

# Westcombe NEWS

Free to 3800 homes, in libraries and shops and online

April 2021 No.3



April prepares her green traffic light and the world thinks Go

-Christopher Morley

## THE DAY THE SCHOOLS WENT BACK

Vicki Duff



anticipated how they might manage on their return and made careful preparations in terms of being ready to address issues relating to their emotional wellbeing as well as their academic learning. Whilst most children bounded happily into school on the morning of Monday the 8th, there were inevitably and understandably a few tears and anxious faces too. However, these didn't last too long and very quickly most have settled back into our routines with smiling faces and excellent learning behaviour with our pastoral team on hand to give extra support where it has been needed. Our parents and carers have been fantastic too with an overwhelming amount of support and thanks for how the children were supported and taught when they were at home, along with a sure sense of relief that the children are back in their classrooms with their teachers and friends. Attendance since we fully reopened has been excellent.

Understandably, the children are adjusting to the length of the school day again. For our younger children in particular, whilst we need to be mindful of any learning they may have missed during lockdown, ensuring their emotional health and wellbeing needs are met is of the utmost importance. Building up children's stamina for learning again, building on and celebrating what they have achieved during lockdown has been key on their return to support their self-esteem and confidence. Teachers carefully tracked all online learning during lockdown so they know what each child's learning needs are and are working extremely hard to ensure they all have a successful end to this school year, without the need to increase pupil workload and pressure.

In essence, the children have come back happy and keen. They are delighted to be with their friends again and are ready to learn, which is great news because we have some really exciting learning planned for the summer term and we are thrilled to have them all back!

**Vicki Cuff, Executive Headteacher  
Invicta Primary School &  
Children's Centre**

It's been wonderful to have our children back in school, where they belong! Although we still have some way to go before being 'back to normal', there aren't too many differences for the children from when they were last in school just before Christmas. We still have our staggered starts, bubbles and enhanced hygiene arrangements in place and had already increased some other safety measures, so some of the new government guidance such as adults wearing masks in communal school spaces weren't a surprise to our children. In addition, we now have Lateral

Flow home testing kits available for all of our staff and have strongly encouraged our families to engage in the wider community Rapid Testing opportunities across the borough and we really hope that all of these measures will contribute to reducing the transmission of the virus and help keep our school open.

With the latest lockdown proving to be even more challenging than the last one for many in our community, we were acutely aware that each and every child has had a different experience during the time school was closed to most. We wondered and

## Heathside Development?

WN reporter

There was some alarm that the green credentials of the government were called into question when an area of grassland opposite Vanbrugh Park, near the treasured wilderness of 'the Dips' was suddenly sealed off.

Fencing was erected, and machinery installed, and men in industrial orange clothing and hard hats began to busy themselves, as excavations started. No one knew what was going on.

Public concern had already been expressed about the new coal mine in Cumbria, and possible fracking plans in sensitive areas of the NorthWest were being explored.

A recent report by the British Geological Survey announcing the presence of hundreds of millions of barrels of shale oil in the south-east of England has deepened a sense of alarm. Surely the heath was safe from fracking developments? Local residents were mystified and alarmed.

A WN reporter contacted a local representative of GAAF – Greenwich Action Against Fracking, Ms Apryl-Foole Hardy. She too was alarmed. "I saw that these men claimed to be from Thames Water. But they would, wouldn't they?" she said. "If it's unbelievable, it's probably true. Fakebook, Twister, Foxx News, they're all the same! These frackers must be stopped!"

With that she stomped off to start a demo, which appears to have succeeded, because almost overnight, the sinister men in their hard helmets disappeared, leaving a slight bald patch in the grass. And GAAF claimed another victory. . .



Pic: Vesna Domany-Hardy

## Newsbriefs \* \* \* \* \*

### Traffic Trials to continue

In August 2020, The Royal Parks launched a series of traffic-related trials across five parks to reduce the impact of cut-through traffic, improve the park visitor experience and open new spaces for park visitors to enjoy.

The Royal Parks will keep the measures in place for the coming year while we monitor additional data to ensure that we have a clear picture of the impact of the schemes before determining whether they should be made permanent.

**Donation Station Open**  
Greenwich & Bexley Community Hospice have

not been able to open their shops yet, but they still need your high-quality pre-loved clothing, books and home-ware donations to stock their shelves. They've now opened up their Bellegrove Parade, Welling, location as a drop-off donation station. They thank you in advance for your support.

### Crisis at Sea

Around 400,000 seafarers worldwide are stuck at sea due to coronavirus restrictions.

The National Maritime Museum has signed the Neptune Declaration, a pledge which calls on government bodies to take

urgent action to safeguard the rights and welfare of seafarers.

For a first-hand insight into how the pandemic has affected those working at sea, watch our film with chief engineer and photographer, Cezar Gabriel – as featured in our exhibition Exposure: Lives at Sea.

### NHS Healthy Start

From 1st April this voucher scheme to help young families on low income buy fresh fruit and vegetables, increases to £4.25.

To find out if you're eligible or to apply go to [liverwellgreenwich.org.uk/liverwell/healthystart/](http://liverwellgreenwich.org.uk/liverwell/healthystart/)

## Residents' voices (and feelings!) have been heard

A tsunami of residents responded to the consultations on both Westcombe Park and Maze Hill Low Traffic Neighbourhood (LTNs) and for the Cycleway from Greenwich Park to Shooters Hill Road. The Council have provided the following updates on their Streetspace programme, on their website: LTN: "The Council consulted on proposals to introduce closures to stop cars from taking shortcuts through residential roads at strategic locations along the railway line - Maze Hill, Vanbrugh Hill, Halstow Road, Westcombe Hill. We have listened to resident feedback and there are strong feelings on both sides. We understand that people are concerned about how the schemes would affect them in practice, and the location and timing of the closures. For this reason, we intend to collect more data (such as modelling traffic behaviour) and work more with residents (as well as local ward members and other stakeholders) to shape the proposals before any further

proposals are made."

CYCLEWAY: "The second phase of the Strategic Cycle Route would link up with the first phase we built in 2020 along Shooters Hill Road between Baker Road and Weyman Road (see map below) connecting to Greenwich Park's east gate, via Old Dover Road, St John's Park and Maze Hill.

We are listening to the feedback we are receiving and there are clearly strong feelings about the proposal in our consultation plans for a bus, taxi and cycle gate on Old Dover Road, on the bridge over the A102, restricting through-access for motor vehicles.

We will analyse all the responses we receive (alongside other data we collect) before making a decision. However, given the strength of feeling about the bus gate, we are already working closely with Transport for London to explore alternatives to the bus gate, that have less impact on car access to Old Dover Road.

# COMMUNITY

## WESTCOMBE NEWS

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## 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 [ ]

## Flower Fancies

During Lockdown, to keep our spirits up and to stay in contact while we cannot meet face to face, Blackheath Flower Club members have been sharing videos of our gardens and everything that has been growing there. This has been lovely especially as Winter turns to Spring and in quick succession, we have seen Snowdrops, Hellebores, Primulas, Daffodils, Crocus and Hyacinths bloom and various trees including Witch Hazel, Mimosa, Pussy Willow, Camellia, Magnolia, Cherry and Hazel.

We started Zoom meetings for our members where we make arrangements in real time online with simple containers and plant material readily available. This month we are using decorated jam jars. (The one in the photo has been decorated with paintbrushes).



Members have also made short flower arranging videos to entertain and inspire. There are six videos accessed on Google search or You Tube by typing in Blackheath Flower Club. This has been a bit of a learning curve for us, and you might want to look out for a few mistakes such as dropped pairs of scissors and a bit of stage fright and arrangements fighting back!

However, we cannot wait to get back to Mycenae House for our flower fix of talented demonstrators and fun workshops accompanied by tea and snacks and a good chat and a laugh. We encourage you to join us for a free taster session as a visitor. Membership is a mere £40 for 12 sessions on the third Friday of each month. Why not try Flower Therapy yourself!  
**Call Sian 07887790028**  
[siancaroline@googlemail.com](mailto:siancaroline@googlemail.com)

## The Dell, Mycenae Road

Many thanks to the community-spirited individual(s) for their much appreciated hard work in The Dell, repairing the long stretch of 'dead hedging' which separates the path from the nature reserve.

'Dead hedging' is a traditional eco-friendly barrier of woven dead branches and foliage and provides a protected shelter for birds, small mammals and insects but its construction takes patience and strong hands. To see the tidy path once more and the oak saplings growing alongside in this little oasis of nature is a welcoming sight.

The display board illustrating the Dell's flora and fauna has also recently been repaired. The Dell is much appreciated by many for its bird life and butterflies and it is heartwarming to see the recent remedial work.  
**-Ann Hill**

## STGEORGE'S

WESTCOMBE PARK

We are cautiously re-opening in April. Join us for worship and for Easter, both online and in Church.

Good Friday in Church from 2pm, a period of contemplation followed by a short service.

Easter Sunday 9.30am in Church - this event will be ticketed via Eventbrite. Link is on our website and 11am online via Facebook and YouTube.

Sundays in April - service in Church at 9.30am and online at 11am.

Wednesdays at 8.30am: Morning Prayer. We hope to return to Church for this service, keep an eye on the website for confirmation.

**Our choir meets to rehearse on Zoom on Tuesdays at 6pm – 7pm.**

**Log on details on website:**  
[stgeorgeswestcombepark.org.uk](http://stgeorgeswestcombepark.org.uk)  
**Telephone: 0208 858 6953**



## Letters

Trevor Allman, Coleraine Road, SE3

Dear Westcombe News, I was very surprised not to see our very own Emily Wilding Davison included in the piece titled "Choose to Challenge" (Westcombe News – March 2021 Edition) regarding International Women's Day.

Emily, who later went onto become a prominent activist in the Suffragette Movement, was born on the 11th October 1872 in Roxburgh House, Vanbrugh Park Road West, which was apparently situated in the vicinity of where the swings are in Combe Avenue today.

During her activities for women's suffrage, Emily was arrested nine times, imprisoned, went on hunger strike seven times and was "force-fed" on 49 occasions.

Emily went down in history when she attempted to put a rosette on King George V's horse during The Derby on 4th June 1913, and was badly injured in

the process, sadly dying four days later.

I have been calling for a memorial to Emily Davison for many years, including during the 2018 local elections when I was the Official Monster Raving Loony Party Candidate in Blackheath Westcombe Ward, and will do so again in 2022, pledging to have a memorial

erected at her birthplace if elected.

The fact that Blackheath does not have any recognition of one of its most famous daughters, who lived and died championing the causes of democracy and women's rights, is beyond my comprehension.

Yours for the manic, not the few,  
Trevor Allman  
(Official Monster Raving Loony Party – Greenwich Branch)



## Invest to Regenerate our Community!

We are delighted that our local, wonderful community space Mycenae House, in Westcombe Park, is due to open its doors again post-lockdown from 12th April, in line with Government guidelines.

However, after nearly a year of on-and-off lockdowns and forced closures, the vibrant hub has alerted the Westcombe News to a shortfall in funding for their Reach Out Project, which has previously been funded with Mycenae House profits. Until all the classes are up and running again those profits won't be available, so, the Reach Out Project is in need of our investment help.

The Reach Out Project has been established for over two years and is managed by Deborah Fitzpatrick, their Community Project Outreach Co-ordinator. The programme offers events and regular activities to help our community reduce isolation and loneliness for those that suffer poor physical and mental health. If you feel drawn to help Reach Out reach out (!) to those that need to feel more included, please visit its Go Fund Me page at <https://gofund.me/2e283eef> to make a donation. Mark Johnson-Brown, the Manager of Mycenae House says, "we welcome contact from anyone wishing to help in other ways as well." For more information: <https://mycenaehouse.co.uk/reach-out-projects/>

## Volunteering Hotspot

**Venue: The Old Pond Garden, Charlton house, SE7.**

WN heard it was a wonderful first week back with some lovely new volunteers and the garden is looking very Spring like. Working party sessions are on Tuesdays 1.30-3.30pm and Thursdays 10-12noon every week. Experts and those who just want to learn as they toil, are all welcome.

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

Dear Editor

When is plastic not plastic? The latest illustrated leaflet received from the Council concerning recycling asks us to distinguish between plastic pots, trays and bottles that are accepted and a whole range of other types of plastic that are not accepted such as "hard plastic items", including the kind of light plastic pot in which one buys plants that can barely be distinguished from the pots that can be accepted. At a time when we are constantly being reminded of the danger to the environment of plastic, it is alarming that such a large range of plastics cannot be recycled and will end up in landfill. I suspect that most people will not be able to cope with the niceties of distinction and will not bother to separate.

Yours faithfully, Malcolm Hardy

Dear Editor,

Amid concern and unrest linked to recent road closures in the Blackheath and Westcombe area, residents of Heathway are now being threatened with their road being used for construction by a developer - MASCH Developments Ltd - who propose using the un-adoped lane to park

and operate heavy plant from in their bid to develop a narrow plot with severely constrained access. In an unprecedented proposal to the Council, Heathway with its winding tree-lined un-made form used by residents and walkers alike, is set to be blocked entirely and used to construct from for the duration of the build, likely to be up to two years. We can only presume this is to cut costs to the developer at the expense of our access and safety.

When the Council is facing mounting challenges with dwindling resources it looks as if it will up to residents to stand up to this gross mis-use of a public highway. 163 people from Heathway and its neighbourhood signed a petition against the construction methods. We call on all developers to respect public rights of way. Unscrupulous companies should not be allowed to ignore residents' right to pass or block access.

It is only through papers like the Westcombe News that our voices can be heard and for decisions between our Council and commercial developers to be scrutinised. Thank you for everything you do.  
*Heathway resident, SE3*

# LOCAL NEWS

## Mayor pledges nearly £40k to support new Greenwich vegetable and flower farm

Following the March article about Sitopia Farm - a new two-acre social enterprise growing fresh vegetables, salad, fruit and flowers on the wonderful Woodlands Farm on Shooters Hill - we're delighted to report that the Mayor, Sadiq Khan, has just pledged his support for the project.



Chloë Dunnett (pictured left), Founder and Chief Grower of Sitopia Farm, says 'We are so delighted to have just heard that the Mayor is pledging his support for our project.

Together with all the contributions from the other amaz-

ing people - many of them from Greenwich - who have already pledged, Sadiq's £37,500 takes us 90% of the way to our minimum target and means we're now sure this farm is going to happen! We can't wait to get started. Please help us get over the line and exceed our target! The crowdfunding page is here:

<https://www.spacehive.com/sitopiafarm>

We were actually on site when the news came in, making a start getting an access path built in the field and hearing more about the wonderful history of the site from Barry, the Chair of Trustees of Woodlands Farm Trust (see photo!) I hadn't known that in the past other market gardens existed very close to where Sitopia Farm will be - nor that they also grew flowers which were delivered to the Savoy where Lillie Langtry was staying, who loved them so much that she came down to the market gardens to thank them for their amazing work! It's incredible too to think

that Shooters Hill tracks the ancient Roman Road, Watling Street.

We're honoured to be taking forward this history into the future, and hope you'll join us on the journey. Do get in touch if you're interested in buying our produce/can help with our 'wish list' including a shed/help with a logo! [hello@sitopiafarm.com](mailto:hello@sitopiafarm.com), or sign up for our newsletter here:

<https://www.sitopiafarm.com/contact>

Of course any support you can give to help us reach (and hopefully smash!) our target through pledging to our fundraiser/spreading the word would also be very much appreciated!

<https://www.spacehive.com/sitopiafarm>  
[www.sitopiafarm.com](http://www.sitopiafarm.com)



Pic above: seedlings of Wild Carrot (*Daucus Carota*) - which make beautiful flowers.

## Local Ward Boundary Changes

The Local Government Boundary Commission for England has set out its draft recommendations for the Royal Borough of Greenwich following a consultation last year. Residents are invited to comment on the proposed boundary changes and put forward their opinions by Monday 10th May 2021.

The Boundary Commission has proposed:  
9 three-councillor wards  
14 two-councillor wards  
a number of ward name changes.

**To have your say**  
visit: [lgbce.org.uk/media/have-your-say-on-a-new-political-map-for-the-royal-borough-of-greenwich-council](http://lgbce.org.uk/media/have-your-say-on-a-new-political-map-for-the-royal-borough-of-greenwich-council)

## Testing...Testing...

Everyone living in Royal Greenwich are being strongly encouraged to get a Covid-19 test to help reduce the spread of the virus.

From 15th March until 14th April, residents will be receiving a letter inviting the entire household to take a rapid test at a testing site local to them.

Councillor Danny Thorpe, Leader of the Royal Borough of Greenwich said: "The more people that get tested, the closer we are to beating the virus and getting back to the things we love doing."

Steve Whiteman, Director of Public Health at the RBG said: "Though levels of Covid-19 in Royal Greenwich are currently low, there is a risk that - as restrictions ease and social interactions increase - more people are exposed to the virus once again.

"It's going to be crucial for all of us to build regular testing into our everyday lives - this is why the mass testing programme is so important. I hope everyone gets behind the programme and sees it as the first of many regular tests that help keep us, and Royal Greenwich, safe."

**psst...** Have you heard the rumour that Barclays Bank building is being repurposed as a microbrewery and beer cafe...how refreshing!

Any ideas as to what the empty Natwest bank cube can turn into? What about a Click & Collect & Returns Hub for all serial online shoppers?

## The Bridge is Back!

During lockdown, The Bridge in East Greenwich Pleasaunce has been collecting and delivering donations of essentials to the Clockhouse Community Centre, HER

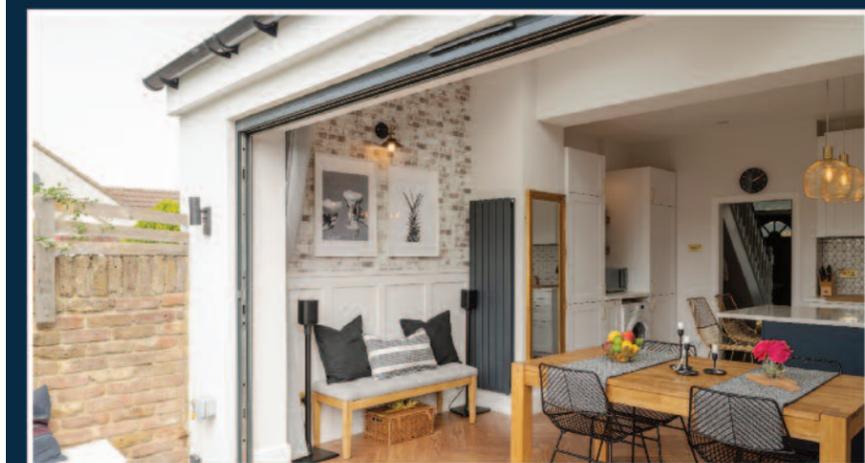
Centre, MumsAid, Queen Elizabeth Hospital and GRACE. This support for vulnerable community members has been invaluable and we are so grateful for your help with this.

We've met a lot of lovely Westcombe News readers over the last few weeks!

We've also been open for Bookable Play Sessions for families with SEND. These private sessions for eligible

families have been great and we've loved to see people making the most of the grounds.

We will be expanding this, offering over the school Easter holidays with SEND Inclusive Multi Sports Activities. Run by ProInfinity Coaching, Kelly McGuinness Yoga and



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Tiptoes & Tappers and in association with Access Sport, these low-cost sessions will take place on 12th - 15th April between 10am and 11.45am.

From March 29th, we will reopen for OUTDOOR ONLY stay & play sessions. These are for families with children under five. Spaces are limited and can be booked online [www.thebridgegreenwich.co.uk](http://www.thebridgegreenwich.co.uk)

Families will get to make the most of our new playground facilities in the tranquil and secure Bridge grounds. Ruth will be offering some Covid-19 secure Forest School and gardening activities.

From April 19th, we will re-open for our Monday Baby Group in association with More2Childcare. The session is for parents/carers with babies born during lockdown who are keen to make friends and chat to others. We will be offering support sessions from professionals trained in breastfeeding support, baby weaning and postnatal wellbeing.

We will then be offering three OUTDOOR stay & play sessions on Tuesdays, Thursdays and Fridays. Pre-booking is essential via our website.

From May 17th, we will be able to offer OUTDOOR ONLY birthday parties for up to 30 people. Indoor and outdoor parties will return from June 21st unless government guidelines change.

Please visit our website [www.thebridgegreenwich.co.uk](http://www.thebridgegreenwich.co.uk) for more information.

### VOLUNTEERS NEEDED

We are looking to expand our team of volunteers. If you would like to give back to the community, support local families, make some new friends or build up your CV and help with employment, please contact Lucie [thebridges10@gmail.com](mailto:thebridges10@gmail.com)

We continue to collect donations of food and toiletry essentials and packs of new underwear and socks. Please drop to us on Mondays & Fridays between 12 and 2 or feel free to drop it at Pistachio's in the Park outside of these times and we can collect from them.

We are so grateful for the support you have shown over the past few months and we look forward to welcoming people back on site soon.

[www.thebridgegreenwich.co.uk](http://www.thebridgegreenwich.co.uk)  
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# FEATURES

## Pâté Anyone?

Jo Burnand

Pâtés or terrines have been around since as early as the 11th century. Athenians used to sell it at the market alongside other meats as a way of making more money by using and selling every part of the animal they used. Not surprising then that most countries have their own peculiar variations from Vietnam's Gan Xay to America's Liverwurst by way of the German and Austrian Leberwurst.

The dish came into its own when the French began exploring ways of preserving meat and fish to last throughout the year. Back in the day the pâtissier would be in charge of terrines. What started with ground meat mixed with spices cooked and eaten cold out of a terrine evolved into pâtés by wrapping several meats into a dough. The dough was a cover to hide all the meat leftovers being used and to make it more appealing. Pâté means dough and pâté was originally baked in a crust, pâté en croûte, to keep everything together.

Be warned though, pâté's can be extremely rich and moreish and should definitely be eaten in moderation. Much of the richness comes from the liver which, having worked very hard all its life, offers a more intense flavour than those organs that don't exert as much as effort. As well as being an excellent source of protein, liver is high in vitamins A, D, E, K and B12 and does not store toxins.

### Pork and chicken pâté with apricots and pistachios.

*This is a simple pâté to make. Ideally you want to allow two days so the mix has time to marinade.*

450g pork belly  
350g chicken breast  
200g dry cured unsmoked bacon  
200g chicken liver  
200g pig's liver  
60ml brandy  
110ml dry white wine  
25ml double cream  
1 tbsp juniper berries  
1 tbsp pink peppercorns  
1 tbsp crushed black peppercorns  
1 tsp salt  
1 tbsp thyme leaves  
2 bay leaves  
1 tsp mace  
2 whole eggs  
3 tbsp dried apricots  
3 tbsp pistachios  
A 2lb (900g) terrine or loaf tin

**Note:** The weights given in the ingredients for the pork and liver are before preparing, eg, removing excess fat from the pork and tubes from the liver.

### Method

- Cut the pork and chicken into small pieces as well as half of the chicken and pig's liver. Liquidise the other half of the liver.
- Put all the ingredients into a bowl save for the apricots, pistachios and bay leaf. Leave to soak for at least 2hrs or overnight if possible.
- Bring the oven up to 150c and have a roasting tin half filled with boiling water.
- Line the terrine with the bacon, spaced apart, so that it hangs over the sides.
- Pour in half of the mixture and then in the centre add the apricots and pistachios. Pour in the rest. Place a couple of bay leaves, spaced apart on top and fold the bacon over.
- Bake for 1.45hours.

Carefully remove the terrine leaving the roasting tin with the boiling water to cool in the oven.

Allow the pâté to cool and then place in the fridge, preferably overnight, place a strip of foil across the top and place a few weights to press it down. Place in the fridge, preferably overnight.

This is lovely, again, in moderation, on buttered toast, with gherkins and a salad to offset the richness.



Jo Burnand (above pic) based his pate on an Anthony Bourdain pate de champagne but instead of beef he used chicken.

### Flash Fiction

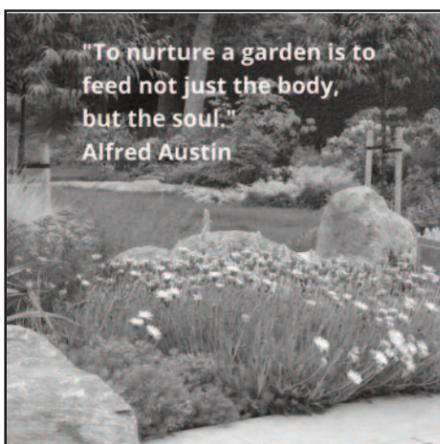
Sarah wasn't satisfied with a zoom call. She wanted the comfort of human touch and it had been months already. But the end was in sight, she had her appointment for a vaccine. Soon she would be home again in the arms of her grandchildren. She smiled as the spring rain came down, knowing there would be flowers.

Kathy Cullen

### A Lockdown Haiku

Another Zoom call  
Daily freezing groundhog walk  
Will this ever end?

Becky Cranham 'Planbee'  
in honour of World Poetry Day  
21st March



### Moss Olive Garden Design

Moss Olive design, build and maintain high quality gardens in Greenwich and Blackheath.

For a friendly chat ring Daniel on 07989 421 841 or mossolivedesign@gmail.com

@moss\_olivedesign

## Heavenly Guidance

Amy Bird

A very potent New Moon in Aries on 12th April marks the beginning of a new cycle, with a lot of planetary energy in brave, assertive, impulsive and pioneering Aries during most of April. This brings the potential for great acts of courage but could also bring anger and aggression, as Aries is the God of War after all!

However, it is the slower moving planets that provide the backdrop for this Moon and give a clear picture of what we are currently facing, both personally and collectively. Pluto is a huge player in this April New Moon and has been in Capricorn since 2008, slowly but surely exposing the rot in our governing bodies and power structures so that they are forced to become more and more transparent. Pluto is the planet of transformation, death and rebirth and so any old, antiquated structures that are simply not working anymore are gradually disintegrating so that something healthier and more appropriate can take their place. Pluto continues this work of detoxifying our societal structures until 2023, so it will be interesting to see what happens in the next couple of years. What will rise out of the ashes?

We also have Uranus in Taurus from 2018 until 2025, bringing the potential for a big shake up of our financial system, not to mention the odd earthquake or two! Taurus is the sign of survival, values and financial security and also represents Mother Earth. Uranus brings sudden change, innovation, technology and revolution, inviting us to think outside the box.

We are certainly experiencing a revolution of our values right now, as what used to hold meaning now holds less value. We are also seeing great innovation and progressive ideas around ecology and sustainability, as well as a greater use of technology in the financial sector and a rise in the use of cryptocurrencies. Taurus is the part of us that like to feel safe and secure, while Uranus is the planet that brings much needed change and revolution, whether we like it or not! These certainly are uncertain times.



Saturn is in Aquarius from December 2020 until March 2023, which could highlight the reality of living in this technological age, in terms of how it isolates us and affects our health, physically, spiritually and mentally, and how it can be used as a form of control and suppression in the form of a technocracy. Saturn, the planet of authority, can also limit, control and suppress any Aquarian tendencies such as the right to protest or question the status quo, the capacity to gather in groups, our civil rights and liberties and our sense of freedom.

This is the shadowy side of Saturn in Aquarius. However, Saturn also call for us to step up and become truly accountable for the kind of world we want to bring in. How can we make a difference, in concrete terms, on the ground level? What little things can we do to help create the world we would like our children to inherit? Instead of relying on daddy government and mummy health care system to take care of us, how can we take responsibility for ourselves and our community?

Last and not least we have Neptune in Pisces from 2011 until 2025, reminding us that we are not as separate as we might think. What affects one affects us all. While we may be in different boats, we are all ultimately in the same storm. Neptune does weaken boundaries and immune systems, as we have seen, and can make us want to just numb out with alcohol, tv, movies, books or sleep - anything to escape harsh reality! Above all, however, Neptune reminds us to treat each other with kindness and compassion, as we just don't know what another person is going through. We are also invited to develop faith and trust in the flow of life and surrender to what is rather than trying to fight against the tide.

Amy is an Evolutionary Astrologer who offers chart readings to help people better understand their purpose and potential for growth. For more info: [www.amybirdartandastrology.com](http://www.amybirdartandastrology.com)

## Finding A Tutor

Amy Biggadike

Homeschooling is finally over and, I don't know about you, but it already feels like a surreal hallucination. There were tears and tantrums along with the glee of the increased freedom as we head back into a more normal school routine. We did a great job. Some of our kids might be behind educationally, but they will also be stronger because they simply managed to get through. And so did we.

If you feel your children are in need of some extra support over the rest of the school year and beyond then finding a Tutor, who could also act as a Mentor to your kids is a healthy option. The ambition should not be to increase the workload and the pressure, but to increase the efficiency and the enjoyment of learning. Tutors must

teach the pupil how to think, not what to think.

Hard work will always pay off. In China, they say that the school day doesn't start until you get home. It is not uncommon for Chinese children to have 3-5 extra hours of tuition after school each day.

Amy Biggadike worked as a journalist before changing careers to run a private tutoring business. She is running free Easter Holiday Boot Camps on the TAG Tuition socials (Instagram: @tag\_tuition and Facebook: @tagtuitionuk). Revision Guidance, Anxiety-Busting Tips, Memory Aids, even Creative Writing Workshops. She invites students to follow along and join in.

## Art gives a Helping Hand

SMAG Art, the not for profit company linked to St Michael's, Blackheath Park has given £1000 to Greenwich Foodbank from the proceeds of its virtual art gallery.

The gallery remains open paintings can be viewed at the church as well as on <https://www.smagart.com>.

Pic: far right: Jamie Ginns, CEO of Greenwich Foodbank, Chris Ashworth, Chairman of SMAG Art and Catherine Ashcroft (SMAG)



# WHAT'S ON

## The Royal Naval College Reopens

The Old Royal Naval College will once again be able to safely welcome visitors from 12th April 2021, with online and outdoor events including digital workshops by illustrator Nick Ellwood, outdoor guided and self-guided tours, and the reopening of the gift shops and café.

Illustrator Nick Ellwood, whose wonderfully mischievous drawings feature in the Painted Hall Family Trail, will have a physical exhibition *Mischief and Misadventure* when guidelines allow, opening from May 2021. Running in advance of this will be online drawing workshops for children and adults - release your inner child and learn children's book illustration.

Exciting digital offerings include award-winning British-Nigerian playwright Adeola Solanke's *Phillis* in London, which will be available to watch on the Old Royal Naval College website. The play, filmed in the magnificent Painted Hall, follows *Phillis Wheatley*, the first black poet published in English, on her 1773 visit to London and the Old Royal Naval College.

Events tickets available online at: <https://ornc.digitickets.co.uk/tickets>

## Living in Greenwich: Tales Through Time

Royal Greenwich Heritage Trust, 'Living in Greenwich: Tales Through Time' ([tales.greenwichheritage.org](https://tales.greenwichheritage.org)) is a major exhibition that explores the history and heritage of Greenwich, by rediscovering the stories of the people who have lived and worked in the Borough before us. Residents can explore their lives through a new online exhibition featuring fascinating objects from the Trust's collection, stories as well as audio contributions from the local community. From pipes and pottery to board games and wedding dresses, objects discarded or treasured by previous generations help us uncover intriguing details about the past. *-Maggie Gravelle*

## Charlton & Blackheath Amateur Horticultural Society

Adam Pasco, editor of *Gardeners World* and other journals, will present his talk on 'Creating a Garden for all Seasons.'

Non-members are welcome but please contact [cabahshortisoc@gmail.com](mailto:cabahshortisoc@gmail.com) in advance to check space.

Monday 19th April at 7.15pm

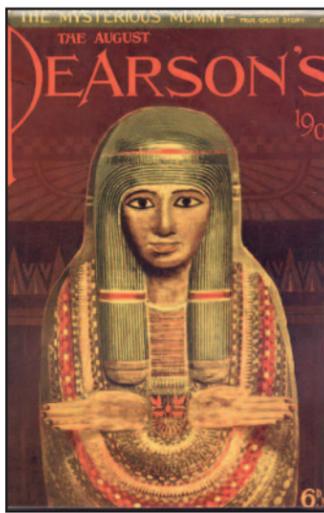
See our website <https://cabahs.com> for details of other events.

## Arts Society Greenwich

### Cursed Artefacts at the British Museum - Tales of a Curator

Lecturer: Louise Schofield  
4pm Monday 12th April 2021

Louise Schofield was Curator of Greek Bronze Age and Geometric Antiquities in the British Museum for 13 years. In this very personal take on her adventures working in the British Museum she will



take you down to haunted basements, exorcisms and extraordinary objects in the British Museum that have curses attached to them.

For instance 'The Unlucky Mummy' fantastic piece on display in the Egyptian galleries - which has a reputation for causing very bad luck - including the sinking of the Titanic!

This lecture will be presented on Zoom. Members will receive email joining instructions. Guests are welcome for £5 - please email [ticaclark@hotmail.com](mailto:ticaclark@hotmail.com) for further details.

[www.theartsocietygreenwich.org.uk](http://www.theartsocietygreenwich.org.uk)

*And finally*, a big hip hip hooray if all goes to plan in the roadmap out of lockdown, on April 12th all non-essential shops, indoor gyms, swimming pools, hairdressers and outdoor seating in pubs, restaurants and cafes will reopen! For all of you who cannot wait to get those lockdown locks snipped off, have a refreshing dip in your local indoor pool or a pint in the Spring sunshine at your local pub, we raise a glass to the return of a bit of long-awaited normality for us all!



If you have any events, happenings or entertainment you'd like publicised, please email: [wnews@westcombesociety.org](mailto:wnews@westcombesociety.org). Polly Morgan (above) and our readers look forward to hearing from you.

## Competition Time

### Design your own theme park ride!

Do you have a creative child? Fire up their imagination with a new challenge to design an exciting new ride for a major theme park!

Talk About Art, a visual arts charity based in South East London, is inviting entries with the Scruffy Dog Creative Group, which designs attractions for theme parks. They are giving young people the chance to create an attraction for a new theme park. The young people have to design a whole land in a brand new theme park, creating an exciting new ride with a rich story, packed with characters, and in an interesting visual style.

The UR ART 2021- Theme Park Challenge is open until the end of June and full details and an entry form can be found on <http://www.talkaboutart.co.uk/ur-art-2021/>. Children aged 7 to 12 can win a family ticket to a Merlin Theme Park and teenagers from 13 to 19 can win the chance to experience working in Scruffy Dog's London design studio.

Entries from last year's competition, A Celebration of Young Artists in Lockdown, can be found in a book in libraries in Bromley, Lewisham, Greenwich and The British Library.



## Greenwich Theatre's challenge to children

Greenwich Theatre will be offering online quality content for families with young children during the Easter holidays. They are re-commissioning *Sir Willoughby's Challenge*, shown during the February half-term, due to the high demand they received.

Join members of the acting company of their stage production of *The Wolves of Willoughby Chase* for a unique online adventure. This brand new theatrical experience is a virtual scavenger hunt for brave and intrepid adventurers aged 6 to 12yrs (with support from their adults if they would like!)

<https://greenwichtheatre.org.uk/events/sir-willoughbys-challenge-2/>



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# FEATURES

## Know Your Neighbourhood: Combe Farm

London's food today comes from Kent and Peru, the Fens and Kenya, via huge processing plants and distribution centres and lorry journeys. But traces of an earlier food system still exist, in which the hungry city was supplied from market gardens at its periphery. Locally, you can glimpse this as you turn into Westcombe Hill from the Woolwich Road, past the redeveloped police station. Tucked behind Westerdale Road is a large brick building: an old barn! Just north of Westcombe Park station stretched one of the city's extensive market gardens, a Victorian powerhouse of vegetable production for the growing population of London.

Combe Farm in 1846 extended from the site of that barn to the Thames, cut through by the Angerstein Branch Railway which still carries freight from the river. The land was owned by the Angerstein family, who built and lived in Woodlands in Mycenae Road, and leased Combe Farm to tenants and for nearly 40 years, Mary Roberts and her family fed Londoners.

The Roberts family were already experienced market gardeners whose farm in Hackney was turned into part of Victoria Park in 1843. Mary, a widow, and her four adult children then moved to Deptford before taking the Combe Farm tenancy. With around 130 acres, they also employed a large seasonal staff, around 110 men and women, probably drawn in part, from the workhouse which was on the site of the Greenwich Centre, at the foot of Vanbrugh Hill.

The Roberts family grew vegetables year round, sending wagonloads to Covent

Garden Market. In winter, they supplied celery, parsnips, broccoli, and cabbages; forced rhubarb was ready in February and

**by Anne Robbins**

but if you're lucky you might come across a 1987 booklet, 'Combe Farm Greenwich', written by Sally Jenkinson and Barbara Ludlow for the

Gordon Teachers' Centre, which encapsulates much of the history of the farm.

The Roberts family were not the first to grow crops at Combe Farm, of course.

The farm was part of a much larger landholding running from Westcombe Park and the area around Eastcombe Road to the marshy banks of the Thames in the early medieval period. It doesn't appear in Domesday Book, the great catalogue of taxable land and property of 1086. The earliest mention, though, is only 40 years later, when a chapel at Combe was listed. Under Norman rule it became Crown property and was divided into Westcombe and Eastcombe and leased to well-connected supporters of the regime.

There were almost certainly people farming the land, but there is little archaeological record of settlements. But in the late 1200s, Combe appears in court records, for instance in 1293 when Thomas of Combe was accused of stealing sheaves of corn and extorting money from some tenants. He was found guilty and fined. In tax records of 1328, 30 households were recorded in Combe, but there is no record of the effects of the Black Death on the area.

King Richard II, who had come as a boy to Blackheath to meet the leaders of the 1381 Peasants' Revolt, granted Westcombe to his chief butler, Gregory Ballard, in 1396, and the Ballard family profited from leasing out the land and its cottages until 1555. But this period also saw the creation of Greenwich Park, when Humphrey, Duke of Gloucester, enclosed land between Combe and Greenwich to build himself a mansion. Even grander was the palace built by Henry VII on Duke Humphrey's site, and royal ripples affected Combe: Henry VIII bought Combe Farm for Anne Boleyn, before his controversial divorce and remarriage. In 1544, when papers mention flood defenses on the Thames, the farm was in Catherine Parr's hands.

Combe Farm passed out of Crown ownership after the death of Charles I. It was mentioned by Samuel Pepys, working for the Admiralty on the dockyards of Deptford and Woolwich during the plague year of 1665-6. He passed by one night, full of fear of Combe Farm's dogs and rumours of the disease, and indeed he reported seeing a coffin and hearing reports of many more deaths on the farm.

It's likely that all through this time the farm was producing food for London, but the Roberts family were particularly intensive gardeners. In 1883, the land was sold for housing development, and the family closed the business. The auction list records a lot of equipment: a water cart with a pump; a winnowing machine; garden engines and land rollers; dung carts; a portable office on wheels; and 25,000 feet of sturdy glass in various sizes. It's no wonder the market garden was so productive.

There are some enterprising growers running much smaller market gardens locally: one is crowdfunding to start up at Woodlands Farm in Welling. But for the most part, London now looks much further afield for its food, and the great market gardens of the past have largely vanished.

**With thanks to Rich Sylvester, Mary Mills, Richard Buchanan, and Philip Binns.**



the spring meant crops of leeks, with seedlings of salad crops, beans, cabbage, kale, and marrows to plant out. The family had an orchard of pears and cob nuts, grew flowers for sale, kept beehives and poultry, and saved their own seed for future crops.

It was a busy and prosperous farm. The main house was a substantial brick home with walled gardens, built around 1790. The family kept records, now in the archives of the Royal Greenwich Heritage Trust. It isn't currently open for visitors,



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# ENVIRONMENT



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

## Plan ahead for the Ultra-Low Emission Zone extension

If you own a car or motorcycle, or drive a minibus locally, it's time to see if it complies with Transport for London's Ultra-Low Emission Zone [ULEZ] requirements.

This autumn, Transport for London is extending the ULEZ from central London out to (but not including) the South and North Circulars. ULEZ has been a success so far, improving air quality substantially. But you might be surprised at what is allowed and what incurs a charge, and the charge is substantial: £12.50 per day.

We've all seen, and smelled, old bangers on the road, clouds of exhaust fumes trailing behind. For ULEZ, your vehicle needs to comply with Euro 3 for motorbikes and mopeds; Euro 4 for petrol cars, vans and minibuses; or Euro 6 for diesel cars, vans and minibuses. These standards became mandatory at various dates. This means that a car might be only six years old and be liable for the ULEZ charge.

Transport for London's website has an easy tool for checking if your vehicle will incur charges, you simply have to enter the registration. There are some exemptions, for vintage vehicles built more than 40 years ago (unless used commercially, like coffee vans) and London-licensed taxis. TfL also has an extended grace period for vehicles registered for disabled tax classes, community minibuses, and wheelchair-accessible private hire vehicles.

For lower income or disabled car and light van owners, there's a useful scrap-page scheme for vehicles that don't comply with the requirements. It will help with the cost of buying a replacement vehicle; Check the TfL website for details.

Why does this all matter? There's plenty of evidence that poor air quality affects health; particulates from exhaust, particularly diesel, have been shown to diminish lung capacity and enter the bloodstream. They affect children's development, and make adults more prone to heart problems and diseases associated with inflammation. TfL says that air pollution has fallen by around 40% in central London since 2017, an impressive amount. Locally, the ULEZ will cover some of London's worst polluted areas, including the Blackwall Tunnel and its approach roads, the Shooter's Hill road across Blackheath, and Trafalgar Road. It may not affect congestion, but removal of the worst-polluting vehicles should improve air quality for us all.

It can take some effort to replace a car, with research into what suits you best, selling an older car, shopping for the newer, and dealing with paperwork; insurance, residents' parking, and so on. With the coronavirus restrictions starting to be removed, now's the time to check whether you need to change cars and make sure yours will comply.

## Proposed Westcombe Park and Maze Hill Low Traffic Neighbourhood (LTNs)

The Environment committee considered how we should react to the Low Traffic proposals for our area. There was an unprecedented response from the public, expressing a wide range of views, often very strongly held. We did not think it possible to accurately reflect this diversity but decided to make a number of points about the process itself and ways in which any implementation should be managed and monitored.

This is what we wrote;

The Council will be aware of the unprecedented level of responses to the proposed LTN in the Westcombe Park / East Greenwich area. We have the following key points to make:

- The survey is poorly designed, as can be seen for example by the discordance between the answers ticked and the views expressed in the comments box and by the fact that there is no option for things to remain as they are.
- The population surveyed is limited as some adjoining neighbourhoods have been omitted even though there will be knock-on effects for them if an LTN is implemented. This is particularly the case for some areas to the east and north of Westcombe Park.
- The original letter about the consultation suggested three reasons for introducing an LTN. These were: to reduce congestion, to reduce pollution and to improve safety. However, implementation may in fact adversely affect health (through increased pollution) especially for families living alongside Trafalgar Road and Blackheath Hill. Some of the areas most likely to be adversely affected are low income.
- Westcombe Park is an area with steep hills and no direct bus services to the nearest large supermarkets. It is unre-

alistic to expect residents to walk or cycle rather than use their cars. If an LTN is implemented car owners may adapt the timings of their journeys when they can but many will still use their cars even if it means driving further with longer journey times. Consequently, evaluating the impact on the desired outcomes (less traffic and less pollution, improved safety) is vital, especially on the main roads. This should include journey duration (especially of buses) and pollution levels near to main roads pre- and post-implementation.

• There needs to be recognition that the pandemic is not a static event. Evaluations of any LTN will be needed post-pandemic and post extended ULEZ. If changes are to be made this should be on a trial basis and should be closely monitored, from a benchmarked position, and include a commitment to make alterations where necessary.

In summary, introducing LTNs is tinkering with the problem and risks shifting pollution and congestion onto main roads, many of which are also residential and where the less well-off live. There is also a risk that diversions within the area would mean residents themselves driving further and passing more residential properties than they would if the roads remained open. A London-wide solution to traffic is needed, involving discussions with local communities, local councils and TfL.



## Bin it!

The Carbon Neutral Plan, recently circulated in draft, is ambitious in its aim to recycle 70% of municipal waste and reduce food waste. For example there is a proposal to collect household refuse fortnightly in order to reduce HGV movements.

But for the moment we have weekly collections. During the Covid restrictions our refuse collection service continued (almost) as normal. The snow at the beginning of February managed to disrupt it but generally the service has been very good and we are grateful to the collectors who go out early and come back late in order to complete their rounds.

Now we have had a reminder about what items can be re-cycled and which must go in the black-topped bins or sacks.



The blue bin is for paper and card, empty cans and aerosols, glass bottles and jars, all plastic bottles (with their lids) as well as plastic pots, tubs and trays and clean foil trays.

Wipes, tissues, nappies, wrappers and packets, hard plastic items and polystyrene, must go in the black bin. For larger items such as washing machines, fridges and furniture, you can take these to the Reuse and Recycling Centre, Nathan Way, London SE28 0AF or arrange a bulky waste collection by calling 020 8921 4661. Please don't leave unwanted items in the street.

The green topped bin is for food and garden waste, including grass, hedge and shrub cuttings, leaves and weeds, plants and flowers, straw, hay and sawdust, tree bark and small branches (less than 50mm or two inches in diameter) and vegetarian pet waste (for example, from rabbits, guinea pigs and hamsters).

DO	DON'T
DO make sure food containers are clean so they do not contaminate the rest of the waste	DON'T put plastic bin liners or carrier bags in your green bin even if they claim to be 'compostable'.
DO squash plastic bottles and replace the lid	DON'T leave unwanted items in the street
DO wash and recycle tetrapacks	DON'T put paint, chemicals or electrical items in any of the bins (check the website for disposal)

## PLANNING APPLICATIONS

(See also <http://www.westcombesociety.org/>)

76 ST JOHNS PARK ref 21/0907/HD

To remove front boundary wall and drop the kerb.

1A VANBRUGH PARK ROAD

WEST ref 21/0594/F

To replace single rear external door with a double door, part glazed.

21/0913/TC

To fell conifer in the side garden. Has a tree preservation order.

64 BEACONSFIELD ROAD ref

21/0911/TC

To fell horse chestnut in rear garden.

TREE WORKS

56 GLENLUCE ROAD ref

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