



Broad Street

“Priory-ty Schemes For Austin Friars”

by **Alderman Professor Michael Mainelli**

Austin Friars adds a footnote to its rich history as The City of London Environmental Enhancement team undertakes public realm improvement works. The City's Bank Area Strategy 2013 identifies Austin Friars as one of the High Priority Courts and Lanes projects, supporting the east-west movement of pedestrians along alternative routes to 'by-pass' Bank Junction. The team are re-paving the footways in Austin Friars, raising the carriageway to footway level, enhancing the soft landscaping, providing new seating, and installing new energy efficient lighting.



“Get thee from a friary” - Portrait of Thomas Cromwell, Hans Holbein the Younger (1533) - The Frick Collection

In the 1260s “Augustinian Friars” was an extensive friary for 60 friars covering about 5.5 acres (2.3 hectares), with a priory

church, two cloisters, a cemetery, and even its own prison. Quiet contemplation later gave way to politics. Hilary Mantel's two popular historical novels, *Wolf Hall* and *Bring Up The Bodies*, focus on the life of Thomas Cromwell, 1st Earl of Essex (c 1485-1540), a lawyer and statesman who served as chief minister to King Henry VIII. Cromwell lived from the 1520s in Austin Friars. He began building his house or 'palace' in 1532 on land leased from the priory, and 'disestablished' the friary in 1538 himself. Following his beheading for treason and heresy in 1540, Cromwell's house came into the possession of the Drapers' Company in 1543, though it burned down in the Great Fire of 1666. Cromwell's Palace cellars remain under Drapers Hall and the adjacent passages.

The area has always had strong Dutch connections. Desiderius Erasmus of Rotterdam, philosopher and “Prince of the Humanists”, lodged here in 1513, famously leaving without settling his wine bill because of poor quality wine. In 1550, Edward VI gave part of the priory church to the Dutch Protestant community, “notwithstanding that they do not conform with the rites and ceremonies used in our Kingdom”. The Dutch Church survived the Great Fire of 1666, but was destroyed by fire in 1862, and again in a 1940 air raid. The

Church was rebuilt from 1950-55. Princess Beatrix (former Queen) of the Netherlands visited the Church in April 2015 to celebrate three prominent milestones, the official opening of the Dutch Centre, the Koning Willem Fonds 140th anniversary, and the 465th year of the Church.



Austin Friars Square - Public Realm Improvement (2015)

Although archaeological excavations in 1909-1910 and again in the 1980s have confirmed the rich history of the area. The public realm enhancement completed its first of four phases, renovating the square, on 19 April. The second phase, repaving the northern section, is underway, while the third and fourth central and southern phases finish in October. Over the 19th and 20th century Austin Friars became more of a service access to the numerous broking and legal offices of the area, a place to pass through. When all four phases are complete, Austin Friars will again be a place worth pausing in.

For up-to-date information, please consult: www.cityoflondon.gov.uk/austinfriars

Ward Deputy's Year as Chief Commoner ends

John Bennett, Deputy for the Ward, handed over the role of Chief Commoner to his successor, Billy Dove, Deputy for Bishopsgate. John's year as Chief was full of interesting and enjoyable events and will be the subject of the next newsletter later this year.



Broad Street

Who We Are



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City & Guilds (Council)



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City of London Freeman's School
Guildhall School of Music & Drama (Chairman)
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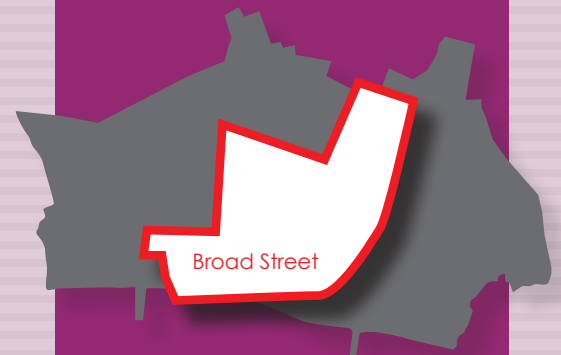
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CONTACT US

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

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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

Ward Club Events

June

Wed 10 1800 Garden Supper and church tour of St Margaret Lothbury (with Coleman Street Ward Club)

July

Thur 02 1800 UWC Soiree
St Botolph's Hall
Bishopsgate EC2

Sun 05 1930 City Livery Concert
Barbican Hall

Mon 06 1015 River Trip to Thames Barrier, guided tour and lunch there
Westminster Pier & return

August No event

September

Tues 08 1730 River Trip on ss Lady Daphne
City Bridge Pier

Wed 09 1800 InterWards Quiz Night
St Botolph's Hall
Bishopsgate EC2

October

Thurs 08 1800 Harvest Festival at St Margaret Lothbury (with Coleman Street Ward Club)

tba Private visit to Freemasons' Hall
Great Queen Street WC2B 5AZ
with supper locally

November

tba

December

Mon 07 1200 Civic Lunch
Guildhall in the presence of the Rt. Hon. The Lord Mayor, the Lady Mayoress & the Sheriff with Consort

Tues 15 1800 Carol Service
St Margaret Lothbury
With supper following

January 2016

tba Pantomime

February 2016

Mon 22 1800 Annual General Meeting
Furniture Makers' Hall EC2

For further information contact the Hon Sec, Judith Rich OBE, 1 Constable's Gate, Winchester, SO23 8GE, or go to: www.broadstreetwardclub.org