



# Westcombe NEWS

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September 2016 Issue 7

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@westcombesociety.org](mailto:info@westcombesociety.org) for craft table bookings or ring 020 8853 1312.**

## Mycenae Soup - again!

Mark  
Johnson-Brown

This autumn, Mycenae House once again presents its innovative micro-funding event, Mycenae Soup, which supports the development of small local charities. This pop up fun dining experience will take place on Friday 18th November 2016 in the Ballroom at Mycenae House.

The simple but effective event sees a number of local people present their charitable initiatives that need funding for diners to vote on. It is supported by catering companies and restaurants from the area with delicious culinary delights (not just soup!) All the money raised from ticket sales goes to the chosen charity on the night.

Last October's inaugural event raised £1279 for the Mental Health Activity Trust, a small charity shop in Delacourt Road which provides employment opportunities for people with Mental Health issues.

The event also saw the successful launch of other initiatives that have gone on to make a national impact. Notable among these is Miss Libby Rose's Pink Bus Project which was picked up by shopping giant Hobby Craft: her project now sees children all-round the country learning sewing and communication skills on the funkiest pink bus ever.

This coming November, Mycenae House will again encourage the local community to come and dine with them, have some fun, be entertained and support the work of local charities.

The call out for charities to register their ideas opens from 5th September and the tickets for diners go on sale also from the 5th September.

Anyone interested in presenting an idea for consideration should contact Mycenae House on 02088581749 or [info@mycenaehouse.co.uk](mailto:info@mycenaehouse.co.uk) for an application form and further information.

## Come on, Girls!



PHOTO: Marilyn Little

**Which was the Remain Team, and which the Leave? Who cares, as long as we pull together! A scene from the Westcombe Society's Family Summer Picnic. "We were very lucky with the weather," said Marilyn Little. "It poured before and poured after but we had some sunshine in between. Loads for the children to do, the rat was smacked and the coconuts got a seeing to. The traditional games proved popular and the odd glass of Pimms was consumed. Many thanks to Emily and Jody for organising it all."**

## Do we really want Pay & Display parking in Westcombe Park?

The Controlled Parking Zone review that has just been distributed proposes that roads that have asked to be included in the extended controlled parking area will have Permit and 'Pay and Display' instead of the 'Two Hours Free' as in the existing controlled bays.

The Westcombe Society, like others thought that the consultation in December 2015 only asked about extending the extent of the 'Two hours free' bays and or times/days of controls. Many residents presumably responded on this basis.

The current proposal does not suggest changing the existing 2 hour bays but does propose Permits combined with 'Pay and Display' in a number of roads/parts of roads not already included in the controls (Coleraine, Hardy, Beaconsfield, Ingleside

Grove, Mycenae Road, Vanbrugh Park, St Johns Park, Invicta and Old Dover Road).

We wonder if those residents who wanted to be included in the control areas still want this if it is Permit/'Pay and Display' rather than 'Two hours free.'

The proposals also suggest splitting the existing zone into smaller chunks and introducing 'Pay and Display', with the first 30 minutes free outside the Old Dover Road shops.

We would like to urge ALL residents to respond to the new proposals. Residents should have received the consultation material which provides space to make clear exactly what you want in your street. Make sure you have your say by replying before the deadline of 16th Sept..[See also [www.royalgreenwich.gov.uk/westcombepark/cpz/](http://www.royalgreenwich.gov.uk/westcombepark/cpz/)]

## Note to charitable projects looking for funding:

Are you a local not for profit project looking to make a positive impact in your community? We could help with funding! Ask us for the information sheet and application form by calling 0208 858 1749 or emailing [info@mycenaehouse.co.uk](mailto:info@mycenaehouse.co.uk).

Our aim is to stimulate small but effective ideas from local people that make a positive contribution to our community.

Last year we had an array of ideas, from training for hospital radio DJ's, sewing workshops for girls, learning development for children living with autism, theatre workshops for kids to

gardening projects for local people.

Again we are looking for exciting ideas that we can help kick start, and we also welcome ideas from new and fledgling initiatives.

You don't need to be a registered charity but you do need to be not for profit and of benefit to the communities in the ward of Blackheath & Westcombe. You will need a bank account as well as someone to present your ideas to an audience of diners.

**If you would like help or advice on your ideas and about applying please give us a call on 0208 858 1749**



## Newsbriefs



### Bobby Furber

We are sorry to report the death on 29th June of Frank Robert Furber (known to all as Bobby). He had reached the great age of 95 and enjoyed a long and very useful life. He was Chair of the Blackheath Society from 1969-1989 and gave hugely to the Society and to local people generally.

### Terry Grant

We are very sorry to report that our popular ex-policeman who ran the weekly film club at Mycenae House died in July following a stroke.

Juliet writes: "The Cinema evening he ran in Mycenae House was a pleasure for Terry to run and I know he enjoyed the company and enthusiasm of all who joined him on Wednesday evenings. Films were a part of Terry's enjoyment of life and he welcomed the chance to share this with other filmgoers." His funeral took place in August.

### The World's Biggest Coffee Morning

Every September the Westcombe Society raises money for Macmillan Cancer Support at this, one of our most successful and enjoyable events. Our aim is to raise £1,000 for Macmillan on this one day. Do come and help us to achieve this by joining us for coffee or lunch on Friday 30th September, when we will be selling drinks, sandwiches and cakes, all freshly made and donated by a band of volunteers. There will also be a cake stall, and also a Raffle with a generous Cash First Prize and many other prizes. If you cannot come on the day please buy Raffle Tickets in advance in Mycenae House. Hope to see you there!

### The Chrysanthemum Tea

The Westcombe Society is already laying plans for events in October, including this very popular event: The Chrysanthemum Tea for Senior

Citizens is on Sat.15th Oct. 2pm to 4pm in Mycenae House. Invites will be going out in September. If you don't receive your invite or would like to come along for the first time, please contact Caroline Owens on 020 8853 0948. If you would like to make cakes for our guests, these are always gratefully received. Please contact Joanne on 07709 571777.

### Autumn Quiz night

The ever popular Autumn Quiz is on Friday 21st October 7.30pm for 8pm in Mycenae House: tables of six, or come along and make up a team and meet neighbours and make new friends. £5.00 members, £6.00 non-members.

Fish & Chip or Chicken & Chip Suppers can be ordered when booking at £6.00. Just chips at £2.00. Please contact Caroline Owens on 020 8853 0948 to book your table and supper. Please book by 15th October.

## Westcombe Society events

### The London Bridges Walk

**on Sunday, 18th Sept., to raise money for Macmillan Cancer Support. It costs £10 to register to walk and we hope everyone will find some sponsorship too – but this is not compulsory.**

**To register, or to sponsor a walker, please ring Caroline on 8853 0948. See also page 2.**

### Macmillan Biggest Coffee Morning in the World

**Friday 30th September 10.00am to 2.00pm, in Mycenae House, Mycenae Road.**

**Please come along and support the Biggest Coffee Morning in the world and help us raise funds for Macmillan. Come for a mid-morning Coffee, Tea and cakes – or a lunchtime sandwich. And don't forget to buy raffle tickets! Generous prizes.**

**If you would like to help and or make a cake/cakes, please contact Caroline Owens on 020 8853 0948.**



# COMMUNITY

## WESTCOMBE NEWS

### ALL EDITORIAL CORRESPONDENCE TO:

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### ALL MATERIAL TO BE SENT TO: wnews@westcombesociety.org

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**Environment Editor:** Maggie Gravelle  
**What's On:** Barbara Ward  
**Reporters:** The community – that means you!

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

**DISTRIBUTION** Emily Norton and volunteers.  
*Volunteer distributors please phone 020 8853 2756, we need your help!*

**ADVERTISING MANAGER**  
**Marilyn Little, 163 Westcombe Hill, SE3 7DP 020 8853 1312**  
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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[www.westcombesociety.org/westcombe-news/](http://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	[ ]

## DON'T FEEL LEFT OUT, COME AND JOIN THE TEAM ..... YOU WILL BE MOST WELCOME.

Once again a Westcombe Society team is participating in The London Bridges Walk on Sunday, 18th September, to raise money for Macmillan Cancer Support. This enjoyable walk starts at London Bridge and crosses each bridge, stopping halfway at Victoria Gardens for a picnic lunch. You can either walk the whole distance of 15 miles or just choose the 7 mile option; whatever you choose the route is suitable for those in wheelchairs or pushing baby buggies too. It costs £10 to register to walk and we hope everyone will find some sponsorship too but this is not compulsory. Just ring Caroline Owens on 0208 853 0948 for further details or to register to join the team.

## Newspaper news

Following the closure in June of the Royal Borough's newspaper *Greenwich Time* (called "a rag" in *Newsshopper*) the Council has announced a new fortnightly publication, called *Greenwich Info* – to be used primarily for Statutory Adverts such as planning applications.

Accused of being mere "propaganda", *Greenwich Time* has been closed down by the Council following a Government-initiated legal action, alleging that the paper did not comply with the Local Authority Publicity Code.

A court case was something the Council was keen to avoid, as it would have cost

local taxpayers hundreds of thousands of pounds. But a Council spokesperson has pointed out that "All Councils are required to communicate with their residents, and placing statutory adverts in local papers is very expensive."

Leader of the Council Cllr. Denise Hyland said that placing ads in alternative newspapers would have cost an additional £250,000 a year. It is also argued that not everyone has access to local papers.

Opposition councillors have 'called-in' the decision for scrutiny, calling *Greenwich Info* "completely shameless". But it is not clear how else the Council can inform residents of planning applications and other important information on social housing etc. in a timely way.

## Westcombe News

The Westcombe News is looking for more editorial assistance. Interested in finding out more? Ring Neville Grant on 0208 858 8489. No more enjoyable or better way of engaging with the local community! Training provided, too.

## Fleet Street RIP

The last two journalists to work in Fleet Street - Gavin Sherriff and Darryl Smith of the Dundee-based Sunday Post, departed on August 5th. So Fleet Street, as the home of British newspapers since 1702 with the *Daily Courant*, is no more. So no more hacks at Ye Olde Cock Tavern - just accountants and bankers. Lunchtime O'Booze would turn in his grave.

## Now, where am I?



A sign of the times.  
PHOTO: Marilyn Little

Locals are frequently accosted by visitors wondering where they are. For example: "Excuse me, do you know the way to the car pound?" they ask. (It's at the bottom of Westcombe Hill. Let's hope that you never need to look for it yourself!)

And all-too-often those who are beguiled into getting on the 386 bus, marked "To Blackheath", in order to get to the village are whisked for several miles in the opposite direction – via Greenwich: the scenic route?

Thanks to the efforts of the Blackheath Standard Village Group we now have a finger post giving directions from the Royal Standard to local areas. Thanks also to the Royal Borough of Greenwich for adding an RBG touch to the post. It all looks splendid.

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## Letters

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

**From: Lesley Abdela Sussex**  
I have written to Greg Clarke MP, the new Minister for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, a letter suggesting that, with Brexit, it's an ideal time for a new Great Exhibition. The Great Exhibition in 1851 was the first international exhibition of manufactured products: "Enormous excursion trains daily poured their thousands into the city... Throughout the season... it was like... a gigantic picnic... large numbers of work people received holidays for the purpose..."

Queen Victoria wrote in her journal on May 1st 1851 about her feelings on the day that she opened the Great Exhibition: "This day is one of the greatest and most glorious of our lives... It is a day which makes my heart swell with thankfulness... The Park presented a wonderful spectacle, crowds streaming through it, - carriages and troops passing... The Green Park and Hyde Park were one mass of densely crowded human beings, in the highest good humour... before we neared the Crystal Palace, the sun shone and gleamed upon the gigantic edifice, upon which the flags of every nation were flying..."

"The tremendous cheering, the joy expressed in every face, the vastness of the building, with all its decoration and exhibits, the sound of the organ... all this was indeed moving."

*Ed: Great idea, Lesley. Time to replace the*



*"In Xanadu did Kubla Khan*

*"A stately pleasure-dome decree . . ."*

**Dome, aka the O2, with a Crystal Palace, the site of the Great Exhibition of 1851? It should be noted that manufacturing is still a very significant proportion of the UK's economy – more or less the same as in the US and France; the UK is still the eighth biggest manufacturing economy in the world.**

**From: Malcom Scott-Hardy St Johns Park**  
How often can we reasonably expect the Royal Borough of Greenwich to clean our streets? In St John's Park we would seem to be lucky if it's two or three times a year. The last time seems to have been just before London Marathon.

The pavements are covered and the gutters filled with dried leaves that after rain turn into a slippery and soggy mulch that blocks the drainage grates. A seemingly abandoned car at the end of the road was surrounded by leaves and rubbish until at long last it was removed.

The Royal Borough should at least (as in some other towns I have known) serve notice that cars be removed from each side of the road prior to cleaning, as happens for the Marathon.

**From: Peter McNamara Greenwich**  
The *WN* repeatedly argues that "The devil is in the diesel!". Our friends from across the pond are taking this seriously. More than 40 percent of the 9.5 million medium and heavy-duty diesel commercial trucks in operation in the US are now equipped with newer technology clean diesel engines, according to analyses carried out by the Diesel Technology Forum (DTF). The US can do this, why not the UK?

**From: G Bailey Westcombe Park Road**  
Many thanks to John Copier for an excellent summary of the issues that have confronted John Roan School over the past year.

One thing missing from his report: exactly how did the huge deficit occur? He says: "further clarity would be welcomed." Further clarity is surely not just to be welcomed, but necessary.

The questions that arise include: how is it that the local authority allowed such a deficit to occur? Isn't it the business of the school governors to monitor such issues, and recommend appropriate action to avoid such a deficit?

Or is there just a quiet assumption that the Local Authority will always bail schools out?

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# LOCAL NEWS

*"I know I have the body of a weak and feeble woman, but I have the heart and stomach of a king, and a king of England too, and think foul scorn that Parma or Spain, or any prince of Europe should dare to invade the borders of my realm..."*

## Pain clinic success

The Vanbrugh NHS Community Pain Management Clinic has won the Gruenenthal 2016 Pain Award (Patient Benefit section) worth £5,000. The clinic, led by GP pain specialist, Dr Ellen Wright, treats patients suffering chronic pain and multi-morbidity.

It now works with Kairos Rehabilitation Trust, a small medical charity providing therapies and social activities which begin to address the many issues that commonly hinder patients making progress.

The aims of the clinic are to improve the person's clinical condition and overall circumstances by addressing all their pressing needs, thereby reducing unnecessary hospital appointments.

The Kairos method involves one-to-one therapies combined with social activities have included a weekly choir and music group, gardening, craft work with felting, jewellery and card making, story-telling



and puppetry. Patients are also offered personal support in various ways, including form-filling and support in tribunals.

As patients get better, they become important examples of helpers for each other. Links with the local community are also facilitated by patients and ex-patients.

Kairos' approach to rehabilitation in chronic pain and fibromyalgia will be explained by Dr David McGavin and eurythmy therapist, Ingrid Hermansen, at two public talks for patients and relatives:

**Monday 12th September at 2.00pm and Tuesday 13th September at 2.00 pm at Kairos Rehabilitation, Forum at Greenwich, Trafalgar Road, Greenwich, SE10 9EQ Further information at [www.kairosrehabilitation.org.uk](http://www.kairosrehabilitation.org.uk) or tel. 07712 810 108.**

## Saved: the Armada Portrait of Elizabeth 1

**Elizabeth the First was Queen of England and Ireland from 1558 until her death in 1603. The Armada Portrait was painted when she was in her fifties, and this picture commemorates the most famous conflict in her reign.**



This was, of course, the defeat of the Spanish Armada in the summer 1588. Two maritime scenes in the background depict the defeat of the Armada, while the mermaid on the queen's chair of state symbolizes sailors lured to their destruction. Intriguingly, both views are very early 18th-century repaintings over late-16th-century originals. The portrait may have been owned by Sir Francis Drake, who was Vice-Admiral of the English fleet. The picture has been owned by his descendants since at least 1775.

An appeal launched to save this portrait for the nation raised £10.3m. An Art Fund appeal generated £1.5m from 8,000 private donations. The Heritage Lottery Fund gave £7.4m; the Art Fund and Royal Museums Greenwich were major donors. The Linbury Trust, the Garfield Weston Foundation and the Headley Trust also contributed.

*The picture will go on show at the Queen's House in Greenwich in October.*

## Shaping the future of E. Greenwich

The Royal Borough is looking to local residents and businesses to help shape its new Sharing Cities programme in East Greenwich and Greenwich Peninsula.

The council is working with the Mayor of London to deliver the EU-funded programme, which looks at how new 'smart' measures, and solutions can be adopted to improve the area.

The council has Smart City status and the programme has been adopted as part of this strategy. Ideas being considered as part of the programme include new types of transport like electric vehicles and bikes, data sensors to collect information

such as traffic counters, and measures to reduce energy consumption such as new energy efficient street lights – and the council is seeking the views of local people to help with these smart measures.

Hearing the views of local residents and businesses is crucial for the success of the programme. To start this process, the council is looking for volunteers who live or work in East Greenwich or Greenwich Peninsula to help shape the programme.

**Those interested in becoming a volunteer can complete a short survey (no more than 10 minutes), available via [www.royalgreenwich.gov.uk/sharingcities](http://www.royalgreenwich.gov.uk/sharingcities)**

## E-business support

The Royal Greenwich e-business support programme is celebrating its second year of partnership working between the council and South East Enterprise (SEE).

The programme welcomes new businesses to sign up and take advantage of its free services. It helps local businesses to capitalise on the digital environment by adopting e-business practices. This includes training and support all aspects.

The programme has helped many small businesses across the Royal Borough increase sales turnover in excess of £8m since it started, creating 75 new jobs on the back of using e-business practices, and safeguarding nearly 500 jobs.

One of the businesses that has benefitted is Eat Sleep Love Ltd, an appointment only baby and nursery boutique providing a wide range of baby products, ranging from

furniture to travel systems.

Speaking from the company, Andrew Slater said "We needed an effective way to communicate with our customers, and the e-business programme has enabled us to develop critical e-business skills."

Richard Tacagni of London Property Licensing, an information resource for landlords and letting agents, said:

"With support and encouragement from South East Enterprise, my company just celebrated its first birthday; we recently won an award for Best Service Provider in the Private Rented Sector 2016."

**SEE are holding an evening event at the Woolwich Centre Gallery on 29th Sept, from 6.00pm to 8.30pm. Ring 8305 2666. For details visit**

**[www.royalgreenwich.gov.uk/e-business](http://www.royalgreenwich.gov.uk/e-business)**

## BHS's new Sixth Form Centre Opens

Blackheath High School was delighted to welcome visitors, parents, staff and students to the official opening of its newly refurbished Sixth Form Centre, when Helen Fraser, Chief Executive of the Girls' Day School Trust (GDST) cut the ribbon to announce the official opening of Westcombe House.

The refurbishment has been designed to inspire a mature, pre-university atmosphere and create a truly contemporary study environment for Sixth Form students.

The Head, Mrs Chandler-Thompson is understandably delighted with the results of the refurbishment which forms Phase 1 of the school's redevelopment. Westcombe House is equipped with the latest interactive projector technology, versatile class-

room furniture and special "break-out" spaces to encourage the girls to develop independent and collaborative learning

The school is now commencing with the major phase of its site redevelopment. The main contract has been awarded to Roof Construction ([enquiries@rooff.co.uk](mailto:enquiries@rooff.co.uk)). Roof construction took possession of the site at the beginning of the school summer holidays and is preparing buildings for demolition while allowing the school to still be able to operate in the Autumn term. The whole redevelopment is scheduled to complete in September 2018. Roof will be holding regular meetings with the school and residents to ensure the school can continue to operate, and disruption for neighbours is kept to a minimum.

## End of the line for Enderby Appeal

A claim for a Judicial Review of the Council's decision to grant planning permission for the Enderby Wharf development in 2015 was dismissed by the High Court on August 3rd. An application for permission to appeal against the judgement was refused.

As reported in June's *WN*, the claimant was granted permission to bring the claim earlier this year on the grounds that the Council had (allegedly) failed to require an assessment of the cumulative effects of the proposed development on air quality in the immediate area.

The High Court dismissed the claim, finding that the 2015 decision made by the Royal Borough of Greenwich was not unlawful and the Royal Borough had properly taken into account the cumulative effects on air quality.

Cllr Danny Thorpe, Deputy Leader of the Royal Borough of Greenwich and Cabinet Member for Regeneration and Sustainability said "The Council followed due process relating to this planning application at all times, including seeking independent reports on specific technical areas such as air quality. Our decision was endorsed by the Mayor of London.

"At the time of the planning decision in 2015, the Mayor of London confirmed that measures put in place by the Royal Borough were satisfactory .....

"The Council understands that a number of local people feel passionately about Enderby Wharf. We have always sought to listen to their opinions at all times and will now ensure that the conditions and obligations put in place by the planning board are honoured by the developer."

## 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](mailto:philosophyper@aol.com)**

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# FEATURES

## The show must go on!



**G**reenwich Theatre is getting a makeover thanks to an investment from the Royal Borough of Greenwich. Also unveiled are artistic plans for a bold new era over the next 25 years.

Extensive refurbishments of this historic 1855 building should be completed this month: included are roof repairs, rewiring, and some front-of-house improvements. There will also be a new “pop-up” studio theatre, offering a completely flexible space with seating for up to 60 or 70. Longer term, there are plans for further improvements.

The theatre hopes to match the local

authority’s investment for phase two of the refurbishment programme, which will see further electrical work around the building as well as other improvements.

“At the same time,” said James Haddrell, “We are announcing a new autumn programme of shows both on the main stage, and in our new pop-up studio, from some of the country’s newest and most exciting theatre-makers.

“We will also be announcing a programme of master-classes for new artists and companies on everything from marketing, lighting and sound design to touring, production management and theatre finance.”

## Totally Thames Festival

**T**he National Maritime Museum is mounting a series of events in September as part of its Totally Thames Festival, including:

**Maritime Lecture series: Totally Thames**  
Every Thursday from 1st Sept. to 6th October 11.00 am - 12.30 pm. Archeologists and curators uncover the river Thames’ rich history from Roman ports to recent archeological digs.  
Tickets: £8.00 | £6.00 members

**Cutty Sark and the Thames**  
Every Wednesday 7th - 28th Sept. 15.00 - 15.30  
Explores the vessel’s links with the Thames.  
Age 11+. Ticket prices vary.

**Ensemble Perpetuo: Voyages of the Sea**  
Thur. 22nd September 7.30 - 9.00 pm.  
Explore the sea through music - Debussy, Roxanna Panufnik, Sally Beamish, Cecilia McDowell, and Malcolm Arnold.  
Cutty Sark: £20.00 | £18. concs

**The Landlubbers’ Maritime Folk Festival**  
Sat 24th Sept. 10.00 - 5.00 pm National Maritime Museum & Cutty Sark  
The best of maritime folk culture - sea chanties, salty yarns of the museum’s figureheads - and try out some traditional maritime crafts. Culminating in the BBC Folk Folk Club winner the *Nest Collective*’s new monthly sessions at Cutty Sark.  
Ticket prices vary.

**Muslims at Sea: From Barbary Pirates to Brick Lane**  
Sat 10th Sept. 11.00- 1.30  
Exploring Britain’s long and fascinating relationship with Islam. Encounter Muslim pirates, European converts to Islam, some beautiful Middle Eastern scientific instruments and maps, and much more.  
National Maritime Museum Study day  
Tickets: £15.00 | £12.00 members  
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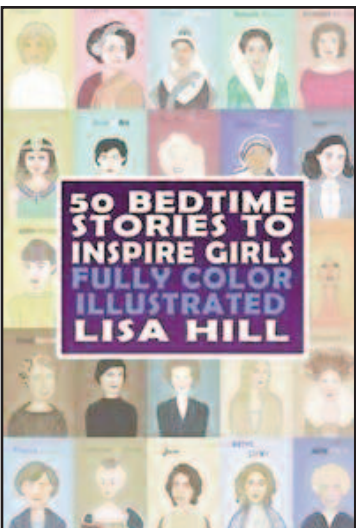


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## Book Review 50 Bedtime Stories to Inspire Girls



**I** really liked how the book explained what each lady did or when she was born or when she died. I also loved the illustrations they were bold, bright and they popped with colour. I think this was a great book and recommend it to girls 6+ and would totally read the second book if there ever was one.

My favourite woman was Germaine Greer because she wrote for magazines about women’s equality. The reason I liked her is because I like making magazines myself.

I also liked J.K. Rowling because she wrote the Harry Potter books and I really like them.

In my opinion I think that there shouldn’t be any royals that didn’t do very much because the only reason they became famous was because they were a royal.

**50 Bedtime Stories to Inspire Girls**  
By: Lisa Hill  
Illustrated by: Vlada Repeykova  
Reviewed by: Daisy Hole Aged 7

## The sounds of silence

**The Department of Music at Goldsmiths is committed “to all types of music from classical to world and popular.”**

For those adventurous souls who like to venture into minimalism, a CD entitled *Goldsmiths*, and recorded at Goldsmiths in August last year, has recently been released by the label Another Timbre, based in Sheffield and founded by Simon Reynall, who specialises in this area of music.

The website of Another Timbre notes that “The softer you whisper, the closer other people have to listen. This is true enough in everyday conversation, but is powerfully illustrated by the British composer Frank Denyer.”

The Plains Pokot, (part of the Kalenjin group) live mainly in remote areas of north-west Kenya. Denyer notes that they sing more “potent” songs more softly, “and very significant texts, such as those of the cattle songs composed by each individual adult male, were sung in a whisper.”

Yes, they are cow-whisperers, not horse whisperers, in Pokot-land.

To catch the most important song, you have to listen hard. This applies to Denyer’s own music—especially his composition *Whispers* and his *Prison Trilogy*.

The same applies to at92, the CD *Goldsmiths* which includes three great new works by Jurg Frey, Sarah Hughes and John Lely. Also on the CD is an extended improvisation by a gifted group of performers: Angharad Davies, Rhodri Davies, Michael Duch, Lina Lapelyte, John Lely and John Tilbury.

This is the kind of music where you really need to listen to the silences, the pauses, as much as the sounds; it is haunting, and hypnotic. The best the music critic of the *W/N* can do is to recommend that you listen to extracts on YouTube.  
Youtube extracts - Sarah Hughes: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oHIViTeY4mo>  
- group improvisation: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bW1bs-FCLq0>  
More details of the label: [www.another-timbre.com/goldsmiths.html](http://www.another-timbre.com/goldsmiths.html)



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# WHAT'S ON



## ARTS

**BLACKHEATH DECORATIVE FINE ARTS SOCIETY** 4th Thursday of every month St Mary's Church Cresswell Park. St Mary's Church, Cresswell Park [www.artsinblackheath.org](http://www.artsinblackheath.org)- 4th Thursday of every month, - 2pm for 2.30pm  
**Thurs 22nd Sept. AGM, followed by Barry Venning on: A child of six could do it - cartoonists and modern art:** a sidelong view of 150 years of modern art as a popular subject for the satire of cartoonists. Non-members may pay on the door  
**GREENWICH DECORATIVE & FINE ARTS King William Court, University of Greenwich 7.30 for 8.00 pm : Nicholas Reed talks on War Artists, Spies & the Art of Deception**  
Non-members may pay on the door  
**MADE IN GREENWICH GALLERY**  
324 Creek Rd SE10 Made in Greenwich Gallery, 324 Creek Road, SE10 9SW. Open daily 11-5.30. to show-case works by local artists, poets and makers.  
**Until Sept. 5: 'Contours',** new work by Ann Hillary and Wayne Foskett.  
**Sept. 23rd -Oct. 3rd: 'Solastalgia',** works by Irene Godfrey, Mary Knight, Ana Mejia and Tracy Ward, exploring the issue of migration and belonging.  
**Sept.r 24th: Cinnamon Press launch of 'Lockdown',** Jane McLaughlin's winning poetry collection.  
[www.madeingreenwich.co.uk](http://www.madeingreenwich.co.uk)

## CHILDREN & FAMILY

**MYCENAE HOUSE**  
**Thurs 8th Sept 4pm - Bach To Baby. Classical Concert for Baby and You. £10.**  
**SHERINGTON CHILDREN'S CENTRE**  
**DAD'S STAY AND PLAY** session every Wednesday 9.30-11.30 Sherington Childrens Centre, all Home Dads welcome. Address: 14 Sherington Road, Charlton SE7 7JW (0208 853 0900). Continues even in school holidays and half-term. **Contact Dan Hall on [daniel.hall1985@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:daniel.hall1985@hotmail.co.uk) for more details.**  
[www.selondondads.org.uk](http://www.selondondads.org.uk)

## BLACKHEATH HALLS

23 Lee Road, Blackheath SE3 9RQ  
Box Office: 0208 463 0100  
**Thurs. Sept. 1st 1305 pm. Blackheath Sundays: NEUS PERIS, PIANO plays in ST ALFEGE CHURCH** Programme to include a sonata by Beethoven, paired with Ravel's Miroirs. Free.  
**MUSIC APPRECIATION WITH MATTHEW TAYLOR** Schubert & Schumann Face To Face  
**MONDAYS: 19, 26 SEP, 3, 10, 17 & 31 OCT, 7, 14, 21 & 28 NOV 10.15h Course fee: £85.00**  
Matthew will illustrate at the piano and on disc how the one influences the other and how they compare. PLEASE NOTE Due to extensive roof repairs at Blackheath Halls, this series of lectures will take place this term at the Old Library, Charlton House, Charlton Road, London SE7 8RE  
Sun 18th Sept. 11.00 pm **LEON BOSCH** Double Bass **SUNG-SUK KANG** Piano play Bach, Mozart, Beethoven and Schubert £14 | £12.00  
Sun 25th Sept. 1430: Blackheath Halls Orchetsra Rehearsal £59 |  
MON 26 SEP 19:30h **BLACKHEATH GOES GOSPEL 2016: REHEARSALS RECITAL ROOM, BLACKHEATH HALL** £70 | £63  
SUN 2 OCT 11:00 am Blackheath Sundays: **TZIGANE PIANO TRIO** Recital Room, Gillian Findlay, Jennie Brown and Elizabeth Marcus formed the Tzigane Piano Trio over 20 years ago. They play Mozart, Marson, Schubert & Chaminade £14.00 | £12.00

## THE WESTCOMBE SOCIETY

**All events are in the Main Hall of Mycenae House unless otherwise stated:**

**Macmillan London Bridges Walk**  
**Macmillan Coffee Morning - Fri 30th Sept.**  
**Boys Brigade Hall, Reynold's Place**  
**Chrysanthemum Tea - Sat 15th October**  
**Autumn Quiz - Friday 21st October**  
**Christmas Bazaar Saturday 26th November at Invicta School, Invicta Road.**

## COMMUNITY

**BLACKHEATH BRIDGE CLUB** duplicate sessions in Mycenae House Mon & Thurs 7.15pm and on Wed at 1.15pm. Tel Ron 0208 319 1312  
**BEXLEY HERITAGE TRUST** Hall Place & Gardens, Bourne Rd, Bexley DA5 1PQ Tel- 01322-526574 Until 4th Sept 10am-5pm **HOW DOES MY GARDEN GROW?** A Garden Museum exhibition, looking at the evolution of gardening £10 £9 Conc./under16 £8 family ticket £30  
**GREENWICH MORRISMEN** Mycenae House every Thursday at 8.00pm Newcomers welcome  
**GREENWICH CREATIVE WRITERS GROUP**  
**Waterstones Mondays 5-7pm**  
Established lively group, space currently available for new members. Led by John Wilks (Writer). Interested in writing? Please contact [johnwilks@hotmail.com](mailto:johnwilks@hotmail.com)  
**SEVERNDROOG CASTLE** Castle Wood, Shooters Hill, London SE18 3RT Main opening times: Thurs/Fri/Sun 12.30 - 4.30pm April -September

## SPOKEN WORD

**BLACKHEATH & GREENWICH WOMEN'S INSTITUTE** [www.blackheathandgreenwichwi.com](http://www.blackheathandgreenwichwi.com)  
**Wed. Sept. 7th 7.30 pm Dave Stuart talks on SHOREDITCH STREET ART**. Sunfields Methodist Church Old Dover Rd. Please note: Due to an almost full membership and high attendance rates we are now restricted to 5 visitors per meeting. Please contact our Secretary Christine Dickinson (07709 553 927) to put your name on the door.  
**BLACKHEATH FLOWER ARRANGING SOCIETY** 3rd Friday of each month. Non-members- £5 Contact: Mrs Jillian Smith 0208 857 1355  
**INDUSTRIAL HISTORY SOCIETY**  
11th October 2016 Terry Powley. Society's Changing Perceptions of Youth in the Twentieth Century Non-members £1  
**BLACKHEATH HALLS** 23, Lee Rd, Blackheath SE3 9RQ Box Office: 0208 463 0100  
**WED 21st Sept. 8.00 pm Recital Room JOAN RUDDOCK** talks about her remarkable life and career and times drawn from her memoir 'Going Nowhere'. TICKETS: £10 (includes a glass of wine)

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## THEATRE

**The Greenwich Theatre** is looking for volunteers. call Aneta on 020 8858 7755  
**Fri 2nd Sept Garden:** On Brighton Fringe Award for Theatre Excellence short list.  
**Sat 3rd/Sun 4th Sept. Lucy, Lucy, Lucy Barfield,** starring Lucy Grace.  
“Quietly revolutionary”  
**Tues 6th - Sat 10th Sept. The Inevitable Heartbreak of Gavin Plimsole** and **The Mission:** Our planet on the brink of disaster: two plays running in repertory.

## St George's Church

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**Sundays: 11.00 am Holy Communion** (All age service first Sunday of the month.)

**8.00 pm First and Third Sundays of each month: “Sceptics” Discussion group at the Vicarage - 89 Westcombe Park Rd.**

**Wednesdays:**

**8.00 am Morning Prayer**

**12.30 - 1.15 Lunch & Fellowship**

**(Soup. bread and chesese)**

**Sat 17th Sept. TALENT SHOW**

If you would like to take part please email Judith on [juditheasthaugh@gmail.com](mailto:juditheasthaugh@gmail.com) or ring 07906 04 3317. Children are particularly welcome to take part..

**ALPHA COURSE** (at Christ Church)

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## MYCENAE HOUSE LIVE EVENTS: SEPTEMBER

**Fri 2nd Sept 7.30pm - Icarus Club.** Acoustic Live Music featuring Wake plus other Icarus regulars. £7.  
**Thurs 8th Sept 4pm - Bach To Baby.** Classical Concert for Baby and You. £10.  
**Fri 9th Sept 8pm - JazzNights.** Candlit Live Jazz hosted by Dave Silk. £10.  
**Fri 23rd Sept 7.30pm - Global Fusion Music & Arts:** music with Martin Carthy. World class live music in celebration of International Day of Peace. £12.  
**Fri 30th Sept 7.30pm - Global Fusion Music & Arts Acoustic Nights.** An evening of live music & dance featuring special guests. £6.  
**Fri 16th Sept or Sat 24th Sept 10.30am-2.30pm - Mono-printing Workshop.** Create your own work of art, course price includes materials, tuition and frame. More info via [anna.german64@gmail.com](mailto:anna.german64@gmail.com)

For further information about all Mycenae House events, please visit [www.mycenaehouse.co.uk](http://www.mycenaehouse.co.uk)

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**SUNDAY ARTS & CRAFT SALE** Sun 4th Sept. 10.00am-2.00pm. For tables ring Kathy 07767 756476  
**BOOK SALES:** on the second Saturday every month (except August & December) 10.00 am - 4.00 pm.  
**FRIENDS FRIDAY:** 16th Sept. 1.00 - 3.00 pm  
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# FEATURES

## Blackheath Halls: the home of community opera

Barbara Ward

### Carmen



This photograph of Blackheath Halls production of *Carmen* shows how inclusive opera can be, as members of the community enthusiastically take part.

No, the lady in the hat is not Carmen – she is a member of the Toreador Escamillo fan club (Blackheath Branch!).

The very strong professional singers included Hannah Pedley (Carmen), Pauls Putnins (Escamillo, pictured above) and Adrian Dwyer (Don Jose). ) The cast also included Adam Music (Dancaire - a smuggler) and James Hutchins (Remindado - another smuggler).

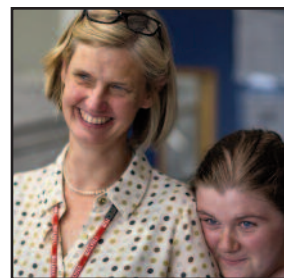
Below: Hannah Pedley's Carmen: gutsily she faces up to her rejected lover, in the harrowing final scene.

PHOTOS: Lena Kern



excerpts in a flash-mob style in Greenwich market to get the project started, and the run ended with an outdoors choral performance at a sunny Greenwich Park bandstand: a special way to close a tremendously successful production.

Once again, there was an annual 'after party' with presentations for community contributors. This year, Rose was presented with ten special gifts to mark each of the ten operas she has superbly managed.



Rose Ballantyne with a member of the cast

Something very special is happening in our community: each year novices sing next to fully fledged professional opera singers; amazing fundraising initiatives take place, the community orchestra rises to the occasion, and a delighted audience applaud the splendid outcome of this exquisite musical recipe.

Again in 2016 the audience rose to their feet to applaud this production of *Carmen* and celebrate this very special piece of annual musical magic. Blackheath Halls Community Opera, we salute you.

Long may you continue.

Footnote:

Perhaps you too could be a participant in future productions!

The community is at the centre of this masterpiece of 'arts inclusivity'. The production seeks to bring opera to all and to open its doors to all.

It draws on a seventy- strong community chorus, local school children (including those with special needs), a community based orchestra of exceptional quality, local Trinity Laban music students and a host of professionals that give their time and expertise year after year, alongside engaged professional opera singers.

This unique recipe works – and works exceedingly well, so much so that musicians of international repute continue to be associated with the project long after the curtain closes.

Behind the scenes there are many uncelebrated community participants that keep it afloat. Within the chorus, Jay Hassan, a local maths tutor, has been taking part in the opera from the very beginning. Over time, she has become a mainstay of the production. When spring blossoms the opera becomes her priority. Not only does she attend all the rehearsals, to help new chorus members find their feet, she also organises a tight team of community bakers who sell cakes at rehearsals to fundraise for the opera.

It is very much a family affair: Jay's children have also performed in the operas and her husband has helped out on many an occasion. Jay did not read music when she started, but over the years her love of opera and her performance confidence has grown. Through this local Blackheath treasure she has built lasting friendships and enduring joyful memories.

This year's *Carmen* involved some additional initiatives away from the Halls. For the first time the chorus sang opera

Left: Jagruti Hassan with Hannah Pedley, Carmen, at Rose Ballantyne's after party this year

Once again in 2016, for the tenth year in succession, Blackheath Halls crafted a musically excellent, sell-out, community opera. This year's acclaimed production, *Carmen*, was a wonderful mix of professional and amateur musicians featuring singers of all ages melded together in a seamless, inclusive, expert way. The result? Yet another splendid community opera performance for which Blackheath Halls has become renowned.

Behind this incredibly successful and complex opera production, orchestrating all the diverse strands that bring it to successful conclusion, was the very talented Rose Ballantyne. Rose is Blackheath Halls Community Engagement Manager. She had the initial vision and the requisite expertise to build this much loved annual event from its inception ten years ago.

A short video of Rose telling the story of the community opera is available at [www.trinitylaban.ac.uk/blackheath-halls](http://www.trinitylaban.ac.uk/blackheath-halls) and is well worth a view. The video highlights the positive pleasure that the annual community opera brings locally and in it Rose explains why this unique co-operative venture has restored her faith in humanity.



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## Celebrating Shakespeare

Readers may recall that Jonathan Dove, who grew up in our own area, was profiled in April's *WN*. In the same issue, we listed some of the music by great composers inspired by Shakespeare. However, we need to add another item to that list.

This year, to celebrate the 400th anniversary of Shakespeare's death, Jonathan Dove's *Our revels now are ended* – words used by Prospero in Act IV Scene 1 of *The Tempest* – is to be performed on the last night of the Proms. The words remain as evocative now as when they were first performed over 400 years ago:

*Our revels now are ended. These our actors,*

*As I foretold you, were all spirits, and  
Are melted into air, into thin air . . .*

*. . . We are such stuff  
As dreams are made on; and our little life  
Is rounded with a sleep.*

Dove's work is an eight minute piece for Baritone Solo, Vocal Ensemble and Orchestra, first performed in August 2004, at the Batignano Festival, Tuscany.

There is seemingly no end to Dove's creativity. A visit some 20 years ago to the Roman ruins of Palmyra, in Syria – vandalised last year by Da'esh, and since recaptured – sowed the seeds of a new work called *In Damascus*, a piece for tenor and string quartet.

Dove was moved by the extraordinary kindness of Syrian people he met, and appalled by current events. His new work contains words adapted from *A Black Cloud in a Leaden Sky* or *Death by Stabs of Sorrow*, by the Syrian poet Ali Safar, as published by Saqi books in *Syria Speaks*.

This extract from Safar's poems gives some idea of the subtlety of thought and emotion, even in this translated version:

*On all my travels, I'd take a book.  
Usually I'd leave it in the country  
I visited. When my friends took a trip,  
I'd give them a book.*

*My problem now isn't the books  
that we give to the people who leave us,  
hoping they'll return,  
But the books that go with the people  
who never return . . .  
Every person who leaves us is a book,  
a book in himself.  
And it won't be long before we return . . .  
As once we were, a nation without books.*

*In Damascus* was performed at Kings Place in July by the Sacconi Quartet and the distinguished tenor Mark Padmore.

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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)

Got the Basement Blues . . .

Serious questions arise over the Council’s treatment of basement developments

*“take a large hoe and a shovel also,  
And dig till you gently perspire;”*

Kipling urged an alternative to boredom and inactivity which, it seems, has been taken to heart in some parts of London. Westcombe Park is an area of changeable, complicated and unpredictable drainage. Surface sands and gravels lie on top of London clay and this can cause some of the erratic drainage patterns. There is a history of subsidence in the area. Residents may have had to underpin their properties and drive deep piles in order to stabilise their extensions. Dry cellars have flooded unexpectedly and springs have developed in gardens.

So, planning applications for new basements should be treated with caution. However, at a packed meeting of the Greenwich Area Planning Committee recently some local residents felt that this was far from the case. Basement construction inevitably involves digging out and transporting huge amounts of material entailing the use of heavy, and noisy, machinery and big lorries. This is in itself likely to cause local disruption, inconvenience and distress, even more so if the property concerned is the other part of your semi-detached or terraced house.

Many of the houses in Westcombe Park, much of which is a Conservation Area, are on or close to a slope and many are also above an aquifer. All these factors complicate the building process and therefore make the decision of those responsible for planning, based on the information they demand and are given, even more important.

Basement Impact Statement

Applicants who wish to extend or build a basement have to submit a Basement Impact Assessment. This is a relatively new requirement and councillors may not yet have much experience of how to handle the document or what sort of detail it needs to contain. The requirement is covered in two documents: first, a Local Information Requirements List (January 2016) which sets out a schedule of documents that should accompany any application, including those where basement development is proposed. Secondly - a Residential Extensions, Basements and Conversions Supplementary Planning Document (SPD), currently in draft form: the SPD was dealt with by Cabinet at its meeting on 20 July where members agreed to accept officers' recommendation to adopt its contents, pending agreement from the relevant environmental bodies. The section of the SPD covering basements runs to a brief 4 pages and offers guidance only. It requires applicants to include information on ground water and

flooding risk – but does not address soil structure and stability, nor does it indicate what policies it would follow with regard to this information or under what circumstances it might demand a full structural statement conducted by a civil engineer. Some local authorities have gone much further. In late 2014 it was reported that Royal London Borough of Kensington and Chelsea was the first local authority in the country to introduce restrictions on controversial subterranean developments.

Westminster has an SPD on basements running to 43 pages plus appendices. In 2015 the London Borough of Richmond produced 20 pages of guidance on basement development.

Camden Planning Guidance on Basements and Lightwells is nearly 40 pages long and includes the warning that "The sides of excavation always move to some extent no matter how they are supported. The movement will typically be both horizontal and vertical and will be influenced by the engineering qualities of the ground, groundwater level and flow, the efficiency of the various support system employed during the underpinning and the efficiency or stiffness of any support frames used."

The GLA Housing Supplementary Guidance (2016)

This document directs planners to consider ground and surface water flooding and land stability and mitigation measures in their deliberations about basements. We recognise that planning committees have a large number of local and national policies to consider, some of which are statutory and others advisory. The Flood and Water Management Act (2010) gives London boroughs clear responsibilities related to flood risk. The London Plan (2016) warns that climate change brings an increased risk of flooding and changes in water levels.

There are also building regulations, which fall outside the remit of the planning committee, as well as aspects of permitted development which do not require planning permission. We recognise that planning decisions have to be made on the basis of planning alone and cannot pay regard to individual or personal factors. Decisions made by the Planning Committee are of importance both to the individuals concerned, but also to the wider community. They set a precedent and a single decision can therefore have far-reaching implications. Family homes have to meet changing needs and we value the variety and adaptability of the housing stock but we would not wish to see the character of the conservation area debased.

As the Character Appraisal says, ‘Westcombe Park is an area of considerable architectural and environmental value’; let's not dig it away. It's time for Greenwich to look again at its SPD.

Maggie Gravelle



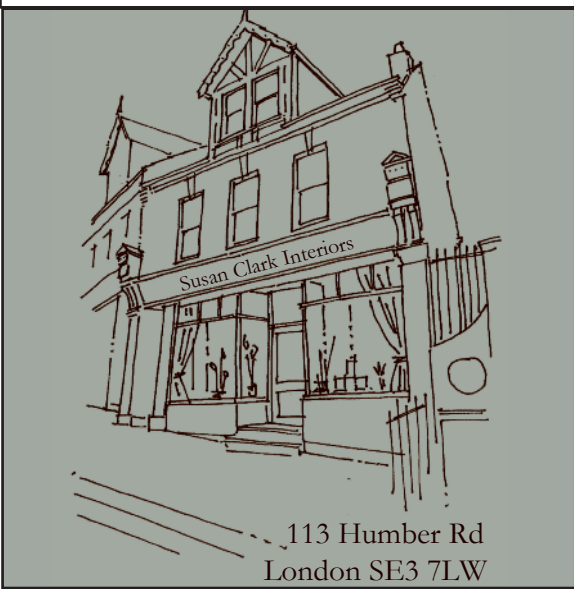
For a spectacular, joyful few days, Londoners kept their eyes wide shut to the real world of referenda and political reshuffles as they took part in the 21st year of the Greenwich and Dockland International Festival. Spoilt for choice this year: in Mycenae House and gardens, we had the Westcombe Society Family Summer Picnic in June, and in July we had a Summer Sunday Extravaganza organised by Mycenae House Community Centre.

All Change for SE Trains

Southeastern trains warn that there are changes to forthcoming timetables due to developments at London Bridge. Between 27th August and 1st September inclusive there will be NO SERVICE on the Greenwich line and CANNON STREET STATION WILL BE CLOSED. There will instead be a rail replacement bus service. On 27th and 28th August trains from Charlton, Blackheath and Lewisham will run into Victoria. On 30th, 31st August and 1st September trains will run from Charlton, Blackheath and Lewisham into London Bridge, Waterloo and Charing Cross with additional trains on this route. The DLR from Greenwich to Lewisham will run and rail tickets will be acceptable. Despite requests by the Westcombe Society, however, we have not as yet succeeded in securing rail ticket acceptance via North Greenwich. After September 1st trains on the Greenwich line will NO LONGER CALL AT LONDON BRIDGE, instead they will all go direct to Cannon Street. There will be some changes to the frequency and timing of trains on both the Greenwich Line and the line through Blackheath. There will be a slight peak time reduction on the Greenwich Line service to Cannon Street and a slight increase in services to London Bridge, Waterloo and Charing Cross via Blackheath and Lewisham to cater for the number of passengers who need to alight at London Bridge. Rail tickets will continue to be accepted on the DLR between Greenwich and Lewisham to allow passengers from Greenwich line stations to reach services to London Bridge, Charing Cross and Waterloo. Tickets will also be accepted on underground services between Cannon Street, Blackfriars and Embankment – but not the inter-mediate stations. We have no information as yet as to how often services will be interrupted at weekends for the

next 18 months but we think it is inevitable that there will continue to be significant losses of service on the Greenwich line and diversions on other lines. Passengers should check before they travel on Southeastern services especially at weekends and bank holidays. The National Rail and Southeastern websites are usually up to date with changes to services for a number of weeks ahead. The changes to timetables starting at the end of August will continue until the end of 2017 so London Bridge services will not resume on the Greenwich Line until 2018. One piece of good news though is that the Greenwich Line will probably be offered two Thameslink services an hour from 2018 with trains running through to Luton via London Bridge, St Pancras International and other intervening Thameslink stations. These will form part of the regular service with four trains an hour to London Bridge and Cannon Street. Consultation on the 2018 timetable may start this autumn so if you like the idea of a Thameslink service make sure you respond to the consultation and say so! Meanwhile Southeastern are keen for passengers to know that they are working hard to make sure trains leave depots clean and on time, they say they have also been making other improvements especially to stations across the region. We will put updates, when we have them, on [www.westcombesociety.org](http://www.westcombesociety.org)

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