Local Government gives even greater assurance to residents that the complete system for the future, and to provide some of the recommendations which will need to be taken forward by London Fire Brigade, local authorities and building owners – we will go through these and publish a full response in due course once we understand what they mean and building owners – we will go through these and publish a full response in due course once we understand what they mean.

 Residents are hoping that they do not have to wait for the second phase of the Grenfell Tower inquiry to be completed before they can live in safety.

Types of high-rise buildings that will be involved:

- 72 high-rise blocks, which are 24 storeys high.
- The six 24 storey blocks that have external cladding.
- All the 93 blocks were fire-risk-assessed tenancy agreements which are in place.
- The London Borough of Greenwich, Planning Department, The Royal Borough of Greenwich, said that it was "still covered in dangerous cladding" that was not covered by the government’s cladding removal fund.

The Royal Borough of Greenwich delivered its bid to become Borough of Culture 2021 on 28 October. Arriving at City Hall by Thames Clipper, Leader of the Council Danny Thorpe and Cabinet Member for Culture Miranda Williams, were joined by local groups, including performers from the fantastic Woolwich Carnival. The London Borough of Culture is part of the Mayor of London’s plans to support the arts in the capital, open for all London boroughs to bid for £1.35m to hold a year-long programme of cultural events.

Charity of the Year 2020  DI BLACKWELL

Do you know of a local charity that is making a difference to the quality of people’s lives – and needs a helping hand with funds to continue its good work? Every year at this time The Westcombe Society, whose main function has always been to nurture the local community in every way it can, asks for applications for its Charity of the Year. In 2019 the Greenwich Winter Night Shelter, the charity which helps the homeless, was the focus of fundraising efforts by The Westcombe Society. Money raised has made it possible for those running the night shelters to purchase beds, bed linen, blankets, and food. All this and much-appreciated shower facilities, too!

The proposals require planning permission: any comments need to be made before 18th December to Royal Borough of Greenwich, Planning Department, Woolwich Centre, 35 Wellington Street, London SE18 6QR, or on-line to planning-consultation@royalgreenwich.gov.uk. Please also let us have your comments so that the Westcombe Society response can reflect the views of our members and residents to info@westcombesociety.org. (see also page 3.)

The General Election 2019

MEET THE CANDIDATES

for the Greenwich & Woolwich Constituency

PUT YOUR QUESTIONS TO THEM

Thursday 5th December 7.15 for 7.30 p.m.
St George’s Church Glencleave Road SE3 7SE

Everyone welcome.

Hosted by Blackheath & Greenwich United Nations Association
Thanks to: The Vicar Revd Tim Yeager
Queries: please ring Neville Grant 0208 858 8489

EURO 2020 Fanzone Community Days

Between 12 June and 12 July 2020 London is one of the cities hosting matches as part of UEFA EURO 2020. As part of this the Greater London Authority is proposing to use Greenwich Park as a Fanzone, where families and friends can come together to enjoy this unique sporting occasion (as reported in the WN) these plans can be viewed online at https://planning.royalgreenwich.gov.uk/online-applications. Search for 19/5497/F.

The projection on this building in Salford, which has 246 flats, seems that it was “still covered in dangerous cladding” that was not covered by the government’s cladding removal fund.

The first report of the Grenfell Fire Enquiry was released in October, and makes very distressing reading. The report related specifically to the events of the night of June 17th, and deals among other things with the likely cause of the fire, and the actions of the London Fire Brigade on the night of the fire. A report released from the Fire Brigades Union said: “The government has repeatedly ignored demands for changes in fire regulations, and for more resources.” Phase 2 of the enquiry, which looks in more detail at the regulations and building requirements and shortcomings, will commence in January. However, most of us will have been only too well aware of at least some of the lessons to be learnt, some of which have already been documented. For it was as long ago as May 2018 that an Independent Review of Building Regulations and Fire Safety led by Dame Judith Hackitt was released.

The purpose of this report was to make recommendations that would ensure this country has a sufficiently robust regulatory system for the future, and to provide assurance to residents that the complete system is working to ensure the buildings they live in are safe, and remain so. It examined building and fire safety regulations and related compliance and enforcement, with a focus on high-rise residential buildings. What is somewhat alarming is that only buildings over 18 metres in height were considered.

The Hackitt report set out over 50 recommendations for government as to how to deliver buildings that are safe to live in. No doubt the second phase of the Grenfell Tower enquiry, due to start soon, will refine some of the recommendations. But do we have to wait until then to make changes?

How much has changed so far?

In May 2019, the BBC reported that data released by the Building Safety Programme indicates that 271 high-rise buildings still have unsafe ACM cladding, and remediation work had not yet started. In October 2019 a report put out by the Ministry of Housing Communities and Local Government gives even greater cause for concern: it claims that there are still 312 tower blocks that have failed tests since the Grenfell Tower disaster. This means that combustible cladding, similar to that used in the Grenfell Tower, is still in place.

The report lists authorities where there are still high-rise buildings with unsafe combustible cladding. High on the list is the Royal Borough of Greenwich, which it claims has some 11 blocks that have failed the cladding test. The top six authorities on the risk list are Brent, Greenwich, Manchester, Salford, Tower Hamlets and Westminster.

In 2017, the Royal Borough reassured tenants and residents that all its buildings comply with fire safety regulations. It was pointed out that within Royal Greenwich there are 93 high-rise blocks, six of which are 24 storeys high. The six 24 storey blocks have external cladding.

All the 93 blocks were fire-risk-assessed annually – according to the regulations on fire safety then in place. And now? Cllr Chris Kirby, Cabinet Member for Housing, said: “We welcome the publication of the first phase of the Grenfell Tower Inquiry report. The Government, councils, housing associations and emergency services owe it to the families of the 72 people who were killed to do everything in our power to prevent such an unspeakable tragedy from ever happening again. There are a number of recommendations which will need to be taken forward by London Fire Brigade, local authorities and building owners – we will go through these and publish a full response in due course once we understand what they mean for the Council and our residents.”

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Organisations asking to be considered for the Charity of 2020 must be locally funded (i.e not a national charity) and should be of benefit to residents of the local Westcombe area or nearby. Applicants can be working to improve the quality of life for local people in all kinds of situations. For example, these may be young people, disadvantaged children, parents in need of support or those with special needs.

Please send in your application (a sheet of A4) by 31st January 2020 to info@westcombesociety.org

In your application provide full details of the organisation, and outline how you would spend any donation.

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Grenfell: What does it mean for Greenwich?  WIN reporter

The Royal Borough of Greenwich delivered its bid to become Borough of Culture 2021 on 28 October. Arriving at City Hall by Thames Clipper, Leader of the Council Danny Thorpe and Cabinet Member for Culture Miranda Williams, were joined by local groups, including performers from the fantastic Woolwich Carnival. The London Borough of Culture is part of the Mayor of London’s plans to support the arts in the capital, open for all London boroughs to bid for £1.35m to hold a year-long programme of cultural events.

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The Westcombe Society’s Quiz Night was held in George’s church on 26th October to raise funds for the Greenwich Winter Night Shelter. Many thanks to the Revd Tim Yeager and members of his church for welcoming us. The church is also of course one of the venues in Greenwich that hosts homeless people one night each week from November till March. The venue provides not only a bed for the night for some fifteen homeless people, but also a hot evening meal, a cooked breakfast and a bit of fellowship and warmth, all done by teams of volunteers.

The church was full with 20 teams of six taking part, and searching for answers set by J-J. Congratulations must go to the St George’s team who took first, second and fourth places!

There was a very generous donation of £50 for the first prize in the Raffle, and our thanks go to all who bought tickets as the Raffle raised almost £400. The first prize was donated to the charity by the winners thereby helping to increase the total raised. Chippy suppers were provided as usual by the ‘Fisherman’s Inn’ on the Woolwich Road and as always were greatly enjoyed. Thanks must go all the team from Caroline taking the bookings, to Maureen organising the suppens, not forgetting Joanne and Patricia who did a sterling job collecting and marking the papers.

We would like to thank all those who took part and helped to raise £1,300 for our Charity of the Year - the Greenwich Winter Night Shelter.

PAINTING & DECORATING
Interior/Exterior

J O H N  a t  J A M E S  &  L A M O N T
Office 020 8462 4646
Mobile 07802 538695
jamun.john@blineinternet.com

The Westcombe Society’s Quiz Night

From: Prof. Matt Todd

From: Name and address supplied

From: Helen & Tony Othen Prynston PI.

From: From: Victoria Rance

From: From: Anna Paine

From: From: Abby, Head Coffee Lady, Macmillan

From: From: Abby, Head Coffee Lady, Macmillan

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

Ph O T O S : T i m  Y e a g e r

The Greenwich Park Fanzone: UEFA EURO 2020 and
Join the conversation!

The days are likely to evolve around a number of themes. Interested groups and partners are invited to attend an initial discussion of ideas and proposals. The first session (5th December, 1:30-4pm) will primarily focus on the following themes:
- Arts & Crafts
- Music & Dance
- Heritage & Stories
- Gardening & Environment
- Sports, Health & Well-being
- Other themes

However, if you can’t make the date that is more relevant to your idea, please do come along for the other session regardless. The consultations will be taking place at the Emergency Exit Arts HQ: Rothbury Hall, Mauritius Road SE10 0BF.

Get into the festive mood by going to the Woolwich Winter Warmer on Sat. 7th December 12.00-6.30pm in General Gordon Square and the Royal Arsenal, an extravaganza with live stages, choirs, an Ariana Grande tribute act and El Carromato’s Big Dancers – you can’t miss them in the Lantern Parade. Also: fairground rides, fireworks and pedal-powered sleigh rides.

Discover London's newest ice rink

The Queen’s House Ice Rink is a magical place to go skating this winter. Enjoy striking views of the River Thames and Greenwich Royal Park as you weave (or wobble) your way around the rink. The Queen’s House is London’s newest Christmas ice skating destination and the only outdoor ice rink in south London. And it’s here in Greenwich, on our doorstep!

Stop the Nastiness!
The group Compassion in Politics has launched StopTheNastiness, which aims to encourage candidates to “campaign with respect, call out hate, and promote compassion” over the next six weeks. It also calls on the media for restraint.

Traffic light adjustments
TfL have proposed to adjust the timing of traffic lights to enable more pedestrians and cyclists to cross roads. An example of the “law of unintended consequences?” Drivers are already frustrated by 30mp/h zones and poorly located traffic lights – notably at the highly polluted junction of Vanbrugh Hill and Trafalgar Road.

Pollution from idling engines is twice as high as from moving vehicles and feelings have been running high since the death of Ella Kissi-Debrah from asthma linked to traffic fumes. It is estimated that one child in five in Tower Hamlets suffers from traffic-related conditions.

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For more information, please see calendar for dates and times.

FVDF
The next surgeries are at the Pavilion Cafe from 10.00-11.00 on Dec. 20th and 29th.
Remembering Max Wall
DAVID DRUMMOND reminds us that comedians are not only found in Westminster

Once familiar face in our borough was the entertainer Max Wall whose latter-day success was achieved via his performances at the Greenwich Theatre. These included his much-lauded Archie Rice in John Osborne’s The Entertainer, Malvolio in Twelfth Night and the birth of his series Aspects of Max Wall in which he introduced to a younger generation the comedic skills he had mastered in variety. These peaked with his hilarious creation of the weird pianist Professor Wallofski prone to funny walks. With a pleasing light baritone he accompanied himself on his guitar as he sang some of the hundred odd songs of his own composition. Remember Me and My Tune? Like many comedians before him his timing skills also led to acclaim as a character actor.

The society got the bar at Greenwich Theatre to bear his name, and display images of him in performance. It also publishes a journal – The WallPaper. Past presidents include Ronnie Corbett and Ken Dodd (currently Barry Cryer) and present patrons are Simon Callow, David Bradley and Alison Steadman. We meet in The London Hippodrome in a special room named after Lola, a female lion tamer.

That Max Wall performed here on several occasions is a particular pleasure to the society’s members. From its archives The Max Wall Society will celebrate him there amongst a number of planned programmes. Reconciled too will be past performers such as Maurice Chevalier, escapist Houdini, and Anna Pavlova in Swan Lake. Max Wall was performance in Britain. Also remembered are the 12-year-old Julie Andrews, Ivor Novello, and Judy Garland in her last performance. It was here that Put Kirkwood first sang that her heart belonged to Daddy, Pedro the Fisherman whistled and a boy named Charlie Chaplin appeared as a dog.

With the owners of the Hippodrome it is hoped that the MWS will revive happy memories and, in particular, be of interest to younger people as it introduces them to the great names of the past.

Details of membership of the society are available from:
Jean Barham Wyatt, 11, Milland Road, Hailsham, East Sussex, BN27 1TG

The Kimberleys
View and share your treasured images on your computer.
I'm local and can:
DIGITISE:
- negatives (all types)
- slides
- photographs
- glass plates

jmfour@outlook.com
www.jmfour.com

The Kimberleys, Isabel and Jim, are professional recording and touring musicians who have worked with such greats as Gordon Giltrap, Cathy Leart, Andy Cutting and Mark Knopfler, but they have also been at the heart of the vibrant local music scene since moving to the area over a decade ago.

In June of last year, to a sold-out Mycenae House, they launched their debut album, an atmospheric collection of traditional folk songs, (impressive and uplifting arrangements – Rock n Reel magazine) and now they return to Mycenae House with a show in celebration of the season featuring Chris, an English, Yorkshire and winter songs. A joyful antidote to the commonplace Christmas playlist.

Mycenae House Friday 20th December Doors 7.00pm £10 /£12 www.thekimberleys.org

The Westcombe News: From Glue-Stick to Memory Stick
NEVILLE GRANT gives an insight into how your favourite local newspaper is produced.

Editing the Westcombe News has given me a lot of pleasure over the years: above all, it is fun. I can’t tell you what a buzz of satisfaction one feels as each new issue rolls off the press. So it will be with great reluctance that I step down as the sole editor of the paper next February.

So, exactly what is involved? These days you don’t need typists, scissors, and glue. Armed with a large screen Apple Mac (it comes with the job as editor), and a simple design and layout system, Quark, production of the WN has become streamlined.

It’s easy! Readers will be surprised to see how easy and straightforward producing the WN has become.

Firstly, the editors are not alone. Marilyn looks after the money side; Gavin is in charge of the ads, and ensures that they come in in good time. Maggie, the environment editor, comes up with new ideas and stories for the environment page – though the story often makes the front page. Annie is a rigorous proof reader, and Emily ensures the paper is delivered, with the help of all our volunteer deliverers. And, of course, apart from roving reporter Vivienne, all the other reporters are YOU, dear readers, for the Westcombe News is a community newspaper, and it is YOURS, not ours!

And where does the copy come from?

There is no difficulty in filling those eight pages. The reason? Copy floods in from many sources. Readers (not just members of the Westcombe Society) find it a useful outlet for them, whether it be to publicise a pet project, or an interesting news story, information about their club or society’s activities, and local issues such as the Silvertown Tunnel, a proposed cruise liner terminal, or new plans for Greenwich Park, for example. The editors have easy access to email – westcombenews@yahoo.co.uk – which provides multiple sources of information, local and national, from Government Council, the Mayor’s office, TfL, and indeed the government. These often impinge on our locality, and the editor finds there is no problem finding a local angle.

There’s no difficulty either in finding readers and, therefore, advertisers with local newspapers becoming thinner and thinner, many people now find the WN an essential source of local information and news. I call it a Heiniken paper that reaches the news that other papers do not reach!

The advertisers like it too – it’s a cheap way of reaching the local target readership; and of course the revenue covers the printing costs – and any extra income goes to local charities via the Westcombe Society.

It’s win, win, win all round!

So, how does the editing work?

Using Quark, you create a text box, and copy and paste the selected text. You can arrange the text in one, two, three or four columns, as needed. A separate text box for the headline is also necessary. Pictures? These include photos, and those advertisements that include pictures, and come in as pdfs or jpeg. As they arrive, or are found, you download them into a picture file. Draw a picture box on the page, to fit, and import the target picture, adjusting the size as necessary. All very easy.

Once all is completed, you do a final save, and transfer it to a memory stick, together with the file containing all the photographs and ads you have used. Off it goes on Monday to our helpful printer Dave. Hey presto! By Friday over 4,000 are alive, and out with the distribution manager: then our wonderful volunteer deliverers take over, and deliver them, street by street. Every issue is a triumph for local community commitment and action.

Long may the paper last. And please, dear readers, keep that copy coming in!
ARTS

THE ART SOCIETY GREENWICH WILLIAM HOGARTH 1697-1764 Linda Smith Monday 9th December 2019 Hogarth is nowadays mostly remembered as a tal ented satirist, but there is much more to him than that. Lavish display at the Greenland University, King William Court, Old Royal Naval College, Greenwich.

BLACKHEATH HALLS Box Office 020 8653 9100 SUN 01 DEC 11.00h NADINE BENJAMIN soprano & NICOLAS PANIZZA piano Emergence - a selection of songs setting the love poems of Emily Dickinson, a poet with an exceptional ability to distil ‘amazing’ sense from ‘ordi nary meaning’. £10.00 | £9.00 conc.

MUSIC

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mirrors, and the rear windscreen also need a driving licence for that offence. A fine of £60, and three points on your licence will clear: again, not a good idea. –

Heater on full and drive off, hoping the salt by Halfords among 1,600 motorists contamines the whole truck and can lead to the entire truckload having to be discarded.

You may be surprised how much your household is set to be one of the chilliest in decades. For drivers, that means frosty windscreen.

A nightmare if you’re late for work. The Highway Code states that “windows and windscreen must be kept clean and free of obstructions to vision.” You can get a fine of £60, and three points on your driving licence for that offence. Not just the frosty windscreen: the wing mirrors, and the rear windscreen also need to be cleared. Not to mention the condensation that forms inside the car. You may be tempted to switch on the heater, and leave the car to defrost while you nip in for a quick cup of coffee. Sorry sir, that’s a £20 fine and three points on your licence for failing to be in control while your engine is running... Best ways to deal with the problem. The obvious way is to use a de-icer. There are other solutions. One way to do it is by making a DIY de-icer. To make a DIY de-icer: mix up a solution of water with a teaspoon of salt, before pouring it over any frozen areas. Don’t use too much salt, as it could cause corrosion to any paintwork it touches. An alternative is to mix three parts of vinegar with one part of water – if you don’t mind the smell? Here’s another idea: prevention is better than cure. Soak an old towel in a solution of water and table salt and place it on the car windscreen the night before. The salt lowers the freezing point of water, which means moisture is prevented from forming over on your screen.

Drive safely for Christmas!

1. Plastic bottles
2. Take-away coffee cups
3. Styrofoam food containers
4. Used pizza boxes
5. Paper plates
6. Paper towels
7. Wet wipes
8. Tissues
9. Shiny wrapping paper
10. Biscuit packet wrappers
11. Sweet papers
12. Baby-food pouches
13. Cig packets
14. Plastic garden pots
15. Black plastic sacks
16. Napkins
17. Coat hangers
18. Wood
19. Bubble wrap
20. Batteries
21. Plastic toys
22. Plastic shopping bags

You can check your ANSWERS on page 8. 

In the bleak midwinter
Frosty windscreen grow...
Environmental groups call for action following Thames21’s Big Bottle Count
KIRSTEN DOWNER reports

London’s largest mass Litter of river plastic, the annual Big Bottle Count, saw more than 100 volunteers count and remove plastic bottles from the Thames last October. A total of 1,732 plastic bottles were collected from seven sites along the Thames as part of the investigation into the impact of single-use plastic bottles on the capital’s river. Organised by Thames21, local group the Grays Beachcombers and assisted by the iOneLess campaign.

More than 27,000 plastic bottles have been removed from the river by the 121 volunteers in the past year, and more than 107,000 since records began in 2016. The Big Bottle Count is part of a regular ongoing monitoring programme.

Treasure that ivy—it’s not a pest!
SHIRLEY BRIGHTON

Wildlife loves ivy—• Ivy is an essential food source for insects during autumn, when there is little else available.
• Ivy provides an excellent habitat for foraging creatures—its roots at many points, with stems that cover a wide area. This notably reduces the effect of frost harden- ing the ground in winter months, meaning animals can continue foraging in the leaf litter during bitter weather. It flowers on mature plants, producing nectar and pollen for bees, hoverflies, wasps, butterflies, moths etc. (including many rare species), before they hibernate.
• Ivy’s winter berries provide food for birds: the high fat content of the berries is a nutritious food resource for birds and the berries are eaten by a range of species.
Ivy is the plant equivalent of a 247% gro-cery store. The berries provide essential food through the harsh winter months for birds.
• Mature Ivy growing on walls and trees provides good shelter and cover for insects, birds, bats and other small mam-
mals where they can hide, roost, nest and hibernate.
Ivy is not parasitic—• Ivy uses trees and walls for support: it is not suffocating or parasites a tree, benders not to allow it to reach upwards to better levels of light. Ivy has a separate root system in the soil, which absorbs its own nutrients and water as needed.
If your tree contains dead wood, or the Ivy grows wildly out of hand, it’s best to keep the ivy trimmed, to reduce wind resistance.
If Ivy dominates a tree’s canopy, it can smother the leading branches, which would limit the tree’s ability to photosynthesise; this will not kill it, but can limit its growth.


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Treasure that ivy—it’s not a pest!
SHIRLEY BRIGHTON

Wildlife loves ivy—• Ivy is an essential food source for insects during autumn, when there is little else available.
• Ivy provides an excellent habitat for foraging creatures—its roots at many points, with stems that cover a wide area. This notably reduces the effect of frost harden-ing the ground in winter months, meaning animals can continue foraging in the leaf litter during bitter weather. It flowers on mature plants, producing nectar and pollen for bees, hoverflies, wasps, butterflies, moths etc. (including many rare species), before they hibernate.
• Ivy’s winter berries provide food for birds: the high fat content of the berries is a nutritious food resource for birds and the berries are eaten by a range of species.
Ivy is the plant equivalent of a 247% gro-cery store. The berries provide essential food through the harsh winter months for birds.
• Mature Ivy growing on walls and trees provides good shelter and cover for insects, birds, bats and other small mam-
mals where they can hide, roost, nest and hibernate.
Ivy is not parasitic—• Ivy uses trees and walls for support: it is not suffocating or parasites a tree, benders not to allow it to reach upwards to better levels of light. Ivy has a separate root system in the soil, which absorbs its own nutrients and water as needed.
If your tree contains dead wood, or the Ivy grows wildly out of hand, it’s best to keep the ivy trimmed, to reduce wind resistance.
If Ivy dominates a tree’s canopy, it can smother the leading branches, which would limit the tree’s ability to photosynthesise; this will not kill it, but can limit its growth.
MARKET PLACE

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HOST FAMILIES Reliable and caring families required for short term students. All enquires to elizabeth.kavanagh@liscotts.co.uk P. 07853 123193

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