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Brent and Harrow



## NEWS FROM CITY HALL : THE LONDON ASSEMBLY

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### MAHATMA GANDHI A Rightful Place in Parliament Square

Mahatma Gandhi's statue was unveiled in Parliament Square on Saturday 14<sup>th</sup> March 2015.

The statue marked the 100 year anniversary of Gandhi's return from South Africa to India when Mahatma lead his unique and historic peaceful struggle for the independence of India. I attended the unveiling ceremony which for me was truly a momentous occasion which I will remember and cherish for ever. Popularly known as 'Bapu', Gandhi was a father of the nation who achieved the most remarkable and unthinkable feat of freedom for India through peaceful struggle. The word attached to Gandhi 'Mahatma'- a Great Soul, truly sums up his vision for equality and peace in India and the rest of the world. The presence of the statue in Parliament Square, in the company of Nelson Mandela and Winston Churchill, underpins Mahatma Gandhi's great standing worldwide. When the world is torn apart by terrorism and war. I hope that Mahatma's statue remind us of the values of peace and respect for all faiths and people worldwide.



### STADIUM LED REGENERATION



Following detailed scrutiny and visits to some key stadiums like the Emirates, Tottenham and Wembley the

Regeneration Committee, of which I'm Deputy Chair, has published its findings in a report called 'Regeneration Game' recommends creation of a Stadium Charter and other measures to support and enhance regeneration surrounding Stadiums.

For full report visit the GLA website

### MAYOR'S BUDGET 2015-16 Mayor Rejects Cross-Party Budget!

A **Consolidated Budget** supported by Labour, Green and LibDem Members on the London Assembly was approved but it failed to get a two-thirds majority in order to amend the Mayor of London's Budget. The budget in the main offered intervention in the four key areas comprising Transport, Policing, Housing and the Environment.



**Transport:** Mayor's decision to lessen the impact of his fares changes on Outer London Commuters was welcomed but the Mayor was asked to go further and reverse his decision to remove the Zone 1 to Zones 4-6 off-peak cap.

**Policing:** To improve London's resilience policing the budget proposed increased funding for staffing resources in area of need across London resulting in equivalent of 874 additional police officers. Other initiatives included introduction of 'Champions for Victims' in Mayor's office to improve victim satisfaction in London and piloting advocacy support programme.

**Housing:** The consolidated budget focussed on key workers and social housing shortage and relief for those renting in private sector to tackle poor standards. For the latter the proposals included decent homes fund, extra environmental health officers and creating register of London's rogue landlords.

For full details of the Final Draft Consolidated Budget visit: [http://www.london.gov.uk/moderngov/documents/s44957/Minutes%20-%20Appendix%](http://www.london.gov.uk/moderngov/documents/s44957/Minutes%20-%20Appendix%20)

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## LONDON'S 'SKYLINE' CAMPAIGN

### Value of Tall Buildings!



London in its recent years has seen major changes to its skyline which has generated an important debate.

There have been various interesting additions to London's landscape with new tall buildings such as the Shard. But there is also some poorly designed and not very well regulated high-rise buildings in London.

The 'Skyline Campaign' has recently raised concerns about the way tall buildings are developed as a result recommendations have emerged, to establish a 'Skyline Commission' for a better planned outcome to control and enhance the development of future tall buildings across the capital.

We implored the Mayor to amend his London Plan and include the Assembly's recommendations but regrettably he has not taken this on board. I would like to see future review of London Plan incorporate changes to better plan and protect London from ill-conceived tall buildings.

I joined the 'Skyline Campaign' because I am concerned about inappropriate tall buildings being developed. The London Assembly's Planning Committee is continuing to scrutinise the formation of tall buildings in London.

At the London Assembly all political parties have unanimously agreed a resolution proposed by me. It asks the Mayor of London to set up a Skyline Commission for a better approach to tall buildings, to preserve and enhance our skyline.



## FUEL POVERTY

### Health concerns for Cold Homes

It is 'deeply worrying' that the Mayor of London does not have an effective strategy for tackling fuel poverty.

12,241 households in Brent and 9,429 in Harrow are now living in fuel poverty. The capital's cold homes crisis is hitting an increasing number of families in Brent and Harrow, with the latest Government figures revealing that 12% of households in Brent and Harrow cannot afford to adequately heat their homes. Across London nearly 280,000 families now live in fuel poverty unable to afford the cost of properly heating their homes. Analysis of ONS figures shows that on average between 2008 and 2013 cold homes were to blame for 853 excess winter deaths each year in London. That means that across the five year period 4,266 Londoners are estimated to have lost their lives as a result of cold and damp housing.

Despite fuel poverty levels in Brent and Harrow remaining significant at 12%, there are concerns that energy companies are failing to meet their obligations to help make homes more energy efficient. The 'Energy Company Obligation', which was introduced in 2013, places a legal obligation on large energy companies to deliver energy efficiency measures to homes across the UK but thus far in Brent and Harrow just 0.2% of households have benefitted from the scheme. With 25% in Brent and 20% in Harrow people dying each year as a result of cold homes, the first step is to deliver a long-overdue strategy to address this silent killer. An urgent Londonwide plan is needed to address the numerous factors contributing to and perpetuating fuel poverty in the capital.

## STAKEHOLDERS AT CITY HALL

### Concerns on Accessibility Issues

A number of service users and representatives of organisations like Brent Mencap, Harrow Mencap, Ekta and Harrow Asian Deaf Club attended a Diwali reception hosted in London Living Room at City Hall. The highlight of the evening included stunning performances by the 'Sunadha' group from India who were visiting London. During the evening there were informal discussions followed by a Q & A regarding accessibility issues. Concerns ranged from signage at stations to staffing support. The main concern was about the impact of ticket office closures for people with disabilities. The reality of poor accessibility was demonstrated by the fact that it took a wheelchair user attending the event four and half hours to reach Willesden Green from London Bridge Station which is normally one and a half hour journey.

## TICKET OFFICE CLOSURES

### Update

Many of Harrow's residents will remember the Mayor of London, Boris Johnson signing a petitions against the closure of ticket offices in 2007 at North Harrow Station.

The Mayor is now implementing his plans to close all ticket offices across London. See below the latest closure plans of some of the ticket offices at stations in Brent and Harrow.

Station	Month	Duration of Work
<b>BRENT</b>		
Willesden Green	April-June	1 month
Kilburn	July-September	1 month
Kingsbury	March	1 month
Queensbury	July-September	1 month
<b>HARROW</b>		
North Harrow	April-June	1 month
Pinner	July-September	1 month
Harrow on the Hill	October-December	1 month
Rayners Lane	October-December	1 month

## QUEENSBURY PUB PLANNING APPEAL

### Fighting to save the Pub



I attended the public inquiry together with Cllrs Lia Colacicco and Tom Miller, Save the Queensbury Pub Campaigners and local residents. The appeal was lodged by Fairview

Homes Ltd against Brent Council's refusal of the planning application for the Queensbury Pub site.

Speaking at the inquiry, I highlighted the motion, to protect London's Pubs, passed unanimously by London Assembly Members in March last year. The motion signalled Assembly members' desire to protect pubs from demolition and urged the Mayor of London to have stronger policies in London Plan to guide local councils towards protecting London's Heritage. I argued that the Queensbury pub was a cherished community asset and provided heritage value making a vital contribution to the conservation area and to the local community. I condemned the proposed tower block due to the unacceptably high density and the ridiculously low level of social affordable housing provision.

## 30 YEAR ANNIVERSARY

### Bhopal Gas Disaster Event



I organised a gala event, at London's City Hall on 21 November to raise significant funds towards

supporting long-term healthcare for survivors of the 1984 Bhopal Gas Disaster.

The money raised goes to the UK based Bhopal Medical Appeal which funds two award-winning clinics in Bhopal, which treat the survivors of the gas disaster along with those affected by ongoing toxic water pollution. The water contamination crisis affects thousands of less well off families and is caused by recklessly dumped toxic waste, from the same disaster. This leaks chemicals into the local water supply. These two clinics are the only places to offer free healthcare to those affected.

This event was supported by the London Mayor, Boris Johnson, who delivered a pre-recorded address. The event was also co-hosted with C.B.Patel and the ABPL Group, publishers of Asian Voice. Further support came from Amnesty International, whose speaker made an impassioned address to the audience directly before Farah Edwards, a survivor of the disaster herself, described some of the disaster scenes.

## HOUSING

### Harrow Wins Housing Zones Bid

Harrow Council has successfully bid for Housing Zones fund as a result of which it's been awarded £31.3 million funding by the GLA for major housing building and regeneration sites across Harrow. Major sites benefitting from the funding are those in and around Harrow Town Centre area including those like the Kodak and the Old Post Office sites located in the 'Opportunity Area' designated in the London Plan.

I'm pleased that Harrow Council's strong and successful bid has now paved the way for a much needed housing and regeneration programme. The funding will benefit the housing and economic regeneration across Harrow and in particular the 'Opportunity Area'. With this funding and the opportunities the funding heralds, Harrow now requires immediate funding for the development of a public transport hub from the Mayor of London and TfL. Harrow on The Hill Station must have lift facilities and both the station and the bus station need refurbishment without any further delay. It is time that they are developed as there will be a significant growth from new housing and economic regeneration.

## Brent and Harrow at Mayor's Question Time

**My recent questions have included the following topics...**

London Overground Stations...[Living Wage](#)..Crossrail Spur to Tring; Wembley Central Station.....[Crime](#)....Countdown Signs...[Rayners Lane](#)...Shared Ownership....[Housing](#)...Countdown Sign for Neasden Shopping Centre...[Crossrail](#)...Greenford Line....[HS2 Ltd](#)... Road Access...[Accesibility](#)....Sudbury and Harrow Station – Improvement Works...[Air Pollution](#)... Step free access for Kensal Green Station...[Modern Day Slavery](#)...Contract Points...[Countdown Signs](#)... Step free access for Stanmore Station .... [Wembley Match Day Disruptions from closure of tube stations](#)...

For more information on the Mayor's answers please visit my website [www.navinshah.com](http://www.navinshah.com)

## REGENERATION COMMITTEE

Throughout 2013-14 the Committee made a number of recommendations to the Mayor to ensure adequate funding was available to fulfil his Olympic regeneration legacy ambitions and welcomed additional funding to regenerate high streets and town centres.

In 2014/15 the Committee conducted a review into Stadium-led regeneration to discuss the impact of stadium development on clubs and communities. It considered lessons from completed stadium schemes involving clubs in London and elsewhere, such as Arsenal FC and Manchester City FC. A report was recently published as a result of these findings.

## PLANNING COMMITTEE

In the last Assembly year the Committee used three central aspects of strategic planning policy for managing and prioritising its work programme.

The three main areas of policy were:

- Undertaking the work for the revision of the London Plan, the Mayor's 2020 Vision and the Infrastructure Plan.
- Policy documents/guidance supplementary to the London Plan - these documents (SPGs) are aligned to key issues, including open space, accessible London, affordable London, localism, and liveable world city.
- Opportunity area frameworks –The Mayor's London Plan identifies 33 Opportunity Areas and ten Intensification Areas, 12 of these have published frameworks and the Committee resolved to review further frameworks as they are published for consultation.

## TRANSPORT COMMITTEE

In the last few months the Transport Committee has been focussing on the Taxi trade. In December 2014 the 'Future Proof Taxi and Private Hire' report was released citing several recommendations for Transport for London to undertake.

This is aimed at protecting and enhancing the taxi trade through a series of improvements such as increasing the amount of taxi ranks and looking into a Suburban Taxi action plan, both of which have been approved by TfL.

To contact **Navin Shah** Assembly Member for Brent and Harrow  
Call on 020 7983 4876 or Email: [navin.shah@london.gov.uk](mailto:navin.shah@london.gov.uk)  
**LOCAL SURGERIES are held once a month on Fridays**  
**in Brent and Harrow by appointment only.**