What could be better than a gentle spring-time stroll along the Thames Path in Greenwich? Well, it could be better, certainly at low tide, when one can see the amazing amount of rubbish – especially plastic – that is strewn on the foreshore.

A series of river cleans along the Thames and its tributaries revealed that more than 80% of litter found in the Thames, and 78% on its tributaries, was made up of single-use items such as metal drink cans, food packaging and plastic drinks bottles.

Over 60% of litter would disappear from Thames basin if we moved away from single-use items, say the waterways charity Thames21 and the Marine Conservation Society.

What is Thames21?
Thames21’s vision is to put healthy rivers at the heart of community life. The idea is to reconnect people to nature by helping them enjoy, protect and enhance their local rivers. On its website it says: “Whether it’s the Thames or one of its many tributaries, we offer inspiring ways for communities to get down to their local riverbank. Thousands of volunteers help us rewild rivers, canals and other stretches of open water, and protect them every year.

“Our aim is to rebuild the relationship between communities and their rivers.”

What does Thames21 do?
Thames21 has a four-pronged approach:

• It campaigns to get meaningful change, such as Break The Bag Habit.

• Thames River Watch trains Londoners to collect crucial data on foreshore plastic involving more than 1,000 volunteers to date, including students.

• It runs education programmes.

• Thames21 is on trend 

last year, Thames21’s River Watch Programme, in partnership with Tideway, the company building the new Thames sewage tunnel, won a highly prestigious Dragon Community Partners Award, less than a week after it released news revealing how the summer heatwaves contributed to more plastic litter in the river.

So, what’s happening in Greenwich? Patrick Ives, chairman of the East Greenwich Residents Association, told the W:

“One of the things we’ve organised is a spring and autumn clean-up of the Thames Path near the golf driving range. There is a planted area there that hasn’t been very well looked after.

“Last year we also included a river clean-up of the Ordinance Draw Dock by the Intercontinental Hotel. Another is planned soon.

“We have been thinking about a foreshore clean-up for some time but there are issues with that. Tide times have to be looked at, access to the foreshore in our area is somewhat lacking in places, and there may be liability issues. We haven’t looked into any co-ordination with Thames21 yet but that may be the way forward. The Great British Spring Clean is on until about the 22nd of April. Last year’s spring time clean-up, which included the draw dock, was part of this.

“This year we will organise something fairly soon for that and it might include the foreshore as well, probably near the Morden Wharf building. That would have to take into account the issues mentioned earlier.”

Stephanie Baker adds: “There’s a lovely campaign to make Londoners think carefully about their choices and waste disposal – it’s called For Fish’s Sake, Don’t Leave Litter and uses the hashtag #ffsldn. I believe it was started by a student at Greenwich University. There’s a large sign about the campaign on the Greenwich Peninsula; ironically I found it around the corner from a lot of construction waste along the Peninsula.”

Thames21’s London Rivers Week takes place May 25–June 2. For information about volunteering, and action, please go to Thames21.org.uk/londonriversweek

Cleaning up our river

Westcombe NEWS

Free to 3800 homes, in libraries and some shops

May 2019 No. 4

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

The Thames21 story
Thames21 was set up in 2005 to promote conservation of London’s rivers and waterways. It works in partnership with communities to improve rivers, and campaigns for people and wildlife.

Blackheath Girls High School
The extended and refurbished school was reopened on May 2nd with addresses by CarolineCisco Peters OBE and Cheryl Giovannesi, CEO, GDfT.

Good news for rail passengers
Network Rail’s proposal to close the foot crossing over the freight line at Angostura Wharf has been withdrawn. Travellers from the Fairthorn Road/Cotord Road area, and Victoria Way will be very relieved, for the route provides quick access to Westcombe Park Station. Cllr Stephen Brain (Labour and Co-Operative, Peninsula ward) told the W: “Due to the combination of good work by Peninsula ward Councillors, Matthew Pennycook MP, residents and the very quick work of the Council’s Legal Services Team, I can confirm that no permanent closure will take place.”

A petition opposing the plan attracted 600 signatures in 24 hours.

Greenwich Civic Awards
The full list is now available; all well deserved. It includes: Lifetime Achievement award John Kervin

Blackheath Hall
Community awards Tim Barnes Rev Robert (“Tim”) Vaughan The Chatton Society

NHS staff shortages
Lewisham and Greenwich NHS Trust faces serious staff shortages. Some are leaving because of Brexit; others for other reasons. Across the UK there were 24,000 unfilled vacancies in the NHS. At present 19% of NHS needed staff are from overseas.

The Botticelli Madonna in Ranger’s House isn’t a copy: it’s the real thing! See page 4.

Construction traffic: Correction
RBG were at pains to point out that the above trunk roads are the only ones approved for construction traffic and inappropriate use of other routes is not permitted.

A Construction Traffic Management Plan will set out the measures required to manage construction traffic.

Link to documents below:

A Route Too Far?
residents of Westcombe Hill be worried?

See page 7.

The Westcombe Society
Annual General Meeting
Friday May 17th 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.

Guest speaker:
100 years after (some) women won the vote, Jane Grant will give a talk on the part women in Greenwich & Lewisham played in the campaign - with free bookings! + Wine & Nibbles.

Nominations for new members of the committee needed. Members only – but new members can join on the night!
AGENDA
1. Welcome and apologies for absence
2. Approval of, and matters arising from, Minutes of 2018 AGM
3. Reports from the Chair  
   - Events Sub-Committee,  
   - Environment Sub-Committee,  
   - Membership Secretary,  
   - Editor of the Westcombe News
4. Treasurer’s Report and presentation of audited statement of the accounts for the year ending 30/03/2019
5. Election of Officers
6. Charity of the year 2019-20
7. A.O.B.
8. Guest speaker: 100 years after (some) women won the vote, Jane Grant will give an illustrated talk on the part women in Greenwich and Lewisham played in the campaign
9. Wine and nibbles will be served

Free booklets on the local women’s suffrage campaign published by the University of Greenwich & Royal Greenwich will be available. This meeting is open to all members. New members may join, and attend.

Letters to the editor
Views expressed are not necessarily those of the Westcombe Society or the Westcombe News.

From: G. Bailey
Humber Road
Your April Fool story and Quiz were almost beyond a joke: To me, it carried the message “Better to laugh than to cry.”

Seriousely, the whole nation, and our elected representatives in Parliament, have gone mad over Brexit: it was Nemo who was said to fiddle while Rome burned.

That’s what our MPs are doing! A whole host of serious issues are being almost totally neglected: saving the planet from climate change; the housing crisis; our under-funded and understaffed NHS, schools and police forces; the hundreds of thousands of children who are below the poverty line, and breathing polluted air; the money wasted on vanity projects such as HS2; yet another generation of useless nuclear weapons; and the aircraft carriers without planes.

We talk of the needs of the people. Here are some facts about the electorate of 51,166*: Nearly 5m didn’t register to vote. 6.13m voted in 2017 12m abstained. 17.41m voted to leave. But what did that mean? A hard Brexit, with no deal? Acceptance of the EAA? Acceptance of some kind of compromise? That means some 39 million people did not vote for Brexit – and even those who did did not all share the same view of what it might mean. Now we know – and it’s time people were allowed an opportunity for informed consent. The outcome of the negotiations. They need to be made aware that the UK has already lost trillions of pounds over Brexit and economic suicide is on the cards. We’re not gaining control: we’ve lost control.
* Excludes a mere 36m UK citizens living in Europe, and 3m EU residents of the UK; and 1.5m 16 -18 year-olds, who were not consulted about the future they wanted.

From: Trevor Allman
Coldream Road
I refer to the letter in April’s WCN about public service cuts facing Greenwich, and note that the councillors approving the cuts are themselves the beneficiaries of an increase in their Members’ Allowance (it starts at £10,210). When I was a councillor (1986 - 1990) we were only paid an Attendance Allowance. I think that should still apply – to MPs too.
Happy Birthday, Jonathan!

O n March 29th, many attended a special birthday celebration in Blackheath Halls of Jonathan Dove, son of life-time supporter and activist of the Greenwich Housing Society, Miles Dove. Astonishingly prolific, Jonathan Dove has composed some 30 operas, and many orchestral and choral works, chamber music, and music for plays, and films. Among his specialities is music for the voice. He is renowned for taking new music into the local community.

What better way of celebrating than a concert of his music in Blackheath Halls? In the afternoon, Jonathan led a rehearsal of the pieces that were to be performed by over twenty Trinity Laban students.

The head of the Voice Department at Trinity Laban, Philippa Scammell, told the audience: “All of us at Trinity Laban were extremely pleased and honoured that Jonathan spent time with our students, who were delighted to hear the results in the evening, performed with great verve and confidence.”

Among the many works performed were Five Aonian Songs - Juliette Koch (soprano) and Lucy Murphy (piano), with poems by Mary Worlty Montague; and The End, for instruments and voice (Sandee Gurrapado (tenor). Other pieces included the haunting voice of Shakespeare’s Ariel. (Sofia Celenza, Isabelle Morgan, and Eleanor Rosser Smyth.) The concert also included solo works for piano by the Grammy-nominated composer Dobrinka Tabakova, whose Modetudes for solo piano introduced and reacted to the ghostly voice of Ariel. Said Jonathan: “I was very impressed by the students who benefitted greatly from his guidance and the students were very pleased to have the chance to perform some of his work.”

And of course a very appreciative audience were delighted to hear the results in the evening, performed with great verve and confidence.

Chris Bentley

Chris Bentley, a very popular man who has always been committed to supporting his community in Siebert Road, passed away on March 12th after a huge struggle against cancer.

Chris fought this horrible disease till the very end, still making plans for his aims both for Siebert Rd and his first true love of sailing. This summer he aimed to sail along the Brittany coast: sadly, he never made it.

He has left behind two sons, Tom and Max, who were his pride and joy. . . . . and me. We loved each other dearly. It seems that everybody whose lives he had touched was struck by his sincerity, his generosity, his kindness – and his love of a good party!

Nothing was too much for Chris. His funeral took place at Eltham.

Greenwich Housing Society: Can you help? Dot Martin

I f you happen to be a regular reader of the Westcombe News, I am sure you will know of the Greenwich Housing Society. From time to time, when we have needed additional members to serve on our Management Committee, we have advertised such vacancies in the WN and have been very fortunate in the calibre of individuals offering help.

Some of you may even remember a short article some while back, on how the Society actually started. A Ms Hatfield, a social worker in Greenwich dealing mainly with older people and well aware of the need for decent accommodation for such people, decided to try to set up a Housing Society.

Having gathered a number of enthusiastic volunteers, a Housing Society was indeed formed. This was back in the 60s when a number of such organisations came into being.

Imagine the surprise when one of Ms Hatfield’s clients offered her house to establish the Greenwich Housing Society. We remain extremely grateful, and the block of flats in Heathway is named Hatfield Court, after our founder.

Currently, we are seeking to expand, adding to Hatfield Court and our property in Glenluc Road. Should anyone know of a property that could be renovated and divided into 2 – 4 flats, we would be glad to hear from you.

Please feel free to contact our Chair, Steve Kerridge at GHS, 12 Glenluc Road, London SE3 7BL or Dorothy Martin, former Chair (same address).

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In April 2017 the Mary Evans Picture Library in Blackheath invited the award-winning poet Jane Clarke to write a sequence of poems in response to the Auerbach family archive represented by the library.

The Patricia Aubrey Collection offers a unique insight into how the First World War affected the members of this family, in particular her uncle, Albert Auerbach, who died in action in September 1918, and her aunt Lucy, who survived the war and lived on into the early 1970s.

Albert Auerbach and his elder sister Lucy were close and, alongside the photos, Albert's letters to Lucy from overseas were a particular source of inspiration for Jane, giving a detailed insight into the minutiae of a soldier's life in wartime. Aged twenty, Albert joined up in the Royal Fusiliers. On 20 July 1915 he was commissioned as 2nd Lt. in the 1st London Regiment, Royal Fusiliers. His first posting was to Gallipoli in Nov. 1915.

After a time in Egypt he went on to France, from where he was invalided home with shell shock and dysentery on 3 Dec. 1916. Returning to France in June 1918, he was killed by a shell on the Somme, in the early morning of 1 Sept, 1918, exactly four years to the day of his joining up.

During the war, Lucy worked at the War Office in London, but occasionally travelled to the Worcestershire village of Madresfield, to help with agricultural and dairy work. A gifted pianist, she made her own personal pilgrimage to the Somme area in September 1920 to see where her brother had fought and died.

November 1918, a time of peace, relief and happiness for some, was a time of tragic sorrow for the Auerbach family. During the writing and researching period, Jane Clarke received a grant from Arts Council Ireland, and a travel bursary from Culture Ireland for the launch event in London of her poetry pamphlet, All the Way Home. This contains a sequence of 21 poems, and was published by Smith Doorstop in April 2019, with book launch events in Dublin, London and Manchester.

The London event took place at the West Greenwich Library on 9 April 2019, hosted jointly by Irena Hill of In-Words and the Mary Evans Picture Library, with a full capacity audience. Local author Blake Morrison introduced her work on the night, reading poems from The River, her first collection (Bloodsack), and her second collection, due out later this year.

The emotional landscape of war, and at home, is reflected in Jane’s poems, and also the poignant photographs from the family archive. And ‘landscape’ is the key word here because, as Jane explained, the natural world gave her a way in, becoming a unique facilitator with its gift for metaphor and beauty, for the everyday and the extraordinary, for expressing loss and the small joys one can experience, even in the midst of a catastrophe.

Ranger’s House reopened to the public for its 2019 season on Monday 1st April. Built in 1723 along the western wall of Greenwich Park at the top of Croom’s Hill, Ranger’s House has a fascinating history.

For most of the nineteenth century it was the official residence of the Rangers of Greenwich Park, who were appointed by the monarch to care for the park. Today, it is run by English Heritage as the home of the Wernher Collection – a remarkable treasure trove of more than 700 medieval, Renaissance and later works of art put together by Sir Julius Wernher (1850-1912), a German-born businessman who became one of the richest men in the world mining diamonds and gold in South Africa around the turn of the twentieth century.

Julius possessed a keen eye for the intricacies of materials and craftsmanship (as you would expect of a man trained as a diamond dealer), so his remarkably varied collection showcases early Renaissance Italian paintings and the decorative arts of jewellry, bronze sculptures, enamels, ivory, tapestries and ceramics.

On the first floor, English Heritage has recreated the way Julius would have presented his collection to his friends. He liked to juxtapose different items for effect so that they ‘spoke to each other’. Highlights include Renaissance masterpieces such as Madonna of the Pomegranate – newly restored and now formally attributed to Sandro Botticelli. Also The Rest on the Flight into Egypt by Filippino Lippi (who was a student of Botticelli), and important works by Gabriel Metsu and Hans Memling.

There are superb examples of maiolica ceramics, including two rare plates from a dinner service made around 1528 for Isabella d’Este – one of the most powerful figures of the Italian Renaissance. And by contrast, an oval dish by the sixteenth century French ceramicist Bernard Palissy featuring hyper-realistic models of snakes, lobsters and fishes – a piece that recalls Wernher’s love of the ‘splendidly ugly’.

On the ground floor, there are more fashionable paintings and furniture laid out in reception rooms to recreate the life of Julius and his wife, Alice, as host and host in Victorian society. These include classic English portraiture by Reynolds, Romney, Raeburn and Hoppner, and a striking portrait of Alice by John Singer Sargent.

The largest room in the house is the magnificent Long Gallery, which features Bergonzoli’s romantic sculpture The Love of Angiol and large scale French tapestries. Ranger’s House will be open Sunday to Thursday 11.00am-5.00pm until the end of October, although it is always best to check the English Heritage website for any unexpected closures. (This is also the place to find admission prices and directions.) Access is from Chesterfield Walk or through a gate from the rose garden in Greenwich Park. The house is available for hire for weddings, parties and corporate events, and we are always looking for volunteers to help welcome visitors and bring the collection to life.
**ARTS**

**THE ARTS SOCIETY, BLACKHEATH**

**23rd May 7.30pm** JO WOODWARD, THE ART AND CRAFT OF JOHN PIPER. 2.00pm, with tea and coffee, and leaving at 2.30. Geoffrey Hall Church, Corscombe Park. Blackheath Visitors are welcome, please pay on the door.

**THE ARTS SOCIETY GREENWICH**

15th May 3.30pm followed by Frank Woodgate: CRAFTSMANSHIP & SENSUALITY: Great in Iron, Cork, Glass and Wood. Greenwich 135th King William Court, ORNC SE10 9LS.

**LIFE DRAWINGS at Mycenae House**

Tuesday May 7th at West Greenwich Library, 7.30-9.30pm.

IN-WORDS

**GREENWICH THEATRE**

Every Thursday 7.00 - 9.00 pm  £15.00 per session

**LIFE DRAWINGS at Mycenae House**

Sat 11th May 20:00  JEREMY MUSSON: and war leader.  £16.00

**PATCHWORK ELEPHANT SHOW**

Sun 26th - Tues. 28th May  THE TIGER WHO CAME TO TEA (aged 3-11 years)

Sun 11th May 20:00: NATACHA ATLAS with her fusion of Arabic and Western music preview her forthcoming album £22 | £20

Sun 12 May 11:30: EMA NIKOLOVSKA & DIAN P PEREZ operatic arias and songs from Purcell, Schubert and Mozart £16.00

Sun 15th May 13:30: EMILY MORRIS & PETR LIMONOV Free, donations

The 16th May 1939. John Parker Young Artists: Masterclass £10 | £8 conc.

Fri 17 May 20:00: SADHAN O'ROURKE with KIT DUNNES two of the world’s finest folk musicians £16.00

29th - Wed 22nd May 1838 Royal Greenwich 2019 | Singing Spectacular with local schools £7 | £5 conc. £5 under 12s

**TRINITY LABAN**

Fare loop concert at St Alige’s Church Hall Thurs 9th May 12.30pm. No ticket needed; with a cuppa.

**THEATRE**

**GREENWICH THEATRE**

23rd May JO WALTON  THE ART AND CRAFT OF LIVING IN ROYAL GREENWICH.

**50+ Club**

**Tues 7th – Sat 11th May**

**THE SIGN OF FOUR  by Sir Arthur Conan Doyle**

**Tues. 7th - Sat 11th May**

**NECK OR NOTHING by Jean Anouilh**

**Tues 7th** 

By Oscar Wilde

Sun 12th May 7.30 pm  THREE EMOS A musical spoof on the life of Oscar Wilde.

Fri 17th May 7.30pm - Churchfitters. A folk band like no other. Tickets £8.00

**20th May, 7.30pm**

The Brockley Jack, 410 Brockley Road SE4 2DH

**THE CENTENARY COMPANY: THE MIKADO**

and other issues “heart-breaking & haunting”

Sun 15th Sept - Macmillan Walk

Fri 27th Sept Macmillan Walk

Sat 26th Oct - Quiz Night

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**What’s on**

**WESTCOMBE VILLA**

**May 17th. Westcombe Society**

AGM

Sun 15th Sept - Macmillan Walk

Fri 27th Sept Macmillan Coffee Morning

Sat 26th Oct - Quiz Night

**COMMUNITY**

ST GEORGE'S CHURCH

Aert Brauss Ensemble Concert Moved to Saturday, 16th of May, 3.00pm performing a fundraising concert for CHRISTIAN AID

BLACKHEATH & GREENWICH WOMEN'S INSTITUTE Meets first Wednesday of every month, begins at 7.00pm at St Stephens Methodist Church on Old Dover Road

BLACKHEATH BRIDGE CLUB duplicate sessions in Mycenae House Mon & Thurs at 7.15pm and on Wed at 1.15pm. Non-members welcome.

Would you like to learn this fascinating game? Bridge lessons Tuesday evenings 7.30p.m to 9.30pm at Mycenae House. Please contact by McGonigle on 020 8297 5134 or rymyres@btinternet.com

CHARLTON HOUSE www.charltonhouse

0208 855 5091 Mulberry Tea Rooms

Jacobus Brown Lunchtime concert every Friday, 1.00pm - 2.00pm

SENDAYS AT MINEFIELDS at St Pauls Methodist Church 95 Old Dover Road, Blackheath SE10 9JZ 1.30 - 4.00 pm from Friday of each month. All older people and their carers are welcome to join us for lunch and light-hearted activities. Free, please do join us for singing around the piano and for coffee in the garden. Free, please do join us for singing around the piano and for coffee in the garden.

CHARLTON & BLACKHEATH AMATEUR HORTICULTURAL SOCIETY

20th May, 7.30pm Charlton House, Old Library at Park Avenue will present a talk on “Cotsworld Gardening”. All visitors welcome, £2. Also plant sales table, raffle and refreshments. Website: https://cabahs.wordpress.com/

**SPOKEN WORD**

BLACKHEATH HALLS

Fri 3rd May 19:30 DAVID STARKNEY: CHURCHILL: WRITING HIS WAY TO POWER so the how the writer determined the events and war leader. £15.00

Sat 11 May 10:00 JEREMY MUSSEN: ENGLISH COUNTRY HOUSES, THE LAST 50 YEARS. £10.00 inclusive of wine. £5-WORDS

Tuesday 7th May at West Greenwich Library, poets Dylan Thomas, June McLaughlin, Colin Pink and Cherry Smyth read from their latest published collections. FREE 7-7.30.

Visit trinweekly.co.uk for more information.

**INDUSTRIAL HISTORY SOCIETY**


Charlton House.

Sun 2nd June 7.30pm AN EVENING WITH ANDY HAMILTON. Bring your questions! Tickets £21.00 Concs. £19.00

**THE WESTCOMBE SOCIETY**

**BLACKHEATH HALLS**

Bus Office: 0843 0109

Tues 7th May 20:30 JAMES NEWBY BARITONE & JOSEPH MIDDLETON PIANO

Blackheath, Stores & Schubert-Loewe

Sat 11th May 20:00: NATACHA ATLAS with her fusion of Arabic and Western music preview her forthcoming album £22 | £20

Sun 12 May 11:30: EMA NIKOLOVSKA & DIAN PEREZ operatic arias and songs from Purcell, Schubert and Mozart £16.00

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**TRINITY LABAN**

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**THEATRE**

**THE GREENWICH THEATRE**

Crooms Hill, London SE10 8ES BUS Service: 8850 7755

Tues 7th - Sun 12th May: Macmillan Brunch: THE SIGN OF FOUR by Sir Arthur Conan Doyle

Tues 7th - Sat 11th May: NECK OR NOTHING: Neundacht with a greatly bear and its aftermath

Tues 14th- Sat 26th May SALOME by Oscar Wilde: Made real: nudity and unseen slopes

Wed 29 May: CARD NINIA with Javier Jerian: You wouldn’t believe it even if you saw it

Sun 12th May 7.30pm: TIBRE EMOS A musical spoof on the life of Oscar Wilde

The CENTENARY COMPANY: THE MIKADO SUNDAYS at St Alige’s Church Hall, Roan St Greenwich £10.00

THE JACK STUDIO THEATRE

The Brockley Jack, 410 Brockley Road SE4 2DH

April 30th - May 6th: The Awakening Singing Fish Thurs, 14th - Sat 25th MAY HAPPY JACK: John Godber’s funny and touching play explores the 60- year-old marriage of his grandpa’s

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**RECTOR’S COURT & LEAH LODGE**

**LUXURY CARE HOMES IN BLACKHEATH**

**DIRECTOR OF LUXURY CARE HOMES**

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Talk About Art

JOHN BARTRAM on a children’s exhibition on the themes of migration and displacement

Talk About Art is running another new exhibition from the end of April, featuring work by schoolchildren from Lewisham on the theme of migration and displacement – themes that resonate with their own life experiences.

The three-week free exhibition starts on Monday 29 April in the Deptford Lounge using a variety of media, including film. Talk About Art will run up to nine free workshops for local schools during the exhibition.

Children at Tidemill Academy, Forster Park and Holbache schools worked [Right] for the show in after-school clubs during ten weeks up to the end of March. The project was designed as an enrichment activity for children eligible for pupil premium, a government grant to decrease the attainment gap for the most disadvantaged children.

Called Talk About Art On The Move, this visual arts project celebrates artists whose greatest work has been inspired by migration, among them Vincent Van Gogh, David Hockney, Peter Doig, Leonora Carrington and Niki de Saint Phalle.

Many of the children have experienced displacement in some form or other, and they are encouraged to use their own life experiences in a positive and creative way. They formed and shared their own opinions about the famous artist’s work, guided and supported by Talk About Art’s professional practitioners.

This is the first of three exhibitions which will also go on public display in libraries around the borough, thus giving these disadvantaged young people the opportunity to be seen as valued contributors to the local community.

The project costs £36,257. TAA has received a £14,800 grant from the Arts Council and a significant contribution in kind from Lewisham Library services.

This is a new project model piloted in consultation with Tidemill Academy and it allows TAA to work outside the school timetable and access children with particular needs, regardless of their year group. TAA will continue to offer free exhibition-linked workshops for class groups.

To book a workshop please contact Marilyn.Moore@lewisham.gov.uk.

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Blackheath Cricket Club

CHARLIE SPeller

Blackheath Cricket Club won the Kent Premier League in 2018 for the first time since 1984! The Premier Division is one of the strongest amateur cricket leagues in the UK whilst the Club’s 2nd, 3rd and 4th XIs also play in the Kent League structure, making the number of opportunities available for high level cricket at one club unique.

This recent return to the prominence has also included featuring in five of the last eight county T20 Finals Days, lifting the trophy twice, and winning the National Knockout Competition in 2014, beating Northern in the final, 43 years after the club’s previous national success, on that occasion beating Ealing.

The Club has been able to field an array of talent in recent years: Martin Sagger (England), Victor Mphatung (South Africa), Mohammad Ashraful (Bangladesh), Nic Maddinson (Australia), Kirk Edwards (West Indies) and Aiden Blizzard (Australia) to name a few.

Former England Internationals Alan Knott and Min Patel spent their formative years at Blackheath CC and more recently, current professionals Daniel Bell-Drummond and Ivan Thomas (both Kent) and Tymal Mills (Sussex) have played the Recatty Field home for Club Cricket.

Historically, the Club has its origins in three local cricket clubs: Blackheath Dartmouth (founded c. 1830), Blackheath Paragon (c. 1840) and Blackheath Morden (1863). A famous (or infamous?) member of the Morden side was leading Jack the Ripper suspect Montague Druitt.

In 1886, Blackheath Morden dropped the “Morden” from their name and took up residence at the Recatty Field ground the Club still occupies today. The ground was shared with Blackheath Rugby Football Club who, along with Richmond RFC, is the oldest rugby club in the world, and the Recatty Field hosted many international rugby games at the turn of the century.

Not to be outdone, First Class Cricket was also played at the Recatty Field up until 1971 with Kent usually facing local rivals Surrey at the SE London venue. The Club’s six XIs, Sunday teams, midweek programme and vibrant social scene mean there is a place for everyone from current internationals to complete beginners.

Blackheath also has one of the leading youth sections in the UK, regularly progressing to the latter stages of the ECB National U13 and U15 Cup competitions, and winning the U15 Cup in 2008 by defeating Wolverhampton in the National Final.

An ECB Focus Club with Clubmark accreditation and a wealth of experienced coaches, Blackheath Cricket Club provides an environment where young people can enjoy the game recreationally, but also supports a steady stream of young people to access county age-group squads.

If you want to find out more about the Club, how to join, get involved or when to come and watch, please contact Charlie Speller at Charlies1794@gmail.com.

For further information, please visit https://www.pitchero.com/clubs/blackheathcricketclub. The first home fixture this year is Saturday 11th May against Beckenham – play beginning at 12.00 pm.

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Vivienne Raper on New inclusive play space in Greenwich Park

The playground to the north-east of Greenwich Park is being redesigned thanks to a £315,000 donation from The London Marathon Charitable Trust.

The Royal Parks’ aim is to modernise the playground, which has been in operation since the Second World War, and to allow able-bodied and disabled children to play together.

The revamp will feature a new theme with a basket swing (like a hammock), a round-about, sand and water play, and natural materials such as logs, rope, and bark, as well as plants to explore scent and colour.

However, in their consultation document, TfL argues that the route is circuitous, and that he

TfL’s preference is for Option 1, via Blackheath Royal Standard, and Westcombe Hill; Option 2 would use a more direct route via the A2 and A102.

Two options for a new route providing this link have been evaluated to provide this. Both options would use double-deck buses operating every 12 minutes during Monday to Saturday day times and every 15 minutes during evenings and Sundays. Both options would terminate at the stand on Moorhead Way.

As can be seen from the map, Option 1 would operate via Blackheath Royal Standard, and Westcombe Hill; Option 2 would use a more direct route via the A2 and A102.

There would be fewer local benefits from this option due to the long non-stop section on the A102. However, this route would be five minutes shorter than that proposed in Option 1.

TfL’s preference is for Option 1, via Blackheath Royal Standard, as it provides an attractive link between Kidbrooke Village and North Greenwich. It also has a range of wider benefits by providing extra capacity on busy local corridors.

Option 2 would use a more direct route via the A2 and A102.

However, there are new birds on the block, too: ring-necked parakeets, flurries of them. Twitchers – bird-watchers – are worried that these visitors from Pakistan may be taking over. It is estimated that living in the UK today are over 8,600 breeding pairs of ring-necked parakeets. Ninety per cent live in London. They are also spreading across mainland Europe.

They are unmistakable: bright green, with a red beak, long tail and a necklace of pink and black feathers, they are hyper-active – and very noisy. If you can’t always see them very clearly, you can hardly fail to hear them.

How did they get here? There are many theories. Some say the first parakeets were pets that escaped – or were released. One suggestion is that some escaped from London Zoo when it was damaged during the Blitz in 1940 or 1941.

There is a story that Jimi Hendrix released a breeding pair from Carnaby in the swinging (or singing?) sixties.

Everyone who goes for a stroll – or a run – in Greenwich Park enjoys the wildlife, whether it be fellow deer, stag beetles or squirrels. And then there’s the birdlife in the park: there are up to 70 wild bird species, more than 30 of which breed in the park. These include woodpeckers, tawny owls, thrushes and warblers.

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However, in their consultation document, TfL argues that the route is circuitous, and would involve a 35 minute journey time.

Westcombe Hill residents have good reasons to be alarmed at Option 1: 30 buses an hour already go up and down Westcombe Hill, plus commuter coaches. Option 1 would add up to another ten buses an hour.

Details of the proposal can be found online at: https://consultations.tfl.gov.uk/bus-routes-335.

Email TfL at consultations@tfl.gov.uk, or you can write to FREEPOST TFL CONSULTATIONS. There is also a survey that can be completed online. The consultation ends on Friday May 17th.

They escaped from film studios during the filming of The African Queen.

For many twitchers, they are like mates – they either love them, or hate them. Some welcome the idea of home-grown parakeets.

Others worry that they may have a negative impact on our local feathered friends. Parakeets, like other birds, enjoy feasting on nuts, berries, seeds and even household scraps.

What’s your view? There are increasing reports of parakeets roaming the gardens of Westcombe Park, almost always in flocks, like feathered gangs. And if they do have an impact on native birds, we should indeed be concerned. But, so far, the jury is still out. Graham Dear, Park Manager for Greenwich Parks, said:

“We monitor wildlife to ensure all species in the park’s ecosystems can co-exist and thrive. Our observations show that parakeets may compete with native bird species, and they eat buds and seeds from trees. But the number of these birds in the parks seems to have stabilised, and aren’t a huge concern.”

The Royal Parks’ aim is to modernise the playground, which has been in operation since the Second World War, and to allow able-bodied and disabled children to play together.

The revamp will feature a new theme with a basket swing (like a hammock), a round-about, sand and water play, and natural materials such as logs, rope, and bark, as well as plants to explore scent and colour.

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Cllr Geoff Brightley told the KN he suggested an alternative route via the Standard and Charlton Retail Park. He

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