Have you say: how to improve our area?

L ast October the WN reported on the
Community Infrastructure Levy which is
distributed by the London Borough of
Greenwich to support local improvements.

Greenwich has divided the borough into
four areas:

\( A \) for Greenwich Town centre, near the Cutty
Sark; \( B \) for Westcombe Park and
Maze Hill; \( C \) for Blackheath and
Westcombe wards; \( D \) for Greenwich and
New Town areas.

Together meetings will be held in late January
and early February. Details soon. Your chance to
be heard.

\( A \) area

Gas holder: doomed?

The gas holder, in place since 1980, when
the structure. The gas holder, in place since
1980, when the structure was inherited by the
Greenwich Borough Council from the
National Coal Board, was a landmark in the
area. It was used to store gas for local
households and businesses. The building
became redundant in the 1980s, when gas
supplied by the National Grid via pipeline
replaced it as the main source of gas for
houses. In recent years, the gas holder has
become an eyesore and a potential
hazard, due to its age and condition.

The gas holder was listed as a
Grade II* listed building in 2003,
recognising its architectural and
historic significance. However, the
building is in poor condition and
 requires significant repair costs. A
proposal has been made to remove the
building and replace it with a new
design that is more in keeping with the
surrounding area.

The gas holder is located near
Westcombe Court, a historic
building that is also listed as a
Grade II* building. The removal of the
gas holder would allow for better
development of the surrounding area.

The council is proposing to remove the
building and replace it with a new
design that is more in keeping with the
surrounding area. However, this has
caused some concern among
residents who are worried about the
impact on the local environment.

Local residents have expressed their
concerns about the proposed
removal of the gas holder. They
believe that it is an important
landmark and should be
preserved.

The council is currently
considering the proposals and will
make a decision in the near future.

\( B \) area

Speeding vehicles and HGVs have long been a
problem. Now proposals include new chicanes
in Westcombe Park. The borough is
considering installing new chicanes as a
way to slow down traffic and make
the area safer for pedestrians and
cyclists.

Calling all Westcombe Parkers who love
their area and would like to be part of the
evolution of our community, that makes
living in this part of London so special.

Perhaps you have recently moved to
the area and would like to make new
friends, and maybe give something back
to a local area we treasure for its
people, natural beauty, and history
by getting involved with environmental
matters. Whatever your reason, the best
way to kick off a fresh new relationship
with your fellow locals is to join
The Westcombe Society and/or volunteer
to help with various fun activities, fundraisers
and get-togethers during the year.

Community needs are always changing
and The Westcombe Society has long
played a dynamic role in helping young
and old to enjoy a sense of togetherness,
and in encouraging new friendships.

Now we are calling for more people to
get involved and help out in its activities.
We would especially welcome an influx of
teenage people to get involved in bringing
together the energy and
enthusiasm of the Society’s many
youth members.

Would you like to help organise
teas, quizzes, charity walks and parties?
Your contribution may simply be to offer a
lend to elderly folk who find it hard to get a
function. Alternatively you may wish to
get involved with reviewing changes to our
area and supporting infrastructure.

\( C \) area

As reported in the WN, arrangements were
clarified and adopted.

Westcombe Park is part of “Area 2”
comprising Greenwich West, Peninsula and
Blackheath
Westcombe wards. This year just over £377,000 is available as part of the
renewed Greenwich Growth Fund and
applications are invited for projects. The
good news is that there appear to be several
projects already in the pipeline.

\( D \) area

The bad news is that this by the time you
receive this, you have less than a week to
apply for a grant for this round. Though
the scheme was signalled at the Better
Together meetings as in each of the four
areas, in January, it was only given
the final go-ahead a Council meeting in
December – too late for the
join December/January issue of the
WN; and not matched with Christmas and
New Year festivities looming.

Despite the representations by the
Westcombe Society and others that the
timescale was unrealistic, proposals have to be
submitted by February 4th. But in case
you are worried that you may have missed
the bus, any unspent money will be rolled
over to the following year.

Proposals, for projects over £5,000, have
to meet a number of criteria, including
demonstrating how they relate to the
neighbourhood priorities which were
established by surveys and through Better
Together meetings. They must have the
support of all ward councillors and should
be ready to start within 6 months.

To deliver on this scheme, Royal
Greenwich has divided the borough into
four neighbourhood areas, with each area
having an allocation of money out of the
Greenwich Neighbourhood Growth Fund
created by CIL. There is already a
million pounds in the fund, to be split
between the four areas in the borough.

The procedure

Some of the ideas suggested by residents at
the Better Together meetings were a youth
club for people with special needs; the
conversion of the old toilet block in
Queenscroft; dredging The Tarn pond; installing
public water fountains in
the area, particularly at the Cutty
Sark; and more community art or murals,
involved the local community.

Proposals must be fully costed and must
be endorsed by all councillors in the ward
in which the proposal will be delivered.

All applications will be reviewed by a
project board, and all those cut up a
shortlist. The projects listed will then be
opened for public consultation before a final
decision is made in March.

It was clear from discussions with
councillors and officers that the
Royal Borough of Greenwich is committed to
local improvements which are supported by
the community and that they view this
initial round as the start of an annual
process which will change and develop
over time.

They have appointed a project
officer to give advice and assistance to any
groups wishing to discuss ideas.

The Westcombe Society, in collaboration
with other amenity societies in the area, is
following developments closely. We will
report on any decisions taken and
will particularly welcome suggestions for local
projects from residents and
members of the local community.

Conditions, guidance and the application
form are on the Royal Greenwich website.
Community groups requiring further
guidance or who have any questions can
call 0208 853 1312 if you are interested.

\( W \) area

A storm brought down this huge beech tree in
Greenwich Park at around 4.00 am on January
18th, creating a hole in the park wall, and slightly
damaging a parked car. It blocked Maze Hill but
was swiftly removed early in the morning.

\( W \) area

Is technology your strength? Perhaps you
have helped re-shape the Society’s website,
a vital means of linking the local community
and sharing information with other local
groups. Or is journalism your thing? If so
the award winning Westcombe News is
always keen for input from locals: writing stories,
taking photos, helping put the paper
together, or assisting in delivering it.

Will you answer the call? Will you help
keep the wonderful spirit of friendship and
kindness alive in our special corner of the
world? Please phone 0208 853 1312 if you
are interested.

Our Community needs YOU!

Maggie Gravelle

Our Community needs YOU!

Westcombe Controlled Parking Zone

Since the initial consultation last year there
have been a number of comments and
complaints — one of which came from residents
asking for their road be included. These all
resulted in delays in implementation. In a letter to Cllr Geoff Brighty, Tim Jackson, RBG’s
Assistant Director, Transportation, apologised
for the delay. Cllr Geoff Brighty has now
informed the WN that the letters and permit
tickets to residents and traders will be distributed
by the 26th January. The scheme will commence
by 19th February. At last!

Gas holder: doomed?

Following the advice of Historic England that
the gas holder on the corner of
Queenscroft and Maze Hill was
blew many tiles off Westcombe Court.

An ill wind . . .

Not just Maze Hill! In November, high winds
blew many tiles off Westcombe Court.

Have a say: how to improve our area?

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Not just Maze Hill! In November, high winds blew many tiles off Westcombe Court.
In January, the Royal Parks charity told the WVN that Greenwich Park is a giant step closer to receiving a multi-million pound investment for Greenwich Park. Revealed— a plan to uncover its hidden historical gems and enhance its natural environment for generations to come.

Last year, the Royal Parks applied for a grant of £4.8M through the Parks for People scheme, jointly funded by the Big Lottery Fund and Sport England. The charity has now been awarded development funding to work up proposals over the next eighteen months, and then invited the oldest application to secure the full £4.8M grant.

Greenwich Park Revealed will enable The Royal Parks charity, which manages the 183-acre park, to conserve and improve the World Heritage Site and Grade I Listed landscape for the 4.8 million people who visit every year.

The plans include proposals which aim to:
- Revive historical features from André Le Notre’s original 17th century baroque design for the park,
- Reinstate the Edwardian landscape at the Flower Garden and Wilderness Park
- Create more opportunities for the local community to get involved
- Improve visitor facilities

Graham Dear, Greenwich Park Manager, said: “We’re delighted to be a step closer to securing this crucial investment. Our next task is to build on the proposals we’ve submitted; we look forward to a successful final result in the months to come.”

Many thanks to all our donors and sponsors

Our Christmas Bazaar could not succeed without the support of local businesses and traders. With their assistance, the Westcombe Society raised over £1,300 for the charities MumsAid and MEFA.

Letters

From: Wendy Fidler

MEFA

On behalf of the board of trustees for Montessori Education for Autism (MEA), I would like to thank you for choosing us as one of the Westcombe Society charities of the year. We were thrilled to receive your donation which has enabled us to replicate some amazing ageappropriate high quality tables which have adjustable height legs. The new tables are now suitable for children aged 1 year old and up. (See photo below.)

Our children, parents and teachers are delighted, and they join with me in thanking you all, and wishing you a very Happy 2018.

From: G. Bailey Westcombe Park Road

Peter Green and Nick Clegg's How to Stop Brexit In the last issue of the WVN it was timely: last year the book was voted the Parliamentary Book of the Year by both the House of Commons and the House of Lords. Could it be that our esteemed representatives in Parliament are having second thoughts, and are at last thinking of putting the good of the country above their party loyalties?

One also wonders why a significant number of MPs passionate about leaving the EU wish to hamstrung parliamentary democracy and prevent Parliament having a vote on crucial issues on the Brexit process. The same people were insist on how important sovereignty and the democratic process are when they chose the elected to be the standard campaign...

From: Mike Radcliffe

It seems to me that the vast majority of the British people will be the losers with any Brexit “deal”, so who are the winners that are pulling the strings of the executive behind the scenes?

I think it is necessary to smoke out who is pulling the strings on Brexit. Who was providing the funds to Aaron Banks to bankroll the Brexit campaign in the referendum? There is a huge hidden dimension to Brexit that must be brought out clearly into the open. Who is it who is having such an influence on policy and what are they hoping to gain? Tax exiles? It worries me when I learn that John Redwood is advising investors to invest outside Britain.

Meanwhile we urgently need a paper that describes the salient steps necessary to negotiate a free trade deal with other markets in which there are bound to be both winners and losers. Any free trade deal opens up your own market to the same access from the ‘other markets’. Is that what we really want?

For the negotiators to reach agreement, both sides need detailed sector by sector analyses of current and future trade in each sector, and both sides need to conduct their own ‘impact assessments’ of the effects for consumers, employees and employers. Such a negotiation would probably take years.

Meanwhile, the British economy is likely to deteriorate badly, with the result that Mr Fox would be negotiating from a position of weakness.

It’s time for an elected repre- sentative in Parliament to do the job they were elected to do, to decide what is best for the country. That includes a non-party political debate (no Party Whips allowed) on whether to abandon the Brexit process, and hold a properly informed referendum.

From: Trevor Almass Cotherdale Road

I read with incridulity your article on Greenwich Council’s ‘Green Gaste–Nick Strategy’ last issue of the WVN. How can Greenwich Council expect residents to take its claims of wanting to combat air pollution and climate change seriously when it continues to support the Silverton Tunnel Project ?

If the Silverton Tunnel is built, it will increase pollution in the borough, not to mention congestion, as it will attract more traffic to East Greenwich. It would also increase the traffic levels in Blackheath Westcombe Ward, as vehicles try and avoid congestion elsewhere.

As the Official Monster Raving Loony Party candidate for Blackheath Westcombe for the 2018 local elections, I will continue to oppose the tunnel if re-elected to Greenwich Council. Even Libeons think the Silverton Tunnel is a crazy idea!

From: Ann Hill

Beaconfield Road

Dear Team

You do an excellent job, thank you. In response to your 5 questions in November’s issue regarding the area and coverage of local news, local issues etc. the answer is ‘Yes’ to all five. If there had been an ‘Excellent’ option I would have chosen that.

ED: The survey is still open for responses.
Royal Greenwich’s ambitious plans to transform Greenwich Town Centre moved a step closer after winning funding from the Mayor of London’s Liveable Neighbourhoods initiative.

Royal Greenwich is one of only seven boroughs to be chosen in the initial round of bids for funding under the Transport for London programme.

The Liveable Neighbourhoods initiative is the first scheme set up to deliver the Mayor’s ‘Healthy Streets Approach’ across London. This plan aims at improving air quality and reducing congestion, and encouraging residents and visitors to walk, cycle and use public transport.

Key target: Greenwich.

Greenwich Town Centre is at the heart of the Maritime Greenwich World Heritage Site which attracts an estimated 18 million visitors a year.

Observes note that, given that the town is on a major East–West travel route, with most of the traffic coming from outside the immediate area, it is likely that making improvements will be quite a challenge. The plan is to make Greenwich Town Centre a much more attractive place for both visitors and residents. The Council’s proposals include designing a more generous and welcoming pedestrian environment, in particular on the approach to the World Heritage Site. It will also provide a safe cycling route through the town centre.

Cllr Denise Hyland, Leader of Royal Greenwich, said: “We worked hard to develop a successful bid that will help transform Greenwich Town Centre into a destination truly compatible with its World Heritage Status and we look forward to improving the environment for residents and visitors alike.”

The Royal Borough of Greenwich is one of London’s most popular destinations, attracting over 18 million visitors each year, providing more than 15,000 jobs, and generating some £1.2 billion for the local economy.

Mental Health Activity Trust

I n December, local charity The Mental Health Activity Trust’s annual award ceremony took place at The Boys’ Brigade Hall in Blackheath.

The event was a lively celebration of the volunteers and supporters who contribute to keeping this independent community organisation running. Since 2014 MHA Trust has improved the lives of people with mental health problems by helping them gain the skills and confidence needed to find paid employment and training. It has helped over fifty people to access work and supported over a thousand with welfare and benefits issues.

The theme of this year’s event was True Colours, signifying the charity’s mission to create a welcoming space where people can be themselves. Over seventy people attended and enjoyed cocktails, music, a buffet dinner and entertainment in the form of celebrity drug poets Bgga Chipz and Minnie Diamond, and a stunning fire eating and juggling display by Tom. MACHiNe, with Steve Allen’s “Crimes and Misdemeanours”. Also in January, Rev’d Tim led a group on a tour of Westminster Abbey, culminating in Evensong. On 27th we hosted a Burns Night celebration, with a live band, haggis (of course) and bagpipes.

St George’s Church had a fruitful Christmas season. At our Christmas services more than £500 was collected for the Greenwich Winter Night Shelter. Then on 5th January the church hosted a concert by the Aeris Brass ensemble; the retiring collection raised more than £200 for the Shelter. St George’s thanks everyone who came and for the generous donations.

We have started the New Year with an active schedule of community events, study groups and loving service to the community. On 9th January, the first night of the Greenwich Winter Night Shelter at St George’s began, hosting up to 15 homeless people, with a delicious dinner, a warm sleep, and a hearty breakfast.

The Spiritual Film Night series resumed in January with a showing of Woody Allen’s “Crimes and Misdemeanours”. Also in January, Rev’d Tim led a group on a tour of Westminster Abbey, culminating in Evensong. On 27th we hosted a Burns Night celebration, with a live band, haggis (of course) and bagpipes.

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EGRA is considering its next steps. They will include following up the case made last summer to Michael Gove, Secretary of State for the Environment. EGRA will seek a meeting and will also continue to discuss riverine air pollution with the Port of London Authority (PLA) and the Royal Borough. Our local MP, Matt Pennycook, continues to actively promote the case for a clean cruise port.

“Nothing liner will happily dock in Greenwich unless shore-side power is installed,” comments Ian Blöre, for EGRA. “The community will see to that.”

The EU can’t act on Enderby

T he petition by East Greenwich Residents’ Association (EGRA) to the European Parliament on the London City cruise port at Enderby Wharf has been turned down. The petition called for a cleaner, shore-based energy supply for visiting ships. In the considered opinion from the European Commission:

• overall environmental assessment is not a requirement under EU law,
• breaches in air pollution within the UK, which the Opinion notes occur in London and specifically Greenwich, are being pursued through infringement actions, and finally,
• “if the Member State grants permission to a project that would increase pollution beyond the limit values for ambient air quality, it would logically have to take compensating measures to ensure compliance with the limit values”.

These opinions may appear anodyne but they may well help with the next steps in securing a clean cruise port with onshore power supply at Enderby Wharf.

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St Alfege’s Church wins Lottery bid

St Alfege Church in Greenwich has received a grant of £1,836,800 from the Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) for its proposed “Heart of Greenwich, Place and People” project.

Thanks to National Lottery players, the project aims to reinforce the church’s position as a heritage asset at the heart of Greenwich, and to reveal and interpret our hidden spaces and heritage for visitors, and the local community.

Voluntary repairs to the fabric are planned, bringing to light the splendid work of Nicholas Hawksmoor, and improving facilities.

Working with the University of Greenwich, the Royal Borough of Greenwich and schools, students will gain practical experience. Volunteer Heritage Ambassadors will be trained to gain practical experience. Volunteer Heritage Ambassadors will be trained to gain practical experience.

Nicholas Hawksmoor, and improving facilities.

Working with the University of Greenwich, the Royal Borough of Greenwich and schools, students will gain practical experience. Volunteer Heritage Ambassador will be trained to help provide a programme of activities.

This will strengthen the Church’s role as a resource for future generations. As custodian of the emerging story of the place, St Alfege’s holds the remains of significant figures in British history, and plays an important role in the Maritime Greenwich World Heritage Site.

The Vicar, Chris Moody, commented: “This has been a culmination of years of planning and we are absolutely delighted at this award. I would like to thank everyone who has made this possible.”

Explaining the importance of the HLF support, Stuart Hobley, Head of HLF London, said: “The Heart of Greenwich project will see Hawksmoor’s building restored and the heritage of this well-loved church brought to a wider audience. It is great that this gift from National Lottery players will support this well-loved historic building.”

If you would like to find out more or visit St Alfege Church, and have a hidden spaces tour please contact office@st-alfege.org.uk. Please mark for the attention of Wendy Foreman, or telephone Wendy on 07775 521 906 for the attention of Wendy Foreman.

The Little Half: a relay and other events over different distances of The Big Half course for participants of all abilities and ages.

The Big Relay: this will be exclusively open to community groups from the host boroughs of Southwark, Lewisham, Tower Hamlets and Greenwich. Participants will be able to run in teams of four, each person will run one leg of The Big Relay – over distances ranging up to five miles.

The Big Festival: a celebration of London’s diverse culture, food and music which will take place throughout the day in Greenwich Park.

The route map can be seen above. The Big Half aims to attract people of all ages and all backgrounds and to inspire them to take part in an event, centred on running. Working in partnership with Sported, the sports development charity, London Marathon Events will engage with local communities at grassroots level, in a way that has never been done before. The event will be accessible, affordable and fun. It will celebrate London’s diverse communities in a way that no other sports event has done before.

A total of 7,500 places are reserved for community groups from the four host boroughs of Tower Hamlets, Southwark, Lewisham and Greenwich who will be able to get entries at just £10 each through their local schools, faith institutions, sports groups and other community groups.

Alternatively, you can apply to community entries@thebighalf.co.uk Come and join the party on 4 March 2018 and enter now on www.thebighalf.co.uk

Capt. Walter Stone VC

A striking Captain Walter Napleton Stone was born in Blackheath, the tenth son of Edward Stone, a solicitor. His family lived on Blackheath Hill, and later moved to Vanbrugh Park.

He attended Pembroke College, Cambridge before dropping out after five terms. In the First World War he served in the 3rd Battalion of the Royal Fusiliers on the Western Front, and was awarded a posthumous VC. A plaque at the Lewisham War Memorial was unveiled at a ceremony on 30th November. His citation in the London Gazette 12 - almost exactly a hundred years ago - February 1918 reads:

For most conspicuous bravery when in command of a company in an isolated position, 1,000 yards in front of the main line, and overlooking the enemy’s position. He observed the enemy massing for an attack, and afforded invaluable information to battalion headquarters. He was ordered to withdraw his company, leaving a rearguard to cover the withdrawal. The attack developing with unexpected speed, Capt. Stone sent three platoons back and remained with the rearguard himself. He stood on the parapet with the telephone under a tremendous bombardment observing the enemy and continuing to send back valuable information until the wire was cut by his orders.

The rearguard was eventually surrounded and cut to pieces, and Capt. Stone was seen fighting to the last till he was shot through the head. The extraordinary coolness of this heroic officer and the accuracy of his information enabled the disposition of forces to be made just in time to save the line and avert disaster.

There is a memorial to Captain Stone in Greenwich Cemetery, near the graves of his family. His actual grave has never been found and he is commemorated on the Cambrid Memorial to the Missing. But there is a mystery: he is also commemorated on a memorial in Shrewsbury, even though he has no known link with Shropshire.

Readers may now be asking: where does he belong? Greenwich, Lewisham – or Shropshire? The answer, perhaps, is that he belongs to history.
ARTS
GREENWICH DECORATIVE & FINE ARTS SOCIETY King William Court, University of Greenwich 22nd Feb - 2018: 1st Year Students and 5th Year with Marylin Pinchbeck (formerly BDIAS) 22nd Feb. David Phillips Income and Inspiration: Science & Art. All meetings are on the 4th Thursday of each month (Except AUG & DEC). All lectures are free. Coffee & cake; record time V.I.S.A. Your visit is important to support the Greenwich Viscount. Please pay on the door.

THE GREENWICH GALLERY
Painting and sculpture by Selina BSS NS
RICK NAYLOR ON WATER 1st - 24th Feb. 36 x 30 cm Water, ink. £4,000.00.
Westcombe News February 2018

CHILDREN & FAMILY
Sat 3rd Feb. 2.00pm THE PRINCESS & THE FUR MANTLE Mon 5th Feb. 10.30am Coffee, and lectures at 2.30pm. Our lecture venue is St Mary’s Charity. Varia, University of Greenwich Viscount. Please pay on the door.

UNIVERSITY OF GREENWICH GALLERIES
created using paints and materials donated by Farrow & Ball. 

COMMUNITY
BLACKHEATH HALLS Tue. 27th Feb. 7.00pm TEA DANCES 2018 GREAT HALL, BLACKHEATH HALLS Come and enjoy a magical afternoon on the dance floor of our Beautiful Great Hall. £4.00
BLACKHEATH & GREENWICH WOMEN’S INSTITUTE. Mon 5th March at every month, doors open at 7:00pm for 7:30pm at St Andrew Methodist Church on Old Dover Road
GREENWICH UNION PUR (MEANING) Reading Group. Local reading group. 1st Wed. of each month. Read--Discuss--Share art and culture books. Barbara West ward-barbera@juno.com 708510785
BLACKHEATH BRIDGE CLUB duplicate sessions in Mycenae House 7pm Wed and Sun 11.30pm. 2nd Wed at 11.30pm. Welcome to our club! Please ring Monday's most popular number. Thu. Tel. 020 8319 1312
CHARLTON HOUSE Huntingdon Mews... 0208-545-3501 Malbury Tea Rooms Lunchtime concert events every Wed. 12.30-2.30pm. 2nd Wed drop in at Sherrington Children’s Centre. 2nd Saturday of the month. 10am-11am. free branch/arts and craft. For more regular contact. Daniel/Alana@trinitylaban.ac.uk ST ALFEGES CHURCH, GREENWICH Wed 14th Feb, 10.30am a celebration of the declaration of Hawthorne’s historic hick burl.
THE 7 WESTCOMBE WOODLANDS Next day out Feb 27th. Sat 3rd Mar.

PHILANTHROPY:
WESTCOMBE WOODLANDS
Theatre at the Greenwich Theatre
THE GREENWICH THEATRE, Crosses Hill, London SE10 8ES Box Office: 8858 7755
Wed, Sat 27th Feb. 6:45pm PANTHERS is Unravelling (violent "rally") Maybe truth is even stranger than this outline. Daily life is a leaf of a leaf £11.00 (Age 4 - 7)
Sun. 26th Feb. 11:30am & 2.30pm THE GINGERBREAD MAN £11.00 (Age 4 - 7)
Mon. 26th Feb. 11:30am & 2.30pm LIFE OF A LEAF £11.00 (Age 4 - 7)
Wed. 28th Feb. 11:30am & 2.30pm DEER IN THE WILD £11.00 (Age 4 - 7)

THE ARTS
GREENWICH DECORATIVE & FINE ARTS SOCIETY King William Court, University of Greenwich 22nd Feb - 2018: 1st Year Students and 5th Year with Marylin Pinchbeck (formerly BDIAS)

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INDUSTRIAL HISTORY SOCIETY 206th Feb. 7.00pm Michael Delay on Unveiling Deptford Creek: industrial and domestic development in the 19th century at The Old Bakehouse. Box Exchange
BLACKHEATH SCIENTIFIC SOCIETY Fri, 1st Feb. 7.45 Fleur Barron soprano & Maya Irga gala piano performance. Scholarship Fund.
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Is education happening?
Yes. But with the not intended need today. Schooling is stuck in a rut which seemed to make sense in the 1980s, but now everything is twenty times more complicated, and the system is not responding. Parents need more education, and the children need more help. Schooling is stuck in a rut which seemed to make sense in the 1980s, but now everything is twenty times more complicated, and the system is not responding. Parents need more education, and the children need more help. Schooling is stuck in a rut which seemed to make sense in the 1980s, but now everything is twenty times more complicated, and the system is not responding. Parents need more education, and the children need more help.
Planned extension to Steiner School

The proposed new building opposite Woodlands House; the entrance to the shared site is to the left.

O n December 6th, the Greenwich Steiner School at Woodlands (which is next to Mycenae House) opened its doors to the local community to view and discuss its plans to build three classrooms in the small garden across the driveway, facing the School entrance. The School moved into Woodlands, which is a Grade II* listed building, in 2007. It leases Woodlands and the area to the south of the driveway (which includes the small garden and three parking spaces) from the Royal Borough of Greenwich.

The aim is to move the existing kindergarten classes from the main building into the new classrooms, freeing up space to allow further intake of 13 and 14 year olds.

The plan is for the student roll to increase by 45 to a total of 225, representing an increase of 25%. The new intake is to be phased in over three years between 2018 and 2020. Additional teachers will be recruited.

The design is for two classrooms to be built next to the third classroom. Each grouping will have its own toilet block. The design is for two classrooms to be elevated to provide a level site, which will stretch from near the entrance to the disabled parking bay in front of Mycenae House.

In addition to the loss of parking spaces and a bin store area, most of the large trees (see the photograph, below) are to be felled, including some memorial and commemorative trees. The architect’s illustration (above) shows the site of the proposed new buildings, and gives an impression of how the classrooms might look. The actual design will become clear when the planning application is submitted, which is expected soon. Plans may of course change again somewhat when a planning application is submitted.

The statutory consultation of the application means that notices have to be displayed on or near the site and residents have three weeks from the date of the notice to respond.

The planning application was to have been sent in in January 2018 but none has been submitted at the time of going to press. Residents who have comments to make should keep an eye out for the planning application. The proposed site to the left of the entrance to the site shared by Steiner School, Mycenae House and the flats. Most of the trees would have to be felled.

How Greenwich Women Changed History

2018 marks the centenary of the Representation of the People Act which, after a long struggle, gave the vote to women – but only those with property over the age of 30. This talk by local historian Jane Grant and Ann Dingsdale examines how this great national event grew out of local events. They describe how women in Blackheath and Greenwich as far back as 1866 helped to precipitate a struggle which would last until the modified vote was won in 1918.

Millicent Fawcett’s Statue is to be erected in Parliament Square in April

Architecture talk

Time again for the annual Friends of Blackheath Halls Architecture lecture. Tom Dyckhoff, architecture historian, TV presenter and judge for the Stirling Prize, will discuss his first book, The Age of Spectacle: Adventures in Architecture and the 21st-Century City which examines the modern city, and the brazen architecture that threatens how we live in it.

The lecture is at 7.30 pm on 28th February in Blackheath Halls. Tickets £15 | £10 concs.

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WANTED!

New Trustees for Mycenae House Community Centre

Trustees attend about one evening meeting every two months from 7.30 to 10.00 pm - although we normally finish earlier. If you have the extra time to devote to being a trustee.

+ are interested in extending social interaction within the community
+ are keen to further develop ideas for future continuing success of the centre
+ are a proactive thinker – and respond to messages
+ would be happy to maybe go on a workshop session “how to become a Trustee” hosted by Greenwich Council
+ are computer-literate, or at least are on email

YES? Then this is for you!

Please note: There is no remuneration: we are a charity that has to pay its way (it does have a small annual grant from Greenwich). The staff are really good, and so far it has thrived.

Still interested? Please ring Mark on 8858 1749

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**ENVIRONMENT**

**Calling all drivers: the Rules are a-Changing ... EMILY NORTON**

Air pollution is one of the most significant challenges facing London, affecting the health of all Londoners, transport being the biggest source of damaging emissions.

The recently introduced T-Charge followed by the even tighter ULEZ restrictions coming into operation in April 2019 aims to significantly reduce air pollution in Central London.

The next stage in the Mayor’s ambitious project to tackle air pollution is an extension of the ULEZ restrictions to London suburbs including Greenwich. The first proposed extension in October 2020 would bring in charges for polluting heavy vehicles, anytime, anywhere in London.

The new proposals

In October 2020 it is proposed that all polluting vehicles, including private cars, vans and motorcycles pay a daily charge. Charges would affect all who drive older vehicles 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, 365 days a year, up to but not including the North and South Circulars. This will affect everyone who lives in or visits Westcombe Park.

Hopefully we will all benefit from cleaner air; but those who own petrol cars and small vans registered before 2006 (which do not meet Euro 4 standards), or diesel cars and small vans registered before September 2015 (which do not meet Euro 6 standards), will either have to replace their vehicles before October 2021 or pay a daily charge of £12.50 whenever they are on the road.

The consultation now begins by inviting all who drive older vehicles to participate. The consultation runs until 28 February 2019 and more information can be found at tfl.gov.uk/airquality-consultation. For those who don't have internet access please ask friends, neighbours or the library to help you access it. Alternatively you can write to FREEPOST TFL CONSULTATIONS.

The Westcombe Society Environment Committee will be responding but would like to include the opinions of residents. The following is a list of questions we are asking ourselves, residents may have others to suggest:

- Are the proposals a good idea in principle?
- What about the boundaries? Should the area be smaller or should restrictions on all vehicles be extended to cover the whole of London?
- Is the proposed charging structure fair? Do the proposed charges unfairly penalise those with older vehicles who only drive short distances compared to others? Do the proposed charges unfairly penalise those who may not be able to afford to replace their vehicle or indeed to afford a new enough vehicle at all? Should those who bring polluting vehicles in from outside London pay more than those who live in London? Please let us see your views so we can reflect them in our response to TFL.
- Note also that TFL are keen to point out that using alternative means of transport are also the best ways to cut those dangerous emissions. Contact the WS Environment Committee at the address given on page 4. Note: All petrol and diesel vehicles pollute the air with their emissions. What varies is the level of emissions. Therefore it can be argued that emissions are mileage-related and that charges should be based on mileage driven as well as the level of emissions.

**Silvertown: yet another delay**

The Government has announced a further delay in its decision on TLI’s proposed Silvertown Tunnel in order to assess the impact on the environment and air quality. The final decision is to be announced in May. Promises, promises... Feed up with traffic congestion and delays, supporters of the proposal are desperate for the early decision. Opponents are angry that the alternatives – crossings in Thamesmead and/or Belvedere, were turned down by the Mayor of London.

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**Greenwich Conservation Group: The future?**

The Westcombe Society covers three conservation areas – Westcombe Park, Blackheath, and Greenwich. To some, the rules in conservation areas might seem restrictive. However, they can also be a real help in preserving and protecting the character of local buildings and of the area as a whole, and the Westcombe Society works hard to ensure this is the case. One element to coordinate with other amenity societies, and this function has been facilitated with the enormous help of the Greenwich Conservation Group.

It’s now more than 50 years since the Civic Amenities Act, 1965, promoted the idea of conservation areas and asked local authorities to set up appraisal committees to designate them, identifying them by the special features or characteristics.

In our case, the late Victorian and Edwardian architecture, mature trees, and uncarpeted streetscapes are notable. In addition, Blackheath and Greenwich have many older buildings, including some fine 18th-century architecture, to protect. But the borough of Greenwich disbanded its appraisal committee in the late 1970s.

Why the GCG started

So how does the local authority protect its conservation areas? Part of the answer is the Greenwich Conservation Group. GCG was founded with several members of the appraisal committee, bringing together ward councillors and local amenity groups to meet regularly, discuss, and comment on proposals. It has never closed Eltham, but has, and still does, include Westcombe Park, Blackheath, Charlton, Woolwich, and Greenwich. The group meets monthly at Woolwich Town Hall to share views on planning applications, some of them very major indeed. Its members include architects, planning consultants, archaeologists, and the untrained. All have a strong interest in local building conservation.

Architects can play a major role. The Blackheath Society has two of them on its planning committee, and can call on local professional architects to give advice and comments. The Greenwich Society had until recently the former Chief Planner for Greenwich, John Franklin, and has several local professionals on its planning committee.

The Westcombe Society Environment Committee includes a former planning consultant, an archaeologist, and comments. The Greenwich Society was made up of four members. It's different: Susan's work as chair of the GCG has been invaluable: her ability to translate the group’s comments into precise detailed advice for the council planners and elected members has meant that GCG’s work is taken seriously by the Council.

**Under threat**

Yet GCG is under threat at the moment. While the forum is respected and has some support at council level, it has no official standing, and neither council officers nor elected members are on the committee. As chair, Philip, is stepping down after 20 years of service. As yet, no one has stepped forward to take on that role.

There are other challenges, too. Greenwich has moved away from paper copies of plans, but new technology can make it difficult to compare different elements of a planning application, for instance existing and proposed elevations, side by side. Some development plans are very large and different people might change them, increasing the numbers of structures or decreasing the number of affordable or social housing units. And the GCG needs to maintain a coherent voice, so that its comments continue to carry weight.

The Westcombe Society very much appreciates the GCG’s work. We have a particular reason to be grateful for its influence, because we cover more than one conservation area, and we thank Philip whole-heartedly for his service. Our chair will be working with the Greenwich Society and the other groups to find a way to carry the GCG forward. And the Westcombe Society would be very glad to hear from local people with planning and architectural backgrounds, who might want to join our Environment Committee, to help maintain the local character that helps make this area such a pleasant place.

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