



Westcombe NEWS



Free to 3800 homes, in libraries and some shops

March 2019 No. 2

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

Välkommen till IKEA

Vivienne Raper

A huge queue of people lined up outside the new IKEA building for its official opening on February 7th, eager to view IKEA's treasures inside. Serried ranks of staff, in their distinctive yellow livery, waving the blue and yellow Swedish flags, gave the customers a warm welcome with music and dancing as they poured in: a real party atmosphere.

IKEA Greenwich, which was dogged by traffic concerns before its opening, claims to be the company's most sustainable store.

"We want to be more accessible to people who don't have cars," an IKEA spokesperson told the *WN*. "We want people to come with keys, phone and wallet and we'll do everything else."

The council's employment service, Greenwich Local Labour and Business (GLLaB), which provides local residents with training and local job opportunities, worked in partnership with IKEA to hold recruitment roadshows across the borough. These were attended by almost 1,500 local residents – and delivered pre-employment training to over 200 unemployed locals.

The new store has employed more than 350 people from across Greenwich and neighbouring boroughs, with 270 local residents in Greenwich accounting for more than 60% of new employees.

IKEA launched the store over the period of a fortnight, with multiple pre-opening events, to address local concerns over air quality and traffic. Cllr Geoff Brighty, who opposed IKEA's original planning application, said: "The key issue for many residents, particularly in the Westcombe area, was that with IKEA's business template there would be an increase in traffic on already congested and polluted roads."

He added: "We need to see how the new store settles into the area, and hopefully it

can work without causing too much of an adverse impact."

However, sources close to the *WN* report gave a mixed picture. One local resident said: "In the first few days there were one or two times during a day when the traffic would be bad or the car park was full, but none of it lasted for any length of time. On the first weekend, a car broke down at the Sun-in-Sands and this led to a traffic jam all the way to Greenwich – lots of people blamed IKEA for it." So, so far, so good?

Special transport provision

An IKEA spokesperson told the *WN* that the store is the first in the UK to offer a 24-hour delivery service. The first twelve weeks of opening will see offers including subsidised delivery costs within a 40-minute radius by public transport, and market hall products delivered by electric bike courier, Zedify.

IKEA have given £750,000 to the Royal Borough of Greenwich Council 'towards the promotion of travel by sustainable modes of transport for co-workers and customers of IKEA'.

Proposed improvements have included new bus lanes, pedestrian and cycle crossings and bus lanes. 41% of customers are expected to arrive by car with the rest taking a bus, walking or cycling.

The travel plan for IKEA also refers to improvements to cycling and pedestrian access, and 'public realm improvements'. But these are unlikely to improve the 'grey and grim' walk from Westcombe Park station under the A2, Brighty says.

In a statement to the *WN*, Cllr Denise Scott-McDonald, Cabinet Member for Air Quality, Public Realm and Transport said: "We are working together with the police

emergency services, public transport providers and IKEA to monitor, minimise and mitigate against the impact leading up to, during and after the store opening and going forward.

"While a major retailer and job creator like IKEA opening up in the Royal Borough is to be welcomed, residents have very serious concerns about traffic and air quality and it is right that they are addressed."



PHOTOS: Neville Grant

Council cuts: have your say

Last year, the *WN* asked "When is a consultation not a consultation?" The brief answer is when respondents have almost no time to respond.

Now the Council has done it again: on 26th January, they asked us all to have our say on its budget proposals for 2019/20 *by 10th February*. Yes, we might have responded if we'd known about it, and been given enough time. Even so, make no mistake: it's a serious exercise which could have an impact on us all.

The problem faces councils all over the country. A Commons Public Accounts Committee has warned the government is in denial about local government finances.

Adult social care has been particularly hard hit: the charity Age UK reports that in the past twelve months 54,000 people across the country have died waiting for a social care package.

In Greenwich, the reduction in central government funding, combined with increases in costs, means that for 2019/20, the Council is facing a £7.5m pressure on its budget. Cuts could mean reducing expenditure on non-essential services and/or increasing council tax by 2.99%.

Your views count . . .

The Council is asking residents for their views on three priority areas which could receive additional funding in 2019/20:

- * setting up a serious youth violence reduction team to help combat and prevent youth and gang violence
- * giving support and advice for people moving across to Universal Credit
- * providing training and support to help people return to work.

Cllr Christine Grice, Cabinet Member for Finance and Resources, said: "Since 2010, the amount of money we receive from government has reduced by over £125million – that's well over £1,000 per household. At the same time, our costs have risen due to inflation and because more people need our services. So far we have been able to protect most services, by efficiency savings., but it is becoming increasingly difficult to cope.

"Residents' responses will feed into a much more detailed consultation we will do later this year as we prepare for the next budget cycle which starts in April 2020."

Royal Greenwich has done well to provide the services it does while keeping Council Tax relatively low; but this news will come as little surprise to students of local council finance.

Leader's statement

Cllr Danny Thorpe, Leader of the Council, said: "We have the 11th lowest council tax in London, but the relentless cuts from central government are making it increasingly difficult to protect our vital frontline services. We propose to prioritise the people who most rely on our services."

The consultation closed on 10th February
The 2019/20 budget was debated at Full Council on 27th. February.

02 Rip-off

At the end of January some 8,000 school children sang in a concert at the O2, raising money for a children's cancer charity – with more than 20,000 parents and grandparents in attendance.

A proud grandparent who attended her nine-year-old granddaughter's debut on the stage describes what happened:

"The concert was lovely, though we couldn't actually see Ruby on stage – you needed binoculars – we never begrudged the £22.50 tickets (though there was a £7.50 "handling charge").

"Before we went we checked up on parking at the O2 – £12.00 for six hours, that's not too bad, we thought.

"But when we got there we were told it was £35.00 for parking for events! Inside the O2, thank goodness we took a packed lunch, but Ruby definitely deserved a treat.

"And that was another £12.00 for a chicken-burger and chips!

"That 02 is nothing but a cash machine – and you wonder how much of the money we all spent went to charity?"

You have been warned!



A real party atmosphere at the opening



Newsbriefs



Enderby House

Enderby House is to open as a pub, probably in June, operated by Young's. Young's pub group already operate the Dial Arch in Woolwich and Cutty Sark in Greenwich; also the Old Brewery on the Royal Naval College site (which they purchased from Meantime) and the Richard 1st pub (formerly "the Tolley").

Greenwich Park

Two more public consultations on Greenwich Park Revealed will be held near the bandstand on Thursday April 11th and Sunday 14th April, 10am-4pm.

You can also contribute your views by email: greenwich-parkrevealed@royalpark.org.uk

Cutty Sark

Many congratulations to the good ship Cutty Sark on her 150th birthday

Goodbye to local papers

We are always sorry to lose any newspaper, especially local ones. *Greenwich Visitor* closed its doors in December – we shall miss it. Also, Reach (formerly Trinity Mirror) has closed its free weekly newspaper *The Wharf* in East London, blaming Brexit, a fall in property revenues and the delay of Crossrail coming to the area.

Greenwich Info

A proposal to offer a company £1.3m to print and distribute the

fortnightly paper Greenwich Info, was criticised in a cross-party scrutiny panel in December, and ran into further trouble at a Council meeting in January.

Questions are being asked as to how efficiently the paper was being delivered; in addition, questions have been asked about why the contract was not given to a local company, such as *Greenwich Visitor*. The *WN* has not put in a bid . . .

Rubbish tip

Ivy McGeorge told the *WN*: to take rubbish to the tip in Nathan way you need your driving licence or a council tax bill with you. A Greenwich parking permit is not sufficient!

The Westcombe Society

Daffodil Tea

Sat 16th March 2.00 - 4.00 pm

The Daffodil Tea for Senior Citizens is by invitation; however anyone who didn't get an invitation and who would like to come, please ring Caroline on 020 8853 0948.



WESTCOMBE SOCIETY

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 April 2019 issue:
16th March

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

All adverts payable in advance by cheque to **The Westcombe Society**.

DISPLAY: Single column 6cm x 6cm: One - four issues £35, five-plus issues £30 each. Other sizes: please inquire.

Classified Ads (Market Place) 30p per word (A telephone number = one word. An email/web address = 3 words.) Deadline for all adverts is 10th day of the preceding month.

Printed by: Trojan Press

Contact the Westcombe Society:

WestcombeNews@egroups.com

Publisher: The Westcombe Society

Chairman: Marilyn Little Tel. 020 8853 1312

The views expressed in the Westcombe News are not necessarily those of the Westcombe Society or of the Editor. We take all reasonable precautions to protect the interests of our readers by ensuring as far as possible the bona fides of our advertisers but cannot accept any responsibility for them. Any complaints should be addressed to the advertiser.

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 W/N – 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:

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

IT SUPPORT

For ALL your home & business needs

Call now for FREE advice



020 8858 2002

www.headstart.it

Members & Helpers' Party



One Saturday night last month Mycenae House was abuzz with good cheer at The Westcombe Society's helpers and volunteers' party – a special annual event highlighting the work of the Society. As well as a tasty buffet there was an eclectic and delightful range of music from harpist Cecilia. During the evening Marilyn Little presented life membership to former W/N distribution manager Myles Dove as a huge thank you for all his years of devoted community service, and also presented a cheque for £2275 to support the work of the Volunteer Centre Greenwich. Jon Fricker, trustee and Vice-Chair of the Centre accepted the donation and outlined the valuable work of the organisation. Raising money for a chosen local charity each year is, along with bringing local people together, the Society's passion.

JANE WILSON

The Christmas Bazaar

Is it time to say goodbye to the Westcombe Society's Christmas Bazaar in aid of charity? This is a question members of the Society are asking in light of falling attendance over the last few years, fewer people turning up at this 20-year-old festive fair, reducing funds being raised for the Society's annual Charity of the Year.

In its heyday the Christmas Bazaar heralded the start of the local community's Christmas celebrations. For most of its life the Bazaar had a lovely Dickensian theme with members of the Westcombe Society decked out in lace, long dresses and top hats. There was mulled wine, roasted chestnuts, and dozens of stalls.

A celebrity would open the fair. Mary Portas was a popular guest of honour a few years ago. And for the children, a Punch & Judy show, and Santa's grotto, have always been highlights.

The 2018 bazaar still had Punch and Judy and Santa, plus carols under the huge Christmas tree, and it all seemed to go down a treat; but numbers were down and stall-holders reported less spending.

Members of the Westcombe Society, and other volunteers, work hard preparing

Di Blackwell

and setting up the Bazaar. The aims are two fold....to give the local community a happy experience, and to raise money for a chosen local charity of the year.

Some people now feel that the Bazaar has too much competition from other local craft fairs, and the reasons it was started in the first place and has been so successful over the years are not as relevant now. Perhaps the Westcombe Society needs to move on and establish other fun, family-oriented fundraising events that are more in tune with changing lifestyles?

Others feel that the Bazaar still has a special place in the community's heart, that it is a colourful local tradition that still brings people together and is woven into the fabric of a Westcombe Park year.

And so, dear readers, we put it to you. Is the Christmas Bazaar a local treasure that must continue, or do you think the Westcombe Society needs to look at its fund raising strategies with fresh eyes, and re-invent ways of raising money for local causes that badly need financial support?

We'd love to have your feedback and ideas to info@westcombesociety.org or 07939386215 Many thanks.

Marilyn Little Chair, Westcombe Society



Letters

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

From David Fletcher:

I wonder if readers are aware of the almost complete demolition of the interior of the Arches Leisure Centre in Greenwich (Google November 2018 "Derelict Places" I fear for its future.

I have also contacted Cllr Geoff Brighty following the Planning Department's recent Blitz of Central Greenwich. I refer to the Council's decision to approve demolition of three town centre buildings – The Bookshop and adjoining 18th Century house, The Lord Hood Public House (both on Creek Road) and now the Victorian Public House on Thames Street.

These buildings all provided character to the Streetscape and are being replaced by developers' maximising their profits with blocks of characterless flats. I fear the Arches may well end up as the same. Ed: Please see page.3

From: Terry Sole

Herne Bay

I am trying to write something about the artists who operated from or taught at Haimo Road adult institute (Eltham) during the 1960's to 1990's. They exhibited regularly at the Blackheath Art Society annual open exhibition each Easter and other South London venues.

They also organised painting in the grounds of Woodlands, and in the summer camping and painting in the South of France. Could your readers please get in touch if they have any relevant information. Terry Sole (Formerly of Coleraine Rd.) One New Street Gallery, Herne Bay Kent CT6 5AH. Mobile 07516756592.

From: Jenny Allen Librarian, John Roan

This year the libraries at The John Roan School are running an Inter-Generation Book Project, where our students and local older residents get together to discuss the books that they enjoyed when they were younger, and what they enjoy reading now.

We'd then like to put the books discussed in a time capsule.

To launch the project we are holding a spring tea party in our library at the Maze Hill site on Friday 29th March from 1:30pm.

If anyone would like to attend and discuss books with our specially trained Community Librarians please RSVP using the information below:
0208 516 7537
jallen@thejohnroan.greenwich.sch.uk

OnBlackheath change of date

The W/N has heard that the date of the OnBlackheath event may possibly change to July this year. Any such change of date for the event would need to be put into effect by a new grant application to LB Lewisham.

It is important that residents of Greenwich are kept full informed, and to this end, Greenwich Council could be willing to forward any comments.

Please note these dates in your diary:

Monday 4th March 7.00pm at Age Exchange - Blackheath Joint Working Party Open Meeting, open to anyone to express their views on anything to do with Blackheath – including OnBlackheath.

Tuesday 12th March - This is the deadline for comments on change in licence for OnBlackheath to allow variation of the current OnBlackheath licence so that OnBlackheath could take place on any weekend between 1st July and 31st September. There is some feeling that the noise will be worse earlier in the summer because of light evenings and people being in their gardens and having windows open. Therefore there may possibly be objections to a change of date because of increased Public Nuisance.

EMILY NORTON

Charity of the year

"What local charity do you think deserves to be the focus of the Westcombe Society's efforts to assist them with a financial contribution?"

asks Chairman Marilyn Little

Over the years the Society has assisted many locally-funded groups including Riding for the Disabled, Mumsaid, and South London Special League to name but a few.

We help them to further their good work with funds raised from events such as our Quiz and the Christmas Bazaar.

We're looking for nominations for this year's Charity of the Year, to be voted on at the AGM in May – and also fun fresh ideas for how to raise that all important money to keep their work going strong.

Do send your ideas and thoughts to info@Westcombesociety.org

From your editor:

Please note that this is a community newspaper: that means it is YOUR newspaper! So make it yours by sending in your own contributions – news, photos, stories, feature articles etc.

www.mycenaehouse.co.uk
02088581749

Supported by
ROYAL LONDON GREENWICH

Go See/Go Do

Over 120 things to Do and See each week
Learning, Concerts, Workshops, Exhibitions, Training, Workouts, Parties, Lectures, Social Events, Childrens and Family Activities, Seniors, Clubs and Societies.

'This place is buzzing'
Time Out

www.mycenaehouse.co.uk 02088581749
90 Mycenae Rd, Blackheath Standard, SE3 7SE 400yds to Westcombe Park Train Station Free Parking

LOCAL NEWS

The People's Vote helps Community Projects

Yet again it's been a bumper year for community groups as the winners of the Greenwich Neighbourhood Growth Fund are now revealed.

A remarkable 23 community groups across the borough will be receiving money to spend on improving their local area. The successful proposals will deliver a range of community benefits that include: new and improved facilities and services for people with learning difficulties; improvements to local parks and open spaces; public conveniences; sport facilities; health and well-being projects; a community festival.

The money for the Fund comes from the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL), a scheme introduced by Government that allow councils to raise money from developments which is then used to deliver infrastructure improvements.

Over 3,200 votes were cast to help decide on the winning projects in the four areas. This is the second round of funding for the Neighbourhood Growth Fund for which Royal Greenwich is divided into four neighbourhoods.

Each neighbourhood is allocated a set amount, which is dependent on the amount of development in their area.

For the purposes of the scheme, the Royal Borough is divided into four areas:
Area one - Eltham and Shooters Hill
Area two - Blackheath and Greenwich
Area three - Charlton and Woolwich
Area four - Abbey Wood, Plumstead and Thamesmead

In Area 2 - our area, the winners this time are:

Friends of Westcombe Woodlands – Seed to Tree Programme
Montessori Education for Autism – Blackheath/Westcombe Autism Support Yard Project
Greenwich Millennium Village – 2019 GMV Summer Fayre
Friends of East Greenwich Pleasaunce – Drinking fountain in the Pleasaunce
St Alfege Church Greenwich – For your Convenience, St Alfege Church
The Forum at Greenwich – Love Your Loos
Talk About Art – Stained glass window project
Greenwich Mural Workshop – Rathmore Hall mosaic bench repairs

Among the winners in other areas are:
The Friends of Maryon and Maryon
Wilson Animal Parks
Central Greenwich Children's Centre – Charlton Park Rugby Football Club – Improving the lives of young people
Severndroog Castle

The next application round for the Greenwich Neighbourhood Growth Fund will open in Autumn 2019.

Christine Bramble

LOCAL DRESSMAKER

Bespoke garments for Weddings, Proms & Special Occasions.

Repairs and Alterations School trousers/Blazers sleeves shortened.

Hems taken up, Jeans taken in. Dresses re-shaped and jackets re-lined.

Over 25 Years experience.

Call: 07904 880 448

Have fun – join our group!

says Mary Bauckham

If you've been wandering around Greenwich Park on a Sunday morning, near the bandstand, you might have noticed a bunch of rather unfit looking people in their 50s and 60s running up and down a slightly wonky pitch marked out with cones, shouting to each other about passing, and, more worryingly, throwing a ball to try and hit some of the players.

This is Danish Longball, played, with very little skill, by members of The Bad Football Club. Yes, we do play football, but only very occasionally, because we have found that our favourite sport is Danish Longball.

It all started when my friend Lesley announced that she fancied playing cricket in the park. I was fresh from a Christmas Day triumph in a family game of 5 a side football, despite not having played for decades.

My favourite game, I told her, was one I'd played on the holidays I'd been on as a child. It's a bit like cricket, rounders and dodgeball all mixed together. You can be very fit and be got "out" very quickly in the game, or you can consider yourself pretty rubbish and be one of the last ones

scoring runs for your team. It's a great leveller and a lot of fun: Danish Longball.

We did indeed play football at our first meeting, badly, hence our name, and now the name lives on partly because we very rarely play it at all.

Some of The Bad Football Club aren't keen on sport, so we mix up our monthly meetings with country walks, city walks, card and board games sessions, and parties (always with games). We've also resurrected the game of "lurky" which involves hiding behind trees in Oxleas Woods and rushing out to kick a can and free the "prisoners". Last summer we even went on a camping trip which involved kayaking and singing (badly) around a campfire.

If you think that these activities sound rather childish, you'd be right. But after a few decades, the novelty of being a grown up is wearing thin. This is our chance to access our inner 8 year olds (maybe not when we're necking the prosecco).

Lots of our members are single or leave the other half at home. Most of them are a bit past middle age but we have some younger members too (the youngest is 10). Loneliness is not something we talk about,



but just as going to a church could help with that, BFC is another place to meet local people regularly and to forge relationships through shared activity, humour, and the foregoing of dignity.

We've been running for nearly four years now. It's all going well, but the activity I would like to promote to readers of The Westcombe News is Danish Longball. Although very many Bad Footballers will show up to a country walk, there's quite a bit of pleading around bad hips and dodgy knees and not-being-picked-for-school-teams when it comes to Danish Longball. You need at least eight players for a match, but really about 16 or 20 players would give us a better game. Who knows? We could even start a league.

If you would like to come and join The Bad Football Club for a game of Danish Longball, please email me at marybauckham@gmail.com. Our next game is on Sunday 3rd March, 12 noon, in Greenwich Park (meeting at the bandstand). After that the big game will be on Sunday 19th May (same time and place). We also have some walks lined up.

Get in touch! All welcome!

The Arches

Ursula Bowyer

The much-loved Arches Leisure Centre boasted a 110 station gym, a fitness pool, a leisure pool including a spa pool, two exercise studios, a Crèche and a Sauna. In addition it was home to various swimming and sports clubs.

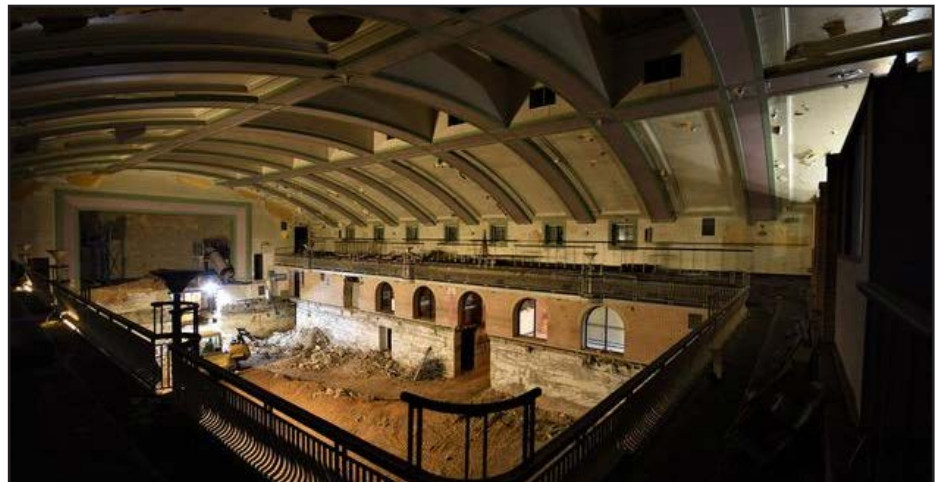
Many readers of the *WN* have fond memories of the centre, with its lavender-coloured doors on the changing cubicles, and mourned its closure in June 2015, when it was up for redevelopment.

Today the building looks shabby and neglected. However, it has an interesting history. It was built to the designs of Horth and Andrews, the winners of a 1923 National Architectural Competition to replace the original 1850s building.

The 1850 baths were among the first in England to be built following the 1848 Baths and Washhouses Act. This was designed to give workers in the hurriedly-built bathroom-less terraces a chance to wash as well as to learn to swim.

This building proved inadequate for the number of men returning from the forces after WWI to take up jobs in the then flourishing Industry in Greenwich.

The Baths that replaced the original building in 1923 extend across a whole block of Trafalgar Road. It is the largest building in the street.



The interior, today: a sorry sight.

What will become of it?

The arched symmetrical design was inspired by Roman baths. It gave the street order and dignity, a worthy approach to the famous buildings of Wren further along Trafalgar Road.

The building had a character all of its own, yet it fitted into the modest scale of its immediate neighbours and of Hawksmoor, which it did not compete with or ape. It was renamed The Arches after the slipper baths (individual private bathrooms) in the centre of the complex which were later replaced by a gymnasium.

The Arches was a 'Locally Listed' building and its design has inspired many later swimming pools – Bryanston Baths, Ironmongers Row, Porchester Place, all of them statutorily listed and in full working order. The Greenwich Society, anxious not

to lose this fine character-filled building prepared a study in 2012 showing some of the unusual and original details of the design of this award-winning structure.

The Society was pleased that after the original intention for the Arches to be sold for demolition, the Council included the following 'Planning Guidance' with the advertisement for its sale:-

"... as a locally listed building located on a busy road and in a conservation area, the potential for development is subject to certain constraints and ... the preference would be for sympathetic conversion/ extension."

For more painful photographs visit 28dayslater.co.uk/threads/the-arches

JAMES REMOVALS
"excellence through effort"
.com

● Fully trained uniformed staff
● Full insurance included in ALL quotes
● Prompt free estimates
● On-site containerised storage
● Discounts for long-term storage
● Well-established family business
● Pianos – our forte

Call
0800 0157775
for a free survey or visit
jamesremovals.com
to request a quotation online

R.G. Austin
(Established 1963)

Heating Engineers,
Property Maintenance,
Electrics, Painting,
Decorating, Plumbing,
Central Heating,
Shower and Bathroom Specialists

2A Hassendean Rd, Blackheath SE3 8TS
Telephone: 0208 858 7359
rgaustintld@gmail.com

GAS SAFE

J K Auto Services

All makes of vehicles serviced

Saab Specialist

Tyres & Exhaust Fitting Service

Air Conditioning Re-gas & Servicing Facilities

Unit 52, New Lydenburg Industrial Estate,
New Lydenburg Street,
Charlton SE7 8NF
Tel: 020 8293 1511

FEATURES

Linda Baker looks at

The Problems of Academisation

We hear a lot about schools becoming academies. One thing we know for a fact is that they are not the answer to the underfunding problems of the education system.

A BBC Panorama programme last year exposed the ease in which academies can fall into the wrong hands. The only financial difference they then make is by taxpayers' money going into private pockets, and management teams awarding themselves fat salaries.

We are also told that academies raise standards, and the Government have used poor Ofsted results as a prime reason for taking schools out of Local Authority (LA) control. But there is no evidence that academies do raise standards higher than in LA schools; in fact, evidence suggests that, overall, academies achieve about on par. However, academies have a habit of restricting the curriculum to subjects that are easily tested.

Why is this? Well, if you are running a school as a financial business it is important to recruit the kind of child who will yield good results. Like a crop! Good results equal successful school! But for many academy trusts it has proved difficult to put this theory into practice.

Special Needs Education

This brings me to the next bad habit of academies. They tend to reduce Special Educational Needs and Disabilities departments (known as SEND) to a minimum. They don't want to 'waste' money on children who do not automatically fuel the results machine. The most expedient way to deal with this is to push children out of the academy system and into the remaining LA schools, schools that have a well-established strategy for dealing with the needs of children.

However, the funding for these children just isn't there. On the 22nd October, an article in the *Guardian* stated that SEND children are being failed by a system that is 'on the verge of crisis'. Nearly three times more parents today are winning tribunals than in 2011 because there are just not enough suitable school places available for their children's needs. And what happens if the Government fulfils its dream and LA schools no longer exist?

What's happening in Greenwich

We know that academies can be predatory in their actions. Let's look at what's been happening in Greenwich. We have two schools that have recently been under threat of academisation.

One of these is John Roan, the oldest secondary school in Greenwich, but with a state-of-the art new building, a listed old building, and other buildings and playing fields, all bequeathed to Greenwich and overseen by The John Roan Foundation. The John Roan has been ground down over a series of years by changes of inadequate management and by underfunding, and received a poor Ofsted assessment (which many believe was unfair) citing high

Our local school, the John Roan, has been hitting the headlines in the *WN*. The school was set up in 1677. It has a proud past, and is rooted in the community. But what is its future?



turnover of staff as a concern. Despite pleas from the LA, and strong local opposition, the DFE are adamant to academise. Of course they are, because the school will be a jewel in the academy crown.

However before Christmas, as readers of the *WN* will know, the UST withdrew its sponsorship, as it said it did not have the resources to "address the challenges that the school faces."

Also, it was found that last year half a million pounds had gone from the school budget, much of it spent on so-called school improvement plans run by the UST, and leaving the school in deficit. The "professional services" of the UST failed to improve the school, but the money has gone. And now the UST has gone! But still the DFE has learnt nothing, and are obsessed on academisation at any cost, despite strong local opposition.

The second school under threat of academisation was Sherington Primary School. But, hang on! This school was deemed to be outstanding by Ofsted, so the argument about raising standards being the driving force for academisation was a bogus one. They wanted Sherington for an academy for another reason, which is that it is much easier to do well as an academy if you start off with a high-achieving school! The fact that the LA has been doing well doesn't seem to matter, the suggestion being that a private company can do better. The proposal was so strongly opposed that it was thrown out.

Academies have developed an ethos that doesn't sit well with educationalists and teachers. The children's well-being is not at the heart of the academy philosophy, and the shocking statistics on mental illness in children shows this.

For this reason teachers and education workers are taking industrial strike action against academisation in Greenwich and around the whole country. And teachers are stressed too, for numerous reasons, and many are leaving the profession - some of them to teach overseas, including the much-vilified EU!

They know that academies place demands on them that they cannot agree to. They know that academies have little interest in the conditions of employment for teachers and for education workers. And they also know that academies frequently suffer a haemorrhage of highly qualified teachers,

leaving unstable and constantly changing staffing conditions, sometimes with unqualified personnel taking classes.

The democratic deficit

But the most compelling argument against academies is the lack of democracy. An LEA is answerable to the local electorate. The LA can deal with any problems. Where do you go to in an academy? To the academy foundation that is the head of the business, but then where? Nowhere!

An academy has a 125-year lease that can't be rescinded without a change in law. Once an academy trust takes over, almost anything can happen. In Greenwich, for instance, the Greenwich Free School was established in 2012, and was re-brokered to ARK Multi-Academy Trust in 2018, the school being "too onerous for the trustees". In other words, it lacked the necessary expertise. It had a very high fixed pupil exclusion rate of more than 20%.

The trend now is for academies to join up into large organisations. For example, Correlli College (Academy), established in 2011, was by 2016 being given 'support' by Leigh Academies Trust (LAT). By 2018 the school had become the Hailey Academy Trust.

In Greenwich, we have had trusts that lasted barely three years. And, around the country, there are about 200 so-called 'orphan' schools that have been abandoned by their academy trusts, and left with no sponsors, and are unable by law to return to their Local Authorities.

What about the future?

What schools are future generations of children going to go to? Who knows! Anyone who can afford to run a school can have a go. Yet money is being wasted on academisation. Already, the administration costs alone of implementing academisation has been estimated at £2bn, all coming out of the over-stretched education budget. This is money that should have been spent directly on children's education: as a result, LA schools – and indeed now academies – are being starved of funds.

The *Guardian* reported on 23 January 2019 that the parliamentary watchdog, The Public Accounts Committee (PAC) concluded in its report that the education of tens of thousands of children has been damaged by academy failures, and by the misuse of public funds.

Parents are rightly concerned that their children's education is being disrupted by the fall-out from the academisation policy. Let's spend the money on strenuous improvements in locally elected LEA schools, where we have a chance to see and influence what's going on.

Anti-academy campaigns are gaining strength and being heard. The fight now is worth it: at stake is the plight of education for our children – and for their children's education in the future.

Ready, Steady - NO!

WN reporter

British business is about to be hit by a double whammy – in both cases what could be called an own goal. And if you read nothing else, read the last paragraph of this news item.

First, half of the nation's businesses are still completely unprepared for any form of BREXIT. The percentage increases if the outcome is what Boris Johnson has most recently embraced – the No Deal Option. (He has, it seems, decided that his pet idea Canada Plus Plus, is not so good after all.)

But that's not all: HMRC is starting to introduce a new system in April 2019 – it's called Making Tax Digital.

What's more, a report from Advanced's Latest Trends survey indicates that 43% of business owners don't understand the initiative and are unsure whether they will be ready for it.

Making Tax Digital is a key HMRC initiative that aims to digitalise all tax returns and submissions into one account whilst forcing businesses to transition to digital record keeping. HMRC hopes this will cut down on fraudulent behaviour as well as make filing a tax return simpler for most businesses. What could possibly go wrong . . .

MTD starts officially with VAT in April 2019 and moves on to Corporation Tax in April 2020. The survey revealed that only 57% of business owners are confident they have a solution in place for HMRC's first rollout of the scheme.

Whilst there have been widespread calls to delay, the first round goes ahead on the 1st April, requiring VAT-registered businesses above the threshold of £85k to keep digital records and submit VAT returns using compatible accounting software.

Business owners currently keeping paper records will be forced to transition to a digital format or risk breaking the law. HMRC recommends using a compatible bookkeeping software which will digitalise your records and give you the ability to submit your VAT return online.

For those looking to avoid learning a new bookkeeping software, you can use spreadsheets for your record keeping but you will still need to find compatible software or an accountant to submit your VAT return, **as submission via the HMRC's VAT gateway will be removed.**

However, adoption of bookkeeping software is not necessarily doom and gloom. Sandra Evans, of local accountancy firm Finsbury Robinson, told the *WN*:

"Whilst this is an onerous change for some businesses, there are some positives for those who choose to embrace online bookkeeping software.

"Modern bookkeeping software allows you real time access to your business' financials, thus giving you the ability to make better decisions, especially in respect to cashflow. They also make reconciliation of your bookkeeping much easier and offer many additional time-saving features such as invoicing, payment handling and credit control."

So, if your turnover is over £85k, you need to act quickly! If it's not over £85k, thank heaven for small mercies – and smaller bank balances! **But be warned, dear reader – it's your turn next: income tax will need to be declared four times a year from April 2020**

The point of education

The point of getting educated is to acquire mental grip: this is needed by everyone today, more than ever before. What has happened to mental grip? It seems to have gone AWOL in many quarters, including Westminster and Whitehall. Unfortunately schools have been organised for thirty years mainly on the principle of getting students to memorise facts and processes, pull them out in the examination, and hence end up with good grades. This fetish for memorization is not doing any good. This is not education. Everyone needs much more grip than this. The PER Group was founded in 1993 and has spent twenty-five years brainstorming what is required. We have meetings at Conway Hall on March 2nd and May 25th. For more details email Chris Ormell on chrisormell@aol.com or go to www.philosophyforeducation.moonfruit.com.



WHAT'S ON



ARTS

THE ARTS SOCIETY, GREENWICH
King William Court, Univ. of Greenwich
All lectures start at 7.45. Wine served from 7.15.
Mon. 11th March NOMADIC TEXTILES OF CENTRAL ASIA talk by Chris Alexander: Houses made from wool that warm in the depths of winter, carpets that tell stories, woven bands that appease ancestors, embroideries that ward off evil, and kilims ... Visitors welcome, please pay at the door
THE ARTS SOCIETY, BLACKHEATH
Thurs. 28th March Andy McConnell on MY UNEXPECTED CAREER IN THE WORLD OF GLASS 2.00pm. with tea and coffee, and lectures at 2.30. Venue is St Mary's Church Hall, Cresswell Park Blackheath Visitors welcome, please pay on the door.
THE WHITE BOX
5 Hare & Billet Road Blackheath SE30RB
Mar. 1st-10th Exhibition: Victoria Rance OTHER-WORLD - imagining the lost creatures & local spirits of Blackheath
Open Day Friday March 1st 11-8pm
Friday to Sunday 11-6pm and by appointment: victori-arance@btinternet.com
16th - 24th March 2019 CHRISTOPHER PEMBERTON and ALEXANDER PEMBERTON
Two artists, father and son, show paintings from Greenwich, 1960 - 2018 Weekends only 11.00 - 6.00 pm & by appointmentajpemberton@btinternet.co

CHILDREN & FAMILY

BLACKHEATH HALLS
Sat 2nd March 12.30 pm Trinity Laban Family Concert: **TALL TALES, MYTHS & LEGENDS: The music of Anton Dvorak** Age 4+ (PG)
Sat 18th Mar R SNOW WHITE, ROSE RED, BEAR BROWN 11.00 am & 3.00pm Age 4+ (PG)
Sat 30th Mar. SOURPUSS : a grumpy ginger cat 11.00am & 3.00pm Age 3 - 8. (Parental Guidance)
WORKSHOP 12.00 noon Recital Room Make your own shadow puppet £4.00
THE ALBANY, DEPTFORD
Fri 8th Mar. MASH UP Beat boxing music and puppetry 13+
Sun 10th Mar. TARZANNA Girl-power aerial theatre Ages 3+
Tue 19th - Wed 20th Mar. GLORY Funny story about wrestling Age 14+
Sunday 24 March 1.00pm & 3.00pm. £7 / £24 family ticket. Ages 3+. **LYNGO THEATRE PRESENTS JACK AND THE BEANSTALK**
Tues 26th Mar. FOOD FOR THOUGHT
Food from around the world - how does it get on our plates? Age 12+
Thu 28th - Sat 30th Mar. LIKKLE RUM WITH GRANDMA Jamaican story telling 14+
Sun 20th Mar THE BOY AND THE MERMAID Ages 5+ **ALL THE ABOVE: Parental Guidance**
SHERINGTON CHILDREN'S CENTRE, Tel. 0208 - 3053140 - 14, Sherington Road SE7 7JW
DAD'S STAY AND PLAY every Wednesday, 1.00pm -2.30pm drop in Sherington Children's Centre, all home dads welcome Each 2nd Saturday of the month - 10.00am -11.30am - free brunch/arts and craft Contact Daniel.hall1985@hotmail.co.uk s, www.selondondads.org.uk



Learning is fun

St Olave's is a Prep School in New Eltham for boys and girls aged 3-11 years

- Broad, child-centred curriculum
- Excellent results in the 11+ selection
- Clubs, outings and residential trips
- Excellent pastoral care
- Small classes
- Specialist staff for PE, IT, Music, French and Drama
- Sibling fee reduction
- Before and after school care

Tel: 020 8294 8930
www.stolaves.org.uk



THE WESTCOMBE SOCIETY

Sat March 16th - Daffodil Tea
Sat 20th April - Easter Egg Hunt
May 17th. Westcombe Soc. AGM
Sun 15th Sept - Macmillan Walk
Fri 27th Sept Macmillan Coffee Morning
Sat 26th Oct - Quiz Night

COMMUNITY

CHARLTON & BLACKHEATH HORTICULTURAL SOCIETY Charlton House Old Library
18th March, 7.30pm Jim Buttress will present a talk on "Greenwich Park". Jim was presenter of the BBC's Big Allotment Challenge and was superintendent of the Royal Parks for 25 years. All visitors welcome, £2. Also plant sales table, raffle and refreshments. <https://cabahs.wordpress.com/>
St GEORGE'S CHURCH
Sat March 2nd. Talent Night 6.30 for 7.00pm
Friday, 15 March 7.30 pm - AERIS BRASS ENSEMBLE St George's resident instrumental ensemble offers another evening of amazing music. Come and be delighted. Free & open to the public. A retiring collection. Refreshments provided.
SUNDAYS AT SUNFIELDS at Sunfields Methodist Church 95 Old Dover Road, Blackheath SE3 8SJ
Lunch! 1.00 - 4.00 pm First Sunday every month. ALL older people and their carers are welcome FREE,
WESTCOMBE WOODLANDS Volunteer dates: 2nd March, 7th April 4th May Sunday 2nd June
Come to the Entrance Gate at the end of Seren Park

THEATRE & OPERA

THE GREENWICH THEATRE, Crooms Hill, London SE10 8ES Box Office: 8858 7755
Fri 1st - Sun 3rd March THE ODYSSEY Humorous Homer. Eves 7.30, Sat mat 2.30 pm
Tues 5th Mar. NARCISSIST IN THE MIRROR award-winning dark comedy 7.30pm
Thu 14th - Sat 16th Mar. NO MIRACLES HERE Mental health issues & music 7.30pm
Wed. 20th - Sat 30th Mar. LORD OF THE FLIES Tues - Sat 7.30pm Wed Thurs & Sat Mats 2.30pm
Sun 24th Mar. LUKE JERMAJ INTUITION Can he read your mind? 7.00pm
Tues 2nd - Sat 6th April THE TRIALS OF OSCAR WILDE Eves 7.30 Sat mat 2.30pm
SE LONDON BASED MIDSUMMER OPERA Semi-staged perf. of Giordano's masterpiece
ANDREA CHÉNIER in Italian.on **Friday March 29th** at 7.00pm and on **Sunday March 31st** at 5.00pm. With MSO's symphony orchestra and chorus conducted by David Roblou. At St St John's Waterloo (opposite the station) and tickets cost only £24 if booked in advance (£22 concessions on Friday only). Phone number is 0207 652 0070. The website is <http://www.midsummeropera.org.uk>.

FIRST CLASS FREE!

The Acting Space

Adult Acting Class

for beginners

Mon 7-8.30pm The Forum, Trafalgar Road. SE10 9EQ
02036334641 info@theactingspace.co.uk

Eltham Executive Charter Ltd
Quality Mini Coach Specialist

16,29 Seater Minicoaches
Premium 12, 24 & 36 seater Minicoaches with WC & faculties

T 020 8850 2011
[E enquiries@eec-minicoaches.co.uk](mailto:Eenquiries@eec-minicoaches.co.uk) W www.eec-minicoaches.co.uk
1 Bromley Lane, Chislehurst, Kent BR7 6LH

MYCENAE HOUSE LIVE EVENTS: March

MYCENAE HOUSE, Mycenae Road SE3
Fri 8th Mar 8pm - JazzNights. Candlit Live Jazz music event hosted by Dave Silk. £10.
Thurs 14th Mar 4pm - Bach To Baby. Classical Concert for families. £10.
Fri 15th Mar 7pm - Global Fusion's St Patrick's Day Event. Great night of music, dance, poetry and food! £12
Fri 22nd Mar 7.30pm - Musicspace_woolwich's Spring Concert. A mix of talent from the local area and beyond in aid of Greenwich & Bexley Community Hospice. £10.
Sat 30th Mar 1pm - Children's Theatre: 'The Nightingale Game'. A world of shadows and songs, an epic journey! £5.
For further information visit www.mycenaehouse.co.uk

MUSIC

BLACKHEATH HALLS
Wed Mar 6th. 2.30pm Opera Masterclass
Recital room Free, booking required
7.30 pm performance of lieder and arias 2hrs inc interval £10.00 | £8.00
Thur. 7th March 8.00pm ALBERT LEE
75th birthday tour One of the world's finest guitarists Great Hall £25.00
Fri. 8th March LEVERET play traditional English folk music £16.00
Sat March 9th 7.30pm The Halls' Orchestra & Chorus perform Bach & Walton £16 | £14
Sun 10th Mar 11.00 am Recital room **WOMEN COMPOSERS IN SONG** £10 | £8.00
Tue 12th Mar. 7.30pm TRINITY LABAN JAZZ ORCHESTRA Free, booking required
Wed 13th Mar. & Thu 14th Mar 7.00pm **LEWISHAM LIVE FESTIVAL** New work by young composers £8.00 | £6.00
Sat 16th Mar. 8.00pm RAY GELATO & THE GIANTS 25th Anniversary Party £22 | £20
Sun 17th Mar OPERA GALA NIGHT Doors open 6.00pm Performance start 7.45pm
Tickets £50.00 £475 table of 10) including light supper. 4 hours long. A fund-raiser
Wed. 20th Mar piano recital Haydn & Schumann. Free booking required
Fri 22nd Mar THE HERMES EXPERIMENT 6.00pm Free, booking required
Mon 25th Mar 1.10 pm CONCERT Mozart & Chopin piano pieces Free, retiring donation
Thu 28th Mar 6.00pm JONATHAN DOVE 60th BIRTHDAY CONCERT FREE, booking required. Local boy makes good, so a must for Westcombe Society members!
Fri 29th Mar 7.30 pm TRINITY LABAN SYMPHONIC WINDS play modern pieces. Free booking required
Sat 30th Mar JUNIOR TRINITY LABAN SPRING CONCERT Free booking
Sun 31st March 3.00pm FROM RUSSIA WITH LOVE Russian composers celebrating secret treaties! £10.00 | £8.00

SPOKEN WORD

INDUSTRIAL HISTORY SOCIETY
Photography Exhibition: "On The Fringe" at Number 86 Cafe, Royal Hill Greenwich London SE10 8RT Until 21st March 2019.
IN-WORDS
April 9th 7.30 West Greenwich Library: Irish poet Jane Clarke will be reading from All the Way Home, inspired by WW1 letters & photographs & the Auerbach family, donated to Mary Evans Library in Blackheath, Compered by Blake Morrison www.in-words.co.uk

CLEONA LIRA – 2PLAN WEALTH MANAGEMENT LTD.

INDEPENDENT FINANCIAL ADVISER, CHARTERED STATUS. SPECIALIST IN INVESTMENTS, PENSIONS & ETHICAL INVESTMENTS.

Address: Heron Tower, 13th Floor, 110 Bishopsgate, London, EC2N 4AD

Email: cleona.lira@2plan.com (T): 0207 112 4968
Website: <http://cleonamarialira.2plan.com/> Blog: <http://cleonalira.co.uk/>

2plan Wealth Management Ltd is authorised and regulated by the Financial Conduct Authority.

It is entered on the Financial Services Register (www.fca.org.uk) under reference 461598.

Susan Clark Interiors



Complete renovation to Decoration, Construction, Project Management Interior Design, Kitchens & Bathrooms
Bespoke Curtains & Blinds, Joinery Upholstery, Furniture, Gifts, Cards

Tel. 0208 305 2299
www.susanclarkinteriors.com

FEATURES

Heritage centre update

Readers will be aware that the Heritage Centre was abruptly closed with no clear steer on the future of the archives and their accessibility. This is now the only London Borough not to have an easily accessible archive.

The original plan was to move the Centre to Anchorage Point, and while the *WV* understands that work on the plans is “ongoing” there has been a regrettable delay in implementation.

Greenwich Archive Users Forum (GAUF) are still in discussion on this dreadful issue with the Council and with the Greenwich Heritage Trust (GHT).

It is understood that Trust staff hope to offer a ‘bespoke’ service from March for experienced researchers and, for others, an appointment service. It is not clear if this will be at Charlton House or elsewhere. Work is ongoing on cataloguing, and digitisation is being considered.

Local planning authorities have a legal obligation to make information about the historic environment publicly accessible as part of policy-making or development management.

If you would like to be added to the Supporters' List of GAUF, please contact Elizabeth Pearcey (e.pearcey@gmail.com)

Counselling for young people

Launched on 4 February 2019, the first day of Children’s Mental Health Week, a new online counselling service will give children and young people across south east London, including Greenwich, access to free, anonymous mental health and emotional well-being support.

The NHS across south east London has commissioned XenZone’s online counselling service, Kooth, to give local children and young people aged 11-19 access to free, anonymous mental health and emotional well-being support.

Kooth has been available to young people in Lewisham for two years. Over 1000 children having already benefited from the service so far.

For an initial period of 14 months the service will now also be made available to young people across the remaining boroughs of south east London – Greenwich, Bexley, Bromley, Lambeth and Southwark.

Kooth offers access to self-help materials, mood-tracking and goal setting tools, counsellor messaging and peer-to-peer

Meet your neighbour: Neville Grant talks to

Joel Thomas, Director of BCfS



When you first meet Joel Thomas, you get the strong impression of a very happy man who is passionate about music. So passionate that he appears to have time for little else: a human dynamo with incredible energy. And he needs it!

Apart from running five different choirs at the Blackheath Centre for Singing, all of which meet regularly in Mycenae House, he has now added two other commitments as organist at St George’s church, and choir master to the church’s choir.

Born in Finchley, he went to school in North London, he took part in the music making as a Junior at the Guildhall School of Music on Saturday mornings – which he highly recommends to any school child interested in music.

He graduated from the Royal Northern College of Music in Manchester – a formative experience: he says that the college did not just operate in its own musical enclave, but made a point of involving the university in its activities.

Jules won his first award as a conductor in such a collaboration, over twenty years ago. I first met him when he became St George’s new organist; impressed by his skill, I asked him if the organ was his

primary instrument. No, he said, it is the piano. His first job? Freelancing – serious music, not soft jazz in smokey night clubs; but soon, much no doubt to the relief of his bank manager, he got a job as Director of Choirs for Barnet Schools Music Centres. a job he did for seven years.

This was the period when as director of music, he had to hone his skills as a conductor, a job that requires empathy with the performers (and the audience) as much as technical skill; he is now much in demand as a freelance conductor, virtually every week, working with some ten different choirs across London.



But he already runs those six different choirs in Blackheath: apart from St George’s, which made dramatic progress under his baton, they range from his Chamber Choir, which includes advanced singers, some of whom are graduates in music; a “Singing for Pleasure” choir; a “Finding Your Voice” choir; a choir dedicated to pop, soul and jazz; and a small but growing children’s choir. All this work is packed into Mondays, Tuesdays and Wednesdays, leaving three – no, four – days of the week for his conducting those other choirs across London.

These involve a very wide repertoire: Monteverdi, Bach, Mozart, Carl Orff’s *Carmina Burana*, and modern works, including the American composer Eric Whitacre. He even conducts the occasional opera – including a notable *Dido and Aeneas* in St Alfege’s a while ago, where he will return to conduct Brahms’ German requiem at Easter.

Many readers will remember a splendid

performance of Bach’s Christmas Oratorio in December at St Margaret’s, Lee.

Joel seems totally inexhaustible. How does he manage it? Mainly, it seems because he is passionate about music.

He does have staff and volunteer team to back him up. But the local choirs all need their programmes worked out, selecting music appropriate for each group; then he must get familiar with the scores for many other professional engagements – doubly demanding if as often happens there is limited time for rehearsals.

I asked Joel which three pieces of music he would choose if cast away on a desert island, and this nearly stumped him: on the classical side, under extreme pressure, he finally nominated Tallis, Monteverdi and Brahms; otherwise he was very eclectic, but placed folk at the top of his list.

He must occasionally unwind, surely. Yes, although he has only lived in Blackheath for three years, he has worked here

for ten, starting the BCfS in 2012. He loves the green spaces of Blackheath and Greenwich Park, and exploring the Kent countryside. But music is his passion.

So where are his singers coming from? All over our area in SE London: currently there are about ninety singers in his five different choirs: they don’t have to be able to read music, and he enjoys working with a varied skill base, from children, and beginners, to professionals.

I asked Joel what is the appeal of singing in a choir: he says it’s all about self-expression, fellowship – and the inclusiveness of it: you might never meet your fellow-singers if it were not for the choir. Above all, it generates joy: ask anyone who sings in a choir, and they will tell you that singing makes them feel better, and there is scientific evidence to support this. With the world as it is, we certainly do need more joy in our lives. So, come and sing!

JOHN DANN FURNITUREMAKER - EST. 1984

High quality bespoke fitted and freestanding furniture made to your requirements. Repair and restoration work also undertaken.

E-mail: johndann93@gmail.com
Website: johndannfurniture.co.uk
Tel.0208 852 3047 or 07837 859763

PAINTING & DECORATING

Interior/Exterior/
Experienced Reliable Clean
Fully Guaranteed/Insured.
References available.
Free no obligation quote
and advice given

JOHN at JAMES & LAMONT
Office 020 8462 4646
Mobile 07802 535695
jamlam.john@btinternet.com

Grant Saw Wealth Management Limited

INDEPENDENT PERSONAL and CORPORATE FINANCIAL ADVISERS

Investments - Pensions - Estate Planning

2 Charlton Road, Blackheath Standard
London SE3 7EX (T) 020 3417 9760
email: enquiries@gswealth.co.uk
website: www.gswealth.co.uk.

HELPING YOU PLAN YOUR FUTURE
Grant Saw Wealth Management Ltd. is authorised and regulated by the Financial Conduct Authority



RECTORY COURT & LEAH LODGE

LUXURY CARE HOMES IN BLACKHEATH

Determined to be the difference

Residential | Dementia* | Respite | Day Care

Rectory Court The Glebe, SE3 9TU | Tel: 0203 553 5768
Leah Lodge Blessington Rd, SE13 5EB | Tel: 0208 108 2802

www.cinnamoncc.com

Emerson Park Apartments & Emerson Grange Care Home
Opening July 2018 in Hextable, Kent

THE Cinnamon CARE COLLECTION

*Select locations.



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

Goodbye to Wet Wipes?

According to the non-profit London environmental organisation Thames 21, wet-wipes are changing the shape of the River Thames. Thames 21, which cleans rivers and canals around the city, said its volunteers pulled 5,453 wipes from one small area the size of a tennis court on the river embankment near Hammersmith in a single month, an increase of more than 1,000 wipes on last year's figure.

"You need to go at low tide to see the mounds forming," said Kirsten Downer, a member of Thames 21. "Wet-wipes are accumulating and affecting the shape of the riverbed. These mounds look natural, but look closer: they are composed of wet-wipes mixed with twigs and mud."

Antiseptic wet wipes are widely used in the NHS, and staff are trained to dispose of them properly – NOT down the loo. Wet wipes, especially baby wipes, have now become a massive industry in the UK.

The main problem is that many people assume all wipes, baby or otherwise, are flushable, when in fact they contain plastic, are not bio-degradable, and should therefore never be put in the toilet.

In December, Water UK found that 93% of all sewage blockages in Great Britain were due to wet wipes. There are some 300,000 sewer blockages a year, costing £100m, and harming the environment.

Around the world, cities are finding huge subterranean "fat bergs" blocking sewers: fat bergs are giant blobs of solid waste matter and congealed fat.

In Whitechapel, a fat berg the size of 11 double-decker buses was found last year. This year, a fat-berg an astonishing 64m in diameter was found in Sidmouth, Devon.

And the wet wipes that aren't blocking the sewers are making it into the river, and not just the Thames. Sewers, rivers and canals all round the country are affected.

Our coastline, too: over the last ten years the volunteers in the annual Great British Beach Clean Beach Clean-up have recorded a fifteen-fold increase in the number of wet wipes. Last year, on average, there was one wet wipe every five or six metres.

However, there is now light at the end of the sewer: wet wipes that are plastic-free are being developed in Swindon, and will carry a "Free-to-Flush" logo. This new fine-to-flush standard will make it easier for consumers to buy an environmentally-friendly product.

Why on earth did the planners approve this? asks former planning officer ROGER ALLEN

Is this a question you have asked yourself when someone changed the use of a favourite shop; unsympathetic alterations were made to buildings or their surroundings; an extension was approved for the house next door; a tiny plot was infilled or yet more 'mega-blocks' were built?

I'll share my little secret. Until 6 years ago, I was one of those pesky planners. I dealt with planning applications and recommended what should be refused and what should be permitted, and why.

Planning regulations and government planning guidance have changed since I left, but some general principles still stand.

Here's a quick primer in why 'the planners' aren't all-powerful...

"Why don't the planners stop it?"

Only changes that planning legislation classes as "development" need planning permission. For instance, uses of land, or uses of space within buildings, are classed by the Use Classes Order into categories.

If the change is from one use in a category to another, it simply isn't "development". Whether permission is needed for a change of use depends on which categories are involved and in some cases on size of development.

Parliament has also granted automatic planning permission for "permitted developments". For instance, your neighbour's small extension or garden building may be permitted development.

Planners are paid to suffer so that you don't have to, but a quick google of 'permitted development' or 'change of use' should lead you to the relevant pages on the internet: www.planningportal.co.uk for further information.

"This scheme's outrageous! How could the Council allow the application to be submitted?"

Terrible the proposed development may be, but if a planning application has the necessary plans and forms properly completed, then the Council is OBLIGED in law to consider it.

"Why didn't the Council take far more time and give the application proper consideration?"

From receipt the Council only has eight clear weeks (for most applications), or 13

weeks for 'major' applications, before the applicant can appeal to the Secretary of State and hence take the decision out of the Council's hands. This time includes compulsory periods of consultation.

"Why didn't the Council get every last detail of this scheme to comply fully with its policies?"

National planning regulations encourage detailed consideration of the ramifications of application schemes (by requiring applicants to submit supplementary statements on design or sustainability) but the inexorable ticking of the clock often undermines these good intentions. Unfortunately, applicants may well be able to commit a dedicated project team to negotiating an approval, whilst cash-strapped councils assign a development control case officer, (who is probably dealing with dozens of other schemes) plus the odd bit of input from specialist staff.

"Why didn't they tell the applicant to appeal and be damned? The Council's been utterly spineless, caving in on this scheme."

You almost need a background in games theory to explain this satisfactorily. Official planning guidance presumes that all applications or planning appeals should be approved unless this would be "harmful to matters of acknowledged planning importance".

This is obviously reasonable, since it rules out refusals based on prejudice against particular types of applications. However national planning guidelines have successively ruled out more and more things from constituting "matters of acknowledged planning importance".

They have also stacked the rules by changes such as redefining 'affordable' housing as costing no more than 80%(!) of local market rents and allowing applicants to duck out of providing any affordable housing on the basis of a financial 'viability statement'.

Planning Inspectors can also vary quite a bit in their general attitude to local councils: some can be sympathetic, most are neutral, but some can be distrustful of, or even hostile to, local authorities.

There are also considerations of cost in staff time and money in fighting an appeal, and the risk of having costs awarded

against the Council if the appeal is upheld. This shouldn't, of course, stop councils fighting appeals on schemes which are absolutely dreadful, but in a time of massively squeezed resources it may be better to put up with a not-very-good scheme which you suspect would be approved at appeal than to fight an appeal and lose.

"It's all very well the Council imposing planning conditions, as if that's going to make a bad scheme good".

National guidance says that councils should consider imposing conditions, where compliance with them would avoid harm to "matters of acknowledged planning importance", rather than simply refusing permission. The problem comes when cynical applicants agree conditions they have no intention of complying with even though non-compliance is often looked upon harshly by planning inspectors at enforcement appeals.

"Why doesn't the Council totally tie down the applicant by imposing loads of conditions on the approval?"

Because national planning guidelines rule it out. These say clearly that a condition should ONLY be imposed if it is ABSOLUTELY NECESSARY to avoid harm to (you guessed it) "a matter of acknowledged planning importance".

Hopefully you are now reconsidering your low opinion of 'the planners'? Add to that the fact that councils have to be able to prove at a Public Local Inquiry that policies they wish to include in their Unitary Development Plans are in line with national policy guidelines. In the end, you might be amazed that they manage to achieve anything worthwhile at all.

SPECTRUM

Painters & Decorators
Interior/Exterior
No job too Small
Clean and Reliable

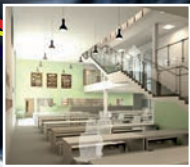
Free Estimates
30 Years Experience

020 8853 2759 or 0795 0815412
Email: paulgammon.pg@googlemail.com

Where tradition meets innovation
and potential is realised within a
nurturing community



We will be moving to our
permanent site at Old Dover Road
in September 2019



www.leighacademyblackheath.org.uk
Shaping Lives, Transforming Communities

RECTORY COURT
& LEAH LODGE



LUXURY CARE HOMES IN BLACKHEATH

Determined to be the difference

Residential | Dementia* | Respite | Day Care

Rectory Court The Glebe, SE3 9TU | Tel: 0203 553 5768
Leah Lodge Blessington Rd, SE13 5EB | Tel: 0208 108 2802

www.cinnamoncc.com

Emerson Park Apartments & Emerson Grange Care Home
Opening July 2018 in Hextable, Kent

*Select locations.

MARKET PLACE

Please send ads for the Market Place with payment by the 10th day of the preceding month to:
Marilyn Little, 163, Westcombe Hill, SE3 7DP
8853 1312 Advertising@westcombesociety.org
ALL classified adverts 30p per word. Please make cheques payable to The Westcombe Society

ACCOMMODATION/ROOMS FOR HIRE

FUNCTION ROOM FOR HIRE
Blackheath area, up to 150 people, Bar, disabled access. Tel 07940 296290
HOST FAMILIES Reliable and caring families required for short term students All enquiries to elizabeth.keiran@tiscali.co.uk

GARDENING

GARDEN MAINTENANCE: mowing, weeding, pruning, planting, hedging, winter tidy ups, garden tuition, communal garden contracts,RHS qualified. Call John and Rachel 07746 121510
GRASS CUTTING, hedges, tree work. 020 83097910.

HOLIDAYS

WHITSTABLE WEEKENDS / WEEKS Sea wall house between Oyster Warehouse and Harbour. Sleeps 5. Fantastic views. 8858 6578 or 013 04 367443

SERVICES & TRADE

LARGE METAL TRUNKS Ideal for storage or removal for disposal. Gordon Baker. Phone: 0208 858 3675.
REPAIRS & ALTERATIONS: Hems. Darts in dresses, and Jackets relined etc. Call 07904 880 448
S.S.D BUILDERS LTD.
Long established Building & Roofing Company available for free estimates & advice. ALL works undertaken, from guttering to Refurbishments. All works viewed within 24 hours, fully insured & new work is guaranteed. Call us today on 07931 536533 or 0208 305 1039 ssdbuilders2@hotmail.com
A MAN AND A VAN Tel: 0208 858 3889
Mobile: 07885 917842
WESTCOMBE CLEANERS I'm a friendly, hard-working & organised domestic cleaner. Regular or single services. Competitive rates. Additional tasks. I love my clients to be happy. Phone 07746 291617
PHONE/BROADBAND SOCKETS.
Improved Broadband speed plates, Fault Finding Repairs, New Extensions, Tidying of cables. 25 yrs BT, Insured. 07845 705900
JEWELLERY AND WATCH REPAIRS AND VALUATIONS from Michele Franklin. British Jewellers Association accreditation 07809 502 714 Michele@personaljewellerylondon.co.uk
SUNSHINE WINDOW CLEANING For a no-obligation quote call Martin on 07821403577
AIR CONDITIONING & ELECTRICAL WORK Fully qualified engineers CSCS Tel: 07419 312547
PEST CONTROL SERVICES All types of pests dealt with including fox control. Call John 0208 300 3496
C.S. CARPENTRY-JOINERY
Decorating and all building work undertaken. Joseph McNamara 8857 5480, mob. 07947155366

WOULD YOU RATHER
EXTRA SPACE
EXTRA TIME
AND LESS STUFF?

AVOCADO INTERIORS Experts in decluttering, home organisation home styling, makeovers and all things interiors
www.avocadointeriors.co.uk info@avocadointeriors.co.uk
07747 616957 or 07833 053923

WRISTWORTH HEATING & PLUMBING

Installation - Servicing - Repair

Tel: 07725 008280

Email: wristworth@hotmail.co.uk



Check Out Our **NEW** Website: wristworthheating.weebly.com

MARK CHEESEMAN, LOCAL CARPENTER AND JOINER WITH OVER 30 YEARS EXPERIENCE.

All Aspects Of Carpentry and Construction Executed Considerately and to a High Standard. Both Traditional and Contemporary Design Joinery - Cupboards, Wardrobes, Floating Shelves Etc. Sash Window Overhaul. If you have Rotten Window Sills, Door Frames Etc. rather than replace them with the associated upheaval and expense, why not have a Timber/Resin Repair? Please Call Mark on 07767 456131 or H: 020 8854 4028.
S.S.D PLUMBING AND HEATING Friendly local plumber available for free estimates and advice. All works undertaken, no job too small, from boilers to bathroom suites, all works viewed within 24 hours, fully insured and new work guaranteed. Call today on 07931 536533 or 8305 1039 ssdbuilders2@hotmail.com
UPHOLSTERER SPECIALISING IN TRADITIONAL UPHOLSTERY Www.suemayesupholstery.net or phone 07932 040298

S.S.D DAMP PROOFING SPECIALISTS
in the treatment of RISING & PENETRATING damp. Repair/ renewal of rotten structural timbers as a result of damp. Chemical injection and render using tried and tested systems. Specialists in providing horizontal and vertical barriers against damp/ water ingress. Please contact us for a free consultation and written estimate. Mob: 07931 536 533 Land: 0208 305 1039
PUBBLE PLASTERING
Need a plasterer with excellent references? Work is of high standard. Qualified C&G. Plastering- Rendering-Plasterboarding - Repairs. Free quotes! Call Alex on 07547 468459 / 0203 092 0684 Email pubbleplastering@googlemail.com
MALCOLM TIERNEY, CARPENTER
Specialist in refurbishment, repair and replacement of sash windows. 07775 657371
LOCAL CARPET/OVEN CLEANER Specialist in cleaning Carpets & Ovens, Upholstery & rugs. Competitive rates. Email: adam@carpetcrew.co.uk M: 07828 503132 <http://www.carpetcrew.co.uk>
DECORATING, ELECTRICS
Plumbing and Property Maintenance. Est, 25 years. References available. Phil McNamara 8857 5480, mobile 07814 360862

WINDOW & GUTTER CLEANING
Blackheath-window-cleaner.co.uk 07791 465052
T.TA ELECTRICS. NICEIC Approved Contractor, Quality Tradesman. All electrical work undertaken, Fully Insured & Guaranteed. 24HR EMERGENCY ELECTRICAL. Please call Tony on 07961 509403 OR 0208 488 7425 OR info@ttaelectrics.co.uk
INTERIOR DECORATOR & CARPENTER with over 20 years experience. A member of the guild of master-craftsman. Free quotes & friendly advice on all your decorating requirements. Local references available. Tel. Ashley Greaves 8858 2981
HOMEWORKS All-round handyman for those DIY's you have no time for! General repairs. Painting & Decorating. General Carpentry and flooring. Flat-pack assembly. Patio and deck cleaning. No job too small. Contact Matthew Barron 07903 388658
ELECTRICIAN / ALARM ENGINEER
No job too small TMIET registered. Call 07879 011792
TRAINED CHIMNEY SWEEP & STOVE INSTALLER
Fast, friendly Happy to work! Call Anthony on 07772 649577 or email: chimneymaintenance@gmail.com

MALE PA CARER GENERAL HELPER
Available Thurs, Fri, Sat and Sundays.Works with male & female clients Good references If interested please call Rogerio on 07868555234
MOBILE HAIRDRESSING Special rates for OAPs. Ring Sjeron on 0208/856/8026
HANDYMAN. Small works, furniture assembly, brickwork, plastering, hard landscaping, fencing, paving, small carpentry work, deliveries and light removals.
Call Chris Pepper: 07944 680269
TOM ELLIS BESPOKE CARPENTRY
Alcove bookcases, cabinets, wardrobes and window seats. Mob.. 07510 869 947

TUITION

ITALIAN TUITION Native Italian teacher offers lessons at all levels. Preparation for GCSE, A-LEVELS courses, Grammar, Conversation Tel 07788 743371
MATHS & ENGLISH TUITION and preparation for 11+ and independent school selection tests by qualified and experienced teacher.marystuition.com Mary Bauckham 0770 9089838 marybauckham@gmail.com
LOCAL PRIVATE TUITION 1-1 or small group tutoring in English and Maths learning support GCSE by qualified tutor. Call: 07904 880 448
SHOW YOUR COMPUTER WHO IS THE BOSS
Are you looking for some extra help working with your computer? Need some help with your digital photos, online shopping and the jargon? To discuss the options, call Paul on 07958 251448 or email paul.clayton@soulchip.co.uk
RUSSIAN TUITION. Russian-speaking university lecturer offers lessons at all levels (including university, business and conversation) in your home/office. Tel.: 07766 531401
SPANISH TUITION all ages and levels, GCSE, A levels , conversation, literature, by Latinoamerican native speaker. Please contact Miguel at migansiergut52@gmail.com or 07910 318513
MULVIHILL ACADEMY OF IRISH DANCE Adult and Child Irish Dance Classes available in Blackheath area. Come along for a fun-all-in-one workout. For more information call Rachel on 07707 100521
11+ TUITION Successful, qualified and experienced DBS-certified tutor providing one-to-one preparation of all eleven-plus exam components (CEM, GL systems). Evenings, weekends available. Email: elevenplus.smarter@gmail.com
MATHS TUITION Qualified and experienced secondary teacher offers tuition to GCSE level. Call Miv Whitaker: 07745816338; or email miv.whitaker@gmail.com
ENGLISH & MATHS TUITION and preparation for SATS. Qualified and experienced Primary teacher offers tuition from Year 2 to Year 6. Call Caroline : 07765255008 or email : carolinecd00@hotmail.com
ENGLISH PRONUNCIATION Accent Softening, Accents & Dialects, Voice and Public Speaking. Coaching from local Teacher and Actor. 25 years experience. Contact David at david.bauckham55@gmail.com www.davesvoicebox.com

A & A LANDSCAPES Landscape Specialists



Free advice & estimates



Qualified horticulturalist

All aspects of soft & hard landscaping work carried out including
* Maintenance *Site clearance
* Turfing * Tree surgery * Patios
* Fencing * Brickwork

Tel. 020 8318 2530

PLANNING APPLICATIONS <http://www.westcombesociety.org>

82 COLERAINE ROAD ref 18/4419/HD
Construct outbuilding (workshop, garage, hobby room) in rear garden with access from Webb Road. Install 1.5m wrought iron fence and gate to front.
40 ST JOHNS PARK REF 19/0183/HD
Construct single storey rear wrap-around extension.

TREE WORKS
31 HEATHWAY ref 19/0478/TC
Fell Ailanthus, crown reduce magnolia, sambucus.
82 COLERAINE ROAD ref 18/4419/HD
Fell 2 horse chestnuts, a silver birch and sambucus in rear garden.

BUY LOCAL!

Discounts available on production of your Westcombe Society membership card.

BLACKHEATH VILLAGE:
PARES FOOTWEAR
10% OFF all shoes over £20, excluding sale stock
RAFFLES DESIGNER WEAR.
10% OFF all non-sale goods

THE VERB SHOP 10 percent discount on all copywriting and content creation. Free 1 hour assessment of your marketing material.

GREENWICH:
NORTH POLE RESTAURANT
12.5% OFF Meals only for two
3D DIVING 10% discount on all scuba diving courses. Offer excludes scuba diving equipment.
GREENWICH COMMUNICATION CENTRE
at 164 Trafalgar Road: 10% Discount on all Computer Maintenance & Repairs (inc Tablets & Smartphones)
www.greenwichcc.com T: 02082692103

HUMBER ROAD:
BODYWORKZ - THE FITNESS CLINIC
109 Humber Road.10% OFF all treatments costing £30 or more except Chiropody; exc.Saturdays.
ROYAL NEPALESE RESTAURANT
(Station Crescent) 20% OFF meals for two or more Sunday - Thursday.
CORIANDER RESTAURANT (Station Crescent) 25% off Sunday to Thursday. Bookings only!

THE STANDARD:
COTON & HAMBLIN - OPTICIANS
£65 off complete spectacles
BLACKHEATH EYECARE OPTICIANS
20% off 2nd pair of spectacles. (Same prescription). Not in conjunction with any other offer. (Complete glasses start from £49.95 with single vision lenses). 5% off contact lens solution and accessories. <https://www.blackheatheyecare.co.uk/>
TROJAN PRESS 10% OFF all quotations

WESTCOMBE HILL
A * DRIVING SCHOOL £5 discount on the price of one x 2 hour lesson for WS members.
THE WONDER WOMEN NETWORK 10% discount

WESTCOMBE PARK ROAD
KAREN STOREY OF HOMESPACE offers members 10% discount on decluttering & homestaging services. Please note the new number: 07951 191086 www.home-space.biz
PENINSULA
SHENDA FALVEY PERSONAL TRAINING & BOOTCAMPS Free bootcamp session at Greenwich Peninsula worth £10. Book to secure place (excludes existing customers) 25% off first personal training session plus free consultation M: 07887 727 335 www.shendafalveypersonaltraining.com



THE POINTER SCHOOL
FOR BOYS AND GIRLS FROM 3 TO 11 YEARS



LEARNING FOR LIFE

FIRST CLASS EXAM RESULTS	NEW 10 ACRE SPORTS GROUND
OUTSTANDING PASTORAL CARE	FRESHLY PREPARED ORGANIC FOOD
CHILDCARE VOUCHERS ACCEPTED	OPEN DURING SCHOOL HOLIDAYS
COMPETITIVE FEES	50+ EXTRA-CURRICULAR CLUBS
BREAKFAST CLUB & AFTER SCHOOL CARE	CHRISTIAN/EVANGELIST FOUNDATION

Main School: **19 Stratheden Road, SE3 7TH**
Early Years: **37 Shooters Hill Road, SE3 7HS**
020 8293 1331
office@pointers-school.co.uk



pointers-school.co.uk

BUILD & CREATE
CONSTRUCTION LTD

BE INSPIRED AND BUILD

Extensions and refurbishments



buildandcreate.co.uk
clinton@buildandcreate.co.uk
0796 1089012 0208 305 2184

Proud members of
Checkatrade.com
Where reputation matters

