

Fitzrovia News

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Community centre seeks artists to create a portrait of the neighbourhood

The Fitzrovia Community Centre in Foley Street is seeking artists to take part in a project to create a portrait of the neighbourhood to be exhibited this summer.

In an announcement this month the Community Centre says it is looking to choose three artists to produce a “personal view” of the neighbourhood in collaboration with artist and curator, Samar F. Zia.

“We are looking for proposals from creatives to produce a body of work of minimum three pieces for the *Fitzrovia: a Visual Portrait* exhibition, part of Hidden Fitzrovia, a project that aims to unpeel the layers of history that make up the area’s rich and colourful past. Your art could be based on either the past or

present, but it should be a personal experience/view of Fitzrovia as you know it. These pieces will be printed large-scale and displayed publicly on hoardings across the borough of Westminster.

“We will be selecting three artists to each make a minimum of three 2-dimensional works. These could be drawing, painting, collage, digital art, mixed media or anything similar,” states the announcement of the project.

Applications from artists wishing to apply will be open until 6pm on 30 April 2023.

For further information and how to apply see: fitzroviacommunitycentre.org or visit Fitzrovia Community Centre, 2 Foley Street, London W1W 6DL.

Camden news publisher appeals for donations

New Journal Enterprises which publishes the *Camden New Journal* is appealing to its readers for financial donations to preserve its future during the toughest period ever faced by the newspaper industry.

They are asking its readers to help it continue its work of holding Camden Council to account and campaigning on the issues that matter to ordinary people.

“For more than 40 years we have published a weekly newspaper, purposely free to all — the idea being that nobody should be denied important information simply on whether they have the ability to pay.” See: camdennewjournal.co.uk

Rediscovering Betty Jackson

In the 1960s the fabulous Mary Quant did wonders for the visibility of female fashion designers, writes Sue Blundell.

Sadly, this didn’t ignite a gender revolution in the fashion industry as a whole. Today, both globally and in the UK, women represent over 70 percent of the industry’s customers, but still hold less than 25 percent of leadership roles. Here, Zandra Rhodes, Stella McCartney, and the much missed Vivienne Westwood are the glowing exceptions that prove the rule: men are still the “creative geniuses” who tell the world what women are supposed to look like.

One of the most enduring and sympathetic personalities in fashion’s fight-back against male dominance is Betty Jackson. In the mid-1980s she was a familiar figure on Tottenham Street.

On a visit to a bar in Mallorca she met a Frenchman from Marseille, David Cohen. After a long-distance love affair Cohen finally moved to London, and together he and Jackson launched the Betty Jackson label in 1981. They began in a basement in Meard Street, Soho.

After six months Jackson and Cohen moved to larger premises on Hanway Street, in an area Jackson knew well because she had once lived on Riding House Street. Two years later “the sacred hour of lunch” led fortuitously to the purchase of a new base for the company on Tottenham Street. While Jackson had a quick sandwich at her desk, the Frenchman Cohen would wander around Soho and Fitzrovia deciding where to eat. One day he phoned to ask what “lease” meant. “Well, I think I’ve found the right place,” he said when she explained. “It was an absolutely fabulous little building,” Jackson comments. “Basement for stock, ground floor for office and admin and upstairs for design.”

While she was at 33 Tottenham Street Jackson was chosen as British Designer of the Year for 1985, and she was also awarded an MBE (later upped to a CBE). The company spent about seven years in Fitzrovia, then in the early 1990s relocated to Shepherd’s Bush.

More news over page. ►

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News in brief

As we went to press the **Easter Weekend** is nearly upon us and it is lovely to see the many callery pear trees in blossom on the streets.

Some local residents call the coming double public holiday “burglary weekend” due to the number of break-ins that unfortunately often occur. If you are going away **please lock your home securely** and ask a neighbour to keep an eye on it.

Covid still remains a public health concern with the infection rate at over two percent of the population of the UK. Please follow NHS advice to avoid catching and spreading the virus. Vaccination information is on Camden’s coronavirus web page and Westminster’s coronavirus web page.

The **mural** at **Goodge Place** has been painted over by person’s unknown and people are wondering where the Banksy mural from Clipstone Street is.

BBC Two has a report by journalist Nawal Al-Maghafi who seeks answers to what happened to 23-year-old Norwegian student Martine Vik Magnussen who was found dead in a basement in **Great Portland Street** after a night out in Mayfair in 2008.

A bus stop on Tottenham Court Road opposite Stephen Street has been temporarily closed since the start of the year due to a gantry from a construction site being erected too low to clear the height of buses.

The **Royal Mail** customer service centre in **Hanson Street** is under threat of closure.

Camden Council is claiming that it is taking “tough action” to rid **Tottenham Court Road** of 19 “poorly managed and underused” phone boxes — but the rotting kiosks are still there after the 18 March deadline has passed.

Camden Green Spaces are reviewing the **Grounds Maintenance** service and would like to hear your views on what’s working well, where we can improve the service and how you would like green spaces to be managed in the future.

Licensing applications

As we went to press there were no licensing applications open for public consultation.

However, the following premises have temporary late events (known as TENs) either pending or approved: **Simmonds, 28 Maple Street**, event until 3am on 7, 8, 9, 10, 29 and 30 April, and 1 May; **Vault 139, 139-143 Whitfield Street**, event until 3am on 9 April; **Elysee Restaurant, 33 Percy Street**, event until 1.30am on 8 and 9 April.

Planning applications

Camden Council applications during March 2023 in Fitzrovia East. In the list is: tables and chairs at **43 Store Street**; historical plaque at **204-208 Tottenham Court Road**; signage at **112a Great Russell Street**; acoustic enclosures at **64 Goodge Street**; variation of conditions 10 (terrace hours) and 11 (terrace noise) at **22 Percy Street**; change of use of apart-hotel at **68 Charlotte Street**; various details at **95-100 Tottenham Court Road**; alterations to listed buildings at **34-36 Bedford Square**, and **24 Goodge Place**.

See: planningrecords.camden.gov.uk for details and the latest applications.

Westminster Council applications in March 2023 in Fitzrovia West. Among the monthly list are: tables and chairs outside **246-248 Great Portland Street**, **96-98 Great Portland Street**; installation of tank and plant at **59-61 Bolsover Street** and **224-228 Great Portland Street**; various works to a listed building at **93 Mortimer Street**; details of refuse storage at **85-86 Newman Street**; and details of storage at **25-33 Berners Street**.

See: idoxpa.westminster.gov.uk for details.

Advice for responding

Residents should check Camden and Westminster’s sites 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.org.uk

There is more news about public consultations on our website:

fitzrovia.org.uk

You can also keep up with the latest news by subscribing to our free email newsletter:

fitzrovia.org.uk

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. They provide a number of activities. 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

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.

Saturday morning gardening. Contact friends@crabtreefields.org.uk