

Westcombenews



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April 2026 No 3

"Sweet April showers, do spring May flowers"- Thomas Tusser

Proposed Cycle Infrastructure in Westcombe Park, Where it will be and What it will Replace

Following on from our report in the March issue the Royal Borough of Greenwich is proposing to introduce new cycle hangers and parking for Lime and Forest Bikes. In theory consultation may have finished by the time this paper goes to press. Therefore we urge anyone affected who wishes to comment to write as soon as possible to transport-programmedelivery-tmos@royalgreenwich.gov.uk

The locations may also change but at the time of going to press we understand that the streets that will be affected are:

Cycle Hangers

Coleraine Road, east side, opposite No. 122 Coleraine Road, replacing part of the 'Permit Holders or Limited Waiting ...' bay.

Humber Road, south side, adjacent to No. 78 Westcombe Hill, replacing part of the 'Permit Holders or Limited Waiting...' bay.

Vanbrugh Hill, east side, opposite No. 119 Vanbrugh Hill, replacing a Bus Stop.

Cycle Hire Parking

On Pavements:

Charlton Road, south-east side footpath, outside No. 30 Charlton Road for 6 metres.

Maze Hill, south-west side footpath, from a point 51.5 metres south-east of the junction with Highmore Road for 6 metres in a south-easterly direction.

Vanbrugh Hill, east side footpath, from a point 3 metres south of the common boundary of Nos. 113 and 115 Vanbrugh Hill for 12 metres in a southerly direction.

6m Cycle Hire Parking Bays:

Maze Hill, north-east side, outside No. 99 Maze Hill, replacing a 'Permit Holders or Pay and Display...' bay.

Maze Hill, south-west side, from a point 18.41 metres south-east of Maze Hill Gate for 6 metres in a south-easterly direction, replacing the 'Permit Holders or Pay and Display...' bay and 'No waiting at any time' restriction.

Station Crescent east side, from a point 1 metre north of the northern property boundary of No. 7 Station Crescent for 10 metres in a southerly direction, replacing the 'Permit Holders or Limited Waiting...' bay.

Ulundi Road, south-east side, opposite No. 53 Ulundi Road, replacing a 'Permit Holders Only...' bay.

10m Cycle Hire Parking Bays:

Vanbrugh Park, north side, from a point 28.82 metres west of the entrance to the garages for Parkside for 10 metres in a westerly direction, replacing the 'Permit Holders or Limited Waiting...' bay.

12m Cycle Hire Parking Bays (replacing existing controls):

Hardy Road, south-east side, opposite No.4 Hardy Road, replacing the existing 'Free' parking place.

Humber Road, north-west side, opposite Nos. 112- 116 Humber Road, replacing a 'Permit Holders or Limited Waiting...' bay.

Humber Road, south side, adjacent to No. 76 Westcombe Hill, replacing 'Permit Holders or Limited Waiting...' bays and 'No waiting at any time'.

Old Dover Road, south side, from a point 18.10 metres east of the eastern building line of No.26 Old Dover for 12 metres in an easterly direction, replacing a 'Free' parking place.

Vanbrugh Park Road, west side, from a point 7.39 metres north of the northern boundary of Swings Playground for 12 metres in a southerly direction, replacing a 'Permit Holders or Limited Waiting...' bay.

Other

Coleraine Road Replace the Permit Holders or Limited Waiting...' bay and 'No Waiting...' with a 'Cycle Hire Parking Place' from a point 3.5 metres north-east of the common boundary of Nos.102 and 104 Coleraine Road for 10.58 metres in a north-easterly direction.

Coleraine Road Replace the 'Permit Holders or Limited Waiting...' bay with 'No Waiting...' restrictions on Coleraine Road, north-west side, from a point 2.4 metres south-west of the common property boundary of Nos. 98 and 100 Coleraine Road for 1.7 metres in a south-westerly direction.

Hardy Road Replace the existing 'Free' parking place and 'No waiting at any time' restrictions on Hardy Road, south-east side, with a 'Permit Holders or Limited Waiting...' bay opposite 1 to 8 Everdene and 14-16 Hardy Road.

St Johns Park Replace the 'Free' Parking Place, north-west side, with a 'Cycle Hire Parking Place' from a point 10.7 metres north-east of its junction with Vanbrugh Park for 15 metres in a north-easterly direction

Ulundi Road Amend the 'Permit

Holders Only...' bay on Ulundi Road, south-east side, to a 'Permit Holders or Limited Waiting...' bay, opposite Nos. 25- 51 Ulundi Road.

Vanbrugh Hill, east side replace a Bus Stop with the following restrictions: 'No waiting at any time', opposite 119-125 Vanbrugh Hill;

Vanbrugh Hill Permit Holders Only Zone EG 9am-6.30pm opposite 113-117 Vanbrugh Hill

Vanbrugh Park Road Replace the 'Permit Holders or Limited Waiting...' bay with 'No Waiting...' on Vanbrugh Park Road, west side, from a point 7.39 metres north of the northern boundary of Swings Playground for 2.7 metres in a northerly direction.

Vanbrugh Park Road Replace the 'Permit Holders or Limited Waiting...' bay with a 'Resident Permit Holders or Limited Waiting...' bay on Vanbrugh Park Road, west side, from a point 5.5 metres north of its junction with Combe Avenue for 53.5 metres in a northerly direction.

Notice of Meeting

Members are invited to - The Westcombe Society's - AGM 2026. 7.00pm on Friday 15th May 2026

LOCATION

In the Wollstonecraft Room at Blackheath High School by kind permission of the Head Ms Argile.

AGENDA

- Welcome and apologies for absence
 - Approval of and matters arising from Minutes of 2025 AGM
 - Reports from the Chair, Events Sub-Committee, Environment Sub-Committee, Membership Secretary, Editor of the Westcombe News
 - Treasurer's Report and presentation of audited statement of accounts for year ending 31/03/2026
 - ELECTION OF OFFICERS
 - A.O.B.
- Wine and nibbles will be served.

Joe Beale will give an illustrated talk on local wildlife following the business of the meeting.

News Briefs

Further Reduction in Local Bus Service

Following on from our report in the March issue of the Westcombe News of the reduction in frequency of the 386 bus service, from every 10 minutes to every 15, the 286 service from Greenwich to Sidcup Hospital via Eltham Community Hospital is also to be reduced from every 11 minutes to every 15 minutes following a new contract on July 11. This contract will also switch the service to double-decker buses which will be a welcome improvement to the

current fleet of 286 buses which often emit clouds of dark smoke.

This service is used by local school children and also visitors and patients to both Sidcup and Eltham Hospitals and the concerns we expressed in March remain valid.

Cutty Sark DLR

We understand that TfL have confirmed that the Cutty Sark DLR station will re-open on the 23rd March.

New escalators and a lift will address the numbers that the marathon brings to Greenwich on the 26th April.

Mycenae House Live

Friday 10 Apr

The SWOP Blues Night
The Mycenae Crew present a night of Blues with usual Open Mic

Friday 17 Apr

CLIVE CARROLL
Award-winning guitarist known for his unmistakable sound.

Friday 24 Apr

GFMA 25 Anniv Celeb.
A fundraising auction, concert and ep launch with guests.


Friday 6 June

Amnesty Int. Concert
David Schweitzer, Linda Moylan Band & SL Samba Band.

WeGotTickets

www.mycenaehouse.co.uk

020 8858 1749 90 Mycenae Road, Blackheath Standard, London, SE3 7SE



Blackheath Westcombe Hustings

Hear from the candidates standing in our election, question them on the local issues you care about, then vote on **Thursday 7th May**

Mycenae House, Mycenae Road, SE3 7SE
Thursday 30th April, 7pm

Want to raise awareness?
46.4% of the electorate voted at the last election in 2022.
Contact Neville Grant at Blackheath and Greenwich United Nations Association on 0208 858 8489

Are you registered to vote?
Registration deadline is midnight on Monday 20th April
gov.uk/register-to-vote

WESTCOMBE SOCIETY

Westcombe News

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3 x standard	£107	£485
4 x standard	£138	£620

Westcombe Society Quiz Night, Friday May 29th at Mycenae House



I was wondering why people love a quiz night. To show off their immense knowledge to their friends? To discover for oneself that one's brain still functions and is able to winkle out hidden information from the deepest recesses of one's brain? To enjoy the delicious fish-and-chips halfway through to keep energy level's up? To get the satisfaction of raising funds for the Westcombe Society's work which includes supporting local charity? To have a few too many glasses of alcohol, in the company of people indulging themselves in a totally similar manner? (i.e. guilt free). To



challenge the quizmaster on obscure points of apparent relevance? (The Quizmaster has broad shoulders). To anticipate a big win on the raffle? To enjoy a convivial evening of light heartedness and laughter with a bunch of other quizzers? Maybe to enjoy winning (or even enjoying getting the wooden spoon for coming last!)? Actually, I don't really mind what motivates you to be at the Westcombe Society Quiz night. Just be there! I'm looking forward to a very jolly evening.

Your Quizmaster, Robbie Swales



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Alzheimer's and Dementia

Dementia, of one sort or another, is something that many of us will have encountered in friends or family. It is proposed that we support Dementia as our Charity of the Year. Locally, there is the Reminiscence Centre Blackheath, which, with its choir and dance therapy, offers support to local people living with dementia and their carers, as does the 'Reach Out' project at Mycenae House. Caroline Owens, who contributed to and was a great supporter of the Westcombe Society for many years, died just over a year ago with dementia. Caroline's son, Johnny, is running the marathon to raise money for the Alzheimer's Society. The Westcombe Society wishes to support him in this endeavour by providing details of his 'Running for Mum' fundraising page for those who wish to make a donation.
<https://2026tcslondonmarathon.enthuse.com/pf/johnny-owens>



Mary Mills honoured with Lifetime Achievement Award

Mary Mills, well known as a regular contributor to the Westcombe News, was honoured with a Lifetime Achievement Award on March 6th at a Royal Greenwich awards ceremony. *The citation read: Dr Mary Mills: An industrial historian and former councillor who has helped preserve Greenwich's heritage for decades.*



Advertising Manager

The Westcombe News seeks a new advertising manager. Tasks in this voluntary position include responding to queries for new ads, invoicing and monitoring payment. Many advertisers pre-pay for future ads, so monthly invoicing is minimal. Basic spreadsheet skills a bonus but training could be given. Around 7/10 hours over the month would be needed. Please contact Marilyn on Advertising@westcombesociety.org or 07939386215

Blue Plaque Application

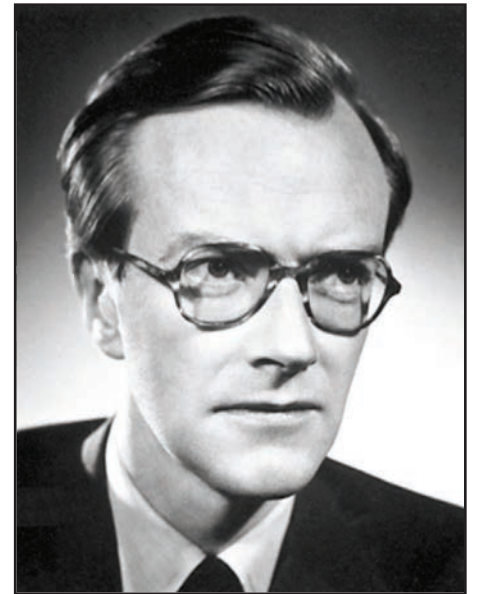


Image: Public domain (via Wikimedia Commons)

The Westcombe Society is supporting an application for a blue plaque at 30 St John's Park, the former home of Maurice Wilkins, the Nobel Prize-winning "3rd man of the double helix". He is best known for his pivotal role in enabling the discovery of the double helix structure of DNA. In 1962 he shared the Nobel Prize in Physiology or Medicine with James Watson and Francis Crick for the discovery of the structure of DNA. Rosalind Franklin, who died in 1958, was also part of the group headed by Maurice Wilkins. He lived in St John's Park for many years and was a Fellow of the Royal Society and awarded the CBE.

Geoff Brighty

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NEIGHBOURHOOD

Celebrating Greenwich Women

Pausing by Elsie Marshall Hall in Vicarage Avenue, have you ever wondered who she was? Who planted that ancient Mulberry tree in front of Charlton House? The aim of Celebrating Greenwich Women Project is to record remarkable women who lived in Greenwich at some time in the past. An enthusiastic group of volunteers, encouraged by historians Lynne Dixon, Claire Eustance and Ann Dingsdale, have highlighted interesting, largely forgotten women and researched their stories for a future book.

by Lady Elizabeth Puckering (c. 1612–1689) who swapped plants with John Evelyn at Deptford. In the Civil War her Royalist husband was imprisoned and she ran the estate.



Diana Rimel speaks to group



Meanwhile, on 14th March at Mycenae House, ten volunteers shared their research. They introduced Beatrice Drapper, Deptford mayor (1886-1961), Rachel (1859-1917) and Margaret Macmillan (1870-1931) educators, Diana Rimel, local history champion, and Edith New (1877-1931), suffragette.

We heard the touching story of Elsie Marshall, vicar's daughter and young missionary, murdered in China in 1895. The gardens at Charlton House were first cherished

Only one photograph survives of working-class Mary Sutherland (1828-1914). She sits proudly at the grave of her partner, an emigre Russian revolutionary. She gave birth to her son in the workhouse but saw him qualify as a doctor. At the other end of the social scale, Anne Twist (died 1624), Laundress to Elizabeth 1, acquired land in Eltham, and in her will ensured that her granddaughter had an apprenticeship so that she too could have financial independence. A different sort of independence was sought by Irene Cooper Willis (1882-1970), who lived on Shooters Hill. She went to Girton and qualified as a Barrister.

The event offered a selection of the fascinating forgotten stories that the project has uncovered.

To join our mailing list, contact eustanceclaire@gmail.com

Ann Dingsdale

Local Election Time!

Local elections for your councillors are on Thursday May 7th - and there will be a hustings on Thursday April 30th at Mycenae House, Mycenae Road, SE3 7SE. This is your chance to meet a candidate from each of the parties for the Blackheath/ Westcombe Ward, as well as any independent also seeking election - and your

chance to ask questions!

As in the past, the meeting is being organised by Blackheath & Greenwich United Nations Association. It starts at 7.00 pm but come early to submit your questions in advance so they can be sorted.

For more information, please contact Neville Grant on 0208 858 8489.

Buzzing in the East End (BEE)



At a recent meeting of the BJWP two representatives of the Bumblebee Conservation Trust explained that areas around Blackheath were being considered as 'super flagship sites' as additions to their existing 'flagship' sites. This is

particularly relevant as the rarest Carder bees have been observed here.

This may refer to the Shrill Carder bee which the Bumblebee website tells us is found in only a few areas in the UK. 'They are found in flower-rich areas of grassland, including sand dunes, drainage ditches, shingle beaches and chalk downs.'

The project would attract funding to begin recording the number of bees on several fixed walks and also the numbers and varieties of wild flowers. This information would form the basis of long-term records and protection of habitats.

Royal Mail Introduces Solar-Powered Smart Postboxes Amid Digital Concerns

Anyone hoping to post a letter through the Old Dover Road letter box, will have to wait for the installation of a new, automated postbox. This will be one of the 3,500 solar-powered postboxes that are being 'rolled out' across the UK. The new design has solar panels on the top to power a digitally-activated drawer, allowing customers to deposit small parcels as well as letters. Payment is through the Post Office smartphone-activated app. The aim is to make it convenient for customers and reduce the need for visits to the Post Office.

The Royal Mail, which is facing competition from delivery companies, is investing in the change in order to meet the demands of changing patterns of delivery services. But there are some concerns. The process involves measuring the weight and size of the item which should be no bigger than a small shoebox. These dimensions then need to be entered on the Royal Mail app which will allow you to read the price. Payment is with a credit card which will then activate a label

which needs to be printed and stuck onto the parcel. The app will then give access to the drawer in which the parcel can be placed. So it is necessary to have a printer and labels.

There are also worries about the 'digital exclusion' particularly of older people and a question about the effectiveness of solar panels when the sun isn't shining.



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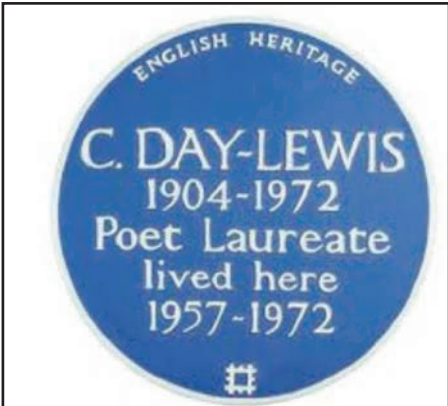
FEATURES

From the archives: Daniel Day-Lewis: Master Craftsman

This was originally published in April 2013

Neville Grant looks at the early life of one of the finest actors in the world – and how Greenwich helped to shape him.

Across the road from the Greenwich theatre in Crooms Hill, there is a Georgian house with a red door. On the wall nearby, a blue plaque marks the fact that Cecil Day-Lewis, Poet Laureate, lived there.



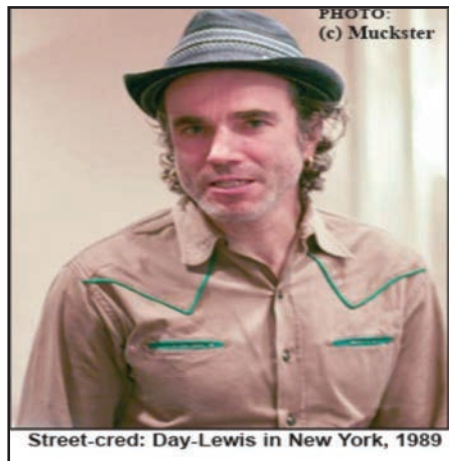
What the blue plaque does not record is that here also once lived Jill Balcon, the actress, Tamasin Day-Lewis, documentary film-maker and cookery writer; and her younger brother, Daniel Day-Lewis, winner of three Oscars for best actor, and arguably the best actor in the world. Daniel Day-Lewis's parents came to live in Greenwich in 1957, and stayed here until 1972. Daniel started off school life at Invicta School from where he moved to Sherington. Surrounded by tough South London children, and talking

"posh", he was often bullied.

In his acceptance speech in Hollywood for the Oscar he won for his role in the film *There will be blood* he spoke about his childhood here, recalling:

"Invicta Infants School, Sherington Primary School in Charlton, Greenwich Park, Blackheath . . . these were the playgrounds of my early life."

Another famous local boy making good, Jules Holland, featured in the WN in 2007, recalls having what he called "a run-in" with Daniel, but history does not recall exactly what that meant.



One can easily imagine that at that time, survival was the name of the game, and Daniel felt he needed to improve his street cred with his classmates. He became a bit of a tearaway: he acquired the local street lingo, and – causing much anguish to his parents – indulged in petty crime (stealing from sweet shops etc).

He later recalled that these were his first convincing performances.

He became totally wild. He was a bright child not being academically stretched, and his parents were at their wits end to know how to break the cycle; so they decided that boarding school was the answer, so he was sent to Sevenoaks – but he only lasted there for two years. He was transferred to Bedales in Petersfield, Hampshire, which his sister attended, which was famous for its relaxed and creative ethos. He was much happier at Bedales, where one of his teachers, John Rogers, recalls he brought to school a pet piglet which all too-often escaped and caused chaos.

It was at Bedales that his love of drama really came to the fore: he played a leading role in Pirandello's *Six Characters in Search of an Author*, and later had a small part in the film *Sunday Bloody Sunday*. However, it was touch and go what career Daniel chose to follow: at Bedales, he spent hours in the woodwork shop, where his woodwork teacher, David Butcher, recalled that he was an extremely talented cabinet-maker.

David visited Daniel's mother at her home shortly before her death in 2009, and recalls sitting in a chair made by Daniel at Bedales. It seems that Daniel loved doing things with his hands, working with materials – in 2002 he even went to Milan to make shoes. After briefly toying with the idea of an apprenticeship in

cabinet-making, Daniel chose a stage career. From the National Youth Theatre he went on to the Bristol Old Vic Theatre School, eventually performing at the Bristol Old Vic itself. In 1982 he had his big theatre break when he became the lead in *Another Country*. He later joined the Royal Shakespeare Company, playing Romeo in *Romeo and Juliet*. However, he forsook the stage in 1989, when, acting the part of Hamlet at the National Theatre, he walked offstage mid-act, having allegedly seen the ghost of his father in the famous ghost scene.

The rest is history. His achievements as an actor are astonishing: just as he lived the part of a street urchin in Greenwich, so he became famous, Stanislavski style, for living the part of the characters he played, on and off set. When he played the part of Christy Brown, who had cerebral palsy, in *My Left Foot*, even offscreen he refused to break character: he had to be moved around the set in his wheelchair, so that he could gain insight into all aspects of Brown's life. Who knows what his next role will be? It is said Daniel wants to go back home to County Wicklow (he has joint British and Irish citizenship) where he lives with his wife Rebecca Miller, daughter of the playwright Arthur Miller, and his two sons. David Butcher thinks he may be planning to return to cabinet-making – but drystone walling may also be on the cards.

Marathon Information for Local Residents

The 46th annual London Marathon will take place on Sunday 26 April 2026, with road closures and parking restrictions affecting the Westcombe Park area.

More than 50,000 participants are expected to take part in the 26.2-mile race, which begins in Blackheath and Greenwich Park, passes through central London and Canary Wharf, and finishes on The Mall in Westminster.

This notice outlines access arrangements for Westcombe Park residents. Further details, including a full list of Vehicle Crossing Points, are available at londonmarathonevents.co.uk/londonmarathon/road-closures

Road closure times

A short section of Shooters Hill Road and Charlton Way will close at 04:00 to allow installation of the Start Area gantry.

From 07:00, the following roads will be closed to ensure the safety of the event route: Shooters Hill Road, St Johns Park, Old Dover Road, Charlton Way, Vanbrugh Park, Charlton Road, Charlton Park Road, Charlton Park Lane and Woolwich Road (A206).

Road reopening times

Roads will reopen as soon as it is safe to do so. Those to the south of Westcombe Park are expected to reopen by 14:30, while roads to the north are expected to reopen by 15:00.

Vehicle Crossing Point

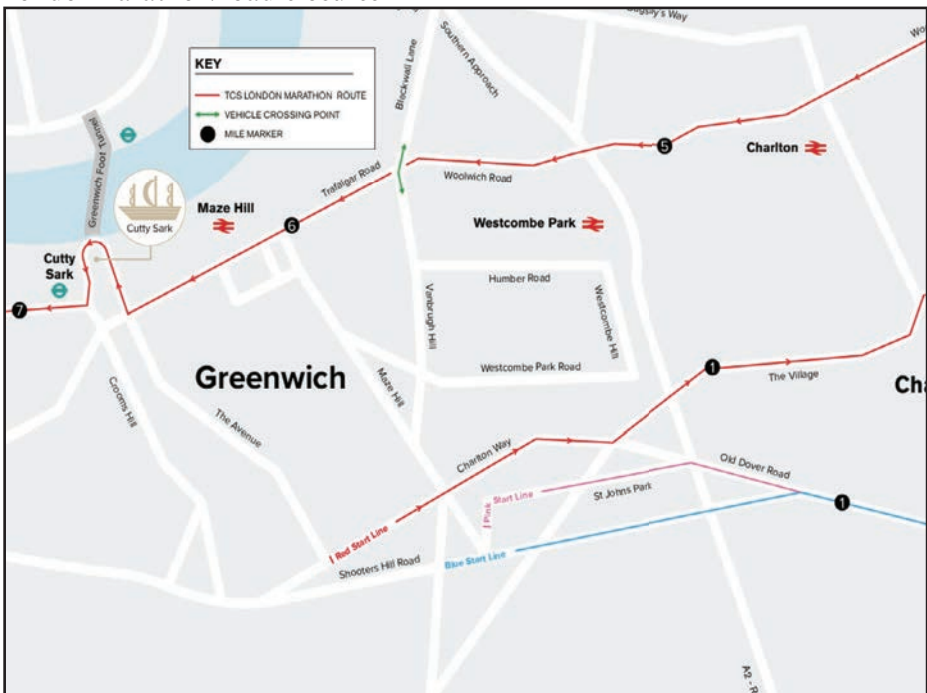
Drivers will be able to cross the route from Vanbrugh Hill to Blackwall Lane until 08:40 and after 13:35.

Please note that between these times the vehicle crossing point will be closed, as participants will be using the full width of the road.

Parking restrictions

Vehicles parked on the route will be removed from 04:00 on Sunday 27 April. Residents are asked to move vehicles off the route on the evening of Saturday 26 April.

If a vehicle is relocated, details can be found at trace.london. Further information is available at londonmarathonevents.co.uk/london-marathon/road-closures



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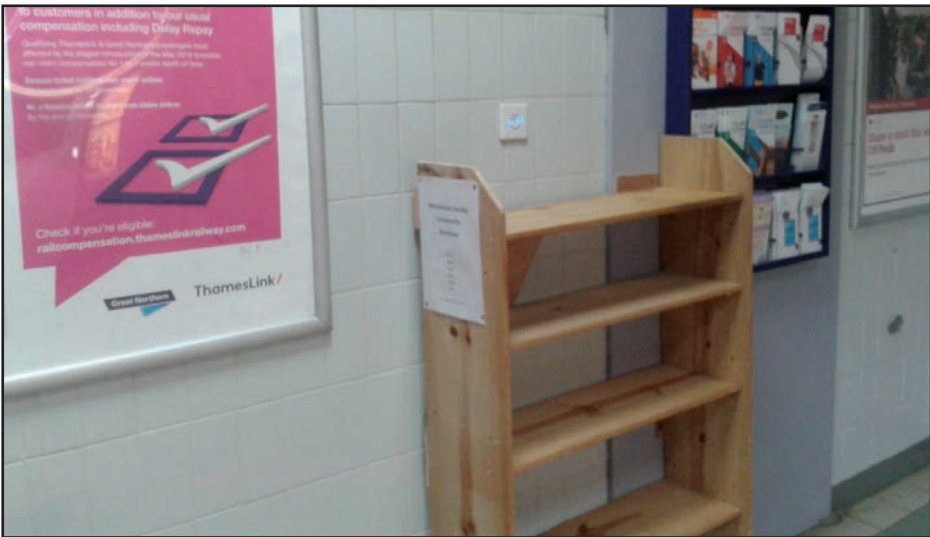
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FEATURES

The Bookshelf

In October 2018 I finally reached their blessing, and to RailTrack, the stage where I had to start who, more grudgingly, gave their



downsizing my massive collection of books, by disposing of those I was never likely to read again. We had come across free bookshelves elsewhere on my travels, so we suggested the idea to the Westcombe Society, who were happy to give it approval. The bookshelf was made in our cellar, entirely using wood garnered from skips in the Ruthin Road area. Our foster son, Luke, gave me a hand in carrying the pieces down to Westcombe Park station for final assembly. We put a

notice on the side saying 'BROWSE, BORROW, TAKE, REPLACE, ENJOY,' put half a dozen old books on the top shelf, and awaited developments. Within a week we were pleased to find that all the books put up as a starter had gone and three or four times the number had replaced them. In the past eight years a number of other free bookshelves have appeared in the area, but the Westcombe Park one has never had less than twenty-five books on it and, currently has over a hundred, with a very high turnover. Some, more organised, free bookshelves have had to adopt a dating system so that really unwanted books can be withdrawn,



but the turnover at Westcombe Park has been so great that this has not seemed necessary. The main withdrawals we have found necessary are videos and DVDs (lots of people have them and nobody wants them), out-of-date fashion magazines, supermarket free foodie magazines, old sales catalogues, out-of-date travel guides and advertising leaflets, all of which go in the bin. Books occasionally reappear, some have obviously been read two or three times, and books occasionally transfer from other free shelves – we regularly notice books with the Blackheath station stamp in them. The shelf was originally securely fixed to the wall but during the Covid crisis RailTrack decided that bookshelves were an infection risk and unscrewed it. I keep planning to find a time when the shelf is nearly empty, to clear it and re-secure it, but it never seems empty enough to justify the effort. I am still trying to downsize by depositing more books than I bring home, which is sometimes a challenge. Although more people are using e-books etc., there still seems to be a ready demand for physical books, and yet most people have a limited space to keep them in so, we hope, the Westcombe Park station bookshelf will continue to provide a useful service for years to come: BROWSE, BORROW, TAKE, REPLACE, ENJOY.

Martin Guha

Planning Matters

Woodland Heights. Much to the disappointment of some residents the most recent application, to add one storey to the five storeys of the ex-nurses' home, was granted by the Local Planning Committee.

The developers had submitted several previous applications which had been rejected on the grounds that 'the extension would be over-dominant, having a detrimental impact on the building and neighbouring streets, including nearby Lasseter Place.' However, on this occasion these objections were rejected and the need to see an increase in housebuilding was cited as one of the reasons for the decision. Since the penthouse flats would add nothing to the stock of affordable housing, it appears that the need to hit the housing target was a major consideration'.



Perhaps the Millenium Village slogan needs to be replaced! Photo Greenwich Wire

IKEA Flats. Greenwich Wire reports that an application to build a 22-storey block of flats behind the IKEA store has been approved. Four years ago, a scheme for the final stages of development of the Millenium Village which included a greenspace with a 'formal grove of trees and a woodland garden', was approved for this site. Over 500 objections to the change were received.

As in the decision for Woodland Heights, it appears that the need to hit the housing target of 35% affordable homes was a major consideration.

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ENVIRONMENT

Introducing Wilder Greenwich

Following our feature last month on the excellent work being done by Joe Beale and his group of volunteers to preserve and enhance biodiversity at Vanbrugh Pits, there's news of another group seeking to improve the local environment. Wilder Greenwich is a voluntary organization set up in 2025 with the goal of increasing biodiversity across the Royal Borough of Greenwich. They aim to achieve this through community-led micro-rewilding projects that improve under-used and neglected pockets of land for nature and for people. They hope to develop a process model for



such projects which, over time, could be used to implement them at larger scale within the Borough.

Wilder Greenwich was set up by Andy Chapman, Nigel Duncan, Fiona Machen Harrison and Anne Robbins, all of whom are long-term Westcombe Park residents and local activists. The first two projects that they are working on are:

At Westcombe Park Station, Wilder Greenwich is underpinning the volunteer gardening team's work, and has become the official Friends group for the station. Now a member of the Community Rail Network, Wilder Greenwich has negotiated permission to extend the gardening work to the north platform and have reached agreement with Southeastern Rail that the station maintenance schedule will no longer automatically include spraying the north platform's beds with glyphosate, a herbicide which may be carcinogenic. The gardening team's plan is to plant a thornless hedge which will add more sources of nectar for insects and berries for

birds. This will complement the decorative planting on the south platform.

The gardeners always need more help and volunteers are welcome - no experience is needed! The team are usually on hand on Wednesday mornings from 11:00, and sometimes on Saturdays.

Siebert Road and the foot of Westcombe Hill Either side of the underpass at Siebert Road and at the bottom of Westcombe Hill adjacent to the A102 are green spaces that have been rather neglected over the years and, apart from a few trees, offer little by way of food, shelter or nesting opportunities for local wildlife.

Wilder Greenwich would like to address this, with the agreement and help of local residents. Their initial ideas for all three areas include planting native hedging parallel to the fencing by the motorway and drifts of bulbs in and among the trees. These changes would provide food and shelter for birds and small mammals, as well as early nectar for



Not a hedge! But the spring bulbs at Westcombe Park Station have given travelers at Westcombe Park Station a brighter commute this spring.

insects. The hedging would also beautify the areas by helping to mask the rather utilitarian fencing by the motorway.

Wilder Greenwich will be contacting local residents adjacent to these

areas in the near future to discuss these plans with them and seek their support for, and involvement in, the project. But it's already clear that there's enthusiasm for the project locally, and the hedge planted at the Rose Garden in Blackwall Lane shows that a group effort can make a big difference to an area.

If you would like more information about Wilder Greenwich or would be interested in volunteering with the group, they can be contacted at wildergreenwich@gmail.com.

The Wilder Greenwich team: Nigel Duncan, Andy Chapman, Anne Robbins and Fiona Machen Harrison

Anne Robbins, Andy Chapman

PLANNING APPLICATIONS*
www.westcombesociety.org

15 VANBRUGH FIELDS
ref 26/0434/HD

To construct single storey rear extension with dual pitched roof and skylight. To replace first floor side window.

48 SHOOTERS HILL ROAD
ref 26/0669/HD

To replace roof tiles and skylights with roof lights.

131 HUMBER ROAD
ref 26/0525/HD

To construct single storey side infill extension with skylights.

10 RUTHIN ROAD ref 26/0522/HD

To construct basement and single storey rear infill extension and install front lightwell.

39 GLENLUCE ROAD ref 26/0396/HD.

To install air source heat pump, solar panels, and battery system.

TREE WORKS

JOHN ROAD LOWER SCHOOL,
WESTCOMBE PARK ROAD
ref 26/0784/TC

To fell plane and ash trees.

57 COLERAINE ROAD
ref 26/0746/TC

To fell two eucalypti in rear garden.

76 ST JOHNS PARK
ref 26/0722/TC

To fell 2 lime trees 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

Bluebells



It is getting near the bluebell season when some of our woodlands are carpeted in blue and the air is heavily scented. Probably the nearest bluebell woods to our area are up Shooters Hill in Oxleas Woods, but my favourite place is Meenfield Wood, part of Shoreham Woods. This, like Oxleas, is a very ancient woodland with many old trees and a grove of yews. As well as the display of bluebells there are, reportedly, some rare orchids. Much nearer to home is Westcombe Woodlands.

Concern has been expressed over the proliferation of Spanish bluebells which appear to dominate our native plants. Spanish bluebells are generally paler, have a more upright stem and are more vigorous than the native variety. English bluebells on the other hand have flowers on one side of an arching stem with petals curled back at the mouth of the bell. The flowers have a delicate, sweet scent. In April 2023 Westcombe Woodlands' newsletter explained, "the native bluebell is much more fertile than any hybrids and will back fertilise, in other words each new plant will revert to being closer to the natives. Only a DNA analysis will show the proportions of native to non-native plants."

The UK has over half the world's population of bluebells and they are protected so must not be picked or damaged.

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(UPPER SCHOOL TALK 1-2PM)

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SCAN QR CODE



WHAT'S ON

Greenwich Industrial History Society

22 APRIL – VANBRUGH 300 – Charles Saumarez-Smith. Marking the tercentenary of the death of the architect and dramatist John Vanbrugh (1664-1726), and coinciding neatly with the exhibition of Vanbrugh at Sir John Soane's Museum opening on 4 March, Charles Saumarez-Smith, author, curator and architectural historian will expand on his life and work based on his recently published book, 'John Vanbrugh: The Drama of Architecture'. It is a joint event in conjunction with the Blackheath, Greenwich and Westcombe Societies.

West Greenwich Library

Poetry Reading

Let us keep sane in this crazy world by doing the things that feed us individually and as a community.

On **May 12** I shall host the launch of three collections with Pindrop Press: Sharon Black (Ms Pindrop herself), Alex Josephy and Emily Wills will present their latest works.

June 9th at West Greenwich Library, not yet on the website because just arranged.

RIVER - Poems for the River Thames, from source to sea with Robert Seatter. This year marks 30 years of the Thames Path, creating unique access to England's most important and much-loved river.

Robert Seatter is writer in residence on this fascinating project, writing 30 short poems for key locations along the river's 200-mile route, including Greenwich.

Poems will be accessed via QR codes on the footpath finger posts, realised in audio, plus available in a hand-printed, limited-edition book.

Join him at West Greenwich Library to hear more as well as to share your own memories and stories of the Thames over time.

Robert Seatter has published eight poetry collections and has won many awards and nominations for his poetry, including National Poetry Competition, London Poetry and Forward Poetry Prize. He lives in London, where he works for the BBC, his most recent role being Head of BBC History.

<https://www.robertseatter.co.uk>

Check the website www.in-words.co.uk



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Pelton Arms

Sat 11th, 9pm: ELO ENCOUNTER
The greatest tribute to Jeff Lynne's Electric Light Orchestra playing all the much loved songs.

Sat 18th, 9pm: JAMIE AND THE JETS
Rockin' of the Crocodile variety! The absolute best tribute to the one and only Elton John.

Maritime Museum

ZWO Astronomy Photographer of the Year 17 For the seventeenth year of the ZWO Astronomy Photographer of the Year competition, images of awe-inspiring aurorae, serene galaxies and stunning shots of the night sky have been analysed by a team of expert judges from the worlds of art and astronomy. The winning images are displayed in an exhibition at the National Maritime Museum alongside a selection of exceptional shortlisted images. The competition is run by the Royal Observatory Greenwich, supported by ZWO and in association with BBC Sky at Night Magazine.

Date: Daily Time: 10.00 – 17.00

Age: Suitable for all ages

Location: National Maritime Museum, Photography Gallery

Admission: Adult £10 | Child £5 | Student £6.50

Kōmij Mour Ijin/Our Life is Here

Discover how the people of the Marshall Islands are responding to climate change and the legacies of nuclear weapons testing, as seen through the eyes of contemporary artists. Kōmij Mour Ijin/Our Life is Here at the National Maritime Museum has been co-produced with arts organisation, Cape Farewell. Bringing together the work of ten artists, the exhibition highlights the resilience of the Pacific nation. Their pieces explore themes including displacement, memory and the climate crisis, and were created following a Cape Farewell expedition to the Islands in 2023.

Date: Daily

Time: 10.00 – 17.00

Age: Suitable for all ages

Location: National Maritime Museum.

Admission: Free

www.rmg.co.uk

Cutty Sark

The theme of this Easter holiday is food and drink, encouraging a deeper dive into topics such as scurvy on ships, a sailor's diet, and how food was transported over the seas. Cutty Sark will be hosting a range of workshops, performances and talks around this theme.

Dates: Until 12 April 2026

Time: 11.00 – 16.00

Age: Suitable for all ages

Location: Cutty Sark

Admission: Free with admission to the ship

Niki Gorick: Dock Life Display is a photographic display that captures the varied lives and activities along London's dockside. A London-based photographer, Niki Gorick has achieved recognition for her candid images, which document the capital's diverse communities.

Dates: Opened 7 November 2025

Time: 10.00 – 17.00

Age: Suitable for all ages

Location: Cutty Sark

Admission: Free with admission to the ship

www.rmg.co.uk

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Tudor Takeover.

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For further details on events at the Old Royal Naval College go to ORNC.Org



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SMAGART

the not-for-profit art company, is holding its next physical art exhibition its 18th, at St Michael's Church, Blackheath Park, SE3 between **7th May and 16th May**. It is also available online, SMAGART.com, as is the SMAG 17 show until May. Details of times and how to apply if you an artist are on SMAGART.com or by email to info@smagart.com



SMAGART was founded in 2017 to showcase local artists and raise funds for local charities. It is a not-for-profit company run by 5 directors which puts on physical exhibits twice a year at St Michael's Church, Blackheath Park, together with an online version. The last exhibit SMAG17, had 94 artists showing over 250 works, over 800 visitors and sold 81 pieces. This allowed SMAGART to give £3900 to local Greenwich and Lewisham charities bringing the cumulative giving to local charities to over £49,000. The next physical exhibition is between 7th May and 16th May More details are available on www.smagart.com

Blackheath Flower Club

April 17th - Blackheath Flower Club

Come and see professional flower arranging demonstrators create modern artistic displays which are raffled off for £2 ,you may be lucky to take one home . £8 admission
siancaroline@googlemail.com

Blackheath Halls

Tue 7 April 7.30pm

Blake Morrison in Conversation

Tue 14 April 7.30pm

Michaela Strachan: Not Just a Wild life

Sat 18 April 8pm

Daliso Chaponda: Topical Storm

Mon 20 April 1.10pm Lunchtime

Recital: Polly Beddoe (clarinet)

Sat 25 April 11am & 1.30pm

Teach Rex! T-Rex Show

Mon 27 April 1.10pm Lunchtime

Recital: Sara Trickey (violin)

& Daniel Tong (piano)

www.blackheathhalls.com/whats-on/

Mycenae House

Fri 10th Apr 1pm + 3pm - The Princess & The Pea.

Let's All Dance's charming show to Enthral children and families. £12/£10.

Fri 10th Apr 7.30pm - The SWOP

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Sat 11th Apr 10am-5pm - Family

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Tues 14th Apr 7.30pm - Sound of Silence.

Silent Productions presents this musical drama by Wendy Reynolds. £15.

Fri 17th Apr 7.30pm - Clive Carroll.

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Fri 24th Apr 7.30pm - Fundraising

Auction.

Celebrate Global Fusion Music & Arts's 25th Year Anniversary with the Greenwich Blues Band and Special Guests. Free entry.

Sat 25th Apr 1.30pm - Mosaic Lamp

Workshop.

Design and craft your own mosaic

lamp. From £59 per person.

Thurs 30th Apr 7.30pm - Gong Bath.

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For further information about all Mycenae House events + workshops visit www.mycenaehouse.co.uk



National One rugby at The Utilita, SE9 6TE. Kick off at 15:00, £15 on the gate.

Apr 11th Sale FC

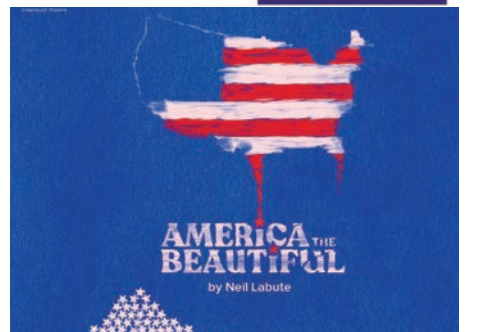
Apr 25th Clifton

Blackheath Women at Rectory Field, SE3 8SR. Kick off generally 14:00 —

check social media. Free entry.

Apr 26th Hackney

www.blackheathrugby.co.uk

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