ACTION PLAN
COVENT GARDEN

working for the future of Covent Garden
the area

The map below shows the extent of the area this plan is designed to address. Looking in detail at different parts of Covent Garden will allow us to concentrate our efforts, and bring about change that is sensitive to the differences across the area. We sub-divided Covent Garden by defining the core piazza and its tributary streets, and the next three areas fell naturally from that.

Much of what is in this action plan will benefit all of Covent Garden. In terms of concentrating on specific parts of Covent Garden our intention is to begin with the piazza and adjoining streets, and then gradually spread our efforts to the other areas. Though this won’t stop us taking early action in parts other than the piazza, where opportunities arise, and problems require early attention.

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Not only is Covent Garden a great place to live and work, for hundreds of thousands of people every day it is a vibrant destination for shopping, eating out, visiting the theatre, opera or ballet, or celebrating a special occasion.

We can thank history for this diversity, as it is the well-preserved street pattern and historic buildings that lend Covent Garden its ability to attract small specialist businesses and make them a success. In more recent years the local community has played a major role in helping conserve what is best about Covent Garden. In common with other parts of the West End, though, the area’s popularity has led to pressures that it was never designed to bear.

In recognition of this, Westminster City Council has embarked on an ambitious programme of Civic Renewal, including a number of action plans for different parts of the West End. As the next step in that programme, I am pleased to present this action plan for Covent Garden. It aims to continue the success of both the Leicester Square and Chinatown action plans, by delivering real improvements in Covent Garden, particularly to transport, the street environment, and the way those streets are used.

This action plan demonstrates our commitment to Covent Garden, but that commitment must be seen in light of the City Council’s very difficult funding situation. We do not have the resources alone to bring about the vision set out in this action plan. Indeed, without a significant input of further funding a number of the actions will not be able to go ahead.

If we are really to succeed, then we must work together. Of course, we are looking for commitment of funding, but that is not the only thing we seek. We want to work with the communities and businesses in Covent Garden to bring about real change.

These are exciting times for Covent Garden, and I do hope this action plan makes a real difference in improving the quality of life of those who live, work and visit this unique and wonderful area.

Councillor Simon Milton
Leader of Westminster City Council

Covent Garden has a rich history, largely based on the lives of ordinary working people, their families and the community they serve. The Piazza and other parts of Covent Garden reflect an unusual combination of special architecture and traditional London commercial activity, as well as a rich residential blend.

The fruit and vegetable market may have left but the traders of Jubilee Market Hall and the Apple Market remain. Years ago, many local people fought to “Save Covent Garden” and succeeded. I welcome this Action Plan as a long-awaited next step to further secure and improve our local environment for residents, businesses and our very welcome visitors. It has been a pleasure to work with Councillor Nicoll and many others in the preparation of this Action Plan.

The hard work for all of us starts now!

Ray Green Chairman & Chief Executive
Jubilee Market Hall Ltd.
Covent Garden requires careful and effective management to ensure the area continues to thrive whilst retaining its unique historic character that makes this one of London’s most popular places.

historical context
Covent Garden has a long and remarkable history. Archaeological digs, in Short’s Gardens near the Strand, on the site of Jubilee Hall, and particularly during the redevelopment of the Royal Opera House, have uncovered significant Saxon remains. It is now known that Lundenwic was a large and bustling trading port in which houses and other buildings were laid out along streets and alleys that were rebuilt many times.

The Covent Garden area as we know it began in 1631 as the first experiment in London of formal town planning. The plan, by Inigo Jones, a London born architect who was inspired by the Italian Renaissance and the architecture of Palladio, included the creation of the first public square in the country for the Duke of Bedford. The piazza and surrounding formal grid of streets were revolutionary to Londoners used to haphazard arrangements of winding streets, alleyways and courtyards. They were built on land belonging, in the Middle Ages, to the Abbots of Westminster who used it as their convent garden, from which the areas current name is derived.

Market trading activities became an established feature of the piazza in the 17th century. Covent Garden received royal recognition on 12th May 1670 when Charles II granted the 5th Earl of Bedford a charter “to hold for ever a market in the Piazza on every day of the year except Sundays and Christmas Day for the buying and selling of all manner of fruit, flowers, root and herbs…” By the end of the 18th century it had become “the greatest market in England for herbs, fruit and flowers”. However, with success came other problems – people had begun to complain about the noise and congestion caused by the market. The situation eventually resulted in an Act being passed by Parliament in 1828 giving the Earl statutory power to demolish the existing buildings and erect a new market. The market was formalised between 1828 and 1830 by the building of Charles Fowler’s neo-classical market building, which transformed the piazza from open plan square to a complex of buildings. It passed through several hands until the Covent Garden Market Act of 1961 established the Covent Garden Market Authority, and vested in them the market and some of the surrounding land. On 9th April 1964 the Authority recommended to the Minister of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food that a new market should be built at Nine Elms in Vauxhall, approximately 2 miles from the original site, and in 1974 the market relocated. Charles Fowler’s market building was restored between 1975–80 and now accommodates shops, restaurants and licensed premises.

contemporary Covent Garden
The area known as Covent Garden extends well beyond the piazza and its tributary streets, and spans the Westminster City and Camden Borough boundary. It houses a thriving and steadily growing residential community whilst also being an international destination famous as much for its street entertainers and lively atmosphere as for its theatres, boutique shops, bars and restaurants.

The Covent Garden area has traditionally been a centre of small businesses. The smaller shop units continue to allow both contemporary and traditional niche retailers and businesses to survive in shops too small to be viable for larger chain stores. Ironically however, several large retailers grew from their humble beginnings in Covent Garden. For example Moss Bros. began on the site of the Tesco store in Bedford Street, Sainsbury’s began in Drury Lane and Sotheby’s in Wellington Street.
The central area around the piazza has benefited significantly from the application of a holistic design strategy, the product of a study carried out by the Covent Garden Area Trust between 1994–5. The resulting practical guidance for all those with a concern for the fabric of central Covent Garden, with advice on many aspects including shop signs, surfacing treatments management of the central area and sensitive refurbishment of buildings, has recently been updated. Any actions resulting from this action plan will pay close attention to the advice contained within “Caring for Central Covent Garden – a Conservation Management Guide” produced by the Trust in conjunction with the City of Westminster and English Heritage.

The popularity and success of Covent Garden has led to pressures the area was never designed to bear. Overcrowding at the tube station is such that it is now permanently closed for people wishing to enter it on Saturday afternoons. Undesirable activities, such as illegal street trading and noisy, poor quality busking have also steadily increased. These can undermine the area’s character, and create problems – particularly for those who live and work in Covent Garden.

Covent Garden Action Plan
Westminster City Council has been working with the Police, businesses and local communities to bring about a programme of Civic Renewal in the West End. Our success with an action plan approach can be witnessed in Leicester Square. We have since applied the action plan approach to Chinatown, and now extend the approach to Covent Garden. Covent Garden’s popularity requires careful and effective management to ensure the area continues to thrive whilst retaining its unique character and sense of history that makes this one of London’s most popular places. The proposals in this action plan are intended to address many of the pressures facing Covent Garden, and the conflicting demands of residents, businesses and tourists. Although Westminster City Council is able to look internally to improve the services it currently provides, our limited resources mean that if real progress is to be made, many of the proposals will require strong support and contribution from key stakeholders, and the close co-operation of local landlords and businesses. This, the final Covent Garden Action Plan, was developed in partnership with local community groups, businesses, landowners and the Metropolitan Police Service and also Camden Council. A draft was then launched for public consultation by The Leader of the Council at the Way Forward for Covent Garden event at the London Transport Museum on 21st October 2003. In all over 5000 action plans and questionnaires were distributed locally, as well as to the key organisations around London. Exhibitions were held around Covent Garden, a large public meeting was held at the Royal Opera House, and many smaller meetings also took place. Consultation closed on 6th January 2004, and comments made have informed this final version.

We need a vision for Covent Garden in order to ensure that we are able to work towards a common goal.

So, what is Covent Garden?

Although the piazza is at its heart, Covent Garden consists of a much wider area than the piazza. Contained within this wider area is a unique mix of uses and roles, the dominance of each dependant on the time of day. It would be difficult to argue that any one takes precedence over another. All uses contribute to the area’s character, and should endeavour to coexist harmoniously.

A historical treasure
The piazza, the narrow streets and alleyways, and the traditional gas lighting all lend Covent Garden a distinctive character and determine the setting for historic and modern buildings of outstanding quality.

We are proud of Covent Garden’s historic links, and recognise the vital importance of conserving its historic fabric. We seek the conservation of what is best from the past but will encourage the highest standards of sustainable contemporary urban design, taking cues from the past where appropriate in order to sustain local character and distinctiveness.

We propose to review the street environment and strike a balance between the need to conserve the area whilst satisfying its contemporary needs. We will reduce the visual and physical clutter that detract from the street scene, improve the effectiveness of signage and information, and make the street lighting work better from the pedestrian’s perspective, as well as the motorist’s.

A residential neighbourhood
Covent Garden has a long-established and thriving residential population. It has a huge amount of soul and pleasure to offer a resident, but the large numbers of people who visit the area can attract and bring with them noise, undesirable and anti-social activity and crime, particularly at night.

Many of the problems endured by the resident population are exacerbated by some of the physical characteristics of Covent Garden – with its historically dim lighting and narrow streets and alleyways, and the night-time economy – which derives much of its success from the sale and consumption of alcohol.

In terms of Covent Garden’s physical characteristics we intend to design out problems where possible, including the use of our lighting against crime programme, whilst respecting its history. In relation to Covent Garden’s night life, its location, nature and intensity is controlled by our planning and licensing policies. However, this action plan proposes street cleansing improvements and an enhanced street enforcement presence to tackle busking and street trading, and assist the police in their duties.
a unique shopping experience

Covent Garden is a popular shopping destination and its urbane mix of retail, restaurants, cafés and entertainment is unique.

The rows of colourful market stalls in the North Hall of the colonnaded Covent Garden Market are collectively known as the Apple Market and are open seven days a week. From Tuesday to Sunday you can find the general art and craft stalls, and on Mondays, the stalls are devoted to antiques and collectables. The Food Lover’s market has recently been introduced on the second Friday of each month, with quality-vetted producers selling a variety of fresh and seasonal British produce. The Jubilee Market Hall on the south side of the piazza houses a further market also open seven days a week, and also specialising in antiques on Mondays, with general goods on Tuesday to Fridays and crafts at the weekend.

In the face of adversity, with increasing property values and rents, a surprising number of specialist shops survive in Covent Garden. We want to ensure the continued success of the markets in the piazza, and the boutique shops offering niche products and services. Whilst the Council has very limited powers to protect smaller businesses, we want to work with landlords as part of this action plan to ensure that all that can be done to enhance the shopping experience is done. For example, we are looking at ways to encourage walking into and out of the area, and therefore discovery of some of the less frequented streets.

a home for British theatre

Theatre is one of London’s greatest trademarks, and Covent Garden undoubtedly forms a substantial proportion of the West End’s ‘Theatreland’ and is home to the Theatre Museum.

We are working closely with the Society of London Theatre (SOLT) and the Theatres’ Trust to ensure that the concerns of theatres are understood, and addressed where possible. In particular we propose to improve the experience of theatregoers on their way to and from the venue, including investigating options to deal with the issue of coaches accessing theatres.

We will work in collaboration with SOLT, the Theatres’ Trust and theatre managers regarding the standard of cleansing service. Improved street cleansing standards are being achieved in the area as a consequence of the new Onyx contract that commenced in September 2003, including more frequent litter-bin emptying and washing, and extended degreasing and stain removal. Scheduled time-band street-sweeping was also introduced in Covent Garden, with proactive sweeping three times a day in addition to reactive sweeping on a 24 hour basis. Improvements will also encompass the extension of the “Bags off the Street” initiative (piloted in parts of Soho in summer 2002).
Area 1 contains the heart of Covent Garden and is to be the subject of many of our early efforts. Much of it is pedestrianised with its character being derived from alfresco dining and street performance, the unique historic piazza and adjacent streets, and the markets.

James Street often becomes very congested. The heavily crowded underground station is located here and many visitors use it as a meeting point. However Covent Garden is in close proximity to several other tube stations (Holborn, Temple and Embankment in particular) with spare capacity. Measures to encourage the use of these stations to access Covent Garden might in turn lead visitors to use other landmarks for meeting. We are working with London Underground, Transport for London, Camden and the Central London Partnership to introduce measures to guide visitors from these stations to Covent Garden.

Another reason for the congestion on James Street is rickshaws waiting for customers outside the station. There is currently no legislation to enable them to be licensed, and in turn controlled. James Street is pedestrianised though, and cycling is prohibited, so we intend to enforce against them in this location until we are able to physically exclude rickshaws from James Street.

Buskers and illegal street traders using this busy stretch as a lucrative stage also cause congestion and attract street crime, contributing a negative image to the centre of Covent Garden. This action plan proposes to build on existing initiatives to deal with these problems by introducing clear enforceable busking guidelines, and more effective enforcement with support from local businesses.

Improving the lighting levels, particularly in the piazza would also enhance the physical environment and make it feel safer. We are working with landowners to subtly improve the levels of light, for example by lighting the market building itself. We also intend to re-light several other streets in the short-term, including Floral Street, and investigate ways to enhance the gas lit streets without undermining the area’s character. This will make the place feel safer, and will also allow improved vision for both private and public CCTV systems. In other areas we will consider improved street lighting or agreements with building occupiers to keep their lights switched on throughout the night. We will endeavour to take forward the recommendations of the Covent Garden Area Trust’s document “Caring for Covent Garden – a Conservation & Management Guide”.

The paved garden area and fountain to the rear of the south gateway adjacent to St. Paul's Church has regrettably become a problem. It now has to be kept locked because of its attraction to vagrants who create a safety hazard with their associated anti-social behaviour, litter and so on. We will seek a solution to this problem in association with St Paul’s Church.

We also agree with a suggestion that certain areas adjacent to some of the theatres and theatre frontages are not befitting to the status of the area. We will seek to improve these areas in association with the theatres, with the courts and alleys running between the Strand and Maiden Lane having been identified as the subject of early attention.
Area 2 is a transitional area between Covent Garden and Leicester / Trafalgar Squares. There are problems with the surfacing on New Row, and with accidents on Chandos Place and Bedford and Garrick Streets where remedial measures will be proposed. Street drinking, rough sleeping and begging are also problems suffered by parts of Area 2, and these issues will be the main focus of our efforts.

People walking between Leicester Square and Covent Garden tend to use Long Acre and St Martin’s Circus. We recognise that improvements are needed at this busy junction to reduce the number of traffic accidents and improve its pedestrian function and aesthetics.

A Community Street Audit has now been undertaken to assess two routes between Leicester Square and Covent Garden from the pedestrians’ perspective, and work to seek funding to implement its recommendations has begun.

It will be important to tackle these problems if we are to encourage better use of this area. We hope to work with landowners, businesses and theatres on St. Martins Lane to find partnership funding in order to establish a programme of “street scene” improvements including lighting (Bedfordbury, Bedford Court and Brydges Place in particular require attention), paving, signage and so on.
Long Acre and Neal Street are a focus for retail activity. Narrow streets and pavements lead to conflict between cars and pedestrians, particularly at St. Martins Circus, on Long Acre and on Shelton Street. If we want to encourage more visitors to explore this area and use it as a means of access to Covent Garden, we will need to make it feel more welcoming and legible for pedestrians, particularly at night.

We are working with major landowners, Camden Officers, and several other local representatives to ensure that a holistic approach is taken towards improvements to the streets, including expansion of our CCTV system, and the installation of additional wall mounted street lighting, initially in Shelton Street. Two proposed redevelopments between Shelton Street and Long Acre, that could provide funding opportunities, are well advanced in terms of planning.

The Seven Dials area lies within Camden, immediately north of area 3. The Seven Dials Monument Charity promotes building and street improvements and undertakes surveys of existing condition, and now proposes extending their area of interest into Westminster (into the part of Area 3 to the south-west of Neal Street) and further into the Camden area of Covent Garden. It is the Seven Dials Monument Charity and similar organisations who can provide assistance in highlighting problems and proposing holistic cross-boundary solutions, and we are working closely with them.
area 4 Drury Lane and surrounding streets
Area 4 contains several theatres, and many bars and restaurants, making some parts lively at night. It, like areas 2 and 3, also has a large number of residents. It is important that we work with establishments to ensure that revellers are aware they are exiting in a residential area, and of their options for leaving the area quickly.

We are working with the Society of London Theatre in order to understand the wishes of the theatres and theatregoers. To date these discussions have revealed a desire for higher standards of street cleanliness, lighting, highways and community protection matters, and a desire to improve the experience of attending the theatre in the West End by coach.

We intend to review and adjust cleansing regimes where necessary, review street lighting from a pedestrian's perspective, particularly on Broad and Crown Courts, and reduce the level of street clutter (signposts etc.) in this area. We have also commissioned a study to consider the problems and solutions in association with SOLT, Camden and the LDA.

A study is already underway into pedestrian / vehicle conflict on Bow Street, and we intend to bring forward proposals to ameliorate the problem, subject to funding.

It will again be crucial for close cross-border working with Camden, to ensure a consistent management, urban design and crime reduction approach.

The forty-odd theatres in the West End and the shows they house are part of the core texture of the city. Visitor surveys constantly show “visit theatre” as the single most frequent reason behind the tourist trip to London. Our role as an industry, which also helps to generate considerable turnover in many ancillary businesses, makes us a dedicated supporter of Westminster’s action plans for the different central districts. Covent Garden is neatly surrounded by theatres owned by Really Useful Theatres, from the Theatre Royal Drury Lane in the East to the Adelphi on the Strand to the Garrick in the West and the Cambridge at Seven Dials.

Our audiences shop and eat and walk around the network of streets and alleyways between those buildings and the improvement in street cleaning standards and litter handling will remove a repeated cause of irritation to the visitor. On Shaftesbury Avenue and in Soho we have already seen the benign effects of working closer on the environment with Westminster Council. Subtle enhancement of traditional lighting around Covent Garden will add immeasurably to the sense of nighttime safety. As an industry, we applaud Westminster’s initiative and with other local businesses we will do our utmost to drive the ambitious plans to refresh and renew this historic quarter of our city.

André Ptaszynski  Chief Executive
Really Useful Theatres
Covent Garden is a very popular destination within the West End. Many of the problems of pedestrian congestion in the area stem from visitors’ lack of knowledge about the proximity of Covent Garden to other areas. The tube is such an instinctive mode of transport that many, understandably, simply head for the station without considering the alternatives.

**Transport**

While we want to ensure that pedestrians feel at ease in the Covent Garden area, we recognise the need to keep essential motor traffic flowing smoothly. Several localities suffer from local congestion and/or rat running and we will be looking for solutions after monitoring the combined effects of the Mayor’s congestion charging and Trafalgar Square improvements. Solutions also need to be found to resolve some of the conflict between pedestrians and vehicles particularly on Shelton Street, and also at St. Martins Circus and on Long Acre. We intend to re-evaluate the balance of favour with the aim of improving the situation for the pedestrian and to draw on the recent audit by Living Streets.

We also hope to encourage pedestrians to use more of Covent Garden, to explore its smaller streets and to realise their proximity to the river and south bank, as well as the rest of the West End, but without adding to street clutter. We intend to assess all the options, including innovative and traditional ways of making the streets more legible whilst avoiding clutter, the distribution of local maps, and a new Tourist Information kiosk in the Russell Street frontage of the Royal Opera House.

**Pedestrians**

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**Cyclists**

Although it is recognised that encouraging cycling by improving cycle facilities could help relieve the pressure on other forms of transport, there is a balance to be struck in the amount of street space allocated to each. Cycle parking facilities need to be carefully sited to minimise clutter and prevent obstruction. Cycle routes must be carefully integrated with motorised traffic to ensure safety. Both require street space, which will continue to be sought, with priority given to improving London Cycle Network route 6.

**Underground**

Covent Garden underground station faces unrelenting pressure, due principally to the area’s surge in popularity and the station not being designed for its current level of use. This has resulted in heavy congestion at the station, with its cramped ticket hall and insufficient capacity to and from platform level.

In the medium term, London Underground propose to improve the layout of the existing ticket hall and increase the number of ticket gates. Short-term measures are being taken to reduce congestion at the station include promoting alternative stations with spare capacity (including Holborn, Embankment, and Charing Cross), and promoting walking routes through the area. These measures (information at stations, in leaflets and guides, at hotels and on street signage) should assist in orientating visitors and result in less reliance on Covent Garden station.

The long-term solution to congestion will be to work with London Underground and the Mayor to develop physical improvements to increase the capacity of the station, for example by building a second ticket hall, and the installation of more lifts or escalators. Feasibility work by London Underground is underway and options will be consulted on later this year. London Underground have a number of high priorities for congestion relief at other stations, but we are working to ensure that the need for a solution at Covent Garden is kept high on their agenda.

**Taxis**

The Council recognises the importance of people being able to leave the area quickly and quietly, and will therefore look for solutions to this problem, which will include initiatives to ensure people leaving
entertainment premises in the early hours are informed of their transport options. Taxis are vital for door-to-door access, as well as being popular with vulnerable groups (such as mobility impaired people and women), particularly at night. They are also the only form of public transport that is 100% wheelchair accessible. One new option being pursued by Transport for London’s Public Carriage Office is a marshalled ordering point for taxis on Cranboum Street, to complement the existing (unmarshalled) ranks on Upper St. Martin’s Lane, St Martin’s Lane, Russell Street, Wellington Street, Exeter Street and Southampton Street.

disabled and mobility impaired access
We recognise that the many barriers in Covent Garden have a disproportionate impact on disabled people. To overcome these, and where possible remove them, we will look at improving access for everyone by an integrated approach to inclusion throughout the Action Plan and its initiatives.
This will be achieved by supplying information, making improvements to the built environment and the training of those who serve the public. We will encourage all stakeholders to work together to bring a joined-up approach to including disabled people so that no one is prevented from enjoying the benefits that Covent Garden offers.

Although the underground station does have lift access, there are steps down to platform level. The historic street surfaces (including cobbles and kerbs) can also prove difficult particularly for wheelchairs to negotiate. We intend to look at this issue and investigate remedies, including (in the long term) urging London Underground to ensure that the station is accessible to all, and that access for the disabled to Covent Garden is possible by buses (as with the new accessible RV1 service), including level routes from the bus stops, and level access to the buses themselves.

In the longer term (2010 at the earliest) a Cross River Tram is proposed, connecting Waterloo with Euston and Kings Cross stations, and running via Aldwych and Kingsway. We will ensure that the trams themselves incorporate level access, and that level routes are available from the proposed tram stops (at Aldwych and Holborn) to Covent Garden.

parking and deliveries
The reliance on lorries and cars for deliveries or transport will always be a feature within central London. Covent Garden has its own particular issues that make deliveries and collections more complicated than other areas. The nature of many businesses, often with small storage areas or selling fresh produce, means that deliveries need to be made frequently. Additionally there are a number of outlets offering large products for sale (e.g. antiques or furniture). People shopping for these items may need to return by car or van to collect them.

We also recognise that the private car is sometimes the only possible mode of transport, particularly for the disabled or those wishing to shop for larger items. Although there is ample off-street car parking in the locality to meet demand, some do need to be able to park closer to their destination.

There is limited on-street parking space in Covent Garden, but these problems need investigation to ensure the fairest distribution of on-street space. To this end we are carrying out a kerb-side activity survey in identified problem areas and review the balance between parking and loading at specific locations as necessary.

We will also provide up to date guidance for residents, businesses and their customers about loading and unloading and parking.

As part of our air quality strategy we are working with businesses in the area on a number of projects. These include developing a route-planning map for businesses to give to their delivery companies to show drivers the most direct routes into and out of the area in an attempt to reduce congestion.

coaches
Coaches are a popular method of entry to London and in turn Covent Garden for tourists, and particularly theatregoers. The narrow streets aren’t best-suited to large vehicles, but in order for the theatres in Covent Garden to remain an attractive option for many travelling in from outside London (we are told that approximately 34% of West End theatregoers currently come by coach), a coherent system of access, dropping off, parking and picking up needs to be striven for. The City Council is leading on a study of coach issues associated with the West End Theatre scene. It is being managed in partnership with SOLT, Camden Council, TfL and the coach industry. It is expected that recommended on-street improvements will be identified in 2004.
**Transport actions and timetable**

**short term**

T1  London Underground Limited (LUL) to progress improvements to existing Covent Garden Station ticket hall, including seeking planning permission.

T2  Lobby Mayor and LUL to give high priority to long-term congestion relief for Covent Garden station.

T3  LUL to develop and consult on options for long-term congestion relief at Covent Garden Station.

T4  Work with LUL, Camden, Transport for London (TfL) to temporarily promote alternative stations and options for accessing Covent Garden (station name changes, walking routes, signage and information etc.)

T5  Audit of directional pedestrian signage particularly in relation to access to transport, adjacent areas and WC's in co-ordination with Camden identifying improvements needed.

T6  Investigate accident problem areas (a) Great Newport St, Garrick St, Bedford St, Chandos Place, and (b) Bow St; and develop accident remedial measures, subject to funding.

T7  Investigate with Camden and developers proposals to manage traffic and improve safety for pedestrians in Shelton St.

T8  Carry out a Theatreland coach access, drop off/pick up and parking study.

T9  Pursue with TfL Public Carriage Office (PCO) a marshalled late night taxi rank.

T10  Undertake a kerb-side activity survey focusing on parking and deliveries.

T11  Carry out works and signing improvements for cycle routes (Wellington Street).

T12  Lobby TfL PCO to introduce the licensing of minicab vehicles as soon as possible.

T13  Distribute three (disabled, residential and generic) up to date information “Park Right” leaflets explaining parking rules and best practice, and one “Safer Travel at Night” leaflet giving tips on night buses and minicabs.

T14  TfL to Carry out surveys in consultation with Westminster and Camden, to assess the extent of through traffic/rat running and congestion in Covent Garden following the introduction of congestion charging and completion of Trafalgar Square improvements.

T15  Commission Living Streets to carry out audits of main walking routes between Leicester Square and Covent Garden.

**medium term**

T16  Implement accident remedial schemes at (a) Great Newport St, Garrick St, Bedford St, Chandos Place, and subject to securing funding from TfL (b) Bow St.

T17  Implement traffic calming and pedestrian improvements in Shelton St jointly with Camden, subject to S106 funding coming forward.

T18  Develop disabled mobility schemes including level routes dropped kerbs to/from main entry points to Covent Garden.

T19  Develop and implement changes to parking and loading/unloading as necessary in light of kerb-side activity survey.

T20  Develop and distribute a route-planning map for businesses to hand to their delivery drivers.

T21  Continue to improve available information regarding walking routes into and around the area in co-ordination with Camden.

T22  LUL to agree preferred scheme for long term congestion relief for Covent Garden Station and seek powers and funding for this.

T23  Review the situation for cyclists in Covent Garden, particularly on the London Cycle Network.

T24  London Underground to carry out improvements to the existing ticket hall at Covent Garden station.

T25  Develop proposals for accessible links to/from proposed Cross River Tram stops.

T26  Develop a redesign of St Martin's Circus to improve the situation for the pedestrian and other road users.

T27  Implement short term priority actions arising from the Living Streets audit.

T28  Introduce measures to address the conflict between vehicles and pedestrians on James Street, including regularising the Traffic Management Orders, and the crossing at Floral Street.

**long term**

T29  LUL to secure powers and funding for long-term congestion relief at Covent Garden Station and start works.

T30  Develop further pedestrian and traffic schemes to improve safety.

T31  Develop schemes jointly with Camden to address local congestion and through traffic/rat running in the light of surveys and monitoring of conditions.

T32  Monitor the impact of efforts to encourage walking and Covent Garden station congestion relief.

We will be looking to progress in the:

* Short term – 2004/5
** Medium term – 2005/6
*** Long term – 2006 onwards
We are continually striving to improve our public spaces, and this action plan provides us with an opportunity to take a holistic look at the whole Covent Garden area. We are looking at how the area is currently used in order to undertake improvements and repairs that are appropriate for those uses and reflective and respectful of Covent Garden’s valued heritage.

legibility

Covent Garden is not just James Street and the piazza, although first-time visitors could be forgiven for thinking this. The Council is aware that the area isn’t the easiest place to navigate around instinctively. Whilst that of course is part of its charm, our intention is to subtly improve the legibility of Covent Garden and its relationship with its neighbouring districts.

Signage is as important as the surfacing, furnishing and lighting of a street in identifying your location. If these improvements are done well, they will have secondary benefits including encouraging people to walk around, and into and out of, Covent Garden.

The scale and design of buildings themselves can also aid people’s understanding of the area, and larger redevelopments can also offer the opportunity to rethink their immediate surroundings, potentially including new pedestrian routes. We will, where possible, produce a planning brief when we become aware in enough time of sites of sufficient size approaching redevelopment.

clutter

London’s streets tend to be narrow, which leaves little room for each of the increasing number of street users and activities competing for the space. Street furniture usually performs a necessary function, but if it has been installed without thought and civic pride, it can detract as much from the street scene as it contributes.

It is our intention to gradually review and rationalise all road and directional signage, bollards, planters, tables and chairs, ‘A’ boards etc. As the Council’s public realm strategy emerges, the theme of clutter reduction will strengthen. This is already evident in the street design section of the strategy, currently called Westminster Way, which is in use and is to be teamed with street management and open spaces sections.

tables and chairs

Outdoor tables and chairs have become a popular addition to Westminster streets and public spaces. A relaxing alfresco drink or meal while watching the world go by has become a favourite pastime of visitors, residents and workers. As demand rises, increasing numbers of cafes, restaurants, pubs and wine bars wish to set aside areas of footway outside their premises for this purpose.

While these activities do bring vitality and character to the streets, and social and economic benefits to Covent Garden, many streets are narrow and teeming with heavy flows of pedestrians, so their location must be carefully considered as some areas are unsuitable.

We know that high proportions of street crime victims in the West End are using alfresco tables and chairs. The design of the furniture itself, coupled with physical barriers around the area, can help in lowering these statistics. Although barriers are not always appropriate in historic areas, we will build on existing initiatives with the police to combat this problem.

Planning permission is required to place tables and chairs on the public highway, and planning policy determines where, what number etc. of tables and chairs are appropriate in any particular location. A balance needs to be struck and we intend to produce guidance for the piazza to that effect, building on the study undertaken by the Covent Garden Area Trust, clearly identifying what furniture designs will be acceptable in which areas, and
whether, for example umbrellas should be allowed. This will assist people making applications.

Additionally it has been requested that the Council offer more opportunities to rest by providing more street seats. It is difficult to find space for seating in the historic and often narrow spaces in Covent Garden without compromising views of an important building or an emergency vehicle route. Seating can also be attractive for the congregation of street drinkers and spare space has often been taken up with phone boxes or cycle racks etc. We will use every opportunity though to find the right spaces to install more seating, subject to funding.

street surfaces
The Covent Garden Area Trust and Seven Dials Monument Charity have produced detailed research and information on surfaces appropriate for Covent Garden's streets. Some of the surfaces on streets surrounding the piazza are in need of refurbishment. Recent improvements to the Strand's surfaces, for example, have been popular and have certainly improved its appearance. Council resources do not run to laying York stone paving in every street, but we will continue, as funds allow (private funding may also be sought under planning agreements) a programme of repair or replacement of street surfaces, with re-designed crossing points where level pedestrian routes are not currently in situ.

In historic Covent Garden the texture, colour, durability and ease of maintenance will be prime concerns to ensure that they contribute to and reinforce the qualities of Covent Garden's buildings and spaces. Specific areas first need to be identified for priority treatment – we are aware that the appearance of street surfaces in New Row and Drury Lane aren't satisfactory.

street lighting
Lighting is a vital component for a successful street. Central Covent Garden derives part of its evening and night time character from its historic gas street lights, which will be preserved wherever possible. The resultant low levels of light do however have associated problems including aiding criminal or anti-sociable activity, making people feel vulnerable, and adversely affecting CCTV vision. We are exploring ways to enhance lighting levels in gas lit streets.

Our lighting team are now proposing to change the gold coloured electric light to a brighter white light source. This will improve colour rendering and facial recognition, particularly for CCTV operators. We are also looking at installing a system with changeable lighting levels, so that the intensity of light can be increased at peak times, for example when theatres are closing and people are using the streets in greater numbers, or during an emergency.

Previous attempts to light streets have focused on lighting the carriageway, principally in order to deter car crime. A 'Lighting against crime' initiative is underway, with plans to improve the lighting levels for pedestrians in parts of Covent Garden. We believe this can be done by adding for example more wall mounted lighting in order to eliminate darker patches, without harming the cherished character of twilight and night time Covent Garden.

Priorities for these improvements include King, Henrietta and Shelton Streets, and we are working with the owners of Covent Garden Market to improve the piazza itself.

There are more innovative ways to ensure that streets benefit from consistent and uniform illumination. One way would be to encourage the illumination of building facades, and we are for example
looking at St. Paul’s Church, and the central market building in association with the owners of Covent Garden Market. This could have drawbacks though on other buildings, including disturbing residential accommodation on upper floors. It is also undesirable to floodlight buildings of little architectural merit or individual buildings within a group.

One other way is to encourage ground floor commercial premises to leave their display lights on overnight. This has worked well on Floral Street and New Row, and provides a joint security benefit for the premises themselves.

**Public Toilets**

There are several well used public toilets in Covent Garden’s piazza and the surrounding area: adjacent to St Paul’s Church on the piazza; adjacent to the Jubilee Hall (including disabled) and temporary (on Friday and Saturday nights) men’s urinals brought in to meet demand on the junctions of Agar Street and the Strand, and King and Garrick Streets. They are not, however, necessarily easy to find. We intend in particular to rectify this situation by improving signage.

A bye-law introduced in 2001, and initiatives such as the introduction of the temporary urinal, and extended opening hours at four conventional conveniences, have allowed us to make inroads on tackling street urination. Nevertheless there are still ‘wet spots’ around Covent Garden which local residents and workers are very keen to be addressed, and future provision (as resources allow) will focus on providing the right facilities in the right places.

Particular efforts will be made to ensure that proposals for any new development in Covent Garden, that might contribute to the problem, also contribute to its solution through the provision of new facilities and commitment to meet on-going costs.

**Street Litter and Waste Collection**

Covent Garden already has one of the most intense cleansing regimes in Europe in terms of numbers of collections, coverage of street-sweeping, street washing and litter-bin emptying. However, there is still room for improvement.

A new cleansing contract, the largest ever in this country, has been let to Onyx and started in September 2003. As part of this, cleansing and street washing schedules have been reviewed. The contract has provided substantial additional resources in both manpower and vehicles, including an increased number of new and more efficient pavement washers. Monitoring of waste collection and illegal dumping by the Street Environment Managers continues.

Smokers’ litter and chewing gum is very difficult to clear effectively from cobbled stones. To tackle this we have recently introduced new mechanical street cleansing equipment such as the cantonet which can vacuum the cobbled surfaces. We are convinced that the standard of street cleansing has improved over the first 6 months of the new cleansing contract.

Grease staining, both from legitimate restaurants putting out commercial waste, together with the dumping of unpaid commercial waste, is also of concern. Chinatown and Soho’s streets have become much more pleasant recently as a direct
result of changes to the collection of commercial waste. The “bags off the streets” scheme, requiring businesses to put their rubbish out at specific times irrespective of who their refuse collector may be, has worked very well in reducing the amount of time rubbish spends on the pavement awaiting collection, and we intend to extend the scheme to Covent Garden.

A recycling service will be introduced in Covent Garden as soon as possible. Options are now being considered and occupiers will be consulted in the coming months.

planting and trees
The experience we have gained from our customers who live work and visit the area is that they favour trees, providing they are the right ones in the right places and that they are looked after properly. The City Council’s tree strategy aims to achieve this. If this is not successful they can detract from the visual and historic environment. We therefore intend to explore the merits of new planting in appropriate locations, including opposite Odhams Walk on Endell Street, as raised in consultation, and removing trees where the consensus is they are not the correct trees in the correct place.

It is also necessary in the 21st century for trees to co-exist with other street furniture such as CCTV and underground services. To ensure that trees do not encroach on sight lines we will work with colleagues to ensure that effective pruning takes place.

Additionally Covent Garden would benefit from traditionally appropriate first floor window boxes, and the introduction of sustainable hanging baskets from lamp columns. Drury Lane has been suggested as a location. In order to encourage this we will endeavour to facilitate schemes to encourage building owners to participate.

special events
Whilst, like street performers, special events in the piazza can contribute positively to the atmosphere of Covent Garden, promotional commercial events can detract from the character of the place. We are working closely with the stakeholders in and around the piazza towards agreeing a forward programme of quality special events befitting of the area's character and respectful of permanent businesses.

courts and alleys
There is a network of pedestrian courts and alleys serving Covent Garden, in particular running from the Strand and from St. Martins Lane. We are aware of the problems of illegal and anti-social behaviour in some of these intimidating alleys, and intend to address them. It has been suggested that problem alleys should be closed to members of the public each night. However we feel that they perform an important historic and physical role that we intend to protect.

A 3-year programme of improvements including lighting and surfacing the Strand courts and alleys, part funded by the Cross-River Partnership and Transport for London, and partly by adjacent premises, will begin this year. We hope that this will encourage more people to use them, and in turn, with the combined effect of increased enforcement and CCTV installations, will help to deter undesirable activity.
# street environment actions and timetable

## short term

| S1  | Improve the signage to and at public toilets. |
| S3  | Audit street furniture including signposts with assistance from the Covent Garden Area Trust and Seven Dials Monument Charity. |
| S4  | Monitor the new cleansing and refuse contract and adjust where needed to meet local circumstances. |
| S5  | Review street washing schedules. |
| S6  | Undertake street light improvements as part of the ‘Light against Crime Programme’ including schemes on (a) Shelton St, (b) Floral Street. |
| S7  | Review the need for further street lighting enhancements to, among other things, alleviate CCTV blind spots, enhancements to lighting the piazza, supplementing existing gas lighting where necessary, and encouraging premises to leave their lights on over night on particular streets. |
| S8  | Carry out feasibility for best practice for upgrading the Strand courts and alleys. |
| S9  | Select preferred pilot court/alley for upgrade and begin design work. |
| S10 | Assess the condition and appearance of street surfaces in Covent Garden and identify areas requiring priority. |
| S11 | Formulate and agree a rolling forward programme of appropriate and exciting special events in the piazza with the Area 1 Steering Group. |
| S12 | Review cleansing arrangements on the boundary streets and depot sharing with Camden. |
| S13 | Investigate the potential for the installation of more public seating. |

## medium term

| S14 | Remove the superfluous and obsolete items of street furniture and rationalise remaining – including posts (for signs) that could be removed, as part of a current drive to remove 500 across the city. |
| S15 | Review the need for more toilets identifying “wetspots” and opportunities. |
| S16 | Distribute information to encourage businesses to sponsor 1st floor window boxes in appropriate locations, including Drury Lane. |
| S17 | Prepare and consult on a Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) for tables and chairs in central Covent Garden in light of consideration of CGAT’s Caring for Central Covent Garden Conservation Management Plan. |
| S18 | Carry out a 3-year programme to improve (lighting, surfaces, drainage) the courts and alleys off Strand. |
| S19 | Initiate a programme of renewal and repair of street surfaces. |
| S20 | Investigate and undertake the planting of trees in appropriate locations, including Endell Street, and the removal of trees in inappropriate locations. |
| S21 | Discuss the problems St Paul’s Church are having with their gardens and assist them in seeking solutions. |
| S22 | Work with the Royal Opera House and the LDA towards securing the timely opening of a Russell Street Information Kiosk. |
| S23 | Investigate and consult on options for resolving problems of the paved garden area and fountain to rear of south gateway adjacent to St Paul’s Church. |
| S24 | Prepare and distribute material to targeted premises to encourage alterations to fire doors frequently used for urinating. |
| S25 | Undertake street light improvements as part of the ‘Light against Crime Programme’ on James Street, King Street, Henrietta Street, Broad Court, Russell Street, and Crown Court. |

## long term

| S26 | Seek the installation of further public toilets, including temporary urinals, as necessary. |
| S27 | Implement improvements to currently closed paved garden and fountain adjacent to St Paul’s church. |
| S28 | Implement a scheme to introduce sustainable window boxes on James Street. |
Much of what has been set out in this action plan requires effective enforcement. It is important that the enforcement of the new regimes and the existing laws and policies is given a high priority in order to ensure the success of actions.

The City Council has led the way in the development of concerted, coordinated enforcement initiatives. As this work continues, we will continue to apply the lessons learnt and new ways of working in our approach to Covent Garden.

The police enforce against illegal activities, and drug dealing for example is of major concern in Covent Garden. The police have set up a Drugs Information telephone line that can be used to report drug or any other quality of life issues such as aggressive begging or drunkenness. Their freephone number is 0800 0850670.

We have a number of specialised enforcement officers who deal with breaches of specific regulations, including parking attendants, planning enforcement officers, 24-Hour Operations officers and Street Environment Managers (SEM's).

The Street Environment Management Service monitors the Onyx cleansing contract and troubleshoots litter and waste problems. They provide a 24 hour a day, 7 days a week service dealing with street-based issues. The service has a clear focus on “Clean Streets” but contains specialists who concentrate on tackling problems of commercial waste dumping, flyposting and graffiti. As well as managing the cleansing service they also take enforcement action against dumping and other nuisances.

Our 24-Hour Operations Team is made up of skilled enforcement officers, available around the clock who are tasked by 24-hour Duty Managers.

The team deals with the following issues:

- Illegal Street Trading
- Noise
- Illegal tables and chairs
- Market Inspection
- Removal of prostitute cards
- Regulation of night clubs and late night cafes
- Mobile CCTV surveillance
- Other front-line environmental issues

A team staff a dedicated call centre dealing with noise cleansing and recycling issues. They can be contacted on tel: 020 7641 2000 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, ready to put you through to officers able to deal with any of the above issues, and strict targets for response times are set.

The team also plans and executes operations in response to intelligence received from its intelligence unit, focusing its efforts on particular hotspots and issues. The team works closely with Westminster Police on seizure operations, deployment of CCTV vans, estate based work and proactive patrolling.

All these services provide specialist assistance to the Police Community Support Officers now on the streets. Although the PCSO’s don’t have investigative powers (rather, they act as ‘eyes and ears’ on the street for the police, without powers of arrest, but with powers to detain) they have sufficient enforcement powers to deal with minor issues, such as dog fouling, cycling on pavements, anti-social behaviour, and seizure of alcohol from people drinking in street drinking control areas such as we propose to introduce in Covent Garden. Anti Social Behaviour Orders (court orders designed to prevent people making a serious nuisance of themselves) are also beginning to be used.
Of course, with a responsibility across all of Westminster, the Street Environment Managers and 24-Hour Operations Team cannot provide a constant presence. In Covent Garden, with funding support from landowners and businesses, we aim to add to and complement the various enforcement services with support from local businesses.

Of course the increased presence of authority on the street comes at a cost. It is unfortunately a cost the Council is unable to bear, and we will therefore be looking for the stakeholders and landowners to commit funding to this type of enforcement.

noise, busking and street performing
There is a balance to be struck between the popular night time entertainment of Covent Garden and those who live and work there. Most noise occurs when people are leaving premises, and so we will endeavour to ensure operators educate them as to the quickest way to leave Covent Garden, and the fact that they are exiting in a residential area.

Whilst quality busking and street performances, in the right places, can (and does, for example in Covent Garden Market building) add to the lively atmosphere of Covent Garden, some acts locate themselves inappropriately, and are too noisy or just poor quality. The resulting noise pollution and pedestrian congestion, particularly on James Street, leads to degradation of the area’s atmosphere, and a feeling by visitors that the authorities have little control. Performance also attracts an audience where pickpockets and other criminal activity can thrive.

Although funding is not currently available to introduce a busking control zone, we intend to bring the problem under control by producing informal guidelines coupled with enhanced enforcement by our 24-hour team and concentrated police operations.

Late-night businesses also need to be encouraged to act responsibly, particularly in ensuring that alfresco activity ceases promptly, and conditions on late-night licenses are adhered to. We will take another look at the weight given to previous enforcement action when we determine to renew a licence.

street trading
To trade on the streets of Westminster you must have a licensed designated street trading pitch. Illegal street traders are attracted to areas where there are a lot of pedestrians, most prevalently in Covent Garden on James Street. This can lead to large groups of people gathering around, which creates congestion problems and easy targets for street crime; and there is no effective control over the quality, safety or legality of the products sold by such traders.

We have begun to target James Street as an illegal street trading hotspot. Our proposals to introduce Staff to complement the existing services, with the support of local businesses, will be able to lend the police further assistance in targeting this activity.

street drinking
A Street Drinking Control Area has now been introduced in Covent Garden, as part of a roll-out across the City. This discretionary power does not outlaw drinking on the street, but enables the Police to ask people not to drink on the street in a particular area, for example if they are causing a nuisance or an obstruction. If that person refuses to stop drinking, he can have his drink seized, and can if necessary be arrested.
drug abuse
We are aware that drugs are regularly traded and used in Covent Garden. Drug related paraphernalia is often found by Council cleaning staff in the darker recesses of streets. The West End Drugs Partnership (WEDP comprising Camden, Westminster and the Police, GOL and local community groups including the CGCA and CGBF) is endeavouring to tackle the strategies regarding begging, Anti Social Behaviour Order’s and the street population are taken. It is also a forum for current problems to be discussed and future campaigns to be agreed.

The aim of the partnership is clear – to reduce drug dealing and drug taking in the West End. It is difficult to measure fluctuations in drug dealing and use. Although all would acknowledge there is still a lot of work to do, there is a general consensus that the partnership is working and there is now less drug activity than when it began in 2003. Below are some of the partnerships main projects.

An anti-begging campaign called Killing with Kindness was launched by WEDP (assisted by the Home Office and the GOL) in October 2003. It was an awareness campaign to educate the public of the connections between begging and the drug market, and was backed up with outreach work and enforcement. As a result begging reduced dramatically. The message was backed up by the results of concurrent drug tests for those charged with begging, where 80% were tested positive for class A drugs (West End wide figure).

Operation Methane is a co-ordinated quarterly 10-day operation in partnership between the Councils and Police. 99 drug dealers and users were arrested last quarter. Operation Methane occurs quarterly and is set to continue.

The WEDP ran a public information campaign to educate visitors to the West End about begging and help direct them to support the agencies from the voluntary sector in the work they do with vulnerable people. During the campaign, police and outreach workers continued their work to help engage beggars in treatment services.

rough sleeping and aggressive begging
Sleeping on the streets is dangerous and the presence of rough sleepers is also the main reason cited by visitors to central London why they would not return. The compassionate approach is to get people away from street life – not sustain them there. We have worked hard to persuade rough sleepers to accept offers of accommodation. Many have done so and what is left is a hard core. The task is now to get them off the streets and into the appropriate form of care. This may require mental health care or drug rehabilitation. It will mean more rapid intervention including working closely with voluntary organisations and focusing on hot spots. For those who refuse offers of help, we will use enforcement approaches including seeking Anti Social Behaviour Orders where appropriate.
illegal parking
Our new parking enforcement contract aims to provide fairer and more efficient parking enforcement. Whilst we can understand the frustration of a recipient of a parking ticket, those tickets are essential to prevent obstruction, ensure a fair turnover of space occupation and protect certain spaces for the essential users such as residents and disabled drivers.

illegal minicabs
Only black cabs can legally be hailed, and therefore ply for trade on the street. Many minicabs operating around Covent Garden act illegally by cruising the streets touting for business. Whilst minicabs offer a cheaper alternative to the reveller, illegal minicabs are not always safe (over 200 women were sexually assaulted in illegal minicabs in 2002, and many minicabs are found in an unroadworthy condition).

The licensing of minicab operators by the Public Carriage Office has recently begun, but this does not permit them to tout for business on the street, or be hailed like black taxis. We are pleased that the licensing of drivers is now on-going – we are now pushing for the licensing of vehicles to occur as soon as possible.

We know the hotspots in Covent Garden are James Street, Langley Street and Southampton Streets. We will work with the police and Transport for London’s Public Carriage Office with to ensure timely and effective enforcement is undertaken, and with local operators to set up a system for customers to book a legal minicab before they leave the premises, reducing the scope for touting minicabs to be successful.

graffiti and vandalism
Westminster Council spends £250,000 annually removing the eyesore of graffiti and flyposting. Money that could be better spent on long-lasting improvements for residents. The Anti Graffiti and Fly Posting unit play an important role in our Civic Renewal challenge to keep the City’s streets and walls free from fly posters and graffiti. We are determined to do all we can to stop this nuisance.

This is a major issue in the West End and some of the area’s music venues and media companies are regular offenders. The Council’s Anti Graffiti and Fly Posting team has already issued a number of warning notices against big businesses who use fly posting, and increasingly stickers and stencils, as a means of illegal advertising, but this is only part of the problem.

A breakthrough in the battle to curb the scourge of graffiti will come about if a Bill that we are promoting becomes law. The 8th London Local Authorities Bill seeks to ban the retail sale of aerosol paints to youngsters under 18 and we will continue to support these new laws to try to prevent these materials from getting into the hands of graffiti writers so easily.

In the meantime, in Covent Garden, we will continue to target hotspot areas such as Maiden Lane and the Strand courts and alleys. Please ensure that you call our Anti-graffiti and fly-posting unit (tel: 020 7641 8938) if you see any graffiti or flyposting requiring removal, and we will work with Street Managers and businesses to encourage them to do so.
### Enforcement Actions and Timetable

#### Short Term

| E1 | Seek agreement with businesses for a street management service in Area 1 co-ordinated with the Council’s 24 Hour Enforcement Team and the Police. |
| E2 | Initiate more effective enforcement to eradicate illegal street trading, illegal A boards and advertising, and street performing, particularly on James Street; and of other causes of noise in Covent Garden such as revellers, and air conditioning units. |
| E3 | Lobby for new powers to licence and control the operation of rickshaws. |
| E4 | Implement identified enforcement measures against rickshaws in problem locations such as James St. |
| E5 | Introduce a street drinking control area to cover Covent Garden giving discretionary powers to the Police to control street drinking. |
| E6 | Carry out targeted action in hotspot areas to deal with rough sleeping, aggressive begging and associated street activity and anti-social behaviour. |
| E7 | Identification and targeting of current graffiti and flyposting hotspots. |
| E8 | Continue targeted operations against illegal minicabs. |

#### Medium Term

| E9 | Continue to target priority issues such as tables and chairs, illegal street traders and buskers, and street urination. |
| E10 | Extend public space CCTV coverage, subject to securing funding, particularly to the eastern side of the piazza. |
| E11 | Ensure CCTV existing cameras have adequate vision, particularly in respect to obstruction from trees. |
| E12 | Assess the effectiveness of the street drinking control area designation. |
| E13 | Initiate an awareness and information campaign against street urination, including toilet locations. |
| E14 | Undertake intensive focused and co-ordinated enforcement campaigns with the Police to tackle specific illegal activities particularly rough sleeping, and illegal minicab operations in particular in problem areas such as Langley, Southampton, Henrietta and James Streets, and drug dealing with WEDP. |
| E15 | Lobby for additional police resources, in co-ordination with Camden, including more PCSO’s in Covent Garden. |
| E16 | Monitor the effects of the new parking enforcement contract. |
| E17 | Implement identified physical measures to exclude rickshaws from James Street. |
| E18 | Monitor the effect of the WEDP on the prevalence of drug dealing and abuse in Covent Garden. |
We recognise that much can be achieved by more effective targeting of our existing resources, and have taken a number of steps towards this end.

We have a multi-disciplinary project group for the West End which co-ordinates activity across all Departments within the Council. For further information please contact the West End Team on 020 7641 7061.

As previously discussed we have divided Covent Garden into four distinct parts in order to make the management of the work more easily controllable, and the monitoring of progress more manageable. We have now set up steering groups for sub-areas 1 and 3, and it is our intention to create steering groups for areas 2 and 4 including representatives from, as necessary:

- Westminster City Council
- Transport for London (including London Underground Ltd.)
- The Police
- Key landowners
- Theatres
- Businesses
- Voluntary Organisations
- Residents
- and Camden Borough Council.

These bodies will meet regularly to review progress against the action plan, and to consider the implementation of specific actions. We hope that these moves will result in tangible benefits on the ground.

Whilst Westminster City Council will retain overall control and responsibility for the action plan, we are certain that in order to be successful we will need to work closely with our existing partners, and forge new productive relationships with landowners, businesses and residents.

Covent Garden is one of several areas in Westminster where the City Council has been exploring partnership structures such as Business Improvement Districts (BIDs). BIDs are where businesses vote to pay an additional levy which they then decide on how to spend in order to improve the environment. This may include paying for additional and/or improved services from the City Council. We will actively encourage the establishment of BIDs in Covent Garden in order to take some of this work forward.
This document can be made available in large print format or on audiotape, and a sign language translator for the public meeting can be made available on request.