**Storms Blight the New Year**

George Martin, a 14-year-old student at Colfe’s, reports

Unprecedented storms have surged through England over the past month. More than 300 people in southern England alone were unable to enjoy Christmas 2013, as they were left without power on Christmas Eve.

Some roofs collapsed and many homes were evacuated as rivers burst their banks, and sea surges overwhelmed coastal defences. The high-powered winds ripped through the country. A 109 mph gust of wind was recorded in north Wales.

Thanks to the Thames Barrier, which had to close a record number of times in January, most of Thameside London escaped flooding. A map on the Thames Barrier Information Centre website shows that without the barrier, large swathes of land would have been flooded, including much of Greenwich, and the peninsula. However, our area did not escape unscathed: many homes lost tiles and slates in the strong winds, including four tower blocks in Woolwich, while blocked drains in Eltham on Christmas Eve caused at least 23 homes to be flooded in Westcombe Avenue; and in Lewisham, the Quaggy flooded homes.

Across the whole area, trees and heavy branches came down, including several eucalyptus trees like this one right in Westcombe Park Road. The Westcombe Woodlands also lost some trees.

The environment agency had dozens of flood warnings in place; in December, England’s east coast experienced the worst storms in 60 years, but in January it was the turn of Western Scotland, Wales, and the South and South-west coasts of England to suffer; in North Wales residents had to be rescued by lifeboat crews.

So far the death toll has gone up to 7, and sadly this figure is likely to rise. Very sadly, one of the casualties was Henry Martin, 18, a student of film and TV at Greenwich University, who left his home in Mmindland, Newton Ferrers, near Plymouth, to take pictures of the storm.

The question in many people’s minds is how far this weather is the result of climate change. John Beddington, former Chief Scientific Adviser to the government, is in no doubt. He warns that there will be “an increasing frequency of extreme weather events” such as flooding in the future.

Weather forecaster Emma Compton of the Met Office in Exeter asserts that there is nothing particularly unusual in these weather conditions, which she said are to be expected as part of a longer-term “turbulent variability” in our weather. There are many who will find that hard to believe.

Editor: The Thames Barrier closed 4 days in the 80s, 35 times in the 90s and 80 times since 2000. As the year turned, it closed 15 times in 2 weeks.

Additional reporting by WN reporter.

**The Eagles has landed — or disappeared**

The Spread Eagle is – was – a very popular restaurant in Greenwich, renowned both for its excellent food, and unique atmosphere. When Foyle Road resident Gordon Baker went there last month, he promised his guest that they would be lunching surrounded by one of the best private collections of maritime paintings in London – and was mortified to find the walls completely bare. All the pictures had disappeared. Asked where they were a waiter shrugged and replied “The British government has got them.”

Somewhat mystified, Mr Baker got on with his hosts’ d’oeuvres. And so for the oenophiles missing from its walls, which included a Gainsborough and two paintings by John Bratby (who once lived in Hardy Road) a partial explanation perhaps lies with the fact that the parent company of the Spread Eagle, Greenwich Inc, is now in administration, with debts, reportedly, of up to £9 million.

The Spread Eagle closed on Dec. 12th, and Inc’s American owner, Frank Dowling (aka “Frank the Yank”) in Greenwich street airport, and two of his Sacred images were being questioned over a suspected underpayment of six million pounds in VAT and PAYE.

There are hopes that the administrators – Griffins – will be able to save jobs, and sell the group’s businesses, most of which it says appear viable. They include the Trafalgar Tavern, the Cricketers, The Admiral Hardy, the Greenwich Park Bar and Grill, and many other bars and restaurants.

To the relief of many, one casualty is likely to be Mr Dowling’s proposed plan to develop the area behind the Trafalgar Tavern with a 6-storey, 96 bedroom hotel.

Meanwhile, art-lovers will be interested to find out who those wonderful pictures really belong to – to say nothing of the 2005 bronze statue by Lesley Povey of Horatio Nelson which once stood proudly outside the Trafalgar Tavern, and which has also disappeared.

Lawyers for Mr Dowling have denied any wrongdoing, and say that he is “co-operating fully” with HMRC.

The Evening Standard newspaper quotes them as saying:

“The investigation, as we understand it, primarily relates to a VAT issue which is complex as it involves different entities within the business structure. The structure is entirely legitimate.”

**Fostering events**

Interested in fostering? Phone 0800 0521499 to book a place at an information event at the Woolwich Centre on Tues. Feb. 25th 7.- 9.00 pm.

**Children’s Clothes, Toys and Equipment at bargain prices.**

2.00pm to 3.30pm. Entrance 50p. If you would like to book a table or stall, please contact Joanne on 07790 571777.

**Daffodil Tea Sat 15th March for Senior Citizens. Invites will be going out but if you don’t receive one and would like to come, please contact Caroline on 020 8853 0948.”

**Nearly New Sale Sat 29th March. Children’s Clothes, Toys and Equipment at bargain prices.**

2.00pm to 3.30pm. Entrance 50p. If you would like to book a table or stall, please contact Joanne on 07790 571777.

**Daffodil Tea Sat 15th March for Senior Citizens. Invites will be going out but if you don’t receive one and would like to come, please contact Caroline on 020 8853 0948.”**

**February 2014 Issue 1**

*A community newspaper commended by the London Forum of Amenity and Civic Societies*
Letters to the editor

From: Ed Hill Fecile Road

The November edition of WN is mis-informing and misleading the community by underlining the official spec that ‘Greenwich Park is looking better than before the Olympic Games.’

The truth is that 10,000 metric tons of acid grassland turf have been replaced, there is undergone significant long-term damage to trees and wildlife, the vonous pavements and the Roman-Celtic Temple have gone, and there is increased ill-health consequent on 2 million tons of traffic to the Park.

We would be most unsure to ignore the corporate views and the Report Marlond’s recent briefing in The Times, which brutally stated that “the choice of Greenwich Park for the Olympics was imperial, lechery and so on.”

The Park must nearly be commercialised. A new community group for the World Heritage Site has now formed called the Friends of Marilyn Little.

From: Liz Coyle Citi Garden

“Making a building site noise neutral” isn’t why the above letter. Edward Hill really should check out his facts more carefully before making such wild and unconsidered statements.

Few readers, I sure, would disagree with the view of the Park. Greenwich Park is a much better than before the Olympics – due to no small part of a dedicated and attention applied to all the remedial landscaping work by the Park management and their contractors.

From: Cllr Alex Grant Real Estate

Reading the November issue of Greenwich Westcomer, I was reminded of one many Victorian had on the potato famine of the 1840s, which claimed that the Irish people “brought it on themselves” by marrying too early and having too many children.

Dr Senior would care to meet with their parents to find out the reasons why, if any, they are not able to afford to feed”. These children, he adds, are “more negative effect on the development of their abilities, forever. They’s intelligence every day.

In the above letter, Edward Hill really should check out his facts more carefully before making such wild and unconsidered statements.

From: M A J B_cart

Parkside

Two illuminated signs to distinguish the Dec-Jan issue of the WN. Watson Smith who lived a few doors down from me I came to know for his humanity and commitment in supporting the poor and underprivileged of the world primarily those in Gaza – a place he knew well from his days as DSM’s police officer. His absence from our neighbourhood is deeply felt.

At the other end of the spectrum, in your letters section, Dr Senior’s learned discussion on the advisability of continuing welfare and housing support for those who have allegedly a “socially destructive” lifestyle.

His lifestyle is not always a matter of choice. Economic and social disadvantages and cultural prejudices play a great part in one end up. Since last March we’ve been helping at a soup kitchen under the shadow of the Shard at London Bridge where 60-100 young and old people are given a breakfast and a cooked hot dinner 7 days a week.

The diversity of people who walk in the Centre is varied, but none of them could be labelled as having chosen a ‘socially destructive’ lifestyle.

It is well to remember that our civilisation is varied, but none of them could be labelled as having chosen a ‘socially destructive’ lifestyle.

From: Trevor Allman Coleraine Road

Councillor Chris Roberts.

We need your help! Volunteer distributors please phone 020 8853 3740, we need your help! The Westcombe Society.

Memorise these dates: 16th February and 1st March.

The suggested contraflow lane cutting straight across the Gl20 (Charlton Road, twice) to Old Dover Road makes the dangerous of dealing with the issue.

From: Jeanne Laroc The Westcombe Society

On a very recent Friday evening a small group of carol singers brought festive cheer to some children and residents at the Westcombe Park.

The money raised, £140.00, will go to the Charity of the Year South London Support. Thanks to Emma for the wonderful and very welcom...
Ahoy there!

Every Wednesday, young adults with learning difficulties meet at the Ahoy Centre to help out, and learn to sail and row. Twelve young people started as apprentices last September, six boat build, and six on a Leadership course.

“We hope that they will soon go on to become Assistant Sailing Instructors,” said Liz Chowidency.

Ahoy’s old sails had become so tatty and worn that it was not possible for the young people to hoist the sails that are used to learn how to use them correctly. The Westcombe Society generously donated new sails which are already being pulled up the mast and set beautifully.

Tom was asked what he liked best about 2013 at the Ahoy and he said: “The new sails, they meant I could sail properly for the first time.”

Target: Westcombe ATMs

Criminals are targeting cash machines at the NatWest Bank on Stratheden Parade. Reports have recently increased of cards being stuck, and of suspicious items being found on and around the ATMs – three in one week alone.

Fraudsters are becoming more and more sophisticated in attempts to take your money. What are they doing?

‘Looping’

There are using external devices to con-

 cigarette your card into the machine. This is a device that can be inserted into the card slot of the machine and unwittingly, you play into the machine and enter your PIN. All the while, nearby someone could be watching you enter your PIN number.

‘Skimming’

Skimmers are devices that can read the information off the magnetic strip on the back of your card. They can ‘copy’ the card and use it to take money from your bank account. What can you do?

* Always cover your pin
* Always cover the keypad when entering your PIN. This is a must! By not disclosing your PIN, you prevent criminals from using your card if it is trapped.
* Be suspicious! Examine the ATM care-fully for devices. Card or cash trapping devices need to be glued or taped to the machine tell the bank immediately.
* If you see something odd on the machine tell the bank immediately and consider calling the police.

* Above all, trust your instinct. If you are at all concerned about the people near you, walk away and come back later or use a different machine.

It’s not all bad news. The Blackheath Westcombe Safer Neighbourhood Team in partnership with the Council and NatWest are increasing the security features around the ATMs.

On Friday January 10th, two men were arrested for possession of articles for fraud after they were seen tampering with a cash point in Stratheden Parade. I will keep you all informed of the results of the invest-

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The WI’s brilliant new cookbook

Backheath & Greenwich Women’s Institute has produced a beautifully produced and illustrated recipe book, London Village Cookbook. It is full of delicious recipes, and was sponsored by several local businesses. A lot of research went into it – Eileen Flanagan, Secretary of the local Women’s Institute, said: “As we are always sharing recipes, it seemed like a great idea to create our own cookery book of members’ favourite dishes.

We had a hugely enjoyable evening sampling each other’s recipes.”

Very practical, it is spiral-bound for ease of use, and has lovely wipe clean pages for those, like your editor, much with a gift for spotting random drops of gravy. Covering an affordable £6.99, it is on sale at Blackheath Cooks, Mara, and other local outlets. Many congratulations to the very talented chefs, and the WI Committee who lovingly tried and tested the recipes:

Carol Singleton, Cathy Rowswell, Annamela Taylor, Emma Homent, Betty Lee, Irene Yet, Jane Ringwood & Alixion Holt

All aboard – for drama

The theatre launched in January with a contemporary relevance. Sat. 8 February £15 Kidbrooke Theatre Company at Corelli College stages The Real Machbeth Sunday 9 February £10 (under 16 £7.50)

THOMAS TALLIS VARIETY SHOW Music and drama on Tuesday 11 February £9 (under 16 £7.50) Comedian ALAN DAVIES performs Fri. 14 February £18 LAD’S NIGHT STIRLING, presents Mind Magic on Saturday 15 February £20+ £9.99 from the British Library

BOOKSHOP or other good bookshops

It’s focus on the BBC is unique

£9.99 from the British Library

NEW sessions for 2014

& Check Out Our Full Card List Online

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Things to See

Lionel Bridgman

PHOTO: Edrid Brigman

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New sails can make all the difference. But we could do with new jibs, said Liz.
Northern European waters like to employ licence Deep Sea Pilots. Although it is not ships trading in Northern European waters. Authority providing expert navigators for Trinity House are a Deep Sea Pilotage. Deep Sea Pilotage production platforms or wind farms. provided on offshore structures such as local port and harbour authorities and those provided on offshore structures such as production platforms or wind farms. Trinity House is also responsible for marking, and disposing, wrecks which are a danger to navigation.

Deep Sea Pilotage Trinity House is a Deep Sea Pilotage Authority providing expert navigators for ships trading in Northern European waters. It is authorised by the government to license Deep Sea Pilots. Although it is not compulsory to carry a Deep Sea Pilot, many ships' masters unfamiliar with Northern European waters like to employ their professional expertise to assist their bridge team.

Charitable Organisation
TH is also a charitable organisation that is concerned with the safety, welfare and training of mariners.

Art exhibition
An exhibition of new work by Greenwich topographical artist Peter Kent celebrating the Quincentenary of Trinity House took place at The Greenwich Gallery, Poynton Place, SE10 8RS in January – sadly, too late for publicity in our December/January issue. However, if you missed it, his unique artwork is still available, at reasonable prices, either via the Greenwich Gallery, or by visiting Peter Kent’s website, www.peterkentgreenwich.co.uk.

Peter Kent is well known for his distinctive style, and his passionate interest in the river, and all things maritime, and this has resulted in a strong following among his admirers. In this exhibition, he visually explored the lighthouses and lightships and other structures that have formed the essential services provided by Trinity House to mariners for 500 years. Peter has drawn many of the lighthouses and lightships that have served to aid sailors around our shores for hundreds of years. His pictorial centrepiece (detail, above) reveals the history and extent of Trinity House activities. To get a flavour of the man and his work, visit peterkentgreenwich.co.uk and explore his blog: http://viewfromtheturns.com.

A new light on architecture
The annual Richard Grierson Architecture this year, organised by the Friends of Blackheath Halls, will be given by Mark Major. Architect and lighting designer Mark Major, a founding partner of lighting designers Spots and Major, will speak about ‘light architecture’.

The Lecture is on Wed 5th February at 8.00 pm at Blackheath Halls. Tickets: £12.00 (Concs. £10.00, Students £6.00) Box office: 8463 8010

Walking the Heath
An Introduction to its History
by Neil Rhind & Roger Marshall

Walking the Heath is a new illustrated guide to Blackheath. Written by our local historian Neil Rhind, partnered by Roger Marshall, it offers three guided walks across and around the Heath. It identifies all the places of interest, from the Vanbrugh Pits, the Paragon, the Village, Elthorpe Place, Whittington’s Mount, the Elthorpe Pits and Dartmouth Terrace, the Points, and the Park Wall from Rangers Gate and Cray Wet to the Maze Hill War Memorial. The guide provides details of many of Blackheath’s historic houses.

The Heath, along with Greenwich Park (once part of Blackheath until 1433) is one of London’s most popular resorts for visitors and local residents alike. Its 1,000 plus years of recorded history will be found in the Timeline, a supplement to Walking the Heath, and the Blackheath Society wishes all users a good read, whether they be walking briskly, strolling nonchalantly or sitting in their armchairs.

Walking the Heath by Neil Rhind & Roger Marshall: £8.49 pages (A5 landscape), more than 90 illustrations, many rare and unusual and some in colour, handy pocket size.

BELOW-

C H I N E S E  N E W Y E A R  O F T H E H O R S E

At the National Maritime Museum

Better late than never! Sat 15th, 11.40 am - 4.00 pm Celebrate the Year of the Horse! Sat 15th, 11.30 and 2.30 pm - Kids Lampion lighting Chinese New Year fun at the Cutty Sark.

Mon. 17th Feb - Fri 21st Feb. National Maritime Museum: Chinese New Year fun from 11.30 & 2.00 pm; & at the Cutty Sark: 11.30 & 2.00 pm

Chinese lanterns will be lighting the day. Activities include: lantern lighting, traditional Chinese food, a paper lantern workshop, and activities in the Children’s Centre. Entrance to the Cutty Sark is free for the day.

The Lecture is on Wed 5th February at 8.00 pm at Blackheath Halls. Tickets: £12.00 (Concs. £10.00, Students £6.00) Box office: 8463 8010

Harth Le Gres
ARTS

BLACKHEATH DECORATIVE & FINE ARTS SOCIETY, 30 Mary's Church Hall, Crossway, Blackheath SE3 9BS; info@blackheath-decorative.org.uk; Telephone: 020 8852 9059. Meetings are at 7.30 pm in Mary's Church Hall, Crossway, Blackheath SE3 9BS. The next meeting will be held on 15 March 2014. For more information please contact Jean Valsler on 0208 852 7548.

THE WESTCOUNTRY SOCIETY

Blighters & Novices' Party Sat 22nd Feb – evening, main hall Ballad of Love and War Fri 7th March – afternoon, main hall Children’s Nearby New Sat 29th March – afternoon, main hall Quiz – Friday 8th April – evening, main hall Easter Egg Hunt Sat 19th April – afternoon, main hall (building will be closed) AGM – Friday 9th May – evening, main hall Summer Picnic – Saturday 25th July, afternoon, main hall Macmillan’s Biggest Coffee Morning Friday 28th September – morning, main hall Children’s Nearby Sat 27th September, afternoon Members’ Evening – Saturday 11th October, afternoon Chrysanthemum Show Saturday 25th October Quiz Friday 7th November – evening, main hall This proposed calendar of events is dependent upon helpers. Please ring Joanne on 07799 577775 if you would like to help out on any of these events.

COMMUNITY

PATERSONS & LUNCHES Thursday 12th February 10.00 – 2.00 pm – at The Swanwind Hotel, Monopole Road, Blackheath SE8 0EB. No quizzing this time, so good chance to meet and chat! Cost £2.50. To book lunches telephone Wendy on 020 3850 0535 for Monday, 3rd Feb.

BLACKHEATH SCIENTIFIC SOCIETY

Myconia House, 90 Myconia Road, Blackheath begin at 7.30 pm. Fee for Feb 23rd M Jarry Cfiton talks on Esh and the Thamos: Where have they gone?

INDUSTRIAL SOCIETY

18th February Anthony Durman on Buchanan in Underground – more interesting than you think. Meeting at The Old Blackheath, Bennett Park, SE3. Please see the car park behind the station. Meetings start at 7.30 and non members are charged £1.

BLACKHEATH BRIDGE CLUB


WORSHIP

St George’s Church, Greenwich High Road

A Community with Children’s Activities

PARRISH OF EAST GREENWICH

(Church of St George, St George’s, Holy Trinity) have a STUDY DAY on Sat, 15th Feb., Led by David Kintzler and authors Andy Angel & Jonathan May. A debate on authors at Christchurch, Trafalgar Road, SE10. To book call Ballantyne: r.ballantyne@trinitylaban.ac.uk or telephone 0208 852 7548.

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WESTCOMBE WRITERS’ CIRCLE

First Friday of every month at 7.30 pm in Myconia House. Poet, Kings Road, SW8 4PQ. www.westcombewriters.org.uk

WESTCOMBE MUSICAL SOCIETY

Wednesday, 26 March St Margaret’s Church SE13 5EA, drinks in the Thames: £12/8. Please note: If you book tickets to Hamlet (pating at 9pm) you receive tickets for both shows for £16/13. Must Ham. He’s a shepherd, he’s technically your domestic uncle, and right now he’s only your hope. Subscription: £10 4th-10th February, 9pm £12/8. Please note: If you book tickets to Hamlet (pating at 7pm) you receive tickets for both shows for £16/13. Imagine someone told you a story, a story so real so real that that story became yours... THE TRUNK. 26th February – 1st March, 9pm £12/8. Sometimes, you find yourself a fascinating case inspired by Chekhov’s short stories. The Trunk painter a bloody crime portrait of our everyday repartee. PANTO TIME – STILL – NEVER too late for a pantomime! The Alexandra Players SLEEPING BEAUTY Thursday to Saturday February 20th to 22nd at the Alexandra Hall, Bromley. Boxoffice: 01689 851400. Performances Feb 21st, 22nd, 23rd at 7.30pm, and 21st, 22nd, 23rd Feb at 2.30 pm. Prices £12/£8. Please note: If you book tickets for Hamlet (pating at 7pm) you receive tickets for both shows for £16/13. Imagine someone told you a story, a story so real so real that that story became yours...
The Genius of JMW Turner
Neville Grant

If you see nothing else this year, visit the National Maritime Museum’s ‘superb exhibition of the sea paintings of JMW Turner in the Sammy Ofer Wing. Turner and the Sea is a huge coup for the NMM – this is the first comprehensive exhibition of the sea paintings of this great man, and museums and galleries from all over the world have been persuaded to lend work from their holdings. No need to go to Amsterdam, Birmingham, Lisbon Southamptont, Florence, Washington or Kansas – they are all here.

Not just Turner, either: the exhibition places Turner within his historical context, so you can compare his work with many other artists, including, notably, Willem van de Velde the Elder, the Norwich artist John Cotman, and even Constable and Gainsborough.

Among the first to catch the eye are his The Wreck of a Transport Ship (1849, Gulbenkian, Lisbon) which is overwhelm-

Beethoven – A Guided Tour Around the Concertos

Is there a better way of spending a Monday morning than with Matthew Taylor? Matthew Taylor has been the Composer in Residence at Blackheath Hall, and is a prolific pianist, composer and conductor. His lectures take the form of anecdotal history and musical illustration. He demonstrates whole scores at the piano – and then we listen to the CD. Over the years there have been numerous subjects, including Prokofiev, Berlioz and Stravinsky, as well as Beethoven’s symphonies and Mozart’s concertos.

These lectures are devised so that one doesn’t need technical knowledge whilst at the same time the experienced aficionado always finds something new to learn. Lectures are from 10.00 am to midday on a Monday with an interval. It is a place where friendships are made or extended.

These lectures attract not only retired people but also those still at work. For some they act as a panacea to avoid Monday morning blues. They also suit those parents who would welcome cultural distraction after off-loading children.

The current series started in January, but it is not too late to sign up: Mondays 3, 10, 17, 24 February, and 3 & 10 March.

Matthew is also planning a live performance with a guest violinist playing with him the two romances for violin.

The complete course of 10 Lectures costs £50. Special arrangements can be made if you missed January! To book, please contact Lionel Lewis on 020 8297 1075.

Art for our sake

Last month, some of you will have seen Jan Barnett’s art exhibition at the Gallery, Ruby and Norm Cott at Lee High Road SE 13 – a very good place to pop in for a cup of coffee and a snack.

Many of our readers will know Jan as the Hon Sec of the Westcombe Society – but she is perhaps better and more widely known for her art. Jan studied from Camberrwell School of Art with a degree in Textiles after an eclectic selection of jobs coupled with various design projects, including unique enamelled buckles, silver jewellery and leather handbags.

Jan then changed direction and worked in media sales, working on a number of new media launches, the Channel 4 and the famed national radio station Atlantic 252. However, Jan continued to draw, paint and design. She designed and hand-made original greetings cards that were sold in many outlets including the Royal Festival Hall. She also undertook commissions, creating personalised art-works and illustrations.

Her passion is now painting. Three of her paintings have been shortlisted for the Royal Academy Summer Exhibition, one in 2012 and two in 2013.

“I am inspired by tangible objects, such as fabrics, flowers and plants,” she says. She loves to juxtapose various organic and non-organic objects in terms of colour, tone, form and texture.

She paints at her home in Blackheath, Mycenae House and The Conservatoire.

Her influences come from Henri Matisse, Giorgione and Edouard Manet, Andre Derain, Paul Cezanne and Paul Guaguin among others. Jan enjoyed the Macmillan Coffee Morning in 2013. She has four cakes for the last Macmillan Coffee Morning. You might also see her delivering The Westcombe News in Langston Way.

ED: Many congratulations on your art, Jan, keep it up!

Philosophy for Educational Renewal

Last year celebrated its twentieth anniversary. CHRIS ORMELL reminds us what it is all about.

Time to revive our education system

Traditionally, the idea of education was to transmit the best bits of the core of the culture of the society to the youth. Done well, the young would acquire quest-

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What’s to be done about the Tunnel?

M ost of us have been there, gasping for breath at the holdups leading to the tunnel; and others have been here too, on foot, choking on the traffic fumes . . .

So it was that, in spite of cold and unrectifying rain, a group of volunteers has started a new Citizens’ Science project for South-East London, to test levels of air pollution from exhaust fumes.

Early in January, they put up about 100 tubes which will collect particulate matter, including vehicle emissions, from the air. These will be in place for a month, and then analysed. If successful, they should give a good picture, along with results from about 150 local authority air testing sites, of where air pollution is densest.

This follows from a study in 2013, which was smaller and only followed the Blackwall Tunnel approach routes. The new sample will also include areas like Dlaştır, Rotherthite and Calford, often used by drivers to avoid snarl-ups at the tunnel and the Woolwich ferry.

The reason for all this work? The proposed Silvertown Tunnel, announced by Mayor Boris Johnson as the solution to the traffic tangles at the Blackwall Tunnel, this development, along with the plans put forward to close the Woolwich Ferry and open a new ferry crossing downstream, is likely to have considerable effects on local traffic levels.

Its proponents argue that by improving traffic flow, it will alleviate the problem of fumes from cars, vans and lorries which run their engines even at a standstill. They also suggest that it will not lead to more traffic, as there should be tolls in place to discourage casual use.

Opponents, though, point to the historic patterns of road use, which show that as soon as a new road is open, traffic levels climb, often far more than was estimated. And yet levels of air pollution in many parts of the Royal Borough of Greenwich are already in excess of World Health Organisation guidelines and European Commission legal limits. (See the WVN, November 2013.)

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