

# The Fitzrovia News

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## Green win for former Fitzrovia resident

Congratulations to former Fitzrovia resident Zack Polanski who won the Green Party leadership contest this week, writes *Linus Rees*.

I'm a long-time member of the Green Party and he got my vote. However, I'm not uncritical of the Greens at London City Hall — who Polanski is one of. They are unfortunately complicit in Sadiq Khan's plans to pedestrianise Oxford Street — something that will benefit the rich landowners of the shopping mile and push more motor traffic along with its associated road danger and pollution into the surrounding residential districts. That's more greenwashing than the eco-populism Polanski says he's in favour of.

## Work to start on 'external alterations' at 45 Warren Street

Residents in Warren Street can expect over a year of disruption from demolition and construction work at Fitzroy House, according to a newsletter sent to neighbours in August.

Fitzroy House is a six storey office building, with 10 residential apartments on the upper floors, which faces onto Warren Street, Fitzroy Street and Euston Road. It was constructed in the 1970s.

Beltane Asset Management, along with TPG Angelo Gordon, bought the freehold of the site in September 2024.

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## Crabtree Fields open again in September

Crabtree Fields public park will re-open after several months of refurbishment works are completed and will be unveiled this month at a special event.

The public open space has been closed since early spring while a contractor working for Camden Council has removed greenery including trees and climbing plants along with the central wooden pergola which was a distinctive feature of the park since it was first created.

Now the park has been redesigned by architects DSDHA with a new perimeter fence, children's play area, a different style of pergola, and a low maintenance planting scheme.

It will be officially opened at 12noon on Friday 19 September at a public event with refreshments, children's activities, and community information.

Local councillors from Camden will be in attendance along with representatives of Fitzrovia community groups and businesses. The event will run until 5pm.

The Friends of Crabtree Fields voluntary group intend to organise ongoing community events including gardening, litter picking, and children's activities.

The works have been carried out by Ginkgo Landscape Contractors at a cost of around £271,000 after a public consultation on the new design was carried out during 2023 and 2024.

The public open space, on the corner of Whitfield Street and Colville Place, first opened in the 1980s and over the years the former car park has become a haven for wildlife.

A large amount of greenery has been removed from the park including all the ivy along the southern wall and a rowan tree. Some new trees are expected to be planted.

A priority for the renovation work is to reduce the already low maintenance costs for the upkeep of the park.

"The replacement pergola at Crabtree Fields will also reduce the maintenance liability to the service. In recent years it's become an ongoing liability to maintain and repair," stated the report.

In 2023 local residents complained

that the park was filthy, some park users were abusive, threatening and playing loud music, and they wanted more police and warden patrols through the public space and better and more frequent maintenance.

However, they were told by council officers that there was no money to step up police and warden patrols or improve cleaning and garden maintenance at the park but that the park would undergo a re-design.

According to the final designs, the "low maintenance planting plan" will help to "increase biodiversity throughout the park and surrounding areas" and the "increased visibility throughout the space will help to encourage more positive use and increase the sense of safety".

## Design for a mural on Mortimer Street wall revealed

A design for a three-storey high mural on Mortimer Street has been unveiled in a planning application submitted by The Langham Estate which is paying for the artwork and leading the project, writes *Angela Lovely*.

Oliwia Bober, a London-based Polish artist, was selected in June after an open competition was held earlier this year inviting artists to give a makeover to a blank wall in Fitzrovia West.

Bober's winning artwork depicts women's bodies as Rubenesque characters shaping and sewing fabric while reaching through Gothic windows, in a pastel-coloured vertical frieze.

"The central scene of the mural represents contemporary Fitzrovia through the image of a convivial interaction between two figures set within an architectural frame that is an amalgam of the area's historic features," states Langham in its application to Westminster Council.

The mural also includes the "Fitzrovia Quarter" corporate branding of Langham, which is a major landowner in Fitzrovia West.

A preview of an early design for the mural was shown at a workshop in June where local people and those with a

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connection to area were invited to comment on the developing artwork.

Bober studied art at the University of Brighton and in 2019 garnered attention when she painted vulvas on toilet doors in venues across London as part of a campaign by a women's hygiene brand.

Critical of the porn and beauty industry, Bober says that women's bodies are presented to society "to be picked apart" and "deemed unpalatable unless they appear to meet idealised standards", resulting in "an endless cycle of shame and embarrassment".

Instead, Bober wants to show women in all their beautiful variety.

"The best we can hope for is that the messages we've been told can be unlearned so that the next generation grows up with a more positive and open attitude," she said in 2019.

The proposed artwork near the junction with Great Titchfield Street has a working title of "Collective Effort" and is scheduled to be painted and unveiled this autumn, assuming it is granted planning permission.

## News in brief

Part of the western section of **Oxford Street** will be pedestrianised for one day only between Orchard Street and Oxford Circus on Sunday 21 September, as part of a demonstration of things-to-come for the shopping street under plans by the Mayor of London.

**Westminster Council** has lost its High Court bid to halt 16 affordable homes in **Marylebone** being refurbished and rented for thousands of pounds more on the private market.

The long-established **Oxfam** shop on **Goodge Street** is looking for volunteers and donations and is making a plea to help keep its forecourt clean.

Local author Jennifer Kavanagh will be holding a talk and book signing at **Charing Cross library** from 7.30pm to 8.30pm, Wednesday 17 September.

For a one-bedroom flat in London, the median monthly **private rental cost** was £1,698 in June 2025. "That's 55.6 percent higher than across UK as a whole. It's actually higher than the UK median rental cost of a two bedroom home, which was £1,230," says Renters Rights London.

Mayor of London **Sadiq Khan** is thousands of homes short of meeting his target for starting construction of new affordable housing by the end of March next year, according to the latest data published by the London Assembly.

## Planning applications

**Camden Council** planning applications in Bloomsbury ward during August, include: 44 Cleveland St; 29 Conway Street; Shropshire House, Capper Street; 86-90 Cleveland Street; 53 Warren Street and 337 Euston Road, Unit 6A, 6-17 Tottenham Court Road. Tables and chairs outside at: Unit 3 101-106 Tottenham Court Road; 5-7 Goodge Street; 39 and 40 Charlotte Street; 46 Tottenham Court Road; 18 Goodge Street; Unit 4, One Bedford Avenue (Tottenham Court Road); and 14 and 21 Warren Street. See: [planningrecords.camden.gov.uk](http://planningrecords.camden.gov.uk)

**Westminster Council** validated planning applications, August in Fitzrovia West, includes: 93 Newman St, 27-35 Mortimer Street, 5 Hanson Street, 67 Mortimer Street, 150 Great Portland Street, 141 Cleveland Street, Flat 4, 146 Great Portland Street, 11-13 Charlotte Street, cnr of Rathbone Pl and Oxford St. See: [idoxpa.westminster.gov.uk](http://idoxpa.westminster.gov.uk)

## Licensing applications

The Old Grey, **28 Maple Street** seeks alteration of conditions on existing licence. Farmer J, **237-238 Tottenham Court Road** seeks new premises licence for alcohol. See: [camden.gov.uk/public-licensing-register](http://camden.gov.uk/public-licensing-register)

## Advice for responding

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

In Westminster residents can contact [licensingadvice.org](http://licensingadvice.org) for free advice, and should also email the Fitzrovia Neighbourhood Association [fna@fitzrovia.org.uk](mailto:fna@fitzrovia.org.uk)

In Camden email the Charlotte Street Association at [csafitzrovia@yahoo.co.uk](mailto: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.

This news-sheet is produced usually four times or more a year and is available from outside Fitzrovia Community Centre, 2 Foley Street. More news, features and comment on our website: [fitzroviaanews.com](http://fitzroviaanews.com)  
Subscribing to our free email newsletter: [fitzroviaanews.substack.com](http://fitzroviaanews.substack.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](mailto:advice@fitzrovia.org.uk)

## Cost of living support

Camden has help at [camden.gov.uk/find-support-in-camden](http://camden.gov.uk/find-support-in-camden)  
Westminster has help at [westminster.gov.uk/cost-of-living-support](http://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](http://camden.gov.uk/coronavirus) and [westminster.gov.uk/coronavirus](http://westminster.gov.uk/coronavirus)

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

**Fitzrovia Community Centre** has activities available, and a community garden. [fitzroviacommunitycentre.org](http://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](http://allsoulsprimary.co.uk) for more.

**Fitzrovia Youth in Action** is a local charity for young people. See [fya.org.uk](http://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](http://rainbowangels.co.uk)

**Little Raccoons Day Nursery**, Holcroft Court, Carburton Street, Fitzrovia, London W1W 5AL. [littleraccoons.co.uk](http://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](http://ageuk.org.uk/camden); in Westminster call 020 3004 5610 or visit [ageuk.org.uk/westminster](http://ageuk.org.uk/westminster)

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