

Westcombe NEWS



Free to 3800 homes, in libraries and shops and online

May 2022 No.4

“Those who make conversations impossible, make escalation inevitable.”

Stefan Molyneux

Has the Westcombe News a Future?

It is a sad fact that local journalism round the country is declining; so many local titles have gone out of print. In some cases, local community newspapers have filled the gap.

There is a strong need for local news, covering local issues - and the Westcombe News has done its best to do the job. But now there is a danger that the WN, too, will go out of print, for we need a new editor!

Our present editor, Anne Williams, has enjoyed the job for the last two and half years - taking over the position a month before lockdown! Now Anne has more She said, “It’s hard work but creative and I liked finding new voices in the community to contribute to the paper.”

So we need a new editor! I asked a previous editor, Neville Grant, what he thought of the job. “I found it enormously rewarding,” said Neville, “and so much fun. You get to meet so many people, hear so many stories. *And* you feel a great deal of satisfaction to see the work you and all the people who contribute have done, turned into a newspaper almost overnight.”

It’s ten issues a year – December/January and July/August are combined issues. The editor gets an Apple Mac computer, with a very simple design program, Quark, which makes it relatively easy to lay out the material. We have a very helpful local printer, Dave, at Trojan Press and there are people in the community to encourage to contribute with news, photos, articles, and of course, adverts.

The next editor gets the support of the Westcombe Society - we offer free training and support; Neville has said he will gladly spend time for any training or advice required.

Interested? The Westcombe News is a great opportunity for a young person keen to establish a track record in journalism, and burnish their CV, or a retired person looking for a new and interesting role. Job-sharing could be a possibility.

This is a voluntary position, but expenses can be claimed. Please give me a ring on 0208 853 1312 to talk through the possibilities.

*Marilyn Little, Chair,
Westcombe Society*

Lighting Up Blackheath for the Jubilee



On Thursday 2nd June. the Blackheath Society is leading celebrations from 8.30pm on the Heath to mark the Queen’s Platinum Jubilee with an event to light a special beacon near the paved circle known as the Hub. Join them to start the specially extended bank holiday weekend with local choirs singing a varied programme for everyone to enjoy before the lighting at 9.30pm. Courtesy of the Blackheath Society.



Local celebrities, the Egyptian goslings, admired here by a pigeon, are growing up fast. WN’s Thea Gioe went to see them (page 4).

Westcombe Society Annual General Meeting for Members

Friday 13th May at 7.30pm
in the Centenary Room, Blackheath
High School, Mycenae Road

AGENDA

1. Welcome and apologies for absence
2. Approval of and matters arising from Minutes of 2021 AGM
3. Reports from the Chair, Events sub-committee, Environment sub-committee, Membership Secretary, Editor of Westcombe News, Advertising Manager
4. Treasurer's Report and presentation of inspected statement of accounts for year ending 31/3/2022
5. Principles of Westcombe Society Finances
6. Election of officers

The Westcombe Society

QUIZ NIGHT

21st May
7.30pm for 8.00pm start

This very popular event is taking place at Mycenae House. Please book your team of six, or come on your own and you will be allocated to a team by calling Caroline: 020 8853 0948 by 14th May to secure your booking.

Tickets: Members £5.00, non
Members £6.00

*'Chippy' suppers can be ordered
in advance*

ONE TO WATCH

Olyn Williams, just five years old is a regular skateboarder in the Park - still allowed by the Bandstand on Great Cross Avenue and Bower Avenue. His dad, Adam, also a dedicated enthusiast of the sport watches as his son executes a perfect ‘ollie’. “Of course he needs to grow and strengthen a bit before he tackles bigger moves...but he’s doing well, this is his fourth ‘deck’ (skateboard)!” he said proudly.

Photograph by Instagram
photographer Mar Agust
Guomundsson



NEIGHBOURHOOD

WESTCOMBE NEWS

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To access back numbers (in colour) go to:
<http://www.westcombesociety.org/westcombenews>

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We would be delighted to receive your support and annual membership subscription.

Family membership £12.
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Please send payment to:
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membership@westcombesociety.org

Easter-licious fun at Mycenae Gardens!

Lucy Hill



For the first time since 2019 the Westcombe Society Easter Egg Hunt

took place at Mycenae Gardens on Easter Saturday. Over 100 children searched the woods for eggs on a lovely sunny day, proudly returning their trays of eggs in return for a chocolate treat. Both the children's and adult tombola were popular, with many people coming to try their luck. The younger children were kept entertained with the craft kits from the tombola, returning to show their completed pictures. The array of homemade cakes, cookies and brownies were irresistible. It was a joy to see happy faces of all generations joining together to celebrate in the sunshine. Pictured are four young volunteers, two of whom are volunteering with the Westcombe Society as part of their Duke of Edinburgh bronze award.



Pic: Jamie Hill

The success of the day was due to the hard work of Ben, Charlie, Lucy and May (above) and their friends and families.

A BIG thank you from the Westcombe Society. Marilyn (Little).



Sophia collecting First Prize

How Are You Celebrating the Queen's Jubilee?

Dear readers: We would love to hear from you, on how you are all planning to celebrate the Queen's Platinum Jubilee in June this year.

Will you be hosting a fabulous street party? Or afternoon tea and a picnic perhaps? Will you be strolling through the Royal Borough of Greenwich that Bank Holiday to soak up the entertainment on offer? What will your children or grandchildren be up to on that day - might it involve face painting and fun activities for the kids? Or something even more quirky perhaps?

Let us know (and send in those pics!) by emailing our editor at: wnews@westcombesociety.org

-Polly Morgan

CHARITY OF THE YEAR REMINDER

The Westcombe Society is still taking nominations for Charity of the Year so if you know a local group that you'd like to see get some financial help please let us know on the following email address:
info@westcombesociety.org

Wanted

Advertising Manager needed for popular local paper. Many regular advertisers, together with one-offs.

Would suit a Volunteer with a few hours a week to spare. Knowledge of simple spreadsheets would be useful but training could be given.

Please contact:
info@westcombesociety.org

Jubilee Tea at St George's

St George's will be having an afternoon tea on Saturday 4th June at 3pm – full details to be announced soon, but get the date in your diary and invite friends and neighbours as we join together to celebrate.

Events

Mycenae House & Gardens

FRIDAY 6 MAY 2022 7.30pm - 10.30pm £5
JAZZ JAM - Open Mic
Join In or Just Listen - Live Jazz with House Band

FRIDAY 13 MAY 2022 7.30pm - 10.30pm £5
LILY NEILL
Part of the New Harp Revolution

FRIDAY 27 MAY 2022 7.30pm - 10.30pm £5
GLOBAL FUSION
Celebration of Chinese Music and Culture

Do, See, Enjoy, Share, Experience

020 8858 1749
www.mycenaehouse.co.uk
90 Mycenae Road, Blackheath, SE3 7SE

Committed to the development of your community. It is a place for learning, wellbeing, culture, support and socialising. We hire halls for Celebrations and Family Parties, activities, meetings, events and all manner of things!

Greenwich Park Events



1st May - start of cricket matches in the Park
8th May - Greenwich & Bexley mini marathon (approximately 800 children)
30th May to 4th June - Quantum Theatre presents Tale of Peter Rabbit in the Royal Observatory Garden
4th June - Greenwich Meridian 5 and 10 km run (approximately 150 participants)
16th June - start of Charity Cycle at 9.00am

Greenwich Food Bank Advice

With fuel charges about to go through the roof along with gas and electricity there is real concern about people making the choice between heating or eating (and perhaps driving?). Hopefully the warm weather will be with us soon. What happens though if you are ill, or have a long-term medical condition and you need that bit more heat for longer even if the weather gets warmer?

Greenwich Food Bank is organised by Greenwich Churches and operate every day of the week. The Welcome Centres are to be found in East Greenwich, Thamesmead, Plumstead, Blackheath, Woolwich, Charlton and Kidbrooke. Each one operates one day each week, some more than once and hopefully within easy reach of most people who need us.

So far in 2022 the Greenwich Food Bank has distributed 30,000 meals, that is a lot of meals feeding local people, made up of food donated by people like yourselves and local companies and organisations.

If someone is in distress and has no food or money, help can be found in various places, churches, doctors' surgeries, chari-

ties, the Job Centre or the Hub at Charlton Athletic and many other organisations who have agreed to issue vouchers. Their job is to gently find out the person's circumstances, very often food is only one reason for the distress and other help and advice may be needed.

The churches can also help with debt advice; they have a team of people who can be contacted through the food banks to give confidential help and advice. They are called CAP: Churches Against Poverty. There are other sources of free food in the area if you are in need and a search of the internet is a good starting point. Some are clubs you join for a small fee then you can buy food at a greatly discounted price. There are Greenwich Council's holiday clubs which operate during all the school holiday and provide a free lunch.

There is also the Greenwich night shelter which operates in the winter months if you know of anyone who is homeless and in need of shelter. Look for the website.

*-Chris Witt.
Kidbrooke Foodbank OneSpace
Kidbrooke*

Urbee - A Local Business with a Buzz

I first read about Urbee in the SE9 magazine and it sounded like a perfect fit, as I have been searching for a local ethical supplier of pollinator-friendly plants for a long time. So last summer I ordered some herbaceous perennials from Urbee - they were good quality, very reasonably priced and delivered free of charge.

Urbee was created by one-time Westcombe Park resident, Cherisse Bown, who moved to Eltham a few years ago, then very recently to Welling, to pursue her love of nature conservation. With a background in design and print and having inherited her mother's green fingers, Cerisse created Urbee (short for urban bee) Ltd, a company which aims to design and provide lovely products for people, homes and gardens, whilst also raising awareness of how important bees and other pollinating insects are to our environment and survival.

Plants are grown in peat and chemical-free conditions and focus on attracting bees and pollinators. 10% of all profits are donated to Buglife and Urbee is also proud to be a member of Ecologi - helping to fund tree-planting and carbon offset projects across the world.

"Delivery to SE3 is free!!"

-Shirley Broughton



An Easter Garden Party



MEfA Montessori held a garden party in their forest school/wellbeing garden on Easter Monday. It was a beautiful Spring day with garden games, eggs to hunt for, and tadpoles, butterflies and blossoms to observe.

MEfA trustees, children, families and teachers welcomed the local community, and we were very pleased that Cllr Geoff Brighty and Westcombe Society chair Marilyn Little were present.

Thank you to everyone who helped make the afternoon a success, and for donations of cakes and chocolate eggs.

-Wendy Fidler, Head of School/MEfA Academic Director

Passionate about Pom Poms

The Mycenae House Reach Out Project, The John Roan Community Librarians and volunteers will be hotfooting it in Blackheath sometime soon, to decorate railings with pom poms to celebrate the Queen Platinum Jubilee. Making pom poms together at The Reach Out Wellbeing Cafe ensures younger and older community members join in together and enjoy each other's company over a cup of tea and an activity.

The Reach Out Wellbeing Cafe focuses on those who might feel lonely or isolated. It's a place to go, have a cup of tea and chat with others. It's 1-3pm weekly every Thursday in the Main Hall (accessible). Free to join and refreshments available in

our Cafe/Bar.

- o -

Mycenae House Reach Out and The John Roan Community Librarians roll up their sleeves to help Care Home Residents

The Mycenae House Reach Out Project and The John Roan Community Librarians are helping to overhaul a Care Home garden in Charlton. We need donations from our Community. We are looking for small garden plants and decorations that would give the residents something to look at and enjoy.

Donations should be given to Deborah at Mycenae House, 90 Mycenae Road, Blackheath, SE3 7SE email: mycenae-outreach@gmail.com tel: 0208 858 1749

Come and join the Walk and Talk group with a Volunteer Centre befriender Mondays 12-2pm



Meet outside main entrance at Mycenae House, 90 Mycenae Road, Blackheath, SE3 7SE email: befriending@volunteersgreenwich.co.uk Tel/Text Abdi on 0744 4182 741

Not a Fun Affair

Blackheath has been witness to a variety of turbulent events, both peaceful and violent, over the years. The latest, reported in the local and national press, took place on the afternoon of 12th April when families were out enjoying the sunshine and the fair.

Police were called when 'a mob of youths went on the rampage'. Seven people were arrested and charged with a variety of offences including assault and possession of an offensive weapon. For a while the area was cleared and the funfair closed down. A stabbing was also reported but no victim was found. There was a greater police presence in the area to ensure public safety.

-Maggie Gravelle

Sound and Air Pollution...

On 9th April, two helicopters hovered over Westcombe Park for half an hour, and a number of residents registered annoyance at this intrusive noise nuisance.

A complaint to the office of the Mayor of London elicited sympathetic noises – but no satisfactory answer. The Mayor shared public concern on how helicopters impact on the environment, health and quality of life in London. However, apparently, the Greater London Authority (GLA) and Mayor do not have any control over helicopter activity across London.

The responsibility for regulating noise and pollution from air traffic, including helicopters, lies with the Civil Aviation Authority (CAA) and the Government, and complaints are best sent to the CAA (<https://www.caa.co.uk/Our-work/About-us/Contact-us/>)

Whilst the Mayor does not have direct control over helicopter activity, specifically on noise, he continues to call on the Government to overhaul the outdated regime which regulates noise from general aviation, including helicopters.

A recent submission from Transport for London (TfL), on behalf of the Mayor, to the Government on these issues can be read on the TfL website: <http://content.tfl.gov.uk/iccan-strategy-consultation-response.pdf>

The Mayor said: "I will continue to stand up for Londoners and highlight this important public health issue."

- Neville Grant

Do We Need Another Restaurant at The Standard?

An application has been submitted to ARBG planning department to change the use of the launderette in Old Dover Road to a restaurant. The applicant states that the launderette is due to be closed at the end of May 'due to insolvency'. The current application is for the removal of existing flues. At the time of publication no further details were available. Public comments are invited until 11th May.

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FEATURES

Happy Birthday to Blackheath Complementary Health Centre



Sarah Pritchard, Director of Blackheath Complementary Health Centre

The Blackheath Complementary Health centre is 22 years old this year! It's owner, Sarah, opened the Centre in May 2000 with a borrowed £5,000 budget. "I'd been working as an acupuncturist and tui na practitioner from a room on the first floor for two years when the landlord asked me if I would like to rent the whole floor. I wasn't at all sure at the time!" She said.

"An old friend who was working as the practice manager at The Park Practice in Greenwich persuaded me that it would be an ideal time to go for it, as the Park Practice was about to close its doors and practitioners and therapists were looking for somewhere to practise. On a wing and a prayer I took the plunge. We started with three therapy rooms and gradually grew the Centre over the next ten years."

In 2013 the charity that had occupied the second floor left for pastures new and again the landlord approached me to ask if we would now like to take on the 2nd floor. This gave us the studio space for teaching classes and workshops, two further therapy rooms and an office for the amazing local charity, MumsAid."

In 2016 the landlord announced that the building would be sold at auction. I look back at that time now and wonder how on earth we managed to do what we did. It's quite a story, but somehow, we managed to buy the building from the landlord and save the Centre.

The pandemic was, as it has been for so many small independent local business, a nightmare! We went from a successful thriving Centre in the winter of 2019 to almost nothing. Very shocking and deeply upsetting. The therapists couldn't work and no one could come for treatment.

The Mothership did survive the storm, we reopened our doors at the end of 2020.

The Reiki drop-in clinic, run by Georgina Armstrong, is 20 years old this year. It takes place on the first Sunday of every month (pay by donation) and is hugely popular with the local community.

We're looking forward to hosting more gong and sound bath meditations in the studio this year and to welcoming more

practitioners and all those who would like support on their journey in this life. I see a great need for human contact, touch-based therapies and body work as well as the talk therapies and counselling.

Let's hear from some of the clients of the Health Centre....

Ian Rickson
"Hidden away on the first floor of a row of shops on Westcombe Hill is one of South East London's best kept secrets. Sarah Pritchard is more than just a healer: she is an expert in Chinese Acupuncture, Massage, Gong Baths, and so much more. She also has set up an environment for other practitioners to share their healing arts, including low-cost offerings like the monthly 'pay what you can' Reiki. This unique space is part of a hidden revolution in our high streets, where we move away from the corporate and towards the holistic."

Jane
"Sarah first treated me over 20 years ago. I was a new mum, exhausted (of course) and had been suffering from repeated chest infections. Three sets of antibiotics in, and I still felt like hell. After a couple of treatments at Blackheath Complementary, I was myself again. Maybe it was simply time for me to get well, but it felt like a miracle at the time.

Sarah is kind, warm, empathetic and def-

initely a force of nature. I look forward to my treatments and come out uplifted; quite literally more in tune with the world. The past few years have been difficult. Sarah has helped me deal with the impact of breast cancer, injury and what has felt like endless ailments. I have travelled a full circle and now (mostly) feel strong and positive about the future.

I really value my treatments at Blackheath Complementary."

Nina
"Having a Centre with such excellent practitioners locally is a wonderful addition to our community.

I always look forward to my appointments, knowing that I'll come out "better". Sarah is both an amazing acupuncturist and a lovely human being - I'm honoured to call her a friend".

Caroline
"I've lived in Blackheath for 15 years and have regular acupuncture with Sarah at the Blackheath Complementary Health Centre. Sarah is an amazing practitioner and also utilises tui na massage to complement the acupuncture treatment. Each session is bespoke to you and what your presenting condition is. I've been seeing Sarah and going to the Centre for about six years. It's such a welcoming place where everyone is supportive and friendly - the Centre is a much loved place in the local community"

So Sweet and So Vulnerable

Thea Gioe

If you've been down to the Prince of Wales pond recently, you may have noticed some people in bright vests slowly circumnavigating the bank. If you look more closely, you may deduce they're following several fluffy new paddlers in the pond - four Egyptian goslings.

The volunteers from the Greenwich Wildlife Network (GWN) arrived soon after, monitoring the pond 12 hours a day to ensure the goslings stay safe. Unfortunately, in addition to guarding against predators like gulls, hawks and foxes, the volunteers are also on the lookout for predatory people and dogs.



On the GWN Facebook page they note they have to protect the location of the babies as some sick individuals seem to like to target these innocents.

As it turned out, it was good the volun-

teers were on hand, as a bruhaha broke out between Papa Goose and the almost mature male gosling that remained from a late brood last autumn. Papa goose was taking no chances his teenage son could do harm to the new arrivals, so the GWN stepped in to find a suitable location to relocate the younger male.

Greenwich Wildlife Network has been around since 2018 but was just granted charity status in January. The charity recognized an underserved area in South East London for wildlife rescue and rehabilitation centres, so a group of volunteers from Greenwich and Bexleyheath stepped up to address the shortage. Thanks to Facebook, the group has expanded to be around 3,000 strong as of 2021. Now they're seeking land where they can establish a limited rehabilitation centre.

The volunteers have done their jobs well. The goslings are getting bigger now and thriving.

Rae from GWN has the following advice for the public generally:

"Whilst all baby animals are incredibly vulnerable and the threat posed by predators is a part of nature that we must not interfere with, the openness of

Blackheath pond means that these young birds are far more vulnerable than most to man-made hazards, like busy roads, dogs, remote-control boats, and even people trying to touch and handle them. Our volunteers are hoping to re-balance these odds."

"If you are a regular visitor to Blackheath Pond, please remember to keep a continued next column..... respectful distance from the birds and ask your children to do the same.



MEfA Montessori School

Montessori House, 135 Westcombe Hill, Blackheath
SE3 7DP
Tel: 0208 305 2203

Now enrolling in all classes:

Montessori School (2-9 years)

Montessori After-school (4-11 years)

Montessori Forest School (all age)


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Toddler Montessori (15-24 months)


Enquiries: Call Wendy on 07710 433 994
Charity Registration No: 1136552

Crucially, please keep your dogs under control at all times around the wildlife and never allow them to get too close. Remember, even a small dog can kill a bird in seconds."



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WHAT'S ON

Vanbrugh Ensemble Opera Gala

(Woolwich Opera Works Soloists)
Saturday 7th May
St Margaret's Church, Lee SE13 5DL
Tickets: £12 at the door, children free

All the Queen's Men

The lives of Elizabeth I's male courtiers and their personal and political relationships with the monarch are on display at the Queen's House.

Featuring paintings of Sir Francis Drake and Thomas Seymour, the exhibition highlights how Elizabeth's connections with her courtiers were crucial to the stability of her government. It also showcases the Armada Portrait of Elizabeth I, one of the treasures of Royal Museums Greenwich's collection.

Also on display at the Queen's House are the Woburn Treasures. The first time such significant collection pieces have been on public display in a national museum since the 1950s. Woburn Treasures will include works by distinguished artists such as Van Dyck, Reynolds, Gainsborough, Poussin and Canaletto. Enjoy this unprecedented opportunity to access this outstanding collection for free in the capital whilst Woburn Abbey is closed for refurbishment.

Daily 10.00am – 5.00pm. Free
Location: Queen's House, Greenwich

Prince Philip Maritime Collections Centre

Toy Stories Tour

On this family-friendly tour, discover a unique range of toys and games from a dominoes set made from bone to a teddy bear that has travelled the world. Toys come in many shapes and forms, this tour will not only showcase toys that have been on great adventures at sea but also those games that have been inspired by maritime history.

31st May – 2nd June
10.00am–12.00noon 3.00– 4.30pm
Location: Prince Philip Maritime Collections Centre Adult £6, Child £4

Half-Term at the Conservatoire

Join us at the Conservatoire in Blackheath this May/June Half Term from Monday 30th May to Saturday 4th June for an eclectic mix of music, art and drama for early years, children and young people, and adults in the celebratory theme of the Platinum Jubilee. For information: **020 8852 0234 / 020 8852 0103**
www.conservatoire.org.uk

Arts Society Greenwich

The Barbizon Painters: The Pioneers of the Forest

Lecturer: Jo Rhymer
7pm Monday 9th May

The Barbizon School was a 19th century loose association of artists who worked around the village of Barbizon, located just outside Paris near the Forest of Fontainebleau. The enormous Forest provided them with a wealth of scenery – regions of dense woodlands boasting a plethora of tree species contrasted with dramatic rock formations and large boulders. Ancient oak trees, marshes and verdant glades presented painters with challenges and opportunities to experiment with composition and painting technique.

It was here that painting *en plein air* (in the open air) took a hold - a practice that was to transform French landscape painting. Looking at work by Rousseau, Millet and Diaz de la Peña, Jo Rhymer will discuss what was so revolutionary about the Barbizon painters and briefly explore how the Forest and villages like Barbizon became a springboard for the development of French Impressionism.

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

Mycenae Delights

A place where "Smiles are swapped, times are enjoyed, empathy is shared and support is felt." said Mark Johnson-Brown, the manager of Mycenae House.

"There are some one-off special activities to its May programme and all are encouraged to visit, whether it's for some live music, new creative workshops, social interaction with real live humans, attend any of our 125 regular weekly session or just to visit our friendly café."

"This year feels a little bit special and little bit more normal. The weather is better, the days are longer, and the feel-good factor is returning. We've even noticed you all smiling more!" You can find all of MH activities on our website www.mycenaehouse.co.uk

Here are just a few highlights for May:
***Friday 6th May 7.30pm – 10.30pm**
Jazz Jam (Live music)



The jazz jam format has so much jeopardy! That's what makes it so enjoyable... Presented by a fine group of semi-pro and amateur jazz enthusiasts, this Friday night session was a huge success with the inaugural session in February. We hope it will continue to be well attended and as much fun as our opening night was.

***Friday 13 May 7.30pm – 10.30pm**
Lily Neill (Live music)

The highly anticipated return of harp virtuoso, Lily Neill, to Mycenae House. Put aside everything you ever thought you knew about the harp and open your ears to the wealth of sound that two hands and

thirty strings can conjure! "... musical and artistic freedom which is boundless in its possibility and contagious in its energy and passion." – *Irish Music Magazine*

***Tuesday 17th May 4.00pm – 6.30pm**
Graffiti Workshop For Kids (Art



Workshop)
Master a spray can, use a stencil, tag your name! Graffiti Workshops are an amazing way to get children thinking, working and engaging whilst having lots and lots of fun from start to finish.

***Saturday 28th May 2:00pm – 4:00pm**
Conscious Breathwork – A Beginner's Workshop

Breathwork can change your life! Find out how at this beginner's workshop. Learn how it can improve and impact our emotional and mental health. This workshop is suitable for all levels. No experience necessary.

Westcombe Society Events

Westcombe Society AGM for Members
Friday 13th May at 7.30pm
in the Centenary Room, Blackheath High School, Mycenae Road

Quiz Night
21st May 7.30pm for 8.00pm start at Mycenae House
Tickets: Members £5.00, non £6.00
'Chippy' suppers can be ordered in advance

Greenwich Industrial History Society

14th June: **Photographs of Greenwich & Docklands Industry since 1970 - Peter Marshall**

19th July: **Morden College and its Archive - Elizabeth Wiggans**

20th September: **The Survey of London in the East End - Peter Guillery**

18th October: **Colliers – the work of the coal carrying ships – Roy Fenton**

All meetings will be on Zoom and details of how to book will appear on the Greenwich Industrial History Facebook page a few days before the event. Bookings will be on a first-come, first served basis.

Concerts in Greenwich Park

The season kicks off earlier than usual, on Sunday 5th June, with a special concert at the bandstand to celebrate both the Queen's Platinum Jubilee and the Friends' 30th anniversary. It features a band new to the Park, Tequila Brass, who play the upbeat, summery music of Herb Alpert and the Tijuana Brass, ideally suited to the occasion. This promises to be an outstanding event and picnics are encouraged. This concert, which is free, will be from 3pm to 5pm.



Welcome to the Healing Path



Blackheath Complementary Health Centre

Celebrating 22 years
serving the community with
alternative and complementary medicine

184-186 Westcombe Hill
London SE3 7DH
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www.healingpath.co.uk

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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)

Heat Pumps: An Interview with a Local Resident

Emily Norton

Why did you choose a heat pump and what are the main components?

We wanted to reduce our carbon footprint. Moving from a Victorian house to a 1930s house that needed renovation gave us the opportunity. We chose air source because ground source heat pumps need a very deep borehole or a garden large enough to lay extensive pipework just under the surface.

Heat pumps work like the reverse of a refrigerator. Ours has two main components, a fan in the garden, that looks like an air conditioning unit, and a compressor inside, the size of a medium fridge. At the fan heat passes from the outside air into a refrigerant which is piped to the compressor where it is compressed to produce heat. This heats the water that passes through coils in two large water tanks to heat the water for central heating and domestic household use.

Did you have to consider anything else?

Heat pumps are most efficient heating water to about 38°C whereas a gas boiler heats it to 60°C. Although 38°C is a good for

underfloor heating it is less good for conventional radiators. To maintain a comfortable temperature throughout our house using heating water at 38°C we installed triple glazing in northwest facing windows, underfloor heating downstairs and a mix of larger than normal conventional radiators and fan heaters designed to work with lower temperature water upstairs. We also minimised heat loss by ensuring that all the floors, walls, roof space, hot water pipes and refrigerant pipes are well insulated. 38°C is too low for kitchen and bathroom taps so for this the heat pump is set at 48°C. This is hot enough for day to day use and has the benefit of not being scalding hot. The heat pump can manage this comfortably and, with the help of a small internal electric heater, it can also heat the domestic water to 60°C for an hour once a week to protect against any build-up of

bacteria in the system. However, our heat pump would struggle to heat all water to 60°C all the time.

Does the system work?

The system works, even in sub-zero temperatures. We no longer burn gas and only use electricity which is increasingly generated from green sources. Also, our overall energy consumption has reduced to just over half of the average for a similar size household though we have no way of knowing how much of this is due to insulation as opposed to the heat pump.

What was the approximate capital outlay? Will you break even?

Difficult to say. The heat pump was installed in 2015 as part of a major house renovation. We think that the heat pump, non-standard radiators and additional insulation added £15,000 - £20,000 to the overall cost of the work. Electricity is also still more expensive per kWh than gas though the gap is closing. Contractors for servicing are more difficult to find and more expensive than for a gas boiler. However, this should improve over time, and we have received a government Renewable Heat Incentive payment of about £7,000 spread over seven years.

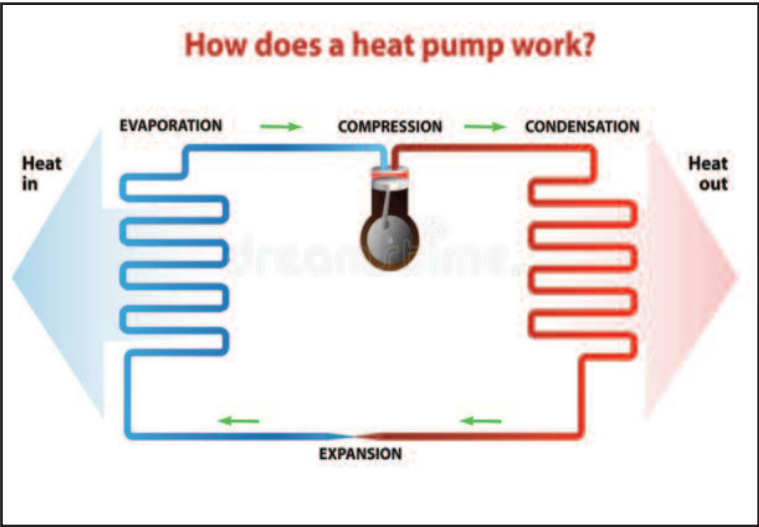
Would you recommend installing a heat pump?

Yes, definitely, especially if you are doing major renovations and can improve your insulation as part of the project. Otherwise

think about how you can insulate your home to save on bills and prepare for a heat pump, preferably before you need to replace your gas boiler.

Have you any tips for anyone considering a heat pump?

- Insulating your home is probably the first step and might be possible in stages when you are redecorating or doing other work. This will start to save you money on heating bills straight away. A Thermal Imaging Survey (see March *W/N*) would be helpful.
- Research the heat pumps available, check their efficiency and the size you need for your home. Technology is constantly improving.
- Check whether you will need to replace your existing radiators.
- Check availability and cost of maintenance for the heat pump.
- Think about space. There may now be systems that require less space but in general, the larger the home and the less well-insulated, the larger the kit you will need.
- Consider the position of the outside fan. How close to your home does it need to be? How noisy is it? Will it disturb you or your neighbours? Does it need planning permission?
- Consider the position of the compressor. How noisy is it? Will it disturb you?
- Consider buying water tanks that also have an immersion heater, so you have back-up.
- Don't forget to insulate all the pipes that carry hot water both to taps and radiators.



PLANNING APPLICATIONS

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

231 WESTCOMBE HILL ref 22/1180/F
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99 COLERAINE ROAD ref 22/1142/HD
To replace windows and alter front gates.

12 CHARLTON ROAD ref 22/1074/F
To erect three 3-storey houses: 2x3bed and 1x2bed houses adjacent to locally listed building.

4 OLD DOVER ROAD ref 22/1211/F
To change launderette/dry cleaners into a restaurant.



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Climate Safe Streets

Chris King

Something has to change on Greenwich's roads. Trying to fit ever more, ever larger cars down stubbornly narrow streets is not working. We need to provide a genuine alternative to persuade people to take fewer short car journeys. That's where Climate Safe Streets come in. The additional 130 million vehicle miles driven on Greenwich's roads in the decade to 2019 have turned Westcombe Park into a cut-through for drivers looking to avoid queues on the A2 and the A102. Local residents decided the proposed LTN was a step too far but the problems it was designed to solve remain.

So what does our campaign propose? We want the Council to act on its pledge to cut car use by 45% by 2030. We need to make it easier to walk short distances by putting in more pedestrian crossings and widening pavements. We think pupils at Halstow, Fosdene, Sherington, St Joseph's, Christ Church, Millennium and other primaries deserve to breathe clean air as recommended on Healthy School Streets. Roads should be designed around the needs of local people rather than those cutting through on the way to central London.

We would love to see the Council's affordable e-bike hire scheme, run in collaboration with the Charlton Athletic Community Trust, restarted as soon as possible, so people can experience a new way of getting around. We want the Council to encourage local businesses to swap delivery vans for e-cargo bikes, freeing up the roads for those who truly need to drive. A trial involving a Greenwich butcher's reduced CO2 emissions by 75%. Imagine



what this could do across Westcombe Park.

In a recent report, Councillors called for a heavy focus on Healthy Streets in Greenwich. Yes, that means some restrictions on vehicle access, but proportionate ones with local buy-in. We believe our campaign will put the Council back on track towards meeting its carbon-neutral goals. That's why we want you to email the prospective next Council Leader and ask for Climate Safe Streets. This means calmer roads with 20mph speed limits. Much-needed greenery from pocket parks. Convenient, zero-emission car hire programmes. Robust consultations so people are empowered to help design schemes that work for them. Westcombe Park residents are rightly proud of where they live, but a cleaner, greener, healthier future is within grasp.

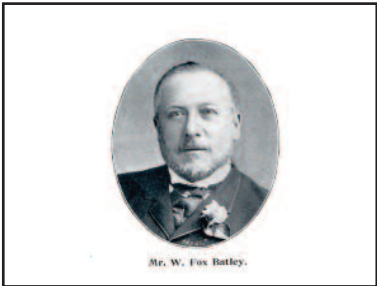
Chris King is the joint Climate Safe Streets champion for Greenwich. To find out more about the campaign, visit <https://lcc.org.uk/campaigns/climate-safe-streets-greenwich/>

THE OUTDOORS

The History of Batley Green

Neil Rhind

The local legend is that as William Batley looked out of his sitting room window at the developing Myrtle Place (we call it “The Standard”) he was not best



pleased to see a large triangle of mud and rubbish with not a blade of grass around and about. At the rear of the house – where Broadbridge Close is now – was an ill-managed pig farm of particularly pungent character. The whole area was becoming, by the standards of the day, a massive traffic interchange. Thus Batley, it is claimed, started the campaign to make improvements. In 1888, he and a local committee chaired by the Rev John William Marshall (1836-1915), incumbent of St John’s Church, on St John’s Road (now Stratheden Road) from 1875 to 1909, thought an improvement could be made.

With Fox Batley as Honorary Secretary, they badgered the local gentry and enough money was subscribed to fund the erection of a drinking fountain and dog bowl, made in polished grey granite and suitably inscribed. It was “unveiled” in May 1889 and was soon joined by a horse trough. By this time Batley had moved on.

Before the fountain was unveiled Batley

had found a more attractive prospect, when he settled in the much grander No 12 Vanbrugh Park, which overlooked the old gravel pits, then much improved by gorse, shrubs and ground cover and the prospect of open stretches of Blackheath. He was to stay at Vanbrugh Park from 1889 until his death in 1904 - his widow, Mary, remained there until her death in 1921. William left over £10,000 of his estate to local charities – the remaining £20,000 went to Mrs B.

By 1895 Myrtle Place was fully developed from end to end. The old names had gone, and the central portion of highway waste was a large triangular junction for Vanbrugh Park, Westcombe Hill, Charlton Road, Old Dover Road and St John’s Road (renamed Stratheden Road in 1935). It had all seemed to settle down from about 1892 when a branch of the London & Provincial Bank (from 1921 an important link in the Barclays Bank chain) was opened in a private house (No 43) in Vanbrugh Park. The expansion of this part of Westcombe Park, already known colloquially as “The Standard” was such that London & Provincial left No 43 and cleared the site next door (it had been a large greenhouse for the local market gardener, for the



imposing edifice we see today, opened in 1906. Alas, its branch at No 43a, was closed by Barclays in 2021 and now fitted up as a brewery/pub.

With a horse-bus stables next to the pub and a bank, houses on both sides of Charlton Road, led to Old Dover Road and Westcombe Hill developed as a small scale but serious shopping centre. Then came

further pressure on the parish to make improvements. In October 1902 it was decided that the triangle of muddy green should be enclosed with higher railings and enhanced with trees and shrubs. This was partly to dissuade boys from playing football and cricket on the ground. By 1905-1907 the land was cleaned, the pond drained, saplings planted, public lavatories for ladies and gentlemen (still there but locked) eventually installed. A bench or two, a footpath following the old desire line and spring bulbs by the hundredweight – it was all to be much improved.

The scheme was implemented eventually,

and the evidence can be seen in this 1910 image – the oldest we have found. The bus company was not too helpful in that it decided in the 1920s that a resting up point for buses, drivers, and conductors, be created at the footpath break in the triangle towards the east – towards Charlton Village. In the 1930s it had been decided that the traffic jams required a roundabout; albeit a pesky one by modern standards. In recent years William Fox Batley was honoured in his memory by naming our triangle after him – Batley Green, yes. Batley Park, a bit exaggerated. It was never his ground and William had gone soon after the drinking fountain was installed, and never lived to see the horticultural improvements we can still enjoy nearly 120 years later.

But two ideas were put forward in the 1920s and 1930s: One was that the triangle should be the site for a proposed new Greenwich Town Hall – but that went elsewhere. The next, better plan was that it should accommodate a sunken railway station – an extra stop on the line, the metals already below ground - from Blackheath to Charlton. Now that would have been more than useful.

(Photographs courtesy of the Blackheath Society)



Walking the Dog

Anne Williams

Outside, an overcast sky and drizzling rain. Inside, my dog’s reproachful, watchful eyes follow every move I make - it’s walk time and we both know it. *Ok, Ok I’ll get our raincoats.* In an instant she’s up at the door, wagging her tail, her understanding of English fluent in walk talk, ball throwing, and sausages, liver and chicken treats.

We are lucky to have Greenwich Park, the Heath and the Pleasaunce all within easy walking distance; oh yes and Mycenae Gardens. Today, I head for the Heath, although, looking up at the overcast sky, I could see cloud watching was off the itinerary. Instead I enjoyed the big expanse of openness, a real visual treat in London. My dog loves the tough grass, perfect for a rolling back scratch. That’s in between seeing off the crows and geese which she does with absolute joy. We move through the village, wishing the weather allowed us to stop at one of the outside cafe tables. Or maybe that was a human wish, my dog was keen to keep walking, smelling and marking. I’ve spent ten years watching my dog and I love the jauntiness of her walk. We cut back across the Heath and enter the main park gates. Greenwich Park in the

rain is a beautiful place with the lockdown crowds just a memory. In their place the rain-drenched glistening bark and branches of the big old trees and, swirling round them, the echoes of the past. After all the park used to be part of King Henry VIII’s hunting grounds, what costumes must these trees have seen? My dog is rolling again but this time it’s not a back scratching roll. For an instant I watch in horror as she smears herself in fox poo. “Out ... Out ... OUT!” I cry, hoping the coat has saved her fur from the worst of it.

As the rain didn’t want to stop I decided to head for the Pleasaunce and its cafe of delicious hand made food.

Sheltering under a tree, I watch as a woman walks towards me smiling, Basil gamboling by her side, his tail wagging as my own longtime companion whizzes around him behaving like a teenager. My mind tacks her name ... Elizabeth ... Petra ... Holly ... Jo? Shamefully nothing came, so instead I said hello to Basil and made a fuss of him. I notice she doesn’t greet me by name but instead fusses over Amber. Welcome to Dog World etiquette. It can take months to remember an owner’s name but the dogs’ names are easily

remembered because, after all, the dog comes first in dogwalking. Their health, their diet, their likes/dislikes, naughty behaviours like jumping up on anyone, stealing food but even then they are, of course, adorable.

As we waited for the tiny bit of blue sky to reach us we both saw a dog quite near us circling its body to get the right angle to have a ‘poo’. Its owner unaware of the drama unfolding. Basil’s owner and I look at each other. Should we or shouldn’t we...say something? Sooner or later all dog owners face this complex question, as we are aware that not picking up our dogs’ poo means grist to the mill of the ‘dog/poo haters’ campaign to ban dogs from parks, or at least insist they stay on a lead, (“where’s the fun in that?” my dog asks.) Usually for my dog’s sake I will alert the owner or dog walker but this alert is not always well received. “Mind your own business” usually makes me want to retort... *it’s your dog’s business I am minding!* It’s a situation that needs weighing up carefully. Some owners go for a less confrontational approach and quietly pick the poo up; as Basil’s owner decided to do in this instance. Brave, I thought, picking up another dog’s poo...rather like changing nappies, I suspect, on a child that isn’t yours.

Bailey joins us along with his female owner. Dogs are sociable creatures, it’s part of their pack nature and so are humans so we are a perfect match...you’d think, but it’s not always the case. My dog, at ten years, is not keen on lively puppies and will give a growl or three until the whippersnapper gets the message or more likely crouches close to the ground, its body doing a cobra dance before it flips over into total submission. So our social group is mainly made up of similar aged dogs who are happy to play or ignore each other whilst their owners drink the park coffee and chat just about anything. If its not about the health or habits of their dog it will be about online dating (always a fun walk), children, partners and the problems of finding a good dog walker.



Artwork: Sophie Harrison-Knibbs

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