

# THE BRIXTON SOCIETY NEWSLETTER

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## The Year Ahead

You will find some dates overleaf, but we would normally expect more dates to trickle in over the next few weeks as local organisations get going again after the Christmas/ New Year break. This year it's more complicated by the current lockdown and the hasty changes between Tiers. It has made forward planning more difficult than usual, though it's widely assumed that live events will return sometime this summer. Meanwhile, it's always worth checking our website for updates, or we will e-mail you about any urgent changes – at least, if you have told us your current e-mail address!

We are tentatively planning some guided walks for the summer months, as part of the annual programme published by the Lambeth Local History Forum. If there are forgotten backwaters that we should explore, or if you would like us to repeat a walk that you missed in the past year or two, tell us before the end of the month, at [info@brixtonsociety.org.uk](mailto:info@brixtonsociety.org.uk)

We can be more definite that the Census takes place this year. The data collected every 10 years is a great resource for planning public services and as an evidence base for funding community projects. When individual returns are released a century later, they also provide rich pickings for local history research. Turn to page 5 for the full story...



*Existing frontage to Trinity Rise.  
(HP/DL/IMG5004.jpg)*

## Cressingham Gardens

### First planning application submitted for the Cressingham Gardens Estate

Last month, Homes for Lambeth (the Council's development vehicle) submitted a planning application for the demolition and replacement of 12 homes in Ropers Walk on the south east corner of the 300-home Cressingham Gardens Estate.

The Brixton Society, along with a large number of other local and national organisations, including the Save Cressingham Gardens campaign group, the Herne Hill Society and the Twentieth Century Society, has written to Lambeth's planning team to object to these proposals.

Our main concern is that the proposed development sets a worrying precedent for the redevelopment of the remainder of the estate and suggests that future phases could have a damaging impact on Brockwell Park.

*Continued on page 3.*

## Diary of Events – First Quarter 2021

### Guided Walks

We hope to begin a limited series of guided walks around the wider Brixton area from **April** if conditions permit. Walk routes will be based on social distancing and you will need to reserve places in advance for “test and trace” purposes. Monthly walks around Brixton’s markets remain suspended due to crowded conditions and limited space within the arcades.

### Committee Dates

Our Executive Committee meets monthly, on the second Thursday, to plan activities and agree our response to current issues. Currently meetings are held on-line via Zoom. Meetings are still open to any of our members, but if you want to join in or to raise a specific issue, please contact the Chair a week beforehand at [chair@brixtonsociety.org.uk](mailto:chair@brixtonsociety.org.uk)

- 14 January
- 11 February
- 11 March
- 8 April.

### Editorial Notice

Space permitting, we try to feature local events, issues and reminiscences in our newsletter. We welcome news and comments from all who are interested in the Brixton area, so opinions expressed in these pages are not necessarily those of the Brixton Society. All material should be sent to the Secretary, Alan Piper, 82 Mayall Road, SE24 0PJ, or by e-mail to [apiperbrix@aol.com](mailto:apiperbrix@aol.com)

### Events arranged by other groups

*Most normal meetings remain suspended, but many talks continue on-line and outdoor events are being lined up for when the weather improves. Please check directly with organisers if any queries over times or charges.*

### Wellbeing Workshops by Loughborough Farm

Catch the last few in the series launched last month: free but book by e-mail to [ljag.events@gmail.com](mailto:ljag.events@gmail.com)

#### Yoga sessions on

Wednesday 13 and Monday 25 January, 6-30 to 8 pm at Arch 504, Coldharbour Lane (opposite Station Avenue).

#### Boxercise for women,

Thursday 14 January, 7 pm to 8-30 at The Remakery, Lilford Road SE5.

#### Happy Drumming

**workshop**, Wednesday 20 January, 11 am to 12 noon at the Remakery.

#### Breath awareness &

**explorations**, Sunday 24 January, 2 pm to 3 pm at The Platform Café, Wyck Gardens (corner of Ridgway and Loughborough Roads) SW9 7AH.

*Loughborough Farm*

### Saturday 16 January

#### Friends of West

#### Norwood Cemetery

Annual General Meeting to be held at 11 am on-line via Zoom. Please register in advance by e-mail to [secretary@fownc.org](mailto:secretary@fownc.org)  
*Friends of West Norwood Cemetery, [www.fownc.org](http://www.fownc.org)*

### Sunday 24 January – Myatt’s Fields Park Project AGM

This park is managed by trustees on behalf of the community. Meet some new trustees at the Annual General Meeting on 24<sup>th</sup>.

More details at

<https://www.myattsfieldspark.info/park-management.html>

or contact

[enquiries@myattsfieldspark.info](mailto:enquiries@myattsfieldspark.info)

*Myatt’s Fields Park Project*

### Walk and Talk, starting Monday 25 January

A 10-week group exercise and health discussion course designed to improve both physical and mental health of older adults – join in free on-line via Zoom, various times available.

More details at

[www.walkandtalkcic.com](http://www.walkandtalkcic.com) or

enquiries to 07 562 475 706

or e-mail to

[nick@walkandtalkcic.com](mailto:nick@walkandtalkcic.com)

*Connect Lambeth*

### On-line talks from Brockwell Park

Brockwell Park Community Greenhouses are continuing their series of on-line talks, on Tuesdays at 7 pm:

**9 February:** Sue Stuart-Smith on her book, *The Well-Gardened Mind*.

**9 March:** Jo Ferguson on *Urban Bat Ecology and Conservation*.

Please book via the website, <https://www.brockwellgreenhouses.org.uk>

*Brockwell Park Community Greenhouses*

### Brixton Orchard

During a year when green spaces have been more important than ever, the little orchard at the foot of Brixton Hill continues to serve the community. Since its inception 3 years ago, 571 volunteer hours have been put into keeping this 300 sq.metre plot looking good. Urban Growth have provided at least 20 focused seasonal training sessions.

The Brixton Orchard is a joint project of the Brixton Business Improvement District and Urban Growth. More details at <http://urbangrowth.london>

### Cressingham Gardens

*Continued from page 1...*

The design of the Cressingham Gardens estate has been praised by Historic England and others for the way that it respects its setting next to the Park, with one and two storey buildings along the park boundary barely visible above the tree line from the park, and green open spaces between the blocks which soften the boundary with the park to the point where “from the park, the estate is an almost seamless addition to its horizon; from the estate, the park seems almost to be its back garden”

The current planning application for Ropers Walk would replace a two and three storey block with one four storeys high which in addition has a larger building footprint which extends over green open space at the side and rear of the existing building.

If this pattern was to be repeated across Cressingham Gardens then we could expect to see a series of four storey blocks running along the boundary with the park and the disappearance of the gardens and green spaces which soften that boundary now.

You can read the full text of our letter to Lambeth Planning on our website. Comments from the 20<sup>th</sup> Century Society can be seen at: <https://c20society.org.uk/news/c20-fights-new-threat-to-cressingham-gardens> and from estate residents at: <https://savecressingham.wordpress.com>

*Vivienne Lewis.*

### Friends of Tate Library

Library use is further restricted for at least a month ahead. The Select and Collect service is suspended, but PC use is still possible by appointment. Tim O'Dell continues to produce a monthly Lambeth Libraries e-newsletter - to receive these notifications regularly, contact [todell@lambeth.gov.uk](mailto:todell@lambeth.gov.uk)

The Local Heroes Initiative is going from strength to strength. Nominations are still being sought, as a future book has been suggested to collate all the information we have received. The current project funded by the GLA Culture Seeds fund is to produce a banner on this theme. Separate textile squares are being embroidered by the participants, under the supervision of tutors Rachel Heywood and Cecilia Washburn, who will then assemble the finished banner.

Our LCDF-funded Tai Chi class was sustained for much of 2020, first live and then on-line. Tutor Anna Franklin has managed to continue the hour-long sessions with 15 participants – e-mail [ame.franklin@gmail.com](mailto:ame.franklin@gmail.com) to join on a paying basis.

Great thanks go to Annick Alet for completing our grant monitoring report for LCDF, including supportive comments from participants. Our thanks must also go to a number of Friends volunteers who have assisted with fund-raising stalls over the years, including car boot sales, bazaars and market stalls, most recently at the Winter Fair in Windmill Gardens just before the latest lockdown.

*Marilyn Rogers.*



*An earlier banner made by a group of library users, led by Melanie Bowles of Stitch School, shown at the library entrance. BS/bannerth.png*

### Making Low Traffic Neighbourhoods work

Around Christmas Lambeth Council published its first results from the **Railton** Low Traffic Neighbourhood (LTN). Vehicle traffic is substantially lower on streets within the LTN and Railton and Shakespeare Roads now have substantially more cycle traffic. More surprising, there was less car traffic too round the fringe of the area (down 18% on Effra Road and 9% on Dulwich Road) though we should also allow for the Atlantic Road closure for repairs to the railway arches, and the effect of successive lockdowns.

Further changes are proposed, though maybe more to annoy residents than to improve safety. The predominant traffic flow along Trelawn Road will be reversed and south-bound traffic would be banned from parts of Rattray and Dalberg Roads. However, Barnwell Road would continue as a popular morning cut-through to join Railton and Atlantic Roads.

Meanwhile, despite the declared intention to improve pedestrian movement, a vital link is still missing from the **Ferndale** LTN. The footbridge over the railway, which should link Ferndale and Landor Roads via Hubert Grove, has been closed since March, awaiting repairs to the steps which never happened. The temporary closure order expired in September!



*Footbridge between Ferndale Road and Hubert Grove, still closed. OD/CI/IMG9710.jpg*

### Sustainable City Awards

Calling sustainability trailblazers and changemakers – the Sustainable City Awards are open for nominations until **10 February**. Anyone can nominate organisations, schools and individuals from within London's 33 boroughs who have shown ambition, taken action and delivered impact to promote sustainable ways of living for Londoners. For details see the website, [www.globalactionplan.org.uk/SCA](http://www.globalactionplan.org.uk/SCA)

### Green Homes grants

This is the Government's current grant scheme to encourage people to install energy-saving measures in their homes, usually as vouchers for up £5,000 of work. However, it favours some techniques over others, so "primary" measures, such as insulating walls, floors and roofs, or installing low-carbon heating, are preferred, and "secondary" measures such as draught-proofing, double-glazing and heating controls will only be supported if combined with primary measures. Installing a more efficient gas boiler does not qualify at all, and all work must be done by accredited installers.

The scheme was due to close at the end of March, before either householders or installers had time to get their act together. It has recently been extended for another year, to March 2022, which should encourage take-up. We suggest you start with the Simple Energy Advice service at <https://simpleenergyadvice.org.uk/energy-efficiency/reduce-bills>

### Zero Carbon Forum formed

There are signs that Green issues are beginning to be taken more seriously within the business world. It was announced last month that 18 leading firms in the Hospitality industry had come together to set up a forum to identify the most effective routes towards net zero emissions. Founding members include Burger King, Pizza Hut, Brewdog, Nando's, Revolution Bars and Fuller's. All have agreed to pool their knowledge on carbon reduction plans and techniques. The aim is to publish a roadmap to net zero carbon before the UN Climate Change Conference in Glasgow in November.

## Local History

### Census 2021 will provide a snapshot of modern Lambeth

For more than two hundred years statistics have been collected from households in England and Wales as part of a decennial census, in order to create an accurate picture of the make-up of Britain.

With the next census being carried out by the Office for National Statistics in 2021, let's take a brief look at the history of the census in England and the wider world.

The census idea is older than the Chinese, Egyptian and Greek civilisations, dating back to the Babylonians in 4000 BC, who used a census as an essential guide to how much food they needed to find for each member of the population.

From around 2500 BC the Egyptians used censuses to work out the scale of the labour force they would need to build their pyramids. They also used the information to plan how they would share out the land after the annual flooding of the Nile.

In China too, censuses began around this time. The most well-known, taken by the Han Dynasty in 2 AD, and considered by experts to be relatively accurate, recorded 57.67 million people living in 12.36 million households.

The first thorough census of England was carried out in 1086 when William the Conqueror ordered the production of the Domesday Book. This detailed inventory of land and property was a massive undertaking at the time, taking years to complete. The Domesday Book paints a very detailed picture of life in Norman England, but unlike the modern census, it did not provide a headcount of the people then living in England.

In 1279, King Edward I commissioned the Hundred Rolls, a great inquiry into landholding in England. The Hundred Rolls paint a more detailed picture of rural society than the Domesday Book, though nothing was done with the results.

In Tudor and Stuart times, bishops were made responsible for counting the number of families in their dioceses, but Britain was very reluctant to adopt the idea of a regular official census. While Quebec held its first official census in

1666, Iceland in 1703 and Sweden in 1749, Britain was slow to follow suit.

Towards the end of the eighteenth century however, it became increasingly obvious that there was little idea about the number of people living in Britain. The industrial revolution had seen an increase in agricultural output and a steep population rise, and it was becoming increasingly more important for authorities to know how many people there were in the country. Not just so that they could ensure that enough food was being produced to feed everyone, but also so they knew how many men of fighting age there were to help fight the war against Napoleon.



*View from Brixton Hill towards the City, a decade before the 1801 Census was taken.*  
Dbx/CU/2007.11.20.jpg

So in 1801 the first official once-a-decade census was conducted, and aside from a break in 1941 due to the second world war, it has taken place every ten years since. 2021 will see the country being asked to complete the census once again, but is it still relevant in modern Britain and to residents of Lambeth?

The answer, in short, is yes. The census helps authorities to inform policy making, plan public services, and decide where billions of pounds are spent, for instance on roads, schools and hospitals. Without the information collected from the census it would be a lot more difficult to provide adequate public services for the population.

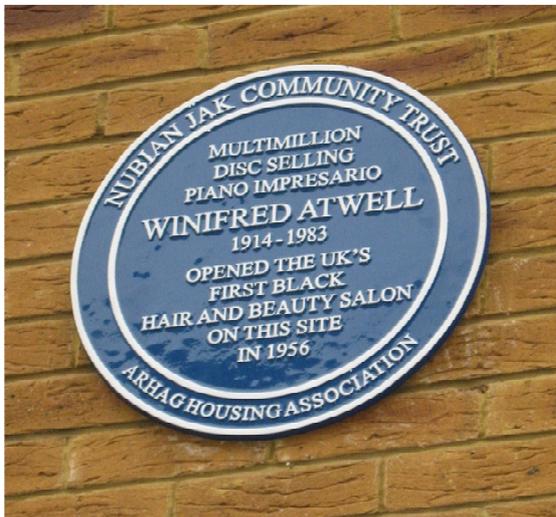
But the census itself changes to reflect the times. The 2021 census will be digital-first, meaning people will be encouraged to complete it online. It will also ask three new questions that will help build a better picture of

## Local History

modern Britain, by asking about previous service in the armed forces, and including voluntary questions on sexuality and gender identity.

There are still two months before the next census starts, with households receiving letters from 1st March 2021. But when those letters do arrive, it is important that everyone takes part. That way we can help shape Lambeth and Britain for the future, and be part of a history thousands of years in the making.

*David Gwyther,  
Census Engagement Manager,  
(North Lambeth), ONS.*



*The newly-installed plaque HP/pics/IMG9702.jpg*

### Remembering Winifred Atwell

It's over 5 years since we told the story of Winifred Atwell in our Newsletter (No.220, December 2015). She has recently been commemorated by a blue plaque on Railton Road, marking the site of a hairdressing salon that she opened in 1956. She was then at the height of her fame as a popular pianist, having made her first No.1 hit record in December 1954, with a second to follow – the only female instrumentalist to have done so.

Born in Trinidad, Winifred was a trained concert pianist, but the music that made her a megastar was played in a ragtime style on an old upright piano. Reputedly bought in a Battersea junk shop, it became her trademark. She launched the hairdressing salon when she

learnt that there were none in England serving the needs of black women. With its rising black population in the 1950s, Brixton seemed to be a natural location, and the salon stood at the corner of Railton and Chaucer Roads. It operated until 1961, after which the premises were used by a plumber's merchants but retaining the distinctive brass door handle in the shape of Winifred's upright piano. Sadly all trace disappeared when the building was burnt out during the riots in April 1981. The plaque is now fixed to the side of the replacement building, flats managed by ARHAG at 82d Railton Road, and was unveiled by Cllr. Sonia Winifred on Friday 18 December.

Previous plaques installed in Brixton by the Nubian Jak Community Trust include that to lawyer Rudy Narayan above the San Marino café at the corner of Brixton Road and Brixton Station Road, and another commemorating the Dark and Light Theatre Company on Longfield Hall (unveiled on 27 October).

The latest plaque is one of 32 being installed across London by the Trust, working with Havas Advertising Agency, to raise awareness of Black achievers. Another is in hand for 16-18 Trinity Gardens, the original broadcasting address of Choice FM. More details at [www.blackplaqueproject.com](http://www.blackplaqueproject.com)

*Alan Piper.*

### We the People – years of activism

Tracey Gregory, who has been working on the Music Hall Stories, recommends a recent film commissioned by the Museum of London and produced by Brixton-based film-makers. It features several local activists in a series of pre-lockdown conversations with young members of the Advocacy Academy. Striking to see how much ephemera – posters, leaflets etc – the older activists have retained from the 70s and 80s, but where will these documents end up? The Q&A discussion after was just as interesting as the interviews. See it at: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=69fUYNr2v4o>

*Have you any reminiscences or old documents or photos to share? Do tell us (see page 2).*

### Charles Walker, the blind comedian and his wife Ida May



DL/ Walker and May2.jpg

The Music Halls brought a huge wave of international talent and diversity to Brixton in the late 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> century. Many of the names and faces simply faded away with the passing of time. Our project *Music Hall Brixton & Beyond* aims to uncover lost histories and put names back on the map. One such couple are black American comedians Charles Walker and his wife Ida May.

During an exhausting 3-year tour of Australia, Charles, age 33, began to lose his sight while at the Melbourne Opera House in 1903. They broke off their Australian engagements and took the long sea journey to England to seek treatment. Tragically he went fully blind on the way and never recovered.

Once in London, they continued to perform. Charles and Ida worked out a secret code that enabled him to know exactly where on the stage he needed to be. Worried about audience reaction, they did not tell anyone for over a year, but their popularity soared when it became public. Charles became known as the great blind comedian.

One of the earliest listings of them performing in London is at the **Brixton Empress** in October 1903. From

there they toured around the country. In 1909, their 18-year-old daughter Leonora Walker made her first stage performance with them, also at the Brixton Empress.

The newspapers of the era claim Walker & May were the first black couple to perform the 'cake walk' on stage. This was a style of popular dance that later inspired ragtime and is thought to have originated from black American slaves.

But good fortune did not follow their fame. The Walkers lived at 69 Mostyn Road between 1904-1906 before moving to Akerman Road then back to 30 Mostyn Road. In the 1911 census they were staying in lodging rooms at 100 Akerman Road.

Music halls were hit hard when war broke out in 1914 and work slowed because of the new competition from cinemas.

For reasons not entirely clear, Charles and Ida were deported to America in 1918 and sailed 3rd class back to the country they had not lived in for 20 years. They arrived in New York on April 21<sup>st</sup>, 1918 with just \$23 between them. Their daughter, Leonora had married and stayed in London.

*Christine Beddoe*

*Music Hall Brixton and Beyond held five online talks during the Lambeth Heritage Festival. These are now available on their YouTube channel: [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uy\\_nGc8JGgP4&feature=youtu.be](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uy_nGc8JGgP4&feature=youtu.be)*

*In addition to the talks, the Music Hall Brixton and Beyond collection on Layers of London continues to grow. There are now over 50 short histories of music hall people in and around Brixton, which can be explored street by street at <https://www.layersoflondon.org/map/collections/508>.*

#### **Local History in Lockdown**

Some of the talks provided in this series last year, and during the Lambeth Heritage Festival in September, can be found at <https://www.lambethlocalhistoryforum.org.uk/talks/>

### More Planning Changes

We reported on several important changes in the Town Planning system in the Autumn newsletter, but further changes are already being proposed by the Government. In September the rules were relaxed to allow changes of use among shops and commercial buildings without planning permission, creating a new generic Use Class E. The latest proposal is to relax controls even further and allow commercial uses to be converted to residential use without planning permission. Previously this was limited to small shops of less than 150 square metres. Only a few building types, such as pubs, theatres and live music venues, would be exempt.

The Government claims the new rights will support high streets by increasing footfall from new residents and bring empty shops and offices back into use. However, planning professionals have pointed out that the changes will create dead breaks in shopping parades and prevent councils from exercising any meaningful control, such as regrouping shops to keep a centre attractive and focused. The proposals would also allow conversions within Conservation Areas, such as Brixton Town Centre.

The Permitted Development approach has already been heavily criticised for producing sub-standard flats without contributing to the supply of affordable housing as any normal planning application would have to.

The current consultation also proposes a new fast track planning route for public service buildings – including schools, colleges and hospitals – to expand facilities by up to 25% of their current footprint, or up to 250 sq. metres, whichever is greater. This would allow sites that expanded previously to expand again.

The deadline for comments is 28 January. The full proposals can be seen at <https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/supporting-housing-delivery-and-public-service-infrastructure>

*Alan Piper (based on material from the RIBA website, <https://www.architecture.com> )*

### Conservation Areas review Lambeth Consultation on Conservation Area Boundaries

At the end of 2020 Lambeth Council issued a series of consultation papers asking for comments on proposals to change the boundaries of some of the borough's Conservation Areas, including the Brixton Town Centre, Brockwell Park, Loughborough Park and Ferndale Conservation Areas. You can find copies of the Brixton Society's responses to these papers on our website. Here's a short summary of what we said.

Most of the changes proposed by the Council are minor boundary changes which would add small groups of properties which are similar to properties already included. We thought that these proposals made sense and said we supported them.

In addition, we have asked for two areas to be added to the Conservation Areas in our patch.

Firstly, we asked Lambeth to extend the boundaries of **the Brockwell Park Conservation Area** to include the Cressingham Gardens Estate.

Since 1999 the boundaries of the Brockwell Park Conservation area have been extended to include a number of neighbouring residential area in recognition of the importance that these areas have to preserving and maintaining the park's setting.

In the time since the last review of Brockwell Park CA, Historic England has recommended that the boundaries should be extended to include the whole of the Cressingham Gardens Estate. This was in recognition of the skill taken by Lambeth's architects to respect the Estate's setting, with low buildings that appear below the tree line when viewed from the park and open spaces which bring a park-like character into the estate.

The Brixton Society agrees with Historic England and we have asked Lambeth Council to give HE's recommendation the serious consideration it deserves.

Secondly, we have asked Lambeth to extend the boundaries of the **Brixton Town Centre**

# Planning News

Conservation Area to include the Brixton Recreation Centre.

In 2016, four years after the last review of the Brixton CA the Brixton Recreation Centre has achieved statutory Grade 2 listing. Historic England's recommendation that the Rec should be listed was based mainly on the quality of its interior, but the exterior also makes a positive contribution to the Conservation Area at street level and to views of the Central Brixton roofscape from the railway viaduct.

While Historic England did not recommend that International House should be listed, the building is in effect the Recreation Centre's Siamese twin, joined at basement, ground and first floor levels. Any major change to International House would have a major impact on and probably damage the setting of the Recreation Centre, and for that reason we feel that International House should accompany the Rec into the Brixton CA.

*Vivienne Lewis.*



*International House from Canterbury Crescent, with stairway down from the walkway passing the Rec entrance and Photofusion Gallery.*  
*HP/Pics/2019-12-07-HBx-IMG9345.jpg*

## London Plan adopted

Above the individual borough plans, the Mayor's London Plan lays down an overall strategy and attempts to join up what adjacent boroughs are doing. The emphasis is on transport and strategic developments, but there are also supporting documents such as Housing Standards which are widely followed by the boroughs. The Mayor's policy on Tall Buildings may also be relevant here, given Lambeth's cavalier approach to this issue.

News reached us just before Christmas that the Secretary of State had approved most aspects of the Plan, with formal adoption of the definitive version expected in the next month or two.

## Changes for Houses in Multiple Occupation

Lambeth Council is currently consulting on changes to licensing arrangements for HMOs – in effect, houses shared by several non-related residents. They propose to lower the threshold for registration from 5 occupants down to three individuals. They estimate this would roughly double the number of HMOs in their licensing scheme, and help ensure basic standards of amenities are maintained by landlords.

The Private Rented sector in Lambeth has been increasing in Lambeth in recent years, with nearly 50,000 households now renting privately. Among them are about 5,000 HMOs by the present definition. The consultation runs until 12 March – more information at [www.lambeth.gov.uk/HMOlicensingconsultation](http://www.lambeth.gov.uk/HMOlicensingconsultation)

We have also been concerned about a number of recent planning applications for Larger HMOs (for 10-30 rooms), which present their own challenges. Lambeth has standards for student housing or hostels, but those are not quite the same thing. We have therefore developed our own criteria, and put these forward in November during the Examination in Public on the latest revision of the Lambeth Local Plan.

*Alan Piper.*

## Entertainment & Hospitality



2005-07-01.jpg

### That's entertainment

Since the heyday of music hall over a century ago, live entertainment has somehow carried on in Brixton, chiefly in pubs, but several which regularly hosted performances have been lost in the past 30 years, like the Loughborough Hotel, Brady's, and the George IV. Local venues are key to new music groups getting experience and building a following. These are desperate times for all pubs, but it's good to hear of one that's not going quietly...

### Saving The Windmill

Like other live music venues around Britain and the world, the renowned Windmill in Blenheim Gardens is fighting to survive the impact of Covid-19. The Windmill has gained particular national attention in the last few years due to its role in the emergence of a Brixton-focussed music scene, which includes such acclaimed bands as Shame, Fat White Family, Black Country New Road, Black Midi and Goat Girl.

Unfortunately, the business's sole trader status made it ineligible for support from the Government's Cultural Recovery Fund when its events had to stop, and despite diverse fund-raising efforts – including distanced micro-gigs and sales of digital music, merchandise and even a book by Will Hodgkinson of *The Times* – it was named one of the 30 most at-risk venues by the Music Venue Trust in the autumn.

Renewed on-line fund-raising followed, with a Crowdfunder campaign attracting over 1400 donations alongside further music releases, streamed lockdown shows, and an on-line auction of items donated by supportive

musicians (including Liam Gallagher). These efforts by the small team led by Tim Perry were thankfully matched by an emergency grant of £10,000 from the Music Venues Trust in mid-December, itself enabled by extensive public fund-raising. The Windmill has said that this should cover its rent for the next 3 months, but it continues to raise funds via the links below and plans to approach Lambeth Council and the Mayor to help it survive the crisis.

*Joanne Nightingale.*

Crowdfunder:

<https://www.crowdfunder.co.uk/savewindmillbrixton>

Music and merchandise:

<https://windmillbrixton.bandcamp.com>

Limited edition "Save the 30" football shirts:

<https://puckd.bigcartel.com/product/the-windmill-savethe30-shirt>

### Hard Times for Hospitality

The past 20 years saw an increasing diversity of eating places in Brixton, but the impact of the Coronavirus pandemic and its associated restrictions seem to be turning into a mass extinction event for the hospitality sector. Some outlets are surviving by focussing on the take-away and home delivery side of the business, such as Indian-themed **Kricket** in Atlantic Road: [www.kricket.co.uk](http://www.kricket.co.uk)

This was a growing element for some firms even before the first lock-down, and the Government has temporarily removed the distinction between restaurants (class A3) and take-aways (A5). A few others have switched to retail operations.

In spite of the challenging climate, there are still people opening up in Brixton. Adejoke Bakare opened **Chishuru**, her West African themed restaurant in Market Row back in September, after winning the amateur category in the Brixton Kitchen competition in 2019. More ambitious will be **Bellefields**, a Mediterranean restaurant supported by Squire & Partners, scheduled to open in April behind the Department Store, hoping perhaps that the worst may be over by then.

*Alan Piper.*

# Beyond Brixton

## Ruskin's legacy lives on

*Back in 2019, our neighbours in the Herne Hill Society were marking the bicentenary of the birth of John Ruskin, art critic, social reformer and one of the moving spirits behind forming the National Trust.*

A new handbook from John Ruskin's educational charity, the Guild of St. George, provides practical guidance on running successful community projects, inspired by Ruskin's thinking on how to make lives happier. *Paradise is Here: Building Community Around Things That Matter* shares knowledge from the Guild's 6-year programme of activity in Sheffield, where it delivered 76 events around the community, working with over 100 partners, practitioners and volunteers and engaging over 25,000 people. The 80-page book has been compiled by Ruth Nutter, the Guild's creative producer.

I have negotiated a 10% discount on the £8 price if you quote the code Civic 10 when ordering – on-line via <https://www.guildofstgeorge.org.uk/paradise-is-here-building-community-around-things-that-matter> or else ISBN 978-1-9162882-4-9

*Joanne Nightingale.*

## Keith Holdaway

We regret to report the death of Keith Holdaway in November. For many years Keith lived on Leigham Court Road, on the boundary of Streatham and Norwood, organising local history exhibits and lectures for the amenity societies for both areas, but mainly the latter until a dispute over how the Norwood Society's archives should be safeguarded.

He continued to be active in local history, as an associate member of the Lambeth Local History Forum, while maintaining contact with other heritage groups in Croydon and putting on talks for the South London History Group at the Phoenix Centre in Westow Hill until the end of 2019.

Keith's working life was spent in the Insurance industry, and he could still recall childhood visits to the Bon Marche department store in Brixton in the 1930s.

## Museums move on-line

We often use this page to flag up approaching exhibitions at museums and galleries around London. Conventional openings have been frustrated by the renewed lockdown, but most cultural institutions have moved to put material on-line. Here are a few highlights:

The **Museum of London** offers a range of digital events and videos, ranging from the Bronze Age to the roots of Dub and Reggae music in London:

[www.museumoflondon.org.uk/whats-on](http://www.museumoflondon.org.uk/whats-on)

The various branches of the Tate Gallery can be accessed via [www.tate.org.uk](http://www.tate.org.uk) but on the opening page, scroll down past the exhibition details to **Delve into centuries of Art online**.

Similarly, for the British Museum go to: [www.britishmuseum.org](http://www.britishmuseum.org) and scroll down to **What's Online**.

Its former stablemate, the British Library at [www.bl.uk](http://www.bl.uk) may also be closed but it continues to offer services (and blogs) on-line.

For the National Gallery, access virtual gallery tours and on-line events from [www.nationalgallery.org.uk](http://www.nationalgallery.org.uk)

## Virtual Tours beyond the museum

Among those offering on-line tours is the **London Transport Museum**, including a choice of 3 tours based on disused Underground stations, King William Street, Brompton Road, or a combination of Kingsway (including the old tram tunnel) Holborn and Aldwych. More details at [www.ltmuseum.co.uk/hidden-london/virtual-tours](http://www.ltmuseum.co.uk/hidden-london/virtual-tours)

## Or self-guided tours

For those who prefer to get out and see things in the flesh, **Open City** - the people behind London Open House weekend – have begun publishing handbooks for self-guided versions of their cycling tours. These are available on subscription, for £35 for 6 months or £60 for a full year of monthly tours. See their website, <https://shop.openhouselondon.org.uk/collections>

## Notes & News

### Become a Market Trader

Lambeth Council has invited applications for trading in Brixton's popular street market. You can apply to be a **casual** trader, operating on the days you choose from any pitch available on the day, or a **temporary** trader operating Monday-Saturday all year round from an allocated pitch. The Council considers there are enough fruit and vegetable traders already but is keen to boost the number and mix of stalls. Last year there were up to 12 pitches available in Electric Avenue, 13 in Popes Road, just 2 in Brixton Station Road and 3 across in Tunstall Road. Applications will be accepted up to the end of January, using the forms to be found on the Council's website at [www.lambeth.gov.uk/streetmarket](http://www.lambeth.gov.uk/streetmarket) or contact [street-trading@lambeth.gov.uk](mailto:street-trading@lambeth.gov.uk)

### New Life for Club 414?

Last month we were contacted by the incoming proprietors of **The Ton of Brix**, a new collaboration between Brixton Jamm and music promoters Percolate. Their stated ambition is to take on 414 Coldharbour Lane, from which Club 414 was evicted some 18 months earlier. Not surprisingly, there were negative comments on the Brixton Buzz website from those who regret losing the old Club 414 but at least there is continuity with Brixton's rich musical heritage – Brixton Jamm has been welcoming local clubbers for over 20 years, while Percolate started out at Simulacra Studios (under the old East Brixton Station) 7 years ago, and has since gone on to stage parties around the UK and beyond.

They aim to provide a venue where local musical talent can perform, and to showcase a wide variety of dance music as a nightclub. There may also be daytime use as workspace or to host cultural events and talks. Enquiries to [simon@percolatemusic.co.uk](mailto:simon@percolatemusic.co.uk)

### Lambeth boundary changes

Boundaries of the wards within the borough have been under review since last summer. The latest proposals from the Boundary Commission should open for comment shortly (until 15 March) – see [www.lambeth.gov.uk/consultations](http://www.lambeth.gov.uk/consultations)

### Making Connections

Successive lockdowns have heightened the importance of Information Technology to keep in touch when personal contact is restricted.

**Recycling:** If you have upgraded, how about donating your old laptop or mobile to a good cause? In a time when access to the Internet has become so vital, Lambeth TechAid has been collecting surplus devices to wipe and pass on to those in need, through schools and community groups. There is a simple on-line donation form on their website at <https://lambeth-techaid.ju.ma>

**Making better use of what you have:** If lack of skills holds you back, Clear Community Web can provide short courses, on-line or doorstep help with computers, tablets and mobile phones, to pensioners, carers and people on universal credit. See their website, [www.communitytechsupport.co.uk](http://www.communitytechsupport.co.uk)

**Upgrading on a Budget:** If you need better software for your laptop or PC, Tekgia offer a range of Microsoft programs at discounted prices for charities, churches, schools and their employees. More information at: <https://www.tekgia.com/discounts-for-churches-charities-etc/>

### Test and Trace in Brixton

Just before Christmas, Brixton had a drive-through Mobile Testing Unit, operating on the old dustcart site in Somerleyton Road, also dealing with cases on foot.

If you experience symptoms, phone 119 first to book a test, or use the website [www.nhs.uk/coronavirus](http://www.nhs.uk/coronavirus) which can also be used to book home testing kits.

If you have no obvious symptoms but need a test for work purposes, book an appointment online for one of 3 local sites (the Town Hall, Brixton Windmill and Brockwell Park): <https://beta.lambeth.gov.uk/coronavirus-covid-19>

King's College Hospital have pointed out that their emergency departments remain very busy. If it's not an emergency, call your GP practice or the NHS 111 service for quick health advice – [www.111.nhs.uk](http://www.111.nhs.uk)