

Anand-Fatal, Sumet

Subject: FW: Leicester square portrait artist pilot scheme summer review
Attachments: Portrait Artists Pilot Scheme submission from Heart of London 30th August 2013.pdf

From: James Robinson [<mailto:James.Robinson@heartoflondonbid.co.uk>]
Sent: 02 September 2013 16:55
To: EHCT Technica Support; Odunsi, Joyce; Hick, Rosalind
Cc: Sarah Porter; 'Daniel.Astaire@grosvenorlaw.com'; Penny, Leith; 'Adam Wiles'; Davis, Robert (Cllr)
Subject: RE: Leicester square portrait artist pilot scheme summer review

Dear Joyce & Rosalind

Thank you for requesting feedback on the portrait artist pilot scheme on Swiss Court, Leicester Street, and Charing Cross Road. Enclosed is our submission to Westminster City Council having reviewed the pilot from October 2012 through to the 30th August.

Through the attached submission, we are supportive of Charing Cross as a location for pitches, but are fundamentally of the position that Leicester Square is not an appropriate location going forward.

We believe that Leicester Square is no longer an appropriate location for portrait artist pitches. The scheme does not contribute to the vision for the Square, the locations already experience the highest level of foot flow congestion, and that the upcoming impact of construction and development will further restrict pedestrian movement and render the locations unsuitable.

We very much look forward to your reply to this submission and to engaging further with you and the Cabinet on the recommendations put forward.

Best regards,
JR

James Robinson | Head of Place Management
Heart of London Business Alliance | Sackville House | 40 Piccadilly | London | W1J 0DR

T. 020 7734 4507 | F. 020 7734 4498 | M. 07730 760 077

E. james.robinson@heartoflondonbid.co.uk
W. <http://www.heartoflondonbid.co.uk>
W. <http://www.westendlondon.com>

Registered in England No. 04293930

Ms Rosalind Hick
ASIM Licensing (Street Trading)
Premises Management
Westminster City Council
Fourth Floor, City Hall
64 Victoria Street
London SW1E 6QP
Sent Via Email: rhick@westminster.gov.uk



Heart of London Business Alliance
West End Business Improvement Districts

30th August 2013

Dear Rosalind

Re: Review of Portrait Artist Pilot Scheme Summer 2013 Review

Thank you for requesting feedback on the portrait artist pilot scheme on Swiss Court, Leicester Street, and Charing Cross Road. Enclosed is our submission to Westminster City Council having reviewed the pilot from October 2012 through to today.

Through this submission, we are supportive of Charing Cross as a location for pitches, but are fundamentally of the position that Leicester Square is not an appropriate location going forward.

We believe that Leicester Square is no longer an appropriate location for portrait artist pitches. The scheme does not contribute to the vision for the Square, the locations already experience the highest level of foot flow congestion, and that the upcoming impact of construction and development will further restrict pedestrian movement and render the locations unsuitable.

We have outlined the consequences of the pitches at Leicester Square. Our recommendation is that locations throughout the borough be identified for portrait artist pitch locations.

We very much look forward to your reply to this submission and to engaging further with you and the Cabinet on the recommendations put forward.

Warm regards

Sarah Porter
Chief Executive

Encl.

c.c. Councillor Daniel Astaire, Cabinet Member for Business
Mr Leith Penny, Strategic Director, City Management
Mr Adam Wiles, Chair, Leicester Square Strategy Board

Heart of London Business Alliance
Sackville House
40 Piccadilly
London, W1J 0DR
Tel 020 7734 4507
Fax 020 7734 4498
Email info@heartoflondonbid.co.uk
Registered in England No. 04293930
VAT No. 782804116
www.heartoflondonbid.co.uk
www.westendlondon.com
A British BIDs Accredited Organisation

REVIEW OF PORTRAIT ARTIST PILOT SCHEME

SUBMITTED BY THE HEART OF LONDON BUSINESS ALLIANCE

30th AUGUST 2013

The following is the Heart of London Business Alliance's feedback on the portrait artist pilot scheme on Swiss Court, Leicester Street, and Charing Cross Road. It follows our review of the initial pilot from October 2012 to December 2012 and the extension to date, which is set to end on the 30th September 2013.

Through this submission, we are seeking an end to the portrait artist scheme at Leicester Place and for Westminster City Council to identify pitch locations throughout the borough.

I. Not part of the vision

In working with area stakeholders, WCC articulated a vision for Leicester Square. This vision is in the process of being realised as the final construction works near completion and the Management Plan gets implemented. This vision calls for "an innovative, uncluttered Square.." amongst other aspirations and desired activities.

In the revitalisation of the Square, the return of portrait artist pitches was not contemplated. Hence there is the situation where portrait artists are seeking to return to the Square, yet the Square is a different place following the £15.3 million transformation. Property owners who contributed funding to the transformation along with the Heart of London assert that the portrait artist pilot scheme is not part of the new vision and aspirations for a world class public space.

II. Other street management priorities

While WCC gives careful consideration to the portrait artist scheme, there remains more important priorities for Leicester Square.

Other issues of street management remain unresolved. While there is a tremendous partnership between Westminster City Council, the Metropolitan Police Service, the Leicester Square Strategy Board, and the Heart of London Business Alliance, we have a collective challenge in implementing the Leicester Square Management Plan. This challenge comes from the huge service demands of this high profile location and diminished public spending.

The urgent challenges of funding a high standard of cleaning and enforcement of such issues as pedicabs, illegal street trading, and street performers. The portrait artist scheme is absent from the Leicester Square Management Plan and remains a lower priority to the other issues which have become frustrating to our business members and also to the property owners who contributed to the Square's transformation.

III. The impact on pedestrian flow and safety

We would like to thank WCC for extending the initial pilot project timing through the autumn 2013. This was important for assessing the impact of the scheme on pedestrian flow during the busy spring and summer months.

a. Foot flow on Swiss Court

Swiss Court is the busiest entry into the Square with the Glockenspiel being the key feature. By way of example for the week of the 19th August 2013, Swiss Court represents 42% of the volume of the six counters throughout the Square. On a daily basis, there is a range of 75,000 to 191,000 pedestrians who pass through Swiss Court between the pilot scheme hours of 12:00 noon to 12:00 midnight. Pitches in this location further congest the footway through the set-up of the artists and the pedestrians who become obstructing spectators.

Congestion is further exacerbated by the portrait artists setting-up out of position and there not being enforcement to correct. More specifically, the Swiss Court location saw the artists continually operating outside of the line of the Glockenspiel and the Canton Tree, which resulted in the artists further encumbering pedestrian movement, especially during busy periods when crowds were attracted.

Intense scrutiny is given to businesses in their use of A-boards and in managing all fresco areas and yet there appears to have been no enforcement to ensure that the artists are properly positioned.

b. Obstructions on Leicester Street

The Leicester Street location saw the artists orienting perpendicular to the street, not parallel as prescribed on the pilot scheme map. We acknowledge that pedestrian flow on this street is not as busy as Swiss Court. However, the perpendicular line of pitches creates a physical barrier to the flow of pedestrians on Leicester Street. This street in particular is starting to come into its own, through the opening of a new hotel and other uses. The positioning of artists as they are serves to further deter foot flow onto Leicester Street.

c. Upcoming construction & retail impact

Current projects and future development schemes will have an impact on foot flow. Development sites throughout the Square include 48 Leicester Square, Victory House, and Broadmead House/Odeon.

The development site at 48 Leicester Square has serious implications for Swiss Court and the continuation of portrait artist pitches at this location in particular. A sizeable portion of the public realm will soon be occupied by construction hoarding on the north facade of this property. This will further constrict this already congested thoroughfare and further render the pitch locations unsuitable. The pitches should be discontinued or relocated now, given construction is scheduled to start in January 2014, with duration of about two years.

Further, this development will include large-scale retail frontage on Swiss Court. It is expected that this destination retail space will generate significantly further foot flow, thereby creating additional pressure to this main thoroughfare into Leicester Square.

Finally, with Cross Rail services to open in 2018, with estimates that foot flow in the West End may increase by a further 25% given new rail capacity. This is tremendously positive for area businesses but will result in difficult decisions by WCC as to the ways in which precious public space is used.

Maintaining the pedestrian footway for the public is absolutely critical for providing unencumbered access to Leicester Square and area businesses.

III. Other considerations

a. Concern about permanence

Through this submission we are requesting that portrait artist pitches not be located at Leicester Square. The small amount of public space that exists in the West End is precious. We would caution WCC against any implicit or explicit commitments about pitch locations. There are tremendous issues already with street trading in general. Past approvals to provide kiosk space has left little ability for WCC to relocate or discontinue these locations, and associated enforcement challenges. Such lessons must be learned in the approach to portrait artists and leave WCC with the ability to manage its public spaces. It is essential that WCC maintains its right to the public realm and should both explicitly and implicitly avoid making any long term commitments to portrait artist pitches. This is critical for ensuring future pedestrian flows.

b. Equity

The European Services Directive 2006/123/EC seeks to ensure that business opportunities are open to all European citizens. In order to comply with the Directive, the right to trade must be offered to all European citizens and preference should not be unduly given to existing artists. To date, we are not aware of how the WCC intends to meet this directive with respect to portrait artists.

IV. Conclusion

Thank you for the opportunity to provide feedback on the pilot scheme. Through this submission, we are supportive of Charing Cross as a location for pitches, but are fundamentally of the position that Leicester Square is not an appropriate location going forward.

We believe that Leicester Square is no longer an appropriate location for portrait artist pitches. The scheme does not contribute to the vision for the Square, the locations already experience the highest level of foot flow congestion, and that the upcoming impact of construction and development will further restrict pedestrian movement and render the locations unsuitable.

We are requesting that Leicester Square not be a location for portrait artist pitches and that locations elsewhere in the borough be identified. Other potential areas for consideration could include Trafalgar Square, Covent Garden, Embankment, parks & other open spaces that provide such opportunities for artists to connect with visitors.

Anand Patel, Sumeet

From: Street Trading, Consultation
Sent: 02 September 2013 10:11
To: Odunsi, Joyce
Subject: FW: Leicester square portrait artist

From: colin.mbennett [mailto:colin.mbennett@virgin.net]
Sent: 29 August 2013 17:02
To: Street Trading, Consultation
Subject: Leicester square portrait artist

Dear Rosalind Hick

I have no objection to the continuation of the Leicester square portrait artist pilot scheme.

It is about time that they were treated properly by WCC who charge them to be there, They have been dangled on a string of uncertainty over their tenure for far too long.

I would however suggest that they should be urged to adopt some simple generic branding to identify that they are indeed officially there.

This would be good for the Square visually, for tourists who use their services and for the artists in terms of generating revenue.

They should also clearly identify charges.

I hope my comments are useful.

Regards

Colin Bennett

Colin Bennett, Chairman
Leicester Square Association
<colin.mbennett@virgin.net>

Anand-Patel, Sumeet

Subject: FW: Leicester square portrait artist pilot scheme summer review

From: Street Trading, Consultation
Sent: 02 September 2013 10:29
To: Odunsi, Joyce
Subject: FW: Leicester square portrait artist pilot scheme summer review

From: Mitchell, Tim (Cllr) [<mailto:tmitchell@westminster.gov.uk>]
Sent: 29 August 2013 17:59
To: Street Trading, Consultation
Subject: Re: Leicester square portrait artist pilot scheme summer review

I have the following comments:

1. The portrait artists should be encouraged to brand themselves so that tourists can identify licensed artists;
2. Prices of portraits etc. should be on display;
3. Licences should be reviewed on a regular basis.

Cllr Tim Mitchell
Member for St James's Ward
Westminster City Council
Tel: 020 7121 8841

Anand-Patel, Sumrat

Subject:

FW: Leicester square portrait artist pilot scheme summer review

-----Original Message-----

From: beabil@aol.com [mailto:beabil@aol.com]

Sent: 30 August 2013 15:04

To: Street Trading, Consultation

Subject: Leicester square portrait artist pilot scheme summer review

Hello

In response to your consultation process I would like to express my opinion on the Pilot scheme for portrait artists.

I believe the Scheme has been successful, and the administration of licences goes well, processing payment over the phone is very convenient way of payment for both artists and Westminster council.

However it is difficult - impossible to get through to the number provided when booking additional shifts. I feel unsure whether someone would get back to me after leaving my message on the answer phone. Last time someone called me the next day he was very confused and couldn't even understand where I was working after explaining several times that I had already sorted out my payment the day before. I called second time that day because it was nearly noon and nobody called me back.

Another issue is the number of pitches in Swiss Court.

In a current location there is additional room for at least two if not four artists. Artists at Swiss court do not obstruct the traffic as they are located along the Piccadilly - Covent Garden pedestrian pathway. Artists occupy very little space and if they stay close to each other they would occupy exactly the same space as they do now. We raised this before but we didn't have any response.

It is much better location for the artists and for the traffic to be placed on Swiss Court as opposed to Leicester place where we seem to be out of place, Therefore I would like to consider allocating more pitches at Swiss Court. This would also allow artists to have more quaranted places and reduced the system when we need to call to book shifts to fill empty spaces I and my colleagues would like to ask Westminster council to consider this option and let us know whether this is a viable option.

Thank you
Kind regards

Beata Bialek

Anand Patel, Summet

From: Street Trading, Consultation
Sent: 02 September 2013 10:11
To: Odunsi, Joyce
Subject: FW: Feedback

From: alioivanov [<mailto:alioivanov@hotmail.com>]
Sent: 30 August 2013 12:01
To: Street Trading, Consultation
Subject: Feedback

Dear Sir/Madam,

I am writing to express my feedback about the portrait licensing scheme. I think you have done a great job with the new scheme and I am pleased to say I had much more successful summer than the year before working on Charring Cross road. The number one location is the Swiss court. However I struggle with the telephone calls on Thursdays at 9 o'clock in the morning. I have never been first through when calling and a few times my telephone was telling me this number is not recognised. Anyway the scheme is successful.

Regards,

I. Ivanov

Sent from my Samsung Galaxy Note II

Anand-Patel, Sumeet

From: Street Trading, Consultation
Sent: 02 September 2013 10:11
To: Oaunsi, Joyce
Subject: FW: Feedback on the scheme

From: Aleksandra kabbara [mailto:leobello_04@yahoo.com]
Sent: 30 August 2013 00:33
To: Street Trading, Consultation
Subject: Feedback on the scheme

Dear Rosalind Hick,

Thank you for the letter, regarding the rotation scheme it seems to be successfully working out. I find it fantastic for the artists, though we need the artists' pitches to be marked and also the price lists of the artists' products to be displayed at all times.

All prices must be reasonable for the customer.

Also want to mention some observations:

All artists should remain polite with courtesy with each other and to all the members of the public at all times.

Shouting, disturbing the public should not be allowed.

Kind regards,

Mouawya Kabbara

Anand-Patel, Sumeet

From: Street Trading, Consultation
Sent: 02 September 2013 10:09
To: Odunsi, Joyce
Subject: FW: Scheme

From: Arben Lleshi [<mailto:alleshi@live.co.uk>]
Sent: 30 August 2013 22:54
To: Street Trading, Consultation
Subject: Scheme

Dear Sir / Madam

I'm writing to you regarding Portrait Artist experimental scheme one year period.

1. Swiss Court, has been the only workable place in terms of business for artists during these three months, there has been no any problem so far with other businesses around or with the flowing traffic of people during on/off peak hours.

2. Leicester Street, it doesn't look as promising as Swiss Court the reasons why are, five pitches are too many in terms of business, night shift is absolutely impossible to work, no light at all, in terms with other businesses around for the health and safety reasons we have been asked few times from police to clear the area because of night clubs emergency access.

3. Charing Cross Road, in term of business absolutely unsuccessful.

Kind Regards
Arben Lleshi

lydia
25/8/18.

NAME	SWISS C. (1)	LEICS. ST. (2)	(1) + (2)	CH. CROSS	TOTAL
ABOUZARIEV	12	10	22	10	32
BERNARDELLO	10	12	22	12	34
BIALEK	10	20	30	-	30
BIBA	12	10	22	10	32
EMELIANOV	12	12	24	10	34
GEORGIEV	12	12	24	10	34
GROVELLI	12	10	22	10	32
IVANOV	12	10	22	10	32
KABBARA	10	10	20	10	30
KIRK	10	22	32	-	32
LLESHI	12	10	22	10	32
MICCOLI	8	10	18	8	26
RAMOS	12	12	24	10	34
ROBINSON	10	-	10	4	14
ZAHARIEV					
	154	160	314	114	428

SATURDAY SHIFTS OFFERED DURING MAY/SEPTEMBER

29 04 13 / 29 09 13 = 21 WEEKS = ~~42 SHIFTS~~


The figures resulting of summing up columns (1) and (2) for every artist show clearly the difference of opportunities offered to them along this period.

This proposition for a second Pilot scheme tends to make disappear all the main problems originated along the former Pilot Scheme ending on September 2013, that brought jealousy, rivalry and fights among the artists.

Relating to the connection COUNCIL- LICENSEES this Scheme is giving more transparency to it, as the opportunities are absolutely equal for everyone, there is no room for error: its perfection is mathematical, putting an end to complains of any kind.

The locations sequence is unalterable and predictable, at the same time easing the task for the Council team in charge of it and avoiding the artists the uncertainty about their working days.

Lydia Bernardello
August 2013



SCHEME SUGGESTED FOR LEICESTER SQUARE ARTISTS

1- Put an end to the shifts. The artist pays for the day, noon to midnight. The fees should be arranged to be equal for Monday/Sunday, as it's wrong the concept that weekend days are specially profitable (more than one artist has found him/herself with £10 as earnings after working a whole Saturday double shift for which he/she has paid £24).

2- Modify the locations as follows>

Swiss Court 1, Swiss Court 2, Swiss Court 3, Swiss Court 4
Leics. Street 1, Leics. Street 2, Leics. Street 3, Leics. Street 4
CharingCross 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7 and 8

Note: There will never be too many artists in Charing Cross at the same time as there has been clearly shown along one year -even on high season- that there is no interest in working at this location.

3.- Create four groups of artists, named A, B, C and D.

Should be highly advantageous to take on account the artists ethnics. Assorting the groups according to their origins (Albania, Bulgaria, Russia, Italy) could solve many of the fights currently held among them.

4.- Give to every artist a specific and permanent pitch number, like used to be before the Pilot Scheme. The fair distribution of this places can be solved by raffling them off; this should be performed by the Council only once and for ever. This way every artist knows in advance his/her position in every one of the three locations. The perdurable painting of the limits for every pitch on the pavement could be as well helpful to avoid "misunderstandings" among the artists.

5.- Legitimise the location of the artists across Leicester Street instead of along it. After one year performing across the street it was clearly demonstrated that any obstruction is caused : the Council staff has repeatedly been there observing and taking photographs. According to this plan there would be only 4 artists.

6.- Keep the current method for "swap/buy" days on Thursdays and Fridays for every next week, but giving priority to the next

group assigned to Charing Cross.

For example, there are one or more vacancies in group A at Swiss Court and/or group B at Leicester Square, then groups C and D have priority, and so on.

- 7.- State fixed payment days (eg the last Monday and Tuesday of every Month).
- 8.- State a minimum annual number of days paid for (e.g. 100) in order to ensure the tenure of the license for next year.
As things are at present, the existence of artists working just a few days on high season only aggravates the situation for artists that steadily pay for their license along the year.
- 9.- A computer programme is enough to organize and set going and running this scheme without any need of subsequent intervention, but for the "buy/swap" deals.

A N N E X

WEEK	GROUPS AT		
	SWISS COURT	LEICESTER STREET	CHARING CROSS
1	A	B	C - D
2	B	C	D - A
3	C	D	A - B
4	D	A	B - C
5	A	B	C - D
6	B	C	D - A

This sequence can be continued without limitations or alterations along the required time, being months or years.