



Walbrook

A short history of The Mansion House

By John Garbutt, Alderman for the Ward of Walbrook



One of many "jewels in the crown" of Walbrook Ward is the Mansion House, to be found in the street called Walbrook, right by Bank Underground station. Prior to its construction as the home of the Lord Mayor, previous Lord Mayors had offered their hospitality from the various Livery Halls in the vicinity. It was recognised, after the Great Fire of London in 1666, however, that the Lord Mayor needed a more permanent home, having been peripatetic until then. The construction of a purpose-built residence nevertheless didn't in fact begin until 1739 and finished in 1758. The first Lord Mayor to occupy the premises was Sir Crispin Gascoigne, (ancestor of Bamber of University Challenge fame), in 1752, some 6 years before it was finally completed. The site identified was on what is now Bank Junction, where previously the old livestock and herb market stood.

Externally, its Italianate design has a façade comprising a portico at the then front of the building, now facing

the junction, with 6 Corinthian columns supporting a pediment. In the centre of this is a symbolic figure representing the City of London trampling all its enemies under foot! The current main entrance in Walbrook was at that time the Lord Mayor's private entrance.

Internally, the original layout included an open courtyard, subsequently covered in 1790 by George Dance the Younger, son of the original architect. This now forms the Salon where drinks receptions are normally held, prior to dinner in the main Egyptian Hall as it's called. In fact, this Hall is entirely Roman in style! The other floors include a ballroom, the private apartments of the Lord Mayor and various staff and meeting rooms.

One of the most interesting levels is the basement which originally housed 11 prison cells (Ironically this is where the House valuables are now stored!) Only one of these cells, called the "Birdcage", was for a woman. Appropriately to mention in this

centenary year of the foundation of the Suffragette movement, this cell was, at one time, occupied by a certain Ms. Pankhurst.

The Lord Mayor's Courtroom above the cells persisted as a Magistrates' Courtroom right up until 1999 when it was moved to the building directly opposite.

So, how was the construction of Mansion House financed? The answer was by fining certain particularly wealthy people, based in the City, who belonged to a religious group known in the eighteenth century as the "Rational Dissenters". This group refused to take the sacrament according to Anglican rites. The then Aldermen, who were the "baddies" in this scenario, deliberately elected members of this group to be Sheriffs, stipulating they had to follow these rites or pay a substantial fine, knowing they would do the second. Some 15 thousand pounds was raised

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Aldgate Square is open for business (and pleasure)



By the time this ward newsletter is distributed, the new-look Aldgate Square will be open to the public, ahead of its formal public opening on 4 July.

This project has taken several years and involved major changes to the highway layout and public realm improvements. The main aim was regeneration of the

area for the benefit of business and the local community. And the area has had more greenery introduced alongside a new public space and improved lighting – making the area more inviting – a place for people to linger, socialise and enjoy. Safety for road users has been enhanced including new cycle routes and pedestrian access.

A significant new addition is the Portsoken Pavilion, a steel and glass building housing a social enterprise café operated by Kahaila and providing a new hub promoting events, leisure and play.

While Aldgate Square is the centerpiece of this transformational scheme (sitting between Sir John Cass's Foundation Primary School and St Botolph without Aldgate Church), it has been joined by an

eastern public space at the junction of Middlesex Street and St Botolph Street.

Changes to the traffic layout were completed early in the project timeline. The finished area provides new pedestrian crossing points and allows easier navigation of bus services.

The project has introduced two-way traffic on Aldgate High Street, St Botolph Street, a section of Middlesex Street and Minories. It has already had a significant impact by helping to bring air pollution at the nearby Sir John Cass's Foundation Primary School below the legal annual limit for the first time since monitoring began in 2003.
cityoflondon.gov.uk/aldgatearea

Stop press: An Aldgate Square Festival will be held on 15-17 June celebrating all the area has to offer including music, activities, talks, performances and a children's area.

It's free to enter and open to all.
cityoflondon.gov.uk/aldgatesquarefestival



City small businesses: do you qualify for rate relief?

The City Corporation is encouraging small businesses to check if they are missing out on business rate tax relief.

If you're a City business whose sole or main property has a rateable value of £12,000-£15,000 you could be eligible to get a reduction in your business rates of up to 100%. Properties with a rateable value of £12,000 or less get a 100% reduction in their rates bill.

If you meet the eligibility criteria and aren't currently in receipt of rate relief, please contact the City Corporation business rates section.

Find out if your business qualifies and apply via:
cityoflondon.gov.uk/raterelief



General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR)

Data Protection legislation in the UK has changed, with the introduction of the GDPR on 25 May 2018 and a new Data Protection Act. This new legislation is designed to enhance the rights of individuals regarding the use of their personal data by bringing data protection compliance into the modern digital age.

It also introduces new, rigorous, requirements for all organisations, in relation to the reasons for processing personal data, and the manner in which it is processed.

The City Corporation has been busy over the last few months, reviewing and updating its data protection policies and procedures, and taking all necessary steps to ensure it fully complies with the new legal requirements for processing the personal data of its customers, clients and staff (data subjects).

Updated information, including our new data protection policy and full privacy notice, is available at:

www.cityoflondon.gov.uk/dataprotection
www.cityoflondon.gov.uk/privacy
or by emailing information.officer@cityoflondon.gov.uk



High fibre for the City



Until recently broadband speeds in the City have been amongst the slowest in the UK, affecting small business tenants who cannot afford dedicated fibre optic leased lines.

However Openreach is now seeking to roll out "Fibre To The Premises" to every building in the Square Mile **at no cost to the landlord**, offering faster speeds of up to 1 gigabit per second at affordable prices for businesses and residents.

Openreach will use existing ducting to access buildings, avoiding street works to install the new fibre infrastructure into basements. This work will require landlord consent in the form of wayleave and Openreach will need to undertake a quick building survey.

Openreach will undertake a phased roll out across the City shown on the map.

Residents and business tenants interested should visit
cityoflondon.gov.uk/fibrebroadband
or contact cpat@cityoflondon.gov.uk

Car park spaces at Smithfield Rotunda

Did you know? You can hire car parking spaces during weekdays and weekends at a reasonable cost.

Smithfield Rotunda, located in West Smithfield is manned 24 hours per day, with good lighting and within easy walking distance for most of the recipients of this newsletter.

For more information on hiring and pricing details, please contact the Smithfield.Market@cityoflondon.gov.uk





Walbrook

Who We Are



Alderman John Garbutt

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Committee Appointments:

Court of Aldermen
Court of Common Council
Audit and Risk Management Committee
Community & Children's Services Committee
Culture, Heritage and Libraries Committee



Deputy James Thomson

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Committee Appointments:

Court of Common Council
Police Committee (Deputy Chairman)
Board of Governors of the City of London
School (Deputy Chairman)
Housing Delivery Programme Working Group
Capital Buildings Committee
Finance Committee



**Peter Bennett,
Common Councilman**

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Committee Appointments:

Court of Common Council
Capital Buildings Committee
Christ's Hospital
Community & Children's Services Committee
Culture, Heritage and Libraries Committee
Epping Forest & Commons Committee
Markets Committee
Planning and Transportation Committee
Port Health & Environmental Services Committee

CONTACT US

To write to any of your Members, to let us know if you wish to receive this newsletter by email in future, or to inform us if you wish to be taken off the distribution list write c/o

Member Services
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Guildhall
London EC2P 2EJ

or email
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We are always happy to talk to workers and residents within the Ward about any issues you may wish to raise. Please contact us if you would like to arrange a meeting.

COMMUNICATING WITH THOSE WHO LIVE AND WORK IN THE CITY OF LONDON

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in this extortionate way, a great deal of money in those days, which was put towards the building of Mansion House. It was, however, known that some Dissenters quietly took Communion once a year to avoid potentially ruinous persecution. This practice was known as "Occasional Conformity"!

Today some 50,000 people visit Mansion House each year. Mainly this is to see the magnificent plate and art collection. The latter was donated to the House in 1987 by Lord Harold Samuel, the property developer, and contains 84 paintings. It's been described as the greatest collection of Dutch art in Britain today.

Among the major and most colourful banquets hosted by the Lord Mayor in the House each year are those for: The Diplomatic Corps (all London-based Ambassadors and High Commissioners are invited to attend in their national costumes); the Archbishops and Bishops, which is a sea of purple; the Judges, all in black; and the multi-badged Livery Masters, Prime Wardens and the Upper Bailiff, the latter currently



myself representing the Weavers company.

Mansion House is also used for charity fundraising events and, in addition, acts as a platform for Cabinet Ministers. For example, the Chancellor of the Exchequer delivers his "Mansion House

speech" in June each year at the Bankers' Dinner concerning the state of the British economy.

In conclusion, Mansion House can be described as perhaps the grandest Georgian townhouse still to be in existence today in the UK.