In the last days of 2016, the W took a hard line on air pollution and urged government action to reduce toxic levels of air pollution in the capital. The committee called for a rapid implementation of measures to tackle the problem, including the introduction of a Clean Air Zone and the expansion of low-emission zones.

The committee also called for the government to increase funding for air pollution research and to establish a dedicated air pollution agency. It warned that if the government did not act quickly, the health impacts of air pollution would continue to rise, with serious consequences for the health of millions of people in London.

The committee’s report was widely praised by environmental groups and health campaigners, who welcomed the strong and decisive stance it took on air pollution. However, it was also met with criticism from some politicians, who accused the committee of being too interventionist and failing to take into account the views of local authorities and businesses.

The committee’s calls for action on air pollution were supported by a growing body of evidence from scientific research, which showed that air pollution was linked to a range of health problems, including respiratory and heart disease, and that it was causing serious harm to public health.

The committee’s recommendations were also aligned with the goals of the Paris Agreement and the UN’s Sustainable Development Goals, which aim to reduce air pollution and protect public health.

The committee’s work on air pollution demonstrated its commitment to addressing one of the biggest challenges facing London and the UK today, and its calls for action were met with a strong response from the government and other bodies.

For full details, see page 3.
Westcombe News February 2017

COMMUNITY

WESTCOMBE NEWS

Are you jumping with joy at the prospects for 2017?!

Or perhaps jumping for joy at the inauguration of Donald Trump? No, these are just Greenwich Morriessen ringing their bells... See feature on page 6.

Homes for the homeless

Blackheath Halls Friends Annual Architecture Richard Grierson Lecture is on Wednesday 22 February 2016 at 8.00 pm, and will be given by Peter Barber (winner of the 2016 MLA Building of the Year Award) speaking on "THE STREET... who owns the city?"

The New London Awards recognise the very best in architecture, planning and development in the capital, including both new and proposed projects across all sectors of the built environment, selected by an international expert jury.

Peter Barber set up his practice in 1989 and has made a strong impact in the field of housing, winning many awards. He has recently completed the remarkable Holmes Road Studios for homeless people for which, in 2016 he won the MLA Building of the Year. His lecture could not be more appropriate, as London records a shamefully high number of homeless people.

From: David Drummond Vanbrugh Hill

Understandable to visiting Australians perhaps – but would we be passengers at this Vanbrugh Hill bus stop at least expected some remedy when an additional notice was added alerting us to the absence of buses whilst speed bumps were installed. After at least six weeks, we had to rely on memory whilst we awaited the signage on the right to be corrected.

From: Mark Johnson-Brown Mycenae House

I write to pass on our sincere thanks to you and the Westcombe News for your support for the Mycenae Soup fund-raising dinner in your splendid publication. In total the event raised £1297 to support great causes within our community. We plan to hold our next Soup event on Friday 17th November 2017, so I hope readers will hear that in mind for future reference.

From: Terry Scales Greenwich

I refer to Graham Dear's article in the December edition of the WBN on "Supporting Greenwich Park" and would like to sound a word of caution. Enticing as they are, huge grants of money from lottery funds and the like do not always benefit the recipients. Managers can sometimes be tempted to do more than is required, and this can result in a loss of the site's original charm. Of course, maintenance of steps and paths is utterly necessary. But do we really need to be the village explainers of our park's history? Where would such pleasures be located? Not I hope in open spaces. Above all, we love our park for its mysterious romantic vistas, utterly natural, and uncluttered with signage.

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

Letters

Any money spent on the boat luke is most welcome; but for the rest, the less we do, the better. Many will remember what a beautiful sight the Cutty Sark was before the fire. A fortune was spent on repairs – which managed to hide much of the silhouetted in a plastic skirt. Incidentally, it was terrible news to hear of the possible loss of the chalet trees because of disease. Might it be possible to preserve some of these trees even just as dead trunks, and grow variegated ivy to cover the upper branches?

Ed: Terry's plea about signage echoes that of John Keats' concept of 'Negative Capability', when 'Marks of all entities being in uncertainties, mysteries, doubts, without any irritable reaching after fact and reason.' [from Keats' letters]. Was Keats in some way related to Donald Trump? What do readers think?

Probation

On probation

In a new play, called Probation, Benoit D Caves explores the lives of three young people involved in knife crime and gang culture. Through interviews with convicted young offenders, the Low is encouraged to try group therapy sessions to assist them towards early release on probation, but the untangled and tattered lives explode with devastating effect.

Probation is at 8.00 pm on Friday 17th Feb, in Mycenae House, Tickets: £8 online at Westeetickets (£10 on the door)

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Westcombe News February 2017
Raising funds for Syrian Refugees

Many locals celebrated the arrival of 2018 with a Wassail in the East Greenwich Pleasance off Halstow Road. This medieval tradition has been adopted by the Friends of the Pleasance, to encourage fertility and a good harvest from our park’s fruit trees.

Twelfth Night was actually celebrated on “Fourteenth Night” – Sunday 8th January. Did that break the rules? If so, it didn’t bother the good people who took part. Lots of families much enjoyed spiced Kent cider, Morris Dancing, Stick-Banging (stick-banging?) and general merriment, didn’t bother the good people who took part. Lots of families much enjoyed spiced Kent cider, Morris Dancing, Stick-Banging (stick-banging?) and general merriment, while children made celebratory crowns.

New Year Resolutions
New research has found that almost 60% of Londonders had broken their New Year’s Resolution by the 11th of January. Here are three to ponder on:

1. Resolve never to give way to depression. (This was Gabrielle Palmer’s resolution)
2. Refuse someone who may be left on their own too much.
3. Never open an email from a person or persons unknown. It may contain phone expenses can be reimbursed.

Offering a helping hand
Looking for a job? Need new skills and experience? Volunteering can be a big plus on your CV.

Chas & Dave: The Masters of Rockney

The history of Chas & Dave is to be performed in one special show – and it’s coming to Blackheath Halls.

They know how to give their audiences a good time, and this event will see them sell-out venues across the UK – and they return to Blackheath Halls with their greatest hits show in March 2017.

Over the last 2 years they have had a new hit album That’s What Happens, headlined The Royal Variety Show, sold out at the Royal Albert Hall in London, and supported Status Quo.

On 9th May 2015 they performed at VE Day 70: A Party to Remember in Horse Guards Parade, London, which was televised on BBC TV. It’s led to believe that their first album was One Fing ‘an’ Answer in 1979!

They have offered to give their audiences a good time, and this event will see them sell-out venues across the UK – and they return to Blackheath Halls with their greatest hits show in March 2017.

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Over the last 2 years they have had a new hit album That’s What Happens, headlined The Royal Variety Show, sold out at the Royal Albert Hall in London, and supported Status Quo.
We all take international phone calls and the internet for granted. We can talk, email, send photos, videos, and documents to almost anywhere in the world at the touch of a button.

Many local people will be aware of the Enderby Group, who are running a local campaign to recognize and protect the heritage of Greenwich’s unique role in this amazing communication revolution. It was here that the first transatlantic telegraph cable was made and loaded on to ships, and for over 160 years, continuing still, workers at Enderby Wharf have been leaders in the cable-based technologies that now connect the world. Up to the 1970s the majority of sub-sea cables were made here and today, at the rear of the same site, work continues on making advanced equipment for sub-sea cables.

In the view to the north from Enderby Wharf towards the Old Royal Naval College, which is now the University of Greenwich, you can see the Thames Path and the jetties treated as a public area with facilities for local residents and visitors – including the many people who walk the riverside path. The Group has recently conducted a footfall survey on the path, which has for long been a much-valued local amenity.

What is needed most of all is support for the Group’s ideas. They have sent out an information pack out to many local groups including a recognition of the heritage of the area – and not just a few pictures hung in the bar of a riverside gastro-pub, as has been proposed.

The Enderby Group want to see Enderby House and the space linking it to the Thames Path and the jetties treated as a whole. The space would be called Pender Plaza, after Sir John Pender, the first chairman (from 1864-1868) of Telcon – the Telegraph Construction and Maintenance Company. The group have circulated their ideas for the area with an interpretation of the development here of international communications as well as developing the area with facilities for local residents and visitors – including the many people who walk the riverside path. The Group has for long been a much-valued local amenity.

Is education happening?

Education means the process by which children are led to acquire deep knowledge and new insights for preparing for their adult lives: about how people tick, about themselves, about the history which led to where we are today, about the natural world, and about the computing 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

Enderby Wharf: the true story

MARY MILLS & PETER LUCK

N ick Raynsford was the local Member of Parliament for this area from 1992 to 2015. In this book he draws on his experience as an MP, minister and campaigner, to try to answer the question: why do some policies succeed and others fail?

As a local MP he pressed successfully for the first underground station in Greenwich – the additional stop on the Jubilee Line at North Greenwich. He also pressed successfully for the additional station on the Docklands Light Railway at the Cutty Sark and the additional station on Crossrail at Woolwich (due to open in December 2018).

The campaign to add the Woolwich station to Crossrail illustrates how he succeeded. On the one hand Berkeley Homes, Greenwich Council and the Mayor of London offered the Government the carrot of funding for the station. On the other hand, the Crossrail Bill Committee, on which Nick Raynsford sat, threatened the Government with the big stick of stopping the Crossrail legislation altogether unless the Woolwich station was added. The Government graciously conceded.

He was a very diligent constituency MP, regularly appearing in my office when I worked for Greenwich Council to press the cases of individual constituents. He was also a brilliant campaigner. When we campaigned together against Margaret Thatcher’s proposal to compulsorily transfer council housing to Housing Action Trusts, he helped build up a strong coalition of tenant opposition throughout England. However, it was Nick Raynsford who identified the section in the Government’s manifesto that was their Achilles heel. Partly as a result, Mrs Thatcher backed down and conceded a tenant ballot.

Nick Raynsford spent eight years as a Government minister. He was deeply concerned that many voters believed that voting made no difference, with the percentage of those eligible to vote but not doing so rising from 16% in 1950 to 39% in 2005. To counter this alienation, he tried to devolve more power from central government and one of his achievements as a minister was to establish the Greater London Assembly and the post of Mayor of London.

He raises the spectre of the slow death of council housing, with inner London areas like Greenwich being reserved for the affluent, and poor on low and middle incomes being driven out to live in Paris style ‘banlieues’. As a minister he tried to counter this by building more affordable housing.

There is also cable-loading equipment preserved on one of two surviving jetties as well as steps into the river on which there is an important art work. The developers, Barrett, are required to restore the house under their planning consent and the Group are pressing for a future use which will include a recognition of the heritage of the area – and not just a few pictures hung in the bar of a riverside gastro-pub, as has been proposed.

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What is needed most of all is support for the Group’s ideas. They have sent out an information pack out to many local groups and people and are happy to send out more. Please get in touch if you would like to have copies. See their website www.enderby.org.uk or their Facebook page.
GREENWICH DECORATIVE & FINE ARTS
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www.blackheathhalls.org

THREE MUGS AND A BUNNY
Sat 11th Feb 1.00pm + 3.00pm - Let's All Dance present THE PRINCESS AND THE FROG. Magical ballet for 2-9 year olds & their families. £9/£7.

Westcombe News February 2017 5

ARTS
BLACKHEATH DECORATIVE & FINE ARTS SOCIETY, St Mary’s Church Hall, Crosspoint, Blackheath www.greenwicharts.org.uk
All meetings are on the 4th Thursday of each month - except August and December - 7.30pm.
Non-members may pay on the door.

GREENWICH MY GRANDDAD'S CAR: a new children's opera by Kate Whitney
George and Georgina are accidentally locked in the mini car. They make friends with the animals - and discover a dastardly plan . . .

ALL MEMBERS WELCOME: 40 children and adults are needed for this show, no previous experience necessary!
Participation fee: £40.00
Rehearsals: Sat 1st – Sun 9th April some evening & weekend rehearsals from Sat 21st March
PERFORMANCES: Sat 8th April 2pm & 4.30pm Saturday 9th April 2.00 and 6.00 pm TICKETS: £11.00 | Under 12s £6.00 Performances suitable for ages 5+

THE WESTCOMBE SOCIETY
Pl see page one. These events can only be enjoyed if you’ve more volunteers to come forward to help. Interested? Please ring Joanne on 07997 571177.

COMMUNITY
BLACKHEATH & GREENWICH WOMEN’S INSTITUTE New Year’s Eve Gala Dance, 7.00-7.50pm at Southend Methodist Church, Old Dover Road. BLACKHEATH & GREENWICH BRANCH displaces Museum House & Masons Quay and on 7th Jan at 1.30pm.

DYSLEXIA ASSOCIATION OF BEXLEY, GREENWICH & SEVENOAKS
07752062382 Help Line 020 3991 9000 Thurs 20th Feb at 8.00pm-9.00pm Talk on Handwriting, and Reading Tips and Techniques at St Nicholas Church Hall (Village Hall) Church Lane, Chislehurst BR7 5JE
Adult Dyslexia Group: First Wednesday of each month at 7.30 at Compton Gardens House, South Street, SE10 9RL

THUMBELINA Sat 11th Feb 1.00pm & 3.00pm
Sun. 12th 5.00 pm & Mon 13th Feb. 2.00 & 6.00pm
\$5 children's ticket; £8.50 Plus: 15 minutes:
21st Feb. Andrew Turner on Redpath Brown & Co account of a difficult life £10.00

IN-WORDS
Visitors welcome - donations £3 to the society.
21st Feb. Andrew Turner on Redpath Brown & Co account of a difficult life £10.00

THE WOODLANDS FARM TRUST
313 Shooters Hill, Wellting, Kent DA9 5RP Telephone: 020 8947 2222
www.thewoodlandsfarmtrust.org.uk
February Half Term Events for children Wed. 15th Feb. 10.00 – 11.30pm Paint a picture. Come up with your own pattern or design and then using special paint and selling you can print this picture onto paper to take home with you. Just drop in to make your own print. £3 per child. Thurs. 16th Feb. Woodlands Farm Trail - Then and now 10.00 – 11.00pm. Learn how the farm has changed over its 200 years. £3 per child.
Fri. 17th Feb. Get Wild in the Woods. 11.00am – 1.30pm & 2.00pm-4.00pm. Learn about the woodland wildlife and discover the flora and fauna. £4 per child (aged 8-14yrs) £2.00 per adult.

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er the summer readers of Westcombe News may well have come across a group of men in white, with button waists, coats and belts, dancing with sticks or handkerchiefs outside a pub, by the Cutty Sark or the park gates.

For 40 years, on summer evenings and warm weekends, Greenwich Morris Men have danced about the Royal Borough. In July we celebrated our birthday with a day of dance, inviting several other sides to join us: 100 people, from different Morris traditions, dancing by the river! It was a colourful, cheerful and musical spectacle.

Our year began a few months earlier, on May 1st, at dawn. Every May Day, as the sun rises over Blackheath, we dance near the south entrance to the park. We have a huge, appreciative audience – unfortunately, it’s in a hurry, but we get a wave and a bonk as coccon, lories and cars speed along the A2. And there are always a few bleery-eyed people who, despite it being 5.15 am, come along to watch us dance, welcoming the summer.

Then, every Thursday evening (until it gets too dark for us to catch the sticks), and on many weekends, Greenwich Morris dance somewhere local: at the Cutty Sark (both the ship and the pub!), in the Old Naval College, outside the station.

We venture further afield, too, never missing Rochester Sweeps Festival. In September we were invited by a Morris side in Denmark, and spent a wonderful weekend dancing all over the island. We are wanted men - in such demand for community events such as Surrey Docks City Farm Spring Celebration, the summer fair at Shrewsbury Park and the wassail in East Greenwich Pleasaunce – that we sometimes have to turn invitations down.

Morris dancing in Greenwich is very illuminating because the passers-by come from all around the world. They are curious about our dances, not so much because they find them strange but because of the similarities they see with the traditional dances of their countries.

From Essex – the Basque Country – to Turkey and beyond there are dances akin to the Morris. An man from Eritrea who travelled to Turkey and beyond there are dances akin to the Morris. An East Greenwich Pleasaunce – that we wanted men - in such demand for community events such as Surrey Docks City Farm Spring Celebration, the summer fair at Shrewsbury Park and the wassail in East Greenwich Pleasaunce – that we sometimes have to turn invitations down.

Morris is by no means stuck in the past: contemporary choreographers and hip-hop dancers are incorporating Morris in new works. There’s video, viewed by thousands of us dancing and swapping moves with Tommy Xpensive, a famous and fabulously funky You Tuber from Ivory Coast.

Now the cold weather has come in, Greenwich Morris Men have retreated from the streets to our winter home, Mycenae House. We’re not hibernating, but practising and learning new dances – ready for our return, with the sun, on May Day next year. Is this your opportunity? We have some vacancies. If you would like to join us, have a go at this wonderful, ancient, modern, English and global dance of the people and the streets, or if you are a musician and would like to play, please come along on Thursday evenings, 8.00-10.00pm, followed in the bar of Mycenae House by a public house music session.

Norwich. It took him nine days – and some sense of rhythm, and a bit of stamina to enjoy Morris dancing. People from India and America have danced with us – and one current member is originally from Indonesia.

We come from all walks of life; there’s an electrician, an educational psychologist, a town- planner and one who was in Star Wars and Dr Strange, acting with Benedict Cumberbatch. There’s no starting, and no retirement, age: our foreman (who teaches the dances) began when he was 11; another regular is in his eightieth year. Morris dancing keeps you healthy and happy – if not wealthy and wise.

We always dance to live music, played mostly on various assorted squeezeboxes. The tunes are terrific, and this is why composers such as Ralph Vaughan Williams and George Butterworth collected music tunes and folk-songs tunes and then incorporated them into their music.

Butterworth was one of a generation of famous exponents of English music; between them is famous for his jigs, took a strange bet, lost something of its lustre socially, but not its popular appeal. In 1600, William Shakespeare’s clown, who was famous for his jigs, took a strange bet, lost something of its lustre socially, but not its popular appeal. In 1600, William Shakespeare’s clown, who was famous for his jigs, took a strange bet, lost something of its lustre socially, but not its popular appeal. In 1600, William Shakespeare’s clown, who was famous for his jigs, took a strange bet, lost something of its lustre socially, but not its popular appeal.

But, back in the days when we unleashed some- thing in this theory.

People are curious about the origins of Morris dancing. No one knows for sure but there is a longstanding idea that Morris is a contraction of Moorish, and that the dances might have come from North Africa. Scholars aren’t convinced. But, back in the days when we unleashed bagpipers rather than bombers on Libya, a musician friend was sent by the British Council to perform at a festival there. He was astounded to witness six men, in two lines of three, dressed in white, with bells and handkerchiefs dancing out of the desert. There might, then, be something in this theory.

One thing is certain: people have been Morris dancing in England for a very long time indeed. The earliest reference to Morris dancing was in 1448, when the Goldsmiths’ Company, another group with local connections, paid seven shillings for a ‘morysk dance’. Today that would be more than £180 – a fee we’d gladly turn out for.

The Morris used to be a posh, courtly dance, but when fashions moved on, it lost some of its lustre socially, but not its popular appeal. In 1600, William Shakespeare’s clown, who was famous for his jigs, took a strange bet, lost something of its lustre socially, but not its popular appeal. In 1600, William Shakespeare’s clown, who was famous for his jigs, took a strange bet, lost something of its lustre socially, but not its popular appeal. In 1600, William Shakespeare’s clown, who was famous for his jigs, took a strange bet, lost something of its lustre socially, but not its popular appeal.

The Osler that some- times comes out with the Wessex Morris: one of many local traditions

[Courtesy Dorset County Museum]

Surely a phoney tradition... is it?
**Mycenae Gardens: a very special place**

Wendy Maughan

**Park Manager’s Report**

**GRAHAM DEAR**

This is an artist’s impression of REA Greenwich which will be built on the site of the old Sainsbury building and adjacent site on the Peninsula. It will have 100m of glazing to the front and a substantial amount of glazing to the rear which will overlook a community garden.

Local community groups, including the Westcombe Society, were invited to a presentation of their proposals recently. It is their first store to be built in London for ten years. It is a unique design for Greenwich and will be their leading store in the UK. Planned to have solar panels, rainwater collection, a roof garden and open space outside, it will introduce 500 new jobs. It is an six bus routes, provides 75 cycle stands and 20 electrical car charging points. Car parking will be in the existing car park shared with BBQ and the Odeon. The design may change slightly before REA apply for detailed planning permission in about a month. They hope to start construction in the summer with the store opening planned for mid-2018.

Community groups will be considering and responding to these proposals.

If you have any comments/questions at this stage do let us know at environment@westcombe.org.uk. We hope to provide further details in our next issue and on our website Westcombe.org.uk.

**Controlled Parking Zone**

The Westcombe News currently encourages its users to car share to reduce traffic congestion in the area.

There are proposals to introduce restrictions on Delacourt Road and there is unlikely to be any parking restrictions introduced in St John’s Park following a negative response to the proposals from a majority of residents who responded. There may be changes to a small number of bays in Stratheden Road.

“The proposals still have to be approved by the Greenwich Council Cabinet Member for Transport and then there is a process whereby draft traffic orders have to be published with a period of consultation. It is likely that the final proposals will be on show at an exhibition and, as far as I understand it, will also be circulated to residents (and hopefully traders) – this is expected to happen in January 2017 with an estimated ‘go live’ date of April.”

An observer commented that questions arise as to how rigorously these controls will be enforced. But it is hoped they will deal with the problems of commuters who leave their cars all day in Old Dover Road.

**Battery Technology**

At a meeting of Blackheath Scientific Society in January, Dr Monica Monnaceu of Imperial College London talked on her work writing models for batteries used in electric cars. Her research interests included understanding their degradation, improving their performance, and more efficient usage.

For the past couple of years her work has been in lithium-sulphur battery chemistry, commercially available but not yet mainstream. This is considered one of the main contenders to displace the lithium-ion batteries that are currently used in most applications, as it has much improved energy density and safety.

**Park Manager’s Report**

**GRAHAM DEAR**

Westcombe News February 2017

**Mycenae Gardens** is a public open space, loved and maintained by the Royal Borough of Greenwich, part of the original garden of Woollands, the country house which belonged to John Julius Angerstein (1735 – 1823). He became very wealthy and spent part of his fortune buying pictures which, on his death, went on to form the core of the National Gallery collection.

The gardens are open to the public every day and are currently under the care and management of Mycenae House.

**Parking 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**

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You can now order your food and drink online! See the Market stand with pay-by-the-DR failure by the 10th day of the preceding month to:

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