

Date:	19 October 2021
Report of:	Councillor James Spencer
Cabinet Member Portfolio	Cabinet Member for City Management
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City for All Vision and Strategy (2021 – 2022)

- **Flood**

On Monday 12 July, more than 100mm (4 inches) of rain fell in areas of north Westminster and elsewhere in London, equivalent to a month's worth of rain in less than a day. This resulted in severe flooding affecting residents and businesses across approximately 230 properties and 64 roads. Further heavy rainfall occurred on Sunday 25 July. Westminster City Council and emergency response services pulled together to support those affected and to address issues such as safety, security, waste disposal and emergency accommodation. A Rest and Information Centre was set-up by Westminster at Porchester Hall on the night, followed by a dedicated 'one-stop shop' support centre on Kilburn Park Road the next day.

Support for individuals and businesses

We updated a dedicated flooding page on our website with the latest information and advice available and used social media to inform residents about the increased support available and responded to individual messages. We also distributed leaflets to residents affected by the flood informing them of the support available to them.

Statutory Responsibility

Westminster has a role as Lead Local Flood Authority. Section 19 (S19) of the Flood and Water Management Act (FWMA) 2010 places a statutory duty on Westminster City Council, as Lead Local Flood Authority (LLFA) for the area, to investigate flooding incidents in Westminster. The purpose of the investigation is to understand how the incident occurred and what functions were exercised by Risk Management Authorities (RMAs) in response to the flood.

Public Meetings

Westminster hosted a special public meeting on Friday 30 July for residents affected by the floods, with representatives from Thames Water, Octavia Housing and Notting Hill Genesis in attendance. A further special Policy and Scrutiny Meeting was held at the Porchester Hall on 30 September with Thames Water, London Fire Brigade, The Metropolitan Police Service, The Environment Agency and Westminster City Council Officers all in attendance.

- **Thriving Economy**

Alfresco Update

There is currently support across 45 plus streets to provide additional space for businesses to allow outdoor dining. The list can be found in the [Supporting Westminster's Hospitality Sector](#) final appendix.

The third and final phase of support to businesses finished on 30 September when pavement licences expired. Barriers and road closures have now all been removed. There are 6 locations where permanent schemes are being developed and consultation has taken place to understand support for a permanent scheme and if so, support for the temporary schemes to remain in place.

Following a month-long consultation, the council has received feedback from residents and businesses in Covent Garden, St John's Wood, Pimlico, North Audley Street, Churton Street, Elizabeth Street and Eccleston Street. In all cases well over 80% of respondents voted in favour of permanent alfresco measures remaining.

A works notification letter was sent to all premises, stating the barriers/road closures will be removed. Each letter was tailored to the scheme being removed. Distribution of letters began on 17 September, giving two weeks' notice of the works.

The Council is also exploring the possibility of introducing longer term al fresco schemes in other areas, including Soho and the Opera Quarter in Covent Garden. These schemes are being mapped out in partnership with local communities and will only go ahead with the support of residents.

We are committed to supporting our local communities bounce back from the pandemic. Al fresco has been and continues to be a lifeline for businesses in the West End. This summer, we created more than 16,000 additional covers across the city, the highest number in London, helping to save countless businesses and jobs in Covent Garden and across Westminster.

Businesses who wish to continue to provide al fresco dining must submit a new application. This will be valid for six months from 1 October 2021. We are still receiving business as usual table and chairs licensees which are all being processed within the statutory timescales.

Please refer to appendix 1 for details on the outcome of the consultations.

Safe movement across Westminster

The temporary School Streets programme, implemented as a response to the pandemic, has been extended until the October half term of this new academic year. The wider programme implemented has begun with monitoring being undertaken across all sites until October. After half term the agreed programme of school street will be implemented, which will involve timed closures enforced by signs and lines.

Monitoring and review will continue throughout. A review of accessibility across the al fresco streets has been carried out in partnership with Transport for All and an additional 20 dropped kerbs have been installed across Soho. The council is committed to continuing to improve accessibility for all users across the city and work is continuing to develop a programme of accessibility improvements focused in Soho and across the city.

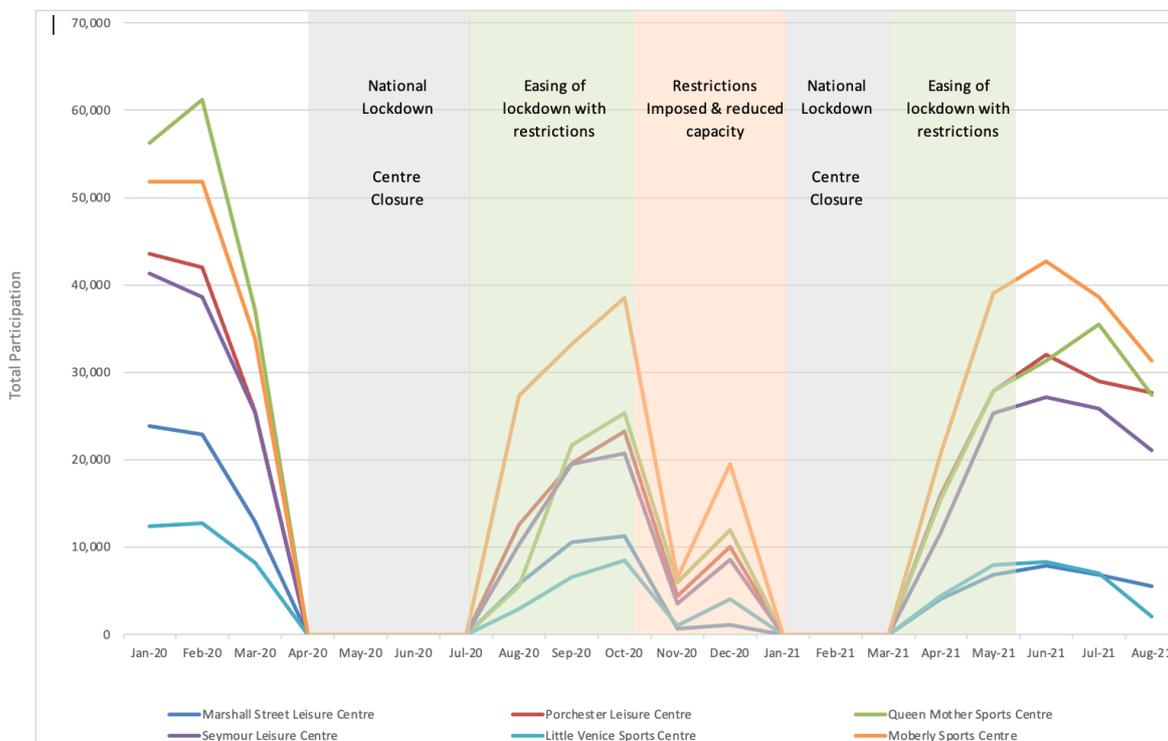
- **Vibrant Communities**

Leisure Centres

Based on usage figures for gym, swimming, and classes between April 2021 – July 2021, we are at 75% (1,002,134) of the Q1 quarterly target and 20% of the annual target. Q3 usage has seen a slight reduction across centres, however the average difference in 2019 and 2021 usage statistics has remained largely consistent between June-August on average reporting a 12,621 average difference per month across all centres when compared to 2019, as industry leisure centre usage declines as people go away and return to school/work. Usage is therefore expected to grow in Q3/Q4. Since centres re-opened in April 2021, the general number of people visiting them continues to increase, with May 2021 showing 99% return when compared with the number of people visiting the centres in May 2019.

We have secured the financial position and the continuity of the leisure service provision following the re-opening of leisure centres post-COVID through to January 2023. This will give residents certainty and continuity of using our high-quality leisure centres and continuing to benefit from the Active Westminster Card discounts and benefits. We will make a decision on the future delivery model of the leisure service beyond January 2023 in November 2021.

COVID-19 pandemic: Westminster Leisure and Sport Centre total participation January 2020 – August 2021 with periods of closure/restriction identified



- **Greener and Cleaner**

Reduce energy consumption - Light-emitting diode (LED) streetlights

In 2019 the Council commenced a programme of installing LED street lights to improve lighting control and reduce energy consumption that was expected to conclude at the end of March 2022. As of the end of August, we have switched 10,749 of our street lamps to LED, with a further 3,498 to be switched by November 2021 as part of our accelerated programme. Once complete, it is projected that 1,335 tonnes of CO₂e emissions will be saved per annum.

EV Charging Infrastructure Update

The City Council's EV Strategy has set targets for the increase in the provision of charging infrastructure to both keep pace with the growing numbers of electric vehicles on the City's streets and to further encourage the transition from Internal Combustion Engine (ICE) vehicles.

The Strategy recognises that this market is still in its infancy so recommends the use of an annual review, or action plan, to determine the extent of the roll-outs required to both satisfy demand and acknowledge the latest technological developments. For the current year (21/22), through the action plan the Council has set a target of installing a further 500 charge points.

The roll out of identified locations is represented in the table below and also in the map available at the following link - [WCC City Highways: EV Charge Points \(jhumb1.github.io\)](https://www.wcc.gov.uk/resources/ev-charging-points/)

WARDS	EXISTING EV CHARGING POINTS	PRPOSED NEW CHARGING POINTS
Abbey Road	100	23
Bayswater	65	2
Bryanston and Dorset Square	39	50
Church Street	23	38
Churchill	17	28
Harrow Road	82	1
Hyde Park	33	45
Knightsbridge and Belgravia	51	32
Lancaster Gate	55	17
Little Venice	85	16
Maida Vale	82	1
Marylebone High Street	42	41
Queen's Park	87	0
Regent's Park	59	27
St. James's	36	22
Tachbrook	14	23
Vincent Square	25	32
Warwick	32	24
West End	32	49
Westbourne	46	8

Temporary Cycle Schemes

11 temporary cycle schemes were implemented in early summer 2020 as a response to the pandemic to support active travel. All of these schemes are currently being monitored and reviewed and a report will be presented to the Cabinet Member in the autumn to recommend making the cycle lanes permanent (with any adjustments required) or removing them. Funding has been secured from Transport for London for this review process.

The table below illustrates the locations of the temporary cycle lanes across the borough:

WARDS	LOCATION OF TEMPORARY CYCLE LANES
Queen's Park, Harrow Road, Westbourne, Little Venice	Harrow Road
Bayswater	Paddington – Royal Oak
Bayswater, Lancaster Gate	Queensway / Inverness Terrace
Bayswater, Hyde Park	Westbourne Terrace
Lancaster Gate, Knightsbridge & Belgravia	Bayswater Road
Hyde Park	Paddington Area
Marylebone High Street	Portland Place
St James	Northumberland Avenue
St James	Abingdon Street
Churchill, Warwick	Buckingham Palace Road
Churchill, Warwick	Lupus Street

Cycle Hangers

The cycle storage demand study continues, with outputs expected in early October 2021 to inform new storage locations. Members & Amenity Societies have provided suggestions to inform the new locations. Proposed new locations will be consulted on in Autumn 2021, with installation expected to start November 2021.

The table below illustrates the locations of the cycle hangers across the borough:

WARDS	NUMBER OF CYCLE HANGER STORAGE LOCATIONS
Abbey Road	7
Bayswater	4
Bryanston and Dorset	2
Church Street	5
Churchill	19
Harrow Road	6
Hyde Park	2
Lancaster Gate	2
Little Venice	10
Maida Vale	19
Marylebone High Street	8
Queen's Park	13
Regent's Park	3
St James Park	10
Tachbrook	5
Vincent Square	6
Warwick	6
West End	1
Westbourne	9

Pending successful roll-out of the pilot, new management processes will be rolled out across the City of Westminster to secure cycle storage currently managed by third party suppliers in house.

E-Scooter Trials

The City Council's entry on 2 August into the London E-Scooter trial has been a success thus far. The wider participation of London boroughs included Ealing, Hammersmith & Fulham, Kensington & Chelsea, Richmond Upon Thames, Tower Hamlets. The City of London, Southwark and Lambeth and Camden are in the process of joining the trial.

We consulted on 71 trial sites and currently have 68 in operation which represents a good coverage. Two of the three sites not continuing in the trial are being reviewed and the third is suspended in the short term due to a planned resurfacing scheme.

Following feedback received from scheme user experiences, the Council has agreed to a request to remove the 'Go Slow' zones, on the understanding that the maximum speed of all three operator scooters remains to be set to 12.5mph. For more information about the scheme please refer to:

<https://www.westminster.gov.uk/news/westminster-join-tfl-e-scooter-rental-trial-august>

Please refer to appendix 2 for further details on the locations of the trial sites and the current consultation.

Public Conveniences

The Council permanently closed 9 public toilet sites in May 2021. These closures followed a detailed review of usage levels, crime and anti-social behaviour, the availability of alternative facilities and the financial viability of public toilets in tourist/visitor areas.

We are bucking the national trend by retaining 20 public toilet facilities and have committed £4m for the modernisation of these facilities which will include enhanced security and cleaning and contactless payment barriers at tourist/visitor facilities. We will be retaining and modernising free entry public toilets in predominantly residential areas. Concept designs for the modernization of public toilets are currently being prepared with the objective of tendering and undertaking construction works during 2022.

Veolia Contract

Following extensive negotiations, the Council will be extending its waste and cleansing contract with Veolia by three years (to Sept. 2024.) Waste collections and street cleaning are consistently ranked by residents as being amongst the most important services provided by the Council and also those with the highest satisfaction ratings.

As well as continuing these important services, a new food waste collection service will be introduced to all households over the next 12 months at no extra cost to the Council. There will also be significant improvements to the bulky waste collection service to reduce waiting times – the new service will operate 7 days per week. Once again, this is at no extra cost to the Council.

Comparison with neighbouring borough waste contract values:

Borough	Annual Waste & Cleansing Contract Value
Brent	£15.8m
Camden	£21.1m
Kensington & Chelsea	£13.5m
Southwark	£26.7m - waste collection only (not street cleansing)
Westminster	£46.8m

The principal reasons for the difference between Westminster and neighbouring borough contract values are the scale of street cleansing services and the inclusion of a large commercial waste collection service in the Westminster contract which generates an annual income of £18m.

Waste and Recycling Review

A waste consultancy firm, Eunomia Ltd, has been appointed to review the Council's waste strategy, to recommend how we can improve services for our residents and businesses and to deliver our climate emergency commitments. The review is due for completion by November 2021 although an extension maybe required.

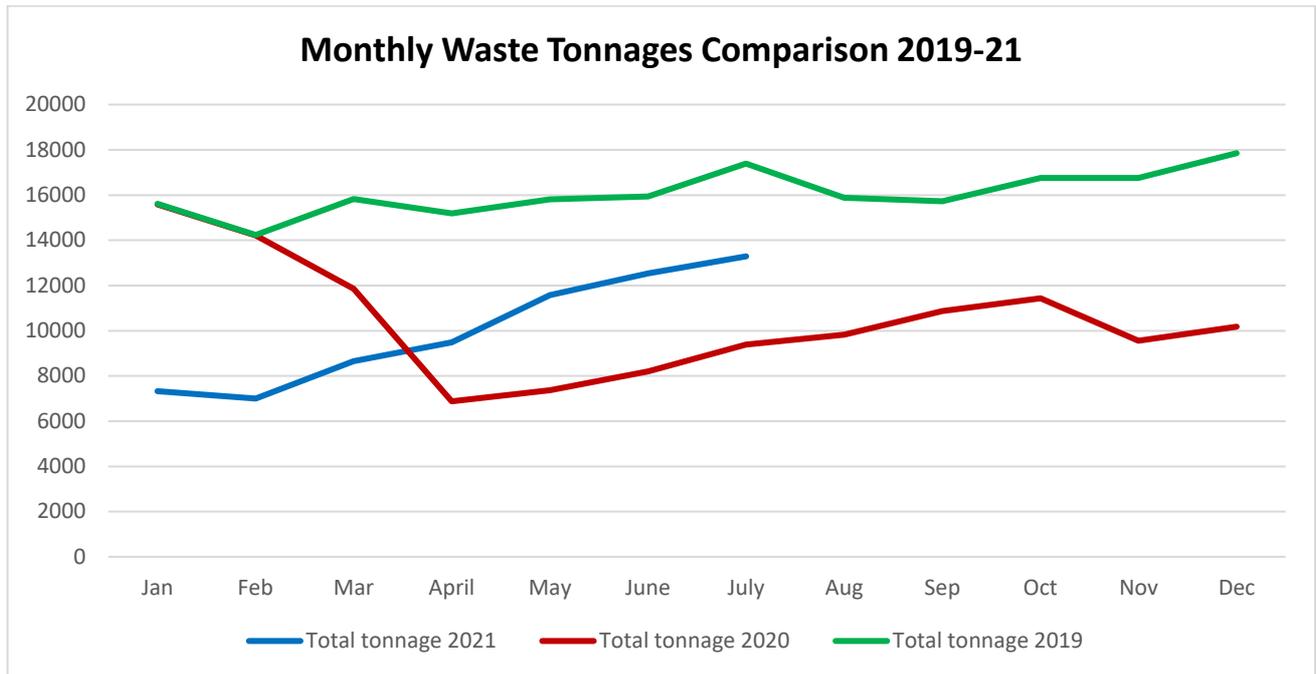
Cabinet Member Decisions

Since the last report, as Cabinet Member for City Management the following decisions have been made:

- Extension of the Waste Collection & Street Cleansing Contract and Food Waste Recycling
- Villers Street Public Realm

Key Performance Indicators

The below graph gives an overview of waste tonnages handled by the City Council before, during and after the Covid-19 pandemic lockdown.



Waste tonnage decreased by nearly 55% during the pandemic due to business closures and lockdown restrictions. Since the end of lockdown and the re-opening of businesses, waste levels have recovered, but still remain 20% below pre-Covid-19 levels.

Appendix 1

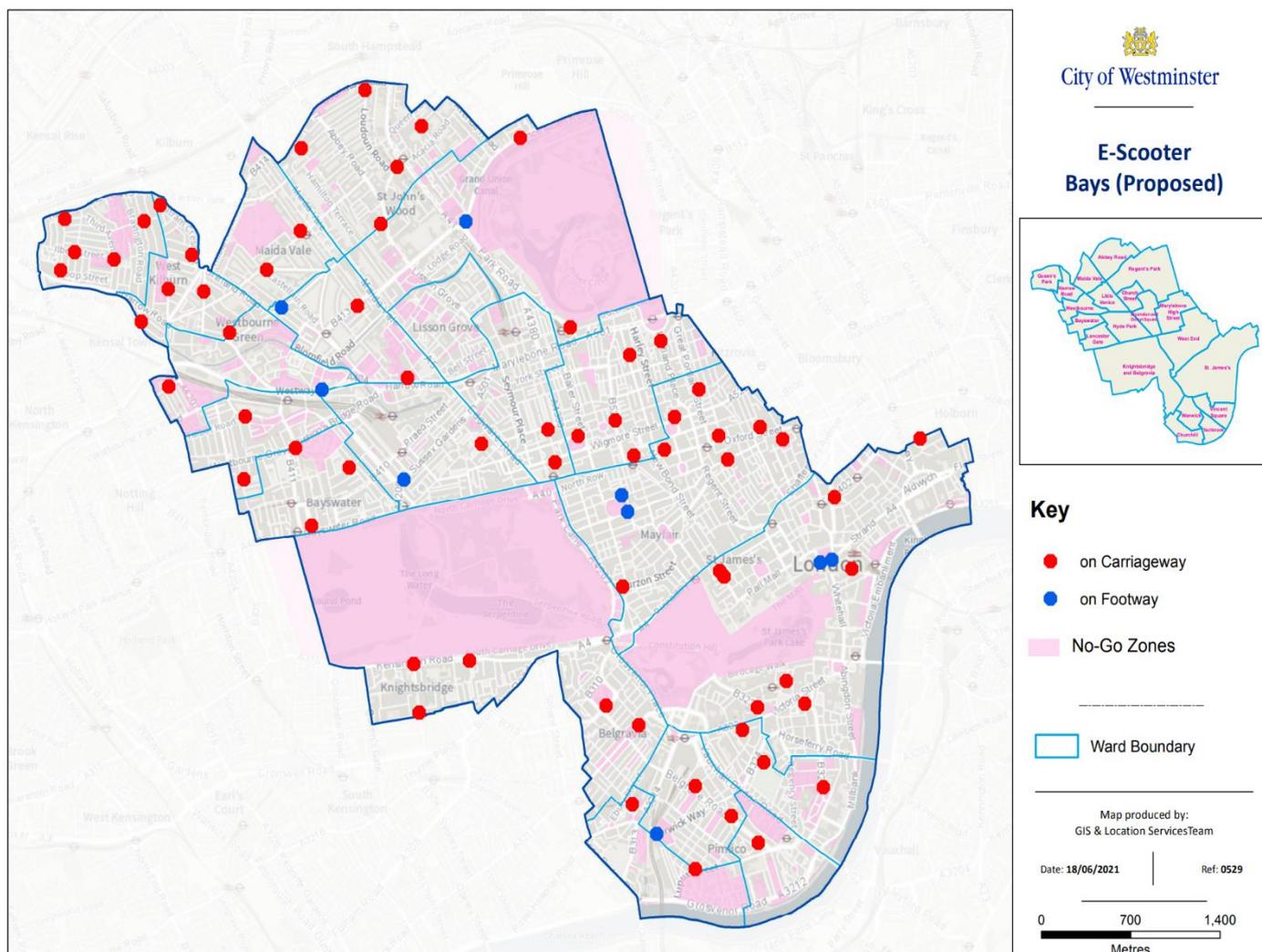
This appendix sets out the outcome of the Alfresco Consultation.

WARD	LOCATION	OUTCOME OF CONSULTATION
Regent's Park	St Johns Wood High Street	<p>The consultation closed on 12th September.</p> <p>The results show:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 86% supporting the development of a permanent scheme • 84% in favour of keeping the temporary scheme in place until the permanent scheme is implemented.
St James's	Covent Garden	<p>The consultations in Covent Garden closed on 12th / 13th September.</p> <p>The results show:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 81% support the continuation of al fresco dining on Henrietta Street, King Street, Maiden Lane and parts of Southampton Street. • 78% of residents who responded told us they supported continued alfresco.
Warwick and Tachbrook	Pimlico	<p>The consultation closed on 26th September.</p> <p>The results show:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 84% supporting the development of a permanent scheme • 83% are in favour of keeping the temporary scheme in place until the permanent scheme is implemented.
Warwick	Churton Street	This will remain in place while a permanent scheme is developed.
Knightsbridge and Belgravia	Elizabeth Street	<p>The consultation closed on 26th September.</p> <p>The results show:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 94% support the development of a permanent scheme • 93% are in favour of keeping the temporary scheme in place until the permanent scheme is implemented.
Knightsbridge and Belgravia	Eccleston Street	<p>The consultation closed on 26th September.</p> <p>The results show:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 96% supporting the development of a permanent scheme • 96% in favour of keeping the temporary scheme in place until the permanent scheme is implemented.
West End	North Audley Street	<p>The consultation closed on 26th September.</p> <p>The results show:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 94% support keeping the temporary scheme until the permanent scheme is implemented.

Appendix 2

This appendix provides an overview of the E-Scooter trial consultation.

The map below illustrates the locations of the sites that are currently included within the City Council's trial. It also shows the distribution of sites according to Ward boundaries and which ones are on the carriageway and which are on sections of 'dead' footway, i.e. on sections that are not typical pedestrian routes e.g. on traffic islands.



The trial sites have been implemented under the powers of an experimental traffic order which means that the sites are first implemented on the street and we then open up communication channels for residents, businesses, key stakeholders and interest groups to advise us with comments of support, objection or requested amendments to the suitability of the sites, or otherwise. A prior milestone to this launch was consultation with affected Ward Members and this engagement with our colleagues will continue.

For those raising comments to the City of Westminster on-street E-Scooter rental sites, enquirers are encouraged to access the following webpage:

[Westminster to join TfL e-scooter rental trial in August | Westminster City Council](https://www.westminster.gov.uk/news/2021/06/18/westminster-to-join-tfl-e-scooter-rental-trial-in-august)

And for general scheme operation comments, enquirers are encouraged to access the following TfL website:

<https://haveyoursay.tfl.gov.uk/e-scooter-trial>