

Fitzrovia News

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All Souls School gets funding towards playground renewal

All Souls Primary School at Foley Street in Fitzrovia has been allocated up to £100,000 by Westminster Council towards improvements to a playground, after a successful application for Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) funding, *writes Linus Rees*.

Councillor Geoff Baraclough, the cabinet member for planning and economic development, approved the money in January as part of a £668,005 package of funding from the Neighbourhood CIL portion to various infrastructure projects across the City of Westminster.

"All Souls has ambitions to improve the design and equipment of its playground, which is currently not fit for purpose," states a council report on the funding allocation. "However, playground improvements cannot take place until an identified drainage issue is resolved."

The funding from the Fitzrovia West neighbourhood CIL pot is conditional and is dependent on the cost and the outcome of investigatory works to determine the nature of the drainage problem.

"Given the need for the drainage works prior to any playground improvements, it is recommended that funding support the drainage works," states the report.

All Souls, which has around 200 children registered, will then be invited to submit a second application for playground improvements including new play equipment when the drainage issue is resolved.

"The project is necessary to address the need for playspace at this school," states the report.

"Fixing the drainage issue will allow for subsequent improvements to the playground, which will help to address the growing problem of childhood obesity by encouraging more physical activity.

"Improving the playground will also help support the school's long-term future and therefore provide the educational infrastructure that the city needs to support expected long-term growth," states the report.

The council also states there is a "deficit in open spaces" in Westminster and this is "predicted to get worse due to future development, leaving children with fewer opportunities to play outdoors".

Funding for All Souls was one of nine successful applications for CIL money made in the summer of 2023 across the City of Westminster.

Computer help for over-55s at community centre

Age UK is offering Fitzrovia residents who are aged 55 and over help with avoiding internet scams, dealing with troublesome computers and fiddly phones, all for free.

Sessions will run on the 1st and 3rd Wednesday of every month.

Come anytime between 2pm and 5pm at Fitzrovia Community Centre, 2 Foley Street, London W1W 6DL.

Dean Street Tesco declared an 'asset of community value'

A Tesco supermarket saved from demolition by a local campaign in 2023 has been granted additional protection from any future applications, *writes Ben Lynch, Local Democracy Reporter*.

Westminster City Council has formally recognised the Dean Street store in Soho as an Asset of Community Value (ACV) following a nomination from the Soho Society.

Councillors sitting on the local authority's planning committee voted four to two in October to reject plans to knock down the Tesco and an Art Deco building and replace them with office space and retail units.

Cllr Ruth Bush said to members there was "no concept" behind the submission, while locals raised doubts about the need for offices and an "art bazaar" in place of the supermarket.

Resident David Bieda said: "You can't buy your fruit and vegetables with a bit of public art."

Following the committee's decision, the Soho Society, which works to promote and protect the district, nominated the Tesco to become an ACV due to its contribution to the local community.

The council has since agreed to recognise the store as such, describing it as offering the "best range of products and price points" in the area.

The designation of the Tesco as an ACV means if the property it occupies goes up for sale, the community will be offered the chance to purchase it first. The listing can also be considered a material consideration in the determination of a planning application affecting the property. It will remain an ACV for five years.

The Soho Society nominated the store to be designated as an ACV as it is the only large supermarket within Soho and it provides an important facility for the district's 3,000 residents.

More news over page. ►

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New opening times and events at the Fitzrovia Chapel

The Chapel is now open during most weeks from Monday to Wednesday, 11am to 6pm, and one Sunday a month (12 noon to 5pm).

Monday is a special community day. If you are part of a community group that would like to have a guided tour, hold an activity or find out more about the chapel, you can email madeleine@fitzroviachapel.org with your request.

Exhibitions coming up include:
Lawrence in Fitzrovia. Daily, free entry, 26 January to 9 February. Lawrence is a former resident of Fitzrovia as well as a highly influential musician.

Bowie: A London Day. Daily, free entry, 1 to 20 March. A series of photographs capturing David Bowie over the course of a single day in 1992.

See fitzroviachapel.org for details.

Hidden murals on Bolsover Street

Local resident Sue Blundell visited a former hospital waiting room on Bolsover Street to discover the rarely seen murals painted by Nan West.

See the feature on our website about the history of these little known paintings that are now within an office block.

News in brief

Thames Water will be digging up Warren Street between Tottenham Court Road and Cleveland Street, and spending three months replacing pipes one section at a time. Work is due to start on Monday 15 January.

Meta, the company which owns **Facebook**, is leaving its **Rathbone Square** premises.

Grove Gallery at 156 New Cavendish Street has an exhibition by contemporary pop artist **Sara Pope** until 13 January.

Over the Christmas holidays there were a number of **burglaries** to commercial properties in Fitzrovia West. Police are investigating.

On Tuesday 23 January at 6pm, Jane Palm-Gold is giving a talk on the history of Church Lane, which used to be in the **St Giles Rookery** before its transition into New Oxford Street. At **Camden Local Studies and Archives Centre**, 2nd Floor, Holborn Library, 32-38 Theobalds Road, London WC1X 8PA.

Planning applications

Camden Council registered 18 planning applications during December in Bloomsbury ward. Including: details and evidence required by a previous application at 247 Tottenham Ct Rd; installation of a blue heritage plaque on the Dyott St side of Parnell House, commemorating Billy Waters; alterations at 2 Warren Ms; and alterations and air conditioning units at 15 Warren Ms. See: planningrecords.camden.gov.uk

Westminster Council validated 17 planning applications during December in Fitzrovia West. In the list: shopfront at 51 Cleveland St; residential use of second and third floors of Duke of York pub 47 Rathbone St; roof terrace and other alterations at 70 Margaret St; alterations to Flat 21, York House, 12 Berners St; creation of rooftop and roof terrace at Flat 11 Furnival Mans, Wells St; repairs to listed building at 21 Little Portland St. See: idoxpa.westminster.gov.uk

Licensing applications

Camden: Ning Season, 5-7 Tottenham Street. Seeks permission for sale of alcohol on the premises. Deadline for comments: 1 February 2024.

Advice for responding

Residents should check Camden and Westminster's websites for the latest applications.

In Westminster residents can contact licensingadvice.org for free advice, and should also email the Fitzrovia Neighbourhood Association fna@fitzrovia.org.uk

In Camden email the Charlotte Street Association at csafitzrovia@yahoo.co.uk where you can also seek advice.

It is also a good idea to contact your ward councillors well before the closing dates with your concerns about any planning or licensing applications.

Fitzrovia News publishes the latest planning and licensing applications on our website: fitzrovia.com

This news-sheet is produced usually four times or more a year and is available from outside Fitzrovia Community Centre, 2 Foley Street. There is more news about public consultations on our website: fitzrovia.com
You can also keep up with the latest news by subscribing to our free email newsletter: fitzrovia.com

Free housing and welfare advice for residents

The Fitzrovia Advice Service, run by Fitzrovia Neighbourhood Association, is able to help residents with private and social housing problems, housing and council tax benefits, disability benefits, Universal Credit and Job Seekers Allowance, pensions and Pension Credit, Working and Child Tax Credits, fuel poverty; and help with benefit, passport and other forms.

Advice is available to Camden and Westminster residents by telephone, email and in person, for speakers of English, Bengali, Sylheti, Urdu and Hindi. Contact 020 3984 6364; or email: advice@fitzrovia.org.uk

Cost of living support

Camden has help at camden.gov.uk/find-support-in-camden
Westminster has help at westminster.gov.uk/cost-of-living-support

Neighbourhood listings

Covid-19 vaccine information is available from Camden and Westminster councils. See camden.gov.uk/coronavirus and westminster.gov.uk/coronavirus

Local councillors serving Fitzrovia on the **Camden** side are: Adam Harrison, Sabrina Francis, and Rishi Madlani; telephone: 020 7974 2792. On the **Westminster** side they are: Paul Fisher, Patrick Lilley, and Jessica Toale; telephone: 020 7641 5377.

Fitzrovia Community Centre has activities available, and a community garden. fitzroviacommunitycentre.org
Visit 2 Foley Street, call 020 7580 8680.

All Souls C of E Primary School, Foley Street takes children from ages 3 to 11. See allsoulsprimary.co.uk for more.

Fitzrovia Youth in Action is a local charity for young people. See fya.org.uk or call at Basement 66-68 Warren Street or call 020 7388 7399.

Rainbow Angels Nursery Fitzrovia 54A Whitfield Street. More information at rainbowangels.co.uk

Little Raccoons Day Nursery, Holcroft Court, Carburton Street, Fitzrovia, London W1W 5AL. See their website or email info-fitzrovia@littleraccoons.co.uk

Age UK provides services for people over 50 years old. In Camden call 020 7239 0400 or visit ageuk.org.uk/camden; in Westminster call 020 3004 5610 or visit ageuk.org.uk/westminster

American International Church offers services including a soup kitchen for the homeless and those in need. See amchurch.co.uk, call 020 7580 2791, or visit 79A Tottenham Court Road.