



Westcombe NEWS

Free to 3800 homes, and in libraries & some shops

November 2016 Issue 9



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

The Westcombe Society Christmas Bazaar is BACK. 26th November at Invicta School. Please contact info@westcombe-society.org.uk for craft table bookings or ring 020 8853 1212

Silvertown Tunnel: "no silver lining" Anne Robbins

The Westcombe Society was dismayed, last month, to learn that London's mayor Sadiq Khan supports Transport for London's plans to build a new road tunnel under the Thames from Greenwich peninsula to Newham's Royal Docks.

Plans for the Silvertown Tunnel are currently being reviewed by the Planning Inspectorate, with a deadline for the main submissions for or against on November 15th.

A series of hearings on specific topics will be held this winter. The Inspector is expected to make a recommendation to the Secretary of State for Transport, Chris Grayling, in the spring.

The mayor's comments

The Mayor has said that he will ask for some changes, including assurances on new bus routes, a bus which will take cycles through the tunnel, benefits for locals, and improved landscaping at the Greenwich Peninsula entrance.

The Westcombe Society has been discussing the plans with residents over the course of several TfL consultations. Its

position is that the plans have the potential to bring much more traffic onto the A102, with drivers being attracted by the extra capacity the new tunnel would offer. Unless TfL can offer firm guarantees and well-drawn plans to mitigate the possible effects, the Society can't support the scheme.



An idea that has been tried, and abandoned: a bike bus

TfL argue that the Blackwall Tunnel simply can't cope – and of course many drivers are very familiar with the queues waiting to get through to the other side of the river. Even minor traffic accidents can halt the flow, and the north-bound bore wasn't built with tall lorries in mind. Over-height vehicles

regularly try their chances, and get stuck, causing blockages. In addition they point to population growth in the area, and the lack of river crossings east of Tower Bridge. So TfL would like to add the new tunnel, for increased resilience, and to cope with demand.

Yet at the same time, air

pollution from vehicles is a big problem for London, and the A102 has high levels of exhaust gases and particles which can affect health in children and adults. London should be complying with European standards.

The *WN* has reported on findings that show some spots dangerously above the safe and legal limits, for instance by the foot tunnel between Siebert Road and Eastcombe Avenue.

TfL says that it will control the traffic levels on the approaches to both of the road tunnels by charging users at peak times; this will also pay for the construction and eventually contribute to TfL's budget. The charges

are not popular, though, with locals, who argue that it is unfair to charge them when other road crossings on the Thames are free. Many businesses also depend on the Blackwall Tunnel for multiple daily trips, and see charging as a real financial burden.

Opposition

The No to Silvertown Tunnel Campaign argue that new roads encourage more people to drive. The new tunnel would also draw traffic from the Dartford Crossing – and would attract large HGVs.

The road system on the north side is unlikely to cope with added traffic from the new tunnel, while the south-bound traffic on the A102 is already too heavy at peak hours. And drivers trying to avoid the charge would head for the Rotherhithe Tunnel or further west, using already congested roads. The new tunnel would simply shift congestion into new areas.

(cont. on page 7)



In view of reports of recent incidents in different parts of the country, including attacks on guest workers, it was encouraging to see a good (and peaceful) turnout for the 80th Anniversary of the "Battle of Cable Street" in 1936, in which the British Union of Fascists led by Oswald Mosely attempted to march through the East End of London. Several local residents attended an anti-racist rally in St George's Park Shoreditch on October 9th. to mark the occasion, which passed peacefully. The mural (above) was painted by Dave Binnington Savage, Paul Butler, Ray Walker and Desmond Rochfort; it is on the West side of St George's Town Hall, near Shadwell and was completed in March 1983.

PHOTO: Neville Grant



Newsbriefs

Friends of Mycenae Gardens

Tim Hoe writes: If you are able to help us in Mycenae Gardens, we would love to see you on 12th and 26th November when some late Autumn planting will be taking place.

The plan is to rejuvenate the shrub beds on the SE side of the gardens to add some colour and interest throughout the year. As usual you can just turn up on the day - or even better - send me an email to let me know that you are planning to come. All you need to bring is a garden fork and spade, if you have them. Gardening gloves would be a good idea, too. We look forward to seeing you there! Contact me

if you have any questions. mycenaegardens.org.uk

Thomas Tallis Choir

Following its highly successful concert in September entitled AQUA, the Thomas Tallis Society Choir of Greenwich will continue its 2016-17 season with a concert on Sat. 12th November with a programme entitled Hidden Treasures – Polish music from the 17th century Polish court to the present day.

The concert will take place at St Alfege Church in Greenwich, starting at 7.30pm. Tickets (£12) may be purchased on the door or in advance at: www.ticketsource.co.uk/hidden treasures

Len Thorne, donkeyman

A granite stone, suitably inscribed, is to be placed close to the Donkey Run near Circus Field to commemorate Len Thorne, who brought his donkeys to the Heath for more than 60 years, starting in 1948.

Greenwich's parks

Twelve of the Royal Borough of Greenwich's directly managed and maintained parks have been awarded the prestigious Green Flag Award for the fourth year in a row.

Let's hope Mycenae Gardens make the list next year. But maybe they don't qualify?

THE WESTCOMBE SOCIETY'S CHRISTMAS CRAFT FAIR ENJOYABLE CHRISTMAS SHOPPING AND CHILDREN'S ENTERTAINMENT

Saturday 26th November

11.00 - 4.00



Invicta School

Invicta Road SE3 7HE

CELEBRITY OPENING: ASAD AHMAD

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Craft and Charity Stalls, Roasted Chestnuts, Mulled Wine, Christmas Music, Santa's Grotto, Face Painting

Adults £2, 12-16s £1, under 12s free, Members £1

Proceeds to Mental Health Activity Trust.

The balloons outside Mycenae House promised a party within! Below, promises kept!



WESTCOMBE NEWS

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What's On: Barbara Ward
Reporters: The community – that means you!

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environment@westcombesociety.org

DISTRIBUTION Emily Norton and volunteers.
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ADVERTISING MANAGER
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Advertising@westcombesociety.org

All adverts payable in advance by cheque to **The Westcombe Society**.
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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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:
Christine Legg, 69 Mycenae Road,
London, SE3 7SE

Name.....

Address.....

Tel.....

Email:

Please enclose payment as appropriate:

Family Membership	£12	[]
Individual Membership	£8	[]
Senior Citizens/unwaged	£4	[]

Westcombe Park's Biggest Coffee Morning in the World!

The Coffee morning took place as usual in the lovely light hall at Mycenae House providing tea, coffee, sandwich lunches and, of course, cakes! It was good to see so many people supporting the event by coming along for a cuppa and a chat with friends and the hall was pretty full for the whole time. Many people took a chance on the general raffle, the 'Spot the Cake' game and the draw for the very beautiful 'Red Velvet Cake'. A list of winners is on display at Mycenae House.

The Westcombe Society would like to thank all those who helped to organise the day. There is a lot to do in organising and advertising the event, putting up balloons in the area, setting up the room and making and selling the food and drink.

We must also give a big thank you to those who washed up throughout the event and helped to clear up at the end. Without all those who contributed in so many ways we would not have been able to make the amazing amount of £900! **Maureen Aune**



PHOTOS: Neville Grant



Letters

Any views expressed are personal, and are not necessarily those of the Westcombe Society or the W.N. Please give address & telephone number; these will not be printed.

From: G. Bailey Westcombe Park Rd.

Am I alone in being aghast at the *laissez faire* attitude of Greenwich Council regarding basement development in Westcombe Park? The hole that suddenly appeared in Mycenae Road in August 2014 is a sharp (or deep . . .) reminder of how dangerous such developments can be in this area. (see also page 7)

From: Scott Bailey

I am sorry to complain for what is a free paper and for which, I hasten to add, I am thankful, but I do think that the issue concerning basement extensions is ill informed and borders on intimidation.

The family on Foyle Road receives this paper like we do and they are simply building an extension lawfully. They have gone through the process set down in law and received a lawfully constituted planning permission from the local Council. If people don't like it, well they have to get used to it. The law is the law.

They could, quite easily, have pursued the permission under 'permitted development' if they had wanted a lesser ground floor extension. Nit-picking over whether details are true or not is just unhelpful; and it's the height of unfairness to single them out. Yes, perhaps their neighbours are miffed that there will be building works, but that's life.

Just because our own housing needs have been satisfied, it doesn't mean that other people, have got everything they need. They are doing nothing wrong trying to establish a larger family home. I think they are owed an apology.

From: Jim Egan Beaconsfield Road

I have enjoyed the *Westcombe News* for many years but on occasion feel that you devote column inches to certain issues out of all proportion to their editorial merit.

The persistently prominent attention you have given to the planning application for refurbishment of a house on Foyle Road strikes me as a good example (*WN* Oct issue and previously). Moreover, your editorial line on this story seems to lack balance, is based more on speculation than fact and, frankly, is mean-spirited.

To be clear, we are family friends with the owners of the house in question. We have both lived in the area for more than 40 years and consider the sense of community in and around Westcombe Park to be one of its greatest assets. Yet your coverage of this planning application seems determined to portray the applicant as someone with no regard for the area, wilfully undermining the community and – quite literally – its geological foundations. In so doing not only are you being unfair to him and his young family, you are also letting down your readers by omitting or failing to clarify relevant points – such as the fact that a cellar already exists at the

property in question.

Writing as someone who lived next door to a twelve month basement conversion on Vanbrugh Hill I suggest there are more constructive ways of dealing with your correspondent's particular concerns than by way of journalistic vendetta. Despite the fact that all due planning processes were completed in July your ongoing pursuit of the redevelopment and of the owner is not appropriate. Continue to debate the issue on the front page if you really believe it is really the most important topic in all of Blackheath & Greenwich, but please do so in a more balanced way and in the positive civic spirit for which the *WN* has previously been commended.

From: B. Blackburn Westcombe Park Rd.

What a self-serving piece of journalism in October's issue by a few needy residents. The front page article on basements could be seen as a personal attack.

The contrived Personal letter and comments by a "local" geologist to compound the issue were petty and vindictive. The overriding concern seems to be personal ones as twice it was reported of "a great deal of disruption and mess to local residents" IF the project went ahead.

Previous building projects by members of the Westcombe society have been tolerated for some time, with no need to make a public issue of it. Shame on you, you have greatly offended.

Ed: No personal attack intended at all: the criticisms were aimed at the Council for not having in place adequate safeguards and guidelines.

From: Tim Shoben Foyle Road

As the owner of the property of the property referred to, I feel entitled to a right of reply. There are a number of inaccuracies in your story, which I would like to point out:

Firstly, it is untrue to say that Greenwich Council has not investigated this application thoroughly. There are valid concerns about basements, which is why we commissioned hydrology, geological & structural reports as well as providing a detailed basement impact assessment & method statement in line with GC's stringent requirements.

Secondly, it is also inaccurate to assert that councillors were "misled" over Greenwich's "much less comprehensive" policy compared to Boroughs such as Kensington & Chelsea. In actual fact, the structural engineer employed on this project described Greenwich's requirements as, "Considerably more stringent than most other boroughs I work with and on a par with K&C." On this basis I do not understand why you think there are "grounds for revoking the permission pending further public examination". We sought planning permission strictly in accor-

The Green sash brigade!



dance with the Borough's exacting requirements, commissioned specialist reports and surveys to assess all the relevant risks and made our case in a public forum at which all could present their views.

Thirdly, and as a minor point of accuracy, it is highly speculative & untrue that 'a huge amount of spoil will have to be taken out via a narrow passageway'. What is true is that basement excavations are noisy and inconvenient for people living nearby and this, I suspect, is the main concern of your journalist. As a local resident who has lived in Blackheath all his life, I have sought to be sensitive to these concerns throughout and my wife and I are endeavouring to mitigate any disruption during the building works. Of course, using your newspaper to scaremonger about disasters waiting to befall our neighbourhood is easily done and very effective but I do not regard it as a constructive approach.

When decrepit properties with ancient pipes, electrics & insulation are receiving large financial investments, this should be a cause for celebration. Indeed, we have found many of our neighbours very supportive which is certainly not reflected in your article. Also, the value of equivalent local properties increases significantly when new buyers see what is achievable.

Three months have passed, and we are still working to satisfy Greenwich's basement planning requirements and we continue to be open to sensible dialogue with neighbours on Foyle Road. To propagate the erroneous idea that the Council's policy is inadequate is irresponsible. I must add that it is disappointing that such a highly valued local newspaper is taking such a partisan view of this matter with little regard for the facts.

Ed: Thank you for putting your point of view. We apologise for any inaccuracies, but stand by our basic concern that the council should comprehensively address the issues around subterranean developments as they affect our area.

From: A.J. Graham Vanbrugh Hill

I was amazed and pleased that the *Westcombe News* has at last chosen to report on Town Hall incompetence.

From: David Sorrell Tudor Grange
To the organisers of the Daffodil Tea

The sweet, the savoury were to be
With, of course, some cups of tea,
An afternoon Quiz, oh, gee whizz
My mind is not being very kind ...
A group of friends and comers new
Racked their brains to give answers true.
Winners or not: Well, so what!
The blooms on each table for you and me
Helped us to enjoy our Daffodil Tea.

Ed: Hope you have now fully recovered from your illness, David.

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LOCAL NEWS

Mental Health Activity Trust's Grown to Cook Project

At the Mycenae Soup event on October 2015, the Mental Health Activity Trust based in Delacourt Road was granted a total of £1079 as a result of the first micro funding dinner event at the venue. MHAT's winning presentation to the diners centred on delivering a gardening project for a group of local volunteers with mental health and learning difficulties.

Once it got underway, the project quickly developed into a food-growing and cooking project.

The team, under the coordination of director Toni Hale, quickly established a fruit and vegetable growing 'pot' garden at the back of the shop in Delacourt Road. But with limited space they were grateful to take on part of an allotment that belonged to a supporter of the MHAT.

"We are more than a group, we are a family wanting those within in it to prosper and be well," said Toni.

Once the project gathered pace, with a very successful growing season which delivered a whole range of vegetables, fruit and herbs, the project has gone from strength to strength, and plants, tools, seeds and fertilizers have been bought.

Once the produce began to bear fruit as it were, it has been used to feed the volunteers and staff for their lunches on working days at the shop. Not only has the project provided a great way for users of mentalhealth services to work together as a team but has also fed them – and given them more skills in food preparation



The A Team: Karl, Andrew & Ken

"We still have all the benefit of the crop and are still cooking plenty."

The project doesn't stop there, Toni Hale explained that "the project will continue to grow... " Without Mycenae Soup we would never have got this project off the ground. I am grateful to everyone who helped and who continue to do so." **The MHAT is the Westcombe Society's Charity of the year. The MHAT is offering some support to rough sleepers, including "Soup Kitchens" – the dates are as follows:**

10th Nov, 7pm-9pm 16th Dec, 7pm-9pm
12th Jan, 7pm-9pm 9th Feb, 7pm-9pm

A photo exhibition about the project is on show at Mycenae House throughout November. Toni Hale will share the story of the project when she joins us for the next Mycenae Soup event on Friday 18th November 2016. Tickets available from www.mycenaehouse.co.uk

BELOW: Amazing what you can grow in your back yard!

New Installation at the Bridge

Talented local metal craft professional Danny Herridge, created a special living Willow arch for the youngsters within the grounds of the Bridge Centre in East Greenwich pleasance – thanks to the generosity of a godparent celebrating the christening of a local baby, and the Parks Department of Greenwich Council.

The ground had been prepared with care, willow rods and compost provided, and a beautiful metal framework constructed. All that remained was planting, which was a more challenging job than predicted.

To the rescue came GoodGym – a charitable group that combine keeping fit with providing hands-on project support to not-for-profit groups. Volunteers from GoodGym arrived, and got cracking – and before we knew it they were off to complete their evening run, leaving behind a beautiful willow arch, for all the local young folk to enjoy and explore...



The Bridge is a Community Interest Company run by volunteers. Started in 2011, it is situated in the former under 5s building in the corner of East Greenwich Pleasance. For the time being, it can offer volunteer-run groups from 8.00am till 6.00pm as well as holding parties at the weekend. Play and stay sessions are £1.50 per family to cover running costs. **The Bridge is open: Tue-Wed: 10:00 - 12:00 pm & 1.30 pm - 2:30 pm in Greenwich Pleasance, off Chevening Road, Greenwich, SE10 0LB**

Another successful Quiz Night

J.J. Aune

Friday 21st October saw twelve teams battle it out to be top of the class in the Westcombe Society's Autumn Quiz.

Congratulations to Ed Mayo's winning team "George", and to the runners-up Teresa Pini's "Viva las Vegas". It was gratifying to see such an excellent turnout with both the usual attenders, some of whom are founder members of the Society, and some local new faces. This is very much intended to be a community event, as opposed to a fund raiser, but any profit

made helps with funds for our charity of the year and ongoing support to local charities. The 'Chippy' suppers provided by 'Fisherman's Inn' on the Woolwich Road arrived on time and were much enjoyed by all, and the bar staff were kept busy. There was a lively and jolly atmosphere with just the required amount of rivalry and fun leading to a successful evening. Our usual thanks go to the Westcombe Society's Events committee who did sterling work to organise and support the evening.

Tackling insecure employment

It is promising that UK unemployment has fallen, but we know it's not all good news. Recent research by Citizens Advice indicate that 4.5 million people in England and Wales are now in insecure work, which includes temporary contracts, variable shifts and zero-hour contracts. A lack of regular hours and guaranteed pay can cause huge uncertainty and stress: workers never know if they will be able to cover their bills, or put food on the table for their families.

As a charity helping people in financial hardship, this echoes what we at Turn2us regularly hear. 39% of low income workers told us their outgoings outweigh their earnings, and 57% would like to work more hours but cannot get the work.

In addition, 87% of all low income

households have seen no improvement to their financial situation within the last year.

Accessing welfare support can also be a challenge. Anyone struggling financially is free to use our free Benefits Calculator at Turn2us.org.uk to check what help could be available. This also includes a 'better-off' function to show how a change in hours or wages could affect benefits entitlements and overall household income.

Whilst more needs to be done to tackle insecure employment in the long-term, we hope that we can help more people to find the support they need now – which could make all the difference in easing some of the pressures they face.

Alison Taylor is Director of Operations of Turn2us <https://www.turn2us.org.uk/>

Alison Taylor

PHOTOS: Toni Hale



The Chrysanthemum Tea

A bright sunny autumnal day brought the usual band of happy party-goers to this annual event organised by the Westcombe Society.

Many thanks to the cake and sandwich makers, the flower-arrangers, the washers-up (washer-ups?), the Quiz Master and the chauffeurs who make this popular event for senior citizens such a success. "It's great to get out and meet old friends!" said Mrs June Ahmad.



Some of the volunteers who helped out. There was some argument about whose turn it was to wear the rubber gloves. The winner here was Shirley!

St George's Church, Westcombe Park

Sundays: 10:15 a.m. Choir Practice 10:45 a.m. Children's Church
11:00 a.m. Holy Communion (All Age service on the 1st Sunday of each month)
Wednesdays: 8:30 a.m. Morning Prayer 12:30 p.m. Soup Lunch Fellowship

Special Events in November

Wednesday, 2nd of Nov. -7:30 pm - FILM NIGHT – "The Mission" (1986) starring Robert DeNiro and Jeremy Irons. 18th century Spanish Jesuits try to protect a South American Indian tribe from a pro-slavery Portuguese Government
Sunday 13th Nov. Remembrance Sunday 10.45 am
Sunday, 6th. and 20th Nov, – 8:00 pm –
Sceptics Group meets at the Vicarage (89 Westcombe Park Road)

Contact: Revd Tim Yeager rtyeager@gmail.com Tel. 07804 614245

Mycenae House & Gardens

'... a special place, its not like anywhere else' Ellise 7yrs

Saturday 12 November
The Owl & The Pussy Cat
Childrens ballet show from
Let's All Dance. Perfect for 2-9 yrs
£8.50 11.00am

Friday 18 November
Mycenae SOUP
Come dine with us and help
support local charity projects.
Donation £10 7.00pm



More information on our website
020 8858 1749 www.mycenaehouse.co.uk

FEATURES

Maritime Radio still on air Barbara Ward

Maritime Radio (<http://www.maritimerradio.com>) returned for a second successful FM broadcast this autumn, directed by Duncan Martin and based at Charlton Athletic Football Charity (CAFC) Community Hub.

This year's broadcast was part of an ongoing trial process that all local radio stations have to go through when applying for a full-time broadcasting status with Ofcom. Applications opened up for radio stations in the London area recently and Duncan Martin has now submitted an application for Maritime Radio with Ofcom.

Maritime Radio has once again provided many hours of music listening time and skilfully covered local community events and news. The Maritime website allowed listeners to view photographs and written reviews, and you can listen again to broadcasts already made through online podcasts. A committed collection of local DJ's, journalists and engineers once again this year worked tirelessly to make it all happen.

Local sponsors, investors and advertisers supported and financed Maritime Radio for its second trial this year, and will continue to do so as Maritime Radio continues to stream online. You can listen through the tune-in app or by pressing the 'listen live' button on the website.

Duncan Martin intends to provide a few programmes and reviews, while the station continues to stream music until the licence issue is resolved. Maritime Radio will be fully back next year and, hopefully, will be with us



Photo: Barbara Ward

Duncan Martin

full-time very soon. However, community and financial support support is needed to make this happen.

You can still currently listen online on the 'Tune In' app on your smartphone or tablet and still find a selection of local reviews as well as great music online. Charlton Live will also be available to listen to every Sunday evening at 7pm and the Big Match preview every Thursday is also at 7 pm. On Sunday evening at 8.30pm, The Nepali Update brings news, views, music and information to the Nepalese community in Greenwich.

If you would like to get involved in Maritime Radio, e-mail duncan@maritimerradio.london

Clive in Concert

Guitar phenomenon Clive Carroll's unparalleled technical virtuosity and versatility have made him one of the world's premier acoustic guitar players, performing everything from 16th and 17th century lute music to jazz standards, blues, Irish reels and his own groundbreaking compositions.

His solo concert in Mycenae House on Friday December 2nd will be an opportunity for acoustic guitar lovers to see Clive play in the intimate setting of this 120 seat venue, before he undertakes a national tour with Australian virtuoso Tommy Emmanuel in the new year, ending up at the Royal Festival Hall.

"I'm really looking forward to the solo concert at Mycenae House," says Clive. "Some friends of mine have played there and tell me it is a wonderful venue... What's even more special is that this will be my first solo concert ever in



PHOTO: Stephen Brayne

South East London! I'll be playing lots of music from my new CD (The Furthest Tree) as well as some long standing pieces in my setlist such as *Oregon* and *Eliza's Eyes*."

Clive has toured with John Renbourn, Gordon Giltrap, John Etheridge and Tommy Emmanuel, among other stars of the guitar firmament. He will be showcasing numbers from his new CD, which includes a duet with John Williams.

Doors open at 7pm. Tickets on the door £16.50, or £14.50 (plus booking fee) in advance from www.WeGotTickets.com

Emma Hamilton: Seduction & Celebrity

The National Maritime Museum has mounted a dazzling new exhibition about Emma Hamilton, an extraordinary woman in a man's world. Emma was one of the most famous international celebrities of her time and her life is the ultimate costume drama. She is now largely remembered as the woman who captured the heart of the nation's hero, Horatio Nelson, but her story is fascinating in its own right.

Our major exhibition explores her incredible story through 200 objects, great paintings by George Romney, Sir Joshua Reynolds and Sir Thomas Lawrence, and heartfelt letters between Emma and her lovers.



Is education happening?

Education means the process by which children are led to acquire deep knowledge and deep insights to prepare for their adult lives: about how people tick, about themselves, about the history which led to where we are today, about the natural world, science, technology and the computerizing of information.

Cramming means memorizing things superficially, quickly – in short term memory – to pass an exam.

The P E R (Education Renewal Group) was founded in 1993 to try to ban cramming in schools and get back to genuine education.

For more details contact philosophyper@aol.com

Early Music Festival

Full details of the annual Royal Greenwich International Early Music Festival are now available.

Because the usual venue – the Painted Hall in the Old Royal Naval College – is being refurbished, the festival is taking place in venues in and around Blackheath, with the fringe events taking place in Blackheath Halls.

On show in the Halls is the world's largest early music exhibition with around 100 exhibitors from across the globe. The exhibition is open daily from 10.00 am - 5.30 pm.

Tickets for this gets you into Makers' Demonstration Recitals, which take place throughout each day in St Michael and All Angels Church. Concerts are as follows:

Thursday 10th Nov. 5.30 - 6.45

Free concert by Trinity Laban Competition winners All Saints Church, Blackheath

7.45 Magdalena Consort with His Majesty's Sagbutts & Cornets St Margaret's Church £25.00

Friday 11th Nov. 5.30 pm Piva - music from Shakespeare's time £12

Friday 11th Nov. 7.45 Michala Petri with Lars Hannibal play virtuoso baroque in St Margaret's Church Belmont Hill £20.00

Sat 12th Nov. 7.45 Laura Schmid recital All Saints Church £12.00

Sat 12th Nov. 7.45 EU Baroque Orchestra St Margaret's Church Colleagues £25.00

Tickets from the early Music Shop: 01274 288100

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WHAT'S ON



ARTS

BLACKHEATH DECORATIVE & FINE ARTS SOCIETY, St Mary's Church Hall, Cresswell Park, Blackheath www.artsinblackheath.org

All meetings are on the 4th Thursday of each month - except August and December - 2pm for 2.30pm

Thurs 24th Nov Andy McConnell 'Swedish Glass from Orreflors to IKEA' A hilarious and informative account of a historically important episode in the history of glass. Non-members may pay on the door

GREENWICH DECORATIVE & FINE ARTS SOCIETY King William Court, University of Greenwich Mon 14th Nov William Lunn 'Behind the Scenes: Curating an Art Gallery'

Non-members may pay on the door

MADE IN GREENWICH GALLERY

324, Creek Rd. www.madeingreenwich.co.uk

Fri 11th Nov - Sun 20th Nov Greenwich/Bretagne, new pastels by John Bangs

Fri 24th Nov 7pm Cinnamon Press launch of two prose poetry books (free)

Fri 11th Nov 6.30pm 'Heartfulness' relaxation and meditation with Kathleen Gillespie (free)

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Christmas Bazaar 26th November

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BLACKHEATH & GREENWICH WOMEN'S INSTITUTE Meets first Wednesday of every month, doors open at 7.00pm for 7.30pm at Sunfields

Methodist Church on Old Dover Road

Wed - Oct 5th 7.30-9.30pm

GREENWICH/BLACKHEATH- READING GROUP New local reading group- starting - first

Wed. of each month. Read -Discuss-Share food) at members homes A few places left. Contact: Barbara

Ward ward.barbara@mac.com 07960 107578 Free

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Established lively group, space currently available for new members. Led by John Wilks (Writer). Interested in writing? Please contact johngwilks@hotmail.com

BLACKHEATH BRIDGE CLUB duplicate sessions in Mycenae House Mon & Thurs 7.15pm and on Wed at 1.15pm .Tel Ron 0208 319 1312

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BLACKHEATH & GREENWICH UNITED NATIONS ASSOCIATION:

Tuesday 15th Nov. 7.30pm Mycenae House Room 2: Short AGM, followed by a discussion on **GLOBAL JUSTICE**, and the impact of Brexit, led by Ed Mayo, former head of the New Economics Foundation. Free, open to non-members

THEATRE

THE GREENWICH THEATRE, Crooms Hill, London SE10 8ES Box Office: 8858 7755 greenwichtheatre.org.uk

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Sun 20th November - Live Canon Poetry- Prize Giving - 3.00pm The 26, short-listed poems in this year's Competition will be performed live on stage

CUTTY SARK STUDIO THEATRE

Cutty Sark Ship, Greenwich www.rmg.co.uk

Cutty Sark, Lower Ground, The Dock, Sammy Ofer Gallery 12th November - 8pm - OperaUpClose - PUCCHINI'S - LA BOHEME

'21st-century La Boheme' Tickets £25 Age 13+



A new survey suggests that people living in Greenwich are among the least happy people in the country.

ED MAYO looks at the data, and asks

How HAPPY are YOU?

How are you feeling? According to government statisticians, the most likely answer for Greenwich residents is 'not too happy'.

Greenwich as a borough is ranked alongside Liverpool, Wolverhampton and Corby as fourth equal in terms of least happy people in the UK. So how should we feel about that?

It might seem that happiness is all too personal to talk about, let alone to measure, but there has been a recognition building over time that if progress is measured simply in terms of what is happening to the economy – stock markets up, the pound down – then as a nation, we are missing the point, which is that people benefit (and, for those that are concerned, that the environment is not sacrificed).

For the last five years therefore, the Office of National Statistics has asked four questions that it uses to monitor

personal well-being. Not everyone is asked, but 165,000 people are, which is enough to answer in average terms for us all.

The questions are:

- 1 Overall, how satisfied are you with your life nowadays?
- 2 Overall, to what extent do you feel the things you do in your life are worthwhile?
- 3 Overall, how happy did you feel yesterday?
- 4 Overall, how anxious did you feel yesterday?

People are asked to give their answers on a scale of 0 to 10, where 0 is "not at all" and 10 is "completely".

It is not all bad news. Satisfaction has improved marginally among Greenwich residents over the five years of the survey. But there has been a significant increase in anxiety,

particularly over the last three years and somewhat against the national trend. If you live in Greenwich, you are more likely to have worries is what we are being told by the statisticians.

Now, perhaps you have already concluded that this is not you. That will be a relief. Or perhaps it is you, but you have concluded that it is not Westcombe Park – not with our community, love of life and occasional problems with the 108.

But there is also data from the Mayor of London's office, at a ward level, from 2013, that suggests that Blackheath Westcombe in fact ranks lower still in terms of happiness than the average for Greenwich.

So, in this spirit, the *Westcombe News* is sharing, below, 'five steps to well-being', which is a recipe for personal happiness developed, with input from residents here, by the UK think-tank the New Economics Foundation – and now used from New Zealand to Canada to Bhutan.

Can we be happier as a borough? The good news, with the emphasis on community, generosity and contact with others, is that it might make us happier just to try.

Ed's new book, Values: how to bring values to life in your business was published in October by Greenleaf.

Comments from our Councillors

The Office of National Statistics (ONS) carried out this survey, which showed Greenwich to be the unhappiest borough, followed closely by Lambeth and Islington. Only Wolverhampton and East Northamptonshire compared with Greenwich. If you want to be happier, move to Redbridge ...

Unsurprisingly, the survey also showed anxiety levels highest in London and lowest in rural communities.

The WN looks forward to receiving some comments from our readers on these issues. Meanwhile we asked our local councillors for their comments.

Cherry Parker (Labour) replied:

"Local councils can take a lead in this by working to build goodwill and fairness in the community.

"I'm hopeful that our new fairness commission, led by Peabody chair Lord Kerslake, will help us do this."

Geoffrey Brighty (Conservative) said: "While it might be possible to question the statisticians gloomy view of Blackheath Westcombe, the 'five steps to well-being' provide very good advice that can be followed whatever the circumstances.

"Greenwich-wide the new Fairness Commission, set up with cross-party support, should look at issues of benefit to residents."

Geoff Brighty has a point about the statisticians. How reliable are these surveys? Another survey by Rightmove ranked seven other boroughs unhappier than Greenwich, with Barking and Dagenham coming off worst.

According to Full Fact, this country's leading independent facts-checking charity, the difference between the happiness levels in these boroughs is minimal - ie. not statistically significant. On average people across all London boroughs rate their happiness at around seven or eight out of 10.

Ed: One for the record books: In 2011, in a 53-country Gallup poll, Nigerians were rated at 70 points for optimism. By contrast, Britain scored a deeply pessimistic -44. But that was before Brexit ...



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DO WHAT YOU CAN, ENJOY WHAT YOU DO, MOVE YOUR HOOD

INTRODUCE THESE FIVE SIMPLE STRATEGIES INTO YOUR LIFE AND YOU WILL FEEL THE BENEFITS.



Mental Health Foundation of New Zealand
www.mentalhealth.org.nz

The Five Steps to Happiness

The Five Ways to Wellbeing were developed by the New Economics Foundation from evidence gathered in the UK government's Foresight Project on Mental Capital and Wellbeing. The Project, published in 2008, drew on state-of-the-art research about mental capital and mental wellbeing through life. It asked NEF to develop the Five Ways to Wellbeing.

The Five Ways have been used by health organisations, schools and community projects across the UK and the world to help people to improve their wellbeing. They've been used in lots of different ways, for example to get people to start thinking about wellbeing, to develop organisational strategy, to measure impact, to assess need, for staff development, and to help people to incorporate more wellbeing-promoting activities into their lives.

The Five Ways to Wellbeing postcards have been an especially popular way to help spread the message.

1. Connect with the people around you.

With family, friends, colleagues, and neighbours. At home, work, school, or in your local community. Think of these as the cornerstones of your life and invest time in developing them. Building these connections will support and enrich you every day.

2. Be active.

Go for a walk or run. Step outside. Cycle. Play a game. Garden. Dance. Exercising makes you feel good. Most importantly, discover a physical activity you enjoy and one that suits your level of mobility and fitness.

3. Take notice.

Be curious. Catch sight of the beautiful. Remark on the unusual. Notice the changing seasons. Savour the moment, whether you are walking to work, eating lunch, or talking to friends. Be aware of the world around you and what you are feeling. Reflecting on your experiences will help you to appreciate what matters to you.

4. Keep learning.

Try something new. Rediscover an old interest. Sign up for that course. Take on a different responsibility at work. Fix a bike. Join a choir. Learn to play an instrument or how to cook your favorite food. Set a challenge that you will enjoy achieving. Learning new things will make you more confident as well as being fun.

5. Give.

Do something nice for a friend, or a stranger. Thank someone. Smile. Volunteer your time. Join a community group. Look out, as well as in. Seeing yourself, and your happiness, linked to the wider community can be incredibly rewarding, and creates connections with people around you.

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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

The geology of South-East London

In this article, MIKE NORTON concludes his review of the geology of the area

Influence on flora and fauna

By the end of the last ice age (about 12,000 years ago) the land surface around Blackheath had taken on its current shape. The landscape remained wooded until Blackheath was cleared as farmland. The sands and gravels of the Harwich Formation, which are at the surface across the whole of the heath, provide distinctly acid soils, due to their high silica content and this in turn led to the distinctive acid grassland, characteristic of many parts of Blackheath, with its own invertebrate fauna.

Pits, quarries and their infill

Chalk was quarried from the outcropping chalk on the northwest side of Blackheath, particularly around Blackheath Hill, where there were a series of lime kilns, until at least the 17th century. The caverns beneath Greenwich Park and Point Hill are well known. The disused quarries tended to be backfilled with spoil from other newer quarries and it is thought that one of these was responsible for the hole on Blackheath Hill that appeared in 2002.

Sands and gravels were quarried in a series of pits all over the heath, some of which provided hazards for the Blackheath Golf Course. Blackheath Vale was built in one of them, Washerwoman's Bottom was apparently infilled between about 1843 and 1863, although I have no details. Marr's Ravine, which was regarded as the most

formidable hazard on the golf course, was infilled in 1905 with spoil from a sewer that was under construction nearby.

The pits by Whitfield Mount, on the Donkey and Circus Fields and next to Vanbrugh Terrace were infilled with building rubble from the Blitz some time before 1945.

The infilled pits tend not to develop acid grasses: this is due to the very different soil chemistry, being often enriched in lime. The only remaining ones are Vanbrugh Pits (known as "the dips") on the northeastern edge, and Elliot Pits on the southwestern edge, of the heath.

Groundwater

The layer of clays that makes up much of the Lambeth Group in the Blackheath area provides the only barrier to downward movement of groundwater in the sequence at Blackheath, as the underlying Thanet Formation sands and the chalk form a single aquifer.

When rain falls on the heath, it percolates quickly through the Harwich Formation sands and gravels before reaching the clay layer and moving along the base of the sands.

The Greenwich Anticline gives this barrier a gently domed shape, with a crest close to the A2, so the water flows away to the north, west and south of the heath, coming to the surface at the outcrop of the upper boundary of the Lambeth Group in both Lewisham and Greenwich, causing wet conditions such as in the bottom of Elliot pits, where the Lambeth Group reaches the surface.

The practice of building large cellars in some parts of the area where the lower part of the sands and gravels comes to the surface appears to be disrupting groundwater flow, causing localised flooding during periods of high rainfall.



New plaque for Foot Tunnel

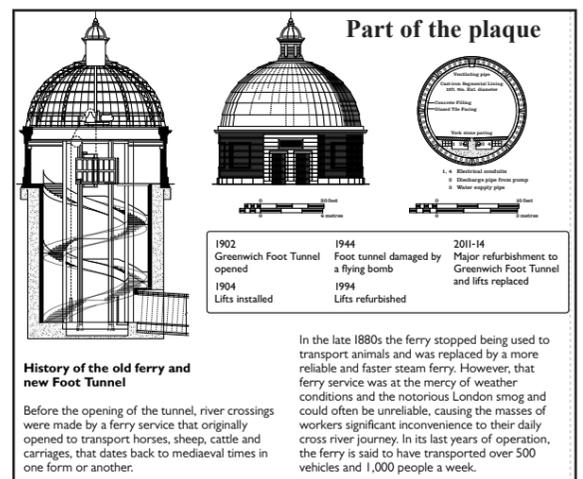
At the unveiling, Cllr Danny Thorpe, Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Regeneration and Sustainability was joined members of FOGWOFT (the Friends of Greenwich & Woolwich Foot Tunnels).

Cllr Thorpe said: "This magnificent tunnel is a testament to the craftsmen who worked on its construction all those years ago. And I have to honour the chief engineer of this great structure, Sir Alexander Binnie, whose great grandson, Chris Binnie is president of FOGWOFT."

Ian Blore, Secretary of FOGWOFT, said: "The plaque will do a great job in explaining the history and reasons for the historic foot tunnel. Since the completion of the major refurbishment scheme in 2014,

A new visitor information plaque charting the history of the Greenwich foot tunnel has been unveiled by representatives of a local appreciation society and the Royal Borough of Greenwich. The plaque reveals the fascinating history of the river crossing, from its days as a ferry transporting horses and carts in the 1600s to transport for the masses of dock workers in the 1800s right up to its construction in the late 1800s and opening in 1902.

it would have been easy for the borough to lose sight of the importance of this working heritage - it is to their credit that they have not, and FOGWOFT will continue to support innovative actions that improve both tunnels."



Silvertown Tunnel (cont. from page 1)

Local residents in Siebert Road and Westcombe Hill have also been campaigning against the impact of A102 traffic, and have won a concession of a noise and pollution barrier between the A102 and their homes. But this would only be built if the Silvertown Tunnel gets planning permission and goes ahead, leaving them puzzled as to what might happen if planning is refused.

Anti-road campaigners say that Sadiq Khan has betrayed his promise of a full review of all the various Thames crossings proposed by TfL. Certainly, he and his Deputy Mayor for Transport, Val Shawcross, did not attempt to take views from local amenity societies and campaign groups. Shawcross admitted in September that 'I think there's a job to be done scrutinising Transport for London's stakeholder engagement.'

The Mayor's support for the Silvertown Tunnel was part of a wider statement, in which he announced plans to take forward a cycle and pedestrian crossing between Rotherhithe and Canary Wharf, and to look closely at plans for a small ferry from Greenwich Peninsula to Canary Wharf, and DLR & Overground crossings for Gallions Reach/Beckton and Thamesmead/Barking Riverside. TfL announced earlier this year that it is commissioning new boats and improving the piers for the Woolwich Free Ferry.

Sadiq Khan described his proposals as 'greener', but they still leave Westcombe Park with a potential traffic attractor. Matthew Pennycook, our MP, called the

plans "disappointing", saying that "Despite enhancements, the modified Silvertown proposals do not resolve concerns about increased congestion and air pollution."

The leader of the Royal Borough of Greenwich council, Denise Hyland, welcomed the announcement, but it seems that the council still hopes for new road crossings east of Woolwich.

The Westcombe Society will continue to oppose the Silvertown Tunnel, and is calling for much stronger assurances from TfL if the Development Consent Order is approved. We'll be asking that traffic using the Blackwall and Silvertown crossings will not be allowed to increase from current levels, construction lorries will be banned from local roads, noise barriers will be installed, and traffic patterns will be monitored and changes made if our local roads are affected.

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PLANNING APPLICATIONS

(See <http://www.westcombesociety.org>)

26 ULUNDI ROAD ref 16/2763/F
Construct rear and side single-storey extension

13C ULUNDI ROAD ref 16/2670/F
Construct part 1/part 2-storey rear extension and new roof

174A WESTCOMBE HILL ref 16/2521/F
Loft conversion with rear dormer

39 VANBRUGH PARK ref 16/2789/F
Demolish 3-storey rear extension and replace with 3-storey rear extension with loft conversion and rear dormer

12 GLENLUCE ROAD ref 16/2835/F
Replace external render

TREE WORKS
58 BEACONSFIELD ROAD ref 16/3368/TC
In rear garden crown reduce willow by 30-40%, horse chestnut by 30%, lift second horse chestnut to 7m and pollard robinia

83 MAZE HILL ref 16/3389/TC
Fell oak in rear garden

40 MYCENAE ROAD ref 16/3385/TC
Reduce cherry and lift London planes to 3m

112 HUMBER ROAD ref 16/3383/TC
Crown reduce silver birch by 30-35%, in rear garden, and fell evergreen oak in rear garden

BUY LOCAL!

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ROYAL NEPALESE RESTAURANT (Station Crescent) 20% OFF meals for two or more Sunday - Thursday.

THE CURIOUS COMB 10% discount on services over £30 Weekdays 8am-10am, 2pm-4pm (excludes retail purchases).
CORIANDE RESTAURANT (Station Crescent) 25% off Sunday to Thursday. Bookings only!

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KARAN CHEMIST 10% OFF Weds. only

BLACKHEATH EYECARE OPTICIANS 20% off 2nd pair of spectacles. (Same prescription). Not in conjunction with any other offer. (Complete glasses start from £49.95 with single vision lenses). 5% off contact lens solution and accessories. <https://www.blackheatheyecare.co.uk/>

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