

# **Soho Action Plan:** Your thoughts in action

**One Soho** Soho is a unique part of the city. It has an international identity as a cross-section of the city's vitality and energy of the people who live and work there. Without order we cannot live in, work in, or visit Soho. A pleasant experience and we will work with you to create a sense of belonging and a wide range of opportunities. One of the most exciting and colourful parts of the city. Encouraging diversity in retail and protecting the character of the area. Building dialogue between businesses and residents. The foundations for enterprise in Soho. Really, we look after the heart of this city. We promote the area for the next generation, and we will improve the public realm.



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# Soho Boundary

Soho is the area within the boundaries set by Oxford Street, Regent Street, Shaftesbury Avenue, and Charing Cross Road (for the purpose of this Action Plan).



# Introduction

**This action plan follows in the footsteps of other area-based action plans for parts of London's West End. It builds on what's already here, addresses issues of importance and celebrates the best that Soho has to offer. Many of Soho's residents and businesses have worked with Westminster officers to produce this document, which plots the future of partnership working for Soho.**

In the second half of 2006, we consulted on our draft Soho Action Plan and many people helped us to identify the things that are most important to them, the things they felt were missing and also areas where we needed to strengthen our commitment. The actions list has been reduced in this adopted version to ensure that all of the actions are related to your neighbourhood, and we have updated the information to make sure it is as current as it can be at the time of going to print.

The Soho Action Plan intends to be a living and working approach to neighbourhood improvement and you can still have your say and input into the priorities for your area.

You can check the website – [www.westminster.gov.uk/onesoho](http://www.westminster.gov.uk/onesoho) or email us at [onesoho@westminster.gov.uk](mailto:onesoho@westminster.gov.uk)

# The Management of the Soho Action Plan

This adopted plan has been written with the help of the Soho Contact Group (a group of representatives from the local Soho community). Regular meetings will take place with the West End Team and a Soho Steering Group (made from the Soho Contact Group membership) to discuss progress on projects, priorities, new actions and funding.

Implementing the actions will take time, with some actions being quicker to realise than others. However, we want this plan to reflect the needs of the community so the steering group will have the ability to prioritise and amend actions according to the greatest needs of Soho at the time. The life span of our West End action plans is normally around five years, but each year we will tell you how we have done, and what we intend to do in each coming year.

Not all of the actions are funded at present, but the West End Team will aim to find ways of funding the delivery of the actions from both within and outside of the council. External funding is very important to all of our action plans and some actions will need to be funded solely from external sources.

**Soho is covered by a number of Westminster City Council policy documents, including the Unitary Development Plan, the Licensing Policy and the Soho Conservation Area Audit.**

The council has published a Statement of Licensing Policy in accordance with the Licensing Act 2003, setting out the policy of the council in its capacity as

licensing authority. The council's policy as planning authority is contained in The Unitary Development Plan (2007) and associated Supplementary Planning Guidance/ Documents. In the event of any conflict between those formal policy documents and this action plan, the formal policy documents shall take precedence.

We would like to emphasise from the beginning that this document seeks to build on the policies already set out, and should not be misconstrued as contradictory or seeking to change them. All of these documents are available on our website or can be requested through our One Stops.

# Foreword

**Cllr Glenys Roberts**, Lead Member for the Soho Action Plan

This action plan represents the culmination of months of discussion and consultation with a focus group of residents, businesses and traders, to set out a shared vision for Soho's future. It also represents the views of many visitors to Soho, gathered during the formal consultation in Autumn 2006.

Soho is a relatively small area of Westminster, but it remains unmatched in terms of its history, traditions and vibrant daily life. It was one of the first multicultural communities in the country and is one of the last central London villages – with many families who have lived here over generations, as well as newcomers and tourists from all over the world who are intrigued by its lively reputation. Soho is unique because although it has always enjoyed its bohemian associations, it has also been a highly productive area. As the traditional home of the film, theatre, music and fashion industries it is overflowing with cultural resonance which must be safeguarded and encouraged.

The challenge in drawing up a plan for the future of such an exceptional area is to marry all its interests. Everyone who responded to our consultation was aware of the need to preserve the best, address the worst and maintain the ongoing vitality that is Soho. I am grateful to all who contributed and I want to give a particular mention to those who have given us special help with this project and to outline their priorities.

**Chris Best** is the Chair of the Soho Caring Agencies Forum and Chief Executive of Soho Housing Association. The forum that meets once every two months has, over the past nine years, become a vital networking and support resource for all who attend from the statutory, caring and voluntary sector in and around Soho. The Housing Association has many properties in the area and its priorities are to protect an already vibrant community, which includes children as well as older people, by ensuring the provision of additional affordable housing. The council believes this is vital to a rounded community and is always seeking ways to do this.

**Simon Quayle** is Director of Shaftesbury PLC, who are long term investors in the area where they are hands-on managers of a wide range of Soho properties including shops, cafes, restaurants, offices and residential accommodation. Shaftesbury believes that the chief ingredient for a successful future is the commitment to the area's prosperity and effective management, which can only help residents as well as businesses. Successful enterprises, new as well as traditional, are the lifeblood of any area and it is the aim of this action plan to make their success easier to deliver.

**Fiona Rhys Jenkins Bailey** is Chair of the Soho Society, which was started a generation ago to represent both residents and businesses in the area and in that time it has seen many changes. Fiona rightly observes that today Soho is such a vibrant and dynamic area attracting such a wealth



of visitors 24 hours a day, that this in itself, whilst being one of its great assets can put strain on all aspects of local life. In particular Soho has witnessed many specialist and often family run shops disappearing over the years and if this trend continues it will change the whole nature of the community. The Society welcomes one of the aims of this plan – to encourage independent retailers into the area to stop Soho becoming just another uniform UK city centre.

**Jane Standing** is Chief Executive Officer of Kairos in Soho (KiS), a community development organisation with premises in both a residential block and a business centre. It is busy during the daytime and evenings, catering especially for the significant numbers of lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) people who have lived in and been drawn to the area for almost as long as it has existed. In the words of Jane, KiS is committed to a greater understanding of LGBT life and family, as well as to working together across communities to address the challenges facing Soho so as to create opportunities for all. Kairos in Soho's commitment to community engagement, services and volunteering across race, gender, disability age and difference has been integral to the development of this plan and echoes the aim of Westminster City Council in working with marginalised communities as a vital part of civic renewal.

To sum up, it is clear from your responses that residents, businesses and visitors all have the same overall objective: that Soho should house a healthy, happy community in a clean, crime free and sustainable environment. As one consultee put it, Soho is a place where everyone should feel comfortable, knowing they can live and work in an area that is not leaving its past behind, yet is evolving in a balanced and healthy way into the most fantastic neighbourhood in London.

This action plan endeavours to deliver exactly this. It will sit alongside the other plans for the West End, showing the commitment of the council and its partners to deliver a safe Soho with a thriving local economy, improved opportunities for the whole community, and an enjoyable environment that befits Soho's status as one of the number one destinations in London.

**Cllr Danny Chalkley**, Cabinet Member for Economic Development and Transport, and I are grateful to everyone who has worked to achieve these shared aspirations. The challenge is now to deliver the vision. All of us look forward to working in continued partnership with the Soho Action Plan Steering Group to achieve this. We would still like to hear from people on their views about Soho so if you would like to know more about the Steering Group or any other aspect of the plan, please contact us (details on 52).



# One Soho

Soho is a unique part of the capital that has grown out of a rich cultural and commercial heritage. Whilst it has an international identity as a cross-cutting and cosmopolitan melting pot, Soho thrives thanks to the personalities and energy of the people who live and work here, which makes this area a truly contemporary community.

# What is your vision for Soho?

**The public consultation supported the view that Soho is a unique and wonderful place. It has a remarkable past, but it needs a sustainable future. Residents should enjoy living here. Workers should enjoy working here. Responsible businesses should thrive. Visitors should want to come back.**

**It's not always like that now, but that is our aim.**

We will therefore support the residential community, which has always been at the heart of Soho's success. We will encourage those businesses and visitors who take account of the needs of residents. At the same time, we will improve the local environment and local amenities for the benefit of everyone who comes to Soho.

Respect and cooperation are the hallmarks of One Soho - help us to make it happen!



## Soho people

Some of Soho's residents were born here and, having lived all their lives here, have collected a valuable record of Soho life. The Soho Society has been the guardian of local history since the 1960s and exists to represent the people of Soho. One of our aims is to found a virtual museum to display this for the benefit of residents and visitors.

We will provide community services for residents young and old, restoring the famous Marshall Street Baths as a local leisure centre, offering swimming and other recreational pursuits and encouraging small businesses whilst preserving the markets and specialist shops that are unique to this area.

Local people tell us it is important to find ways of providing new, accessible community facilities. We will undertake an audit of Soho's current community facilities and work with landowners and statutory services to ensure that the need for further community facilities is met in a co-ordinated way.

It is estimated that 7-10%<sup>1</sup> of the residential population is lesbian, gay, bi-sexual or transgender (LGBT). Soho is an important LGBT residential and visitor destination on a London-wide, as well as a national and international level. This is because it is a place where the LGBT community feels welcome and safe, although this is not always the case. The lack of specific facilities, such as a London community

centre for the LGBT community, was highlighted in a consultation exercise by Kairos in Soho (KiS) in the preparation for this action plan. Support for a feasibility study for this centre was very strong in the results of the public consultation. KiS has greatly assisted us in identifying various needs, and we will continue to work with them to support initiatives that address the particular needs of the LGBT community.

Westminster Primary Care Trust (PCT) provides a wide range of community health services in Soho. These include the Soho NHS Walk-in Centre, Soho Centre for Health and Care, the Great Chapel Medical Centre, General Practitioners, Dentists and other services for people who live, work and visit Soho. The centre also provides a full range of medical services for homeless people. In order to promote health, the PCT has worked with local people in developing a Healthy Soho Action Plan that aims to improve the health and wellbeing of the community.



## Younger Soho

There is a need for safe, accessible play-space for children in Soho. We are working towards the Government's five outcomes in Every Child Matters<sup>2</sup> through the development of Soho's integrated Children's Centre. The Children and Young People's Strategic Partnership (CYPSP) details the following priorities as agreed in 2006 (published in detail in the Children and Young People's Plan 2006-09). These priorities are:

**Be healthy:** better uptake of childhood immunisations; improved emotional well being; reduction in childhood obesity; reduction in sexually unsafe behaviour and reduced use of alcohol and drugs.

**Stay safe:** increased safety and feelings of safety among children and young people; better protection for children who have suffered/ are at risk of significant harm to enable them to live safely with their families and improved security when children are placed away from home.

**Enjoy and achieve:** improved education attainment at Key Stage 3 and Key Stage 4; improved attainment for looked after children and other under-achieving groups; reduction in exclusions and unauthorised absence in secondary schools and improved inclusion and attainment of vulnerable children.

**Make a positive contribution:** increased engagement in positive activities; increased involvement in citizenship and volunteering and a reduction in anti-social/offending behaviour committed by young people.

**Achieve economic well-being:** increased proportion of young people achieving Level 2/3 qualifications by age 19; better levels of education, employment and training among young mothers, young offenders and young people with Special Educational Needs/ Emotional Behaviour Disorders and increased numbers of parents entering the job market.

Through delivery of these we will provide a broader range of services for parents, pupils and the wider community at Soho Parish School. We are committed to developing quality early years services and our aim is to continue this level of support throughout a resident's life.

We will promote the development of a sustainable community by seeking affordable housing schemes, promoting life-time homes and encouraging the retention and improvement of existing residential stock to encourage Soho's children to stay as they grow older.

## Older Soho

Westminster's Cabinet approved the Every Older Person Matters agenda (EOPM) in April 2007, which aims to support older residents to live longer, in good health and independence as far as possible. We will do this in a number of ways, by continuing to work closely with the PCT in Soho to deliver more preventative services to keep people active and healthy, for example. We acknowledge the important role older people play and we want to promote inter-generational activities in Soho in recognition of that. We will expand the range of activities available at Age Concern's Covent Garden Day Centre and continue to work with and support the unique and valuable role played by Westminster Advocacy Service for Senior Residents.

To find out more about this scheme, visit: [www.westminster.gov.uk/seniorpassport](http://www.westminster.gov.uk/seniorpassport)

Learning opportunities for older people will increase, with £100K being invested borough-wide at existing day care centres including Covent Garden. Understanding different benefits systems can be complex. We will make sure that the new Pensions Joint Visiting Team offer help and support to those that need it and get in contact with all older people in Soho. Additionally, we will promote volunteering opportunities across all communities in partnership with Soho Caring Agencies Forum and their Time Bank.

For a more detailed look at the history of Soho and the experience of its residents, businesses and faith groups, please visit [www.sohosociety.org.uk](http://www.sohosociety.org.uk) or [www.westminster.gov.uk/onesoho](http://www.westminster.gov.uk/onesoho)

<sup>2</sup> [www.everychildmatters.gov.uk](http://www.everychildmatters.gov.uk) – Bringing together all services for children and young people to improve outcomes for children and young people, led by local authorities.

# Order

Without order we cannot live in, work in, or visit Soho in enjoyment and peace. We want being in Soho to be a safe and pleasant experience and we will work with the police and the Soho community to achieve this.

# Crime and safety

**Although Soho is very safe compared to other major city centres (including other parts of London), people tell us that at certain times and in some places it feels uncomfortable, threatening and unwelcoming.**

As part of our commitment to keep Westminster safe, the council extended the CivicWatch process to include the Soho area in July 2006. CivicWatch is a partnership project linking in the various council departments with the police, fire brigade and local communities, working together to resolve concerns around crime, anti-social behaviour and community safety. The Soho area is covered by a local Safer Neighbourhoods team, which provides extra police dedicated to tackling community concerns.

The process brings with it a level of accountability ensuring that the relevant partner agency takes responsibility for delivery on the issues identified. These priorities are not only those driven centrally by crime figures, but also those identified by the community. A survey of residents and businesses is carried out on a quarterly basis and the results fed into the overall strategy. In addition, the team is working towards establishing a neighbourhood ward panel chaired by local residents who will help inform the police and CivicWatch about the issues most affecting them. The teams will be accountable to this group for ensuring the successful delivery of identified priorities.

CivicWatch is the process by which the issues discussed in more detail below will be managed.

Soho is currently covered by a Dispersal Zone. Using this power, drug dealers and users can be dispersed outside of the boundary of the zone. The zone is designated under anti-social behaviour legislation, is reviewed every six months and is not intended to be a permanent tool. Community feedback tells us that this method of combating drug misuse in Soho and the West End has worked well, and with the police we intend to continue using Dispersal Zones and other tactics of overt and covert policing to target crime where appropriate.

A Street Drinking Control Area has been in operation in Soho and across Westminster since October 2004. This discretionary power does not outlaw drinking on the street, but enables the police to ask people not to drink on the street if they are deemed to be acting in an anti-social way, or are likely to do so.

Soho is part of Westminster's West End 'Stress Area', for further information read our Statement of Licensing Policy 7 January 2005, sub-section 2.4. The number of licensed premises in this area is regarded as having reached saturation point so there is a policy of generally not granting entertainment licences which would allow new pubs, bars, dance premises or take-away hot food and



drink premises in this area, or which would intensify their use.

Westminster has consulted on its revised Licensing Policy Statement and this will be published in January 2008, following the publication of central government's Revised Guidance. Westminster has recently produced draft Supplementary Planning Guidance (SPG) and UDP policies TACE 8-10 for entertainment uses, covering 33 areas, including Soho. This guidance addresses the character and function, amenity and local environment and provides detailed guidance for 10 sub areas within Soho. This is being re-drafted for formal adoption following the public consultation in 2006.

Some aspects of Soho's vibrant night-time economy have a negative effect on Soho's residents and businesses. Noise from late-night traffic, air conditioning units, patrons of licensed premises and waste and bottle recycling collections have been highlighted during consultation, and we will work with local residents to identify specific problem areas. We recognise that ambient noise levels in many parts of the city are above desirable levels. As announced as part of our 18 One City initiatives in March 2007, we are committed to developing a long-term strategy to reduce ambient noise levels where they are excessive through a combination of licensing, regulatory and enforcement powers. While this work takes place, council departments will work to

alleviate noise nuisance where we can by adjusting our own services.



“Clipping”<sup>3</sup> disturbs the peace for residents and other law-abiding people as well as causing problems for unsuspecting visitors to Soho. City Guardians have distributed warning leaflets to potential customers to deter them from entering premises and accepting offers on street. The leaflet distribution and arrests have reduced reported crime dramatically and this will continue until we can legislate against those responsible. Considerable efforts from both the Premises Licensing and Planning Enforcement teams have delivered a large reduction in the number of clipping premises, and we are pursuing legislation under the London Local Authorities Bill to make these businesses illegal. We will continue to work with the police and other agencies to negate the impact of on-street clipping which affects our residents in their homes, and will close down illegal clip joints where possible.

Hate crime (which includes faith, homophobic, transgender, racially motivated and repeat victim crime) is a recognised problem in Soho. Data from the Metropolitan Police for January 2006 - 2007 suggests that on average hate crime occurs a total of 2.25 times per calendar month in the Soho Metropolitan Police area. Anecdotal evidence suggests that this figure could be much higher and that it is under reported, particularly in respect of homophobic offences. We recognise that the LGBT community is often reluctant to report violent offences for many reasons, including fear of reprisal. We will work with the police, the

LGBT community and other partners to combat this, and we will relaunch a third party reporting scheme, where victims can report such crimes safely.

Drug dealing and related activity have been problems in some parts of Soho. With our partners in the health service and police, we have developed services for drug users to divert them away from drug use and other possible criminal offences. A Drugs Intervention Programme has been developed to provide a specialised day programme for offenders involved in substance misuse, and includes counselling and relapse prevention. We will continue to target individuals on arrest and leaving custody, in partnership with NHS prescribing and stabilisation services.

The Dispersal Zone has provided the opportunity to disrupt and enforce against known drug dealers and users. In some areas, there are problems with discarded hypodermic needles. We will continue to tackle this by expanding buildings based services for drug users in hostels, existing treatment centres and pharmacies so that the full range of services available to the end drug user can be targeted and provided at each location. Evidence tells us this is already bringing results, with Westminster residents accessing treatment at a rate of 13% more than expected.

Services are integrated with alcohol misuse assessments, as part of our joint alcohol strategy; we will continue to support families and friends living in Soho, so that they can

encourage healthier lifestyles and support the whole community to tackle drug and alcohol use and its effects.

During 2005, we launched a programme to make Westminster a ‘Wireless City’. A current pilot scheme allows CCTV cameras to operate over a wireless network in parts of Soho. We will use these to observe and monitor emerging areas of criminal activity, as well as existing hotspots, in order to take appropriate enforcement action.

Aggressive begging has been tackled quite successfully in the past with the use of anti-social behaviour orders (ASBOs) and intensive enforcement. The number of beggars has reduced significantly across Westminster over the last two years since the council and the police, supported by a Home Office Trailblazing grant, have specifically targeted street begging. Cash point begging has specifically been tackled with some success, with many now covered by CCTV, which we may expand through our wireless network. The police are signed up to respond ‘soonest’ to such begging incidents: their second highest response level (after ‘immediate’ for urgent calls). In 2006 and again in April 2007, we repeated our Killing with Kindness campaign, educating the public about the consequences of giving to beggars. The aim was to divert money into established services for homeless people, to fund treatment and support, and to considerably reduce overall the number of people sleeping rough in the area.

Following the recommendations of an independent report, we have moved from providing services and assessments on the streets to building based provision. The council funds a dedicated Metropolitan Police Team (located within their Safer Streets Homelessness Unit) to work with the buildings based services and ensure that the delicate balance between enforcement and the social care agenda is maintained. Street drinking schools are targeted with the aim of encouraging people to accept services aiming to considerably reduce the number of people sleeping rough in the area.

The last few years have seen a rise in the number of agents who stop people on the street and ask for charitable contributions. Pending the Charities Act being brought into full force, Westminster is seeking interim measures in the form of a borough-wide scheme that has been successful in other London boroughs. Agencies are requested to follow guidelines of conduct and are provided with locations where they can and can't carry out their work. Our street licensing enforcement team is undertaking this work.

The council and other statutory bodies have worked hard over the last few years to educate the public about the dangers of illegal mini-cabs. However, they still exist in the West End and Soho is no exception. We will work in partnership with Transport for London (TfL) to promote the Safer Travel at Night campaign and will also work with licensed mini-cab companies to establish the

<sup>3</sup> “Clipping” can be explained as obtaining money by deception, through the suggestion of sexual services. This can be either on-street or in premises.



provision of an easily recognisable pick-up point, similar to a taxi stand. Provision of a LGBT and women-friendly cab service has also been suggested during consultation. Additionally, we have been using CCTV from SMART cars to enforce against illegal mini-cabs and we will continue to do so, along with concerted, targeted campaigns of enforcement until the Wireless City roll-out is complete. As part of this, many of the most challenging streets (Glasshouse, Archer, Sherwood, Denmark, Old Compton, Bateman, as examples) will be enforced by cameras, which will be in operation by October 2008.

There are still some unlicensed sex shops in Soho and officers from the Premises Licensing Inspectorate routinely monitor this activity. Their work has led to many being closed down and this will continue until all unlicensed premises have been closed. In five years, we have reduced the number of unlicensed sex shops from 52 to 11. During 2006/2007, three unlicensed shops were closed and no new premises opened. The sale value of the material seized is the equivalent of £741,775 not entering the illegal economy. Forty-nine raids have been undertaken and a total of 29,671 items of unclassified material (videos/DVDs) has been seized from these premises. This figure represents the highest seizure of unclassified material since we undertook this work seven years ago, and we have pursued prosecutions against 49 people as a result of these raids.

The police and the City Guardians have worked together on an initiative for the prevention of cycle theft, where bicycles are marked and logged onto a database for easy identification in case of theft. There are also a large number of bicycles clamped to posts and private railings throughout the West End and Soho, causing an obstruction. We will continue with anti-theft initiatives and look to install on-street cycle stands where possible as well as encouraging businesses to do the same in their car parks.

### Keeping the streets clean and clear

The provision of an attractive and safe environment is of paramount importance to both residents and businesses in Soho. The community tells us that despite general high satisfaction levels, some of Soho's streets are in need of improvement, particularly for those with reduced mobility or small children. We are keen to work with landowners, businesses and residents to find partnership funding in order to establish a programme of street scene improvements throughout Soho. For more on this, please see the Renewal section.

Soho's streets are narrow leaving little room for the increasing number of users competing for space. It is our intention to review and rationalise all street signage, bollards and planters, A-boards and other potential obstructions, in line with our public-realm strategy. When improvements to public space are being considered, whether the land is public or privately owned, the needs of people with disabilities will be taken fully into account. This will include the removal of barriers such as steps and improving way-finding and orientation by installing good signage and lighting. Westminster is seeking legislation to control hand-held signboards where they affect visual amenity and/or public safety and cause an obstruction.

We conducted extensive research when our cleansing services contract was tendered in September 2003, and it is clear that we have made important progress with rubbish collection in Soho. The local community tell us that Soho is generally clean and we recently consulted widely on waste collection times as part of the Bags off the Street initiative; collection times have been amended in accordance with the results. Despite this, we know there are some areas we could improve on such as looking at where we need narrower vehicles to access narrow streets.

Despite the pressures on this busy area, there is generally a high standard of cleanliness but residents and visitors in Soho are concerned about the amount of street fouling. Urination on the street is common, not only in out-of-the-way corners. City Guardians will work with police to tackle individuals who are responsible. We will look at treating the street surfaces to combat the smell and investigate better lighting and signage to public toilets. We will work with pubs and clubs to encourage patrons to use toilets before they leave the premises, as well as promoting the creation of accessible toilets in licensed premises where none exist.

# Opportunity

The sense of belonging and wide range of opportunities in Soho make even visitors feel at home. This makes it one of the most exciting and colourful parts of the capital, if not the world, in which to live and work.

# Opportunity

**Part of the One City vision is to increase opportunity for Westminster's communities. These opportunities are wide-ranging and affect a number of our service delivery areas.**

## Education

Educational establishments in Soho include: Westminster Kingsway College (WKC), Soho Parish Primary School, the Westminster Adult Education Service (WAES), and the London College of Beauty Therapy. Soho Parish School ran a campaign during 2006/07 to raise funds to secure a long-term lease on two floors of 13-14 Archer Street, adjacent to the school. Room to Grow aimed to increase physical education space by 116%, classroom space by 27% and community use by 100%. They have been successful in securing £1.5m needed to expand their community offer. WAES will be looking into finding suitable, accessible premises in Soho that are fit for the future. The Soho Action Plan will support both WAES and the school by encouraging the whole community to work with them and support their work.

We have recently completed a School Travel Plan for Soho Parish Primary School. There is scope for improving the traffic situation on Great Windmill Street where drivers often approach the top end by the school too quickly. The signage needs to be improved and City Guardians have already begun work in the school to help educate children about the dangers of the road, as well as providing

a visible support outside the school when the children are entering and leaving.

Parents and teachers have expressed great concern about the sex-related premises that are adjacent to Soho Parish Primary School. The council has encouraged these premises not to open at times when children are entering or leaving the school. The City Guardians are monitoring the situation, but parents and residents are still concerned about their presence. We will continue to seek legislation to enable the council to shut down hostess/near-beer bars. In the meantime we are looking at ways of using Bluetooth technology to deter potential customers from entering.

Westminster Kingsway College (WKC) is a college of further education and a strategic partner of Westminster City Council in meeting the educational needs of the residents and employers of Westminster. At its Peter Street Centre, WKC provides English programmes for speakers of other languages (ESOL), for 1,500 students per year, and vocational programmes for the creative industries sector. We will continue to support WKC and its work, focusing especially on the creative industries so important to Soho's local economy. In particular, we will work with WKC as it seeks to improve its current site, together with other adjacent sites around Berwick Street.



The cultural community within Soho is keen to contribute to local education. For example, The Photographers' Gallery (moving to Soho in 2009) will re-write its education strategy and we encourage the community to give their input.

## Cultural services

We provide support via the Westminster City Council Arts Liaison Service and other avenues to promote the arts within Soho. Soho contains several independently owned art galleries and a high concentration of resident artists. We want to improve cultural and community benefits when considering local redevelopment opportunities, by encouraging public art programmes as part of any new developments as well as looking into using derelict sites as temporary homes for artworks. We see public art programmes as an opportunity for Soho's communities to come together and be creative. We also see them as a chance to promote positive images of everyday Soho life, of its residents, workers and communities. We recognise that positive and realistic images of the LGBT community in particular are rare, despite Soho's significant LGBT presence. With this in mind we would look to encourage art from all of Soho's community. Advice on proposals for new public art in Westminster is provided by the Public Art Advisory Panel, and in the document Public Art in Westminster.

There is also a thriving live music and jazz scene in Soho which we talk of more in our Enterprise section.

We will continue to work with community organisations and support community festivals. There are some churches and faith organisations in Soho that play important support roles within the community and we will continue to work with these organisations. Similarly, the Soho Society actively engages all local community members of all ages, organising many community events and is renowned for the annual Soho Festival, a true community event since 1973. Soho Pride celebrated its 5th year in 2007, consisting of market stalls, drinks, food, and dancing on the streets. The council will work to improve its management of these events.

We will also continue to work with art galleries and theatres in the area, such as The Photographers' Gallery, the Soho Theatre and Writers' Centre, and Shared Experience Theatre Company. We will ensure that the concerns of these establishments are understood and addressed in the context of the Soho Action Plan where possible.



## Healthy Soho

Westminster will be supporting the PCT's delivery of the Healthy Soho Action Plan and, as well as delivering improved services for older residents, we will work with the PCT to expand the range of preventative services available to residents in Soho so that the health of the whole community is improved. Pre-empting the Government's expectations in the White Paper 'Our Health, Our Care, Our Say', we deliver services targeted at meeting the needs of Soho's communities jointly so that residents are able to access the full range of health and community based services as seamlessly as possible. We will continue to monitor the effectiveness of services provided in other areas, with a view to introducing new and appropriate ways of supporting improved health and wellbeing in the Soho community. This could include, for example, GP Exercise Referrals for those with chronic conditions associated with poor fitness.



# Enterprise

Encouraging diversity in retail and protecting Soho's core businesses, promoting all that Soho has to offer and opening up dialogue between businesses and residents, making the council more business-friendly; we want these to be the foundations for enterprise in Soho.

# Encouraging enterprise will be a top priority



Soho offers a dynamic mix of uses, all of which contribute to the area's distinctive character. Supporting Soho's vibrant economy in a way that recognises its contribution to London as a whole, will be one of the central challenges as we deliver the Soho Action Plan. We are keen not to focus solely on the big names and the obvious points of interest – such as Soho's well-known bars, clubs, and restaurants – but also to work with small businesses to promote the area's mix and history.

Soho remains an important location for the headquarters of many national and international businesses such as advertising, and the significant number of office premises in the area ensures that there is a large daytime population. Film and media production studios are often 24 hour operations, meaning that staff can be entering or leaving Soho at any time of the day or night. We will continue to work with the media and creative industries so that their needs and issues, such as safety for staff late at night, are understood and met. Soho has the greatest concentration of creative industries in the UK and we are looking at ways to offer more protection to these types of businesses. We are doing this by revising our Planning and Economic Development policies as part of the emerging Local Development Framework and revised Economic Development Strategy.

As part of the One City programme, we are looking to sustain local community retailers

that are under commercial pressure. We have already begun this process with our Savile Row Strategic Group. The council, in partnership with private landowners and small business owners, will look into ways to attract and retain independent businesses in Soho. We will apply this particularly to the Berwick Street area, which has seen a decline in business and we will explore ways of promoting it and increasing its economic sustainability.

We want to become more business friendly, and the reliance on delivery vehicles for many businesses in Soho is paramount. The Transportation and Parking departments will continue to investigate loading restrictions within certain streets of Soho, particularly relating to deliveries while balancing the need to protect residential amenity and minimise noise during unsociable hours. We also hope to work with local businesses in deriving the most effective logistics for deliveries. We are working with businesses and the freight industry to improve loading/unloading facilities and have been instrumental in developing a London-wide loading/unloading code of practice. In addition, through the Clear Zone Partnership, we are discussing the possibility of introducing a delivery consolidation scheme. Soho could be used as a pilot area for such an initiative and, as the boundary of the Clear Zone is currently being revised, there is the potential to incorporate Soho within the Clear Zone.

We want to acknowledge where there has been a change or mix in business use and ensure that we keep up with those changes. For example, considering the creation of additional loading bays in areas where the business mix has changed recently, such as Richmond Mews.

We are always open to suggestions for making parking arrangements more accessible. We have recently increased the maximum stay period on meters from two hours to four to assist Soho's visitors. The parking permit re-engineering review will look into all parking permits and will include consideration of provisions for tradesmen and contractors. Parking for the Berwick Street market traders will be considered. We recognise that drivers of vehicles used by disabled people, including minibuses adapted to transport wheelchairs, need to be able to pick up and drop off passengers, and we will work on making this possible. We are also reviewing provision for motorcycle and bicycle parking in Soho and the West End following the increase in the Congestion Charge and increased levels of correspondence relating to parking space availability.

## Entertainment

There is a vast array of entertainment on offer in Soho and for decades the area has been a top food and drink destination. The restaurants are mainly independently owned and some restaurant owners have told us that there is a need for a local restaurant

group, or perhaps a forum, where local views and issues can be discussed.

Historically, Soho has always attracted musicians and today Soho has a buzzing live jazz and blues scene. This scene is supported by popular venues such as Ronnie Scott's on Frith Street, Jazz After Dark on Greek Street, and the Jazz Club on Dean Street. We will work with our partners to promote this as an aspect of Soho's historic inheritance. Live music is an important part of entertainment in Soho and this is celebrated annually with the City Showcase [www.cityshowcase.co.uk](http://www.cityshowcase.co.uk). This has been hosted in Soho during a week in June since 2003. New live acts get a chance to perform in public and attend lectures.

The modern sex industry has existed in Soho for over 50 years. By the end of the 1960s Soho's well-established sex-related premises included film clubs, strip joints and mail order and retail shops. Today the council is highly active in driving out illegal trade within the industry and this will continue. Central Government's proposals to decriminalise small brothels will be closely monitored by our Planning Department to ensure that their impact does not result in either nuisance to the local community or loss of permanent residential housing stock.



## Soho's businesses

Soho is the centre of the film, video, and publishing industry – being home to both multinational and independent businesses – as well as the television and film post-production industry. The area is criss-crossed underground with the fibre of Sohonet and at rooftop level by free space communications laser beams.

We will endeavour to work more closely with media organisations and will support any Soho-focused media industry association or forum to work with us in identifying and addressing issues for this important sector.

Soho is also home to 01zero-one, the Creative Learning Lab operated by Westminster Kingsway College. 01zero-one offers vocational and short-course programmes for the creative industries sector as well as providing well-equipped meeting space, which is a valuable resource for businesses and community groups in Soho. We will support WKC's efforts to increase the range and number of educational and training programmes focused on the creative sector.

Soho is an internationally recognised focus for gay economic and community activity. We would like to work further with such businesses to ensure their needs and issues are understood. We would also like to encourage a greater range of gay businesses, thereby providing a wider variety of choice for local residents as well as visitors.

Soho provides a unique and popular shopping experience. In its recent history, Soho was famous for its cosmopolitan food shops. Brewer Street was home to butchers such as Slater Cook and Bisney and Jones, while Randall and Aubin was a butchers and delicatessen. Old Compton Street housed Richard's, a famous fish shop and today is home to many restaurants, bars and clubs retaining a number of long standing patisseries, cafes and the Prince Edward theatre. We will actively promote key shopping destinations across the whole range of Soho's shopping areas, for example Berwick Street's music and rag trade shops, Newburgh Street's cutting-edge fashion shops and the tailoring industry (for more information please read *Bespoke Tailoring in London's West End* – March 2006). Berwick Street, with its market and characteristic small retailers and cloth shops, will be encouraged to become Soho's local high street with shops sustained by the local community.

In the face of great adversity, partly due to escalating rents and property values, a surprising number of specialist shops still thrive in Soho. We want to ensure the continued success of these shops and boutiques. Whilst we have very limited powers to protect smaller businesses, we will work with landlords as part of this action plan to ensure that everything possible is done to retain and enhance the Soho shopping experience. It is envisaged that an initiative like this will also encourage local

goods and service providers, such as butchers, cobblers and bakers, back into the area. We will look into establishing a Soho-focused independent retail association.

Today, the Carnaby Street shopping district is a thriving area packed with a range of shops. However, the full potential of the entrance to Carnaby Street via Great Marlborough Street is unfulfilled. A pedestrian approaching from Great Marlborough Street is confronted by a dominating motorcycle bay and aesthetically poor entrances to the public lavatories. As this is an important area, alongside buildings and streets of historical significance, upgrading the street scene would be considered a high priority. The council will work with landowners, including Shaftesbury PLC, to make improvements to this part of Soho.

Berwick Street market was historically renowned for its quality fruit and vegetables, bread, fish, cheese, spices and flowers. However, there is a perception that recently, both the area and the market have been deteriorating in quality and character. Business benefits for the market traders could be looked at as part of a regeneration of the Berwick Street area, which is being guided by the Berwick Street community. For example, market traders have highlighted the lack of electric points, washing facilities and toilets. A lack of signage, parking provision, stall design, variety and the penalty-points system have also been identified as major impediments to the

market's success. We have been working towards the improvement of Berwick Street market during 2007, and have implemented pedestrian signing from major routes, filled the remaining vacancies and the market has recently celebrated success with Ian Keene being awarded Westminster Market Trader of the Year 2007.

We will investigate a longer-term vision for the market and explore initiatives that could help it to flourish; there has been a suggestion for developing a farmer's market, for instance. It has also been suggested that a waste-handling facility be installed for Berwick Street market, including a rotary waste compactor and a cardboard baler; which would enable recycling for the market traders' waste. At present, waste from the market is taken to the Dufour's Place street-cleansing depot and deposited in a skip compactor. Alongside this, we will consider implications for Rupert Street market, which was also celebrated historically for its quality fresh foods.



We will look into initiatives that, wherever possible, would ensure vacant premises are turned around quickly for use. The opportunities provided by such premises could be used to bring services back into the local area and, in some circumstances, return upper storeys to proper residential use. We will investigate the flexibility of leasing arrangements with landlords, perhaps using some vacant premises as temporary art space.

Since 2006, it has been mandatory for those applying for planning consent to provide an access statement that will demonstrate how access for disabled people is going to be achieved. We will work with applicants to make the most of this opportunity, and examine ways to match improved access to buildings with improved access to the approaches to the building, where these are in the public realm.



We will be judged by future generations on how we look after the heart of this city. We propose real consultation with residents, businesses and workers in areas of regeneration, and we will improve the public realm to make Soho accessible to all.

# Renewal: Our lasting legacy

# Our lasting legacy



## Public realm

The architecture, historical street patterns and spaces of Soho are important assets. We have adopted the Soho Conservation Area Audit, which highlights the area's architectural merits.

We agree with the many responses during the consultation telling us that some of Soho's physical environment is in need of improvement. We will carry out an audit to look at options for improving the lighting and footways, do away with non-functioning street furniture, and to look at where we could install electric vehicle charging points, cycle stands and recycling points, to encourage a greener Soho. We will consider the streetscape for vehicles and pedestrians to ascertain the best use of the urban space. We will carry out an access audit of Soho to identify where areas can be made more open and welcoming for disabled people. Beak, Kingly and Warwick Streets have been identified as in need of physical improvement for some time. Some simple solutions could be applied here, for example rationalising and improving the footways and raised tables to make access more welcoming for pedestrians at cross points.

If Crossrail 1 (whose proposed east/west route runs south of Oxford Street) proceeds, the impact will be felt in the north-eastern part of Soho. The construction of Crossrail 1 will result in considerable disruption to those visiting, living and working in the area, as well as to traffic and pedestrians. Westminster

City Council is seeking to minimise the impact of the development and to ensure that proper provision is made to mitigate disturbances. We will continue to lobby for this. The council will also continue to lobby to minimise adverse townscape and construction impacts arising from the long term Crossrail 2 proposal (whose proposed route runs from Victoria Station to Kings Cross station).

Soho and Covent Garden are particularly difficult for bicycle access due to narrow streets and one-way streets. These result in people ignoring one-way signs and cycling the wrong way so the number of accidents is above average.

Some cycle routes were installed in the area as part of the London Cycle Network, with a few contra-flow cycle lanes to improve access. Despite this, most routes are still very circuitous and difficult to follow. The contra-flow lanes add to street clutter, are difficult to maintain and are unattractive.

Currently there are two planned strategic cycle routes through the area, which are being processed (Routes 6 and 39). If approved, these will be part of the London Cycle Network Plus (LCN+) which TfL aims to complete by 2010. The majority of TfL's grant for cycling is allocated to LCN+ routes.

There is also high demand for public cycle parking but narrow footways severely limit the number of suitable sites. Many Sheffield

stands have been installed around the area in recent years and the police have carried out bike marking schemes to reduce theft. One solution to the cycle parking shortage would be to erect stands in unused vehicle bays on the carriageway and this is being investigated.

## Go Green and Sustainable Communities

During the consultation in 2006, many people told us it is important to do more to improve environmental sustainability in Soho. The council has established a 'Go Green Board' and, in February 2007, committed to drive improvements to the city's overall environmental performance, recover its previous pre-eminence as an exemplary 'green authority', and contribute to combating climate change. This is particularly important when looking to improve existing areas of the city and here in Soho developments will follow our emerging Sustainable Communities agenda as well as the Westminster Biodiversity Action Plan (WBAP). We can look towards including an integrated set of proposals to improve sustainability over the life of this plan by conducting a green audit of Soho, which would look at ways of improving Soho's environmental sustainability in terms of its buildings and functions – a particular challenge in a conservation area made up of competing land uses and narrow streets.

Soho's three areas of green space – Soho Square, St Anne's Gardens and Golden

Square – are small but vital components of Soho's life. While there is scope for improving these spaces and increasing access to them for disabled people, we would not want to change their function or role. Additional maintenance measures, such as public art programmes and lighting, would augment the attractiveness of these spaces. The Open Spaces Strategy has now been adopted and captures works in public open spaces, which is part of the previously mentioned WBAP. We will look at enhancing Golden Square and Soho Square and encourage partnership-working with local groups on improvement to open spaces, such as Soho Green's 'Artshed' toilet at St Anne's Gardens.

## Enforcement activity

Westminster has pursued compulsory purchase action in respect of ten mixed commercial/ residential buildings which were being used as walk-up prostitutes' flats in recent years in and around the Berwick Street area. The purpose of this action had been two-fold; to improve the condition of the worst of the 60 or so houses in Soho used in this way and to return the parts of these houses intended for residential use to this purpose. We will continue to implement this programme, which is aimed at building sustainable communities and ensuring that residential stock is preserved. Running alongside this, we will look at increasing residential opportunities in sites such as Trenchard House and Ham Yard (please see Berwick Street and Ham Yard sections for more).



We are aware from residents, local landlords and police that they remain concerned about the effect the activities of the illegal sex trade and hostess bars are having on the quality of the area. It is felt that the advantages to be gained through the regeneration of Ham Yard and Berwick Street will be seriously diminished by the continued presence of this type of illegal sex trade. We will look at forming a multi disciplinary enforcement team comprising of the council and external enforcement agencies to take action on these activities.

### Berwick Street

In March 2007, the council adopted a planning brief for the area around Berwick Street. We want to promote an improvement scheme to regenerate this part of Soho and the planning brief will guide this process. We are considering how proposals can be taken forward with local residents and businesses, together with the Trenchard House and Westminster Kingsway College sites. The Berwick Street Working Group has been established to liaise and work with us to see the regeneration through. We want to support the mainstay of the Berwick Street community and encourage this area of Soho to develop and prosper. In addition to the Berwick Street News, there is a specific website that will give updated information on this work

[www.westminster.gov.uk/berwickstreet](http://www.westminster.gov.uk/berwickstreet)

### Ham Yard

Ham Yard is mainly derelict, apart from one office building on the south side. In 2003, planning permission was granted for a mixed-use scheme comprising of residential units, commercial space, and a small restaurant. This was subject to legal agreement to secure affordable housing, public art and some street improvements, but the landowners have not yet pursued the scheme. It is a great time to bring about real change in this part of Soho. The council will use the full extent of its powers to bring about development of this site and will develop alternative regeneration proposals in the event that the existing permission is not implemented.

In May 2007, the council's Environmental Health department took direct action in Ham Yard by erecting a fence around the site. It intends to recoup the cost of work from the landowner in due course and we will continue to take action to protect public safety on this site.

### Marshall Street

A high-quality refurbishment is proposed for Marshall Street Leisure Centre. Plans include a restored, historic public swimming pool and a range of leisure services that will provide a state of the art public leisure centre for community use, a smaller 200-space car park and a new-build depot to meet the cleansing needs of the area. It is important that this reduces the current impact on residents in Dufour's Place. In addition to providing residential accommodation, the scheme will also include commercial units to encourage small, independent businesses. It will include affordable and key-worker housing, in accordance with planning policy. We will continue to revitalise this area and work with the community during the development phases of this scheme. Neither planning permission nor listed building consent has been granted at the time of going to print.

### Visitors to Soho

Soho can seem like a maze at times but that is part of its appeal. Visitors will find that they are never far from a restaurant, bar, shop, or café. We will work to promote Soho and encourage more daytime visitors. Directions to the main thoroughfares, such as Charing Cross Road, Oxford Street, Regent Street and Shaftesbury Avenue would be useful in guiding pedestrians, especially at night. As part of a wider pan-London scheme to waymark the West End we will investigate

opportunities for signage improvements, especially on the more 'trodden' streets such as Old Compton Street and Wardour Street.

Black cabs can be difficult to find in Soho as drivers are reluctant to get held up in the one-way system. A traffic survey will be carried out with a view to addressing this, balanced with discouraging an increase in traffic from the area and including a rigorous assessment of pedestrian priority to look at the conflicts between cars and pedestrians on Old Compton Street, for example. We will also investigate the possibility of a black-cab rank in Soho.

The council recognises the role pedicabs have in the West End, but they are not universally welcomed as they block streets and pavements and their behaviour in the midst of traffic can be dangerous. The council has been lobbying Government to introduce enforcement powers against pedicabs, and will continue to press the Department for Transport (DfT) and other Government departments for action in this regard. Transport for London (TfL) has also consulted on a licensing regime for pedicabs. We will continue to work with TfL on the implementation of pedicab licensing.

The Leader's vision for the City of Westminster is clear: everybody who lives, works, and visits the city shares it with other people and we cannot, and should not, ignore those around us. New arrivals must accept British culture and values and respect all people regardless of race, nationality, religion, age, gender, disability or sexual orientation. Soho, with its mix of people, businesses, and communities is an excellent example of this. Our vision, as set out in this action plan, is that Soho remains inclusive and tolerant, and that it is a fantastic place in which to:

**Live  
Work  
Visit  
Learn  
Invest  
and be creative**

These six themes can be achieved through the actions set out in the following section, and we believe that these will be a lasting legacy for Soho.

# One Soho, One City, One Action Plan

## Actions – What did you think?

**During consultation, people told us which actions they thought were most important to them. The following summary shows the top three actions from each section of the plan that will be taken forward as priorities, in partnership with the Soho Steering Group, council departments, local residents, stakeholders and community groups and the Primary Care Trust:**

### Order

- 02.** Develop a strategy to deal with ambient noise levels in Soho (including noise from late-night traffic, air conditioning units, patrons of licensed premises and waste collections).
- 03.** Work with night-time establishments to reduce disturbance and urination when patrons leave premises.
- 05.** To work with the Community Protection department and LGBT community organisations to improve the reporting and case management of LGBT hate crimes.

### Opportunity

- 22./23.** Encourage public art programmes which reflect the diversity of the Soho community. Encourage public art as part of any new developments and as a potential temporary use of derelict sites.
- 24.** Support local community organisations and community festivals.
- 26.** Work with the Westminster Primary Care Trust to deliver targeted services that meet the health and social care needs of the whole Soho community, focusing especially on services which aim to improve the health and lifestyles of residents.

### Enterprise

- 30.** Work with local landowners and small businesses to attract and retain independent businesses and establish a Soho-focused independent retailers association to encourage independent retailers back into the area.
- 39.** Work with gay businesses to address their needs and issues, and encourage a greater range of gay economic and community activities.
- 41.** Work with the local community to regenerate the Berwick Street area, encouraging its development as Soho's Local High Street.

### Renewal

- 46.** Implement the Open Spaces Strategy including biodiversity, reviewing access for disabled people and looking at ways of enhancing Golden Square.
- 49.** Promote an improvement scheme to regenerate the area around Berwick Street, encompassing the Trenchard House and WKC sites, working in partnership with the local community.
- 51.** Improve Marshall Street Leisure Centre, working closely with the local community to revitalise the area.

### One Soho

- 56.** Look into the provision of a virtual museum to record Soho's rich and varied history.
- 59.** Work with Kairos in Soho to support the needs of the LGBT community.
- 60.** Examine the feasibility of a LGBT community facility as a focus for community action, health and social care, social enterprise, exhibition space and research.

# List of actions

## Time scale key

### ST (Short Term)

12 months or less to complete

### MT (Medium Term)

2 to 5 years to complete

### LT (Long Term)

up to 5 years to complete

## Order

- 01.** Limit new late alcohol and entertainment licences in the West End 'Stress Area'.  
**Department/Agency:** Licensing/Planning  
**Time scale:** MT
- 02.** Develop a strategy to deal with ambient noise levels in Soho (including noise from late-night traffic, air conditioning units, patrons of licensed premises and waste collections).  
**Department/Agency:** Community Protection  
**Time scale:** LT
- 03.** Work with night-time establishments to reduce disturbance and urination when patrons leave premises.  
**Department/Agency:** Community Protection  
**Time scale:** LT
- 04.** Undertake an audit and then implement 'Design Out Crime' initiatives in the area.  
**Department/Agency:** Community Protection  
**Time scale:** MT
- 05.** To work with Community Protection and LGBT community organisations to improve the reporting and case management of LGBT hate crimes.  
**Department/Agency:** Community Protection  
**Time scale:** LT
- 06.** Support and assist initiatives to address homophobia (including aggressive behaviour, mocking and harassment) and eliminate the targeting of Soho for such activity.  
**Department/Agency:** Community Protection  
**Time scale:** LT
- 07.** Investigate the provision of a licensed LGBT and women friendly cab service.  
**Department/Agency:** Community Protection/West End Team  
**Time scale:** MT
- 08.** Continue to support and promote the 'Safer travel at night' campaign in partnership with TfL, including the establishment of a recognisable pick up point for licensed mini cabs.  
**Department/Agency:** Transportation/Community Protection  
**Time scale:** LT
- 09.** Continue to use CCTV from SMART cars to enforce against illegal mini-cabs and carry out concerted, targeted campaigns of enforcement.  
**Department/Agency:** Parking  
**Time scale:** LT
- 10.** Enforce against illegal mini-cabs by CCTV when the Wireless City is complete (by October 2008).  
**Department/Agency:** Parking/Transportation/Community Protection  
**Time scale:** LT
- 11.** Investigate the use of ASBOs and continue to use CCTV to combat aggressive begging at cashpoints.  
**Department/Agency:** Community Protection  
**Time scale:** LT
- 12.** Work with Police on initiatives to prevent cycle theft, including investigating suitable locations for cycle stands.  
**Department/Agency:** Community Protection/West End Team/Transportation  
**Time scale:** MT
- 13.** Undertake an audit of the street scene in order to establish a programme of streetscape improvements with local partnership funding including review and rationalise street furniture and signage.  
**Department/Agency:** West End Team/Transportation  
**Time scale:** ST
- 14.** Review waste collection rounds to investigate where narrower vehicles are needed and how such vehicles can be made available for these streets.  
**Department/Agency:** Cleansing  
**Time scale:** MT
- 15.** Investigate locations for new mobile toilets and improve signage and lighting to existing facilities.  
**Department/Agency:** Environment and Leisure  
**Time scale:** LT
- 16.** Investigate the implementation of preventative measures where street urination is common.  
**Department/Agency:** Cleansing/Community Protection  
**Time scale:** MT

## Opportunity

- 17.** Work with Westminster Adult Education Service to find new premises.  
**Department/Agency:** Lifelong Learning/Property Division  
**Time scale:** LT
- 18.** Work with Soho Parish Primary School to produce a 'School Travel Plan' including educational initiatives for children and improved road safety measures close to the school.  
**Department/Agency:** Transportation  
**Time scale:** LT
- 19.** Lobby for legislation to shut down hostess and 'near-beer' bars, prioritising those which impact on the local community, such as the school.  
**Department/Agency:** Community Protection/Licensing/Legal services  
**Time scale:** LT
- 20.** Work with Westminster Kingsway College in developing its accommodation as part of the wider redevelopment of the Berwick Street area to increase its prominence in the area for the English Language Courses and the creative sector.  
**Department/Agency:** West End Team/Planning  
**Time scale:** LT
- 21.** Facilitate community input into the Education Strategy of the Photographers' Gallery when it moves to Soho in 2009.  
**Department/Agency:** West End Team/Libraries, Arts and Culture/West End LARP  
**Time scale:** LT
- 22.** Encourage public art programmes, which reflect the diversity of the Soho community.  
**Department/Agency:** West End Team/Planning /Libraries, Arts and Culture  
**Time scale:** LT
- 23.** Encourage art as part of any new developments and as a potential temporary use of derelict sites.  
**Department/Agency:** West End Team/Planning/Libraries, Arts and Culture  
**Time scale:** LT
- 24.** Support local community organisations and community festivals.  
**Department/Agency:** West End Team/Libraries, Arts and Culture/Communications  
**Time scale:** LT
- 25.** Work with local independent art galleries and theatres to address their needs.  
**Department/Agency:** West End Team/Libraries, Arts and Culture  
**Time scale:** LT
- 26.** Work with Westminster Primary Care Trust to deliver targeted services that meet the health and social care needs of the whole Soho community, focussing especially on services which aim to improve the health and lifestyles of residents.  
**Department/Agency:** Westminster PCT/Soho Caring Agencies Forum/Social Services/West End Team  
**Time scale:** LT

## Enterprise

- 27.** Host an international creative industries conference in Soho.  
**Department/Agency:** Planning Policy  
**Time scale:** ST
- 28.** Where appropriate, take forward actions arising from the WCC Creative Industries Study to help support and promote creative sector businesses in Soho.  
**Department/Agency:** Planning Policy  
**Time scale:** MT
- 29.** Work in partnership with local businesses to promote the area's local mix and history and to protect and promote Soho's key shopping destinations.  
**Department/Agency:** West End Team  
**Time scale:** LT
- 30.** Work with local landowners and small businesses to attract and retain independent businesses and establish a Soho-focused independent retailers' association to encourage independent retailers back into the area.  
**Department/Agency:** West End Team  
**Time scale:** LT
- 31.** Continue to review loading provisions within Soho, also considering areas where business mix has changed, such as Richmond Mews.  
**Department/Agency:** Parking  
**Time scale:** LT
- 32.** Support the Clear Zones Delivery Consolidation Scheme working with the Clear Zones Partnership to include Soho within the Clear Zone boundary.  
**Department/Agency:** Transportation  
**Time scale:** LT
- 33.** Consider provisions for tradesmen and contractors, as well as parking for the Berwick Street Market Traders and key workers as part of the Parking Permit Re-Engineering Review.  
**Department/Agency:** Parking  
**Time scale:** MT
- 34.** Work on making it easier for vehicles used by disabled people, including minibuses adapted to transport wheelchairs, to drop off passengers.  
**Department/Agency:** Department/Agency: Parking/Transportation  
**Time scale:** LT
- 35.** Establish a forum or 'local restaurant group' to address catering trade issues.  
**Department/Agency:** West End Team  
**Time scale:** LT
- 36.** Promote Soho's live music scene  
**Department/Agency:** West End Team/Libraries, Arts and Culture  
**Time scale:** LT
- 37.** Monitor the impact of central government's proposals to decriminalise small brothels.  
**Department/Agency:** Planning Enforcement  
**Time scale:** LT
- 38.** Work with the media industry in Soho and support any forum or association set up to address their needs.  
**Department/Agency:** West End Team  
**Time scale:** LT
- 39.** Work with gay businesses to address their needs and issues, and encourage a greater range of gay economic and community activities.  
**Department/Agency:** West End Team/West End LARP  
**Time scale:** LT
- 40.** Work in partnership with landowners to improve the entrance to Carnaby Street via Great Marlborough Street.  
**Department/Agency:** Transportation/West End Team  
**Time scale:** LT
- 41.** Work with the local community to regenerate the Berwick Street area, encouraging it as 'Soho's Local High Street'.  
**Department/Agency:** West End Team/Licensing/Property Division/City West Homes  
**Time scale:** LT
- 42.** Formulate a long term vision for Berwick Street and Rupert Street market to help them operate more efficiently and to flourish.  
**Department/Agency:** West End Team/Licensing/Community Protection/CPG  
**Time scale:** LT
- 43.** Identify bars and other premises with features such as un-stepped access, accessible tables and toilets and make information available.  
**Department/Agency:** WCC Access Officer/Property Division  
**Time scale:** LT

## Renewal

- 44.** Undertake a Street lighting audit.  
**Department/Agency:** West End Team/Highways  
**Time scale:** ST
- 45.** Make necessary physical improvements to Beak, Kingly and Warwick Streets in partnership with landowners.  
**Department/Agency:** West End Team/Transportation  
**Time scale:** LT
- 46.** Implement the 'Open Spaces Strategy' including biodiversity and reviewing access for disabled people and looking at ways of enhancing Golden Square.  
**Department/Agency:** Parks and Leisure/West End Team  
**Time scale:** LT
- 47.** Carry out green audit of Soho and review recommendations for implementation.  
**Department/Agency:** West End Team/Go Green/CPG/Landowners/English Heritage  
**Time scale:** ST
- 48.** Organise multi-agency task force to deal with problems associated with clipping and unlicensed premises.  
**Department/Agency:** Cross departmental, plus external agencies  
**Time scale:** MT
- 49.** Promote an improvement scheme for the area around Berwick Street, encompassing the Trenchard House and WKC sites, working in partnership with the local community.  
**Department/Agency:** West End Team/CPG/DPS/Property Division/Licensing/Transportation/City West Homes  
**Time scale:** LT
- 50.** Proactively work towards regeneration of the area in and around Great Windmill Street and Ham Yard.  
**Department/Agency:** DPS/Housing/West End Team/Street Enforcement  
**Time scale:** LT
- 51.** Make improvements to the Marshall Street Leisure Centre, working closely with the local community to revitalise the area.  
**Department/Agency:** Environment Projects/Planning  
**Time scale:** LT
- 52.** Introduce better signage as part of the wider scheme to "waymark" the West End, as part of the Central London Partnership Scheme.  
**Department/Agency:** Transport Policy/West End Team  
**Time scale:** LT
- 53.** Investigate the possibility of a black-cab rank in Soho.  
**Department/Agency:** Transportation/PCO/Community Protection  
**Time scale:** MT
- 54.** Lobby the DfT to introduce enforcement powers against pedicabs, and work with TfL to consult on a licensing regime.  
**Department/Agency:** Transportation/Community Protection  
**Time scale:** LT
- 55.** Carry out traffic survey, to include pedestrian priority.  
**Department/Agency:** Transportation/West End Team  
**Time scale:** ST

## One Soho

- 56.** Look into the provision of a Virtual Museum to record Soho's rich and varied history.  
**Department/Agency:** Libraries, Arts and Culture/Soho Society/West End Team  
**Time scale:** MT
- 57.** Consult on classes or groups to be held at the Marshall Street Leisure Centre, when it re-opens.  
**Department/Agency:** Environment Projects  
**Time scale:** LT
- 58.** Undertake an audit of Soho's community facilities and services and work with the West End Community Network to investigate options for a community centre.  
**Department/Agency:** West End Team  
**Time scale:** ST
- 59.** Work with Kairos in Soho to support the needs of the LGBT community.  
**Department/Agency:** West End Team/West End LARP  
**Time scale:** LT
- 60.** Examine the feasibility of a LGBT community facility as a focus for community action, health and social care, social enterprise, exhibition space and research.  
**Department/Agency:** West End Team  
**Time scale:** ST
- 61.** Westminster Primary Care Trust to establish a 'Healthy Soho' user group to oversee the implementation of the 'Healthy Soho' Action Plan.  
**Department/Agency:** Westminster PCT at Soho Centre for Health and Care  
**Time scale:** ST
- 62.** Aim to improve the 18 priority areas in Westminster's Children and Young People's Plan, contributing to the agreed targets for 2006-09.  
**Department/Agency:** Education/Westminster CYPSP  
**Time scale:** LT
- 63.** Expand facilities for older people in Soho through the Age Concern Covent Garden Day Centre.  
**Department/Agency:** Adult Social Services/Adult Social Care/Older Peoples Services  
**Time scale:** MT
- 64.** Promote inter-generational initiatives in the community.  
**Department/Agency:** West End LARP/Older Peoples Services  
**Time scale:** LT
- 65.** Increase volunteering activities across all communities in Soho through the Time Bank.  
**Department/Agency:** West End LARP  
**Time scale:** LT

## Contact

You can stay in touch with progress in a number of ways:

### Web

[www.westminster.gov.uk/onesoho](http://www.westminster.gov.uk/onesoho)

### Email

[soho@westminster.gov.uk](mailto:soho@westminster.gov.uk)

### Tel

020 7641 3341

### People who are deaf or hard of hearing can

- Use a BSL interpreter on a videophone at One Stop Services.
- Textphone/minicom:  
020 7641 8000  
020 7641 8222 social services

### Text a brief question to

07797 882 705

### Use a computer and go to

[www.westminster.gov.uk/textphone](http://www.westminster.gov.uk/textphone)

### Write to us at

West End Team  
Planning and City Development  
Westminster City Hall  
64 Victoria Street  
London  
SW1E 6QP

If you would like this document in an alternative format or language, please contact us using the details above to make your request.

cultural and commercial heritage. Whilst  
pot, Soho thrives thanks to the persona  
a truly contemporary community. Order  
We want being in Soho to be a safe and  
to achieve this. Opportunity There is a s  
visitors feel at home. This makes it on  
which to live and work. Enterprise Enc  
all that Soho has to offer and opening  
business-friendly; we want these to be  
judged by future generations on how w  
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