

**Julia Atherley**

THE tranquillity of one of London's grandest squares has been shattered by the roar of Underground trains below — likened to "living on a train platform".

The Georgian terraces of Cloudesley Square sit above a stretch of the Victoria line between King's Cross and Highbury and Islington, used by one train every 90 seconds in either direction at peak times.

While a distant subterranean hum has been a constant presence in the tree-lined square since the line opened in 1968, some residents claim it has crescendoed in the past few years.

The rattling din is said to be depriving occupants of sleep despite repeated complaints to Transport for London.

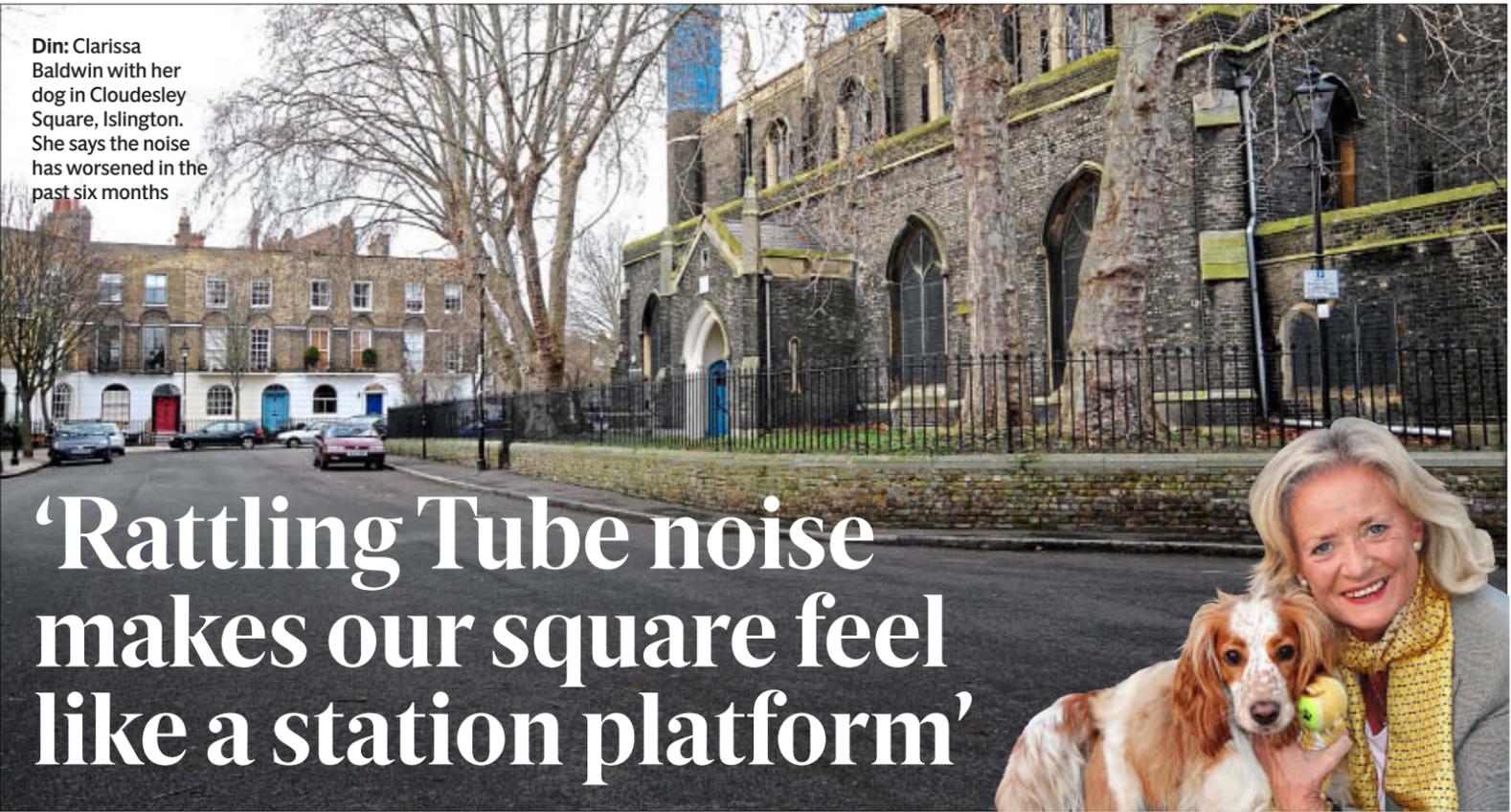
The noise is thought to have been caused by tracks becoming worn down or damaged and it is feared that the amount of work needed to fix similar problems around London is delaying TfL's response.

London Assembly member Jennette Arnold said TfL's response was "progressing at a glacial pace".

Clarissa Baldwin, the former chief executive of Dogs Trust who lives in the square, told the Standard: "It's been going on now for quite a long time but it got really bad about six months ago."

"When you're downstairs you feel as though the train is almost going to come in and join you."

"At one stage you could hear it in our bedroom upstairs. It was house-rocking, really. We can use the downstairs but you couldn't have a dinner party." Victoria line trains travel at up to 50pmh below Cloudesley Square, which is



**Din:** Clarissa Baldwin with her dog in Cloudesley Square, Islington. She says the noise has worsened in the past six months

# 'Rattling Tube noise makes our square feel like a station platform'

home to the Holy Trinity Church, designed by Houses of Parliament architect Sir Charles Barry in 1826.

The church is surrounded by terrace townhouses that sell for up to £2 million. According to TfL, Underground trains are noisier when they travel over tracks that have become worn down or damaged, but this can be alleviated by

grinding the rails. The authority says it spends £150 million a year on track improvements, including a dedicated £1 million to develop rail noise technology. This autumn, TfL has ground a 400-metre stretch of the southbound rail, lessening noise for some in the square. TfL says it is monitoring the results of the recent grinding before

making any decision on their next steps. Lawyer Mark Geday, 50, said he recalled hearing little more than a "very faint swoosh" when he first moved to the square 17 years ago.

But he said: "It reached a point this year where we couldn't use downstairs because it was just constant. It's like living in a train station. My son is at the

top of the house and he was being woken up at night by the trains."

Peter McNaught, of London Underground, said: "We understand the effect that noise can have, and we are committed to doing everything possible to keep noise levels as low as we can. We have met residents in Islington about their concerns."

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