

# Westcombe NEWS

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February 2022 No.1



## Westcombe Park and Maze Hill Area Low Traffic Neighbourhood

Following the Consultation on the **Westcombe Park and Maze Hill Area Low Traffic Neighbourhood** the Cabinet Member for Environment, Sustainability & Transport, Sarah Merrill will be making a decision on the resulting proposal and way forward on 28/1/22.

The proposed decision is NOT to implement the proposed scheme, but to continue the monitoring of traffic levels in the area and to explore the scope for more appropriate traffic calming measures on Maze Hill, Vanbrugh Hill and Westcombe Hill.

More detail is available in the officer's report on [westcombesociety.org](http://westcombesociety.org). We will post an update confirming the decision when we have more news. A fuller appraisal of the Council decision will be in the March issue of *WN*.

### Final Notice

The consultation on the **West Greenwich Low Traffic Neighbourhood** closes on the 22nd February. Have your say at: [royalgreenwich.gov.uk/westgreenwich](http://royalgreenwich.gov.uk/westgreenwich)

## 2022 - The Year we all Spoke Up?

### Us oldies

The younger generation  
Though often very kind  
Tend to treat us oldies  
As if we've lost our minds.  
But though we can't  
Move quickly

Our brain cells  
Are not sickly  
And we've learnt things  
Over years and years  
Of good times  
And of tears

Gabi Marston (d.o.b. 15.3.32)



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# NEIGHBOURHOOD

## WESTCOMBE NEWS

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**And pledge your support and  
annual membership subscription.**  
**Family membership £12**  
**Individual membership £8**  
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*Thankyou and see you at  
an event soon*

## Join the WN this Year

The WN has attracted a committed group of contributors who either write pieces or suggest ideas, but to keep the paper vibrant and buzzing with all things local, we encourage others to come forward and add their voices. Additionally the WN is looking for that fun guy/girl, dad/mum dancer, or, perhaps an on-their-toes senior citizen who think they'd like to volunteer as the editor of the What's On page. It's an interesting project for some-

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## Westcombe Society Charity of the Year

The Westcombe Society supports a local charity each year and invites WN readers to nominate a charity they would like to see being given some financial help.

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

We help them further their good work with donations and funds raised from events such as our Quiz. We welcome also

ideas for how we can raise those all important funds that enable the designated charity to continue their important work.

Do send your nominations and ideas to [info@Westcombesociety.org](mailto:info@Westcombesociety.org) giving details where possible of how any donation would be used by your chosen charity.

The final choice will be ratified by members at the AGM in May. Thank you

*Marilyn Little,  
Chair, Westcombe Society*

## Events 2022

Saturday 19th February  
- Members and Helpers Evening  
Saturday 19th Mar - Daffodil Tea  
Saturday 16th April - Easter Egg Hunt  
April - Quiz (date to be agreed)  
May - AGM (date to be agreed)  
Saturday 24th September  
- Macmillan Walk  
Friday 30th September  
- MacMillan Coffee Morning  
October - Chrysanthemum Tea  
(date to be agreed)  
Saturday 19th November - Quiz

Invites for the Member/Helpers evening have gone out. If you haven't had yours please contact Tessa on 07757 105 808/02037 595 117 or by email to: [tessalewis@cross@gmail.com](mailto:tessalewis@cross@gmail.com)

If you have recently moved into Westcombe Park and would like to attend please contact Tessa as above.

## Peter Greaves 1931 – 2021

We are very sorry to report the death of Peter Greaves, aged 89, who, after a globe-trotting career with the UN, finally retired to his house on the Cator Estate. A great loss to his wife, Chloe, his children, Tim and Kate, and all his extended family, including four grandchildren.

A loyal parishioner in St Margaret's Church in Lee, he was also an active supporter of Blackheath Halls, and other local organisations, such as Blackheath and Greenwich United Nations Association.

He met, and married, Chloe Morgan, an up-and-coming young actress. They settled in a flat in Shooters Hill, before moving to Blackheath.

His friends were often only dimly aware that he was well-known and respected on the international stage. A distinguished career with the UN agencies the FAO and UNICEF included work in the Middle East, India, Brazil, and, finally, New York, and his work on child nutrition undoubtedly saved many lives.

In his retirement he campaigned on many issues – including climate change, Baby Milk Action, and refugees. He wrote regularly to national newspapers (and the Westcombe News). In the words of his son, Tim: "He is undoubtedly one of those rare people who has left this world a better, a more generous and kinder place than he found it."

*-Neville Grant*



## Foodbank Staples Wanted

Chris Witt of Greenwich Foodbank is proud that Greenwich Foodbank provided 91,603 meals in 2021. He also flags up the following items as being urgently needed: tinned veg, tinned meat, tinned fruit and UHT milk. "These are all going out the door very fast!"

If you are the super organised type, you there is a Food Bank App listing what the Foodbank team are short of.

## Civic Awards 2022 Nominations Open

Residents are invited to name their local hero of 2022 - an individual or organisation they feel have made an outstanding contribution to the community.

The award categories are: Good Neighbour; Young Persons Outstanding Achievement; Volunteer; Community; Sporting Achievement; Teacher/Teaching Assistant; Arts and Entertainment; Act of Courage; Lifetime Achievement.

Councillor Danny Thorpe, Leader of the Royal Borough of Greenwich, said:

"...what a year it has been for Greenwich. From the hundreds of volunteers who have been supporting the vaccination programme to the work of our many small - but vital - community groups..!"

To nominate, visit <https://www.royalgreenwich.gov.uk/civicawards> by 5.00pm on Monday 7th February.

*Yours, La*

In December we reviewed the book of WWII letters from a mother who lived in Beaconsfield Road to her soldier son at the Front. The collator of the letters, Katie Oakley, the granddaughter of La wants readers to know this treasure of a book is now available at waterstones.com and also at the Blackheath Bookshop. She hopes *Yours La* will soon be sold at the Greenwich Waterstones too.

## PAINTING & DECORATING

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## Poppy Appeal

In our November edition Captain Kerr advised which dates he hoped to collect door to door in Westcombe Park and also at the Standard during the 2021 Poppy Appeal. He has asked us to pass on his thanks for the welcome he received and the thanks of the Royal British Legion for the generous donations he was given which amounted to £2,329.

He said the dry weather meant that he was able to collect somewhere in Blackheath on each of the 17 days of the Appeal and the total donations he received amounted to £8,700.

## Greenwich Winter Night Shelter

The huge commitment and effort of the staff, trustees and volunteers of the Greenwich Winter Night Shelter, local businesses and the local council has paid off as GNWS is now settling into its new venue on Middle Park Avenue in Eltham.

Having moved away from rotating between seven churches every night of the week for Covid reasons, GWNS now has a newly refurbished building with nine single rooms for homeless people and rough sleepers and additional rooms for a day centre and other advice services.

Guests are referred into GWNS through partnered referral agencies and can stay at the shelter for up to 28 days. Within that time, they receive one to one support from a Caseworker who works alongside the referral agencies and local organisations to move people on into more permanent housing solutions. If you come across someone sleeping rough on the street, the best thing you can do is notify Streetlink who will send out a team to look for the person and try to find accommodation for them. Either download the app or head to [www.streetlink.org.uk](http://www.streetlink.org.uk).

GWNS is currently looking for more people to join the team, particularly people to help out with evening, night and morning shifts and for cooks to prepare food for the evenings. All information, including the application form, can be found at [www.gwns.org.uk](http://www.gwns.org.uk) or you can email directly at: [volunteering@gwns.org.uk](mailto:volunteering@gwns.org.uk)

If you would like to make a donation, you can do so via the 'donate' button on the website.

*Katy Ridsdill-Smith  
GWNS Project Development Manager*

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# Moving Goalposts on the Heath

## Blackheath Events Policy is Changing by Emily Norton

As life returns to some semblance of normality in 2022, both Lewisham and Greenwich Councils are keen to generate income wherever possible. One way of doing this is to allow events to take place on Blackheath’s open space.

In recent years an Events policy has been used to provide a framework to guide acceptance or rejection of a request to hold an event on the heath. All the amenity societies representing the residential communities that surround the heath were unanimous in their view that Events should only be allowed to take place on the heath on 90 days in any calendar year (including setup and take down). The amenity societies have made this very clear through the Blackheath Joint Working Party, which is an advisory group set up to bring Councillors and Officers from both Councils together with representatives from all the amenity societies to discuss and advise on matters to do with Blackheath.

However, the Councils have both taken this request as a limit of 90 days for each council in any calendar year. They have also excluded the Marathon from their 90

days claiming it is a joint event and therefore can’t be included in their 90 days. This could mean that some part of the heath could be in use for an event, set up or take down on 180 days in the year plus the Marathon days. In practice most events take place in the spring/summer/autumn but the number of days is mitigated by some overlap.

We thought residents would be interested to know what the current schedule is for 2022. As you will see, the scheduled events total 154 days though overlap means the number of days affected is 105 i.e. 15 days over the 90 maximum requested by the amenity societies. This does not include film days. (Did you spot the Ranger’s House as the home of the Bridgerton family?)

We would be interested in any comments you have about events on Blackheath now or in the future. You can attend the Blackheath Joint Working Party Open meeting at the Bakehouse in Blackheath at 7.30pm on Wednesday 23rd February at Blackheath Quaker Meeting House, Lawn Terrace, Blackheath, SE3 9LL. Or you can email [environment@westcombesociety.org](mailto:environment@westcombesociety.org)

## Help is at Hand

During the pandemic The Reach Out Project engaged with voluntary organisations such as The Royal Greenwich Community Hub (who link volunteers with people most in need of support), NHS Responders, Greenwich Mutual Aid, Age UK Greenwich Befriending and The Volunteer Centre Greenwich.

Since our return we could not hold back those who wanted to return to the Wellbeing Cafe as soon as lockdown had ended; the old and a new crowd turned up! Other Reach Out activities numbers are increasing, particularly for those signposted from assisted living homes for those with learning disabilities, Oxleas Community mental health and Lewisham SLAM.

We run a weekly Wellbeing Cafe on Thursdays from 1-3pm in the hall in Mycenae House, and we have monthly

seated exercise, bingo, magic and hearing loss advice. From time to time we offer other activities and in the near future we are looking forward to working with Fiona Veacock on an exciting new art and ceramics project.

We want to create a rolling programme to engage our community in healthy living sessions with therapeutic sessions such as seated exercise with Crossroads Care and The Blackheath High School, healthy walks and supportive therapy sessions from NHS Time to Talk.

We love that both our community and local businesses are involved and welcome any ideas to help with fundraising for The Reach Out Project. For more information: Telephone: 0208 858 1749 email@: [mycenaereachout@gmail.com](mailto:mycenaereachout@gmail.com)

**Deborah Fitzpatrick**  
*Reach Out Project at Mycenae House*



## Letters

Dear Westcombe News,

I would like to echo what was stated in the “Westcombe News” (December 2021 / January 2022 Edition) regarding responding to the “consultation” on the so-called Low Traffic Neighbourhood schemes in West Greenwich, even though it appears the Labour Group on Greenwich Council will do what they intend doing irrespective of the opinions of the people they are supposed to serve.

In May 2021, I stood as the Official Monster Raving Loony Party Candidate in the Greenwich West Ward by-election on a platform of total opposition to the Conservatives’ Low Traffic Neighbourhood schemes, which the Labour Party have zealously implemented despite the negative impact on working class people who live on the main roads where the bulk of the traffic has been displaced to. With the increased congestion has come increased pollution levels, as ‘idling’ vehicles emit more fumes.

With the Liberal Democrats and The Green Party also supporting so-called Low Traffic Neighbourhood schemes, which are one of Boris Johnson’s pet-projects (along with eroding civil liberties and trashing the economy seemingly), the Official Monster Raving Loony Party will be the only major political party contesting Blackheath Westcombe Ward in the 2022 local elections totally committed to scrapping the so-called Low Traffic Neighbourhood schemes. For the Manic, Not the Few, Trevor Allman (Official Monster Raving Loony Party – Greenwich Branch).

Westcombe News February 2022

Dear Editor,

This week, the report on the Westcombe Park and Maze Hill Area Low Traffic Neighbourhood (LTN), proposing the use of ANPR cameras to restrict through traffic, was released by Greenwich Council after months of delay. The council's report recommended "not to implement the scheme", preferring to "continue the monitoring of traffic levels in the area".

As a resident of Maze Hill, and I’m sure residents on Vanbrugh and Westcombe Hill will feel similarly, I was bitterly disappointed by this lack of action after 18 months of promises that something was going to be done to alleviate the pollution, noise, congestion and reckless driving on our doorsteps. The council’s own monitoring has already shown a 59% increase in traffic on Maze Hill following the introduction of the West Greenwich LTN, and yet their solution is to do nothing.

Of particular concern to residents here is the fact that the council secured £161,000 of funding from TfL specifically for tackling the, in the council’s own words, ‘unacceptable levels of through-traffic in the Westcombe and Maze Hill area’. This funding has instead been reallocated to improve the West Greenwich LTN, with no money whatsoever spent on reducing through-traffic in the area it was secured for.

The Healthy Streets initiative the council backed for Greenwich has failed.  
**Colin Humphreys**  
*Maze Hill*

# Charity Status Awarded to the Greenwich Wildlife Network

Historically there has been poor coverage by wildlife rescue organisations in London in general, but the South East, in particular, has had no dedicated wildlife rescue centre at all. All this has changed with the Greenwich Wildlife Network - a homegrown group of animal rescuers - being awarded charity status.

This is a game changer for rehabilitator Rae Gellé who was under pressure from the public, and from local vets, to take on large numbers of sick, orphaned and unwell animals, as they simply had no place else to go.

A Facebook group was created to help with such things as transport and fundraising for medicines, etc. It started out as just a group where local people could help with collecting and dropping off animals, and slowly grew into an experienced and dedicated team of people. Rae being the core wildlife rehabber, helped by other key volunteers like Fran McEvilly, Paul Elliott, Lisa Baden, Darren McEvilly, Dave, Tracey, Gowri Jeevaratnam, Abbie Smith and Krisztina Csundak assisting with hands-on rescue, transport, fundraising, and so on. This group also began to form relationships with rescue organisations outside of London, like South Essex Wildlife Hospital, and began regularly organising the transportation of animals to these centres, which are too far away from SE London, to collect animals from this area for themselves. These transports enable the Greenwich Wildlife Network (GWN) to help significantly more animals, as well as



being able to transfer animals with complex illnesses or injuries for treatment at specialist wildlife hospitals.

The organisation has continued to grow since then, with huge amounts of support from the local community who are grateful to finally have someone to call on if they find a wild animal in distress locally.

Applying for charity status was the next logical step, and now they have it, they are looking to secure land or premises for the organisation locally, to train more rehabbers and expand their impact on animals in the community. This includes branching out into domestic animals, like stray cats, and educating and campaigning on matters relating to conservation and animal welfare.

GWN’s registered charity number is 1197507. If you would like to contribute with a donation/regular standing order, their bank details are:

Greenwich Wildlife Network  
Sort Code: 30-96-26  
Account number: 73981360

For information of their activities, news and opportunities to help visit <https://www.greenwichwildlifenetwork.org/>

## First Success of 2022!

At Christmas a bird of prey was found unconscious in Kent and brought to GWN where it was assessed to have major concussion. The buzzard (pictured left) was cared for, by hand and tube feeding, until stable enough to feed himself. The bird was then transferred to Kelly Wolmer at Runham Wildlife Sanctuary, where a large flight aviary awaited him for his final rehabilitation. It is hoped that very soon, this handsome bird will be released back into his own habitat.



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# FEATURES

## FARMING ACQUIRING CELEBRITY STATUS?

by Chloë Dunnett

It's deep winter down at the farm, all glis-  
tening cobwebs and frosty woodchip  
paths and, when we're lucky, a very special  
golden light filtering through onto all the  
greens and purples of winter leaves grow-  
ing in the relative warmth of the  
polytunnel.

The colder temperatures that finally  
arrived in January after an unseasonably  
warm December have been welcome: help-  
ing kill off pests and supporting the natural  
life cycle of many plants. Some flowers  
bloomed too early after the hottest New  
Year's Eve on record and, like with the  
cherry trees you see blossoming on the  
streets, it's yet further evidence that the cli-  
mate crisis is upon us.

Rather than wallow in doom about that  
(an entirely understandable reaction), we're  
all about channelling our fears and con-  
cerns about our changing planet into taking  
positive action. We so urgently need trans-  
formation of our food system. It is one of  
the greatest contributors to, and potential  
saviours of, the climate crisis and wider  
environmental damage and so we're keen  
to grow as much food as possible in as  
eco-friendly a way as possible.

It's been wonderful to take advantage of  
the shorter days and slower pace on the

farm during the winter months to rest,  
research, and plan for the year to come.  
We're introducing a whole range of new  
vegetable crops: think unusual perennial  
varieties like kailaan broccoli, salt bushes,  
and Babbington's leek. We'll also be plant-  
ing out lots of heritage fruit trees including  
apples, pears, quinces, cherries, plums,  
apricots and figs as well as worcester-  
berries, gooseberries, greengages, raspber-  
ries, rhubarb...as much as we can squeeze  
into the beds we're still building! For us  
this is about preserving and enhancing  
some of the incredible biodiversity that has  
been lost, as well as offering our customers  
a range of flavours and food experiences  
that are just not generally commercially  
available. Come see for yourselves; we'd  
love to meet you.

There are days we pinch ourselves: this  
time last year our farm was still a dream on  
a beautiful patch of pasture. Fast forward  
less than a year and we've already pro-  
duced several tonnes of vegetables and  
flowers... and featured in the BBC R4  
Today programme over Christmas and  
British Vogue no less, who highlighted our  
seasonal produce bags and flowers as the U  
(for urban farming) of their A-Z of things  
to look forward to in 2022. It would appear

farming is becoming fashionable.

We're hugely heartened by the support  
we've had from so many of you and other  
customers over this year, and are delighted  
that the waiting list for our  
vegetables/flower home delivery gets  
longer by the day. Do sign up if you  
haven't already over on our website  
[www.sitopiafarm.com/farm-shop](http://www.sitopiafarm.com/farm-shop). While  
regrettably we don't yet have the capacity  
to meet all the demand, we will be priori-  
tising those who live close to the farm. We  
aim to start deliveries again come Spring,  
as well as our Saturday pop-up shop,  
though we've continued to supply several  
restaurants through the winter and after the  
wonderful Christmas po-up shop we'll  
likely hold another spring flower and veg  
pop-up in February- sign up via our web-  
site for our newsletter to be kept up to  
date! This year we hope to continue with  
our veg boxes deeper into the winter,  
potentially supplemented by staples such as  
organic potatoes and onions from other  
farms.

We like to think that it's the incredible  
freshness, value (comparable in price to  
supermarket organic) and quality of our  
produce that are big reasons for why we  
have such a growing, loyal customer base.

Our regenerative farming techniques and  
hyper-local sales lead to infinitely better  
taste and higher nutrition values than pro-  
duce that hasn't been grown organically/  
has been harvested some time ago and  
transported long distances. We also think  
it's because we're riding a swelling wave  
of awareness about the critical role food  
and farming plays not just on our own but  
planetary health. While politics can leave  
all of us exasperated and angry- and we  
urgently need our politicians to change our  
agricultural subsidy system, trade deals and  
much more- nevertheless changing how we  
eat and where we shop can be transforma-  
tive. We all vote with our forks at least  
three times a day. What will you do with  
yours?



**Chloë Dunnett**  
Founder/Chief  
Grower  
**Sitopia Farm**  
[www.sitopia-farm.com](http://www.sitopia-farm.com)  
Instagram/twit-  
ter: @sitopia-farm

## The Funfair on Blackheath

by Tony Lord

Over eighty odd years ago I was living  
with my widowed mother in a row of  
big Victorian houses at the top of  
Blackheath Hill. Across the road was the  
Green Man pub. In those days this part of  
Blackheath was called 'The Grove'. Now  
it's called 'West Grove'. Mother paid Mrs  
Tabb, the landlady, fifteen shillings a week  
for rent to live in the attic of number twenty.  
There was no bathroom and we shared a  
lavatory with the people downstairs.

Forrest's funfair came to the heath at  
Easter, Whitsun and August Bank holidays  
occupying the huge gravel pit alongside  
the park wall. After the war the pit was  
filled with rubble from war damaged  
houses.

Gradually on such days the hill would

fill up with expectant people trudging up  
from Deptford or crowding into the six-  
wheeler buses. Maybe they would pause  
outside the pub to buy a bag of Larkin's  
roasted peanuts or a windmill on a stick.

My mother would give her little boy a  
shilling to go out until lunchtime. If the  
wind was in the right direction I would  
hear the tinny organ music from the steam  
roundabout as soon as I emerged from our  
front door. Running past the water fountain  
and horse trough at the top of Hyde Vale I  
would round the corner of the park and see  
the yellow canoes and paddleboats on  
Folly Pond, then the patient donkeys teth-  
ered to the railings and the man selling  
candy floss. With my shilling burning a  
hole in my pocket I would give the lady in

the paybox tuppence and climb to the top  
of the helter skelter holding a mat. Up  
there I could see the deer grazing in the  
park and on the other side several church  
spires across the heath. My grandfather  
said he could count seven if he stood near  
Whitfield's Mount.

After I slid down I had ten pence left. I  
was certainly not going in the Ghost Train  
alone with skeletons and lace curtains  
hanging in the darkness which brushed  
against your face like cobwebs. The two  
huge swings with the names of the famous  
liners Mauritania and Aquitania painted on  
them were also a no-no because a ride on  
them made me feel sick. Dodgem cars  
were too expensive and it was well nigh  
impossible to knock a row of tin cans off  
their shelf because they had lead weights  
soldered to their bottoms. I could try to  
score twenty-one or under with three darts  
to win a goldfish swimming in a plastic  
bag of water or try and knock a coconut  
down.

Maybe I'd buy a toffee apple or a Wall's  
ice cream and save the rest for a Dinky toy  
in Chiesman's toy basement tomorrow. I'd  
still have fourpence left to get into the  
Roxy Cinema in the Old Dover Road after  
school later in the week to see Laurel and  
Hardy or Mickey Rooney and Ann

Rutherford in the Hardy Family series.  
Three hours of entertainment, much more  
fun and much more sensible than blowing  
it all in five minutes on the Roll a Penny  
stall.



**Tony Lord**  
**1925-2021**

It is with a great deal of sadness that *WN* learnt of Tony's passing early December. We  
really enjoyed publishing his amusing stories and hand-drawn illustrations for the last  
two years, and will greatly miss his presence on our pages.

Tony lived in this area for most of his 96 years and his life and work was so varied and  
interesting - he served on hospital ships in the war and his ship "Gerusalemme" carried  
the emaciated prisoners, captured and tortured by the Japanese, back home. He was a  
local teracher for over 20 years and, alongside this, had another job ferrying the wealthi-  
er children to their schools. "Tony's Minibus" was a familiar sight along the roads of  
Blackheath, Charlton and Woolwich. When his mother died in 1979 Tony changed his  
career to pursue his passion for writing and painting, becomming a columnist for The  
Mercury and The South London Press. He sold numerous paintings and it is very much  
hoped his writings and drawings will be collated into a book, as his memories and stories  
of this area are a treasure trove.

His wife Jackie sent the above picture of Tony sitting in the sun. "He loved the sun-  
shine and we like to think that he is somewhere hot, watching his beloved cricket."

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# WHAT'S ON

## Events on Blackheath 2022

(as known in mid January)  
**Under 12s funfair:** 12th-20th February  
**Zippos Circus:** 31st March-8th April,  
Funfair on Circus Field:  
27th March-19th April  
**Race for Life:** 26th June  
**Botton's funfair:** 23rd-31st July  
**Cellar Door cinema** (to be confirmed):  
22nd-31st July  
**Funfair on Circus Field:**  
15th August-5th September  
**Music Festival (to be confirmed):**  
21st/22nd August  
**London Marathon:** 2nd October  
**Kite Festival:** 8th/9th October



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FRIDAY - 4TH (7.45pm)  
SATURDAY - 5TH (4pm/7.45pm)  
SUNDAY - 6TH MARCH (6pm)

In aid of Charlton House Roof repairs  
for the benefit of the Whole Community

Tickets: £15 Adults £5 Children  
BOOK NOW: 020 8856 7373

'MAMMA MIA' is a spectacular musical written by Catherine Johnson and the music and lyrics by Benny Andersson and Björn Ulvaeus. Our Charlton show is produced by Gwen Zammit, BEM, and the musical director is Richard O'Shea. The cast is made up of members of our Community and have aimed for a professional standard.

We are hoping to create a party atmosphere after all the Covid restrictions, which means we would love you to participate when invited to do so, i.e. dancing in the aisles and singing but, at the same time, listening to our wonderful cast as they purvey this romantic story to you all. **Wine and soft drinks will be on sale at reasonable prices during the interval.**

## Runs in Greenwich Park

19th February - Run Through Greenwich, approximately 500 participants.  
19th March - Greenwich Meridian 5k-10k Approximately 300 participants.  
2nd April - Run Through Greenwich, approximately 500-600 participants.

## Greenwich Theatre

11th-19th February - **Revival of Michael Frayn's Alarms and Excursions**, a collection of short comic plays. Very exciting to announce this inhouse production directed by James Haddrell (Artistic Director Greenwich Theatre). Last performed in Greenwich in 2018. Cast includes Dan Gaisford (from their production of Caryl Churchill's Bad Nights & Odd Days last May) alongside Shereener Browne and Lauren Drennan. Returns 9-26 March.

25th February - **Bowjangles** - Virtuoso musical comedy superstars Bowjangles are back with their preposterous retelling of Dracula

26th-27th February - **The Snow Beast** - a snowy adventure story for ages 6+, complete with live science experiments carried out on stage.

info@greenwichtheatre.org.uk

Westcombe News February 2022

## Arts Society Greenwich The Wonderful World of Canal Architecture

Lecturer: Roger Butler  
Monday 14th February at 7pm  
This lecture provides a colourful introduction to the secret world of our 2000-mile



canal network and looks at all aspects of their architectural and artistic vernacular - only the National Trust and the Church of England have more listed structures than our inland waterways. Included are descriptions of unique buildings, heroic engineering and quirky landmarks, historic boats, interesting landscapes and little-known features.

This lecture will be presented on Zoom. Members will receive an email with joining instructions. Guests are welcome for £8 - please email ticaclark@hotmail.com for further details.

www.theartsocietygreenwich.org.uk

## Blackheath Halls

**Miranda Sykes Behind the Wall**  
Friday 4th February 8pm

The Hearn Recital Room  
The acclaimed singer and bassist with 'Show of Hands' is returning to her roots, she is touring as she started out: one woman, one bass, and one guitar. Join her for a roller coaster ride exploring where we are going; Miranda, you, me, all of us. Tickets: £13



**Bye Bye Blues Band  
The Farewell Tour**

Saturday 5th February 8pm Great Hall  
Four decades, over 4,000 gigs, 30 albums and a string of singles later, the Blues Band (pictured below) are taking to the road one last time to remind us just how durable and eternally thrilling live Blues remains. Erudite in their craft, experienced and tutored by their close early working relationships as side-men with the likes of John Lee Hooker, Buddy Guy, Howlin' Wolf and many others, The Blues Band have filled halls and stadiums around the world.

If you're an aficionado of authentic Blues played by richly experienced and seasoned journeymen, this will be a memorable opportunity to catch them one final time. Tickets: £30



## The Old Royal Naval College

**The Admiral's Tea - 13th February**

Treat someone special to a luxury afternoon tea in the Admiral's House. This exclusive setting is rarely open to the public and is one of the oldest buildings on site, with views of the Thames and a regal yet intimate atmosphere.

**Family Sundays**

A programme of free events for families, ranging from arts and crafts sessions to drama and movement workshops, exploring themes and characters linked to the history of the grounds and buildings.

**The Big Dream**

**Evening of 22nd February**

20 iconic locations around the world will simultaneously project a large-scale artwork representing the world's collective dreams for the planet in the next decade.

The Big Dream project hopes to capture 100,000 dreams for the future from around the world and it's not too late to send in yours.

Tickets/info: ornc.digitickets.co.uk

## Diary Date

The Charlton Society. Saturday 19th February **Charlton Histories of Home by Naomi Oppenheimer** Talks held at Charlton House SE7 8RE 2.30pm Entrance and refreshments Members £2 Visitors £3

## Charlton Community Gardens

Sunday Gardening Parties continue on the first Sunday of the month starting on 6th February, from 10am. During the growing season, come and join us on the third Wednesday morning of the month from 10am. Work continues to develop the community garden at Charlton Station organically, and as a way of showing that food can be grown in small spaces.

The garden also provides habitats for local wildlife too. Our volunteers help with clearing the ground, watering, planting, harvesting and eating the produce. If you want to join us in 2022, don't be concerned as gardening experience is not necessary.

During 2022 we will continue to work in the Orchards and Café Orchard Bed regularly. We hope you can join us to help or come and say hello on any of the dates below.

Understandably, if the weather is too wet, cold or windy, we won't be there.

For those of you who visit Charlton Park, come and say hello as we will be there on alternate Friday mornings, in the Café Orchard area, near the Old Cottage Coffee Shop

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## Early Music

### One for the Diary



Early music specialists **Musicke in the Ayre** return to St Alfege on 5th March for a lunchtime recital with a strong local flavour. Westcombe Park resident and Trinity Laban alumnus Alysha Paterson will be accompanied by ensemble founder Din Ghani (both pictured above) on lute and baroque guitar in "A Greenwich Song Sandwich" - songs from the reigns of James I and Charles I, bookended with works by two Greenwich-based Royal musicians. Alfonso Ferrabosco the Younger was buried at St Alfege in 1628; while Nicholas Lanier (the first-ever Master of the King's Music) was baptised there in 1568. The sandwich filling gives a flavour of how musical tastes evolved from the end of the Elizabethan age to the Restoration six decades later. The lute songs of John Dowland, Thomas Campion (and Ferrabosco) contrast with theatre songs by Robert Johnson, followed by the continuo songs of the Lawes brothers and of Lanier himself. Over this period composers gave up writing song accompaniments specifically for the lute, leaving the choice of instrument open to the performers; although the lute remained the preferred option for some time, the newly emerging "Spanish" guitar was another option. The recital begins at 1.05pm; entry is free, with a retiring collection for the church.

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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)

## Living Walls are High Maintenance

During a trip to Chelsea flower show a couple of years ago, I saw an amazing lush-looking vertical garden – a living wall, with a great variety of plants. It seemed a new way of improving the environment and ‘greening the city’. So, it’s not unsurprising that they now appear in developers’ proposals, to increase the ‘greening quotient’ in plans.

However, without proper maintenance, they unfortunately quickly degrade into brown, dead foliage. An article in the Architects’ Journal (October 2021), came complete with photographs of sorry examples from Southwark, Islington and west London amongst those from other UK cities. In fact, dead ‘green’ walls pose a greater fire risk, and, post Grenfell, green walls are not now allowed on residential buildings above 18m, with an intention to lower the ban’s threshold to 11m. If green walls are to be allowed, a clear maintenance regime must be specified in the planning condition with the water source, sustainable drainage system, its regime and maintenance. So on reflection, the cheapest and most sustainable way of vertical gardening is the old-fashioned use of ivy and traditional climbers.

- Helen Warner



## Solar panels - an invitation!

Given the rise in energy costs and the need to reduce our fossil fuel consumption, the Westcombe News is planning a series of interviews with local homeowners about their experiences in shifting away from fossil fuels for domestic use. Below is the first in what we hope will become a series of interviews. If you are willing to share your experiences and tips, please contact Maggie Gravelle, Environment committee.

Solar panels: interview with David Jervis, Mycenae Road resident

**Why did you choose solar panels rather than some other system?**

There are only two sources of electrical generation available for domestic properties - sun and wind. Photovoltaic panels fitted to the roof are the preferable choice for suburban areas as wind turbines are more obtrusive, although more aesthetically pleasing designs are being developed.

**What are the main components and where are they situated?**

Photovoltaic installations comprise the following elements:

- The panels, which absorb the sun’s ultra-violet rays, need to be installed preferably on the south facing roof of the house or garage, although east and west orientation will still work.
- The inverter, which converts the DC volt-

age produced by the panels into AC voltage for use. This is approximately 600mm x 450mm and can be installed adjacent to your electrical meter or in a garage.

-The generation meter. This is fitted next to your electric meter.

**How long did the installation take?**  
Installation of the panels, inverter and meter normally takes just a day, but as access to the roof is required, scaffolding is normally involved and so a day for both installation and removal should also be allowed.

**What was the approximate capital outlay?**

This varies according to the size of the installation, the company used and whether any grants are available. In my case, for a 2.4 kW installation (8 x 300W panels) the cost was approx. £5,500 including scaffold costs.

**How many years do you expect it will take to break even?**

The norm is to break even in approximately 7-8 years, but this will depend on the Feed-In Tariff (FIT) available. This is the payment you receive for surplus energy you generate at home and send to the National Grid.

**Are you able to produce enough electricity to meet your needs?**

My installation provides about 50% of our daily electrical consumption, but depend-

ing on the roof area available it is perfectly possible for an installation to meet your total consumption.

**Would you recommend to a friend?**

Yes, most definitely. Photovoltaic panels installed to every home in the country would negate the need for so many power stations to be constructed.

**Have you any tips for anyone planning to install solar panels?**

1. If possible and affordable, install battery storage at the same time. This allows power generated during daylight hours to be used during night time.
2. In a conservation area, check with the Council’s planning department to ensure what you propose is lawful.
3. Research providers carefully. There are very good installers but also some very poor ones so try to get recommendations for your chosen installer.
4. Your installer can advise on the best orientation of panels.
5. Check what grants are available as these seem to change regularly.
6. In order to qualify for the Feed-In Tariff your property must achieve a minimum Energy Performance Rating of D, so it is advisable to check insulation, glazing and draught-proofing prior to survey.

- Ann Hill

## PLANNING APPLICATIONS

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

**87 WESTCOMBE PARK ROAD ref 21/4498/HD**

**To replace fence and create in-out driveway and replace hardstanding.**

**63 LANGTON WAY ref 21/4488/HD**

**To demolish garage, conservatory and shed and construct single storey rear extension**

**65 BEACONSFIELD ROAD ref 21/4149/HD**

**To construct basement. Construct new windows to front and rear, new dormer to rear slope, alter front dormer and rooflight, raise rear garden level, construct balcony to rear elevation and remodel interior of the house.**

**3 BEACONSFIELD ROAD ref 21/4538/HD**

*Continued.....*

## The Queen’s Green Canopy: Plant a tree for the Jubilee

This month sees the start of events and other celebrations to mark the Queen’s Platinum Jubilee and we are all invited to plant trees to create a green legacy to honour the Queen’s long service. Every tree planted will benefit each one of us: not only are they beautiful, but trees clean the air we breathe, provide wildlife habitats, and slow the impact of climate heating.

The tree planting invitation extends throughout 2022, but February and March, or late autumn, are the best planting seasons. The aim is to create a network of individual trees, copses, avenues and whole woodlands. Your tree can be plotted on a UK-wide Queen’s Green Canopy map (<https://queensgreencanopy.org/>)

The aim is to encourage everyone, either as individuals or as groups, to plant the right tree in the right place, at the right time so that they will thrive for generations



Blackbird sitting in a Juneberry tree

*Planning Applications continued from previous column....*

**To demolish side conservatory and construct single storey rear side extension.**

**102A WESTCOMBE HILL ref 21/4385/HD**

**To construct outbuilding in rear garden.**

**2 STRATHEDEN PARADE ref 21/4242/F**

**To install external extraction ducting system for Dallas Chicken restaurant.**

**TREE WORKS47 ST JOHNS PARK ref 22/0224/TC**

**To fell laurel in rear garden and remove co-dominant stem of laburnum.79 WEST-**

to come. So assess the conditions before you plant (dry, shady etc).

Below are five trees that you might like to consider for a small garden. They thrive in sun or partial shade and provide blossom in spring, pollen and nectar for bees and butterflies, and berries for birds in autumn:

- Rowan (Sorbus): has bunches of white blossom in spring and then yellow, orange, or red berries. Native to the UK.
- Hawthorn (Crataegus): one of the most wildlife-friendly trees you can grow. Native to the UK.
- Crab apple (Malus): ancestor of our orchard apple has stunning blossom and fruit for birds, or make into crab apple jelly.
- Juneberry (Amelanchier): a slim tree: if you have space, a multi-stemmed variety looks even more lovely. Snowy scented blossom and small red berries, which birds adore.
- Wedding cake tree (Cornus): compact, ornamental, with small creamy flowers and dark berries.

Join the Jubilee fun! Make sure you buy UK-grown plants to avoid new imported pests and diseases and, if possible, are peat-free and organic. Native trees are best for attracting biodiverse insects and other species. For help with what, where and how to plant try <https://habitataid.co.uk>.

- Ann Hill

**COMBE PARK ROAD ref 22/0205/TC**

**To fell cypress in rear garden.**

**50 VANBRUGH PARK ref 22/0171/TC**

**To crown reduce sycamore in front garden by 40% and rowan by 30%; in rear garden crown reduce sycamore by 30%.**

**21 VANBRUGH PARK ref 22/0156/TC**

**To fell horse chestnut in rear garden.**

**91 COLERAINE ROAD ref 22/0159/TC**

**To fell ash on rear boundary.**

**90 MYCENAE ROAD (MYCENAE HOUSE) ref 22/0093/TC**

**To fell Robinia and bay tree.**



...that’s the cost of providing a school-age girl in Africa with sanitary pads for a month. Without such protection, girls often miss lessons and can lose over two month’s education every year.

A small group of individuals provides sanitary protection in Kenya for up to 600 girls every month. We are now seeking to create a regular donation base of £400 a month (to achieve a maximum of £5,000 a year) to continue this work into the future.

**Do you have £2 a month to help?**

Stamens is a ‘small charity’ [registered under HMRC for GiftAid] based in Greenwich - 100% of the donated money is spent on the mission, which has no administrative costs.

**To find out more** or to set up a £2 monthly donation, please visit [www.stamens.org.uk](http://www.stamens.org.uk)



# THE OUTDOORS

## So You Want to Run a Marathon?

By Helen Amanda Hutchinson

You’ve done it - your place is confirmed, the date is set. Stage one complete! Now the fun begins. The first thing to do - don’t think about how far it is!

If it’s your first time running that distance, you could end up sitting at your kitchen table, staring into space, slightly panicking, wondering what on earth you’ve got yourself into.

Instead, stand up, go out to a sports shop, and get yourself measured up for a proper pair of running shoes.

Shops like Runners Need and Asics offer free gait analysis so you can ensure your shoe is suitable for your style of running and for the type of race you’ll be doing. <https://www.runnersneed.com/expert-advice/gear-guides/choosing-the-right-running-shoes.html?from=lister>

### Start planning your training

If you haven’t trained for this type of event before and don’t belong to a gym, find a recommended personal trainer who can help you devise a plan suitable for your level of fitness/the number of times you want to go out running each week. You would probably only need a couple of sessions to get a training plan mapped out along with warm-up and cool-down stretches.

Your personal trainer could also be a huge source of inspiration and motivation throughout your training. For example, somebody like Jim Ashford-Beaumont - personal trainer, NHS Orthotist, Prosthetist, UKA run coach and now ParaAthlete: <https://twitter.com/jimashworthbeal?lang=en-GB>

en-GB <https://www.gofundme.com/f/jim039s-greatest-challenge>

Your event website might also have training plans you could use. The Big Half (which is returning to our streets on Sunday 4th September 2022) has Beginners and Nine Week Training Plans: <https://www.thebighalf.co.uk/training/training-plans>

If you're training for a long distance running event, it's a very good idea to build in weekly cross training sessions - e.g swimming, cycling, resistance training - alongside your running sessions. You can target these to build up the areas you need - e.g calves, quads, glutes, upper body - so you can become more co-ordinated, are balanced better, can run stronger and longer and you are minimising your risk of injury. So decide what type of cross-training would suit you best

If you like being outdoors, Burn it Fitness provide a variety of morning and evening HIT and resistance classes, ideal for jumping about merrily on the Heath: <https://burnitfitness.co.uk>

Never, ever skip on your warm-up and cool down stretches! They play a vital role in keeping injury free.

### Write your plan down on the calendar

Cross off each session as you go. Mark down how fast you went in an interval/time taken for a long run. This is a great way to keep track of your progress, hold yourself accountable and keep yourself motivated.

If you miss a session, don’t beat your-

self up. Sometimes, life will get in the way of training. Don’t worry. You’ll pick up at the next one.

Learn to really love long runs. If you are training for a half or full marathon, you’ll be doing one long run every week. Think of these as giving you precious space to meditate, to explore new parts of London, to discover new music and podcasts.

Use this time to reflect on why you signed up to do this in the first place. A personal challenge perhaps, or to raise money for a charity, or maybe to help keep your body and soul together. Whatever your purpose is, keep it at the forefront of your mind step by step, mile by mile.

There’s no such thing as bad weather! Rain, snow, wind - these are just elements. They won’t stop you. Check the forecast, layer up your running kit accordingly and out you go. Think of how invincible you’ll feel afterwards and how amazing the hot bath with Epsom salts will be when you get back home!

### Embrace intervals

Ah, intervals. Short bursts of high intensity running. You’ll have to do these at least once a week to increase your speed and endurance. Your legs will hate you at first, and your heart will be trying to escape from your chest but gradually you will improve.

<https://www.runtastic.com/blog/en/top-6-benefits-interval-training/>

Greenwich Park is a great spot for interval training. As you get closer to race day, you might see other runners sprinting,

stopping, bending double to get their breath back, checking their watches, starting again. Give them high-fives. You’re all in it together.

Race Day. It’s arrived!

Focus on the finish line but remember - running is the journey. Relax. Enjoy the experience. Savour every step. Listen to the crowds. These are the moments to treasure.

Once you’ve completed one race, you might find you’ve caught the running bug. You’ll be lacing up your trainers and heading out in all conditions. Welcome to the club!



Helen coming over Tower Bridge in the 2021 London Marathon

## A Night Hike on the Heath

The Christmas lights may be mostly packed **By Ben Gioe & D L Gioe**

inviting, resist the urge to pop into the pub just yet.

away, but that’s no reason to hibernate indoors once the sun goes down. While most of us tend to sequester insider from now until Spring, a night hike offers the chance to get out and see our area from another perspective, in addition to getting some exercise. In February, the dark arrives before tea, giving night adventurers plenty of time to grab some fresh air and still make it to bed on time.

On Blackheath, all manner of creatures are out at night after the humans have largely hurried themselves indoors. You’re likely to spot a fox slinking across the frosty grass and could even hear an owl near some of the wooded areas. You could also stumble across a local Cub Scout Pack. The 40th Greenwich were out on the heath recently, learning to navigate using maps and landmarks, which can look very different in the dark. The duck and goose pond near the Princess of Wales pub, for instance, was strangely quiet and serenely reflective, seeming to offer a peak into another dimension.

Did you know that there is another pond across the heath near the Hare and Billet pub? Set yourself a course – or better yet, have your kids plot one for the whole family – and enjoy a starlit stroll along the paths, or across the grass if you’ve got good wellies.

Though the warm windows will look

There are sights worth the wait, and the short walk from the second, wilder water feature of Goeffers Road to Point Hill and the Maidenstone Hill park that looks out over the London skyline is surely one of them. In addition to the memorial for Australian Flight Lieutenant Richard Reynell, who was downed near this spot in 1940 (see pic below), there are benches here for the walk weary or those who thought to pack of thermos of hot cocoa while they marvel at all the lights that twinkle across the city regardless of season.



Pic: Ben Gioe



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