

Views from the Hill



NEWSLETTER OF THE TEWKESBURY LODGE ESTATE RESIDENTS' ASSOCIATION Winter 2017/18

A Cleaner, Greener, Safer Estate?

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The speed and volume of traffic, particularly HGVs, cutting through the Estate to avoid the South Circular Road has long been of concern of residents. Canonbie Road and Westwood Park are the most affected, particularly the former: lorries using SatNavs are unaware of the steepness of Canonbie Road, especially the stretch leading down to Honor Oak Road. With a gradient of 18%, it is one of the steepest hills in London. Loss of control has resulted in the demolition of garden walls in the road. As the morning rush hour co-incides with the walk to school, there is also a safety issue for children trying to cross the road, as well as the potential harmful health effects of increased air pollution from vehicle exhaust fumes. And, of course, residents must also contend with excess noise and vibrations from heavy vehicles. The TLERA campaign to install road humps some years ago and the very recent introduction of a borough-wide 20mph speed limit has proved no deterrent, with seemingly no possibility of cameras to help with enforcement.



Lorries using Canonbie Road as a cut-through.

Over the years the Association has written to Lewisham's Traffic Department; our MP, councillors, Mayor and Deputy Mayor; the Mayor of London, and our London Assembly representative. We have met with organisations such as Sustrans, Living Streets, Twenty's Plenty and the Forest Hill Society. Over 120 people attended one meeting with the Deputy Mayor at Fairlawn Primary School where a video of the treacherous junction of Canonbie Road and Honor Oak Road during the school run was shown. Additionally, in the Summer of 2016, there was an overwhelming response to two petitions for action to be taken that were handed to the Council.

Despite promises to deal with the issues raised, nothing has been done - the situation continues.

Newly built homes and the conversion of properties from single to multi-occupancy has also led to increasing pressure on parking. Members have reported that using Langton Rise has become hazardous due to the recent housing development. As a result, it is no longer possible for cars to pass each other as they attempt to turn up from Wood Vale (a busy North/South corridor). Cars turning down from Westwood Park are not able to see upcoming cars until they round the corner, so then have to reverse back around the (blind) corner which is potentially dangerous.

The situation will inevitably continue to worsen over time unless action is taken. As you will read in this issue, there will be a presentation on the need for traffic calming measures on our Estate at our AGM in March. Possible solutions will be outlined and discussed, including one proposed by Forest Hill Society. Given the implications for all of us, we really need to know the views of our members. So please come along on the 13th March and take the opportunity to have your say.

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Chair's report



I hope you enjoyed Christmas and the New Year and winter is not proving to be too dreary. There are some signs that spring is on the way – the snowdrops are ready to flower, the daffodils are in bud, and even the tulips are beginning to emerge – despite being May flowering varieties!

Looking back over 2017, I think community spirit was definitely enhanced by the success of the various activities the Association organised for members, culminating in the *Carols by candlelight* event before Christmas. Not only did members enjoy them, but almost £6000 was donated to various charities, the majority through the garden opening for the National Garden Scheme (NGS). My thanks to the Committee who, with

the support of many of our members, worked so hard to make the events so successful.

Looking forward to this year, more street trees are being sponsored by residents that will not only visually make our Estate an even more pleasant place to live, but will also make it a greener, cleaner area by helping to filter out pollutants from vehicle emissions that are potentially harmful to health. These can also be reduced by traffic calming measures to prevent cars and lorries diverting through the Estate to avoid the traffic in the surrounding major roads, particularly the South Circular. As you will read below, various solutions have been suggested, but we do want your opinion. So do come along to the AGM in March and let us know what you think.

Valerie Ward

Dates for your diary

AGM: Tuesday, 13th March between 6.30-8pm at Horniman Primary School.

Horniman School Challenge: Sunday, 25th March between 9.30-12am (more details on page 5).

Easter egg hunt: Sunday, 1st April between 10-12am at 28 Horniman Drive.

Garden opening event: Sunday 20th May between 1-6pm

Pollution, rat runs, and steep hills

The Association, Forest Hill Society, Lewisham, London, Britain and the Earth are wrestling with issues created by burning oil and the internal combustion engine. Transport for London (TfL) is currently consulting on the introduction of a London-wide Ultra Low Emission Zone within the South Circular Area that will directly affect the Estate. While a health benefit for residents due to reduced particulates, it will be to the financial detriment of those of us who own a diesel car. Meanwhile, both the TLER A Committee and the Forest Hill Society have been examining local requests from residents for measures to combat traffic issues.

In our own local area, three roads have been brought to our attention by residents. These are Langton Rise, Canonbie Road, and Westwood Park. In each case these roads are being used as 'through routes' by people wishing to avoid traffic issues on the boundary roads. We have been provided with road measurement statistics from Lewisham Council for some of the streets in our neighbourhood. They quite clearly show speeding, school run pick-ups and drop-offs, as well as a sharp increase in commuting in the

mornings, and a more spread out increase in the evening.

The Forest Hill Society has been asked by residents in Devonshire Road (between Forest Hill and Honor Oak stations) to take action to reduce traffic flow along this notoriously busy road. This is outside of the Tewkesbury Lodge Estate area, but the recent closure of Devonshire Road for Thames Water works led to traffic jams on Honor Oak Road and even more 'rat-running' through the TLER A area. The Forest Hill Society has therefore mooted a solution which takes account of the wider implications by altering through routes in our area and on the boundary major roads, thereby mitigating the effects.

At our AGM in March there will be a presentation on the need for traffic calming on our Estate, and possible solutions discussed, including the one proposed by the Forest Hill Society. Given the implications for all of us, we need to know the views of our members. So do come along and let us know what you think.

Dave Leslie

Our street trees are arriving!

On December 6th our first street tree was planted at the very bottom of Liphook Crescent - an Amelanchier about 12 feet high, with a rootball girth of about 13cm. It was planted in a tree pit of approximately double the size of the root ball. The heavy London clay which had been removed to create the tree pit was returned in a much improved state, mixed with well fertilised loam. The tree was mulched with bark chippings and, before planting, two strong stakes had been driven into the earth around the tree pit. Close to the surface a perforated irrigation tube surrounded the tree and, through the tube, water can be run down the sides of the rootball. The tree won't need regular watering until its leaves open in spring, but I gave it 20 litres just in case the root ball had dried out in transit down the M1, from its nursery outside Ely.



By mid-December two more Amelanchiers had been planted on Canonbie Road, and two crab apple trees on the grassy verge at the corner of Ringmore Rise and Horniman Drive. Four more trees are expected to be planted by the end of winter.

Looking ahead to next year, we now have 10 definite offers of funding for trees and two possible offers, making a total of at least 19 new trees. This will start to make a real difference to the Estate.

The leaning tree on Horniman Drive has finally been removed by the Council. We had discussed this tree at our last AGM, following which I wrote to the Council. Although they agreed to remove the tree, nothing happened. One of our members then met a Lewisham councillor at a local event and told him about it. Soon after the tree was removed. Committee members were so delighted that three of them clubbed together to fund a replacement tree!

With the Council's help we have designed and sourced a brass plaque for use with the new trees if required. The first of these will be dedicated to a former resident and a standard form of words has been agreed. This will be adopted as Council policy for other plaques.

Similar activity is taking place across Lewisham and I have learnt a lot from my involvement with tree planting in other parts of the Borough. I was particularly involved with the plantings at Brockley Station and the decision to plant exotic trees there. Three Italian Cyprus trees will be planted on the slope leading up to the station. These beautiful trees, which are characteristic of the Tuscan landscape, will in time become an iconic feature on the Brockley skyline and should be visible from the railway line from Forest Hill to London Bridge. An even more exotic tree, the Indian Silk tree, will also be planted there. The canopy of this tree is covered with pink 'pom pom' flowers throughout the summer. It has feathery leaves which open and close in sunshine. Although a huge Italian Cyprus would not be suitable for us, the Indian Silk Tree is a definite possibility for the micro-climates where olive trees flourish on our Estate.

Once again, the Association is extremely grateful to all the residents who are supporting this initiative, either with offers of funding or with their willingness to water the trees for their first two years. If you would like to become involved, please text me on 07709 578 417.

Stuart Checkley

Footnote. We still have the generous offer of a beautiful yellow Magnolia for somewhere on Tewkesbury Avenue: does anyone know of a suitable site for this scented tree?

Sydenham Hill Woods

The London Wildlife Trust (LWT) has raised £699,000 to invest in the Great North Wood Living Landscape in south-east London. The project, mainly funded by the Heritage Lottery Fund, will mean the creation of new footpaths in well-used areas of sites such as Sydenham Hill Wood and Dulwich Wood.

In the autumn, volunteers began installing fencing in areas of Dulwich Wood that were suffering severe soil erosion due to uncontrolled footfall and rainwater washing soils downhill. These fenced areas allow trees to recover and their roots to breathe, and they will also provide refuge for Dulwich and Sydenham Hill Wood's population of hedgehogs. Ground nesting and feeding birds also frequent these areas, meaning that they will be given greater freedom to feed without disturbance.

The rebuilding of a path in Dulwich Wood began in November - it had become badly eroded and prone to flooding in winter. 2018 will see further improvement works in Sydenham Hill Wood, including the re-laying of paths across existing routes in need of repair, and installing fencing.



around ancient woodland wildflower areas and known hedgehog hotspots. None of the main or current pathways in Sydenham Hill Wood will be permanently closed or have their access revoked by these works.

As visitor numbers have steadily increased over the years it is important that the LWT take all appropriate steps to conserve the wildlife, including trees and wildflowers, which make this woodland so very special.

Extract from the LWT website

Navigating our pavements - and our Council services....

Stretch of pavement in Westwood Park.



Local drivers will be pleased with the work that Lewisham Council has done on resurfacing some local roads, but as a non-car owning pedestrian I'm equally concerned about the state of some of our pavements. So a phone call to Lewisham Council had to be made. This is not as easy as it should be. The automated voice response asks you to state your concern. 'Pavements' I say, so I am forwarded to 'Payments'. I redialled and tried again. 'Pavements', was pronounced with a touch more exasperation, but the result was the same. So I stayed with payments where a sympathetic woman tells me that she is weary of misdirected

calls and advises me to try 'Highways Department'.

From them I learnt that Lewisham Council carries out inspections of the pavements at least twice a year. There are additional 'regularly driven inspections', which I take to imply inspections are carried out from within moving vehicles. I am informed that the problem can be reported on-line. I put this to the test but 'Highways' was not on the Council's long A-Z list of services. I eventually discovered what I wanted was under 'Transport', which has a 'Roads and pavements' sub-section.

Task completed, but I remain unhappy with the quality of a system that makes the search for information harder than it should be.

The Association will now try to establish what can be done to address the problem of unsafe/badly repaired stretches of pavement on the Estate and discuss possible approaches at the next meeting of the TLERA Committee.

Michael Levin.

Carols by candlelight

If you were dreaming of a white Christmas, then the snowy scene you wanted came early, precisely and conveniently coinciding with our annual carol concert. This produced a very picturesque scene at the Horniman Triangle, particularly when viewed from indoors looking out, but would our members brave the cold to join us? We didn't know what to expect when we put up the gazeboes, added the lights, lit the candles, prepared the mulled wine, and brought out the mince pies.

However, come the dark starting hour of 5pm our loyal members rolled in. I should have done a head count, but my hunch is that we had about seventy people, including a good and very welcome number of young children.

Warmed by mulled wine, the singing raised our spirits still higher. After such traditional carols as *Away in a Manger*, *King Wenceslas* and *Once in Royal David's City*. We then had a go at more modern seasonal songs: *Jingle Bells*, *Winter Wonderland*, and *Rudolph the Red Nosed Reindeer*. Here *We Come a Wassailing among the Leaves So Green* was announced as non-religious but very English, and very acceptable.



On the way out we offered everyone a chocolate and held before them a collection bucket for the charity *Crisis at Christmas*, which raised £250.

I had summoned my youngest daughter, a trained singer, to augment the singing. Afterwards I asked her how she found the experience: "Can't get more Christmassy than warm mince pies and carol singing in the snow". Amen to that.

Michael Levin

Horniman Primary School 3 Peaks Challenge!

On Sunday 25th March between 09.30-12.00am the children will set off east along Horniman Drive, enjoying fabulous views of the Kent Downs whilst preparing themselves mentally for the first climb of the day: Canonbie Road (aka Ben Nevis).



After collecting their badge from the marshall at the top and undertaking a perilous descent, the children will march bravely westwards along the bottom of Westwood Park before gritting their teeth and walking up to the crest of Westwood Park (aka Scaffell Pike).

A brief glimpse of home will spur the explorers on as they continue their adventure to tackle the third peak of Ringmore Rise (aka Snowdon).

For those willing and able, a second lap of the whole course will take them to a total height climbed of 609 meters (if you include up and down the apparatus twice in the school gym at the finish) – the **official height of a mountain**.

In all they'll have walked a course of either 1.8 or 3.6 miles, depending on the course they take. We'll celebrate the children's achievement with a well-deserved sausage sarnie and cup of tea at the end. One lap or two, all will return heroes!!

Adam Jones, Parent Teacher Association

Footnote

The PTA is organizing this event to raise much needed funds for the School, given the recent major cuts to the education budget. TLERA members can really help on the day by volunteering to act as marshalls along the route. Contact Valerie Ward on 0208 699 if you can help out in your road. *.Continued overleaf*

The start of the ascent of Forest Hill's Ben Nevis!

Continued from
previous page.

In about 90
mins from
London Bridge
you could be
punting on the
River Cam.
Hopefully in
the sunshine...

You can also help by sponsoring the children. Although cash donations on the day are always welcome, on-lines sponsorship is preferred via

<https://mydonate.bt.com/fundraisers/horniman3peaks> - the School can claim Gift Aid!
Valerie Ward

Traffic and transport

New rail timetable

Following a recent consultation, in May 2018 we will see the new Thameslink and South-Eastern timetable put into action. At the last minute Govia (the company behind these services) deferred the proposed Maidstone to Cambridge service due to a concern about throughput in the central London stretch of track. There will, however, still be new services via London Bridge from Brighton and Gatwick to St. Albans, Luton, Peterborough or Cambridge. So the short platforms 4 and 5 at the newly rebuilt London Bridge Station will be very busy with the new services from North to South and back.

On the downside, we will have fewer late-night or early morning services from Forest Hill to and from Norwood Junction, East Croydon or Gatwick.



The half hourly services remaining will be run between about 8 am-10 pm. It may therefore be worth considering taking a cab or train to London Bridge, from where direct services to and from Gatwick will be running every 8 minutes or so from early to late. We will publicise the full changes in the Spring newsletter and on the Tewkesbury Lodge Estate Facebook page.

Dave Leslie

On your bike!

And if you don't have one, or want to find out whether cycling suits you, why not borrow a quality bike for a month from Lewisham Council for only £10? This includes a helmet,

bike lock, and a high visibility vest as well as optional items such as lights and child seats at no extra cost.

There are a range of men's and women's bikes in various sizes to choose from, all

suitable for riding on roads and firm tracks. There are also some folding bikes which can be taken on many trains, buses, and the tube. If at the end of the month you want to buy your bike, you can do so at a discounted price.

As well as this new cycle loan scheme, the Council are offering free cycling lessons for all age groups to help and support the complete beginner or for those just wanting some tips to get back on the road. For more information, contact Road Safety and Sustainable Transport: Tel: 020 8314 2254, Email:

roadsafetyeducation@lewisham.gov.uk

Valerie Ward



News from the Horniman Museum and Gardens

The Museum

With the coming of Spring, there will be a variety of events and activities for everyone to enjoy both indoors and outside. Our *Signs of Spring Welly Walk* is the perfect opportunity to blow the winter cobwebs away and explore the Nature Trail and the animals and plants that live there. There's also pond dipping and a family Bat Walk in the Gardens. Or be reminded of

warmer days with a visit to our Butterfly House and tropical indoor garden.

A new family friendly exhibition *Colour: The Rainbow Revealed* opens on 10 February and explores the way that colour shapes our world through hands-on exhibits and exciting games and challenges. The exhibition is the



Year of the Reef, a year-long campaign of events and initiatives to promote coral reef conservation. You can visit the beautiful coral reefs in the Aquarium, see textile artworks by artist Karen Dodd inspired by coral in her display *Coral: Fabric of the Reef*, and join in with activities, events and workshops celebrating these fragile ecosystems.

inspiration for a variety of performances, activities, and events over the coming months including the Neon Late evening on 1 March. The Horniman is celebrating the *International*.

And don't miss the Horniman Easter Fair which has something for all the family, including craft workshops and stalls, an Easter trail, face painting, storytelling and activities in the Gardens. We hope to see you soon.
Stephanie Hay, PR and Media Officer

For more information, go to our website www.horniman.ac.uk.

The Gardens

Happy New Year from the Horniman Gardens team! January is a good time to reflect on the past year, and 2017 was great for us. I'm told our display of 20 varieties of pumpkins and squash took the social media world by storm! We also had fun planting up our new tropical Butterfly House with some really cool plants. Here's a reminder of the transformation of the Butterfly House – an exciting project for the Gardens team.



Butterfly house before and after

We also started work on our new Grasslands Garden late in 2017, and completing that in the months to come means that 2018 will be

even better and more horticulturally exciting. It is made up of two displays: the first is an ornamental grass border designed by grass expert Neil Lucas with amazing grasses in all shapes and sizes. The blocky unconventional style will perfectly contrast with the centre beds that feature intricate planting designed by Professor James Hitchmough, best known for his naturalistic planting style that was so popular in the Olympic Park in 2012. He helped us set out the North American prairie plants in November, but at the moment there is very little to see as the plants are dormant. They'll be springing back to life in the next couple of months, when we'll be adding South African plants. The Grasslands Garden tells the story of lost landscapes – there is very little natural grassland vegetation left in the world – and will link to our new World Gallery opening in June.

We will be having some fun with our Sunken Garden summer bedding scheme, planting it up to represent a colour wheel. It obviously won't be a circle, but we are brushing over that small detail! The bedding display will link in nicely with our temporary exhibition this year, *Colour: The Rainbow Revealed*, and it will be a great way of bringing colour to life in the garden. So 2018 should be a busy but exciting year. I hope you all manage to visit and see how our new projects are coming along.

Wes Shaw, Head of Horticulture

Dog fouling: 'Bag it and bin in'

....but not in someone else's black bin

As dog owners know, failing to remove dog faeces on all public footpaths and highways as well as parks, gardens, and open spaces is an offence under the Dog Control Order that can result in a £75 fine. Fortunately, it isn't

usually a problem in our area, with residents cleaning up after their dogs. But please take it home and dispose of it in your own black bin rather than using someone else's.



Crime and policing



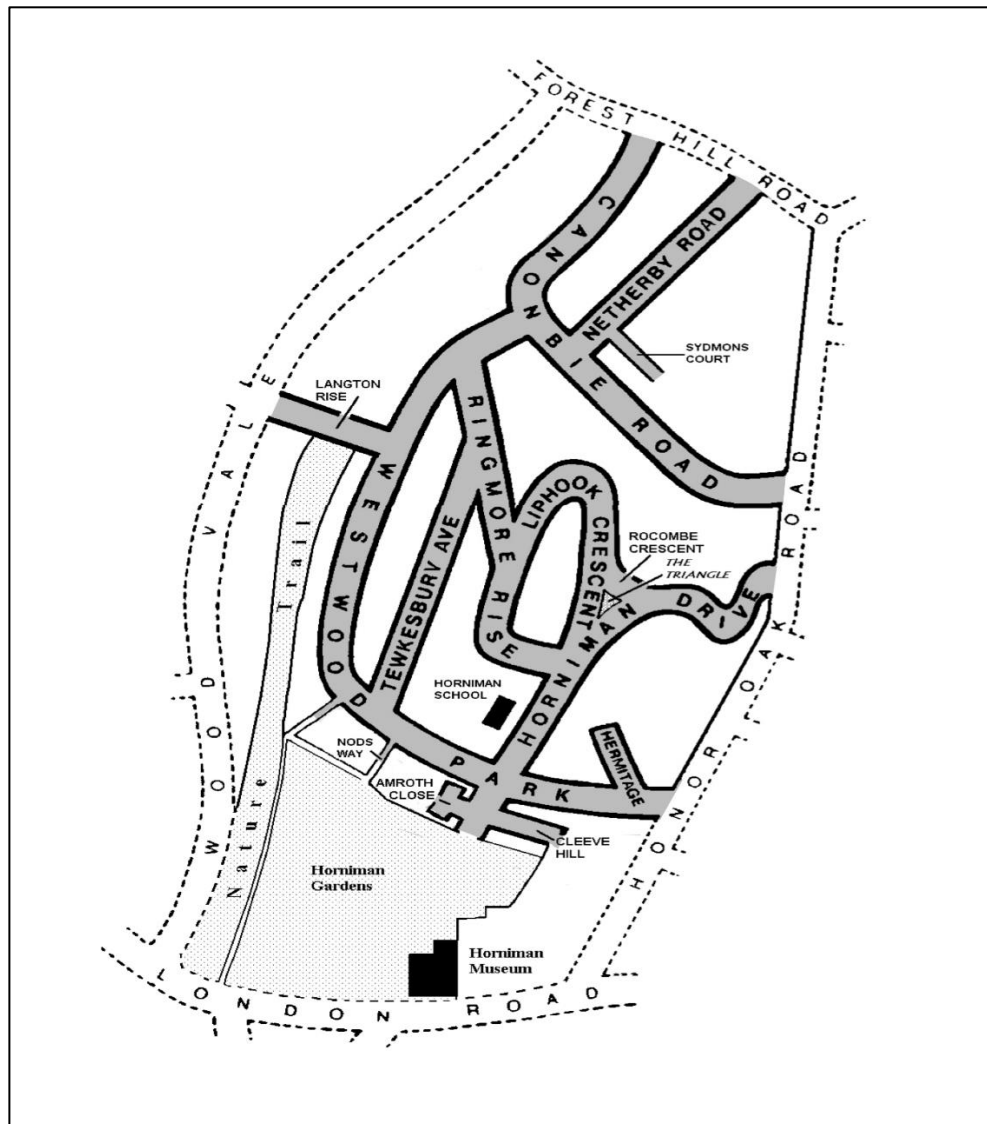
Our Safer Neighbourhoods Team (SNT) ward panel encompasses local resident, traders, Residents Associations, and Societies. Recently, a new chair is elected, Michael Abrahams, also chair of the Forest Hill Society. The Panel meets with our SNT every quarter and agrees policing priorities for Forest Hill

If you are concerned about any aspect of crime, it can now be reported via the local Forest Hill Police site www.met.police.uk/your-area/lewisham/forest-hill/. Our SNT team are regular tweeters and can be followed on @MPSForestHill. They also host a regular 'cuppa with a copper' event at Forest Hill Pools, details of which can be found on their website. There has been a recent increase in burglaries within Forest Hill Ward, including our Estate.

A recent e-mail sent to members alerted them to the fact that a house in Canonbie Road had been broken into during the night. Thieves caused some damage and stole workmen's tools. The Association has since learnt that a house in Liphook Crescent was also broken into around the New Year. It had just been sold and was very obviously empty. Work was being carried out on the property, and again the thieves were clearly looking to see if the workmen had left tools there. So if you plan to have any work done to your property, do be especially careful – especially if scaffolding is involved.

If you see anything suspicious, it can be reported by either ringing 101 or via the Met Police site (<https://www.met.police.uk>)
Rowena Lowe

Tewkesbury Lodge Estate Residents' Association area



This newsletter was compiled and edited by Valerie Ward and proof read by Carole Abrahams. Contributions from members are very welcome and can be e-mailed to us at secretary@tewkesburylodge.org.uk