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SOHO
BUSINESS ALLIANCE

The Impact of Transport Strikes on Soho and the West End

We are writing to you on behalf of the [SOHO BUSINESS ALLIANCE](#) (SBA), made up of businesses within the Soho, London area. We stand with SODA, HOLBA and the other business communities in Central London,

The SBA has more than 100 businesses, and support thousands of employees, as well as making a huge difference to the West End, incoming Tourism and Visitors and Residents alike.

We are saddened to hear a further round of industrial action announced during the festive period, a particularly crucial time for our sector and the hospitality businesses we support.

The financial impact of transport strikes on London cannot be understated. In research carried out after strikes in June 2022, 70% of respondents (over 90% in London) said that strikes affected them negatively, with 75% of venues saying they experienced audience cancellations or no-shows. With falls in sales averaging £10,000+ per venue in London on strike days, as well as staff being unable to access their workplaces or homes with ease causes great distress to the entire industry and area.

The loss of revenue will add up to more than £1bn to the UK economy. Strikes will take this additional income away from our members in the hospitality sector who continue the slow road of recovery from the pandemic.

Soho Businesses are still in a precarious position – the peak Christmas period of 2022 was severely impacted by the Omicron variant, and it now looks like Christmas 2023 will be dealt an equally or more damaging blow by industrial action.

Businesses in Soho are having to deal with issues on multiple fronts: energy and supply costs are rising, severe staffing shortages remain, rents are increasing since 2020 and we face a cliff edge of withdrawal of pandemic-era Government support.

Our visitors and workforce are facing massive increases in their cost-of-living, and households up and down the country have to make difficult spending decisions.

We all need reliable, affordable and accessible public transport. We urge all parties to work together to avoid costly and damaging strike action. We hope that theatres will be able to operate at full capacity over the Christmas period, welcoming back our audiences to their favourite festive performances for a fantastic night out.

The SBA, alongside our members and the other trade and business groups represented below, are keen to work with all parties to ensure industrial action is avoided.

Yours sincerely,

Sophies Steakhouse Soho, Jack Solomons, Zima, Hensons Bar, French House, Ceviche, Thin White Duke, Lobos, Negroni, Soho Maintenance, No Escape London, Zebrano, Soho Arts Theatre Club, Soho Estates, Hoppers, Fox Soho Maintenance Ltd, Sophisticats, Purgatory Bar, 40 Dean st, Outlet Residential, Karma Retail, CTS Cleaning Solutions, Thirst Bar, Soho Live Music Club, Balans, 92 Dean st, SOLA, Randall & Aubin, Bubula, Prix Fixe, Pierre Victoire, Bar Italia, Little Italy, Beasy Bar, Koya, Ku Bar, Arts Theatre Club, Lina Stores, and all members of the Soho Business Alliance: <https://sohoba.co.uk/join-us/member-list/>