

PHOTO: ALAMY/PA, KIRSTY O'CONNOR



# Britain says thank you and faces the future

A magnificent commemoration and celebration of Her Majesty’s reign brings people together

**K**ING CHARLES III shakes the hand of his prime minister, Liz Truss. They are dressed in the sombre colours of mourning for the late Queen Elizabeth II but have soon to turn their faces to the future as a new era begins for Britain.

The death of Britain’s longest-serving monarch has had a profound effect on the country and even those who hold no strong feelings for the institution wanted to pay tribute to the person.

A local resident who joined the crowds on the day of the Queen’s funeral writes: “I am not an ardent monarchist but have great respect

for the way Queen Elizabeth II dedicated her life to her public role as our monarch so, having seen Winston Churchill Lying in State as a child, I was tempted to queue.

“The day Queen Elizabeth arrived in Westminster for the last time I was still undecided, I was in town and nearly came home but something drew me to Westminster Bridge to hear the distant procession and the muted bells of Big Ben. Afterwards I walked along the South Bank following the newly forming queue for Westminster Hall. Just beyond the Globe I found the end. Would I stay? I did. Little did I



know that the 45 minutes it had taken me to walk from Big Ben would expand into six hours before I passed it again. The hard bit was nearly two hours in the airport-like queue at the end, but it was worth it. Westminster Hall was beautiful, the atmosphere respectful and I had shared the queue with a friendly mix of people, two couples from Bromley and Stoke-on-Trent, one of our local vicars, a coincidence, and a Scottish/Egyptian archaeologist.

“I wrote the above on Constitution Hill while waiting for the funeral procession, after a late-night decision to catch the first

train with a neighbour. Another moving experience, especially listening to the service and the moment the coffin passed. But it was also the people we shared the morning with, one of whom had come from Derby and waited all night to watch her daughter march in one of the bands. I was lucky with a shortish queue and a good position. I admire those who were less lucky. I also thank those who organised such smooth running of such a massive series of events to mark the passing of our Queen and the end of an era.”

● Page 5: Liz Truss: from Greenwich to Downing Street



## WESTCOMBE NEWS

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## Runners raise funds for powerchair

Supporters of Greenwich Powerchair Football Club have taken another step towards their goal of raising £6,500 for a new power wheelchair.

On Sunday 4 September they joined The Big Half, when 12,500 people ran 13.1 miles in glorious autumn sunshine around Canary Wharf, over Tower Bridge and finishing at the Cutty Sark, Greenwich, “surfing waves of positive energy from the crowds and from each other”.

Helen Hutchinson said: “We know from our own experiences that taking part in sport, at whatever level we can participate, improves our mental and physical health and our overall sense of wellbeing. [That’s why] we are raising money for a new powerchair for Greenwich Powerchair Football Club (GPFC). A new one costs upwards of £6,500 and thanks to your ongoing support, we are now a quarter of the way there.

“Every Thursday between 4pm and 6.30pm, it’s match time for GPFC. These are valuable moments of freedom in restricted lives where for a couple of magical hours, life is defined by what is possible – it’s a game of football with friends. South London Special League (SLSL) launched in 2004 to provide a competitive football league for young disabled people. It’s now helped over five thousand players experience the fun and friendship that can develop through competitive sport.

“With your help, we can buy a new powerchair for GPFC and ensure our diverse, disabled community of all ages can continue to meet friends, play football and have fun. Donations can be made at [www.justgiving.com/team/special-league](http://www.justgiving.com/team/special-league)”



## Walkers go the distance for Macmillan

What better way to combine fun and fundraising for a very special charity than sharing a scenic, historic London



Charity runners: (l-r) Helen Hutchinson, Rachel Mai-Jones, Olga Bonde, Mirren Davies, Rebecca Morgan, Jess Bennett

walk with friends. On a mellow sunny morning recently we set off from the Cutty Sark in Greenwich to head for a walk to Victoria Park in aid of Macmillan Cancer Support.

The Thames sparkled, the trees and grass were restored after the heat and drought of summer, the Regents Canal was buzzing with birdlife and canal boats and Victoria Park shone in autumnal glory. Coffee and sandwiches under the trees and then we were off again, back the way we came. Over £150 will have been raised for this very worthwhile charity.

## Westcombe Society events

It’s that time again! Engage your brain and test your knowledge. Peter, Patrick and Robbie are busy putting together the questions for the **autumn quiz** on Saturday 19 November. Make up a team of six or come on your own and meet some of your neighbours. The bar at Mycenae House will be open. Quiz-only members £5; non-members £6. Fish and chips £10. Bookings to Caroline 020 8853 0948. It will be a lively evening and we look forward to seeing you there!

Our **Chrysanthemum Tea** for senior citizens will be held on Saturday 22 October at Mycenae House from 2pm to 4pm. There will be tea, plus the usual quiz and a raffle.

**IT IS SAD to announce the death of Ruth Gabriele Katharine Felicitas Marston, known as Gabi, writes Maggie Gravelle.**

**Gabi was a keen gardener and many residents will have chatted to her when she was in her front garden. They may have benefited from the cuttings and seedlings that she left for passers-by.**

**Gabi had an illustrious career as a hospital play specialist, being a pioneer in the field. She remained interested and well informed about local and national matters until the end. Readers may also know her as an inveterate letter writer and a poet of 'terse verses', some of which**

Invitations will be sent out by the 15 October. Please please respond to Caroline. (If you have not received an invitation and would like to attend the tea, please call Caroline on 020 8853 0948.

## Marathon road closures

Road closures will be in force for the forty-first edition of the London Marathon on Sunday 2 October. More than 40,000 participants will take on the 26.2-mile course, starting at Blackheath. The organisers say that roads to the south of Westcombe Park are expected to reopen by 1pm while roads to the north of Westcombe Park are due to reopen by 3pm.

Visit [www.tcs londonmarathon.com/the-event/road-closures](http://www.tcs londonmarathon.com/the-event/road-closures) for more details.

Next year’s marathon will take place on Sunday 23 April.

### PLANNING APPLICATIONS

(See also [www.westcombesociety.org](http://www.westcombesociety.org))

45 Dinsdale Road ref 22/2768/HD

To install replacement windows to front and rear.

148 Humber Road ref 22/2964/HD

To construct rear side infill extension with pitched roof, skylights, new windows to rear, and Velux roof light to rear.

### TREE WORKS

103 Mycenae Road ref 22/3034/TC

To fell eucalyptus in rear garden.

**have appeared in the Westcombe News. The last poem she wrote was about the lilies, which gave her great pleasure.**

### LILIES

The lilies  
In my garden  
Are trumpeting  
Triumphantly.  
Though silent, they seem to say,  
“Look at us  
Enjoy the day!”

**Gabi Marston (15.3.1932 – 4.8.2022)**

## Romatic pomegranates at Charlton House

VITA SACKVILLE-WEST wrote that “Of all fruits the pomegranate is surely one of the most romantic.” I would be willing to bet that most people walk through the Peace Garden gate at Charlton House without realising they have just passed under two “most romantic” pomegranate trees, writes Kathy Aitken.

When the volunteer scheme started in 2020, these two trees were deeply entwined with ivy, choking them very unromantically. I wish I had a photo of our volunteers, wrestling and chopping at the ivy around the base of the trees! It was one of the team’s early successes, as the next year the trees

were covered in their startlingly bright orange flowers. We have yet to get the flowers to “set”, so no pomegranate fruits yet. But of course, as gardeners, we live in hope.

Vita grew a pomegranate tree for the sake of its reddish twigs in spring, and for the young leaves which “are transparent as cornelian against the light before they have properly unfolded”. She gave it a warm corner at Sissinghurst and provided a coat of a Russian mat draped across it in winter. It says something about climate change that the ones in the Peace Garden have thrived with no winter protection at all. I have been

encouraged to plant one in my own garden in Westcombe Park and it has come through three winters now.

The pomegranate goes back far in antiquity, being found in Egyptian sculpture and mentioned in the Old Testament and the Odyssey.

The sculptors of the Renaissance recognised it as a symbol of poetry and fertility. William Morris used the fruit in one of his famous wallpaper designs; and on the walls of our own Charlton House, you can spot the fruits in the plasterwork on the Grand Staircase. You can’t get much more romantic than that!



# NEIGHBOURHOOD

## Doubt over future of Mycenae Gardens group

THE FUTURE of the Friends of Mycenae Gardens, which seeks to protect and promote “this hidden gem” is in jeopardy, writes Mark Barnes, the group’s chair.

The annual general meeting of the Friends of Mycenae Gardens was called for 13 September, 2022, but too few members turned up for a quorum. The meeting was adjourned for a date to be announced.

In case that meeting too is inquorate, or too few are willing to serve on the committee, a special general meeting will also be called for the same date, to dissolve the group and hand over its role in the management of the gardens to Mycenae House and the Greenwich Steiner School.

The FoMG is one of a number of Friends Groups set up in 2011 at the initiative of Greenwich Council to help manage their green spaces and to reconcile the needs of differing user groups in each park or garden.

The spark that led to the creation of the FoMG was a tumultuous meeting in response to a notice that implied the gardens were at risk of being sold off for development.

When the real purpose became clear, passions subsided; but early meetings could still be a little sparky as dog-walkers clashed with child-walkers, Mycenae House and others tussled with the Greenwich Steiner School over the wear and tear on the lawns, and ecologists pushed for a wildlife haven with emphasis on peaceful contemplation



Photo: Tim Hoe

You are invited to a morning of light work in the garden on Saturday 15 October from 10am to 1pm

and respectful play. By the time I became chair in 2017, annual general meetings had become much quieter. I thought then that the quiet mood and reduced attendance were a sign that the group was doing its job. Now I fear that the gardens are suffering from a general indifference, or perhaps a feeling of hopelessness as the grounds are progressively degraded by over-use and the recent drought.

Of course there are some who care little for green spaces, but most of us are aware of their importance and many of the local community are happy to use the gardens. For those, indifference is inexplicable, and

hopelessness an inadequate response to the challenges. For an account of what has been done over the last year, see the recent ‘Chair’s Report’ at [tinyurl.com/2fue5rvk](https://tinyurl.com/2fue5rvk)

That report also mentions that the council seems to be withdrawing at least some of its support for the gardens. So the challenge will be greater. The loss of a group focussed on the preservation and improvement of the gardens would be particularly unfortunate in that event.

If you care for such things, please do your bit to help. Sign up and turn up to the adjourned meeting and step up to the committee or encourage others to do so. We currently have just three active members on the committee – and they do most of the work done by the whole group.

More members are needed who are willing to get involved in the gardens on a regular basis, but we also need a new chair and more members on the committee: to organise and lead the work in the gardens; to re-organise the finances of the group and set them on a more sustainable footing; to liaise with the council and other local groups and to improve and maintain online and other communications with the membership and with the wider community.

If you can help preserve and improve these gardens for the benefit of all, please do. Sign up, come to the AGM, put yourselves forward for the committee and/or propose others who could help.

## Pleasaunce Parksfest: the joy community events bring

ON SUNDAY 4 September at East Greenwich Pleasaunce, tucked behind Halstow and Chevening roads, the Parksfest was back after a pandemic pause, writes Lois Kennett-Brown.

Families gathered to picnic, soak up the live music and make the most of the last of the summer sunshine. Laughter and joy overflowed, a celebratory atmosphere that every community needs, creating a sense of belonging where individuals can feel part of something bigger than themselves.

It was an opportunity to get to know new neighbours and reconnect with old friends after these disjointed few years of separation and lockdown. New joyful collective memories were made across the generations.

The Friends of East Greenwich Pleasaunce did a

fantastic job of getting local organisations and bands involved, providing something for everyone. The Bridge offered activities for the under 5’s, the team from Pro-Infinity football kept the older energetic kids busy with football skills. In the gazebos around the edge of the dog-free zone was badge making with the team from East Greenwich parish, wood-turning demonstrations, a kids craft tent and a busy bar.

It was great to see new local talent perform on the main stage. ‘Broken Bridges’, four local sixth-form lads with connections from Halstow Primary and John Roan school, had their first public performance.

They got the crowd going with a mix of their own songs and a cover version of The Killers ‘Mr Brightside’. Also new to the stage were the



People gather for the start of Parkfest

‘Veteran jazz band’, improvising away on some jazz classics. The Halstow Community choir gave a terrific performance with a range of music from pop to classical. Community singing is a fantastic way to strengthen the lungs, as well as the feeling of well-being and togetherness. You can try out this choir on Tuesday evenings 20.00-21.15 at Halstow primary school during term-time. There are definitely opportunities for tenor

and bass singers to get involved.

The final act of the day was ‘Groove 101’. The amazing power voices of the lead singers, got people of all ages up on their feet and dancing. Together we were celebrating the joy of our community. Little did we know that within a week of Parksfest, our nation would enter a time of national mourning, celebrating the life and service of an extraordinary Queen.



## Postman aims to deliver marathon record

LOCAL postman Iain Love will be attempting to set a new Guinness world record for the fastest marathon dressed in postal uniform at the TCS London Marathon on Sunday 2 October.

He said: “The uniform consists of: Royal Mail issue trousers, a shirt and tie, a coat/jacket, a hat and I have to carry a postal bag with a minimum of 10lbs in it. (As if running the

marathon wasn’t hard enough.) The current record is 3 hours 45 minutes and 6 seconds. [It was set by Brian Kirsopp (UK) at the 2017 London marathon.]

“I have run 34 marathons and 34 ultra marathons including a 100 mile event, over the past 11 years and decided to give myself a new challenge.

“Not only am I running the marathon in postal uniform, I am also raising money for

Bexley and East Kent Mind, [a mental health charity].

“After a tough couple of years through a global pandemic I needed to reach out and talk to someone, and luckily I have a friend who works for Mind and he was happy to help me and steer me back to a happier place. So as a way of saying thanks, fundraising for Mind was the best way I knew how.”



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### REACH OUT Walk and Talk Group

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Email:  
[befriending@volunteersgreenwich.co.uk](mailto:befriending@volunteersgreenwich.co.uk)  
Tel: Abdi 07444 182 741



My next big challenge: leaving home and starting university

By Iris Brown

HAVING LIVED in Greenwich for as long as I can remember, I’m currently preparing to leave for the University of York along with the thousands of other students who will also be starting university this September.

Safe to say, the run up to results day was less than enjoyable, especially given the warnings from UCAS executives that many students could face missing out on their first-choice university due to fewer As and A\* being awarded.

However, on the morning of 18 August I was thrilled and relieved to learn that I’d been accepted into my university of choice, where I’ll be studying English Literature. It feels as though I’ve spent the majority of my time these last two years at school thinking about university in some way or another, from researching courses, to writing my personal statement and finally sitting my A-levels in June (the first public exams I’ve ever sat thanks to Covid).

As someone who has no career-path planned, deciding what and where to study has been challenging and at times felt a little overwhelming, but now that the time for me to leave home is rapidly approaching I couldn’t be more excited. There is an ever-growing pile of things on my bedroom floor (I’ve been told probably too much), which includes bed linen, saucepans and cutlery, as I prepare for life away from home.

Once I’ve got everything I need the only thing left for me to do will be to say goodbye to my friends and of course my family. However, luckily for me the journey is relatively short (about three hours) so I can return whenever I’m in need of rest and nutritious food (as I predict that, lacking any culinary skills, my diet from now on will probably consist entirely of pasta and baked beans on toast).



● This is the cutter head of “Jill”, the giant machine now boring the Silvertown Tunnel under the Thames between Greenwich Peninsula and Newham.

The machine was named in honour of Jill Viner, who in 1974 became the first woman driver of a London bus. The cutter head measures 39 feet in diameter. “Jill” is the largest-diameter tunnel boring machine in the UK.

The 1.4-kilometre tunnel is reported to be costing £1.2bn and is due to open in 2025.

Riverlink, which is carrying out the project, said that “Jill” “will progress under the river at around 10 metres every day and once the first tunnel is completed, will then be turned around to head back to Newham and complete the second tunnel”.

Lane restrictions on the A102 south of the Blackwall Tunnel to facilitate a new road layout are to begin on Monday 17 October.

Mind your backs: Pilates may be the answer to relieving aches and pains

By Andrea Whytock

PEOPLE enduring back pain, sports injuries or who want to keep fit and mobile into old age may benefit from the many Pilates classes in the area.

Invented by Joseph Pilates (a German circus performer and gymnast) to counteract the negative effects of modern-day stresses on the body, the exercises can help almost anyone. Pilates corrects postural defects caused by repetitive habits such as regularly hunching over a laptop or carrying heavy bags.

It releases tension, loosens tight muscles and promotes all-round fitness. Pilates uses breath control, a centred posture and flowing movements to balance the body’s structure, major organs and joints. With everyone working at their own pace, it is never too late to begin. Pilates classes can take place on a mat or using a range of equipment. This includes the reformer – a bed filled with springs originally made to enable hospital patients to exercise in bed.

Joseph Pilates discovered that using this equipment quickened the recovery of patients with spinal injuries. The benefits of Pilates can include: back pain relief; strain and injury prevention with speedier recovery from minor injuries; improved posture; improved breathing with increased oxygen supply to the body; relief from joint



pain and stiffness; improved balance and increased muscle mass and bone density.

Local classes can be found at:

**Blackheath Pilates**, Quaker Meeting House, Lawn Terrace, Blackheath SE3 9LL. Tel: 07932 325 552. [sue@blackheathpilates.co.uk](mailto:sue@blackheathpilates.co.uk) [www.blackheathpilates.co.uk](http://www.blackheathpilates.co.uk)

**Matwork classes.**

**Ellie Brown Wellness**, Fitness and Pilates, Market Studios, 18-23 Greenwich Market, Durnford Street, Greenwich SE10 9HZ and Reformer Studio, 225 Greenwich High Road, Greenwich SE10 8NB. Tel: 07958 225 598. [ellie@greenwichpilates.co.uk](mailto:ellie@greenwichpilates.co.uk) [www.greenwichpilates.co.uk](http://www.greenwichpilates.co.uk)

**Matwork and Reformer classes**

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**Chiara Favaretti**, Blackheath Hill Home Studio, London SE10 8AF. Tel: 07774 813795. [chiarafavarettipilates@gmail.com](mailto:chiarafavarettipilates@gmail.com) [chiarafavaretti@cloudstudios.com](mailto:chiarafavaretti@cloudstudios.com)

In person one to one sessions.

**Mandy Brown Pilates**, Mycenae House, 90 Mycenae Road, Blackheath SE3 7SE. Tel: 07986 671 168.

Wednesdays 2pm (matwork classes for those aged 50+). Wednesdays 3pm, 7pm and 8pm (mixed mat classes) . Fridays 9am and 10am (mixed mat classes).

**111 Pilates**, 115a Trafalgar Road, Greenwich SE10 9TX. Tel: 020 8318 5221, [info@111pilates.com](mailto:info@111pilates.com) 111pilates.com. Reformer classes. Matwork classes. Private sessions.

**Pilates for Core Strength**, Mycenae House, 90 Mycenae Road, Blackheath SE3 7SE. Tel: 07919 496 934.

Mondays 1.30pm.

**Pilates Plus**, 109 Humber Road, Blackheath SE3 7LW. Tel: 020 8859 9790. [www.pilatespluslondon.co.uk](http://www.pilatespluslondon.co.uk). Mat classes. One to one sessions. Reformer classes.

**Clare Roberts Pilates**, 20 Wemyss Road, Blackheath SE3 0TG. Tel: 07899 065 088, [clarerobertspilates.com](mailto:clarerobertspilates.com)

1:1 sessions using reformer/equipment.

**Trinity Laban Pilates** matwork class Laban Building, 30 Creekside, London SE8 3DZ. Tel: 0208 305 4444. [www.trinitylaban.ac.uk](http://www.trinitylaban.ac.uk) 9am Saturdays.

Visual Sustainability Research Initiative

INVITATION TO PARTICIPATE

University of Hertfordshire

**UH**

Ethics Committee

This is an official notification by a student of the University of Hertfordshire in respect of a study involving human participants.

**Title of study:** The importance of visual sustainability in urban design strategy

**Protocol Number:** cCTA/PGR/UH/05711

**Approving Committee:**

The University of Hertfordshire Social Sciences, Arts and Humanities Ethics Committee with Delegated Authority

If you have any queries concerning this document, please contact me Pieter de Kock, email: [visual.sustainability@outlook.com](mailto:visual.sustainability@outlook.com) or my supervisor Dr Silvio Carta, email: [s.cart@herts.ac.uk](mailto:s.cart@herts.ac.uk)

<b>Activity and Location:</b> (map provided)	Unaccompanied walk in the area of Greenwich Town Centre and Greenwich Park (PARTs 1 and 2).
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*If you're a regular walker within the Greenwich Town Centre, including Greenwich Park and immediate surroundings, we'd like to know more about what and how you see. We're particularly interested in the object(s) that you're most attracted to during your normal daily walk. This should take place in your favourite area and one in which you are familiar and comfortable. We'd like to know what you most hold dear. It could be anything, large or small, for example but not limited to: an entrance door, a statue, a view of something in particular, a special place, a favourite tree or bench. A building or some part of a building. Perhaps an ornamental feature. A certain stretch in your walk, foliage, architecture or microclimate. Sounds or a sound associated with an object, whether related or not. Laughter, a passing train, a bell, a car, a bicycle. Patterns of light and shade.*

Your participation is hereby requested for PART 1 and PART 2 of this study. After your reply to accept this invitation is received, we'll send you more information about the study area, along with the Participant Information Sheet and a Consent Form to complete. Here is a short summary describing your involvement (duration: 45 to 90 minutes):


**In PART 1**—for the walk—we'll ask you to use a simple free smartphone App, take photos and make notes to describe any objects that you feel most attracted to during your walk.

**PART 2** is a questionnaire about an event or memory that stands out—one that is most valuable or vivid and which, for whatever reason, is *most dear to you*.

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# First steps in Greenwich on Liz’s road to Number 10

Photos: Andrew Parsons/No 10. Downing Street and Instagram @elizabeth.truss.mp



ALL POLITICAL careers end in failure, as Enoch Powell once observed. Quite a few begin that way, too. Liz Truss, the Prime Minister and leader of the Conservative Party, started with a setback.

In 1998, with an Oxford degree and still only 22 years of age, she stood unsuccessfully in Vanbrugh ward. Not perhaps unexpected. Then as now, Greenwich was a solid Labour borough, and only a year earlier Tony Blair’s Labour Party had won a landslide victory in the general election.

She re-entered the fray in 2002, this time in Westcombe ward. Once again, the vote went to Labour. Success finally came in 2006 when she won a seat in Eltham South. In the same period two attempts to win parliamentary seats in West Yorkshire failed.



Liz Truss in No. 10 Downing Street. Below, with running mate Douglas Ellison when she contested Vanbrugh ward in 1998, her first election campaign

Alex Grant, a former Labour councillor, who served for 16 years and won election battles against Liz Truss in 1998 and 2002, writes in his blog. “It was hard to dislike Truss. But it was equally hard to see her as a future MP, let alone as a credible minister or prime minister. She always seemed to be a bit bored in Greenwich, impatient to become a Tory MP for a safe seat in Middle England, and keen to put the fruitless work of being a Tory councillor in a safely Labour London borough behind her.”

Liz’s breakthrough came in 2010 when she won the safe Tory seat of Norfolk South West, which she has held ever since. Twelve years later she stepped through the door to No. 10 Downing Street as Prime Minister.

Her earlier membership of the Lib-Dems, when she wanted Margaret Thatcher out and the monarchy scrapped, has proved no obstacle. She told the BBC’s Nick Robinson: “In my youth I was a professional controversialist. I liked exploring ideas and stirring things up.”

Although Alex Grant thinks she seemed bored in Greenwich, Liz Truss has lived in the borough for many years. She married Hugh O’Leary at St Alfrege’s Church in 2000. They have two children. The Guardian newspaper has even spoken of a Greenwich set: the Chancellor, Kwasi Kwarteng, is a neighbour and James Cleverly, the Foreign Secretary, lives nearby as does the peer Lord Frost.

## Local authors argue case against academy schools

SCHOOLS ARE slipping from local authority control; should we worry? That was the question posed by local authors Terry Edwards and Carl Parsons, in *How to Dismantle the English State Education System in 10 Easy Steps* (Zero Books, 2019).

They say that its messages are more worrying today, with the growing criticisms of academies and multi-academy trusts.

The book makes a

satirical yet data-based case against the academisation of state schools – a fiercely debated local issue in relation to the John Roan School. The authors argue that the process is “amounting to semi-privatisation as with the NHS, ... [and] not what the country or local communities need”.

A postscript outlines ways to bring back schools into democratic and community control.

Terry Edwards is a retired secondary school teacher with 41 years’ experience in London secondary schools. Carl Parsons was a teacher, researcher and retired as a university professor of education. He has written on social justice issues in education and school exclusions.

Copies of the book are available now for £10, post free. Email [carlparsons05@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:carlparsons05@yahoo.co.uk) Otherwise £12.99 from Amazon).

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# ENVIRONMENT

## Tap into saving water – and money

By Ann Hill

GIVEN THE steep rise in the cost of living, many are wondering how to reduce their gas and electricity bills. One expense to bear in mind is that around 18 per cent of our energy consumption is from heating water for showers, baths, and hot water taps. So if we use less hot water we can reduce our energy bills significantly, as well as our carbon footprint.

The figures below give an idea of hot water consumption in the average household.

**Baths and showers**  
These consume about 34 per cent of the water used by an average household. A medium-sized bath uses 150 litres of water. A power shower for ten minutes also uses about 150 litres. An eco-showerhead for ten minutes uses about 50 litres.

**Washing clothes and dishes:** These consume about 22 per cent of a household's water. A washing machine uses about 50 litres/cycle. Modern dishwashers use 14 litres/cycle (10 litres on an eco-setting). Washing dishes for five minutes under a

running tap uses 30 litres (8 litres using a bowl)

**Tips to reduce hot water energy costs**  
Spend less time in the shower and use an eco-showerhead. Aerated showerheads use less water by mixing air into the water stream to create larger droplets and a softer shower. However, some heat is lost. Non-aerated showerheads restrict water flow by forcing the water through small holes. This gives a forceful, massaging shower. Attach an aerator to the spout of taps (very cheap and easy to install). Use the dishwasher only when full and choose an eco-setting. Avoid pre-rinsing. Use the washing machine only when full, and wash at 20 degrees C or 30 degrees C. Check manuals to find the most water-efficient cycle.

**Reducing cold water usage**  
Our region is one of the driest in the UK. Recent rain has helped revive our gardens but has not been enough to refill the depleted upper reaches of the Thames and river Lea which provide 80% of our tap water. The rest comes from aquifers, which are also depleted. Little rain is forecast for the next three months and further drought orders are



being considered. The average person in England uses 140 litres of water day, but only 4 per cent of this is used for drinking. Running a tap uses up to 9 litres of water a minute.

If we reduce our water consumption it will reduce the amount abstracted from streams and rivers and will protect the wildlife that lives in them, and reduce the risk of future water shortages. Reducing water usage will

reduce carbon emissions as water treatment requires energy and chemicals.

**Toilets**  
These account for 30 per cent of water usage in an average household. An old-style flush toilet uses about 13 litres/flush. Using a water displacement device in the cistern saves up to a couple of litres per flush. A dual-flush, which gives a choice of water volume, uses 4-6 litres/flush. Upgrading to a dual-flush could save around 50,000 litres per household/year.

A leaking toilet wastes 200-400 litres of water/day, and can be hard to spot. To check, either add a little food colouring to the cistern and check after three hours if any colour has leaked into the bowl or dry the inside of the bowl 30 minutes after the last flush and place a dry piece of toilet tissue across the back of the bowl's inner surface; leave in place for three hours or overnight, then check if wet or torn.

Reducing our consumption of energy and water is vital in this climate emergency. It's worth trying. For more information see Waterwise at [waterwise.org.uk](http://waterwise.org.uk) or the Energy Saving Trust at [energysavingtrust.org.uk](http://energysavingtrust.org.uk).

## ‘Significant growth’ in borough will impact on all areas of transport

FOLLOWING THE controversy over the West Greenwich Low Traffic Neighbourhood scheme and repercussions on other areas, the council has produced its promised Transport Strategy, writes Maggie Gravelle.

The document is at pains to identify some of the constraints in working with existing strategies and policies and with other bodies such as Transport for London, the Department of Transport and neighbouring

boroughs. It spends some time outlining and then aligning the aims of the various relevant policies in order to arrive at a list of general aims, themes and objectives.

These have proposed actions attached to them and a timescale by which they should be achieved. The main difficulty lies in the vague nature of these actions, many of which are simply promises to consult widely and in a timely manner.

Part of the problem is that the borough has very limited powers to make significant changes.

It has little control over public transport or over the design and regulation of highways beyond providing information about cycle routes, installing cycle parks, promoting car sharing and regulating parking.

So it is not surprising that the draft Strategy devotes considerable space to its proposal to extend controlled parking zones (CPZs) across the borough.

As blog 853 suggests, CPZs take a long time to introduce, given the need to consult

widely, and are often controversial. There is also a danger of an increase in the conversion of front gardens to hard standing.

The intention to encourage wider use of electric vehicles through more charging points is positive but, given the cost of these, is not likely to effect widespread change. They are also proposing to consider some form of road user and workplace parking charges and to reduce speed limits to 20 mph.

The council anticipates that the borough will experience 'significant growth' which will impact on all aspects of transport. One might, therefore, have expected a more proactive approach suggesting priorities for change and ways of engaging with other partners.

But it is very hard to see how this strategy, much of which recycles old policies, lacks concrete actions and is un-costed, will achieve its commitment to net zero carbon emissions by 2030.

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