakes for happy and wonderful moments”**

A pastry chef who worked at Michelin starred restaurants and hotels for 12 years, Daisy calls it a “dream come true” and has her own poetic take on cakes.

“Cake is not just cake,” she says. “It contains our biggest memories of all our senses: flavour, smell, visual, sound. I bake for those moments and hope people remember their memories from Daisy’s cakes”.

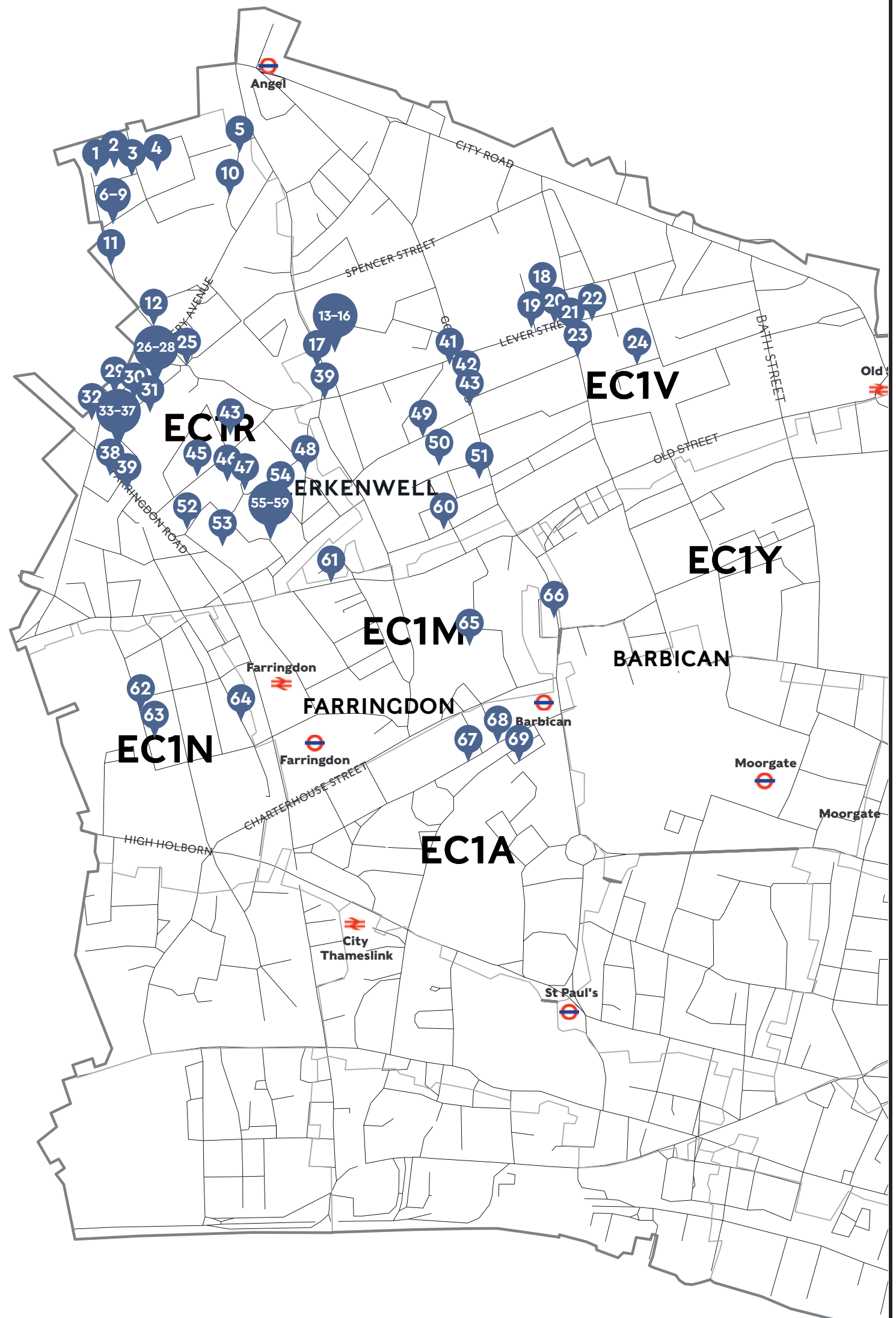
Daisy Boutique Cakes is at 3A Lever St, London EC1 and on Instagram at @daisy\_boutiquecakes



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- 7 Gents of London
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- 9 Ottoman Grooming Lounge
- 10 Shakespeares Head
- 11 Amwell Group Practice
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- 13 Nisa Local
- 14 St John St launderette
- 15 Mag Culture
- 16 City Kebab
- 17 Finsbury Library
- 18 Kings Square Launderette
- 19 Kings Square Bakery
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- 22 Barbican Café
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# CULTURE MILE

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## Culture, creativity and collaboration across Culture Mile



Dancers Salomé Pressac and Faye Stoesser perform during the filming of 'The Spell and the Promise' by Lexi Kiddo, part of Culture Mile, Brookfield Properties and LSO's PLAY series of films © Odera Okoye

**C**ulture Mile is the City of London's cultural district, stretching from Farringdon to Moorgate. Led by the City of London Corporation, with the Barbican, Guildhall School of Music & Drama, London Symphony Orchestra and the Museum of London, its five core partners work together on creating a vibrant, creative area in the north-west corner of the Square Mile.

### A year of reflection

When faced with developing a world-class destination for culture and learning in the heart of London during a global pandemic, Culture Mile had to reconsider its purpose as a cultural district.

This prompted Culture Mile to prioritise the interests of local communities, creating new ways of working that would bring together residents, artists and organisations to help create a better environment in which to co-exist.

Between April 2020 and March 2021, Culture Mile delivered 21 projects with a diverse and dynamic range of partners, engaging with approximately 92,250 people. The release of its latest Annual Report explores these projects alongside personal accounts from participants and partners as well as feedback from the local community.

With a new approach that puts an emphasis on culture, creativity and collaboration at every step, Culture Mile has been able to play an important role in bringing the City back to life for those who live, work and study there. From creative activations, community programmes and funding opportunities that respond to the wants and needs of local residents during a difficult time

to supporting local businesses and freelancers in their road to recovery, there's plenty to explore.

Visit [culturemile.london/annualreport](https://culturemile.london/annualreport) to find out more.

### Brookfield PLAY Harmony

Co-commissioned by Culture Mile and Brookfield Properties, HARMONY features four newly composed pieces



Workshop by LSO and GSMD for Brookfield PLAY Harmony © Em Davis / Culture Mile

of music as part of an immersive augmented reality installation at London Wall Place.

Composed by Guildhall School of Music & Drama students under the mentorship of London Symphony Orchestra (LSO) musicians, the music (performed by the LSO mentors) will accompany four 3D animations that will be overlaid onto the feed of a user's phone camera, enabling them to take part in this AR experience by listening to the compositions and watching the animations as they move around each location.

From the Roman St Alphage's ruins and One London Wall Place water feature to the gardens near the Minotaur statue and the highwalks, each artwork is intrinsically connected to the space in which it features.

The project will be launching soon so visit [play.londonwallplace.com](https://play.londonwallplace.com) for the latest information.

### Across the City

As we prepare for the autumn weather, a new season of events across Culture Mile is upon us too.

At the Barbican Gallery, the latest exhibition celebrates Japanese American sculptor Isamu Noguchi (1904-1988), one of the most experimental and pioneering artists of the 20th century.

The Museum of London has a new display too. London Making Now tells a unique story of 15 London makers, who produce incredible objects in materials ranging from porcelain to plastic, and provides an insight into the world of craft and making in modern London, demonstrating how makers have shaped, and are shaped by, the city.

From 18th-23rd October, Guildhall School of Music & Drama present Emilia at Milton Court Theatre. First performed at Shakespeare's Globe and then in London's West End, Karen Tomlin directs Morgan Lloyd Malcolm's critically acclaimed, triple Olivier-award winning play as Emilia and her sisters transcend centuries with passion, fury, laughter and song in this riotous reclaiming of the life of an extraordinary woman.

To find out more about the above projects and to explore what's happening in and around Culture Mile, simply visit [www.culturemile.london](https://www.culturemile.london) or follow @CultureMileLDN on social media.

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LETTERS

Jubilee Walks for Clerkenwell and City

David Wilcox  
Smithfield

Earlier this year the *Echo* promoted an interactive map to allow anyone to nominate their favourite places in EC1 – whether a bar, park or museum. I’ve now combined the results of that with a bigger mapping project about the past, present and future of the area. New maps and information sheets chart the main heritage sites, and link with a selection of *Echo* stories about what’s happening now.

I have also compiled a set of links to some self-guided walks around Clerkenwell and the City. In addition, I believe there’s great potential for bringing together heritage walks with the maps and apps created for walking and cycling in healthier streets. I’ve started to collect links and ideas on that too. More at [commons.london/ec1](https://commons.london/ec1). Do get in touch if you are interested, or have some links I have missed please email [david@socialreporter.com](mailto:david@socialreporter.com)

Lloyd Baker name

Mrs M Busgith



I was very interested to read your recent edition of EC1, especially Mark Aston’s article entitled *Guides, grandees and landlords*. I have lived in the Clerkenwell area since 1972 and remember some of the shops that Philippa Perry talks about

in her article, especially ones in Exmouth Market. However, I am surprised that there is no mention in Mark Aston’s article about the Lloyd Baker family and their estate and their dairy which was on the corner of Amwell Street and River Street. The shop is still there and many of the streets, including Lloyd Baker Street, where I lived for many years, were owned and named after the family.



Mark Aston responds: Mrs Busgith is right to flag up the absence of Lloyd Baker Street in the article. Sadly, space dictated that there would be some omissions. Lloyd Baker Street (Baker Street before 1937) was laid out in the early 1800s and, like Lloyd’s Row, Lloyd Square and Lloyd Street, was part of the Lloyd Baker Estate named after Thomas John Lloyd Baker (1777–1841), a magistrate and deputy-lieutenant of Gloucestershire whose family owned this area of Clerkenwell. Another associated name is Granville Square, after anti-slavery campaigner and abolitionist Granville Sharpe, whose niece married Lloyd Baker.

The well-known Lloyd’s Diary at 42 Amwell Street is, surprisingly unconnected with the Lloyd Baker Estate but acquired in 1914 by Mr Lloyd Lloyd or ‘Lloyd Squared’, as he was known locally. By 1921 he had converted the address into a diary, after which he and his descendants ran it as such throughout the rest of the 20th century.

In Memorium

The *EC1 Echo* is sorry to note the death of contributor Johnny Homer, who died in July. Johnny grew up in EC1 and was a journalist, broadcaster (BBC Radio London) and author of several books, including *Clerkenwell and Islington Pubs*. Condolences to his family.

EC1 Echo deliveries

Matt Baust  
Bowling Green Lane, EC1

I wanted to ask if there had been a change in the distribution area for the paper? We live in a block of flats at 19 Bowling Green Lane and used to love receiving the paper through our door but haven’t had one for a few months. If they are no longer being delivered on our street we’d love to know where they are available to pick up locally.

Hi Matt, thanks for flagging this up. Sometimes we run out of copies. A fail-safe way to receive a copy is to become a member – see the opposite page for details. If you would like to receive a copy of *EC1 Echo* please let us know at [ec1echo@peelinstitute.org.uk](mailto:ec1echo@peelinstitute.org.uk) and we will work out a way to get one to you. Thanks, Oliver Bennett, Editor

EC1 Echo shortlisted for an award

The *EC1 Echo* is pleased to bring you the exciting news that it has been shortlisted in the ICNN Community Newspaper of the Year Category for this year’s News Awards, alongside its sister publications at Social Spider, the *Enfield Dispatch* and *Waltham Forest Echo*. We will bring you news of our progress but we’re delighted to be on the shortlist, particularly as we only started in 2019. Since then, we continued to publish through the pandemic and have grown our circulation and page numbers. Thanks to all our readers, members and contributors. With your help we intend to bring news from the EC1 area and its near neighbours to you every two months for years to come and remember – the *EC1 Echo* is open to all of you so please get in touch with us at the email address below.

Got an opinion on something in EC1? We accept letters of up to 150 words from people and organisations in the area.  
Email [ec1echo@peelinstitute.org.uk](mailto:ec1echo@peelinstitute.org.uk)

Help at hand

Dan Morgan explains the work of James’ Place in Clerkenwell



Credit Kulli Kittus/Unsplash

We are a male suicide prevention charity set up in memory of James Wentworth-Stanley, who died by suicide in 2006 at 21 years old. James’ parents, Nick Wentworth-Stanley and Clare Milford Haven, believe strongly that if a centre like James’ Place had been available at the time, James might still be here. We opened our first James’ Place centre in Liverpool in 2018, and have now expanded to London. We’re currently based in Clerkenwell, and hope to move to a permanent accommodation near Old Street early New Year.

“Our clinical model has been designed specifically to reach men at crisis point”

**What we do**  
We provide an immediate lifesaving, therapeutic intervention to men in suicidal crisis. We are a free service and operate without a waiting list. Our clinical model has been designed specifically to reach men at crisis point, and we have a unique technique using descriptive cards to aid the effectiveness of our service. Our first-year evaluation and the pending release of our

second – compiled by Liverpool John Moores University – has provided clear, evidence-based data which proves our model and service decreases suicide risk in the men who complete our intervention.

**Who we see**  
We treat men in suicidal crisis and in London, only accept referrals from recognised professionals, such as GPs and clinicians. We make a balanced judgement on every referral based on its individual context. Our intervention usually lasts between six and nine sessions of one-to-one therapy with a specially trained therapist.

**What we’re up to**  
As well as increasing in the number of men we see in London, we’re also beginning our new ‘Student Outreach Programme’, a pilot which will see us collaborate with three London universities to offer our service to students who may incur severe mental health difficulties and may not be known to student counselling services. We recognise the difficulty students face, particularly in light of the Covid-19 pandemic, and wish to work alongside services to ensure nobody in a university environment feels like help is unreachable.

**How to reach us**  
You can visit our website [jamesplace.org.uk](https://jamesplace.org.uk) to find out more about what we do and who we help, as well as how to get involved and how to contact us. James’ Place operates between the hours of 9.30am–5.30pm Monday-Friday (excluding bank holidays). Alternatively, you can access the Crisis Text Line by texting SHOUT to 85258. The service is free and operates 24 hours a day and you will be contacted by a trained volunteer.

If you or somebody you know is experiencing a suicidal crisis, you can contact Samaritans on 116 123 or you can present to the Crisis Team at your local A&E.  
Visit [jamesplace.org.uk](https://jamesplace.org.uk)

# Support local independent journalism



## What we do

Here at *EC1 Echo* we do things differently. We combine professional journalism with voluntary contributions from people who live and work in the area and create content which is responsive to and reflective of the community.

These are challenging times for print media with many newspapers closing and advertising revenue in decline, but our not-for-profit model offers a new approach to creating local journalism which is inclusive and accountable.

## How you can help

As a not-for-profit publication, started by The Peel, a longstanding Clerkenwell charity, we rely on the generous support of our community. We look to our readers, who recognise the value of independent journalism, to help support us.

You can do this by becoming a member either as an individual or as an organisation. See the rewards opposite and once you've decided what package you would like, visit [EC1Echo.co.uk/join](https://EC1Echo.co.uk/join)

## Individual rewards

### £3 per month upwards:

Name in print and online, pin badge

### £5 per month upwards:

Name in print and online, pin badge, tote bag, paper posted to you every month

## Organisational rewards

### £10 per month:

Name in print and online,  
10% discount on advertising

### £20 per month:

Name and logo in print and online,  
20% discount on advertising

### £50 per month:

Name and logo in print and online, 40% discount, six free small adverts per year

## We would like to say thank you to our members:

David Wilcox, Daniel Winn, Laurence Colchester, Diana Alsobrook, Sarah Falconer, David Chapman, Tania Cohen, Brian Jones, Veran Patel, Katrina Fialko, Mirela Popoveniuc, Sarah Wood, Stephanie Pietraszkiewicz, Juliana Lottmann, Daron Pike.

[winkworth.co.uk/clerkenwell](http://winkworth.co.uk/clerkenwell)

**Winkworth**

for every step...



**St. John Street, EC1**

**£1,650,000**

This spacious Georgian property, built by carpenter Ebenezer Simes in 1830, benefits from many period features, including high ceilings and original wooden floorboards, use of a private roof terrace and access to a 24 hour concierge.



**Pinks Mews, Dyer's Buildings, EC1**

**£1,495,000**

An extremely hi-spec two bedroom apartment, just moments from the West End. This stunning fully furnished, two bedroom third floor apartment has been beautifully designed.



**Rosebery Avenue, EC1**

**£875,000**

A stylish one bedroom apartment finished to an extremely high standard, perfectly positioned near Exmouth Market and Farringdon Tube Station. Reflecting their heritage and the 'here and now' in equal proportions, the interiors blend traditional features such as oak flooring, Victorian style skirting and period architraves.



**Gazzano Building, Topham Street, EC1**

**£749,950**

With southerly views towards the City, a well presented two bedroom, two bathroom, fourth floor apartment, has been finished to an exacting standard with white quartz worktops, Siemens appliances and Hans Grohe taps.

**Winkworth Clerkenwell & City**

66 Exmouth Market, Clerkenwell, London EC1R 4QP

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