

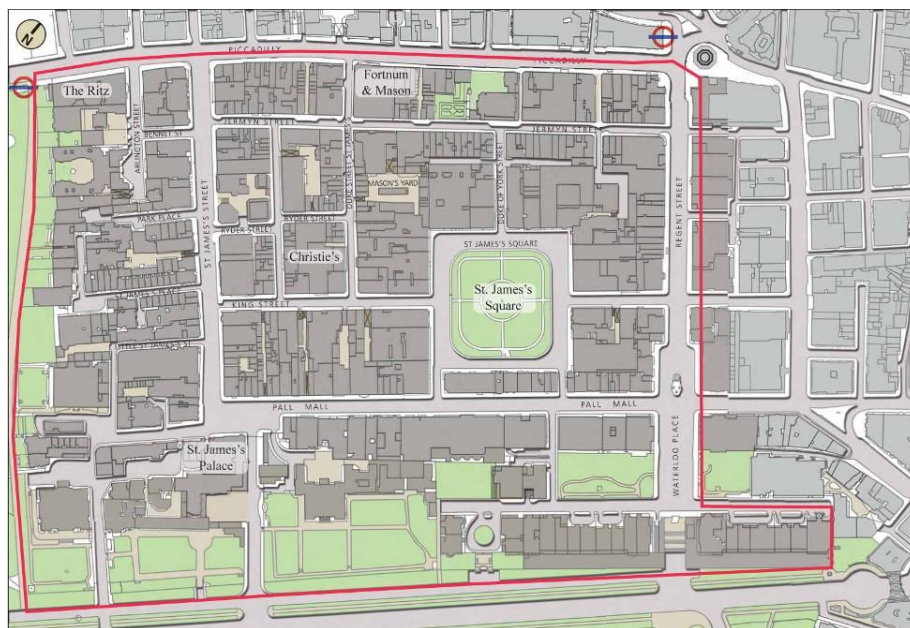


The St James's Paving survey

The St James's Conservation Trust

The St James's Conservation Trust is an amenity society in Westminster which was established in 1998 by a small group of concerned residents and businessmen, headed The Hon. Dominic Elliot and John Beveridge Esq.QC. The Trust consults leading experts in planning, law and other fields and bases its case to the relevant authorities on high quality reports. Over the past eleven years this approach has led to much success in promoting high standards of planning and architecture and maintaining the character of the area. In this case paving survey was done by the Administrator personally who collected the data and analysed it. Full details of the Paving Survey can be found on the Trust's website: www.sjctrust.co.uk

The Trust's Area of Benefit, in which the survey was conducted, is defined by the red line. (See map below) It is bounded to the north by the south side of Piccadilly, to the west by Queens's Walk in Green Park, to the East by the eastern side of Lower Regency Street and to the south by the Mall. St James's Palace is located in the south west corner of the map. This pattern of streets was laid down in the 17th century and St James's Street was one of the first to be properly paved using good quality stone.



The paving survey

Deeply concerned by the degraded nature of the paving in the streets of London's historic St James's, the St James's Conservation Trust carried out a survey of the footways in the area in 2008.

Historic St James's contains the highest concentration of Listed Buildings in the United Kingdom, and yet many of the fine buildings are beset by poorly paved footways which detracts from the buildings' aesthetic qualities.



Carlton House Terrace Grade I -1827-29 by John Nash with Sir James Pennethorne facing south onto The Mall

The footways on the northern side of Carlton House Terrace are paved with tarmac which is inappropriate for such an important historic building.

Conduct of the survey

The survey was carried out over five days in May and June 2008. The observations were made visually (*not with instruments*) and this method was considered adequate to determine the state of paving stones or lack of paving stones where tarmac was in use..



An example of some of the badly damaged concrete paving stones in St James's

A simple system was adopted to measure paving that was completely damaged, three quarters damaged, half damaged, quarter damaged and not damaged. The extent of damage was a measure of the cracking, including hairline cracks and no differentiation of sizes of paving stones was taken into consideration.

The length of each footway was measured using suitable maps and where continuous tarmac was used the lengths were calculated. Where paving stones had not been replaced but their spaces filled with tarmac they were considered as completely damaged paving stones. Photographs were taken of most of the completely damaged stones, areas where paving broken paving had been replaced by tarmac and those streets that were mainly paved with tarmac..

Surface materials

Concrete-The majority of paving stones in St James's, as elsewhere in Westminster, except in places of special prestige, are made of concrete. This material is chosen because of its relative cheapness, but it is not as attractive as natural stones and its *whole life* cost is probably higher than York Stone when its earlier replacement is taken into consideration.

York Stone- (*The term EPS – English Pennine Stone is now used by Westminster City Council*). This is the best stone for use on footways. It is hewn from the Pennine grits of northern England and has been used for many years to pave most of the centres of major cities in the country. It is not cheap in comparison with concrete, but much more durable and, as stated above, its whole life cost is probably cheaper than concrete paving stones. Jermyn Street is paved with York stone, as is the frontage to St James's Palace and Cleveland Row and Little St James's Street.

Tarmac It is surprising that 17% of the area of Historic St James's is paved with tarmac including prestigious streets such as Carlton Gardens, Carlton House Terrace and St James's Place which are mostly surfaced with tarmac. Replacing the tarmac surfaces with paving stones would require a very large number of paving stones which would be costly.

Causes of damage

The survey concluded that a major cause of damaged paving stones is due to the concentrated weight of large heavy lorries mounting the kerb and moving along the pavement. This is illustrated by the picture below.



Damage can also occur as a result of inadequate laying of the stones. Paving stones should be generally laid on a bed of sand to remain strong and more resistant to damage. Smaller modules and thicker stones or reinforced concrete paving could be used.

Analysis

The analysis was conducted in the following stages:-

First: A calculation was made of all the damaged stones irrespective of severity of damage in a particular street. The total for St James's was **1329** damaged paving stones of various degrees of damage.

Second: This was a consolidation of all the completely damaged, three quarters, half and quarter damaged paving stones. This figure for the whole of St James's was consolidated to a figure of **827** totally damaged paving stones.

Third: This involved taking the length of footways into account.

Conclusions

- The condition of the paving in historic St James's is unacceptably poor and must be rectified.
- Lists of the six streets with the most severely damaged paving stones was produced using the above three stages of analysis. Naturally each list was different and the third stage was considered to give the most reliable result and is a guide to Westminster City Council for prioritising the repair of the footways.

Results

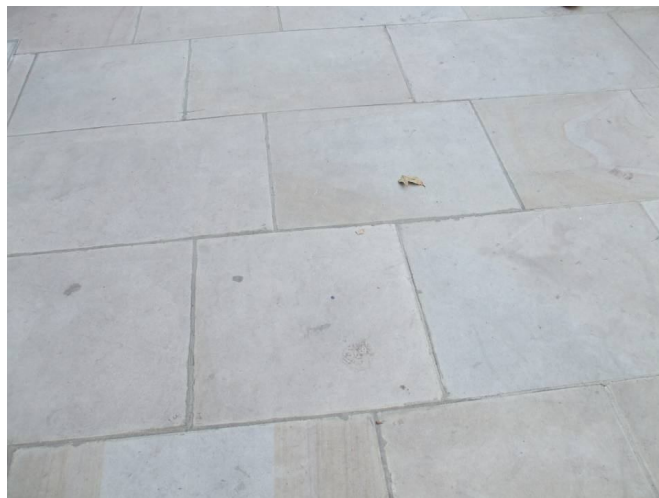
- The paving survey was presented to the Westminster City Commissioner of Transportation and helpful comments were received by the Trust from his staff.
- Major repairs were made to paving stones in King Street, the worst affected street, but regrettably using concrete paving stones.
- A recent Westminster City Council draft public realm document entitled Westminster Way states :

- **Paragraph 68.** In areas of particularly homogeneous townscape character, high numbers of Grade I and II* listed buildings where natural material will survive, limestone, sandstone or gritstone, preferably from British sources, can be used. The generic term for these sedimentary stones is English Pennine Stone (EPS).
- **Paragraph 105.** In historic streets and in townscape compositions that warrant it, EPS or granite is appropriate. The standard, 600mm coursing will be the same as the Westminster and Conservation Standards as noted above for EPS. These streets and locations are noted on map 6 and are streets where the council considers the profile and character to warrant the highest quality specification using natural stone. *Comment: Map 6 indicates that this applies to historic St James's.*
- Crown Passage , an historic pedestrian way between Pall Mall and King Street, will be paved with York stone in March 2010. This is a direct consequence of the arguments made by the Trust Westminster City Council in reliance on this survey.

The Future

It is the desire of the St James's Conservation Trust that all streets in historic St James's should be paved using York stone. A small start is being made with Crown Passage and Jermyn Street is already paved with York stone, as are a few other small parts of streets near St James's Palace. The Trust's immediate next target is St James's Street, a significant thoroughfare in the heart of the most traditionally high quality area of London, of which the present standard of paving is inappropriately poor.

This proposal is in accordance with Westminster City Council's draft public realm policy, but it can only be achieved when funding becomes available. This may be happen as part of a proposal to restore two way road traffic system in St James's Street prior to the 2012 Olympic Games but will depend on funding being made available by Transport for London.



An example of recently laid York stone in Westminster which sets the standard that the St James's Conservation Trust wishes to be adopted in historic St James's