

Revitalising Kensington High Street - Celebrating Culture November 2019 update

What makes Kensington High Street unique is that it has two wonderful parks – Holland Park and Kensington Gardens at either end and a wealth of cultural attractions – the Design Museum, Kensington Palace, Japan House, 18 Stafford Terrace, Leighton House, the Central Library and the Town Hall Conference venues that all give more reasons apart from shopping to visit our High Street. Celebrating and building upon this is how we are starting to revitalise our High Street.

Progress has been made with all of the projects identified in April this year to help revitalise the High Street.

Creative Crossings

Two public art ‘creative crossings’ have been installed on pelican crossings in the High Street sponsored by the Design Museum and Japan House.

The Japan House crossing was designed by renowned Japanese designer Hara Kenya, for more information see <https://www.japanhouselondon.uk/discover/stories/hara-kenya/>.



Recreating the Abbey Road Beatles Album cover with Cllr Hargreaves, RBKC, Japan House crossing designer Hara Kenya, Michael Houlihan Director General of Japan House and Sacha Loeb designer of the Design Museum crossing.

Simon Wright, Director – Programming, Japan House London commented:

“The design of the Japan House creative crossing takes its inspiration from the character for the number ‘one’ in Japanese. It is representative of a single horizontal, finely crafted brush stroke with a simplicity which is, in fact, a culmination of carefully considered detail. This, we believe, conveys a refined subtlety and our particular Japanese sense of beauty. We hope that you will find many different and surprising aspects of Japan in one place at Japan House.”

Continued overleaf

Parklets

Two parklets have been installed by the Council on the High Street. These are benches surrounded by planting that provide an opportunity to take a rest and provide a refuge from the traffic making the High Street a more comfortable place to spend time in.



Cllr Cem Kemahli and local businesses launching the parklets

Kensington High Street map

A map of the High Street and surrounding areas has been produced by the Council and Kensington Business Forum. It has been printed as A3 pads for hotel concierges and is available as a pdf <https://www.rbkc.gov.uk/explore-kensington-and-chelsea/kensington-high-street-map>,



It will shortly be installed at the exit from the arcade in front of High Street Kensington station.



Mock up of the exit to the arcade

The Design Museum's crossing 'Bauhaus re-written' celebrates the women of the Bauhaus, for more information see <https://designmuseum.org/exhibitions/bauhaus-rewritten>



It is the work of award-winning designer Sascha Lobe, Partner at design consultancy Pentagram.

Chief Curator of the Design Museum, Justin McGuirk, notes: *"On the 100th anniversary of the founding of the Bauhaus, the Design Museum is celebrating the female students and teachers at that most influential of schools. Often overshadowed in official histories, their names are now to be branded across High Street Kensington in Sascha Lobe's very public graphical tribute."*

We hope to have more creative crossings on the High Street in the New Year.

Kensington Town Square

The space outside the Central Library – Kensington Town Square - will be used for an exciting programme of events that started at Half Term with Sparks Fly – a Circus and Science Festival.



Sparks Fly - Heliosphere

Business Improvement District

We are investigating the possibility of setting up a Business Improvement District (BID) for Kensington High Street. A BID is an organisation set up to deliver a programme of activities and projects set out in the BID business plan. Businesses have a referendum to set up a BID and the work of the BID is funded by an additional charge on top of business rates. If a majority votes for the BID then all businesses in the area have to pay.

Explore Kensington and Chelsea



www.rbkc.gov.uk/explore also available from the front page of the Council's website provides details of all the borough's attractions for residents and visitors – what's on, see and do, shopping and where to eat and drink. We are looking for recommendations of other things to feature.

Seasonal lights

The Council has purchased star lights for the street trees in the main part of the High Street. The Kensington Business Forum has done a tremendous job raising funds for lights to go on most of the lampposts and more tree lights at the western end of High Street. So the street should look very festive this year. They will be on from 20th November.



Star lights in the street trees a few years ago



Mock up of the lamppost lights

Now we are looking for your ideas for the High Street for next year

Email your ideas to towncentres@rbkc.gov.uk

Keep in touch with what's happening via the Council's website <https://www.rbkc.gov.uk/business-and-enterprise/towncentres-neighbourhoods/town-centre-initiatives/revitalising-kensington>