Funding crisis in our schools

London head teachers are grappling with a funding crisis that will damage the quality of education schools can provide, research commissioned by London Councils has revealed.

London Councils, representatives of London’s 32 councils and the City of London, is a cross-party organisation that works on behalf of all of its member authorities regardless of political persuasion.

Talking Heads, a survey of nearly 400 London head teachers and senior school leaders conducted for London Councils by TES, The Education Company and Shift Learning, shows that increasing pressures due to a range of increasing pressures, such as growing pupil numbers, pensions and national insurance contributions and the introduction of the apprenticeship levy, are forcing head teachers to make some tough decisions to balance school budgets.

The Talking Heads report lays bare the negative impact of insufficient funding on teachers and pupil assistants, pupils, curriculum options, learning resources such as IT equipment and textbooks, and the upkeep of school buildings.

70% of London school leaders who responded to the survey have already experienced budget cuts. Since 2015, £2 billion have been cut from school budgets. The effects are country-wide. 38 out of 40 schools in Greenwich will lose money and resources. For example, the HFV has learnt that John Roan School will lose over £422,000 by 2020, that means £451 per pupil; and quite possibly 8 teachers lost. * More than 80% believe that the quality of education will be harmed by further budget cuts, and pupil outcomes will be negatively affected. The TES research shows that:

- London head teachers rank managing budgets as the number one challenge
- 47% of secondary school leaders and teachers in London have already reduced the breadth of their curriculum to deal with funding cuts.
- 70% of primary schools have already
- Figures from Andrew Bailey, Schools U-turn.

Recent curriculum reforms have placed the IT equipment is becoming more and more important to staff and students, though schools find it difficult to find funding to invest in it. Front and back-end equipment is required to be up-to-date and capable of meeting the demands of both the curriculum and IT technology requirements.

CASE STUDY: IT

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One Christmas Bazaar

The Westcombe Society’s Christmas Bazaar is back at Blackheath High School for Girls again this year with some lovely craft stalls and our usual children’s entertainment with Father Christmas, Punch and Judy, refreshments and a celebrity opening.

The Westcombe Society has chosen two local charities to support this year – MumsAid, and MEA – Montessori Education For Autism. The Christmas Bazaar is on Sat. 25th November 11.30 to 4.00pm.

Phone masts update

Yet another phone mast – in Bromley Avenue (near the car pound) – has been applied for. Matt Pennycook MP reports: “Applications for phone masts are coming in thick and fast across the constituency (either as a result of upgrade work or because demand for 4G is increasing) and in planning terms it can be difficult to find strong grounds for refusal. … I’m doing my best to represent the understandable concerns that residents have about masts going up near their homes.”

Become a Youth Councillor!

Don’t miss out on your chance to be part of Greenwich Young People’s Council. If you’re aged 11 to 18 years old (or up to 25 years old if you have a disability), this is an opportunity to make your voice heard and create positive change.

The Young People’s Council creates an annual manifesto and action plan, holds events and consultation and helps to run campaigns. The role also gives Youth Councillors a chance to meet new people, learn new skills and take part in regional and national activities.

The Chrysanthemum Tea for Senior Citizens is on Sat. 21st Oct. 2.00pm to 4.00pm in Mycenae House. Invites have been sent out, but if you haven’t had one 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.

Quizz Night

Fri 3rd Nov. 7.30pm to 9.00pm at Mycenae House. Please book your team of 6, or your place on a team, by calling Caroline Owens on 08853 0948 by Oct. 15th. Chicken/fish ‘n chips may also be ordered in advance.

Tickets: £5.00 members, £6.00 non-members

The Westcombe Society

The Christmas Bazaar

Free to 3800 homes, & in libraries & some shops; please ring Marilyn on 020 8853 1312

Yinka Shonibare’s ship in a bottle is a scaled-down replica of Nelson’s ship HMS Victory. First seen on the fourth plinth in Trafalgar Square, in 2012 it was installed outside the Samson Offer wing of the National Maritime Museum after the public helped to raise £362,000. The ship’s 37 large sails are made of richly patterned textiles commonly associated with African dress and symbolic of African identity and independence. The work reflects the legacy of British colonialism and its expansion in trade and empire, made possible by the freedom of the seas that Nelson’s victory provided.

Should Lord Nelson be removed from Trafalgar Square? See Letters page 2.

Pippa Hack of the council has confirmed that none of the reported irregularities invalidate the permission for the Siebert Road mast. Marilyn Little has gone back to her expressing disappointment, and asking for conformation that the land ownership questions can quash the Siebert Road proposal. Rebecca Moore reports that, apparently, sharing the Bromley Avenue mast is not an option.

Controlled Parking Zone

Details of the proposed new CPZ scheme have been delivered to local residents. The plans have been devised in new resources such as tables, PCs and robotics equipment, many find the required budget for such investments to be unrealistic in the current climate. Some schools find it difficult to provide the IT education of an adequate standard, and threatens to impact upon Ofsted ratings. Institutions already classified as Requires Improvement may find it more difficult to progress with these barriers in place.

Our Christmas Bazaar

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People

We are sorry to announce the death of Mary Greenhalgh, a past editor of the Westcombe Society.

Bid by Greenwich Park

The bid by Greenwich Park for £4.8 million in Lottery funding for improvements to the park, (phase 1) which was strongly supported by the Westcombe Society and other groups, has been submitted to the Heritage Lottery Fund. The outcome is expected some time in December. Fingers crossed.

Click here to apply online

To apply, download an application form from www.royalgreenwich.gov.uk/gypc.
The Macmillan Charity Walk

Letters

From: N Grant
Stratford Road

A survey shows that a quarter of all those who backed Brexit believe they were misled by the Leave campaign, almost one-in-ten now say they would change their vote if a second referendum was held. Another survey shows that 66% of people in the UK want to retain their EU citizenship. As the pound sinks, and the cost of living rises, it is time the BBC give adequate time for such views on their news and talk programmes; and it is time that Parliament insisted, for the good of the country, on having a free vote – with any Whips' interference – with a second referendum on whether to proceed with the folly of Brexit. That's their job – to represent our interests, and the good of the country.

No one argues that the EU is perfect: its flaws are many and well-documented: but we aren't going to change things by leaving it.

From: Thomas Turrell

We have dimmed the lights to prevent light from these screens shining into peoples homes. We have had complaints from the Health, in pursuit of a peace dividend of huge worth that market by far – we will have no say whatsoever on European issues, but will have for decades, if not centuries.

From: Caroline Owens

The facilities have gone up it is easy to see why we have less control, and by leaving the EU – our largest single interest, and the good of the country, on having a free vote – with any Whips' interference – with a second referendum on whether to proceed with the folly of Brexit. Their job – to represent our interests, and the good of the country.

I voted Tory for the first time in 40 years for Brexit to stop Corbyn, although he is a sincere man. The NF is only paid on receipt of a peace dividend of huge worth that market by far – we will have no say whatsoever on European issues, but will have for decades, if not centuries.

From: Peter Dempsey

We will continue to press for their removal in the referendum on whether to proceed with the folly of Brexit. That's their job – to represent our interests, and the good of the country.

From: Mohammad Abdul Qavi

Our beloved friend Qavi (a friend of the oppressed people especially in Palestine) died peacefully on 27th August in Bethlehem, Palestine.

A goodby gathering at The Women’s Union El Beit Guest House in Beit Sahour was held on 28th August. Funeral services were held after the noon (Dohr) prayers at the main (Omar Bin Alkhattab) mosque in Beit Sahour on the same day.

Condolences will be received at the Palestinian Museum of Natural History (http://palestinemuseum.org). He was buried in Bethlehem according to his wishes. Qavi had been coming to Palestine from London regularly for fifteen years helping students with their tuition, demonstrating and speaking out for Palestinian rights. Join us as we mourn this loss but also celebrate a life of giving for this man – an extraordinary human being who left his imprint on the lives of so many grateful people.

Mazin Qumsiyeh
Professor and (volunteer) Director
Palestine Museum of Natural History
Palestine Institute of Biodiversity and Sustainability, Bethlehem University, Occupied Palestine

Ed: Please see an obituary on p.6. We extend our deepest condolences to family and friends for a man who was much loved both in Blackheath and Palestine.

St George’s, Glenclose Rd.

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11.00 a.m. Holy Communion (All Age service 1st Sunday of each month)

Wednesdays: 8.30 a.m. Morning Prayer
12.30pm: Lunch & Fellowship
Sceptic keynotes meet at 89 Westcombe Pk Road 1st & 3rd Sunday each month

Special Events in October:

St George’s: Spiritual Film Night: Wed. 18th Oct. – 7.30pm  • Special Day

Two people meet during Hitler’s visit to Italy in May 1938. (Marcello Mastroianni and Sophia Loren)

Spiritual Film Night: Wed. 18th Oct.

George’s: Spiritual Film Night

And while we are about it, let’s boycott the play at the Globe Theatre on Bankside, and tear down the statue of Lord Nelson in Trafalgar Square because he was a war criminal who presided over mass torture and massacres of thousands of men and children.

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Looking for a job? Don’t get on your bike – get on our bus!

Help and advice finding a job is available on board a bus which will be popping up around the Royal Borough of Greenwich. Greenwich Local Labour and Business (GLLaB) community outreach bus is one of the Council’s innovative approaches to supporting local residents improve their skills to gain permanent employment.

The service, which was launched in General Gordon Square in August, will help GLLaB services get in contact with the community, making it easier and more convenient for people to obtain the help and advice they need.

Residents who are looking for work, training or apprenticeship opportunities will be able to get on board for help with their job search, preparing CVs as well as interview techniques. They’ll also be able to find out about job opportunities with local employers from GLLaB staff.

Cllr Siza James, Cabinet Member for Transport, Economy and Smart Cities, said: “GLLaB offers a fantastic range of services for job seekers and the community outreach bus helps increase awareness of this. I’d encourage anyone who is looking for work to hop on board and find out what help and advice is available – the next stop could be the job of your dreams!”

The bus will next be in supporting General Gordon Square from 10.15am to 2pm on 29 August and fortnightly after that. People looking for work can also get on board at other locations in the borough including Greenwich Islamic Centre, 131 Plaistead Rd, SE18 7DW, Middle Park Community Centre, Middle Park Ave, SE9 5SD, and Armada Community Hall, 21 McMillan Street SE8 7EZ.

A drop-in service is also available at 25 Calderwood Street, Woolwich, SE18 6PQ or weekdays from 9.30am to 4.30pm.

More venues will be added and the GLLaB Bus will also feature at major weekend events around the Borough. To find out more or to register with GLLaB, visit www réglaphome.gov.uk/gllab

Are new builds up to scratch?

Public confidence in new builds is falling at a time when the average house in England will have to last 2,000 years. If the sluggish rate of house building and replacement continues, the LGA (Local Government Association) has warned that the average new home in England will have to last 2,000 years.

The country has not built enough homes for decades. As a result, existing homes must house more people and last for much longer. This means that the country will have to build twice as many homes as the 2013 projection. The report reveals that in 2016, 627 billion was spent on the repair and maintenance of existing homes, with £35 billion spent on building new ones.

Disadvantaged house-buyers

No wonder that one in ten new home buyers are disadvantaged with the quality of their new home, and one in six would not recommend their house builder to a friend.

The GLLA report, The Quality of Housing, also reveals that most local authorities have more homes built before 1930 than from any other period of time, thus demonstrating the age of much of England’s housing stock.

The LGA is calling on government to help councils build a new generation of high quality, genuinely affordable and additional homes, supported by adequate infrastructure and services: buildings that will stand the test of time.

Another report indicates that buildings in the UK often use double the energy – and emit twice as much CO2 – as their designers predicted. Like the VW scandal. This is a wake-up call when companies such as Berkeley Homes are making huge profits.

Building renaissance needed

What’s more: it has now emerged that a number of tower blocks are at risk because they are not built to withstand gas boiler explosions. This problem has emerged in several areas of London, including Peckham, Lewisham and Tower Hamlets.

Greenwich is currently carrying out investigations. With increasing numbers of people in the private rented sector, council leaders are also concerned that 28 per cent of privately rented homes are not decent, an increase of 150,000 homes since 2006. In comparison, council homes are more likely to be better in quality, with 85 per cent meeting the decent homes standard, an increase from 70 per cent in 2008.

Local government leaders insist a “national renaissance” in council housing must be central to solving our housing shortage and improving quality, and for delivering the mix of different homes that meet the growing and changing need of communities.

For this to happen, the LGA said that councils need to be able to borrow to build and to keep 100 per cent of the receipts of any home they sell to reinvest in new and existing housing.

Cllr Judith Blake, LGA Housing spokesperson, said: “Everyone deserves an affordable, decent – and safe – place to live.”

Is education happening?

Yes. Michael Okseshott famously said that education was a conversation between generations. In recent times a considerable gap has opened up, because children see a different world with different values, norms, and fashions. This makes education very difficult. Parents need to do everything they can to “talk the same language as their children”, Schools need to do everything they can to win the trust of pupils. Without these moves much teaching talk in classrooms is a waste of time.

The P E R Group’s new website: www.perprospero.co.uk

St George’s Garrison Church

If you haven’t been to St George’s Garrison Church in Woolwich, you should definitely put this poignant reminder of past sacrifice on your “to do” list.

St George’s was built in 1862-63 as a Church of England place of worship for the Woolwich Royal Artillery garrison. In 1944, it was hit by a V1 flying bomb, and largely destroyed by fire.

The church stood as a sad ruin for decades but phoenix-like, it has risen from the ashes thanks to a dedicated band of friends and volunteers, as well as a very pro-active Trust, chaired by Tim Barnes.

The restored building with its canopied roof, its blue, red and yellow brick walls, its mosaics, and a memorial garden is open to the public on Sundays; you can also visit it on Open House weekends (this year it was on 10th-17th September, when refreshments were also served.)

The Church retains strong links with the military, and has hosted christenings, weddings and funerals. The very beautiful mosaic work around the altar is still largely intact, and the walls surrounding the freshly planted garden (by Seth Furminger) contain a number of commemorative plaques for servicemen and women, including several VCs.

The Summer Festival of the Trust lies some of the events mounted in the Church, including an interfaith service, performances by Tramshed Theatre (Greenwich and Lewisham Young Persons Theatre) and a performance of Hamlet in July by the Changelfg Theatre which was very well supported. Later that week the Greenwich and Docklands International Festival (GDF) put on four performances of a dance event called Five Soldiers on a stage laid in front of the the Chancel steps. Plans are in place for a continuing programme of improvements, including the installation of new gates.

You can also What’s on, page 5.)

Tim Barnes, Chairman of the Trust, adds:

If you would like to support our work in renovating St George’s Garrison Church, why not become a Friend?

Annual subscription:
£10 for those living in SE18 (to encourage those living in the locality to join)
£15 for those living elsewhere.

Family membership £22; life membership is £100.

For further details visit our website: https://www.stgeorgeswoolwich.org/
The Blackheath Society has published two new books to celebrate its 80th birthday this year - one details historical walks around Blackheath Village and the other tells the story of the Blackheath Preservation Trust.

Walking the Village, written by Society President Neil Rhind and former committee member of the WS Roger Marshall, is a handy pocket size 90-page colour book providing a guided tour to over 250 years of the recorded history of one of London’s surviving rural villages. It is a companion volume to their Walking the Heath, published in 2013, and covers three walks around the Village with many photographs, fascinating details about buildings past and present and a historical section on The Making of the Village. The Blackheath Preservation Trust 1938 – 2016, was written and edited by committee member John Bartram. It is a 40-page book which tells the full story of the BPT with complete details of all the buildings saved during its 80 years. It costs £5 and is available from the same outlets.

The BPT was founded in 1938, one year after the Blackheath Society, to buy buildings under the threat of demolition and to preserve, enhance and then sell them on into safe ownership. Much of today’s built environment of Blackheath was preserved thanks to its efforts. The BPT was taken over by the Society in 2010 and wound up in 2016, when better planning regulations and a greater interest in preserving older buildings meant that its efforts were no longer needed.

Walking the Village costs £10. The Blackheath Preservation Trust costs £5.00. Both books can be bought from The Bookshop on the Heath, 74 Tranquil Vale (phone 0208 852 4786) or from the Society’s office at Studio 2, The Old Bakehouse, 11 Blackheath Village (phone 0208 297 1937).

Death in the Ice
The W/N looks at the latest special exhibition mounted by the National Maritime Museum

Sir John Franklin was one of the most celebrated explorers of the Nineteenth Century, leading four expeditions to the Arctic. In the first three expeditions he had explored and mapped much of the Arctic coast line, and had reason to be optimistic about finding a new sea route – the North-West Passage, a short route from the Atlantic to the Pacific. In 1845 he sailed from England in HMS Erebus and HMS Terror. The ships were powerful and luxurious, with elaborate heating systems, and Franklin had secured huge supplies of preserved foods. In late July, the two ships were seen by a whaler in Baffin Bay, waiting for ice to clear in Lancaster Sound and to begin their journey to the Bering Strait. However, the voyage ended in tragedy. Facing some of the most inhospitable conditions on earth, all 129 members of the crew perished in a mystery that has endured for over 150 years. Franklin’s final expedition has captured the public imagination for over a century. Over thirty expeditions were mounted to find out what happened, but had little success until 1859: following information provided by Inuit, an expedition led by Francis McClintock found relics and human remains on King William Sound. Then last year, the ships were discovered by Canadian archeologists, who also found a number of new artefacts now on display in the exhibition at the National Maritime Museum. Starvation, madness or even cannibalism – can these amazing objects reveal the crew’s true fate?

Read more at http://www.rmg.co.uk/discover/explore/john-franklin-final-north-west-passage-expedition-1845/0/health-and-decay/099

[Image] One of the artefacts displayed, this model ship made of wood and bone, indicates the Inuit had contact with Europe long before the C19th.
Global Fusion of Music & Arts October Programme: Black History Month

Friday 6th Oct, Charlton House - World Cinema Night: Martin Luther King 18th Oct 7.00 pm African Spoken Word night Mycenae House

Friday 27th Oct, Mycenae House, Celilid & Acoustic Night: Morgan Freeman & Monique Thomas Saturday 28th Oct, Charlton House - BIM Children’s Workshops Contact 8588 9447

THEATRE

THE GREY ARTS THEATRE, Canterbury House, London SE1 6RS Box Office: 8088 7555 greyarts@canterburyhouse.org
Sun for 4th, THE SANDMAN contemporary ballet Max 2nd Oct 9:00 Bronte: in a heartbeat. improv ramp 6:00 - 7:00, JR: JERK & SB EYEBE 5th - 6th, OCT. STOGEN CT Studio Tues, 10th - 20th, BOWERED’S END in the Studio Celebrating the life of Frankie Howard 10th Oct NOCTURNES say goodbye. Thurs 12th - 16th Oct, New Musical: PROMISE & PROMISCUITY Thue 36-21 Oct KIWADAN Japanese ghost story THE ALEXANDRA’S present SEASON’S GREETINGS by Alan Ackbaran at the Alexandra Hll, Londrom Station, WED 27th Oct 9:00 am - 7:00 pm Res: 8088 7448 00

COMMUNITY

WESTCOTE PARKLANDS
The woods on your doorstep! Celebrate the Autumn season and join us Sat 7th Oct, 10:00 - 4:00 pm. * Bedouins explained + Woodwork activities * Pay-as-you-go * Refreshments + Refreshments * Entrance: Tree at the end of South Park car park near the church to the Stokenchurch Hall Ticket: www.woodcraft.org.uk Free - £5 for non-members BLACKHEATH HALLS 23, Lee Rd. SE3 9RQ 020 8828 4310 www.ticketsource.co.uk/tts

AGE EXCHANGE


ARTS

BLACKHEATH DECORATIVE & FINE ARTS SOCIETY 10 Mary Church Road, Blackheath www.blackheathdafa.co.uk All year round, every Tuesday, 2nd, 5th, and last Wednesday of the month – 10,00am -11.30am – free brunch/arts and crafts Contact 07709 571777.

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The woods on your doorstep! Celebrate the Autumn season and join us Sat 7th Oct, 10:00 - 4:00 pm. * Bedouins explained + Woodcraft activities * Pay-as-you-go * Refreshments + Refreshments * Entrance: Tree at the end of South Park car park near the church to the Stokenchurch Hall Ticket: www.woodcraft.org.uk Free - £5 for non-members BLACKHEATH HALLS 23, Lee Rd. SE3 9RQ 020 8828 4310 www.ticketsource.co.uk/tts

AGE EXCHANGE


ARTS

BLACKHEATH DECORATIVE & FINE ARTS SOCIETY 10 Mary Church Road, Blackheath www.blackheathdafa.co.uk All year round, every Tuesday, 2nd, 5th, and last Wednesday of the month – 10,00am -11.30am – free brunch/arts and crafts Contact 07709 571777.

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Ty passed through Blackheath Village one Saturday morning, you might have seen a small man with a big placard standing on a traffic island. The placard demanded of us that we should “Repair the World” not destroy it.

This one-man demonstration made his first appearance in the aftermath of 9/11 and became a regular fixture of Blackheath Village life for years; the man, was, of course, Qavi, our favourite local eccentric, Mohammad Abdul Qavi, who some of us knew as the only Moslem Quali, whose placard we later to become Bangladesh.

Sadly, very sadly, he is no longer with us: he died on 27th August 2017 in Bethlem, Palestine.

Sometimes membership of both the Westcombe Society, and Blackheath & Greenwich UNA, and resident of Parkside, he was born in India in 1936; at the time of partition, his family moved to what was later to become Bangladesh.

Subsequently, he moved to Dubai, where he saw a business opportunity: at that time Dubai was at the start of its rapid development, there was a huge demand for housing, but how to furnish the houses and shops that were developing?

Qavi’s business provided the answer: for nine years, Qavi ran an astonishingly successful – and profitable – furniture making business: though he himself knew nothing of wood, or carpentry, he taught himself enough to be able to develop a reliable workforce producing high-quality furniture.

“I made enough money to see my time out on this earth,” he said. “I had little interest in making money for its own sake, but to cut a long story short he bought Pine Interiors from its founders, a charming couple, Mr Kenneth and Mrs Renee-Marie Croose Parry, co-founders of the Teilhard Association.) (The shop has since become Raffles.)

Every day Qavi looked up at the tower of Costa Brava came to an end. Passing through London, Qavi met up with an old friend, John Parkinson, whom he had known in Dubai, and who was at a loose end. So Qavi invested some money in a house-building company, which built houses in the Reading area. But it soon emerged that this was not a good time for property developers: in the early eighties, the housing market was in a bad state, and mortgage rates were for a while up to 17.5%.

The business was in serious difficulties, and Qavi came over to help resolve the problems. In Dubai he applied for an investor’s visa, and the British Embassy people were “astonishingly welcoming.”

Arriving in England in 1983, where he knew almost no one except John Parkinson and a Parsee friend in the city, Qavi solved the problem by writing off his investment. And then wondered what to do to justify his annually-renewable investor’s visa.

Staying in rented accommodation in Richmond, he happened to see an ad for an on-going business, Pine Interiors, in Blackheath. He did not even know where Blackheath was, but to cut a long story short he bought Pine Interiors from its owners, a charming couple, Mr Kenneth and Mrs Renee-Marie Croose Parry, co-founders of the Teilhard Association.) (The shop has since become Raffles.)

The former Blackheath Art Club at the end of Bennett Park, was the home of the General Post Office film unit before and during World War II.

John Grierson, the pioneering Scottish documentary maker also began his career in Blackheath. The fascinating history of film making in the building is by John Foxon, BFI curator of non-fiction films.

Thursday October 12th, 7 for 7.30pm at St Mary’s Hall, Cresswell Park, Blackheath. Tickets are £10 (inc. glass of wine) or ring 8297 1937.
An Inconvenient Sequel

Neville Grant reviews probably the most important film of the year

“Scientific evidence for warning of the climate system is unequivocal.”

- Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change

The first time that Vice-President Al Gore’s second film on climate change was shown was to the press on Jan. 19th. This year, the day before Donald Trump was inaugurated as the 45th President of the United States, The film – directed by Jon Shenk and Bonnie Cohen – had been selected to open the Sundance film festival.

The film is therefore timely. It is of course a sequel to his film An Inconvenient Truth, first shown eleven years ago, and looking at a sequel, it feels like deja vu all over again, as it were. Surely An Inconvenient Truth did its job? As one watched Greenland melting before our eyes (a third of its ice has now disappeared) it was very hard to believe that there were people, many people, who remain unconvinced.

Fake news, fake science

The facts visibly displayed before our eyes it seems count for nothing, for we live in a world of “fake news”, of “alternative facts” according to Trump’s spokeswoman Kellyanne Conway. We are living in a world of infantile fantasy, in which some people believe what they want to believe: literally, a land of make-believe. And Trump, the master of fake news, turned it around: anything he doesn’t like seeing he termed fake. “Fake science”.

In the same way, the massive consensus of the scientific establishment is also consigned to the status of conspirators, cooking up “fake science”, because they have evidence that conflicts with what Trump and his cronies want to believe. And what they want is in uncanny accord with the science, and included many quotes and observations by reputable scientists such as James E. Hansen.

The second film does contain some compelling graphs, but the main thrust of the film is towards anecdotal evidence which is likely, in the world occupied by Trump supporters, to count for more than scientific evidence

However, the second film would have been much more persuasive if the evidence for showing that climate change is down largely – mainly? – to human agency had been provided at some point.

The film opens in Greenland, where the images of melting ice, exploding glaciers, storms, and great cracks opening in the ice, are very telling.

The film then takes one round the world (in my view sadly missing out the drying coral reefs) but always ending in the US – for that is where Gore wants his film to have the biggest impact.

Three striking examples of the way the world is going drives home the message all set in the US; first, he mentioned that in An Inconvenient Truth, it was quite possible that the rise of sea levels could flood the 9/11 monument in New York.

“Ridiculous exaggeration!” was the response by his critics. Five years later, floods did indeed inflict serious damage on the 9/11 monument.

The message is getting through

Thence to Miami, where the authorities are in a desperate fight to cope with rising sea levels: sea levels rise, and the roads are flooded. So the Republican mayor of Miami, and dozens of mayors across Florida, are investing in alternative energy. Hundreds of mayors across the US are following suit. Meanwhile Trump has cancelled billions of dollars spent on climate change research, and opted out of the Paris accord on climate change.

Truth to power

And so Gore continues to campaign for climate policy change in the US, Asia, Europe – around the world. His slogan “Truth to Power” is compelling; his call to action: “If President Trump refuses to lead, Americans will.” He argues: “It is your choice, your voice, your vote.”

An admirable person, a courageous and determined person, whose persistence is remarkable; one major omission in my view marred the film: he does not specify what John Doe, the ordinary citizen, can do to mitigate the dangers of climate change in terms of personal life-style. For that, one needs to read something like the Green Party manifesto:... Sadly, John Doe might find that too difficult a pill to swallow:.... Still unconvinced? See: https://climate.nasa.gov/evidence/

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