

Plans for a more uniform look to Valletta streets

Old cities' rehabilitation committees restructured

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The streets and pavements of Valletta have long been criticised for their poor state.

A new committee appointed to address rehabilitation projects in Valletta is preparing a masterplan which aims to standardise the streets and pavements in the capital city.

Resources Minister George Pullicino also stressed the importance of ensuring that the capital's streets and pavements are rendered safe for pedestrians.

Valletta's pavements have long been criticised for their poor state. Just yesterday, a reader who wrote to The Times complained that Valletta's pavements are not wheelchair friendly, with the wheels constantly getting stuck in the uneven paving tiles and cracks, bumps and potholes.

Last October, Martin Scicluna, the former executive president of Din l-Art Helwa, described the city's pavements as "a hazard and a national disgrace".

Speaking during the first joint meeting of the newly appointed rehabilitation committees for Valletta and Floriana, Mdina and Cottonera, Mr Pullicino said it hurts him to see some 11 different types of pavements in the capital city.

"This is not the way things should be done," he said, adding that the masterplan will categorise streets and pavements with the aim of introducing a more uniform look around Valletta. The three former rehabilitation committees dealing with the three regions have been restructured so that a single seven-strong core team will sit on each committee and each one will be chaired by the same person, architect Marie Louise Musumeci. Other members of the committees will include representatives of local councils. The new system, he said, should bring about a more consistent and coordinated approach, with a national body looking at the needs of Malta's fortified historic cities.

Speaking to The Times, Ray Bondin - who is on the committee representing Heritage Malta - expressed his belief that other committees should be set up for other historic towns, like Rabat and Victoria.

Dr Bondin has long been associated with the rehabilitation committees, having headed all three from when they were set up in the 1980s until he resigned a year ago.

"I hope that the committees will continue with the work which has already been started, especially those projects which have not yet been finished," he said, adding that these included the interior of Our Lady of Victory church and the Jesuit church.

Dr Bondin said he agreed with the concept of having a core committee which was present on each of the three committees.

Comments

Denis A. Darmanin (2 weeks ago)

I can't understand how pavements get rehabilitated or repaired, when cars are still allowed to park on them? St. Lucia Street between Old Bakery and Old Mint has become Valletta's major exit and cars have to ride the opposite pavement and residents hardly have space from their doors.

Due respect is to be given to the old hard stone paving, some of which dates to the 1840s and have withstood a war and so-called progress. At a time of leather soled shoes and hob-nailed army boots, these stones were rendered against slipping, yet I was once told that we don't have the means to up-root, render and relay these stones!

And please do something about the highly polished copies near Sir Paul Boffa's monument and the inclined road leading to Marsamxett.

What about the nearly intact lava paved street sections that were zipped to pass pipelines and the likes? I hope that they get properly patched, not like the section of St. Christopher Street where

you can feel stones buckling as you drive over.

We must not forget the steps of St. Ursola and Strait Streets which are in dire needs, even though some pointing was done recently.

Victor Dimech (2 weeks ago)

Whats the use of upgrading pavements in Valletta for cars to park on.I wonder how Dr Pullicino managed to notice 11 different types of pavements with cars parked on them day and night. And what is the use of restoring old churches in Valletta when there is no one to look after them as happened to Our Lady of the Pilar church in West Str. Such a gem of a church, and as soon as it was restored it had to be closed again! Is the new committee open to suggestions especially from us Valletta residents?

Alex Mizzi (2 weeks ago)

committees, committees, committees...just get cracking on the shambles that is Valletta. It's not rocket science, you know!

Vanessa-clair Farrugia (2 weeks ago)

A few years back, I was walking toward the Allied offices, and I rounded the corner with Castille. My daughter tripped on a loose stone, right in front of the guard, keeping watch on the St. Paul's street entrance. The pavement is a highly polished stone, the street was dry as it wasn't raining, and my daughter, still being an 8-year-old, wasn't wearing any high heels, just regular children's shoes. The fall gave her a big bruise on her abdomen, and as she was doubled up in pain, unable to stand up and walk, the guard came over and thankfully helped me carry her to the nearest door-step while she regained her breath.

My otherwise healthy daughter ended up with major bruising on her abdomen, but nothing more serious. Still, I shudder to think what would have been the outcome if an elderly person were to suffer the same fate.
