

# WestcombeNEWS



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July/August 2025 No6

“One benefit of summer was that each day we had more light to read by.” – Jeanette Winterson

## HGVs to be banned through Blackheath Village?

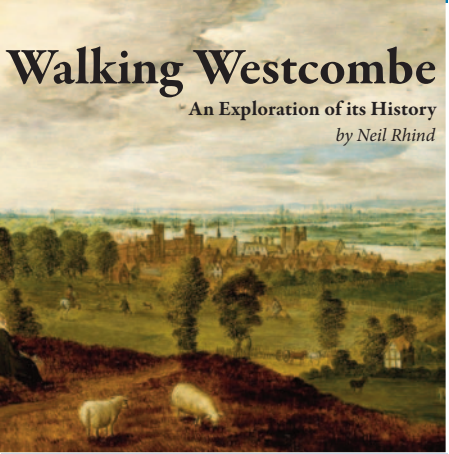
Lewisham Council is considering banning vehicles over 7.5 tonnes using Blackheath Village as a through route though it is likely that provision for deliveries would be made. Enforcement would probably be by camera.

While this would likely be welcomed by many, and has been put forward before, a key issue would clearly be what alternative route HGVs would be advised to follow in order to avoid the Village. With the recent experience of the East/West Greenwich LTN in mind another important matter would be to have adequate advance warning signage of any diversionary route. Also to be addressed is how and whether such a ban would affect surrounding areas and it is to be hoped that is an issue that Lewisham Council will take into account in consultation with Greenwich Council and its residents.

A stumbling block to past Village HGV ban proposals has been a negative reaction from TfL, presumably concerned about effects on the wider road network.

*Geoff Brighty*

### Walking Westcombe



**Walking Westcombe**  
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Neil Rhind's look at the history of the area arranged in 12 walks - with maps and more than 100 pictures. £12 - available from The Blackheath Bookshop (Waterstones) and The Bookshop on the Heath. Copies also on sale at the Westcombe Society stall at the Parkfest, 3rd August at Mycenae House. Published by the Blackheath Society in association with the Westcombe Society.

## A New London Plan

Sadiq Khan is inviting Londoners to share their views on the New London Plan. So, what is it and why should we be concerned?

The London Plan is a 'blueprint for development and growth in London. It includes policies on key issues such as new homes, workplaces, public transport and open spaces.' It will affect the Local Plan through the regulations or legal obligations that it imposes on Local Authorities, whose plans should be 'broadly in conformity with the London Plan.'

The consultation document has a particular focus on housing, with a target of building 880,000 homes over the next ten years. (The target in the current plan is for 520,000 homes over the same period.)

Critics and commentators point out that the Government's set target for London is completely unrealistic. House building in London has dropped in recent years. Various figures are being quoted but there has been a reduction in starts of affordable and housing association homes. It is claimed that there are permissions to build 300,000 homes which have not been started and that 87,000 homes are long-term empty or second homes. Another likelihood is the increase of high-rise buildings around transport hubs or in 'opportunity designated areas' (such as along the Thames) and concern about the number built as student accommodation (where regulations enable smaller spaces than 'normal'), or let as short-term rentals and Airbnbs rather than meeting the needs of families.

There are also issues about where to build. Brownfield sites are not sufficient to meet the need, so there is a proposal to re-designate some greenbelt areas as 'grey' belt which makes them available for some development. Publicly available metropolitan open land (MOL) should remain protected.

The London Plan is at the early stage but local amenity groups will continue to discuss and monitor progress because of its impact on the development of the new Greenwich Local Plan.

Read more at:  
<https://www.london.gov.uk/programmes-strategies/planning/london-plan/towards-new-london-plan-consultation>

*Maggie Gravelle, Helen Warner*

## South Eastern Railway Formed

It has been announced that Southeastern trains and the Network Rail Kent Route have been brought together in a new Company called South Eastern Railway. The Managing Director is Steve White, who was the MD of Southeastern. This creates a single leadership team accountable for both rail passenger services and infrastructure throughout the South East. They were working in close partnership from October 2023, and the creation of an integrated leadership team is described as a significant part of the Government's plans for rail reform and the creation of Great British Railways.

The delivery of reliable train services depends upon both reliable trains and reliable infrastructure, so it never made sense to separate track and train with a complicated contractual relationship between different companies, who often blamed each other for failures. The impact of the new Company on passengers everyday experience remains to be seen, but co-operation over blame-gaming must be an improvement.

There are no quick answers or solutions to the problems the railway face. The Company has stated its objectives are to improve performance, invest in the infrastructure, develop the timetable, invest in the fleet and the stations, and deliver better customer service. Some of the examples that affect this area are completing the work on the Blackheath Tunnel, the new footbridge planned for Maze Hill, the refurbishment of the Class 376 Electrostar fleet, track and equipment renewals between London and Dartford, and the procurement of new metro trains.

It all sounds good, but only time will tell whether this is the start of a new beginning or a false dawn.

*Mike Sparham*

## PARKSfest ... Just for Fun

Packed full of fun for all the family, PARKSfest 2025 – taking place in the tranquil Mycenae Gardens on Sunday 3 August from noon to 5pm – promises to be a summer highlight. It's a free annual event that ticks all the boxes. There'll be children's activities, dance performances, lots of music, face painting, arts and crafts stalls, and a magic show. The café bar will be open – and of course, there'll be ice cream!

Look out for The Westcombe Society's stall, where we'll be busy promoting membership, answering queries about upcoming events, and – hopefully – selling copies (£12) of a terrific guidebook, *Walking Westcombe*, by the late local historian and author Neil Rhind. Neil knew our area inside out, and the book offers 12 walks packed with historical detail.

Fingers crossed for a sunny day!

*Diane Blackwell*

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Greenwich Parks Forum

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Deadline for September copy  
15th August 2025

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Deadline for September Advertising:  
18th August 2025

DISTRIBUTION/DELIVERY  
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Tel: 0208 853 2756  
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PRINTING  
Trojan Press.  
Email: info@trojanpress.co.uk  
www.trojanpress.com

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A Gift with  
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So many of us are deeply grateful  
to the folk at the Greenwich &  
Bexley Community Hospice for their  
help and support when loved ones  
are in the final stages of their lives.  
To show our heartfelt thanks, The  
Westcombe Society has chosen the  
hospice as our 2025 Charity of the  
Year. A donation of £1,000 – raised  
from various events throughout the  
year – will go towards supporting  
the hospice wherever it is most  
needed.

Kate Barnard, Trusts and  
Foundations Manager at Greenwich  
& Bexley Community Hospice, has  
suggested that the donation could  
fund a gift to the Inpatient Unit  
(IPU): a 10-litre oxygen  
concentrator. This equipment would  
provide rapid oxygen therapy to  
patients experiencing breathlessness  
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Diane Blackwell

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From Plant Sale to Bloom: Help  
Charlton House Gardens Thrive

There are many wonderful  
gardens within easy reach of  
Westcombe Park, but local residents  
don't always think of Charlton  
House & Gardens as a regular  
destination for a garden visit. It's  
well worth keeping an eye out for  
events there! The gardens won Gold  
at RHS London in Bloom last year,  
and the planting continues apace,  
extending into the Long Garden  
borders this year.



The Garden Volunteers held their  
big annual Plant Sale in the Peace  
Garden in May. Some plants are  
now grown on-site by volunteers,  
while others are donated by  
members of the Charlton &  
Blackheath Amateur Horticultural  
Society (CABAHS). The event  
raised over £4,000, which will be  
shared between the Community  
Hospice and the Royal Greenwich  
Heritage Trust to ensure the garden  
revival continues.

The volunteer scheme was set up in  
2020 as a partnership between the  
Horticultural Society and the Royal  
Greenwich Heritage Trust, which  
manages the estate. Key to the  
success of the garden revival was the  
appointment of Head Gardener  
Jason Sylvan, whose beautiful  
designs are followed faithfully by the  
volunteers to create the

award-winning landscape.  
Five years on, the scheme has over  
40 people signed up (including at  
least 10 from Westcombe Park).  
Over that time, volunteers have  
clocked up 12,000 hours across 400  
sessions, with an average of 16  
people at each one.

If you have a little spare time, do  
consider signing up. It's a "drop-in"  
scheme, so no commitment is  
needed. Sessions run on Tuesdays  
from 2–4pm and Thursdays from  
10am–12 noon, and they're open to  
anyone with a love of gardens. There  
are so many varied jobs that it really  
can work for everyone. It's not just  
weeding, pruning, digging, and  
planting—we need people to pot up,  
take cuttings, sharpen tools, make  
the tea, keep notes on the flowers—  
anything!



You might be working in the  
established Walled Gardens or the  
new Long Garden. If it's too hot  
and sunny, perhaps The Glade or  
The Wilderness is a cooler place to  
be. You can be sure that work takes  
place in a friendly, sociable  
atmosphere—and there's always tea  
and biscuits!

Kathy Aitken

If you missed it, the next plant sale  
will be held at the Horn Fair at  
Charlton House on 19th October.  
To join the Charlton & Blackheath  
Amateur Horticultural Society,  
contact: garden@cabahs.com  
To join the garden volunteers,  
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# NEIGHBOURHOOD

## Report on the 2025 BJWP Public Meeting

The annual public meeting of the Blackheath Joint Working Party (BJWP) was held on 10th June. The BJWP Chair, Councillor Mariam Lolavar (Blackheath Westcombe), described the role of the BJWP, as a body comprising Councillors, officers and resident's representatives that advises both Greenwich and Lewisham councils on matters concerning the heath. She also shared a map showing which parts of the Heath were the responsibility of which council. Janine Whittaker (Deputy Events Manager for Greenwich), in collaboration with Gemma Marston (Glendale, who manage the Lewisham side of the Heath), gave an overview of upcoming events on the heath. In 2025 there will be the normal funfairs and circuses plus the Kisstory/Uptown music festival in late July. The latter event's organisers were disappointed by the lack of turnout at the resident's meeting. Residents are encouraged to take such opportunities to have their say on Events as mitigation is possible if the organisers know of potential problems in advance. The number for reporting noise issues at the July event will be published on [westcombesociety.org](http://westcombesociety.org). Greenwich are introducing a new voluntary environmental impact fee for all events on their side of the Heath. It is hoped that this will bolster the BJWP's Community Fund from Lewisham and allow funding for projects on both sides of the Heath. Filming units, such as Bridgerton, already give a donation to support local charities such as the Greenwich Foodbank. Greenwich (in common with other councils) are actively seeking events, suitable for the heath and other open spaces, to provide much

needed income. The existing events policy for the Heath is now out of date. A new one should be agreed later this year in collaboration with BJWP. Antisocial behaviour associated with events on the Heath, such as occurred at one of the funfairs on Circus Field, seems to be part of a wider issue. Jannine reported that Greenwich were already acting to reduce the likelihood of such problems. James Hedges (Greenwich's Parks and Open Spaces) reported on several aspects of the management of the Heath. It is hoped that the application for Nature Conservation status for the Vanbrugh Pits (the dips) will soon be approved. The retirement of a member of the council parks team who has been living in the house near the Folly Pond will mean there is a new occupant soon. Mariam said that Savills (who manage the Crown Estate's property portfolio) are still carrying out a viability assessment for future use of the dilapidated toilet block next door. Greenwich officers apologised for not consulting the BJWP before the bus stops were moved on Prince Charles Road. However, we are still awaiting an explanation as to why this was done and why users of the bus stops were not consulted. Local naturalist Joe Beale reported on his butterfly surveys in 2020, 2021 and 2024 in Vanbrugh Pits, supported by the Community Fund. He expects to produce his final comparative report this autumn. He mentioned that there were no current problems with oak processionary moths, with any nests found removed manually. Ana Sutherland, a local architect, reported on the project to improve

the areas around benches on the Heath, also supported by the Community Fund. Work is starting by concentrating on the benches near the All Saints' church. Helen Reeves of the Blackheath Society said that there was a separate project to replace benches, done through Lewisham council. She is hopeful that these two projects will be coordinated. Jack Delso, (Lewisham Tree Services Officer) talked about trees in areas around the Heath. They were last inspected in 2023, with the next survey due in 2027. They use "tree equity mapping" to identify areas deficient in trees. They have worked with "Street Trees for Living", planting 1200 trees in the last two years, with a high survival rate ascribed to the use of local residents as "tree guardians". The spring cutting of one of the bunds that have been raised at the edges of many of the "fields" on the Heath was questioned. Eszter Wainwright-Déri (Lewisham Ecological Regeneration Manager) said that the bunds were cut either in the early spring or in the autumn and that bunds missed in the autumn cutting were done in March. Diane Summers of the Friends of the Blackheath Play Area reported on progress on the play area for young children at Talbot Place, showing pictures of the new wooden tractor, paid for in part by the Community Fund. If any residents have comments to make about the Heath, we encourage you to contact your local Councillors, who are all members of BJWP, and [environment@westcombesociety.org](mailto:environment@westcombesociety.org).

Mike Norton

## Letter

### Swifts

I refer to Shirley Broughton's article in your November 2024 issue, and to my own letter published in your December/January 2024 edition. I am sorry to report that I have seen only one or two swifts over our area so far this year. I know from BBC Springwatch that swifts have been sighted over Belfast since the end of April. However, the BBC also reported in June that there has been a "swift decline highlighted at Hampton Court Palace", so we are clearly not the only ones affected. I often look at the Vanbrugh Park Estate and think what a perfect habitat it could be for swifts, if only "swift bricks" were installed. The surrounding grounds could also be planted with field maples, common limes, teasel, catmint, and devil's-bit scabious – all of which support and attract the insects that swifts feed on.

James Moore

## From Classroom to the sky: Chess as a Tool for Cognitive Growth

Under sunny skies, Pointers' students aged 5-11 went head-to-head in a game of chess on top of the O2 Arena.



They were marking the launch of a new chess club as well as promoting the games benefits in education. Chess is thought to boost concentration and memory as well as enhancing critical thinking and planning.



The Pointer School celebrates their 75th anniversary this year and has a proud history and record with chess. A former student, Shreyas Royal, became England's youngest ever chess grandmaster – aged just 15 years old.



Another student, Kushal Jakhria, is competing in championships this year as well as the full team making it to the finals of English Primary School Chess Association National Primary Schools Championships 2025, demonstrating the prep school's chess success. The school has a commitment to making chess more widely available in the community and are opening their doors to other pupils in Greenwich and South East London free of charge. Spaces for the chess club are limited but available for all primary school age pupils. Visit <http://pointers.school/about/check-club> for more information. Jerzy Dybowski, chess tutor at The Pointer School, said: "Chess builds confident learners and thoughtful decision-makers. We're proud of our heritage, but even more proud to be part of something bigger, something that reaches beyond our school walls."



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# FEATURES

## The Vanishing Boundary Stones

I write an article on Greenwich local history every week for Greenwich Weekender. Recently I have done several about walking around the Greenwich Parish boundary in 1851. These boundary walks used to take place quite often - the vicar and the church wardens, choir boys, schoolchildren and anybody else would process round the nine mile boundary. Sometimes they went right through people's houses and out of windows and much else. As they went, they looked for old boundary markers, most of which were stones. Already by 1851 many had disappeared.

In 1980, what was then the Greenwich Antiquarian Society undertook a replica walk around the boundary, and in 2020 Julian Watson wrote an article about it in the Greenwich Historical Society Journal. By then, most of the markers had vanished. Some of the stones were free-standing, and some were set into walls. My article series has just reached

Blackheath, and there are still a few there – hidden in long grass and often moved from their original sites. I know that the 1980 walk found some important markers in the Charlton area which have now completely vanished.



Greenwich parish boundary stone on the south side of the slip road from Shooters Hill Road to St German's Place, marking the boundary with Kidbrooke.  
Photo Credit: credit Julian Watson

Really, all of these stones should have been listed years ago, and various people have said we ought to draw up a list of what remains – and maybe also of what we know about some of the ones that have gone. So, please get in touch if you know of any stones or other boundary markers.  
*Mary Mills*

## South East London Mind's Greenwich Services Set to Relocate to The Forum this summer

South East London Mind's Greenwich services currently operating from the Ormiston Road site are scheduled to move to The Forum at Greenwich by August 2025. This relocation marks a significant change for the community, as the Ormiston Road site has been a vital hub for mental health support for over 45 years. The Ormiston Road property was no longer viable due to the extensive refurbishment required throughout. It is among several Council-owned sites recommended for sale. SEL Mind and the Council worked together to identify a new fit-for-purpose home for the service, which the Council will contribute funding

to adapt. Similarly to Ormiston Road, The Forum at Greenwich has a community feel, and lots of flexible space to run a range of vital services from 1:1 counselling to peer support groups. Shukri Mohamed, Head of Services, Greenwich, said: "We know leaving Ormiston Road, our home for four decades, will be difficult. But I believe this move presents us with opportunities to connect with more members of our community. South East London Mind's promise to stand by people with mental health problems and dementia isn't tied to a building. Our support is about people, and that will always be our priority".

### TROJAN PRESS

PRINTING IN BLACKHEATH  
SINCE 1978

1a Lizban St, Blackheath,  
London SE3 8SS

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## Garden Glory

The magic of a lovingly tended garden is all the more special when the public can bask in its beauty and at the same time help raise funds for the Greenwich and Bexley Community Hospice. Early summer heralds the Open Gardens Festival, a homage to gardeners in Greenwich, Blackheath, Lee and Eltham. In our very own Westcombe Park patch, gates were flung open for 2 weekends in June for locals to enjoy the uplifting power of flowers, plants, vegetables, trees, shrubs, lawns, and the love that owners have poured into their gardens.

In Mycenae Road Tina and Stephen have spent 40 years creating a captivating country feel behind their Edwardian house. There's a large expanse of lawn surrounded by shrubs, trees and flowers, a sweet stone bridge over a water feature, a robust compost bin and surprise gems like the statue of a demure lady rising out of the greenery. Over in Heathway, two gardens celebrate the beauty that can be created in small spaces. Keren has used small pebbles, elegant paving stones decking and an assortment of ferns and grasses for a subtle, calming Japanese feel. And in a far corner is a dream cubby house for the lucky grandkids. Across the road Margaret and John have, in just 3 years, turned a small space into a paradise of flowers



(like roses and daisies), shrubs, ferns, woodchip, pebbles, features like a mirror on a brick wall to create a feeling of more space, and quirky touches like the big old stone seat in the front garden. This is truly a peaceful space, a secret retreat. Helen and Robbie's place in Westcombe Park Road was a bomb site for 10 years after World War 2. They've lived here for 43 years and are still digging up rubble. Helen is the passionate gardener; Robbie - one of The Westcombe Society's quizmasters - is a passionate admirer of her work. Helen's enthusiasm led her to take a course with the late great garden and landscape designer John Brookes MBE and over the years the garden has evolved into a floral paradise with so much strategically placed flowers and foliage that its beauty and perfumes are breathtaking. As the organisers of this year's Open Garden Festival promised, we were allowed a peek into "a world of colour, creativity and community."

## Letter

**Shooters Hill Murders**  
Dear Editor  
I should like to add the following to Neville Grant's article in your June edition about the Shooters Hill Murders and how the hill was notorious for highwaymen and



gibbets. The gallows stood at the bottom of the hill where the now-closed police station stands on the corner of Well Hall Road and there was a gibbet for exposing the corpses of the executed criminals at the top of the hill. This can be seen in the attached illustrations of the 1805 execution of Webb and Russel for burglary. At the beginning of Dickens' "A Tale of Two Cities" the Dover mail stagecoach is struggling up Shooters Hill with the passengers walking in the mud beside it when the approaching messenger following it on horseback is feared to be a highwayman.  
*Malcolm Hardy*

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# FEATURES

## Help Make Greenwich Theatre Accessible for All

Greenwich Theatre has been a much-loved part of our local community for over 150 years, delighting audiences of all ages. One of London’s foremost Off West End Theatres, it’s a vibrant hub of dramatic creativity, nurturing a creative talent pipeline of talent.



Paul McGann and Amanda Ryan in Jez Butterworth's *The River*, June 2024

From award-winning, joyful pantomimes to dark and unforgettable drama, there’s something for everybody here. However, the current building dates from 1969, and the stairs and narrow passageways leading to the auditorium and stage can make it difficult for those with mobility issues to access. ‘I want as many people as possible to come and experience the unique magic of live theatre,’ says James Turner, Executive Director of Greenwich Theatre, ‘and this is why we’ve launched this campaign to raise £50,000 for accessibility improvements.’ Less than 10% of Greenwich Theatre’s income comes from public funding. ‘Greenwich Theatre is a charity. Our three main sources of revenue come from the bar, ticket sales and venue hire. These essential accessibility works are only possible with the support of the local community,’ says James. Now over halfway to the fundraising target of £50,000, work has begun on accessible gender-neutral toilet

facilities, and a hearing loop is also planned. But there’s more the theatre would love to provide for its patrons – including automatic entrance doors and video tours to support neurodivergent audience members. ‘The first play I saw was Joseph and his Technicolour Dreamcoat in Blackpool when I was 7 - I was hooked,’ says James, ‘I knew then I wanted to work in the theatre when I was older. Regional theatre is such an enriching and vital part of our lives. Nothing beats the live experience.’



Dick Whittington and his Cat - Winner of Best Script and Best Pantomime at the UK Pantomime Awards 2022

Greenwich Theatre has a wonderful summer programme lined up – including *The Three Musketeers*, written by multi-award nominee and Greenwich pantomime favourite Anthony Spargo. In our increasingly digital obsessed age, the live experience becomes increasingly precious. So a big Thank You Westcombe News readers for whatever you are able to donate. Every penny you can spare will help ensure the magic of Greenwich Theatre is accessible to all.

Helen Marley-Hutchinson



[www.justgiving.com/campaign/greenwichtheatreaccessibilityfundraiser](http://www.justgiving.com/campaign/greenwichtheatreaccessibilityfundraiser)

## Greenwich Gears Up for Record-Breaking Movie-Themed Spectacle



Photo Credit: ORNC Tigz Rice.

Film lovers and costume enthusiasts are being called to the Old Royal Naval College this September for a blockbuster celebration with a twist — a Guinness World Records™ attempt for the largest gathering of people dressed as film and TV characters. Taking place on Saturday 27 September 2025, the free event marks 100 years of cinematic history at the Old Royal Naval College — one of the UK’s most iconic filming locations — and at Elstree Studios, home to classics such as *Star Wars*, *The Shining*, and *The Crown*. Together, they’re inviting the public to become part of history by donning recognisable costumes and joining a giant, film-inspired gathering along the Thames. Over the past century, the Old Royal Naval College has appeared in more than 200 film and television productions, from Oscar-winning epics to streaming blockbusters, with legendary directors such as Christopher Nolan, Ridley Scott and Kenneth Branagh among those to have used its grand baroque setting. The day promises more than just record-breaking. Attendees will enjoy themed food, music, and immersive experiences featuring

iconic props such as the Batmobile, Cruella’s car, and a *Bridgerton*-inspired throne. Live recreations of film scenes, photo opportunities and costume inspiration will bring the movie magic to life. Elstree Studios, also marking its centenary, is hosting a series of celebratory events throughout the year. Highlights include a visit from the Duke of Edinburgh, the UK’s first AI-driven immersive film and television experience, a gala honouring industry giants like Stanley Kubrick, Steven Spielberg and George Lucas, an interactive heritage trail, and a community open day featuring screenings and Q&A sessions. Luke Flynn, Filming Manager at the Old Royal Naval College, said: “What better way to mark a century of screen magic than by inviting fans to be part of a real-life blockbuster moment?” Costumes must be identifiable to count towards the Guinness World Records™ total. Entry is free, but participants must sign up in advance and arrive in costume to be included in the count. More details and sign-up can be found at [ornc.org/whats-on/guinness-world-record](http://ornc.org/whats-on/guinness-world-record).

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- Tuesday 23<sup>rd</sup> September
- Tuesday 30<sup>th</sup> September
- Tuesday 7<sup>th</sup> October

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# ENVIRONMENT

## Queen's Orchard

The Queen's Orchard is a small, enclosed area in the north east corner of Greenwich Park. Records go back to 1693 when it was used as a kitchen garden for the Royal Palace. Today it is managed by staff and volunteers who grow fruit trees, vegetables and flowers.



In March this year an application was submitted to the Planning Department by Greenwich Park Management to create an opening for a gate in the southern boundary wall of Queen's Orchard. This wall is Grade II listed and is part of the UNESCO World Heritage site. The wall is significant because it is part of a small number of surviving elements from the 17th century development of the Royal grounds and also because of its unbroken

length. The proposed opening would break into the wall roughly half-way along it when viewed from the park.. The application gave no reason for the insertion of the gate and went into great detail to justify its statement that the change would have little impact. The Environment committee submitted an objection, arguing that the wall was of historic significance and adding; "We do not think that the proposed alteration will only have a minor effect on the listed wall". We queried the reason for the change with the Parks Manager, Clare Lanes. She explained that as the employer of staff who manage the boating lake she has an obligation to ensure that they have adequate 'welfare' space. This includes toilets, secure lockers and rest facilities. At present they have to use the toilets in the children's playground which raises safeguarding issues. The management are in the process of providing facilities for the volunteers in the Queen's Orchard and this could also be used by the boating lake staff. The new gate would be in addition to the existing gate at the eastern end of the orchard. The Environment committee felt that, while supporting the concern about staff welfare, more effort needed to be made to find alternative solutions. The Greenwich Society has also objected to the proposal. The Planning Department have yet to make a decision.

## Tolling on the tunnels

TfL are monitoring traffic patterns following the opening of the Silvertown Tunnel and the new charging regime. Half term and the Bank Holidays have occurred during the opening period, but the figures so far suggest that traffic using both tunnels has reduced by a small amount, from about 100,000 to 88,000 vehicles per day, while the use of the Woolwich Ferry, still a free service has increased considerably. TfL say they will continue to monitor traffic flows and pollution and noise levels and to report at regular intervals.

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## PLANNING APPLICATIONS\*

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

**WOODLAND HEIGHTS, VANBRUGH HILL** ref 25/1700/F  
To add a sixth storey to the existing building to provide 8 flats and construct additional cycle and waste storage space, new loading bays and pedestrian access, ramp, landscaping and fell two trees.

**FLAT 4, 10 VANBRUGH HILL** ref 25/1803/F  
To construct side dormer and two skylights.

**67C SHOOTERS HILL ROAD** ref 25/1963/SD  
Details related to materials to be used, hard and soft landscaping, waste storage, cycle parking, and construction logistics and management plan.

**37 MYCENAE ROAD** ref 25/1744/HD  
To construct single storey rear infill extension and single storey side extension, and install a side dormer, two rooflights to front, and loft conversion.

**4 ULUNDI ROAD** ref 25/1576/HD  
To demolish ground floor rear elevation, remodel internal arrangements, and provide new landscaping and timber screening.

**19 GLENLUCE ROAD** ref 25/0868/F  
To replace roof tiles to front and repair rear roof.61

**LANGTON WAY** ref 25/1622/HD  
To construct ground floor rear extension, loft conversion with rear and side dormers, front rooflights, and changes to side window.

**1C COLERAINE ROAD** ref 25/1439/HD  
To convert garage into habitable space including new window to front, to construct single storey ground floor rear extension and part first floor extension with balcony.

**143 WESTCOMBE HILL** ref 25/1033/HD  
To construct ground floor side rear infill extension.

**TREE WORKS**  
**51A WESTCOMBE PARK ROAD** ref 25/2000/TC To fell apple tree.  
**121A WESTCOMBE HILL** ref 25/1883/TC To fell chestnut and reduce height and width of two conifers in rear garden.

\* Please be advised that the planning applications noted here are based on information available at the time of print. For the latest updates, please visit our website [www.westcombesociety.org](http://www.westcombesociety.org)

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## Gardening at Westcombe Park Station: spring into summer

This has been a difficult spring for gardeners. However beautiful the weather has been for outdoor activities, it's been dry. And while home and allotment growers have likely been able to water, that's been harder for the volunteers at Westcombe Park Station. Has anyone thought to bring a watering can? Is the ticket office open, and will we be able to draw on the goodwill of the staff for a bucket of water?



*A teasel, bringing sculptural drama to the station garden.  
An abundantly flowering geranium, hiding the also abundant mare's tail weeds.  
Photo credits: Anne Robbins*

Even so, the raised beds looked very pretty, with plenty of daffodils and tulips, glorious primroses, and some shrubs putting on new growth. Now, coming into summer, the rosemary and the fuschia are flowering, with bees happy to see them. There's Japanese anemone, with its paler flowers bobbing above the greenery, and the vivid salvias haven't minded the dryness, and there are sunflowers reaching for the skies. That said, the volunteers who garden at the station (everyone welcome, Wednesday mornings, 11:00 - 12:00) have seen some plants in difficulty. However lovely the primroses were, they needed some moisture, and the leaves have withered. We hope that they're going to return, but they've clearly not been happy. The hebes haven't put on as much growth as they should, nor have the Christmas box plants. This spring has been one of the driest on record, and the records show that this has been a pattern, with very dry summer conditions occurring more often over recent years. The station gardeners will be trying to take account of the changing climate, which is behaving just as scientists predicted, as they make more space for new plantings and add variety to the garden. The good news is that the volunteers are working toward becoming official: we will be applying to be Station Adopters within the Community Rail Network; an organization funded by the Department for Transport to encourage passenger rail use. This could mean some financial support, for instance for good quality mulch for the raised beds. It should lead to better dialogue with Southeastern Rail, which runs the station. Rail users may have noticed that the station staff have been able to install some indoor plants and delightful hanging baskets, to help celebrate 200 years of passenger rail. That's a real achievement in itself, something to appreciate as a vital part of national infrastructure. So, hurrah for train travel; and let's show Westcombe Park Station that we care about it.

Anne Robbins



# WHAT'S ON

## Cutty Sark

**Relaxed Opening Session**  
**Dates: 27 August 2025**  
**Time: 10.00 – 11.00**  
This relaxed opening session is designed to welcome families, neurodivergent visitors, those with sensory sensitivities, and anyone who would enjoy a more peaceful way to explore this iconic ship without the crowds.  
Age: Suitable for all ages  
Location: Cutty Sark

## Greenwich Park

**Bandstand Concerts**  
Continue on Sunday afternoons throughout July and Aug.  
**Summer in the Park**  
**Family Friendly Festival 12/13 July.**  
Open Air Live Music / Family Friendly Activities/ Picnics and Refreshments/ Nature and Sightseeing/Community Spirit  
**For full details go to**  
**artstrust.co.uk/events/greenwichpark**

## Greenwich Fair

**6.15pm 23rd/24th August:**  
part of Greenwich and Docklands International Festival.  
Epiphytes - With breath-taking high-wire skills, four aerial performers create entrancing images at Lawn Lookout, Observatory Hill, Greenwich Park, SE10 8XJ.  
**Further details from**  
**festival.org/gdif/whats-on**

## Royal Observatory

350th Anniversary of the Planetarium  
The Sky Tonight 1675 is our special planetarium show for the 350th anniversary. It will show audiences the sky on the day of their visit and compare it with the sky 350 years ago, on the night the foundation stone was laid in Greenwich.  
Dates: Daily (except Thursdays)  
Time: 16.30  
Age: Suitable for ages 7 and over.  
Location: Royal Observatory Greenwich, Peter Harrison Planetarium  
Admission: £12 Adult | £8 Student | £6 Child  
[www.rmg.co.uk/whats-on/royal-observatory/sky-tonight-1675](http://www.rmg.co.uk/whats-on/royal-observatory/sky-tonight-1675)  
On **8 August** there will be an Evening of Astrophotography – an evening panel looking at the role of the Royal Observatory in the development of astrophotography in the nineteenth century and its role in photographing the night sky today.

## Greenwich Industrial History Society

**8TH July – Ian Craig on the Watkins Family**  
and ship towage on the Thames. This will be held via Zoom at 7.30pm  
Booking Details can be found on the Greenwich Industrial History Facebook page the week before the talk.

## St George's Church

**Summer Fun Day for all ages on Aug 16th**, from 11am-3pm, with refreshments and hot dogs on the menu. Details of all events go to St George's Westcombe Park website.

## Blackheath Halls

**Wed 2 Jul, 7.30pm** – Literary Talk: Lisa Smith & Katherine Faulkner | South London Stories  
**Thu 3 July 7pm** - Trinity Laban Opera: Il Ritorno d'Ulisse in Patria  
Fri 4 Jul 7pm  
Sat 5 Jul 2pm  
Sat 5 Jul 7.30pm  
**Mon 7 Jul, 1.10pm** Lunchtime Recital: Clara Orif & James Cheung  
**Fri 11 Jul, 6.00pm** Trinity Laban Battle of The Bands  
**Sat 12 Jul, 7.30pm** Haven't Stopped Dancing Yet Summer Disco Ball  
**Tue 15 Jul, 7.00pm** Blackheath Halls: Schools Go Gospel  
**And get booking for another stunning community opera from Blackheath Halls in September this time**  
**Iphigenia in Tauris find out more at:**  
**www.blackheathhalls.com**

## Thomas Tallis Society Choir and St Paul's Sinfonia

perform Taylor Scott Davis' magnificent Magnificat, set beside Schubert's Magnificat and Faure's Cantique de Jean Racine.  
Conducted by Eamonn Dougan.  
**7.30pm, Sunday 6 July 2025**  
**St Alfege Church, Greenwich**  
Tickets £18 & £12,  
**www.ticketsource.co.uk/tts**  
**or on the door.**

## Sitopia Farm

**Throughout July and August:** Seasonal farm-fresh flowers! We are now able to welcome new subscribers to our flower subscription scheme. Treat yourself (or a lucky giftee) to a beautiful bouquet of flowers on a weekly or fortnightly basis. Delivered to your door or to a number of pick up points including Blackheath. From £25 per bouquet.  
**Wednesday 16th July:** One-Day food and flower growing course. Buy tickets in advance. Limited numbers. Come join us for a day of learning from our experienced team at Sitopia Farm about organic, no-dig growing. Your ticket includes tuition and lunch, a goody bag of fresh produce and a bouquet of flowers to take home with you! £180. Free places available for those on low incomes. Email [hello@sitopiafarm.com](mailto:hello@sitopiafarm.com) for tickets and questions.  
**Saturday 19th July and Saturday 16th August:** Pop-up farm shop and open day (3rd Saturday of each month Spring -Autumn). 10-2pm, 331 Shooters Hill, London, Welling DA16 3RP. Buy our delicious, certified organic vegetables, salads, fruits, herbs and flowers, and take a walk around our farm to see what and how we're growing.  
**All details on our website**  
**www.sitopiafarm.com.** You can also sign up for our newsletter.

## Kisstory on Blackheath

**26th and 27th July**  
Kisstory on Blackheath and family festival Uptown festival return to Blackheath. Find out more and book at **Blackheathlive.com/whats-on/**

## National Maritime Museum and Queen's House

**Rhythm**  
**Date: 12 July 2025**  
Time: 11.00 – 17.00  
Age: Suitable for all ages  
Location: National Maritime Museum, Ocean Court  
Admission: Free  
**Ocean Songs**  
**Date: 11 July 2025**  
Time: 18.00 – 21.00  
Age: Suitable for all ages  
Location: National Maritime Museum, Ocean Court  
**Movement on the Map**  
**Date: 4 July 2025**  
Time: 13.00 – 13:30 | 13:45 – 14:15  
Age: Suitable for all ages  
Location: National Maritime Museum, Ocean Court  
Admission: Free  
**Audio Universe**  
**Dates: Weekends and holidays**  
Time: 12.30  
Age: Suitable for ages 7 and over.  
Location: Royal Observatory Greenwich, Peter Harrison Planetarium  
Admission: £12 Adult | £8 Student | £6 Child  
**SPECIAL EVENTS**  
**Summer Sounds: Back on the Map**  
**Date: 1, 2 August 2025**  
Time: 1 August - 19.00 – 22.00  
2 August - 13.00 – 16.00  
Age: 1 August - 16 and over  
2 August - Suitable for all ages  
Location: National Maritime Museum, Ocean Court  
Admission: Free  
**International Slavery Remembrance Day**  
**Date: 23 August 2025**  
Time: 11.00 – 16.30  
Age Suitable for all ages  
Location: National Maritime Museum and Queen's House, Greenwich  
Admission: Free  
**Artist Masterclass: Portraits Drawing Workshop**  
**Date: 3, 8, 31 August 2025**  
Time: 10.15  
Age: Suitable for 18 and above  
Location: Queen's House, Greenwich  
Admission: £20  
**Queen's House Classic Treasures Tour with drinks on the loggia**  
**Date 3, 10, 17, 24 August 2025**  
Time: 15.30  
Age: Suitable for 18 and above  
Location: Queen's House, Greenwich  
Admission: £20  
**Ocean: Above and Below**  
**Date: 23 July – 31 August 2025**  
Time: 11.00 – 16.00  
Age: Suitable for all ages  
Location: National Maritime Museum, Greenwich  
Admission: Free

## GREENWICH THEATRE CONNECTS

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## The Arts Society Greenwich

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



**The Quiet Life of L S Lowry Ray Warburton - Arts Society Greenwich lecture Monday 14 July 2025**  
LS Lowry found his defining subject matter – the industrial north-west – in 1916 when he missed his train into Manchester one day, and walked around his home town, Pendlebury, as workers were leaving the Acme Spinning Mill. With all the mill's many floors of windows lit against the darkening sky, Lowry said he was in rapture, and painted such scenes again and again. He filled his paintings with slumped characters, weighed down by their lives under soulless skies. Those who dislike Lowry point to his simplistic depiction of the north-west; those who like him refer to the snobbery of his detractors.  
Ray Warburton has had a life-long love of art. However, in his twenties, Ray studied social sciences at the London School of Economics and the School of Oriental and African Studies. These studies led to a career in health and social care, with art being an evening and weekend passion. But all that changed in 2011, when Ray became a guide at Tate Britain and Tate Modern. Then from 2014 to 2017, he studied art history at the Open University, and then at the University of Buckingham, from where he gained an MA in the History of Art. And to cap it all, Ray became an Arts Society lecturer in 2017. Ray also knows what it's like to be on the receiving end of lectures as he is a member of his local Arts Society in Blackheath  
[www.artsocietygreenwich.co.uk](http://www.artsocietygreenwich.co.uk)

## GALLERY WHITE BOX



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