



# Westcombe NEWS

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June 2014 Issue 5



A community newspaper commended by the London Forum of Amenity and Civic Societies

Monthly newspaper of The Westcombe Society: fostering a sense of community

## Save our children from air pollution

**S**choolchildren walking between Blackheath and Charlton are having to endure air pollution levels more than two and a half times the European legal limit, a new study of air pollution across south-east London has revealed.

Prolonged exposure to air pollution causes respiratory problems and can lead to cancer. Pollution from motor vehicles can also affect the development of children's lungs.

### The Devil is in the Diesel

The *WN* has repeatedly highlighted the issue – and has pointed out that “The Devil is in the Diesel.” Air pollution health experts warn that diesel engines in buses, vans, cars and trains may be responsible for thousands of premature deaths a year and cost the NHS billions of pounds.

Government figures for 2008 reveal that 29,000 people die prematurely from air pollution each year. Frank Kelly, professor of environmental health at King’s College London, believes that diesel fuel could be responsible for around one in four of all air pollution deaths.

The message is getting through: in May, Boris Johnson called for an increase in road tax on diesel-fuelled vehicles.

However, it’s not just diesel. Plans to build the Silvertown road tunnel between Greenwich and the Royal Docks are likely to add more pressure – because more road capacity encourages more traffic.

The No to Silvertown Tunnel campaign, together with the Don’t Dump on Deptford’s Heart group, monitored air pollution levels at over 140 locations from Rotherhithe to Bexleyheath in January.

### Local air pollution figures

The results revealed horrifying levels of air pollution. They include:

\* Children walking to school between Blackheath and Charlton face a level of 104 µg/m<sup>3</sup> at the Bramshot Avenue underpass, underneath the A102 – the road that

**WN reporter**

Boris Johnson has said will double the capacity of cross-river traffic if a new tunnel is built. The EU limit is 40 µg/m<sup>3</sup>.

\* Children at Windrush Primary School and students at Royal Greenwich University Technical College, Woolwich Road, Charlton, face levels of nearly twice the EU limit, at 79 µg/m<sup>3</sup>.

\* Pupils at Fossdene Primary School, Charlton, have to endure levels of 48 µg/m<sup>3</sup>.

\* Levels of 43 µg/m<sup>3</sup> were recorded outside Sherington Primary School.

Shopping areas also saw levels which broke EU limits – for example Blackheath Village registered 54 µg/m<sup>3</sup>, the Royal Standard had 55 µg/m<sup>3</sup>, and Charlton Village had 43 µg/m<sup>3</sup>.

The study was carried out between 6th January and 7th February this year. If it hadn’t been the wettest January since records began, it’s likely the results would have been far worse. The Saharan dust cloud over London only made the capital’s poor air quality more visible.

The campaigners now plan to combine their figures with local authority data to get a full picture of air pollution across the area. The groups behind the study were No To Silvertown Tunnel and Don’t Dump on Deptford’s Heart, with backing from Network For Clean Air, which helps citizens carry out pollution studies in their communities.

No To Silvertown Tunnel conducted tests across the borough of Greenwich, including Blackheath and Charlton, as well as locations in Lewisham, Catford, Welling, Bexleyheath, Canning Town, Silvertown and East Ham. Many of these locations will see increased traffic levels if the Silvertown Tunnel gets the go-ahead, putting increased pressure on the A2/A102 and surrounding main roads. These tests follow an earlier No To Silvertown Tunnel study carried out in summer 2013.

Many are now saying that if another river crossing is needed – bridge or tunnel – it should be located further east.

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## News briefs

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### Charity of the Year

It was agreed at the Westcombe Society’s AGM that the new Charity of the year 2014-2015 would be the 999 Club in Deptford, which provides a Drop-in Centre offering social and practical support for the homeless and those with alcohol, drug, and mental and physical health problems; but smaller grants would be given to other worthy candidates for specific needs. *The Chairman’s report at the AGM can be found on page 2 of this issue.*

### Don’t miss this exhibition!

Following the AGM, Mark Johnson-Brown, the manager of Mycenae House, took members of the Westcombe Society on a guided tour of the exhibition of the iconic photographs by Jack Kay, who lived on Westcombe Hill until his retirement. The exhibition – *Right Place, Right Time* – will continue by popular request in Mycenae House until the end of June. Don’t miss it!

### Fire causes traffic chaos

Campaigners against the Silvertown Tunnel claim that a recent fire near the Blackwall Tunnel caused a huge traffic jam on the A102 – and served as a foretaste of the traffic chaos that could result if plans for a new tunnel were to go ahead.

### Westcombe Woodlands

The Friends Summer Party is from 12.00pm at The White House at the top of Crooms Hill. All Friends and their families are welcome. No charge - unless Friends are observed drinking more than three glasses of wine! Children welcome. RSVP to Tim (tim@ttbarnes.com or 020-8858-1185)

### Thieves jailed

Two men who stole money from cash points at the Natwest Bank in Old Dover Road have been jailed for six months. The police report that after serving their sentence they will be deported to Romania

### Lewisham Run-around

A major reconstruction of the Lewisham Roundabout has just commenced, and is likely to continue for years. See www.NewLewisham.com.

### To Infinity and Beyond

The *WN* now has a QR (short for quick response) code. (See top of this page). People with a smartphone or tablet can now scan the code and link directly to the Westcombe Society webpage. So you can now access it on your smartphone or tablet.

### Eyeful Tower

According to a report in the *FT*, guests at the Shangri-La Hotel, in the largely glass Shard tower, may be able to see into other visitors' rooms thanks to the building's reflective qualities. The hotel said that "blinds are available for guests' privacy".

### Local elections

Congratulations to the winners – including Denise Scott-McDonald in Peninsula Ward.

## The faces of St George's



In May, it was Christian Aid Week for Churches all over the country, and St George's in Glenlucie Road celebrated with a fund-raising dinner attended by over thirty people, who enjoyed an amazing five course meal served by three generations of the same family.

*Top right: Toby, with his Mum, Tracey. Toby's Nan, Susan, was also on the team.*

*Centre: Christian Aid Poster*

PHOTOS: MARILYN LITTLE

### Local election results - Blackheath Westcombe ward (turnout 47.69 %)

Name	Party	Votes	% breakdown: (2010 figures are in brackets)
Trevor William ALLMAN	Green Party	1,098	Labour 39.3% (31.2%)
<b>Geoff BRIGHTY*</b>	Conservative	<b>1,797</b>	Cons. 32.3% (30.2%)
Lee COPPACK	Liberal Democrats	458	Green 19.8% (13%)
<b>Paul Raymond MORRISSEY*</b>	Labour	<b>2,028</b>	Lib Dem 8.6% (23.2%)
Michael John O'KEEFE	Liberal Democrats	477	
Laela PAKPOUR TABRIZI	Conservative	1,459	
<b>Cherry PARKER*</b>	Labour	<b>2,185</b>	
Thomas TURRELL	Conservative	1,518	
Damien Francis John WELFARE	Labour	1,725	* Elected
Labour 39.3% (31.2%)		Conservative 32.3% (30.2%)	Green 19.8% (13%) Lib Dem 8.6% (23.2%)

## Time running out for Greenwich Time?

In October 2011 the *WN* published the news that the government criticised Greenwich and Tower Hamlets Councils for publishing Council-owned local newspapers such as *Greenwich Time*.

More recently, Eric Pickles, Minister for Communities & Local Government, added his voice, calling such papers "Pravdas" that peddled "propaganda."

It was estimated at the time that *Greenwich Time* cost around £600,000 a year – paid for by local taxpayers.

Now the issue is coming back, with a vengeance. Mr Pickles has repeated his accusations, and expressed concern that local authorities have tried to ban bloggers or Twitter users from covering public council meetings. (The *Camarthen Journal* reported that the blogger and campaigner Jacqui Thompson was arrested, handcuffed, and then detained at a police station for two hours. All she had done was to film a public meeting of Carmarthenshire Council on her camera-phone.)

Mr Pickles said: "It is scandalous that

bloggers have been handcuffed for tweeting from council meetings, whilst propaganda on the rates drives the local press out of business. Only Putin would be proud of a record like that."

His argument is that Council newspapers "only print one side of every story", that they cost taxpayers' money, and they compete with local papers for advertising, an important source of revenue.

The counter argument is that the Councils' papers contain vital information about local services such as housing, and planning applications; and that commercial papers (such as *Greenwich Mercury* and *News Shopper*) only achieve 50% circulation, if that, among local residents. *Greenwich Time* claims to achieve 100% circulation, though whether its readership is 100% is debatable . . .

Mr Pickles says *Greenwich Time* will now face legal proceedings for breaking the publicity code for local authorities – part of the Local Audit and Accountability Act passed in January this year.

**The Westcombe Society  
in conjunction with St George's Church/Parish of East Greenwich**

## Summer Picnic

Sat. 12th July 1.00 to 4.00pm

Mycenae Gardens

Entrance £1.00 adult members/£2.00 non members. Children enter free

Bring a picnic or enjoy a ploughman's lunch and a cream tea. Licensed bar, live music, home-made cakes, charity stalls, raffle, children's activities and traditional races

Come and spend a few hours in the lovely grounds of Mycenae House and join in this family community event

# COMMUNITY NEWS

## WESTCOMBE NEWS

### ALL EDITORIAL CORRESPONDENCE TO:

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Tel. 020 8858 8489

### ALL MATERIAL TO BE SENT TO:

wnews@westcombesociety.org

### Deadline for the combined July/August issue: 16th June

### News Editor:

**Environment Editor:** Maggie Gravelle

**Reporters:** The community - that means you!

### ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE

**Emily Norton** All queries and comments to: 020 8853 2756 environment@westcombesociety.org

### DISTRIBUTION

**Myles Dove & Barbara Henley**  
**Jean-Jacques and Maureen Aune**

Volunteer distributors please phone 020 8853 3740, we need your help!

### ADVERTISING MANAGER

**Marilyn Little, 163 Westcombe Hill, SE3 7DP 020 8853 1312**  
(marilyn.little@btinternet.com)

All adverts payable in advance by cheque to **The Westcombe Society**.

### Costs:

**DISPLAY:** Single column 6cm x 6cm: One - four issues £35, five-plus issues £30 each. Other sizes: please inquire.

**Classified Ads** (Market Place) 30p per word (A telephone number = one word. An email/web address = 3 words.) Deadline for all adverts is 10th day of the preceding month

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### Contact the Westcombe Society:

WestcombeNews@egroups.com

**Publisher:** The Westcombe Society

**Chairman:** Marilyn Little

Tel. 020 8853 1312

*The views expressed in the Westcombe News are not necessarily those of the Westcombe Society or of the Editor.*

*We take all reasonable precautions to protect the interests of our readers by ensuring as far as possible the bona fides of our advertisers but cannot accept any responsibility for them. Any complaints should be addressed to the advertiser.*

To access back-numbers (in colour) go to: www.westcombesociety.org/westcombe-news/  
Westcombe Society's Blog:  
http://westcombe.blogspot.com

### Westcombe society membership

please send this membership form to:  
peter Lewins, 221 Westcombe Hill,  
SE3 7DR

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## The Westcombe Society's AGM

I must again thank all those people who set aside time to assist the society in so many ways. But begin by saying that we have lost some valuable supporters of our society over the last year. Lawrence Smith who was an enthusiastic and committed member of the Environment Committee, Geoff Garvey a valuable contributor to the *Westcombe News* and Les Dodson and John Bolland who were both founder members of the Society. We acknowledge the commitment they all made.

I have to thank the Executive committee who oversee the running of the Society, and The Environment Committee who work hard to ensure that Westcombe Park and surrounding areas are protected, maintained and improved in many different ways. We work with other groups including the Greenwich, Charlton and Blackheath Societies, the BJWP, The Royal Parks, the Safer Neighbourhood TeamPanel, and we also support GLUG in their attempts to improve/lessen the effects of the London Bridge rebuild on our area.

I should also mention the support that we are given by our Ward Councillors on many local issues.

We also have to thank the Events Committee who have a very full calendar of social events. They provide entertainment for young and old. Most of the events are held at Mycenae House or in the Gardens and are very well supported. We are reliant on a host of other volunteers in the form of Cake and sandwich makers and tea pourers etc. The Events committee also have links with many local charities and we are happy to help when needs are made known to us. Joanne the chairman of the Events committee will add further details as well as mentioning our new volunteers.

But the committees are only part of the story. We are very grateful to ALL our helpers, our deliverers of the *Westcombe News*, our graffiti busters and all the volunteers who help at the Bazaar and other events year after year. Note that our volunteers have been helping for years so it must be quite enjoyable and not too onerous! So if you have the odd afternoon to spare do let us know – we are grateful for any assistance.

The *Westcombe News* continues to be a very popular read covering both local and national issues that affect our area. We have many long standing advertisers. We much appreciate our editor Neville Grant and the time that he spends in ensuring we meet press deadlines whilst still producing a high class publication. We welcome contributions and details of where they should be sent are in the 'News'. And finally I have to thank Michael Helm who continues to inspect our accounts.

Many thanks to everyone for yet another successful year.

**Marilyn Little, Chairman, the Westcombe Society**

### Your committee. The following were elected or re-elected:

<b>Marilyn Little (Chair &amp; Treasurer)</b>	<b>Diane Blackwell</b>
<b>Jean-Jacques Aune (Deputy Chair)</b>	<b>Neville Grant (<i>Westcombe News</i>)</b>
<b>Jan Barnett (Hon Sec.)</b>	<b>Barbara Henley</b>
<b>Peter Lewins (Membership Sec.)</b>	<b>Joanne Lucas</b>
	<b>Caroline Owens</b>
	<b>Patricia Slade-Baker</b>

## Letters to the editor

Any views expressed are those of the writers only, and are not necessarily those of the *WN* or the Westcombe Society.

### From: Maurice Old Dover Road

I noticed two pieces in recent issues of the *WN* about the Queen's Oak in Greenwich Park. Both pieces I found rather pathetic. I couldn't care two pins whether the tree was an oak or a sweet chestnut.

All I see there now is a railed-off area with a notice about this historic tree. But there is no tree, just a pile of firewood! It's a joke.

When I first moved south of the river forty years ago there was an imposing trunk of an old tree standing. I found it very interesting. It was a sight to see – an attraction – in the park. I always made my way down the hill to see it. Years passed and I watched it slowly disintegrating – what idiots allowed this to happen?

It would have been a simple matter to prop up the trunk, injecting it or coating it in resin to preserve it. It enruffles me now to see the remains of that historic landmark.

The Fairy Oak in the gardens of Queensway has been preserved, it's still standing, preserved and remodelled. Why couldn't the people responsible for Greenwich Park have done the same thing?

### From: Sharon Brokenshire

Many thanks to everybody in the Westcombe Society who voted for South London Special League as their chosen charity of the year.

The money was spent on funding our highly successful and inspirational Specialist Sports Camp that empowers the most disabled young people in the community through sport.

Please see the report on page 6 of this issue.

### From: The Blackheath Society

The works in Lewisham mean a significant detour for pedestrians to Lewisham Station. This could be mitigated by the re-opening of the gate to Platform 4 of the station, a campaign which we supported strongly several years ago.

There is a petition in favour of the re-opening of the gate which you may wish to sign. The link is as follows:

<http://www.change.org/en-GB/petitions/south-eastern-railway-open-the-platform-4-gate-at-lewisham-railway-station-all-day-every-day-and-add-standalone-oyster-readers-to-it>

## Election time again

St. George's Church was the venue for a well-attended hustings meeting, organised by the Westcombe Society and chaired by Gordon Baker, armed with his egg-timer.



All four parties standing at the council elections were represented: Geoff Brighty\*, Laela Pakpour Tabrizi and Thomas Turrell for the Conservatives; Trevor Allman, Green Party; Lee Coppock (who was not able to be present) and Michael O'Keeffe for the Liberal Democrats and Paul Morrissey\*, Cherry Parker\* and Damien Welfare for Labour. (\*Elected)

No prizes for guessing what residents' questions focussed on: local transport, the development of London Bridge Station, increased congestion and pollution in the area, the Woolwich Ferry replacement, and the proposal to build an IKEA outlet on the Sainsbury's site. All the parties pledged to keep the public informed about train services and to press for improved bus services.

On the subject of IKEA, the Conservatives expressed their opposition and the Labour candidates said they were awaiting the outcome of the independent traffic modelling exercise. All candidates endorsed the safer cycling campaign, including a riverside cycle path.

There were also concerns about the proposal to build the Silvertown tunnel – firmly opposed by the Greens and LibDems. The other two parties awaited assurances on the environmental and congestion implications and stressed the need to consider alternative river crossings.

Most of the candidates shared residents' concerns about the ability of the infrastructure to cope with the increase in housing: though it was important to balance housing needs with other provision such as transport, employment and the environment. Another questioner raised the importance of local shops to the community, and the need for parking issues to be addressed.

All present agreed on the importance of local involvement and the need to engage people in political debate – a process nurtured by a very successful meeting.

Maggie Gravelle

### From: Brian Peirce Dear Neighbours:

It is with regret that we announce that we have left. Having lived here since the late 60's we are relocating and wish to say "Thank You" for all the friendship shown to us in that time.

For myself I can say that from my earliest recollections in the late 1930's when I went to Mr. Dannatt's Sunday School I wanted to live in this area. But sadly, along with my wife and daughter it is time to move on.

Many of you have become our dearest friends and it is a wrench to go, and in so doing give our best wishes to you all. In one respect something we will not miss are speed humps and the plethora of street furniture. Where we are heading they do not, as yet, have what one journalist has called "traffic harming" and for that we will be grateful.

Good-bye from the Peirces.

### From: Caroline Owens Beaconsfield Road

We wish to hold a Competition to Design the Westcombe Society Christmas Card for 2014. We are publishing this now, as entries need to be submitted by the beginning of September. Full details will be in the next issue (when the Committee has worked them out at their next meeting!) but we shall be looking for something that the entrant believes to be both seasonal, and representative of Westcombe Park.

**CORRECTION:** On the letters page in May, we referred to "President Blair". This should have been "President Blair." [sic]

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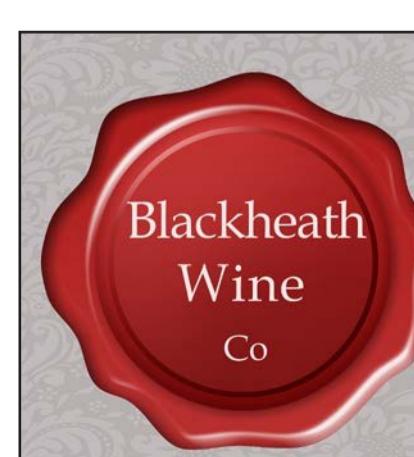
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# LOCAL NEWS

## A bridge too far

Transport for London has just put up ugly temporary fences on both sides of the Old Dover Road and Charlton Road bridges over the A102 – without consulting or notifying residents or councillors.

TFL can't even say how long the fences will be up, what work is to be carried out behind them, or how high the bridges' railings will be once the work is complete.

According to one nearby resident, the new fences "look ugly, look scary, ruin the view and make you feel that you are in prison". Another resident describes them simply as "hideous".

Work on the parapet and railings on the Charlton Road bridge was judged necessary following an accident last October in which a car struck the north side of the bridge and part of the railing fell onto the A102 below (thankfully no one was hurt).

Following safety inspections, work was also judged necessary at the Old Dover Road bridge.

Everyone would agree that the Charlton Road bridge needs repair and that safety should always take priority. However, Greenwich Council was not consulted or informed before TFL put up these "heavy-duty temporary containment barriers" on both bridges. Since their arrival, the council's highways department has asked to see TFL's programme for the repair work,



and to be told a completion date, but TFL cannot provide answers.

As usual TFL are going about this the wrong way – consulting no-one, and putting up ugly temporary fences while they take months on end to decide what to do. TFL is not a good neighbour to those living by the A2/A102 motorway: while TFL refused to put up higher fences to protect residents of Siebert Road and Westcombe Hill from noise and pollution, it presses ahead with plans for huge advertising screens on the Sun-in-the-Sands roundabout despite their refusal by the Council.

Why can't TFL actually talk to the council and local people about what it wants to do, and why?

### UPDATE:

TFL have told Labour GLA Member Len Duvall that "In the interest of public safety we have installed temporary concrete barriers, and are now working on a scheme to make the bridges permanently safe."

No one knows when this will be. . .

## Richard Buchanan

David Brown, the chief engineer on the Channel Tunnel, recently spoke to the Blackheath Scientific Society about high speed trains in Europe, and the proposed HS2 in Britain.

These trains run at up to 250km/hr (160 mph) and can halve journey times. When opened, they attract more passengers, numbers doubling again within four years. The lines they run on have specially designed, secure signalling: because track-side signals flash by in a blur, driver information is displayed on-board.

Mr Brown was very much in favour of the HS2 line, saying that Britain has become London-centric and that we need better communications with the North, to enable development there. The West Coast

Main Line has double the number of passengers using it since the upgrade that took place four years ago, and is already running to capacity.

He agreed with Sir David Higgins, chairman of HS2, that the line should be built sooner than originally planned; and that the first phase of construction should go to Crewe where a transport hub could be developed. It should also have a direct connection to the Channel Tunnel rail link (HS1) – even if it cost £1bn to do it.

One hears of higher speed trains, but these are only practical if distances between stations are much greater than in Europe; China is currently looking into magnetically-levitated trains that can travel at 700km/hr.

## Autism Awareness Schools Campaign

South East London charity Montessori Education for Autism (MEfA) has launched a fundraising campaign to expand their programmes for children with autism. The charity runs a free-of-charge after-school nurture group for primary-aged schoolchildren with autism.

Schools are invited to join the campaign by raising £100 for the charity.

"We hope the schools in South East London and further afield will support us," Wendy Fidler, MEfA's director said, "The Me 4MEfA Campaign will help to raise awareness of the needs of children with autism in schools and in the community."

The Campaign was launched at Blackheath High School for Girls: Wendy Fidler gave a presentation at a school assembly, assisted by Dot who attends the school. Dot is volunteering as a helper as part of her Duke of Edinburgh Award.

The group is for children who are having difficulties, including behavior and interaction, at school because of their autism. Blackheath High School is the first school to sign up.

*A free-of-charge after-school nurture group is held at Mycenae House in Blackheath.*

*To find out more, please contact*

MEfA: 0208 305 2202  
/07710433994

The Friends of Mycenae Gardens present

# Sunday 22 June 12 - 5.30pm

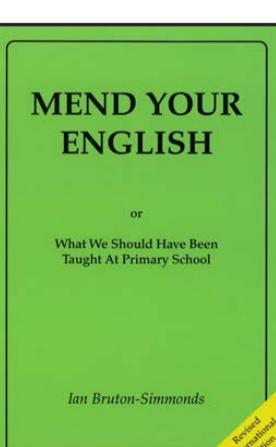
## The Big Summer Sunday Extravaganza

Live Music Performance Workshops Demos Family Fun Kids Cinema Great Food Bar Stalls

As part of Royal Borough of Greenwich ParksFest

Featuring artists from Icarus Acoustic Club & Jazz Nights Blackheath Centre for Singing

**Free**



## Better safe than sorry

Remember those five chihuahuas stolen from a dog-breeder's home in Lissett? The dogs, including Crufts champion Xena, were abandoned 150 miles away, hungry, thirsty, but alive, being too hot to handle. The moral: always micro-chip your champion chihuahua!

Dog-theft will become a thing of the past as microchipping will soon become compulsory for all dog owners in England.

Get your dog microchipped and you can be assured that should it be lost (or stolen), it is more likely to be returned to you safe and sound.

Working in partnership with the Dogs Trust, Blackheath Westcombe Safer Neighbourhoods team are to hold a FREE Dog Microchipping event on Saturday June 14th. from 11.00 am to 3.00 pm at Mycenae House, 90 Mycenae Road.



Microchipping your dog has a number of benefits – it deters dog thieves, it reduces the number of strays, and enables vets to contact dog owners for emergency procedures. It also enables identification of dogs in emergency situations so that dogs and owners can be moved and reunited more quickly.

## Free bike-marking event

Theft of pedal cycles is a common crime throughout the UK, and the police have noticed there has been an increase in thefts locally. The Blackheath Westcombe Safer Neighbourhood Team are offering advice on how to keep your cycle safe over the coming months.

We have found that a high number of the stolen pedal cycles were left insecure, and others had poor quality locks or they were poorly fitted. Sometimes they were simply left unattended, without locks.

You should protect your bicycle by following some simple steps:

- Always lock your bicycle even if you are just leaving it for a few minutes
- Buy a good quality lock. We recommend a high quality D-lock
- Lock your bike to something immovable like a bike rack
- When leaving your bike unattended, lock both wheels and remove detachable items like lights
- Lock your bicycle away in a secure shed or garage

\* When buying a new bike, insist on proof of ownership, and check the bike frame number at BikeRegister.

Cyclist are urged to keep a record of their frame number, the make and model of their bike, and any other unique marks that could help to identify it. You can register your frame number on these websites:

- ♦ [www.bikeregister.com](http://www.bikeregister.com)
- ♦ [www.immobilise.com](http://www.immobilise.com)

This will enable the police to check databases, and inform you if your bike has been found.

### CONTACT DETAILS

◆ EMERGENCY	999
◆ NON-EMERGENCY	101

*Blackheath Westcombe Safer Neighbourhood Team supported by the Safer Transport Team will be running a FREE bike marking event at Mycenae House on Saturday the 14th June 2014 between 11.00 and 3.00 pm. Marking your bike deters potential thieves as your bike can be easily traced if it is stolen.*

### THE GONDOLIERS IN A DAY!

SUNDAY 15th. JUNE 2014

Kingswood Hall. Kingswood Place, SE13 5BU

### Afternoon rehearsal FOR SINGERS. CONCERT performance 6.30pm

Each year as a fundraiser, The Centenary Company invites singers to 'come and sing' in a 'from scratch' performance of a G&S opera. This year it's *The Gondoliers*. Our Music

Director, Elinor Corp, will put singers through their paces during the afternoon, in preparation for the evening concert performance. So come & join us in the chorus!

To take part, pre-register on 020 8859 8400 or [centenarycompany@gmail.com](mailto:centenarycompany@gmail.com) by Friday 6th June. Cost for singers: £12. Scores available for hire on the day.

Audience tickets: £10 in advance (or on the door): 020 8859 8400

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# FEATURES

## Instilling the love of learning

An overview of Greenwich Steiner School by NEVILLE GRANT

The first in an occasional series on local schools



A classroom in action: the teachers say that the circular lighting system in most of the rooms helps to develop a sense of calm and inclusiveness.

The Steiner School in Mycenae Road has come a long way since it started 23 years ago in St George's Church in Glenluce Road. At that time it was almost like a parents' co-operative: it relied heavily on the involvement of parents – supervising play on the eccentric hillside on which St George's sits, painting walls, donating equipment, raising funds.

In today's Steiner School, parents still play a crucial role, as they do in all Steiner schools, which have always regarded education as a partnership between parents teachers – and, of course, the children.

But today, the school is now on a real professional basis – well-staffed and equipped; the school has adapted the Steiner Waldorf curriculum, and provides an all-round education for some 150 children aged 3 - 14 years. Some kindergarten classes still continue in St George's, but most are happily ensconced in the elegance and beauty of Woodlands House.

A building that once housed John Julius Angerstein, merchant, Lloyds underwriter, and patron of the arts whose collection formed the nucleus of the National Gallery, is now a centre of learning, filled with the low buzz of eager young voices. The Steiner School, with its emphasis on "head, hands and heart" is now fully established.

Some children – "the Acorns" – come under the age of three, to attend a play-group. They get accustomed to the school and its ambience, and effortlessly graduate to the kindergarten which caters for 3 1/2 to six year olds.

Formal learning of the three R's does not feature in the Steiner kindergarten: the belief is that children will learn these skills more effectively if they have had plenty of

time and opportunity to develop socially, emotionally and physically first in a creative, harmonious and non-threatening environment.

The result: the children acquire a life-long love of learning. Learning is not a chore, a burden imposed on them by the teacher, but something that takes place organically as the child develops.

**Who's right?**  
*"A greater emphasis on structured learning is the answer"* - Sir Michael Wilshaw, Chief Inspector, Ofsted  
*"Don't rush to formal learning too early"* - Beatrice Merrick  
**the British Association of Early Childhood Education**

Go into a kindergarten classroom - any classroom, at any level, and it is striking how calm and purposeful the atmosphere is, how at ease the children are with each other, and with their teachers

### Head, hand and heart

Another feature of the kindergarten class is that it is mixed in all possible ways: for example, 6 year olds are deliberately placed in the same class as three, four and five-year olds, so that they learn responsibility, and the importance of setting a good example: the beginning of parenting skills, perhaps?

The main focus of the kindergarten is play: children learn through play. Play takes place both inside and outside and includes activities such as cooking, painting, and handicrafts, for example, sewing, knitting and weaving. These activities develop socialisation skills, and psychomotor skills – these are the "hands" part of

*"Receive the child with reverence.  
Educate them in love.  
Send them forth in freedom."*

- Rudolf Steiner

the curriculum. Music and movement, too, play an important part – and the children also take it in turns to do chores: sweeping the floor, washing up, and so on.

What of "the head"? The main building block of literacy – oracy – is highly developed in these early years, and counting rhymes and memory games play an important role in cognitive development.

Numeracy also features in important ways: many activities such as sorting, counting, weighing, playing shop, post office, folding napkins, setting places at table, etc. help to give numbers and measurement meaning in real life.

### The later years

With a firm basis laid in the kindergarten, the children learn, seemingly effortlessly after their sixth birthday: and I was surprised – impressed – to see the quality of written work produced by eight year olds, producing well constructed sentences in "joined up" writing. The work in maths is also of an outstanding quality: nor is science neglected – there is even a mobile chemistry lab.

Look through any child's Lesson Book (written and illustrated by the child, Steiner doesn't encourage textbooks) and you will see work on Native Americans, World War One, photosynthesis, bees, healthy diet, bread-making, poetry (written by the children) ..... no doors are closed to the inquisitive mind. Ask any child about what they have been learning, and they will respond fluently, and confidently.

Creative activities such as songs, storytelling and rhythmical verses, also play an



A cello class: music plays an important part in the children's education

important part – perhaps one could say that these were part of the "heart" part of the curriculum.

Other elements of the curriculum are not neglected: every child for example, learns at least one musical instrument, they all do gardening activities, and they all learn French and German – and, in one case, Spanish. There are regular outdoor games – in the grounds of Mycenae Gardens, and on the heath.

A question every parent wants to ask concerns the interface between Steiner and mainstream schools. What happens at 14? Already research is being carried out on this question, but the evidence so far is very positive: Steiner children have inculcated into them a love of learning that enables them to cope easily with GCSE and A levels, and can only stand them in good stead throughout the rest of their lives.

## Time for art

This year there are over twenty artists taking part in the annual Open Studios event in the Westcombe area. Among them are Colin Boothman and Felicity Moss (The Studio in Mycenae House), Nicola Corrigan and Laura Matthews (5 Maze Hill), Jane Jones (5c Charlton Road), Maggie Learmonth and Maria Silva (40 Hardy Road and Ann Dingsdale (10 Hardy Road). A little further afield, Carol Kenna and Stephen Lobb display their work at The Trafalgar Rowing Centre, 13-16 Crane Street (off Park Row)

**For full details of all the artists, and a map please visit the website.**

**Dates: 14th/15th & 21st/22nd June**

**From 1.00 to 6.00pm Visit: http://www.greenwichopenstudios.co.uk**



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# WHAT'S ON

## ARTS

**NATIONAL MARITIME MUSEUM**  
War Artists at Sea Until February 2015  
From April 16th: **GUIDING LIGHTS:** marking the 500th anniversary of Trinity House

**BLACKHEATH DECORATIVE & FINE ARTS SOCIETY**, St Mary's Church Hall, Cresswell Park, Blackheath 4th Thursday of every month, 2.00 for 2.30. Next meeting: 26th June Theodora Clarke talks on **Russian Art: Introduction to the Avant Garde** Non-members £5 on the door.  
[www.artsinblackheath.org.uk](http://www.artsinblackheath.org.uk) or ring 83187550

### GREENWICH DECORATIVE & FINE ARTS SOCIETY

King William Court, the University of Greenwich



### NEXT LECTURE:

9th June: Life and Art in Paris in the Jazz Age - Those Crazy Years: talk by Linda Collings

8852 7873 Non-members £8.00

### GREENWICH OPEN STUDIOS ART TRAIL 2014 14/15 AND 21/22 JUNE 1.00 -6.00 pm

This year there are plenty of participating artists in the Westcombe area. For full details and map please visit <http://www.greenwichopenstudios.co.uk/>

### BLACKHEATH ART SOCIETY SUMMER EXHIBITION

in Blackheath Halls: Thu 5th-Sun 29th Jun Mon-Fri 10.00am-5.00pm

### MADE IN GREENWICH GALLERY

[www.madeingreenwich.co.uk](http://www.madeingreenwich.co.uk) 324 Creek Road

SE10 June 3rd - 15th Terry Scales and Christiana Angelini exhibition: 'Observing the Familiar'

June 4th 7.30 pm poetry evening with Patrick Early and Matt Bryden £5.00 (£4.00 concs.) to include drink and nibbles. [www.poetrypf.co.uk/](http://www.poetrypf.co.uk/)

July 1st at 7.00 pm: Graham Fawcett on Ted Hughes as part of his World Poets tour £10.00 to inc.

drinks & light buffet. Booking recommended.

### ASHBURNHAM TRIANGLE ASSOCIATION

Thurs. 5th June Neil Rhind & Julian Watson talk on their book *Greenwich Revealed* at the Mercure Hotel, Catherine Grove, Ashburnham Triangle, from 7.30 pm. Tickets inc. free glass of wine are £5.50 if booked in advance, £7.50 on the door.

## CHILDREN & FAMILY

**GREENWICH THEATRE** Crooms Hill, Greenwich Box office: 020 8858 7755. Until Sun 1st June **ALICE IN WONDERLAND**



### BLACKHEATH HALLS

SAT 7 JUN 15.00h

**THE MAGIC HARP** Morgan, Anna & their dog live at the foot of the magic mountain, home of the fairy folk. 4+ Tickets £7.00

**SE LONDON DADS GROUP DADS ALERT:** Regular stay-and-play for dads and children under five at Sherington Children's Centre, 14 Sherington Road every Wednesday from 9:30 - 11:30am. Contact: [www.SELondonDads.org.uk](http://www.SELondonDads.org.uk) or email: [info@selondondads.org.uk](mailto:info@selondondads.org.uk)

### AGE EXCHANGE

**BOOK SALES:** on the second Saturday every month (except August & December) 10.00 am - 4.00 pm.

**LUNCHTIME CONCERTS** on the last Saturday of every month by Trinity Laban students. Free, but there is a retiring collection in aid of Age Exchange & Blackheath Village Library.

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W. [www.pointers-school.co.uk](http://www.pointers-school.co.uk)

## THE WESTCOMBE SOCIETY

Summer Picnic – Saturday 12th July, Macmillan World's Biggest Coffee Morning Friday 26th September - 10.00am to 2.00pm, main hall Children's Nearly New Sale Saturday 27th Sept. Members' Evening – Saturday 11th October – Chrysanthemum Tea Saturday 25th October Quiz Friday 7th November – evening, main hall Please ring Joanne on 07709 571777 if you would like to help out on any of these events!

## COMMUNITY

### FRIENDS OF AGE EXCHANGE

AGM Thurs 12th June 6.30 pm (Complimentary drinks) for 7.00 pm at Clarendon Hotel SE3 0RW

### FRIENDS OF GREENWICH PARK

AGM is on Thursday June 19th at 7.30 pm in The Theatre, Blackheath High School for Girls

### WOODLANDS FARM Tel. 8319 8900

BARN DANCE! Woodlands Farm is holding its second Barn Dance on Sat. 5 July, 7.30-11.00pm. Live country music by Skinners Rats. Please bring your own food, drinks and glasses. Tickets £12 each.

### CANCER RESEARCH LUNCH

Thursday 5th June at The Clarendon Hotel, Montpelier Row, Blackheath SE3 0RW

To book lunches call Wendy Templeman on 020 8265 0335 by Monday 3rd March Cost £8.50.

### HALSTOW SCHOOL SUMMER FAYRE

Sunday 29th June 12 - 4pm Entrance on Kemsing Road, SE10 Bouncy Castles, Lots of Sports and Games, BBQ, Pimms stall, Plant sale etc

### INDUSTRIAL HISTORY SOCIETY

17th June Ian Bull talks on The narrow gauge railways of the Royal Arsenal. Meeting at The Old Bakehouse, Bennett Park, SE3, Please use the car park behind the station. Meetings start at 7.30 and non members are charged £1.

**BLACKHEATH BRIDGE CLUB** duplicate sessions in Mycenae House Mon. & Thurs. 7.15 pm & on Wed. at 1.15 Tel. 8851 2609

### BLACKHEATH FLOWER CLUB

Third Friday of every month at 1.45 pm at Mycenae House

### GREENWICH MERIDIAN CHOIR

If you are interested in joining the choir as a regular member, (rehearsals are Thursday evenings during term time), contact **Jean Valsler** on 0208 8527548 or email [brookjean@btinternet.com](mailto:brookjean@btinternet.com)

**AMNESTY BOOK SALE** Sat. 21st June 9.30 - 4.30 pm. Book sale at the Church of the Ascension, Dartmouth Row, Blackheath. Bargains galore on a wide range of books on many different subjects

### LIVE JAZZ AT MYCENAE HOUSE

Candlelit jazz, special guest on the second Friday each month. Bar & Food available. 8pm. £10/ £8

### THE PLEASANT PLEASAUNCE MONTHLY MARKET

last Sunday of every month 10.00 am - 2.00 pm Arts, Crafts, Clothes & Fresh Produce.

### GLOBAL FUSION MUSIC & ARTS

Fortnightly workshops: Tuesdays & Friday evenings 7.30 - 8.30 at Mascalls Meeting Rooms off Victoria Way Charlton SE7 7TT. Tai Chi, Singing, Drumming, Writers' Group, African Dance Info: 020 8858 9497

### OTTIE AND THE BEA 12 Old Dover Road

Sun. 8th June 11.am - 12.30 pm The Loop Magazine are running a workshop on how to write for a newspaper for ages 8+. £12.00

### Mon 30th June 4.30pm:

DAVID COUSINS on his latest book *Charlie Merrick's Misfits*. Free but please book. 8465 5318

### AGE EXCHANGE

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**LUNCHTIME CONCERTS** on the last Saturday of every month by Trinity Laban students. Free, but there is a retiring collection in aid of Age Exchange & Blackheath Village Library.

## ENGLISH FOLK MUSIC 9.00 pm every Tuesday



at the Lord Hood pub,  
Creek Road;  
jazz on  
Thursdays

## SUMMER WINE TASTING

Davys Wine Vaults - Greenwich High Road

Saturday 14th June 2014 10.30am to 1.30pm £49.95 per person for the tasting and 4 course lunch.

Davys Wine Shop - 171, Greenwich High Road SE10 8JA

Cheese and Wine Tasting in conjunction with The Cheeseboard

Wednesday 25th June 2014 - £25.

Contact 020 8858 9147 for booking/further info

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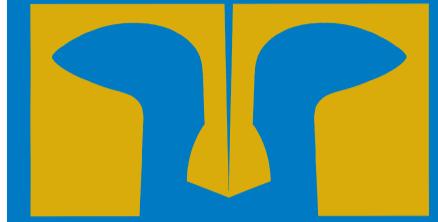
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## MUSIC

**BLACKHEATH HALLS** Tel 020 8463 0100 June 1st: Leslie Howard plays Beethoven Schubert & Liszt 11.00 am £14.00 | £12.00

June 2nd, 9th, 16th. Monday Luncheon recitals 1.10 pm Welcome to the summer series of Monday recitals. Free

June 3rd The Jubilee Quartet perform Schubert, Haydn & Beethoven 7.30 pm Free Thurs 5th Fri 6th & Sat 7th June ANYTHING GOES, BAI, MUSICAL THEATRE

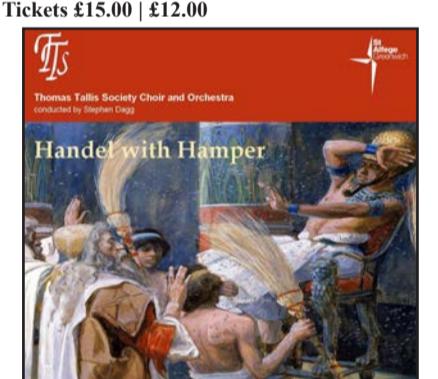
Trinity Laban musical theatre students sing Cole Porter classics 7.30 pm Free Sat 7th June The Magic Harp

Fri 6th June LUNCHTIME RECITAL Free, donations to the Halls. 1.10 pm Tues 17th June CO-OPERATION:

Meet the Production Teams for the two upcoming operas 6.00 pm Free

Thurs. 19th June 7.30 pm Trinity Laban Sinfonia Orchestra play Brahms, Bizet, and Franck's symphony Tickets £10 | £5.00

JULY 3rd, 4th & 5th: Trinity Laban Opera perform Handel's BELSHAZZAR 7.30 pm Tickets £15.00 | £12.00



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## SASH-WINDOW DOCTOR

# FEATURES

## Welcome to The Scullery

As a lad, Colin Woolven used to pop into Gambardella's Café at 48 Vanbrugh Park for a snack on his way home from school. Now the chef to royals, politicians, business tycoons and London's social set has realised a dream to call this historic eatery his own. Late in April The Scullery opened its doors with a simple ethos: traditional looks, modern food.

Colin has kept the interior almost exactly as Gambardella's left it with its vibrant 1950s style fixtures and fittings, many taken from an old Lyons tea house. The outside of the café however looks crisp and modern with pot plants courtesy of Colin's wife Karen, a florist.

Colin grew up in Woolwich and Ladywell. He did his chef training at the South East London Technical College, then set to notching up an impressive CV. He worked as head chef for an oil company, then mastered the art of Nouvelle Cuisine during 8 years at Claridges, the wonderful art deco hotel in Mayfair. For about a decade he helped run a chefs' agency, supplying 45 top cooks to major sporting events like Royal Ascot and Epsom.



Sharon Brokenshire MBE is founder and Project Manager of the South London Special League. Here she reports on an event that the Westcombe Society helped to fund

The South London Special League is a successful independent community charity that makes a significant difference to the lives of disabled people.

The Specialist Sports Camp in the Easter Holidays in April was extremely successful. It was sponsored this time by The Westcombe Society whose generous funding also went towards the purchase of some new much-needed equipment. This included a New Age Kurling set, and a new Boccia set.

We were based in the 5-a-side hall at the Waterfront Leisure Centre, where 15 young people attended on each day,

To make the week more accessible for the young disabled people, on this occasion we invited siblings to attend. This made life a lot easier for two of the families. These new attendees thoroughly enjoyed themselves, and gave them an insight into what it means to help each other.

Rhea Mackennon was responsible for delivering a wide range of activities. On the first day with the support of our very experienced staff, they joined up with the

From there Colin became head chef at the Royal Naval College, creating banquets for up to 500 people at one sitting. His illustrious clientele included Prince Philip, Prince Charles and Princess Anne.

Colin moved on to the heady heights of the grand and historic Guildhall working for an "events" company based at Canary Wharf. We're talking state dinners, a big party for 2500 politicians and athletes after



the 2012 Olympic Games, oh and a mere 1000 strong guest list for the reception after Baroness Thatcher's funeral. He also cooked at Hever Castle, and for Lord



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DIANE  
BLACKWELL

and Lady De L'Isle at Penshurst Place.

However, Colin's dream was to run his own restaurant, and when Gambardella's was up for grabs, he saw his chance. The focus at The Scullery is on fresh food from local and near-local suppliers: meat from Sparks, fruit and vegetables from Apples 'n Oranges, coffee beans from Dulwich, jams from Bermondsey, croissants from Borough Market. Produce also comes from allotments Colin has started.

As well as breakfasts (the full English job comprises organic sausages, dry cured



bacon, free range Kent eggs, slow roasted tomatoes with herbs), and lunches, twice a month there's an evening "Supper Club" when customers can bring their own wine.

"The Parlor" at the back of The Scullery is devoted to business meetings, coffee mornings, afternoon teas, children's parties – you name it. Colin's also talk excitedly of his "Scullery at Home" concept – catering for garden parties, small dinner gatherings, birthday parties and the like.

Thanks to a local boy made good, a Blackheath institution is reborn.

## Raising the Standard!

### Alex Grant adds:

Run by Colin, the Scullery Cafe's interior is almost exactly as Gambardella's left it ..... it's great to see the historic interior survive a change of operator (see the write-up the Classic Cafes website gave to Gambardella's a few years ago.)

Gambardella's had always been one of my favourite meeting places in Blackheath but it usually closed at about 5. The Scullery now has an evening licence so will be opening for supper, with wine served (currently the only places at the Standard serving evening meals are the Royal Standard pub itself, and the legendary Sun Ya Chinese restaurant).

The Scullery is just one of several exciting new businesses to open at Blackheath Standard in the last few years – others include the chemist next door, Mara Interiors & Coffee Shop on Westcombe Hill, and over on Old Dover Road the children's toy and bookshop Ottie and the Bea, the cookshop Blackheath Cooks and Moca Cafe (in what used to be Fosters, and reviewed on the Blackheath Coffee Shops blog). The Royal Standard has done well to survive the recession and the slow recovery since without any shops standing empty for long.

It has cemented its reputation as the place to go for the sort of distinctive, independent shops and cafes which are becoming rarer in Blackheath Village and Greenwich town centre because of rent rises – by contrast, the council has frozen shop rents on Old Dover Road ever since 2008.

The Royal Standard Business and Traders Association is looking at how to market the shops better, with help from the council's e-Business programme, and a new Shopwatch scheme has been set up to help traders work together to prevent crime. The Royal Standard is on the up, and long may it thrive.

## Specialist Sports Camp

After a really successful week all those who attended joined in for a photo



mainstream Kool Crew to enjoy athletic activities in a really inclusive way.

Many exciting games especially suitable for disabled young people were introduced during the week: New Age Kurling, Boccia, Table Cricket, Seated Volleyball, tennis rounders and others, as well as an introduction to Powerchair Football.

With the help of other sports workers, Rhea ensured that all the young people with a wide range of different disabilities were included effectively at whatever level they could perform.

On the final day, the deputy Mayor of

Royal Greenwich, Mick Hayes, attended. He thoroughly enjoyed watching the activities in full swing. At the end of the day he presented all the young people with certificates and medals. He also presented two Jack Petchey Achievement Awards to two of our young people – Jack Gilham, and Taylor Smikle-Isaac.

The whole project has a real success, it did not take any imagination to see from the happy faces of the young people what a great time they were having. It was an inspirational occasion.

## Priory Players

Many of you will be familiar with the film *The Odd Couple* starring Jack Lemmon and Walter Matthau. Not many people are aware that Neil Simon also wrote a female version of the same story and it is this version that the Priory Players, Eltham, are putting on on June 5th - 7th. As usual with Neil Simon the play is full of sharp dialogue and deft characterisation but this female version, to many people, seems so much funnier. *The venue: The Progress Hall, Admiral Seymour Road, Eltham, SE9 1SL. Time: 7.45. Box Office: 07502 450983.*



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# ENVIRONMENT



Planning applications can be viewed in the library, or at the Woolwich Library on the lower ground floor of the Woolwich Centre, 35 Wellington St. They may also be viewed on [www.greenwich.gov.uk/planning](http://www.greenwich.gov.uk/planning)

## OpenGardens Festival Hélène Martin

Please try to find time to visit some of the 25 gardens open to the public over the week-end of 14 -15 June 2-5.00 pm in aid of your local Hospice. There will be clusters of gardens participating in Greenwich, Charlton, and Blackheath, so within easy reach. The gardens are very varied – some horticultural perfection, others more of a ‘wilderness’, but all are of interest: some have plants for sale, some offer home-made refreshments. Look out for flyers and posters which will be distributed locally and full details can be found on the Greenwich & Bexley Community Hospice web site – Open Gardens Festival. It is an excellent cause and as the NHS only covers a third of its costs, the Hospice needs everyone’s support. Some of the gardens are listed below:

### West Greenwich Cluster:

#### 30 Hyde Vale, London SE10 8QH

Saturday 14th only The garden of an 1830s tea-caddy house.

Refreshments: Pimms

#### 34 Hyde Vale, London SE10 8QH

Saturday 14th & Sunday 15th

A south facing walled garden, with terrace, lawn and upper level.

Refreshments: Tea & Cakes

#### 14 Crooms Hill, London SE10 8ER

Saturday 14th & Sunday 15th

A very large rear walled garden

#### The Manor House, Crooms Hill, SE10 8HG

Saturday 14th & Sunday 15th

The north-facing garden is beautifully framed by a church spire and huge sycamore

Refreshments: None.

#### The White House, Crooms Hill, SE10 8HH

Saturday 14th & Sunday 15th Walled garden to the home of former Astronomer Royal.

Refreshments: Tea & Cakes

#### Hamilton House, 14 West Grove, SE10 8QT

Saturday 14th & Sunday 15th

The south facing garden is in a state of transition full of visual surprises – a wonderful space for children to escape in.

Refreshments: Tea & Cakes

#### Prior Street Allotments, Prior Street,

London SE10 8SF Saturday 14th & Sunday

15th Allotment holders will be on hand to answer all your horticultural questions.

Refreshments: Tea & Cakes

### Blackheath Cluster:

#### 27 Kidbrooke Gardens, Blackheath, SE3 0PD

Sunday 15th only

A terraced garden facing south

#### 29 Kidbrooke Gardens, Blackheath, SE3 0PD

Sunday 15th only

The front garden with an imaginative design, while the garden behind the house rises steeply. Refreshments: Teas & Coffees

#### 54 Blackheath Park, Blackheath, SE3 9SJ

Sunday 15th only Extensive, rambling, south facing garden Refreshments: Teas & Coffees

#### 28 Brookway, Blackheath, SE3 9BJ

Sunday 15th only A large south facing garden Refreshments. Plants for sale

#### 20 Manor Way, Blackheath, SE3 9EF

Sunday 15th only A woodland garden has been created near a wildlife pond.

### ALSO why not visit

#### Ballast Quay Garden SE10 9PD

Run by and for the neighbours of Ballast Quay, the garden was a wharf until the 1960s. With sweeping river views the garden is home to ferns, roses, irises, ornamental fruit trees, and a handsome London plane, yet it retains signs of its industrial past with valerian and other wild flowers growing through the cracks in the old river wall, an iron anchor and moorings for tethering Thames barges. For the weekend it has sculpture on sale by blacksmith Brian Greaves and Kevin Herlihy, who designed and made the goat memorial. Free!

*Open: Saturday + Sunday 10:00–17:00*

## Greenwich Park From The Editor

The *WN* has received (and published) several letters from Edward Hill that are critical of Greenwich Park and the impact on it of the 2012 Olympics.

To most of us, the Park appears to be more beautiful, and greener, than ever. Moreover, the vast majority of people the *WN* has spoken to say how much they enjoyed the Equestrian events in the park, and how pleased they were to share it with the world.

I think it is now time to move on and appreciate the Park in all its glory. Efforts are being made to improve the biodiversity

beyond that which existed before, and improvements made post-Olympics have added to most people's enjoyment of this beautiful place. The herbaceous border, which is currently undergoing replanting, will I am sure look amazing when it is completed.

It is surely now time to look forward and enjoy what is one of the most beautiful places in London.

Most of the community in Westcombe Park community appear to share this view and so far as the *WN* is concerned the correspondence is closed.

## Christopher's Column

### Adapting to conditions



Tender species like fuchsias started putting out leaves in March and after a few blooms for a couple of months we have had osteospermum and (overwintered) nasturtiums in full flower from April.

To counteract this activity – no need for the nitrogen boost this year – I applied a shot of potash and will feed regularly till August with tomato food to keep the flowers coming.

If you are thinking of bringing in new plants to extend the flowering season, very early species such as geranium malviflorum, cardamine, doronicum or pachyphragma will give leaves and flowers in a little sunshine. For late colour, asters and nerines flower later than most species and if you sow them late (mid-June, say), easy-to-grow annuals like sunflowers, marigolds, nasturtiums will bloom late into the cooler weather.

It's also high time to consider the 'Chelsea chop' – to give more flowers for longer. At least one author has written a whole book on the subject but it's not that difficult. It's taking out the tips or stems of flowering plants

to keep them bushier, produce more flowering shoots, or simply to slow them down.

It works on lavender to spread the flowering – any stems you nip out will produce more side shoots – but works best on the long-flowering French or Spanish species.

Most established late flowering perennials will take this treatment and you can chop the whole plant, or just parts of it (keep an eye on the shape). It won't work on most bulbs, hostas, daylilies and ground cover plants (like heucheras) which produce single flowering stems.

The most dramatic effect I have had is on the tall verbascums – once you take out the top of the old flower spike, they will branch and make flowering shoots right up the stem. And some old favourites like wallflowers, verbena, fennel, asters, fuchsias and osteospermum will root easily now from lengths of stem pushed into soil (and it will be even quicker if you have a greenhouse or light window sill). Whichever technique you use to make more plants, water them well and dose with tomato food.

Christopher Raven



## An open letter to Boris

We attach a letter for your attention in relation to a proposed new IKEA store for which Greenwich Borough Council granted outline planning consent on 3rd March 2014. We understand that you are in charge of ratifying this proposal which we consider is in breach of the London Plan, in particular:

- *Quality of Life (page 7 of the London Plan)*
- *London's living places and spaces (including historic) (p. 206)*
- *Protecting London's Open and Natural Environment; Noise and air pollution (p.215)*

We believe that the Council's decision to grant outline planning consent to IKEA is also in breach of the Greenwich Unitary Development Plan Policy TC16 and The Town and Country Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2011. The Council has recklessly chosen not to exercise a key power to protect local residents' interests: the right and duty to conduct its own Environmental Impact Assessment ("EIA"). The development qualifies for an EIA on many grounds, including that the proposed new store will be more than 0.5 hectares in size, in an area in which the environmental quality standards laid down in EU legislation have already been significantly exceeded.

Greenwich is an Air Quality Management Area (AQMA) with emission levels almost twice as high as the limit imposed by your air quality management strategy (current emissions recorded at 75 micrograms, compared to a limit of 40 micrograms).

We also consider that the development would significantly undermine the Site Management Plan for the UNESCO World Heritage Site in Greenwich. Paragraph 3.1.2 of the Site Management Plan expressly recognises that "traffic is the single greatest problem affecting Greenwich Town". Around 10 million visitors come to Greenwich every year. The world average number of visitors to an IKEA store per year is 2.2 million. This would represent an increase in visitors of in excess of 20%, arriving with vans and estate cars to collect flat pack furniture. The GLA is one of the agencies responsible for monitoring this Site Management Plan.

IKEA claims it has chosen this site for its connectivity to public transport and its sustainability, yet its business model depends on people arriving in vehicles to collect self-service flatpack furniture. A full size store and warehouse will bring traffic chaos and increased pollution to an already congested area with illegal emission levels.

Please do not put the health of local residents and the future of the delicate and beautiful protected Unesco Heritage site at risk by allowing in furniture giant. Never before has IKEA been granted permission to build a store in such a congested inner city area. Please do not allow Greenwich to suffer from such an ill-considered experiment.

Yours sincerely,

Michael & Sophie Howard, Humber Road

## Jazz Concert

### PLANNING APPLICATIONS

See also <http://www.westcombesociety.org>

#### 14 VANBRUGH HILL ref 14/1098/F

Replace front railings, gate, & pathway. Install solar panel

#### 48 HARDY ROAD ref 14/0973/F

Construct single storey side extension

#### 20 HARDY ROAD ref 14/1178/F

Construct a 2-storey front extension, rear extension, & front and rear dormer windows (resubmission)

#### 23C CHARLTON ROAD ref 14/0900/F

Install timber windows, new slate roof & 3 roof lights

#### 237 WESTCOMBE HILL ref 14/0549/A

Install 2 non-illuminated fascia signs

#### 99A COLERAINE ROAD ref 14/1157/F

Loft conversion with raised roof ridge, rear dormers and 3 front roof lights (resubmission)

#### 142 HUMBER ROAD (APP/E5330/A/14/2217990)

(original application 14/0151/F) is going to appeal.

Final submission date is June 18th,

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