Britain is continuing to carry out tests of self-driving vehicles, but despite mounting concern over safety after a pedestrian was killed by one in the US, Government-backed trials using small autonomous vehicles in Greenwich ended in March amid widespread reports of public unease about the implications for road safety and cybersecurity.

In the so-called GATEWAY project (Greenwich Automated Transport Environment) on Greenwich peninsula, members of the public have been trialling low-speed autonomous pods on pathways and cycle paths. GATEWAY reported that less than half of 1,300 public responses were positive about the new technology, with 46% opposed, or opposed, expressing fears about how driverless vehicles will interact with humans on the roads.

The pods did have one collision during the trials, when it crashed into a barrier with the roads minister, Jesse Norman, aboard. Despite this accident, he has pledged to keep the UK in the vanguard of developing autonomous technology. The government putti the money on this. It would be overwhelming road laws to allow self-driving cars.

Nevertheless, doubts expressed in Greenwich seem well justified. They came in of a self-driving Uber car hitting a woman in Tempe, Arizona – the first time that a self-driving vehicle has killed someone that was not its occupant.

The victim, 49-year-old Elaine Herzberg, was wheeling her bicycle across the road when she was struck by the Volvo; she later died in hospital.

While investigations continue, Uber has suspended its test fleets of self-driving cars across North America. Meanwhile, Jaguar Land Rover, the country’s biggest carmaker, has been carrying out experiments with autonomous cars on roads in the Midlands. In late March, they demonstrated with four uncertain, vehicles’ features, including emergency braking assistance, on urban streets.

Greenwich is expected to allow Ford and Jaguar Land Rover autonomous cars on its streets in the next phase of testing. Meanwhile, Greenwich Airport authority said it would be testing autonomous vehicles to shuttle staff across the airfield, which it said could lead to “an Uber-like service” for ground transport as required. (See also page 4)

Wildlife in Greenwich

Greenwich Wildlife Awareness Group (GWAG) needs your help to raise awareness of our green spaces! People want to know about all the wonderful wildlife in Greenwich, not just in their local park. If we want to protect our open spaces we must make sure people know about them.

As a first step we’ve set up a GWAG Twitter account, @WildGreenwich. There are lots of superb photographs, and really good birders and naturalists in the Borough, and we’d love them to share pictures, records and news.

So far we’ve hardly anything from the south of the Borough – Eltham, Shooters Hill. Where are you all?

The sort of things we want are:

Mary Mills

- Recent wildlife photos taken in the Borough
- Interesting wildlife news or sightings relating to Greenwich.
- Any local special sites and records you are willing to share.
- Details of accessible events, training and courses that could be of interest (not necessarily in Greenwich).

For those who already have a Twitter account (it’s really easy to set one up), please tweet us @WildGreenwich.

If not, send us details in an email to gwagtwitter@gmail.com

Finally, if anyone out there has ideas (and ideally can help!) about other ways of sharing news, please let us know.

The WS hosts local Hustings Event

As the local elections approach in May, the Westcombe Society organised a Local Council Hustings event, at which local people could meet and question some of the candidates for election in our local ward, Blackheath/Westcombe.

The event was held at St George’s Church, courtesy of the Rev Vav Yeager. Among the many issues raised were housing, air pollution local community care – and local shops.

Questions were raised about our local independent traders, who faced crippling rises in business rates and rent, and, with the internet, changes in shopping habits. All the candidates agreed that our local shops were a tremendous community asset: no one wanted empty shops.

Another issue, air pollution, generated much interest; the cruise liner terminal in Enderby Wharf was particular cause for concern.

There were also questions about housing, homelessness, it was pointed out that Greenwich had a very poor record on social and affordable housing compared with other boroughs. Among other issues was the quality of community care: all agreed that in need of this support deserved the best possible service.

On other pages:

- P.2 Community events
- P.3 Local News
- P.4 Features: The future of transport
- P.5 What’s on
- P.6 News: How to be happy, & Greenwich’s Guerrilla Garden
- P.7 Environment: The Cruise Liner Terminal; Trouble in the Foot Tunnel; The scandal of police housing
- P.8 Marketplace

Westcombe Society Annual General Meeting

Friday May 11th at 7.30 pm, in The Centenary Room, Blackheath High School for Girls, Vanbrugh Park by kind permission of the Head, Mrs Carol Chandler-Thompson.

Your chance to hear what’s going on – and to elect a new committee.

The meeting will include a short talk from the Friends of Greenwich Park. All this and Wine & Nibbles!

Nominations for new committee members welcome.

The May 2018 election candidates are listed below in alphabetical order:

Allman, Trevor William (Independent Monster Raving Loony Party)*
Badrinath, Usha (Liberal Democratic Party) Brighty, Geoff (Conservative Party)*
Fletcher, Lou (Labour & Co-operative Party)*
Lalavar, Mariam (Labour & Co-operative Party)*
Mackers, Joanne (Green Party)*
Miller, Suzanne June (Liberal Democratic Party)
Moir, Fiona Charlotte (Green Party)*
Ramee, Victoria Tracy (Green Party)
Reid, Malcolm (Conservative Party)*
Shukrad, Sallya (Labour & Co-operative Party)*
Stevens, Franklin Mosley (Independent Democratic Party)*
Turrell, Thomas (Conservative Party)*
* Present at the Hustings

P.8 Marketplace

Westcombe News

Free to 3800 homes, in libraries and some shops May 2018 No. 4

A community newspaper commended by the London Forum of Amnesty & Civic Societies

Do driverless cars: cleaner, safer?

Wandering Loony Party)*
Find out what’s happening at our AGM!

Friday May 11th at 7.30 pm.
In The Centenary Room,
Blackheath High School for Girls,
Vauxhall Park
by kind permission of the Head

AGENDA
1 Welcome, and apologies for absence
2 Minutes of last AGM and matters arising
3 Brief reports:
   • Chairman
   • Events Ctte
   • Environment Ctte
   • Westcombe News
4 Tenders for repayment & presentation of audited accounts
5 Election of new committee
6 Charity of the year 2017 - 2018
7 Any other business
8 A representative of the Friends of Greenwich Park will give a short talk about the Park.
9 Wine and nibbles.

The Westcombe Society’s Queen Elizabeth’s Birthday Tea for Senior Citizens took place under sunny sky (at last!) in April; over 40 guests enjoyed a slap-up tea. The guests included a bouquet (bouquet) from St George’s Church. Surely they didn’t nick all those cakes? Shock, horror!

No, the editor ran out of space for the photo, so weeshopped the cake stand onto their table.

Many thanks to all who made and served the tea, and the did the washing up!

But the star of the tea was Grace (B) (above, right). Our youngest volunteer with probably our most senior guest.

The Men in Sheds Project and its sister Women in Sheds is an inspirational community project set up to help men and women over fifty become involved in woodworking, and to gain new skills and new friends.

Comments received from the Repair Cafe include “Please advertise this project in Catford and Lewisham too”, “Excellent Community Resources which helped me to understand the problem with the radio and how it could be upcycled”, and “Fab for the Shed and the Community.”

We have already heard from those in the community who saw the Repair Cafe repeated. Watch Myocene House on social media for a repeat performance.

Deliver us from Temptation (& Gluttony!)

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WANTED! More volunteers to distribute the FN – and to help with Westcombe Society’s community events. Please phone 020 8853 2756 if you would like to help.

WESTCOMBE SOCIETY MEMBERSHIP

Please send this membership form to: Christine Loe, 49 Myocene Road, London, SE3 7SJ.

Name______________________________
Address______________________________
Tel______________________________
Email______________________________

Please enclose payment as appropriate:

Family Membership £12 [ ]
Individual Membership £8 [ ]
Senior Citizens/unemployed £4 [ ]

SUPPORT

For all your home & business needs, call 020 8858 2002 for free advice
headstart IT Solutions

Westcombe News May 2018
LITTERBUG!

This litter was tipped (near a bin!) at the junction of St John's Park and Vanbrugh Park from a white SUV (reg. no. E60XL). The vehicle then sped off.

This shameful episode is a reminder that increased fines for 'litter louts' have now come into effect. Fines up to £150 per incident can be set by the Council and vehicle owners can be fined even if it is a passenger who does the littering.

Littering is a blight on our environment and cleaning it up costs the Council thousands of pounds – money which is needed for other community services.

Hats off to the volunteers who regularly pick litter from the heath and to those civic-minded residents who pick up discarded cans etc when they are out and about doing everyday activities. They are unusual heroes and heroines.

250 years of Circus

If you listened to the BBC’s Woman’s Hour on Easter Monday, you would have heard that it came from Zippos’ Circus in Blackheath. Those interviewed claimed that circus acts were both an art form – and also, for some people, even a form of therapy, too, as they discovered skills they did not know they had.

Celebrating the 250th anniversary of circus entertainment, Zippos’ Circus this year pays homage to Englishman and impresario Philip Astley. Fittingly, the man who invented circus in 1768 set up his first circus not far from Blackheath.

The circus, which came to Blackheath this Easter, showed the amazing horse acts which thrilled people back in Georgian times – acts that are now performed by master equestrians The Khadikov Riders.

There was of course clowning fun – from Totti and his wife Charlotte, the brilliant comicacrobat Paolo Dott Santa, and some might have wanted to close their eyes as daredevil Pablo straddled a dazzling space rocket; as well as Cuban acrobats the Hermansito Troupe, who showed off their springboard and Russian Bar skills, and foot juggling from Romy. “Perhaps most daring of all was Alex Michael, the fearless Brazilian aerialist who swung and walked upside down 30 feet above the audience with no safety nets or wires. It was all presented by ringmaster Norman Barrett MBE, with his colourful fun-loving budgies, always a big hit!”

Paw note: Lion taming in circuses has now been banned, even though the 2007 Radford Report, found no evidence that “the welfare of animals kept in travelling circuses is any better or worse than that of animals that are kept in other captive environments”. What do readers think?

Whoever heard of a Knitathon?
Deborah Fitzpatrick

Mycenae House held a knitathon on the 5th April. It was a great treat to see our local community supporting us in knitting flowers like the Yorkshire Poppies (Right) for Dementia Action Week. We even have somebody knitting for us in Oz!

The Bexley Ukulele Group kindly played for us at the event. The knitathon was a chance for our community to get together to join in with a knitting project with Mycenae House, The Alzheimer’s Society and the Beckenham Court Care Home.

The flowers will be ‘yarnbombed’ in a secret location during Dementia Action Week at the end of May. We are still asking for knitters to join in and knit and ask for us from home.

This project is part of Mycenae House Reach Out Project designed to tackle and reduce social isolation.

Community groups win grants

The winners in Area 1:

* Greenwich Cooperative Development Agency for its Woolwich Digital Inclusion Programme;
* the Big Red Bus Club Charlton to replace windows at Charlton under-tives Play Centre;
* Greenwich & Lewisham Young People’s Theatre to develop and sustain Woolwich community and carnival projects.

The next round is in the autumn. Meanwhile, local amenity societies have been meeting to review the process, for example by making it more accessible for ‘hard to reach groups’, and hope to meet local officers and councillors in order to suggest ways in which it can be improved.

Any comments or suggestions from readers would be very helpful in order to ensure that these funds are made available as widely as possible.

Living in London: Five artists explore the city and its people.

Cristiana Angeline, Irene Butcher, Terry Scales, Graham Smith and Peter Teyney are exhibiting their art in West Greenwich Library, 145 Greenwich High Road, SE10 until 26th May. Terry Scales told the WN: “When the Library’s future was in doubt, a number of local poets and painters mounted a campaign to save it. Fortunately, the Council saw sense, and kept our Grade II listed building, with its three superb cupolas.

From Lingerie to lingering over a pint

Most of us have our own favourite local pub, whether it be the Royal Standard, the British Oak, the Vanbrugh, the Plume of Feathers or The Penfold.

Ever thought of looking further afield for time to time? For those real ale and cider-loving readers of the WN who haven’t yet to discover the delights of The River Ale House it is time to pay 131 Woolwich Road a visit.

Trevor Puddifoot, 65, decided to reopen the former lingerie and hosierly business in a rather different format last September – having already spent over 20 years at the premises. Trevor, from Charlton, took inspiration from the opening of The Long Pond, the other Greenwich Borough micropub, in Etham in 2014.

With an ever-changing line-up of up to ten ales and ten ciders from independent brewers and cidermakers around the UK, along with a small wine list and extensive gin list, drinkers can avail themselves of artisan-made sausage rolls and scoot eggs in an environment free of loud music, sports TV and fruit machines.

The pub has a very local flavour, is dog-friendly, and is now a firm favourite of many from the surrounding area and beyond. A perfect place to go for a chat or to delve into a newspaper or a laptop.

Exposed brickwork and furniture and fittings made from scaffolding boards complete the relaxed atmosphere and with a highly competitive price list and Camra discount available, drinkers can afford to push the boat out just a little more.

Community groups win grants
Blackheath’s Miss Marple

Alice Castle grew up in Beaconsfield Road and went to school at Invicta, Sheringham and then Haberdasher’s Aske’s Hatcham Girls’ School. Alice has been giving a talk on her successful series of whodunits at Dulwich Books on 18th April as part of the Dulwich Festival Artists’ Open House, and at the Greenwich Centre library on 23rd April.

Her cozy crime murder mysteries, Death in Dulwich and The Girl in the Gallery, are set just around the south circular in SE21, following Alice’s experience of living in the area while her children were younger.

Her books have topped the best seller charts in the UK, US, Canada, France, Germany and Spain, as well as being firmly in the top ten in Dulwich’s own charts in the UK, US, Canada, France, Germany and Spain, as well as being firmly in the top ten in Dulwich’s own charts in the area while her children were younger.

Her books have topped the best seller charts in the UK, US, Canada, France, Germany and Spain, as well as being firmly in the top ten in Dulwich’s own charts in the area while her children were younger. Unfortunately the Blackheath Bookshop is unable to stock the book as it is part of Waterstones and doesn’t support small publishers.

‘I realised that Dulwich, with its white picket fences, village atmosphere and expensive schools and houses, was quite similar to Agatha Christie’s St Mary Mead, where Miss Marple does such a great job of solving impossible crimes,’ says Alice, who still lives in Blackheath, and hasn’t ruled out setting future books in the Westcombe area.

‘I wanted a small, closed setting for my single mum amateur sleuth, Beth Haklaine, but also wanted to include challenging contemporary themes as well as in all the complexities and pressures that London life generates.’

Alice is also giving a talk, signing and selling books on 12th/13th and 19th/20th May at Dulwich Books. Her next book in the London Murder Mystery series is Calamity in Camberwell, which will be published on 15th August, followed by Homicide in Herne Hill later this year. The books, published by Crooked Cat under her pen-name Alice Castle are available from Village Books, Dulwich Books, Herne Hill Books, Clapham Books and The Bookseller Crew, as well as Amazon.

The Future of Transport in Greenwich

Greenwich plays host to around 85,000 work-related passenger journeys each morning and evening. 62,000 of these daily commutes are made by motor vehicles; the other 73,000 are made via public transport. Situated close to strategic assets such as the Blackwall Tunnel, the Borough also sees a considerable number of journeys transiting through on a daily basis. Over one billion vehicle kilometres are travelled by motor vehicles each year in the Borough.

Greenwich is also one of London’s “Growth Boroughs” and is expecting the current population of around 275,000 to rise by a third by 2028.

As the population increases so will the pressure on the Borough’s physical and digital infrastructure. Understanding the requirements for future service delivery is essential if these services are to be resilient, especially when bandwidth requirements will vary dramatically at key times of the day and throughout the year.

The role of CAVs (Connected and Autonomous Vehicles) will help people who are unable to operate a vehicle: children, individuals with visual impairments, many seniors and others with health issues or disabilities.

This means that people of all ages will be able to maintain a level of mobility, irrespective of their ability to drive. The following table shows current population figures and projections for the Royal Borough of Greenwich:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age Band</th>
<th>2015 Population</th>
<th>2030 Population</th>
<th>Increase %</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0 – 3</td>
<td>18,120</td>
<td>19,780</td>
<td>9.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 – 15</td>
<td>41,940</td>
<td>50,750</td>
<td>21.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16 – 64</td>
<td>186,070</td>
<td>224,180</td>
<td>20.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>65 – 84</td>
<td>24,840</td>
<td>36,260</td>
<td>45.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>85+</td>
<td>3,220</td>
<td>5,970</td>
<td>56.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All People</td>
<td>274,800</td>
<td>336,940</td>
<td>22.6%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As the table indicates, with increasing life expectancies, the greatest percentage increases are expected in the older age cohorts, and is a UK-wide trend: health issues may prevent older people from driving or using public transport. A report (2015) by the International Longevity Foundation and Age-UK concluded that many over 65s will find it difficult or very difficult to travel to hospital or their GPs.

CAVs are therefore held to be a door-to-door service that could connect house-bound citizens with family, friends, the health service and the local economy, enabling a better quality of life, prolonging the citizen’s independence and returning dignity to the individual.

CAVs will affect transport use in four key ways:

1. Microtransit: ‘Last mile / first mile’ passenger shuttles connecting users to high capacity transport links. Significant con- gestion is caused by motorists trying to reach (and park near) main transport hubs.


3. Accessibility: the use of shuttles by non-drivers and the mobility impaired.

4. Parking: CAVs coupled with shared services will have a positive impact. The vision for CAV usage in Greenwich is not to replace or compete with mass transit solutions such as tubes, trains and buses, but to facilitate greater demand for public transport through the provision of first / last few mile connectivity. CAVs will provide segments to journeys where there is no public transport equivalent, or where levels of demand do not support an economically viable service.

In Greenwich, this will mean that on demand CAVs will connect seamlessly with Crossrail, Rail, DLR, Tube, riverboat services and buses, providing transport to onward local destinations ranging from entertainment venues, retail areas, doctor’s surgeries and hospitals.
WHAT'S ON

ARTS

BLACKHEATH HALLS
23, Lee Road SE3 9BQ Box Office 020 8463 8100 www.trinitylondon.ac.uk
The Hall's will be closed from April to October 2018 for renovation work. Events will continue throughout this period at various venues:
• WED 09 JUL 20h in the PEACOCK ROOM
• KING CHARLES COURT Royal Opera House singers perform Will Songs from Illeanicus Ludovici, Wagner Wesendonck Lieder and Butterworth Broden Hill and other songs
• 29 MAY 10h. SHERINGTON CHILDREN'S CENTER BLACKHEATH HALLS ORCHESTRA: Opera Greats; 2 Boccherini; Mozart & Wagner performed by our very own community orchestra with award-winning sopranos Raphaela Patschke £12 /£10 concessions / £12 concessions 6.50pm beigne (12)

THURSDAYS AT ST ALFEGE’s
Free concerts by Trinity Laban students at 1.00pm every Thursday in May.
OLD ROYAL NAVAL COLLEGE CHAPEL
Free concerts at 1.45pm: Fri 11th May, Tue 15th May, Tue 22nd May, Fri 29th June

SOUTH & OTHER CREATIONS
NEW! MEETINGS AT ROYAL KENSINGTON SUNDAYS
More to be announced - please check our website

FREE TIME

MEYNGHACH HALLS by Mark Hill. “The talk will be an exploration of the different meanings of the word value are con -

GLOAG and Robin Thomas. FREE.
www.selondondads.org.uk

TY All welcome

Australia and the Space Rabbit
around the world. Why does a red toadstool have white

book by Sebastian Faulks. Tickets £8.00

THEATRE

THE GUT GIRLS May 3rd - 4th
A gritty yet heart-warming look at
come along – there is no need to book. FREE

THE ICONOCLASTS May 28th - 29th
8th - 12th May
SECRET LIFE OF HUMANS
WORLD
gutting sheds of Deptford’s Foreign Cattle Market.
enchanted forest where sprites lurk and fairies rule.
night, four young lovers find themselves in an

by William Shakespeare On a Midsummer’s

by Dave Silk featuring saxo-

us of slow-tempo, contemporary music. £30

the nation’s past and forecast a future in an every-

to a producer-writer wanting to turn their beloved Chip Shop into posh apartments. Tickets £8.00

THE MIDSUMMER NIGHT’S DREAM by William Shakespeare On a Midsummer’s

Boulangerie Jade is now in your

Come in and curate your

French bakery offering lovely
Breakfast and Brunch. We also have amazing cakes for all occasions!

Come and visit us at 4 Vanbrugh Park from 8.00am to 6.00pm & 9.00am to 5.00pm on Saturday.

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 GREENWICH DECORATIVE & FINE ARTS Society in Gilbert and Sullivan and the different meanings of the word value are con -

Theatre Hall’s at the Old Bakehouse
Thursday Fri 25th May 6.00pm Empire in Breitrat: VICTOR BILMER-THOMAS talks on this book A public and an international authority Victor Bilmer-

BARGAIN day sees sales go on in the Old Bakehouse
Blackheath
Saturday May 11th
10am - 4.00pm Art & Craft Sale, and Book sale in the Old Bakehouse Fri 25th May 11.00am Free Lieder concert

Liederbuch, Wagner Wesendonck Lieder and
KING CHARLES COURT Royal Opera House

KING CHARLES COURT Royal Opera House

June 11th, 18th & 25th.

Liederbuch, Wagner Wesendonck Lieder and

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OLD ROYAL NAVAL COLLEGE CHAPEL
Free concerts at 1.45pm: Fri 11th May, Tue 15th May, Tue 22nd May, Fri 29th June

SHERINGTON CHILDREN’S CENTRE, Tel. 0208 -856 -3001 Mulberry Tea Rooms

Beating the chips are posh apartments. Tickets £8.00

THE MIDSUMMER NIGHT’S DREAM by William Shakespeare On a Midsummer’s

Boulangerie Jade is now in your

Come in and curate your

French bakery offering lovely
Breakfast and Brunch. We also have amazing cakes for all occasions!

Come and visit us at 4 Vanbrugh Park from 8.00am to 6.00pm & 9.00am to 5.00pm on Saturday.

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June 11th, 18th & 25th.

KING CHARLES COURT Royal Opera House

June 11th, 18th & 25th.
grounds continue to enjoy the garden, and no Community Garden would dominate the world.

The Secret Life of Humans

One of the few recent books that everyone should read is Yuval Noah Harari’s ‘The Dawn of Human Kind’. For him, history began around 70,000 years ago, when our species Homo overwhelmed the other species, such as the Neanderthal, and began to dominate the world.

This was when we developed speech, which in turn enabled us to form and organise larger social groups: from community to clan, to tribe, to nation state, and even the modern Western economy. Harari’s book was the inspiration for David Byrne’s play ‘The Secret Life of Humans’. Byrne imagines how in 1949, Dr Jacob Bronowski, renowned scientist and broadcaster who made in the 70s a great TV series ‘The Ascent of Man’, installs a secret room in his house. Fifty years later his grandson discovers his secrets, unearthing echoes from across six million years of human history, told from the perspective of the Twentieth Century, a century in which every year is a revolutionary year . . .

The Secret Life of Humans is a mind-boggling host of tips, and here is a selection of them. To find out more, read the book!

Readers’ Forum

What makes you happy? Is there a recipe – or at least, do you have strategies for feeling happier that you would like to share with our readers? Please send them in to the editor. Who knows, it might make you happier!

SUSAN CLARK INTERIORS

Be kind. Because the science of positive psychology tells us what we already knew, that the quickest way to make yourself feel good is to do a good deed for someone else.

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Website: johndarnfurniture.co.uk
Tel 0208 852 3047 or 07837 859763

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email: enquiries@grant-saw.co.uk
website: www.grantsaw.co.uk

HELPING YOU PLAN YOUR FUTURE

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WESTCOMBE NEWS MAY 2018
Cruise liner campaign kicks off

Local people from both sides of the River Thames joined forces to re-ignite the campaign against the plans for London City Cruise Port.

In 2015, Greenwich Council finally approved plans which will see cruise ships permanently running their diesel engines whilst docked at Enderby Wharf.

Just one ship emits the same amount of toxic diesel fumes as 688 lorries. There are signs that developers have got cold feet amid delays, making it all the more vital to increase pressure on the people behind the unpopular project.

Residents have been campaigning against the plans over the past three years with the support of local MP Matthew Pennycook. Their key objection is that the ships will have free rein to burn 700 litres of unfiltered diesel fuel an hour in an area that already exceeds legal pollution limits.

There are 12 schools within half a mile of the proposed site and thousands of homes including new riverside apartments. Campaigners say that the pollution problem could be solved if ships plugged in to a clean onshore power supply, as cruise ships can to other major cities including Los Angeles, New York and Amsterdam.

Greenwich council maintains installing shore side power would be too complex and expensive, although it estimates the cost of shore side power would be too complex and expensive, although it estimates the terminal could bring in £25 million per year.

Campaigners have calculated the cost of the required infrastructure to be around £6 million, which they argue is a small price to pay for peoples' health.

Moreover, under UK law an alternative to burning diesel fuel in port will have to be found by 2025, making the port in its current form unusable.

The terminal – which is expected to host 55 ship visits per year – will be paid for by the construction of 477 new homes, but as Ralph Hardwick, local campaigner, says: “Who would want to live on Star Street by a cruise port with ships belching out toxic fumes?”

The land, owned by Morgan Stanley, is currently being marketed for £50 million by JLL. As reported in last month’s WN, Barratt London, the main developer for the housing, is not involved in the crucial second phase of development.

Even so, Daniel Hayes, Chair of East Greenwich Residents’ Association, EGRA, says: “Although the future of the cruise port is looking more precarious, the danger is still there. It doesn’t mean the end of the fight. The support we have had so far shows that passions are still running high against the terminal.”

Over the next few months campaigners will run events highlighting the cruise port issues. They continue their dialogue with the Mayor’s and Michael Gove’s offices and will ask to meet the Greenwich Council leadership after the local elections.

A petition against the terminal which has already raised over 4,500 signatures Contact: Laura Eynes 07985 487765
www.notoxiccruiseship.london /@toxiccruiseship

Police flats: arrested development

Greenwich police station is to be demolished; it is an ugly building, and few will regret its passing on aesthetic grounds – though no one (except villains) likes to lose a cop shop.

However, the WN has learnt that the police owned fifteen three-bedroom flats behind it, also to be demolished. These flats have stood empty for the last eleven years.

“This is quite shocking,” said local resident Tony Othen. “Those flats could have housed fifteen families. Not only that – the lights were on in them every night!”

The WN finds this very shocking, too, indeed, scandalous. The council has said that the flats were police property, and the council had no jurisdiction over them. But wouldn’t it have been possible to carry out a compulsory purchase order?

Slow progress on the foot tunnels

The Greenwich and Woolwich tunnels are an important part of the transport network; over 3,000 people pass through them daily, and the traffic is growing. Users are roughly split evenly between cyclists and walkers and for both they are practically the only fixed river crossings east of Tower Bridge. (That is, unless you choose to be asphyxiated by fumes in the Rotherhithe Tunnel.)

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The inaugural meeting of FOGWOFT in 2013 was held to persuade Greenwich Council to finish a botched but well-meaning refurbishment, including new lifts and lights.

FOGWOFT’s online survey to assess attitudes to the vexed question of cyclists racing through both tunnel assets showed that the majority of nearly 300 respondents were in favour of allowing permission for considerate cycling (almost 60% over 24 hours plus 9% during the night only). The problem is how to police “considerate use”. To deal with this problem, the Council launched a hi-tech sign system that allowed cycling when traffic was low and banned it when high.

This system was tried out in early 2016. It was bedevilled by teething problems and by confusion among all users. Worse still, the outdated byelaw (of 1915 vintage) controlling cycling with a 20 shilling fine (remember those?) remained in force.

FOGWOFT asked for the technical trial to be suspended until a new byelaw was drafted and processed. This is the current situation. However, processing the new byelaw, fixing fines up to £200, is very slow. It is stuck with the lawyers of three councils (Greenwich, Tower Hamlets and Newham) and will still need to be agreed by the Secretary of State after a public consultation.

In the meantime FOGWOFT continue to look at a future trial of the system. We have already drafted terms of reference to evaluate a trial, to which the Council has agreed. In the meantime the old ban on any cycling continues and we hope the old signs indicating such may be refreshed.

More immediately there have been serious problems with the Greenwich tunnel lifts and with lighting and electricity supply. These have shown that the tunnels are still bedevilled by the poor project management of the last refurbishment, a failure highlighted by the Wilmot Report (commissioned by Greenwich Council in 2012).

FOGWOFT has asked for a new scrutiny of the ongoing management of tunnel assets. All present at the recent AGM felt that serious problems persist and we need a thorough review. Our important and almost unique tunnel盯着 deserve no less.

Visit: www.fogwoft.com/events