



# Westcombe NEWS

Free to 3800 homes, in libraries and some shops

May 2018 No. 4



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

## Driverless cars: cleaner, safer? WN Reporter

Britain is continuing to carry out tests of self-driving cars on public roads 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 those uncertain, 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 recently confirmed it would be overhauling road laws to include self-driving cars.

Nevertheless, the doubts expressed in Greenwich seemed justified as reports came in of a self-driving Uber car killing 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 some of the 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, Gatwick Airport announced it would be testing autonomous vehicles to shuttle staff across the airfield, which it said could lead to "an Uber-like service" for ground staff to use as required.

(See also page 4.)



Last year, this prototype shuttle began driverless navigation of a 2km route around the Greenwich Peninsula. Travelling at 10mph, it used advanced sensors to detect and avoid obstacles whilst carrying members of the public participating in the research study. Is this the vehicle of the future? The chancellor, Philip Hammond, has promised driverless cars on the road by 2021. But Noel Sharkey, emeritus professor of artificial intelligence at the University of Sheffield, said: "Autonomous vehicles present us with a great future opportunity to make our roads safer. But the technology is just not ready yet and needs to mature before it goes on the road. Too many mistakes and the public may turn its back on the technology." For a report on some of the ramifications, please see page 4.

## 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 Yim 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, and 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 those in need of this support deserved the best possible service.

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

**Allman, Trevor William** (Official Monster Raving Loony Party)\*  
**Badrinath, Usha** (Liberal Democrat Party)  
**Brighty, Geoff** (Conservative Party)\*  
**Fletcher, Leo** (Labour & Co-operative Party)\*  
**Lolavar, Mariam** (Labour & Co-operative Party)\*  
**Mathers, Jannet** (Green Party)\*  
**Miller, Suzanne Jane** (Liberal Democrat Party)  
**Moore, Fiona Charlotte** (Green Party)\*  
**Rance, Victoria Tracy** (Green Party)  
**Reid, Malcolm** (Conservative Party)\*  
**Shahzad, Sabiha** (Labour & Co-operative Party)\*  
**Steves, Franklin Moseley** (Liberal Democrat Party)  
**Turrell, Thomas** (Conservative Party)\*  
\* Present at the Hustings

### On other pages:

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## Wildlife in Greenwich

Mary Mills

Greenwich Wildlife Awareness Group (GWAG) need you all to help 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 photographers, and really good birders and naturalists in the Borough, and we'd love them to share pictures, records and news.

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

The sort of things we want are:

- \* Recent wildlife photos taken in the borough.
  - \* Interesting wildlife news or sightings relating to Greenwich.
  - \* Any local species lists and records you are willing to share.
  - \* Details of accessible events, training and courses which 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](mailto:gwagtwitter@gmail.com)**  
**Finally, if anyone out there has ideas (and ideally can help!) about other ways of sharing news, please let us know.**



## Newsbriefs



### Cladding wars

A judge has suggested that leaseholders in flats where cladding is a problem should consider suing:

- \* the central government which writes the building regulations;
- \* local councils which operate building control;
- \* the builder, or the cladding manufacturer.

Meanwhile, Galliard, the developer that built 1000 homes in Greenwich, is taking to court the National House Building Council (the warranty & insurance provider) over the £40m bill.

Not reassuring for the residents whose apartments are no longer worth what they cost, and paying for fire wardens, as work is put on hold.

### Too hard to loos

Following the April Fool in last month's *WN*, truth really is stranger than fiction: there is a real discussion about what to do about the ex-public loos in the Standard, but there is just one small problem: no one knows who owns the loos. To whom do they belong?

Please contact the *WN* if you have lost a loo.

### Bombs in Woolwich?

In preparation for upgrading the Woolwich ferry terminal, the bottom of the Thames has been searched for unexploded WWII bombs in case some remained undiscovered.

As well as upgrading the terminal, TfL has plans for a new generation of state-of-the-art ferries; the current ferries are some 50 years old. That's the good news: the bad news is that they are being built in Polish shipyards.

### Calling all gardeners: for Peat's Sake

Spring has come late this year, and it is a truth universally acknowledged that this is the time when one's fancy lightly turns to thoughts of – gardening. Gardeners are urged to pause before they buy that bag of peat.

Peatlands are endangered habitats that absorb greenhouse gases; they also support plants and animals that cannot survive in any other habitat. Why not try a peat-free compost such as Sylva Grow, which comes in a handy 15 litres bag, easy to lug home.

Reach for your trowels, everyone!

### Borough's Civic Awards

Among the Royal Borough's nominations this year is Philip Binns, following his retirement as a key member of the Greenwich Conservation Group – and his membership of the Blackheath Society Management Committee.

Among others listed are Sue Redford, for her services to Blackheath Boys Brigade since 1975 and her work for the Greenwich Winter Night Shelter. Also nominated are Alan Robinson, one of the founders of the Greenwich Foodbank; and local artist Peter Kent, who is well-known for his highly creative depictions of Greenwich and London. The Priory Players won this year's "Royal Greenwich Civic Award in Arts and Entertainment" for outstanding contribution to arts and entertainment. And Ottie and the Bea won the Independent Retailer Award at the inaugural Royal Greenwich Business Awards. Well done, Julia Marsen. Richly deserved.

### Floods of cheers

for the young people who took part in *Noye's Fludde* in Blackheath Halls.

## 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.





# COMMUNITY

## WESTCOMBE NEWS

### ALL EDITORIAL CORRESPONDENCE TO:

**Neville Grant**, Editor  
wnews@westcombesociety.org  
Tel. 020 8858 8489

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

**Deadline for the June issue:** 16th May  
**Environment Editor:** Maggie Gravelle  
**Sub-editor:** Annie Grey  
**Reporters:** The community – that means you!

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

**DISTRIBUTION** Emily Norton and volunteers.

*Volunteer distributors please phone 020 8853 2756, we need your help!*

**ADVERTISING MANAGER**  
**Marilyn Little**, 163 Westcombe Hill, SE3 7DP 020 8853 1312  
Advertising@westcombesociety.org

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*To access back-numbers (in colour) go to:  
www.westcombesociety.org/westcombe-news/  
Westcombe Society's Blog:  
http://westcombe.blogspot.com*

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

### WESTCOMBE SOCIETY MEMBERSHIP

**Please send this membership form to:**  
**Christine Legg**, 69 Mycenae Road, London, SE3 7SE

Name.....

Address.....

Tel.....

Email: .....

*Please enclose payment as appropriate:*

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Individual Membership	£8	[ ]
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## Find out what's happening at our AGM!

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

### AGENDA

- 1 Welcome, and apologies for absence
- 2 Minutes of last AGM & matters arising
- 3 Brief reports:
  - \* Chairman
  - \* Events Cttee
  - \* Environment Cttee
  - \* Westcombe News
- 4 Treasurer's report & 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.
- 7 Wine and nibbles.

## The atmosphere was *Electric!*



**Deborah Fitzpatrick**

**M**ycenae House & Age UK Bromley & Greenwich (Men in Sheds) staged a pilot "Repair Cafe" on 21st March. Our Women in Sheds and Men in Sheds both helped on the day. Both the mobile sheds are based every Wednesday at Mycenae House.

What a fun atmosphere it was on the day. Volunteers from the Restart Project, the Essential Handyman, other shedders from Men in Sheds, Women in Sheds as well as individual volunteers gave up their free time to help the local community fix their items such as an heirloom lamp, watches, phones, crockery and a retro radio, which generated great interest.

The Repair Cafe and Women and Men in Sheds are part of Mycenae Reach Out Project to tackle social isolation.

The volunteers benefited from social interaction, and felt that it was a great opportunity to become involved in activities that supported them too.

## Egg-cellent Egg hunt

**Marilyn Little**

**A**nother very enjoyable Easter Egg Hunt despite grey skies for most of the afternoon, although we did see the sun for a few moments. Numerous eggs were found and exchanged for chocolate eggs.

There were very many hunters, and some of whom had made amazing hats and baskets. Our face-painter was kept busy, and the homemade cakes were popular as was the Tombola. Many thanks to the families from Westcombe Hill who set up and ran the event so successfully.

## Deliver us from Temptation (& Gluttony!)



PHOTO & CAKE-NICKER: Neville Grant

The Westcombe Society's Queen Elizabeth's Birthday Tea for Senior Citizens took place on a sunny day (at last!) in April: over 40 guests enjoyed a slap-up tea. The guests included a cohort (*above*) 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 he photoshopped the cake stand onto their table.

Many thanks to all who made and served the tea, and did the washing up! But the star of the tea was Grace (8) (*above, right*) Our youngest volunteer with probably our most senior guest.

PHOTO: Di Blackwell



Grace helped J-J with the raffle, handing out Prizes, and also helped by offering cakes and sandwiches.

Even when our guests were full up they couldn't resist taking a cake from Grace!

## Letters



Any views expressed are not necessarily those of either the Westcombe Society, or the Westcombe News.

**From: Eimear Mallen** **Kirkside Road**  
Every year Oxleas NHS asks for nominations for "Team of the Year" in each of its seven directorates. Patients, carers, volunteers, members, partner-organisations and members of staff, are asked to nominate a team that they consider has done outstandingly good work in the past year, and this process culminates in an annual awards ceremony.

It's a great idea, and it's also a mark of good governance for any organisation that has a way of recognising quality and commitment in its teams of workers.

Following the suggestion in last month's *WN* that Oxleas should recognise the valuable work done by community organisations and charities that offer support in the field of community health, wouldn't it be a good idea for Oxleas to have a special award category for such groups each year?

Public recognition of the work being done by such organisations as Greenwich CRUSE, MIND, the Mental Health Activity Trust and Mumsaid – there is a number of others that also do good work – would mean a great deal to the volunteers who work for them, and the people that they serve.

Admittedly, this would be no substitute for even a small financial grant from Oxleas – though simply being nominated would assist fundraising.

### Volunteers become Mr (& Mrs) Fix-Its!

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 would like the Repair Cafe repeated. Watch Mycenae House on social media for a repeat performance.

PHOTOS: Simon Nichols



'I'm sure there's one here somewhere ...'

## COCKAPOO HANGOUT

The Dog Society GB present

THE COCKAPOO CANINE CAPERS HANGOUT  
SATURDAY 12TH MAY 2018  
1-3PM  
GREENWICH PARK  
Meeting at The Bandstand!

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# LOCAL NEWS

## 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 unsung heroes and heroines.



Dog fouling on pavements is another shameful blight on our community and there has been a noticeable rise recently. This also carries a fine. It is very inconsiderate, and scooters, buggies and children are particularly prone to its offensive (and dangerous) consequences.

**Do readers have any suggestions? Is it time for spraying stencilled 'Clean it up' notices on our pavements?**

## 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 Sun in the Sands or The Plume of Feathers.

Ever thought of looking further afield from time to time? For those real ale and cider-loving readers of the *WN* who have 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 hosiery 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 Eltham in 2014.

With an ever-changing line-up of up to ten real ales and ten ciders from independent brewers and cidemakers



around the UK, along with a small wine list and extensive gin list, drinkers can avail themselves of artisan-made sausage rolls and scotch 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.

## 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 Zippo's 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, Zippo's 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 comic acrobat Paulo Dos Santos, 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?**

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## Whoever heard of a Knitathon? Deborah Fitzpatrick



Mycenae House held a knitathon on 5th April. It was a great turnout with 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 Rectory Court Care home.

The flowers will be 'yarnbombed' in a secret location during Dementia Action Week at the end of May 2018. We are still asking for knitters to join and sit and knit for us from home.

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

Everyone had a good time, and ended up dancing to the Ukelele Orchestra!



**Flowers to be sent to Reach Out Project at Mycenae House, 90 Mycenae Road, Blackheath, SE3 7SE by 14th May. Knitting pattern available on request.**

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

Cristiana Angelini, Irene Butcher, Terry Scales, Graham Smith and Peter Tingey 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.



"And it's not just a library! Each year those of us around at the time mount an exhibition of our work. I enclose an image from the show – one of a series I did of London dockers."



# FEATURES

## Blackheath's Miss Marple



Alice Castle grew up in Beaconsfield Road and went to school at Invicta, Sherington and then Haberdashers' 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 bookshops. 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 Haldane, but also wanted to include challenging contemporary themes as well as to 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 13th 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 Crow, as well as Amazon.**

## The Future of Transport in Greenwich

Edited extracts from the ATLAS Project report: *Benefits and Use Cases Prepared for: ATLAS Project* by Heather Yedigiaroff and Phil Williams Nov. 2017. The report discusses the role in the future of 'Connected & Autonomous Vehicles.' (CAVs)



Are driverless buses like this the answer to our transport problems?

Greenwich plays host to around 135,000 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 kilometers 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

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:

Age Band (Years)	2015 Population	2030 Population	Increase %
0 – 3	18,120	19,780	9.2%
4 – 15	41,940	50,750	21.0%
16 – 64	186,070	224,180	20.5%
65 – 84	24,840	36,260	45.9%
85+	3,820	5,970	56.1%
All People	274,800	336,940	22.6%

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 therefore hold the keys to 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 congestion is caused by motorists trying to reach (and park near) main transport hubs.)
- 2. Logistics:** the use of autonomous vehicles for logistics and deliveries. The report sees a role for local deliveries. Ocado is already using driverless vehicles for some deliveries.
- 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.

### THE ROYAL RECEPTION



### Party Party Party

ON 19TH MAY 2018 AT PISTACHIOS  
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# WHAT'S ON



## ARTS

**GREENWICH DECORATIVE & FINE ARTS SOCIETY** King William Court, University of Greenwich 14th May **UNDRESSING ANTIQUES** talk by **Mark Hill**. "The state of the antiques market and the different meanings of the word value are considered, and we take a look at what current and future generations of collectors are buying, why they are buying it and how they are displaying it." Visitors welcome, please pay on the door  
**THE ARTS SOCIETY, BLACKHEATH**  
**24th May 2.00pm** St Mary's Church Hall, Cresswell Pk. **Peter Medhurst: PARODIES OF VICTORIAN SOCIETY IN GILBERT AND SULLIVAN** 2.00pm. with tea and coffee, and lectures at 2.30. Visitors welcome, please pay on the door.

## CHILDREN & FAMILY

**GREENWICH THEATRE CROOMS HILL**  
**May 27th. 2.00pm THE OWL AND THE PUSSY-CAT** Join Owly-cat and fellow family members, Jumble and Quangle Wangle Quee, in a story about where, what and who our family really are. Inspired by the nonsense world of Edward Lear. Age 3+  
**May 30th 2.00pm JOHN HEGLEY: ALL HAIL THE SNAIL AND OTHER CREATURES** Join poet John Hegley as he takes us on a humorous journey through his living library of poems, songs, stories and animal drawings Age 5+  
**June 1st 2.00 & 6.00pm RUFUS LONGBOTTOM AND THE SPACE RABBIT** Filament's new family show uses song, music and a bit of magic to delight and enchant audiences young and old alike. Age 5+  
**June 2nd - 3rd Sat 12pm & 3pm Sun 11am & 2pm THE ELVES AND THE SHOEMAKER** Classical fairytale, featuring an original score of songs! Age 2+  
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## SPOKEN WORD

**BLACHEATH HALLS** at the Old Bakehouse Theatre Fri. 25th May 8.00pm **Empire in Retreat: VICTOR BULMER-THOMAS** talks on his book A respected international authority Victor Bulmer-Thomas offers a grand survey of the United States as an empire. His book offers three definitions of empire - territorial, informal, and institutional - and explains the nation's past and forecast a future in an ever-changing world. Book tickets (£10) on 020 8463 0100  
**INDUSTRIAL HISTORY SOCIETY**  
**22nd May Dave Perrett. Made in Greenwich and Lewisham** at The Old Bakehouse, Age Exchange, Bennet Park.7.30 pm  
**BLACKHEATH SCIENTIFIC SOCIETY**  
**May 18th. 7.45 pm May 18th DISCOVERING EARTHLIKE PLANETS - Dr Guillem Anglada, Queen Mary College.** Visitors welcome, donations £3  
**IN-WORDS**  
**Tues. May 22nd 7.00 for 7.30 at West Greenwich Library** Cinnamon Press returns to Greenwich with a crop of four diverse poets reading from their latest collections: Frank Dullaghan, Neil Elder, Daphne Gloag and Robin Thomas. FREE.  
**www.in-words.co.uk for more information.**  
**CHARLTON & BLACKHEATH AMATEUR HORTICULTURAL SOCIETY** Charlton House, Mon. May 21st 7.30pm **Dr Benz Kotzen on THE ROOF GARDEN AT GREENWICH UNIVERSITY** All welcome **cabahs.wordpress.com/calendar**



## Constantine the Great and Christianity in Roman Britain

*A program by Dr Sam Moorhead  
FSA (British Museum)*

In AD 306, Constantine was acclaimed Roman emperor at York, a turning point in world history. This lecture will outline Constantine's rise to power and his adoption of the Christian faith, culminating in the Battle of the Milvian Bridge in AD 312. After the Edict of Milan in 313, which ended the persecutions, we witness the growth of Christianity in the Roman Empire and in Britain. The British Museum has the best collection of fourth century Christian objects north of the Alps. Using such treasures and a range of other archaeological evidence, this lecture will outline the rich Christian heritage of late Roman Britain.

Sam and his family are members of St George's Church. Come and learn! Refreshments provided. Free and open to the public.

**Tuesday, 8<sup>th</sup> of May - 7:30 pm**

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Rev'd Tim Yeager, Team Vicar 07804 614245 [rtveager@gmail.com](mailto:rtveager@gmail.com)

## THE WESTCOMBE SOCIETY

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**Sat June 30th Summer Picnic**  
**Fri 28th September - MacMillan Coffee Morning**  
**Sat.ing10th Nov. Quiz 7.30-10.30pm**  
**Sat 17th Nov. Christmas Bazaar**  
**We need more volunteers to help out at community events. Please ring Joanne on 07709 571777**

## COMMUNITY

**ST GEORGE'S GLENLUCE ROAD**  
**Apart from normal services: Weds. 12.30 p.m.**  
**Soup Lunch Wed. 16th May 7.30 Spiritual Film Night: How Green was my Valley**  
**BLACKHEATH & GREENWICH WOMEN'S INSTITUTE** Meets first Wednesday of every month, doors open at 7.00pm for 7.30pm at Sunfields Methodist Church on Old Dover Road  
**BLACKHEATH BRIDGE CLUB** duplicate sessions in Mycenae House Mon & Thurs 7.15pm and on Wed at 1.15pm. Lessons on Tuesdays. Tel Ron 8319 1312  
**CHARLTON HOUSE www.charltonhouse** 0208 -856 -3001 Mulberry Tea Rooms Jacobean Entrance Hall Mon-Fri 9am- 4pm  
**Lunchtime concert every Friday 1.00pm – 2.00pm SUNDAYS AT SUNFIELDS at Sunfields Methodist Church 95 Old Dover Road, Blackheath SE3 8SJ** 1.00 - 4.00 pm ALL older people and their carers are welcome to join us for lunch and lighthearted activities. Carers are also invited. Please do just come along – there is no need to book. FREE

## THEATRE

**MYCENAE HOUSE**  
**Friday May 18th. WHEN THE CHIPS ARE DOWN** by **Andrew Ogleby** Everyday folk stand up to a property developer wanting to turn their beloved Chip Shop into posh apartments. Tickets £8.00  
**CHURCHILL THEATRE BROMLEY 3285 6000**  
**Tues 1st - Sat 5th May BIRDSONG** based on Sebastian Faulks' novel  
**Tues 12th - Sat 19th May CATS**  
**THE GREENWICH THEATRE, Crooms Hill, London SE10 8ES** Box Office: 8858 7755  
**May 3rd - 4th THE GUT GIRLS** about five women at the turn of the 20th Century, working in the gutting sheds of Deptford's Foreign Cattle Market.  
**May 5th BALLISTIC** A darkly comic thriller asking vital questions about the violent events increasingly defining our 21st century narratives.  
**3 May - 4 May THE GUT GIRLS** tells the tale of 5 women at the turn of the 20th Century, working in the gutting sheds of Deptford's Foreign Cattle Market.  
**May 6th 7.30 pm TOM AND BUNNY SAVE THE WORLD** Comedy Musical + Fantasy £16 | £13.50  
**8th - 12th May SECRET LIFE OF HUMANS** Inspired by Yuval Harari's international bestseller, *Sapiens: A Brief History of Humankind*.  
**15th - 25th May A MIDSUMMER NIGHT'S DREAM** by William Shakespeare On a Midsummer's night, four young lovers find themselves in an enchanted forest where sprites lurk and fairies rule.  
**May 24th. THE BOB DYLAN EXPERIENCE** THE one person who probably won't mind us celebrating Bob Dylan's 75 birthday on the occasion of his 77th birthday is Mr Dylan himself...  
**May 28t -29th THE ICONOCLASTS** An exuberant family façade is about to crack. Music, magic, poetry, drag and comedy meet seeks redemption.  
**31st May TWO** A gritty yet heart-warming look at northern life filled with pathos and humour.  
**THE ALEXANDRA PLAYERS**  
**Wed 30th May to Sat 2nd June 8.00pm** nightly  
**A MURDER IS ANNOUNCED** by Agatha Christie at the Alexandra Hall, Bramshot Avenue, SE7  
Tickets £9 (Conc. £8) 07867 627 987

## AGE EXCHANGE

**11 Blackheath Village SE3 9LA**  
**Sat 12th May. 10.00 am - 4.00pm** Art & Craft Sale, and Book sale in the Old Bakehouse  
**Fri 25th May 12 noon** Free lunchtime concert

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## MYCENAE HOUSE LIVE EVENTS: MAY

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**Fri 11th May 8pm - JazzNights.** Candlit Live Jazz music event hosted by Dave Silk featuring saxophonist Derek Nash. £10.  
**Fri 18th May 7pm - 'When The Chips Are Down'** - a play. Global Fusion Music & Arts present Andrew G. Ogleby's play. £8.  
**Thurs 24th May 4pm - Bach To Baby.** Classical Concert for families. £10.  
**Fri 25th May 7.15pm - Lily Neill.** Solo concert by internationally renowned harpist. £14.

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

## BLACKHEATH HALLS

23, Lee Road SE3 9RQ Box Office 020 8463 0100  
[www.trinitylaban.ac.uk](http://www.trinitylaban.ac.uk)  
The Halls will be closed from April to October 2018 for renovation works. Friends events will continue throughout this period at various venues:  
**WED 09 MAY 19:30h** in the PEACOCK ROOM, KING CHARLES COURT Royal Opera House singers perform Wolf Songs from Italienisches Liederbuch, Wagner Wesendonck Lieder and Butterworth Bredon Hill and other songs  
**SUN 20 MAY 18:30h** DEPTFORD GREEN SEC. SCHOOL Blackheath Halls Orchestra: Opera Greats inc. Puccini, Mozart & Wagner performed by our very own community orchestra with award-winning soprano Raphaela Papadakis £12 | £10 concs | £6 under 12s  
**MEANTIME JAZZ** continue rehearsing at MANOR HOUSE LIBRARY 34 Old Road SE13 5SY. Our friendly jazz orchestra perform at 7.00 pm on Mondays: 7th, 14th, 21st 28th May and June 11th, 18th & 25th.

## THURSDAYS AT ST ALFEGE'S

Free concerts by Trinity Laban students at 1.05pm every Thursday in May.

## OLD ROYAL NAVAL COLLEGE CHAPEL

Free concerts at 1.05pm: Fri 11th May, Tues 15th May, Tues 12th June, Fri 29th June

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# FEATURES

## From car park to community: The saga of Royal Hill Community Gardens

WN Reporter

As it enters its second year, the widely-praised Royal Hill Community Garden (RHCG) in Greenwich, once a derelict police car park, has become a factor in the upcoming Greenwich Council leadership elections, friends of the Garden have revealed:

‘It’s true,’ confirms co-founder and local resident Jonathan Mantle, ‘we have it on good authority that this little piece of green space created by the community for the community, has polarised more opinion within the Council than developments many hundreds of time bigger in the Borough.’

With a previous high density scheme by architect Paul Russell thrown out, the latest proposal by Greenwich Council envisages a care home for adults with learning difficulties, and has led to an architectural competition between five architects.

However, there are problems: the site lies on an overground railway line that ran through a deep open cutting. The cutting remained open after the line closed around 1920, and was only filled in with loose infill from bombed houses after WW 2.

Friends of the Garden applaud the idea in principle, but point out the extreme instability of the ground, which is part of the longer footprint of the railway that includes the allotments in Prior Street. For this reason, very little of the railway footprint has ever been built on. Development of the site would be very expensive, and a danger to nearby buildings.

A copy of the competition brief to architects obtained by RHCG furthermore suggests that little green space would remain, and no Community Garden would survive of the kind that exists today.

Meanwhile, as spring finally arrives, hundreds of people of all ages and back grounds continue to enjoy the garden,



PHOTO: Tony Othen

**Spring time in the garden:  
all done by volunteers**

particularly at weekends. Children play in the willow teepees, people with learning difficulties plant and tend flower beds, tourists from around the world enjoy a haven of peace and calm. The Garden has become a regular Tuesday night fixture for the Greenwich Good Gym running group.

The local scout troop builds and plants vegetable planters and helps out generally on a regular basis, which gains them badge credits for community involvement. As Scout Mistress Lucy Hickey points out: ‘You can’t do this in Greenwich Park.’

The Royal Hill Community Garden has featured extensively on television and in the national and local press, as well as social media. Thousands of people follow it on Facebook and Twitter, and the Garden has recently been twinned with the New York City Community Gardens Coalition.

So where does this leave Greenwich borough councillors looking for short-term votes? ‘We know some councillors running for the leadership elections are in favour of keeping the Garden, and some are against,’ confirms co-founder and local resident Tony Othen, ‘but for all of them, public opinion matters. So, who knows? Whatever happens, no building, if any, will begin until 2019. So we will see the summer and autumn in, and please, please, use the Garden now – while you can!’

## The Secret Life of Humans

One of the few recent books that everyone should read is Yuval Noah Harari’s *Homo Sapiens: A Brief History of Humankind*. For him, history began around 70,000 years ago, when our species of the genus *Homo* overcame 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 to empire.

Hariri’s book was the inspiration for David Byrne’s play *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 . . .

First staged at the Edinburgh Festival, the show received enthusiastic reviews. *The Stage* magazine described in as “bold, beautiful and utterly absorbing”; for *The Guardian* it was “ambitious, intelligent and moving.”

The director of Greenwich Theatre, James Haddrell, is bringing it here from May 8th - 12th, before taking it on for a four week run in New York. Go see it!

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## How to be happy

Book review



**A UN report features international happiness scores averaged over the years 2014-2016: the UK came 19th – behind Costa Rica and Israel. Top of the list is Finland followed by Norway, Denmark & Iceland. Maybe these tips might improve our score!**

The Author of *Happiness - your route map to inner joy*, Andy Cope, gives some great tips. They are fun and unique, but with serious science behind them (he is the UK's first Doctor of Happiness with a PhD in positive psychology). Read some of his tips below; you can read more about Andy and his co-author Shonette here: <http://www.artofbrilliance.co.uk/training/our-team/andy-cope>.

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

### 😊 Calculate your happiness

According to the esteemed researchers at the University of London's Institute of Education, here are some monetary values of happiness: [Ed: *They sure about this?*]  
\* Seeing friends and relatives is equivalent to a pay rise of £64k per annum  
\* Having nice neighbours is worth £37k pa  
\* Excellent health is estimated to be worth £300k per annum to you  
That means that you would be already halfway to being a millionaire already! Who says there is no connection between money and happiness? [Ed: *Fake figures?*]

### 😊 Sleep on it

A University of Warwick study found that improving your sleep quality leads to levels of mental and physical health comparable to those of somebody who's won a jackpot of around £200,000. [Ed: *I'd settle for a few sleepless nights for £200,000*]

### 😊 Stop, look and listen

Slow down a teensie bit and notice the ‘beautiful ordinary’ - the sunrise, raindrops, dewy cobwebs, misty mornings, smiling children, stars.... happiness is available, on tap, once you learn that's it's right here, right now.

### 😊 Be a hugger

The average hug lasts 2.1 seconds but for the love to transfer, a hug needs to last 7 seconds or longer – but be warned, counting out loud spoils the effect!

### 😊 ‘Vuja De’

Everyone knows and understands déjà vu, that feeling of familiarity, an experience that has happened to you before. Very few

know the opposite, ‘vuja de’ – seeing a familiar situation through new eyes: but upgrade the view from rose-tinted to ‘gratitude-tinted’ specs. That means reminding yourself of what to be thankful for . . .

### 😊 Enjoy your plot twists

You are the author of your life's story. So when something doesn't go according to plan it's not a nightmare, crisis, challenge or problem, it's merely a plot twist. Plot twists are inevitable. They're there to make things more interesting. Notice your plot twists and shout them out. WooHoo! They exist because you're alive.

### 😊 Celebrate stuff that didn't happen

Notice the many things that could have gone badly but didn't. Have a go, it's fabulous fun. Bad things that didn't happen are always good for a laugh.

### 😊 Cut your social media by 50%

One true flesh and blood friend will bring you more happiness than 1000 Facebook ones. Cut your use of social media and spend time with real family and friends instead.

### 😊 Get snuggly

Brits like to moan about our weather. That's why we like to holiday in the sun somewhere. The UK is languishing at 17th in the international league table of happiness: while the top 5 - Sweden, Denmark, Finland, Canada & Switzerland - have all got weather that's worse than ours. The secret to happiness seems to be in embracing the snuggles. Here's a couple of new words for you; we think you'll notice a theme:  
*Mysa*. [Sweden] To be engaged in a pleasant or comfortable activity; to be content or comfortable; to get cosy; to snuggle up.  
*Hygge*. [Denmark] Enjoying life's simple pleasures. Coziness. Snuggliness.  
The above are more than words, they're philosophies. *Mysa*, *Hygge*: learn from the happy Scandis. Snuggle into the snuggly moments.

### 😊 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.

### 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!**

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# ENVIRONMENT



Planning applications can be viewed in the library, or at the Woolwich Library on the lower ground floor of the Woolwich Centre, 35 Wellington St. They may also be viewed on [www.greenwich.gov.uk/planning](http://www.greenwich.gov.uk/planning)

## Cruise liner campaign kicks off



PHOTOS: Iga Cegielko

Local people from both sides of the Thames joined forces on Saturday 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 amidst 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 in 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 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 in a flat right 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 they are asking supporters to sign, has already reached over 4,500 signatures  
**Contact: Laura Eyres 07985 487765**  
[@notoxicport](http://www.notoxiccruiseship.london) [www.egra.london](http://www.egra.london)

**\* Matthew Pennycook, MP secured confirmation from DEFRA in a Parliamentary Question that: Transposition of Directive 2014/94/EU on alternative fuels infrastructure, the Alternative Fuels Infrastructure Regulations 2017 came into force on 9 October 2017. These Regulations implement the requirements of Directive (2014/94/EU) of the European Parliament and of the Council of 22 October 2014 establishing a common framework of measures for the deployment of alternative fuels infrastructure**

## 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?



PHOTO: Neville Grant

## 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.)

This was the background to the fourth AGM of the Friends of Greenwich and Woolwich Tunnels (FOGWOT) last month. The inaugural meeting of FOGWOT in 2013 was held to persuade Greenwich Council to finish a botched but well-meant refurbishment, including new lifts and lights.

FOGWOT's online survey to assess attitudes to the vexed question of cyclists racing through both narrow tunnels 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.

FOGWOT 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 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 FOGWOT continue to back a future trial of the system. We have even 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 Wilmoth Report (commissioned by Greenwich Council in 2012).

FOGWOT 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 tunnels deserve no less.

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