

Westcombe Society Annual General Meeting - 9th May 2025

Chair's Annual Report 2024-2025

Another busy year for the Westcombe Society which is fortunate to have a number of members willing to take on a generous share of its work through the Events Sub-Committee and the Environment Sub-Committee and by taking responsibility for the Westcombe News - they report separately and in more detailed form - but I wanted to give a flavour of all they do

The Events Sub-Committee continues to organise successful fund raising activities which, in particular, support our charity of the year donation, for this year Action for Refugees in Lewisham, and the Macmillan cancer charity with the hugely popular coffee morning and the well supported sponsored walk.

They also organise the annual members and helpers party.

The Environment Sub-committee works tirelessly to monitor and comment where appropriate on planning applications and traffic issues with the Low Traffic Neighbourhood scheme having been high on its list of priorities.

Westcombe News: Residents have continued to receive the Westcombe News with its ten issues a year provided free to the local community. Many thanks to the volunteers who organise and carry out the deliveries. Our enthusiastic editor, Christne Fells, leads an experienced editorial team and, with special thanks to Marilyn Little's work on advertising, it is encouraging to note that the WN's financial position has improved since last year.

The Society's Executive Committee deserves a mention for their contribution and support during the past year and in particular Jean-Jacques Aune who took on the role of Vice-Chair and Miles Storey (Treasurer) for his expert stewardship of the Society's finances, which is reflected in his report, and Christine Legg for keeping our membership records in good order.

At last year's AGM Jane Wilson stood down as our Secretary but we were delighted that this proved to be temporary and to be able to welcome Jane back to the role, which she had filled so admirably, during the year. We should also record our thanks to Andrew Graham for stepping into the breach during the interim period.

As Chair of the Society I would like to thank our relatively small band of volunteers who keep the organisation functioning as effectively as it does - and do let us know if you would like to become part of that group.

Thanks are due to the members of the Society for their support and encouragement.

Membership stands at 238 (including single members, couples or families) of which there are 182 annual members and 56 Life members. There have been 9 new members in 2025.

During the year we were sad to lose several friends of the Society. These included Caroline Owens well known to many for her outstanding work for the Society and the local community over many years and Barbara Henley another long standing and stalwart supporter of the Society.

For the coming year what are the issues that seem likely to be to the fore. Possibly the effects of the Silvertown Tunnel which opened for business just a month ago on 7th April and, almost certainly, the Low Traffic Neighbourhood (LTN) scheme which continues its experimental implementation.

The Council's LTN has always been controversial and has even attracted coverage in the national media, for example with a highly critical Daily Mail article by Robert Hardman. Whatever the merits or otherwise of the scheme -and its introduction has been described as a shambles - LTN's can cause divisions in local communities with some residents enjoying the benefits of a quieter environment and others concerned about air quality from displaced traffic and longer journey times on diversion routes. The Westcombe Society will be continuing to monitor developments that is for sure.

Geoff Brighty
Chair: Westcombe Society
May 2025