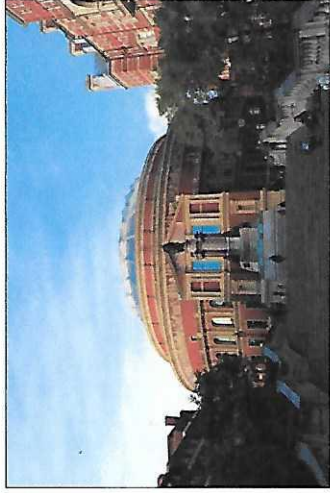


# What should Knightsbridge be like 20 years from now?

**Please tell us here today**



## **Knightsbridge Neighbourhood Plan**

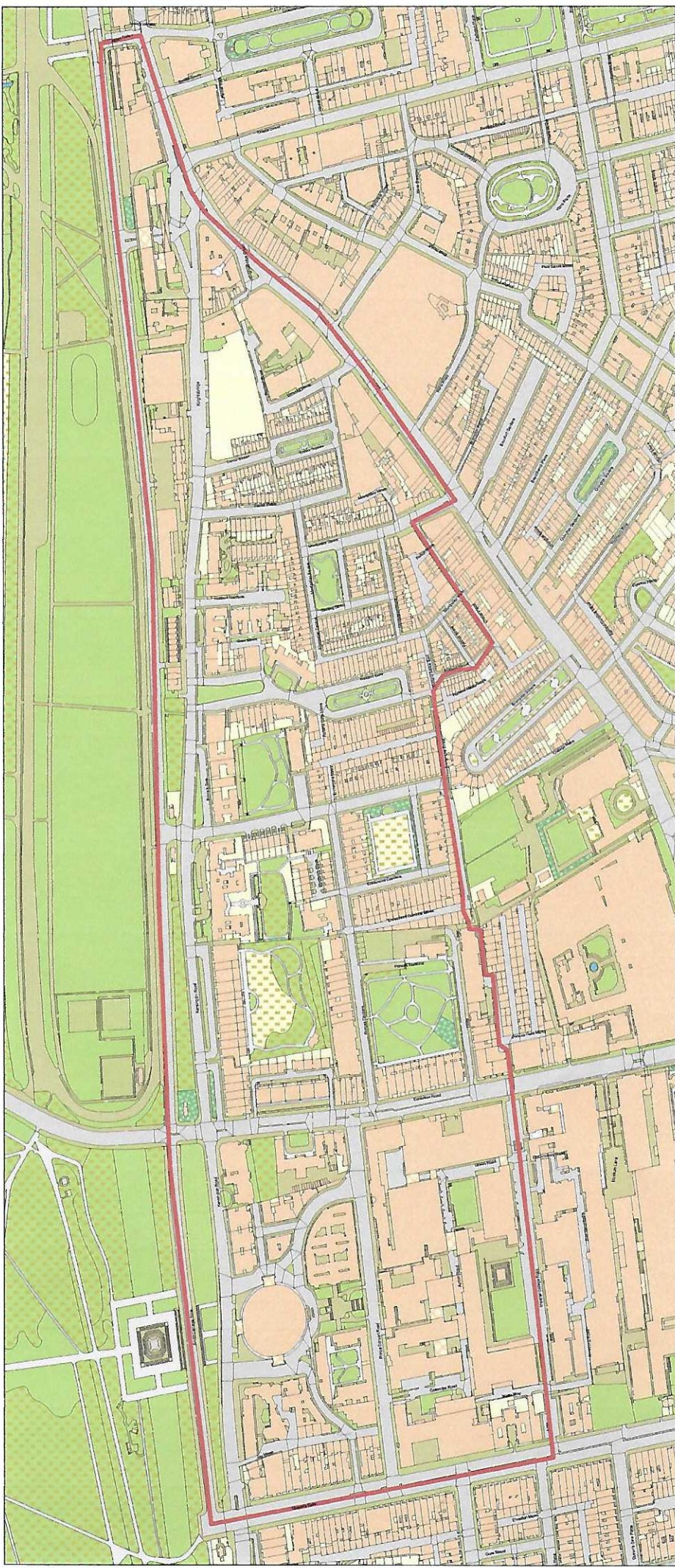


# Please tell us where you come from

If you are a resident of Knightsbridge then please identify broadly which area you live in with a **red dot**.

If you do not live in Knightsbridge, please stick one of the following coloured dots anywhere outside the red line:

**Student - blue dot**   **Worker - black dot**   **Tourist/other - green dot**



## What is the future of your Knightsbridge?

**Knightsbridge is one of the most famous places in the world. To its residents, businesses, students and visitors, it is special.**



The Knightsbridge Neighbourhood Plan is an opportunity for the community of Knightsbridge to shape its future.

Please tell us what your issues are and what needs to happen to ensure Knightsbridge remains a great place to live, study, work and visit.

**So what is it that makes Knightsbridge special?  
What needs to happen to ensure that it is still special 20 years from now?**

## What is a Neighbourhood Plan?

A Neighbourhood Plan is a planning document that directs land use change in a neighbourhood. Since 2011, the Localism Act has enabled local communities to prepare Neighbourhood Plans to shape the future of their places. Over 1,000 are doing so, including many in Westminster.

Ultimately, Neighbourhood Plan policies should hold as much weight as the Local Plan policies of Westminster City Council when determining planning applications.

But a Neighbourhood Plan is much more than just planning policies. It articulates what type of place a community wants to be over the next 20 years or so and it helps to identify priorities to be taken forward.

A Neighbourhood Plan can also assist in securing funding to deliver those identified actions, with 25% of money from Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) developer contributions being earmarked to spend in Knightsbridge.

The Knightsbridge Neighbourhood Plan (KNP) is being taken forward by the Knightsbridge Neighbourhood Forum (KNF), a body specifically constituted for this purpose. Find out more at: [www.knightsbridgeforum.org](http://www.knightsbridgeforum.org)

The KNF has been working hard since 2015 to start the process of preparing a Neighbourhood Plan. We have identified four distinct Quarters in Knightsbridge: Residential; Business; Cultural; and Hyde Park.

The four Quarters have influenced and informed how we have gathered views from key stakeholders to date and what we are highlighting to you today.



## Vision and objectives

The proposed vision for Knightsbridge over the next 20 years is to:

**'Make Knightsbridge the most desirable and attractive residential and cultural area in London in which to live, work, study and visit'**

**Does this vision capture what is important to you?**

The vision will be realised by addressing a series of objectives, which come under five themes:

### Theme 1: Character

- Objective 1:** Enhance the special character of Knightsbridge e.g. architecture, low level buildings and recognition internationally as a centre of expertise and innovation in arts, science and design.
- Objective 2:** Enhance and restore historic features and improve the public realm.
- Objective 3:** Protect and enhance Hyde Park and Kensington Gardens Metropolitan Open Land (including the Hyde Park Barracks land) i.e. the strip of land just inside Hyde Park.

### Theme 2: Community

- Objective 4:** Promote the sense of community e.g. mixed retail, sensible licensing hours and arrangements and meeting the day-to-day needs of residents, students, workers and visitors.
- Objective 5:** Protect and enhance existing residential unit size and height e.g. single occupancy houses and smaller and medium sized flats.

### Theme 3: Culture

- Objective 6:** Create and maintain an environment that enables our world-class cultural and educational institutions to continue to thrive and enhance their world class status and competitiveness.

### Theme 4: Public spaces and services

- Objective 7:** Improve the working of Exhibition Road e.g. as a shared space and the heart of our Cultural Quarter.
- Objective 8:** Prioritise sustainable transport e.g. pedestrian, cycling and traffic hierarchy. Zero accidents. Shared space on residential roads.
- Objective 9:** Encourage superlative mass transit and utility infrastructure e.g. public transport, drainage and broadband.

### Theme 5: Environment

- Objective 10:** Achieve the highest sustainability standards e.g. zero local emissions and greening.

**Are these objectives the right ones to achieve the vision?  
Should they be amended? What's missing?**

## Character

### Objective 1: Enhance the special character of Knightsbridge e.g. architecture, low level buildings and recognition internationally as a centre of expertise and innovation in arts, science and design.

One of the features of Knightsbridge is the large number of comparatively low level buildings. This assists the relationship with Hyde Park and helps to retain the feel of the Residential Quarter. This area is also recognised internationally as a centre

of expertise and innovation in arts, science and design.

The KNF proposes to promote the retention of low level buildings in Knightsbridge and restrict the intensification of units.



### Objective 2: Enhance and restore historic features and improve the public realm.

Knightsbridge has a high quality of architecture and design that has consistently defined its streetscape over time. We want to retain and enhance this quality but there are examples of buildings and features that are poorly maintained.

Whilst owners cannot easily be compelled to repair and restore historical features, we can encourage them to improve poorly maintained areas. There are also some important features in public spaces that need renovation or repair.



**Which historic features matter to you? Which buildings and structures are most in need of repair?**

Some stakeholders have told us that parts of Knightsbridge are looking rather 'tatty'. The Knightsbridge experience of the 'public realm' – the spaces we use every day – needs improvement.

This includes repairs to pavements, lighting, street furniture (benches, lampposts, signs), street cleaning and other aspects. We wish to restrict the size and weight of vehicles, especially those for construction, to protect under-pavement vaults.



**What changes and improvements would you like to see to the public realm e.g. roads, pavements and street furniture? Where are improvements most needed?**



## Community

**Objective 4: Promote the sense of community e.g. mixed retail, sensible licensing hours and arrangements and meeting the day-to-day needs of residents, students, workers and visitors.**

Knightsbridge is many different things to the many different people that are here each day.

**What does 'sense of community' mean to you? What defines the sense of community in Knightsbridge?**

Knightsbridge is a popular area and the needs of residents, businesses, students and tourists must be carefully balanced. For many people, this directly relates to the public realm, including the changing uses and activities in shops and cafés.

Many of these outlets are licensed which can create issues with anti-social behaviour affecting the Residential Quarter e.g. late-night bars, shisha bars.



**Do you consider that licensing is an issue? If so, where are the problems greatest?**

Equally, many people have said that Knightsbridge is losing its basic convenience facilities and services e.g. where do you go to buy a pint of milk or a newspaper?

This is important for residents, workers and students alike. Where can you go for a drink or meal after work or with friends?

**What types of shops and facilities does this area need?**

**Objective 5: Protect and enhance existing residential unit size and height e.g. single occupancy houses and smaller and medium sized flats.**



Over the past 20 years, the composition of Knightsbridge's population has changed. We have fewer long-term residents and more rental and empty properties. Some people think this has a detrimental impact on the sense of community here.

Residential properties have also been getting larger, mainly through amalgamation or redevelopment. Whilst there is still a need for some larger properties, it is important that we protect our stock of smaller and single occupancy properties to maintain the sense of community. For example, we wish to restrict the intensification of units.



**Do you agree? Is that your experience? What sort of properties do you want to see here?**

## Culture

**Objective 6: Create and maintain an environment that enables our world-class cultural and educational institutions to continue to thrive and enhance their world-class status and competitiveness.**

Knightsbridge is recognised internationally as home to some of the UK's greatest cultural and academic venues. The Royal Albert Hall, Imperial College, the Royal College of Music, Royal College

of Art and the Royal Geographical Society are within the KNF area and shape the Cultural Quarter. They are each world-class organisations and embedded in the local life of Knightsbridge.



Innovation, inspiration and learning is at the core of the institutions, founded from the legacy of the Great Exhibition. They have been shaping the future and advancing understanding of the world from here since 1851.



It is vital that they are able to continue to thrive and to compete internationally to attract students, academics and visitors from around the globe. This requires an attractive and desirable area and facilities to meet the needs of students, staff and visitors. Equally it is recognised that this is also a residential area and that the amenity of residents must be respected.

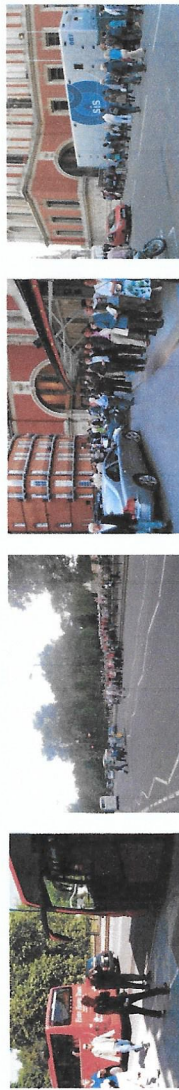
**What makes this area a good place to work, study or visit?  
What improvements would make it a better place to work, study or visit?**



# Re-imagining Albertopolis



Aerial view of proposed public realm, showing improvements to crossing, park, entrance & the environs of the RMH



Current Challenges: Undignified visitor experience, inadequate crossing facilities that are not fully accessible, major conflict between pedestrians and vehicles and difficulties managing functional requirements

The area around Albertopolis has seen major interventions over the last decade. These include key investments such as the Exhibition Road scheme and the refurbishment of Kensington Palace and Gardens. Whilst these schemes have been real successes, they highlight the lack of investment in the public realm of the Albertopolis area. The spaces and routes to and around Albertopolis are the missing pieces in the wider jigsaw. With all surrounding areas witnessing major enhancements over the last decade, there is one very important and highly visible gap.

A location of such heritage and importance demands a generous, dignified and legible public realm, which is currently not the case. The last 20 years has seen limited investment in the quality of the public realm, with improvements focussed primarily on maintaining the status quo. The area is now looking tired, and with increasing numbers of visitors, workers and residents, the area is in real danger of becoming a major disappointment. A significant investment in the public realm is needed to ensure the neighbourhood functions well again for all.

The Re-imagining Albertopolis project is intended to transform the area of public realm around the Royal Albert Hall and Albert Memorial, improving the visitor experience, road safety and the appearance of this important part of Central London.

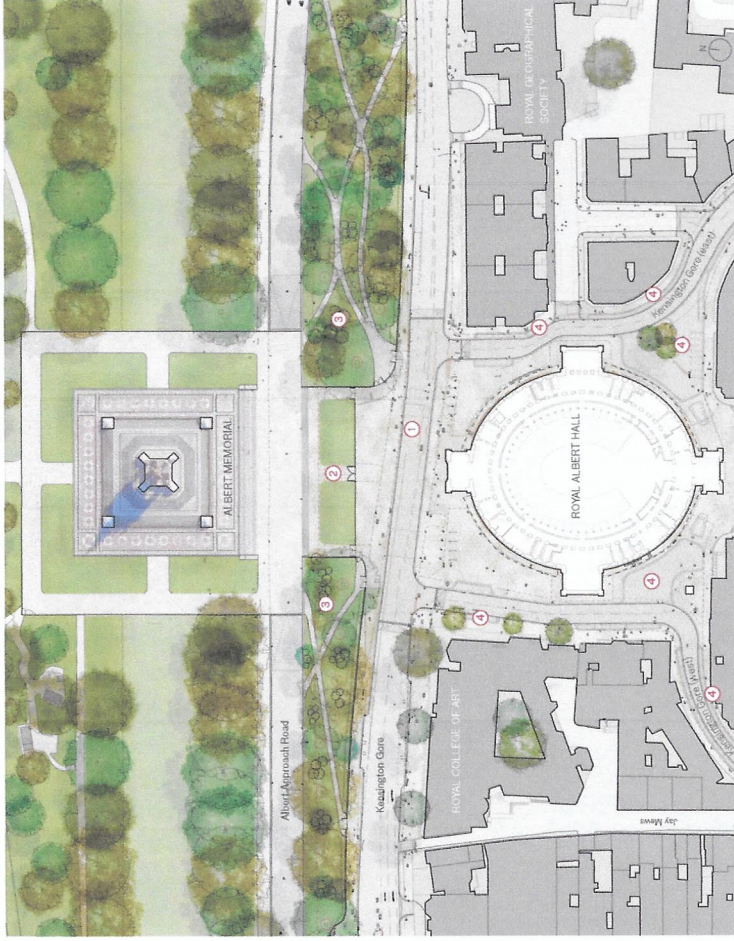
The interventions focus around four aspects:

- **Better accessibility and space for pedestrians** - a new, fully-accessible pedestrian crossing across Kensington Gore is proposed that will eliminate the double kerb condition on the park side, reconnecting the northern part of Albertopolis with Kensington Gardens.
- **Highways improvements** - by narrowing Kensington Gore, removing barriers and improving the balance between pedestrians and traffic, the proposals will lead to greater safety on the south side of Kensington Gore.
- **Readjustment of the Park** - the proposal will create a wider pavement on the north side of Kensington Gore, returning dignity and ceremony to the setting of the Memorial.
- **A re-imagined landscape** - through the re-landscaping and re-grading of the entrance to the park, a gently-sloping, step-free route can be provided into Kensington Gardens.

## How important do you think investment in improving the public realm in the area is?

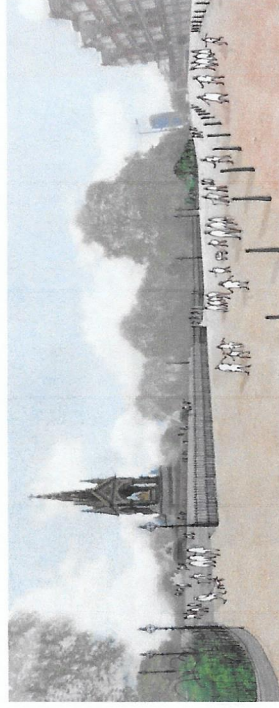
## Do you think that the potential scheme that has been presented provides a good solution? What are its particular strengths and weaknesses?

## What other issues need to be addressed in order to improve Albertopolis for visitors and residents?

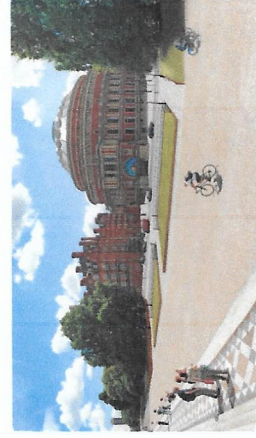


Proposed plan showing scheme overview

- 1 Road narrowing and bus lane changes
- 2 Adjustment of steps and lawn area
- 3 Adjustment of paths
- 4 Provision of parking area
- Yorkstone Paving
- Granite Sets to locally match Yorkstone
- Reinforced Board Gravel
- Granite Kerbstones
- Asphalt with coloured striping
- Asphalt
- 2m radius around existing trees
- New fence line



View towards entrance of Kensington Gardens showing new fence line



View from the Albert Memorial steps towards the Royal Albert Hall



View from the Albert Memorial steps towards the Royal Albert Hall



## Public spaces and services

### Objective 7: Improve the working of Exhibition Road e.g. as a shared space and the heart of our Cultural Quarter.

While many agree that the road layout is an improvement on what was there before, many feel there are still issues to be resolved and that further improvements can be made. Such problems include speeding traffic, 'rat-running' through Princes Gardens and Ennismore Gardens, difficulty crossing the road at certain points and confusion at the roundabout, and a feeling of danger for pedestrians.

At present, the experience for pedestrians could be improved, for example with planting, better parking arrangements or restrictions on the average speed of vehicles.



#### What is your experience of Exhibition Road?

If there are problems, what are they and where are they most severe?

How could these problems be addressed? Should through-traffic be restricted or banned?

Also, we feel that the character and ambience of Exhibition Road could be improved to give a better sense that this is a unique Cultural Quarter – home of arts, science and inspiration.

For example, this could include temporary art installations and occasional events relating to the programmes of the institutions.

How could the environment of Exhibition Road be improved? What would you like to see in Exhibition Road?

## Public spaces and services (continued)

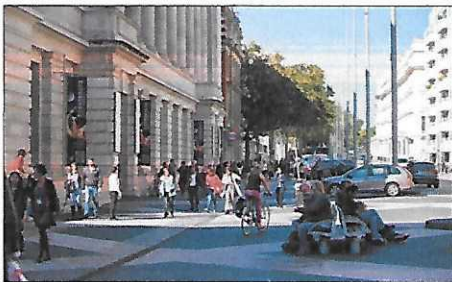
**Objective 8: Prioritise sustainable transport e.g. pedestrian, cycling and traffic hierarchy. Zero accidents. Shared space on residential roads.**

Knightsbridge is dominated in many places by traffic – congestion along Brompton Road and leading into Exhibition Road is a daily event. As a result, ‘rat-running’ through the residential streets is a problem e.g. along Montpelier Street and Trevor Place and Trevor Street into Lancelot Place and Raphael Street.

The KNF thinks it is important that movement within Knightsbridge is made more pleasant for pedestrians and, to a lesser extent, cyclists (provided they keep off the pavements). This will improve quality of life and safety. In other words, pedestrians should be prioritised over cyclists who should be prioritised over motorists in local residential streets.



**Do you agree? If so, where do you feel uncomfortable as a pedestrian and why?**



The relationship with Hyde Park needs to be improved in order to break the ‘wall’ of traffic.



We want to improve the space between the Royal Albert Hall and the Albert Memorial – please see the separate display on this issue.

Generally, local residential streets need to be improved for pedestrians. We should preserve and enhance the ‘Hole in the Wall’ linking Rutland Mews East and Rutland Street as the only location where the Residential Quarter is connected to shopping areas and cultural organisations without having to walk along the busy Kensington or Brompton Roads.

Making some residential streets ‘shared spaces’ and introducing 20mph speed limits may help to reduce the volume of traffic and slow it down.

**Do you agree? Are there better solutions and if so, what are they?**

# Public spaces and services (continued)

**Objective 9: Encourage superlative mass transit and utility infrastructure e.g. public transport, drainage and broadband.**

Traffic congestion has significant negative impacts on the community of Knightsbridge. The most serious are the impacts of air pollution and noise. In fact, Brompton Road breached its annual nitrogen dioxide legal limit for the whole of 2016 by 8th January.

It is important to improve public transport as an alternative to travel by the private car and that we find ways to discourage diesel vehicles which are responsible for over 90% of the most harmful exhaust fumes, including nitrogen dioxide. This must be done whilst continuing to meet the needs of local businesses and institutions. Many people travel to Knightsbridge on the London Underground or by bus but movement through the Knightsbridge area could be improved by widening pavements and reducing traffic.



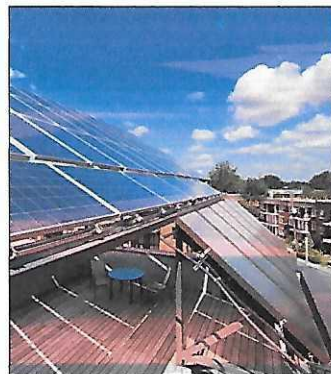
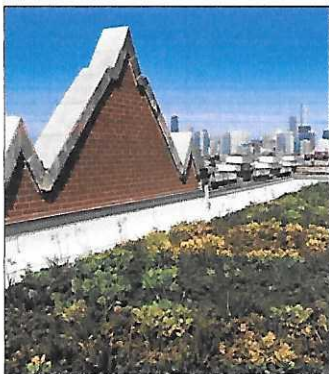
**Do you agree? If so, are there any particular locations where buses currently experience delays? What transport improvements should be made a priority?**

Broadband internet speeds are poor. For a Central London neighbourhood, we consider this is unacceptable.

**Do you agree that all new or refurbished buildings should be encouraged to include such features? Should there be exceptions to this?**

## Environment

**Objective 10: Achieve the highest sustainability standards e.g. zero local emission and greening.**



Many of the other objectives of the KNF are seeking to improve the quality of life and sustainability of Knightsbridge as a place to live, work and visit. Local air pollution and nuisance noise are unacceptably high and must be reduced quickly. Wherever possible new or renovated buildings should meet the highest standards of energy efficiency and reduce air pollution and nuisance noise. More generally, the sustainability of the built environment of Knightsbridge can be enhanced by making sure that new development meets the highest standards of sustainability. Possible actions could include the use of solar panels, green roofs, ground source heat pumps. We also think emergency vehicles should consider risk before using sirens, particularly at night.

**Do you agree that all new or refurbished buildings should be encouraged to include such features? Should there be exceptions to this?**

# Neighbourhood Management

There are a number of general issues around 'Neighbourhood Management' which the Neighbourhood Plan can address. It is considered that these should be shaped by the following values:

- 'Attractive and desirable'**
- 'Everything you need'**
- 'Clean, safe and quiet'**

**Do you agree that these are important values to Knightsbridge?**

- 'Everything works'**
- 'Easy to move around'**

**What are the day-to-day things that need to be improved so that these values can be achieved? This could be anything from waste management, litter and chewing gum on the pavements to air pollution, idling vehicles, fear of crime, nuisance noise or broken paving stones.**

## What should our priorities be for local infrastructure spending?

Once Knightsbridge has a Neighbourhood Plan in place, we will have a direct say on what developer contributions raised from development in Knightsbridge should be spent on. In fact, 25% of funds raised locally from the so-called Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) should be spent on provision, improvement, replacement, operation or maintenance of local infrastructure or "anything else that is concerned with addressing the demands that development places on an area".



Categories proposed by Westminster City Council include:

- Crime and anti-social behaviour infrastructure
- Educational facilities
- Health facilities
- Parks and open space
- Provision of enterprise space e.g. facilities for businesses
- Public realm improvements e.g. streets and pavements
- Social and community facilities
- Sports and leisure facilities
- Transport and highways but excluding required works e.g. reinstatement of highways
- Utilities
- Waste

These could include improvements to the public realm e.g. planting, signage, seating or paving.

**What do you think developer contributions should be spent on? If possible, please could you give specific examples.**

# KNIGHTSBRIDGE NEIGHBOURHOOD FORUM

## What should Knightsbridge be like 20 years from now?

**Whether you live, work or study in Knightsbridge or visit it,  
we want to know what you think**

You are therefore invited to attend the following events:

**Date: Friday 26 February and Saturday 27 February 2016**

**Time: Between 10am-2pm on both days**

**Location: Foyer of the main building of Imperial College,  
South Kensington Campus, Exhibition Road, London SW7 2AZ**

These are drop-in events so please come along at a time that suits you.

The Knightsbridge Neighbourhood Forum (KNF) was established in 2015 to give the community of Knightsbridge the opportunity to prepare a Neighbourhood Plan (Plan).

This is an opportunity that has not been given to communities before, with the final Plan ultimately having as much weight as the Westminster City Council plan when determining planning applications. In short, together, we have a chance to shape the future of our place.

The KNF has prepared a draft vision and objectives but we want to hear from you about the most important issues affecting the future of the Knightsbridge area. How should we amend or take forward the vision and objectives before we start drafting the Plan later in 2016?

To find out more about the Knightsbridge Neighbourhood Forum, please visit:

Web: [www.knightsbridgeforum.org](http://www.knightsbridgeforum.org)

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/KnightsbridgeForum>

Twitter: <https://twitter.com/KnightsbridgeNF>