

# THE BRIXTON SOCIETY NEWSLETTER

Spring issue, April 2022

No.245, Quarterly issue,  
Distributed free to members.

Registered with the London Forum of Amenity Societies, Registered charity no. 1058103, website: [www.brixtonsociety.org.uk](http://www.brixtonsociety.org.uk)

## Getting out and about

At last, we are resuming live meetings and guided walks, after two years of on-off restrictions. We feature a number of events in this issue, which we are trying to distribute early in the month so that you have more advance warning of what's coming up.

There is still some uncertainty about a resurgence in Covid, and other challenges, so please check our website (as above) in case of changes in arrangements.

For any late changes of our plans, we try to alert most of our members via e-mail. If you have changed your preferred e-mail address in the past year or two, please tell us via [info@brixtonsociety.org.uk](mailto:info@brixtonsociety.org.uk)

## Free with this issue!

If you receive a paper copy of the newsletter, you should find enclosed a copy of the Local History Walks leaflet from the Lambeth Local History Forum, together with a leaflet from the Friends of Windmill Gardens listing the open days and events at Brixton Windmill.

If you receive a digital version, we have still included the key links to the same information on page 2. In either case, we must stress the need to book in advance for all guided walks and tours, so we can manage numbers.

And if you cannot attend after all, please cancel so that somebody else can be fitted in – or the volunteer guide can take the day off if there are no bookings!

*Alan Piper.*



*With Council elections approaching, the Town Hall clock tower returns as our front page picture, but this time an inside view.*

*Dbx-CU-2017-Dec-06-01.jpg*

## Monthly Market Walks are back

Our popular **Brixton Market** walks start again from **9<sup>th</sup> April**. After a 2-year gap, the charge is now £5 a head (including the guide book) and we will no longer have a stall in the market for late bookings, so book in advance via our website, [www.brixtonsociety.org.uk/events](http://www.brixtonsociety.org.uk/events)

We offer a choice of several other guided walk routes between April and September, kicking off on Sunday **10 April** with a walk along **Railton Road**, scene of the 1981 Brixton Riots and much else. There may be some overlap with a **Blue Plaques** themed walk on Sunday **29 May**. During the summer months, we will also be exploring Tulse Hill, Myatt's Fields, Larkhall Park, Stockwell Green and the western fringes of Brixton Town Centre. Although there is no set charge for these walks, donations when booking, or on the day, are very welcome.

# Diary of Events – Early Summer 2022

## Committee Dates

Our Executive Committee meets monthly, at 7 pm on the second Thursday, to plan activities and agree our response to current issues. We are resuming live meetings, but locations may have to vary over the next few months. These 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 April (Brixton Tate Library)
- 12 May (venue tbc)
- 14 July

## Vida Walsh Centre

Before successive lockdowns, this was our usual venue for committee meetings, but it is currently being remodelled by Age UK Lambeth and a date for re-opening is still awaited. *2b Saltoun Road, SW2 1EP (facing Windrush Square).*

## 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 (before **25 June**) to the Secretary, Alan Piper, 82 Mayall Road, SE24 0PJ, or by e-mail to [info@brixtonsociety.org.uk](mailto:info@brixtonsociety.org.uk)

## Thursday 9 June - Annual General Meeting and Social Evening

7 pm at the Windmill Education building, Windmill Gardens, off Blenheim Gardens SW2. In addition to considering the annual report and accounts, and electing a committee to serve for the next year, a chance to get together for a drink and chat.

## Events arranged by other groups

*Please check directly with organisers for any queries over times or costs.*

## Brixton Windmill events

In addition to monthly open weekends, special events will include:  
The Beer and Bread Festival on **Monday 2 May**,  
A Harvest Festival event on **Sunday 25 September**.

And note there will be **two** open weekends during April, 9<sup>th</sup>/10<sup>th</sup> and 16<sup>th</sup>/17<sup>th</sup>. See [www.brixtonwindmill.org](http://www.brixtonwindmill.org)

## Spot the early bird!

It's a 6 am start for the Spring Bird Walk through Brockwell Park on Sunday **10 April**, from the Herne Hill gate. Essential to book via <https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/277437953387> (FoBP/RSPB members only event). *Friends of Brockwell Park*

## Archaeology in Southwark

**Tuesday 12 April:** a Roman cemetery in Lant Street.  
**Tuesday 10 May:** Recent excavations in Southwark Street, both talks begin at

7-30 pm at 106 The Cut, SE1 (across the road from the Old Vic). £1 donation. *Southwark & Lambeth Archaeological Society.*

## Local History Events

Other groups within the Lambeth Local History Forum will occasionally post details of their talks or events on the LLHF website at [www.lambethlocalhistoryforum.org.uk](http://www.lambethlocalhistoryforum.org.uk)

## Kennington Bioscope

This is a strand of silent films shown regularly at the Cinema Museum, based in part of the old Lambeth Workhouse, 2 Dugard Way, off Renfrew Road SE11 4TH. These are only part of an ongoing film programme: see their website for more – [www.cinemamuseum.org.uk](http://www.cinemamuseum.org.uk)

## Myatt's Fields Park

The Myatt's Fields Park Project holds its annual general meeting at the park depot on Saturday **14 May** between noon and 3 pm (lunch available). This marks the 20<sup>th</sup> birthday of the project, set up to steer a £3 million renovation of the park. Enquiries to [enquiries@myattsfieldspark.info](mailto:enquiries@myattsfieldspark.info)

## Dulwich Picture Gallery

Their exhibition of works by Helen Frankenthaler (1928-2011), American abstract expressionist, will finish on Easter Monday, **18 April**. More details of all their events at [www.dpg.art/whats-on](http://www.dpg.art/whats-on)

## Amenities News



Spring cleaning the notice-board in the Square  
DL/ img.3050.jpg

### Windrush Square

Following the controversy last Remembrance Day with two competing ceremonies, there has been rising interest in making something better of Windrush Square, reinforced by concern over the disruption caused by the slow progress of works to surround the square with bollards. Since January, Ros Griffiths has convened a series of on-line meetings with stakeholders, as an Engagement Hub, and as a result, it's looking as if there is enough support to re-launch the Friends of Windrush Square as an independent entity.

After the remodelling of the Square in 2010/11, the Friends have only existed as a sub-committee of the Brixton Society, because there were not enough active people to sustain it as a group in its own right. It has not been possible to do much beyond nagging the Parks department about neglect, together with a little gardening, limited by the inadequacies of the square's design.

There have been suggestions of organising more community events in the square, as a counterweight to the intrusion of commercial events. The square also needs to be better maintained, in keeping with its focal position in Brixton and proximity to the Town Hall. A stronger Friends group should be able to attract more resources, but this is likely to need a restructuring as a CIO or CIC, as undertaken by the Friends of Windmill

Gardens a couple of years ago. Work is continuing to firm up these plans and there will be another on-line meeting of the Engagement Hub on Monday **25 April**.

There is likely to be an item on the agenda of the Brixton Society's AGM on **9 June** (details on opposite page) which may be as simple as recognising the Friends' independence.

Our own structure, as a registered charity and an unincorporated association, limits what we can do in terms of getting and spending money, but we don't want to hold back fresh ideas.

If you have any queries or suggestions in the meantime, please contact me at [apiperbrix@aol.com](mailto:apiperbrix@aol.com)

*Alan Piper.*

### Coming Events in the Square

Two events already in the pipeline are:

**Sunday 24 April:** 12 noon to 4 pm, to mark the first anniversary of the unveiling of the Cherry Groce Memorial.

**Sunday 26 June:** 10-30 am to 12 noon, a parade and march-past by the West Indian Association of Service Personnel, followed by music and entertainment until 6 pm.



*Windrush Square in December 2020.*

### Reclaiming the Rec.

Lambeth Council is bringing management of the Brixton Recreation Centre back in house from April next year. BRUG (the Brixton Rec User Group) held a public meeting on 15 March, attended by over 100 people.

Those present welcomed the move, having experienced Greenwich Leisure/ Better's tendency to focus on the more profitable activities like exercise machines, rather than developing the full range of activities for which the centre was designed. However, Lambeth did not escape criticism for its past years of under-investment, and a fresh approach was called for. Expect to hear more as the months count down to the change of management, but be wary of Better losing its motivation as the end approaches.

If you missed the meeting but still have ideas for future improvements, BRUG would still like to hear from you, at [brixtonbrug@gmail.com](mailto:brixtonbrug@gmail.com)

Now would also be a good time to ask your prospective councillors where they stand on supporting the Rec.



*View of the Rec from the London Overground.  
P/img.0044.jpg*

### And around the Rec...

Work should now be underway in Brixton Station Road as part of Lambeth's **Revitalising Brixton's Rec Quarter** project. The first phase is to improve the street market infrastructure with the introduction of new power bollards for the market traders, so they can power their equipment and light their stalls. Some of the other bollards may be replaced by Sheffield-style cycle stands, parallel with the road to minimise obstruction. The street works will take up to 8 weeks, with another 4 weeks for the electrical works.

Further works to the public realm, to the exterior of the Rec, and to the shopfronts below it, are due to start in the Autumn, together with the long-awaited fit-out of space behind the shops as new workspace.

Enquiries to Martha Levi Smythe, Neighbourhood Regeneration Manager, at [mlevismythe@lambeth.gov.uk](mailto:mlevismythe@lambeth.gov.uk) or phone (020) 7926 4203. Shifting of stalls to suit progress of the works is being dealt with by Trevor Virtue, [TVirtue@lambeth.gov.uk](mailto:TVirtue@lambeth.gov.uk)

### Summer events in Brockwell Park

There will be a block of ticketed events in the park between Friday 27 May and Sunday 5<sup>th</sup> June, so up to a quarter of the park will not be available to the public for a period including set-up and take-down times. The events are:

**Wide Awake** on Friday 27 & Saturday 28,  
**City Splash** on Sunday 29 May,  
**Jubilation** on Thursday 2<sup>nd</sup> June,  
**Mighty Hoopla** on Friday 3<sup>rd</sup> & Saturday 4<sup>th</sup>,  
**Cross the Tracks** on Sunday 5<sup>th</sup> June.

Details are awaited of additional public events on the Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday.

In addition, the Lambeth Country Show will return for the weekend **16/17 July** and we hope to have a presence there again.

### Tai Chi alongside Brixton Windmill

Thanks to a grant from the IKEA Places Called Home fund, some free sessions are being run for local residents on Wednesdays between 11 am and 12 noon. The first batch of 4 taster sessions started on 16 March, but there will be another batch starting in late **April**, so you still have a chance. At the end of the series, you can progress to the current series of paid sessions (£3 per class) if interested.

These sessions are organised by the Friends of Windmill Gardens, using a qualified Tai Chi teacher supported by volunteers. Following each class, there will be half an hour to meet with other participants and get help in finding other support services to suit. All booking enquiries to [jean@brixtonwindmill.org](mailto:jean@brixtonwindmill.org)



DL/Elec-Van-Pulross-20.jpg

### Lambeth's Climate Action Plan Examined

Lambeth Council's Cabinet approved a Climate Action Plan on 21 March, following on from the work of the Climate Assembly which we reported in our Autumn Newsletter. Here we take a look at the key points of the Plan, but also the challenges and contradictions that must be dealt with to achieve any progress.

The **introduction** re-states the issues and highlights the need to reduce greenhouse gas emissions generally. Rising energy costs are now a strong incentive to conserve energy in any case, but the Plan also has wider aims to safeguard green infrastructure, reduce waste and pollution, and encourage biodiversity. The Plan sets ambitious goals to be achieved by 2030, but that's only 8 years away. And while Sustainability is the watchword, it's less clear that its implications are fully understood in the Town Hall.



The view from Vauxhall Station img-0235.jpg

### Buildings and Energy

Buildings are responsible for the highest proportion of carbon dioxide emissions within Lambeth, and in 2018 42% of all emissions came from our homes. The plan urges retrofitting all existing buildings to level C on their Energy Performance Certificate rating. New

buildings will need to be Net Zero standard. Both embodied and operational carbon will need to be considered in new developments.

#### **Challenge 1 – high rise, high density**

Lambeth Planners are keen on high-rise high-density development, seen at its worst around Vauxhall but spreading to Brixton with their championing of Hondo Towers, and the 18-storey tower approved for Landor Road. The aim has been to maximise developers' contributions (Community Infrastructure Levy) to offset cuts in Central Government funding. Meanwhile, the real community infrastructure is overloaded, with daylight and green space being much reduced.

#### **Challenge 2 – rebuild or retrofit?**

Lambeth is moving slowly to rebuild 6 estates via its Homes for Lambeth offshoot, but the overall effect will be to reduce the number of Council homes. Lambeth Eco-Housing Group (an offshoot of Transition Town Brixton) has estimated that the programme will demolish 914 Council homes and put back 20 less, alongside 2500 more for sale at full market price. Neither are the new builds as energy efficient as they should be. The current programme only really benefits the building industry and their consultants, rather than Council tenants. Limited public resources need to be used more effectively.

#### **Challenge 3 – upgrading homes**

Probably the largest task is to help people to make their current homes more energy efficient. Needs are both for reliable technical advice and for financial support with the up-front costs. Fortunately, Lambeth is one of 13 London boroughs piloting a new Green Homes Grant scheme from Central Government. This is aimed at lower-income home-owners but is also available to landlords with eligible tenants. Enquiries to [sustainability@lambeth.gov.uk](mailto:sustainability@lambeth.gov.uk) or phone 0800 233 5655 in office hours.

#### **Challenge 4 – summer overheating**

Right now, it's rising energy bills that concern most people, but the sting in the tail of climate change is increased risk of excessive heat in the summer, particularly for highly-glazed high-rise buildings in dense urban areas. Instead of using less energy in summer, you will spend

# Green Issues

*more to run fans or air-conditioning to keep conditions bearable.*

## Transport

Carbon dioxide emissions from transport of all forms account for a quarter of Lambeth's total, and have been slow to fall, despite 6 out of 10 households not owning a car. Through traffic can only be reduced through a London-wide approach, and the Mayor's Transport Strategy is already looking for a 27% reduction in car mileage by 2030. More sophisticated road pricing is mentioned, but in the meantime expect more general use of on-street parking charges, together with more cycle hangars.

The 4 main policy strands are reducing overall motor traffic by 27%, increasing trips by public transport, walking and cycling to 85% if all trips, using 25% of kerbside space for uses other than car parking, such as bike hangars, planting or playspace, and finally, reducing net emissions from freight and delivery traffic to zero by 2030.



*Cargo bike in Railton LTN img-0056.jpg*

## Challenge 5 – learning from LTNs

*Low Traffic Neighbourhoods have been rolled out by the Council with enthusiasm, but the benefits are uneven – some residents have less traffic but others around the edges have more. The Council has been slow to respond to the access needs of people with disabilities.*

*An alternative approach, suggested by our old friend John Stewart at a recent London Forum webinar, would be a more advanced road charging system than the present ULEZ/ congestion zone approach. There would be*

*higher charges for busier routes, and perhaps for busier times also, with the aim of reducing traffic volumes more widely in urban areas. A shift to hired vehicles would also counter drivers' urge to get the most use out of cars with high ownership costs.*



*Wheely bins on Herne Hill img-0210.jpg*

## Waste and Food

The Plan looks to reduce consumption-based emissions by two thirds by 2030, but much will depend on individual consumers. It suggests increased provision for repair and re-use and promoting low-carbon choices. It sets targets to divert more waste into recycling streams. There is a worthy aim to consider life-cycle emissions in the Council's own purchasing. Urging residents to reduce meat in favour of plant-based foods is probably only getting behind a current trend.

## Challenge 6 – boost re-cycling

*Though domestic recycling rates have crept up, the system is still very basic and fails to make the best use of different waste streams. It would help if a wider range of products could go in our green bins.*

*The weakness of the present approach is that it depends on recycled products having enough market value to cover recovery costs. Reducing packaging or encouraging its re-use would be a more efficient approach.*

## Biodiversity & Environment

The ambition is for 30% of open land to be "naturalised" for the benefit of wildlife by 2030, with pesticides currently being phased out. Green coverage should increase by 15% by 2028, with wildlife networks through the borough.

New development is expected to show a 10% increase in biodiversity on each site. Air quality should be improved towards World Health Organisation targets.

# Green Issues



Bee Urban at Myatt's Fields Park, 2018.

## **Challenge 7 – Urban Intensification**

A major issue is Lambeth Planners' drive to build and pave over the whole borough. This overloads the sewer system, increases flood risk, and leaves little space for greenery and wildlife. Efforts by other Council officers to boost biodiversity and make space for nature are undermined. Much of our area is already short of open space.

## **Challenge 8 – Official Vandalism**

Some departments and contractors still prefer the crude approach of hacking everything back for their own convenience rather than making space for a variety of plant life to thrive. Thus Lambeth Housing recently swept away the vines and mutilated the trees in the shared garden behind Angell Terrace in Brixton Road.

## **Next Steps**

The Council has already set up a **Climate Partnership** with major bodies within the borough, including hospital trusts, academic institutions, the National Theatre, the South Bank Centre and two of the major housing associations active in Lambeth. It's less clear how much attention it will pay to climate campaigners and community groups. The Plan refers to forming an **independent advisory group** and also a **community climate action forum** but says nothing about when or how they will be formed.

## **Challenge 9 – Mobilising Business**

One strand not picked up from the Climate Assembly recommendations is encouraging local business to do more. The South Bank Employers Group accounts for larger firms at the north end of the borough, while Business Improvement Districts provide a channel to engage with smaller firms in local centres. The Brixton BID is already active with several small recycling and sustainability initiatives.

## **Challenge 10 – Community Action**

Progress towards the Plan's targets cannot be achieved by the Council alone. It needs to mobilise the enthusiasm of Lambeth residents and encourage changes in consumer habits. Yet it is difficult to convince people when they see different Council departments pulling in opposite directions.

Of course, there are enthusiastic campaign groups already taking action but there are nearly 1200 active groups already known to the Council, from residents associations to choirs, which could be encouraged to play a more active part in this.

Alan Piper.

## **More Green News**

### **Health Risks of Wood-burning Stoves**

Global Action Plan have alerted us to their upcoming webinar on Thursday **7 April**, from 3-30 to 5 pm. Enquiries to [cleanerair@globalactionplan.org.uk](mailto:cleanerair@globalactionplan.org.uk)

They are also co-ordinating London events for **Clean Air Day** on **16 June**, so if you want to do something locally under this umbrella, contact Tessa, their campaign lead at [tessa.bartholomewgood@globalactionplan.org.uk](mailto:tessa.bartholomewgood@globalactionplan.org.uk)

### **Quiet Routes through urban areas**

A month ago, I joined a Lewisham walk set up by **Tranquil City**, who are promoting quieter walking routes through urban areas as a cleaner air alternative to walking alongside busy main roads. More about them at: [www.tranquilcity.co.uk](http://www.tranquilcity.co.uk)



Stockwell War Memorial IMG-0087.jpg

### Centenary Exhibition

To mark the centenary of the inauguration of the memorial clock tower on Clapham Road, on 3<sup>rd</sup> May 1922, a free exhibition has been arranged at St. Michael's Church, Stockwell Park Road, SW9. It will be open (afternoons only) from Saturday **30 April** to Saturday **7<sup>th</sup> May** (except Sunday). Material on display shows the design competition run by the Royal Academy, early newspaper reports and newly-discovered photographs, reminiscences and a short film about the memorial over the years. Organised by the Friends of Stockwell War Memorial and Gardens, enquiries to [info@stockwellmemorialfriends.org](mailto:info@stockwellmemorialfriends.org)

### Around the Van Gogh House

Our last newsletter reported our visit to the house at 87 Hackford Road and mentioned its use by a series of Artists-in-Residence. From April it will have a Writer-in-Residence, Roma Tearne, who previously lived in the area between 1963 and 1980. Arriving as a refugee at the age of 10, she would pass the house on her way to school. The area, and the house itself, would eventually feature in several of her novels and also in a short film. She plans to excavate her own and others' memories of the

area, and will be compiling a travelogue of the local streets and estates. The surrounding community are now invited to participate, so please get in touch with the project, especially if your time in the area overlapped with Roma's. Please contact Mimi Lanfranchi at [mimi@vangoghhouse.co.uk](mailto:mimi@vangoghhouse.co.uk) (NB - working Thursdays and Fridays only).

### Railton Road design project

What does the street mean to you? A space to reflect on history? Share your passion and feeling about Railton Road. Get involved in a street furniture design project for Railton Road – please register by Monday **11 April** at [bit.ly/railton-rd](https://bit.ly/railton-rd) or text to 07 395 193 772 or e-mail: [railtonroad@inuse-reuse.co.uk](mailto:railtonroad@inuse-reuse.co.uk)

### Review of historic links to Slavery and Colonialism

In October 2020, in response to the Black Lives Matter campaign, Lambeth Council announced a review of memorials and place-names associated with the trans-Atlantic slave trade. Lambeth Archives subsequently carried out extensive research and identified a small number of cases of direct links. As a diverse borough, Lambeth is keen to review troubling links and to assess if it can legally adopt new names to commemorate people who have contributed to the borough we know today.

The approach today is more considered than when the issue was last raised in the 1980s, when Lambeth councillors had a burst of enthusiasm for re-naming places after Black heroes, but mostly lacking local connections. Angell Park was renamed Max Roach Park, though the only person I recall recognising the name of this American jazz drummer was the local police commander at the time.

It's worth noting that road and block names are largely chosen by the developers, often with an eye on marketing. Changing them later is a cumbersome process, so we still have a Rhodesia Road in SW9.

Inevitably some building names change over time to suit the owners. Scinde House in King's Avenue took its name from the Indian province seized by the house's first occupant, General Sir William Napier. After his death in

## Heritage Focus

1860 it became Dunderave House to suit a later owner, and since 1918 it has been Victoria House. This does not commemorate the late Queen, but came from the Music Hall star, Vesta Victoria, resident between 1918 and 1926.

Lambeth is still consulting on this issue, and the closing date for comments on their Commonplace site is **31 May** – go to: <https://lambethunited.commonplace.is/>

*Alan Piper.*

### The Great London Smog of 1952

Researchers for a Channel 5 documentary are seeking memories of this event. If any of our older members can assist, call Charley Leach on 07 923 114 575 or [charley.leach@dsp.tv](mailto:charley.leach@dsp.tv)

### Sunset over Herne Hill

Sub-titled John Ruskin and South London, this book was published by the Herne Hill Society last November. This is the first book to look in detail at how this influential and controversial thinker forged his ideas in South London, where he lived well into old age. Here he witnessed the destruction of the natural environment of his childhood by railway building and uncontrolled suburban growth. He was horrified by the scale of the Crystal Palace, glinting on his skyline, and despaired at the builders who misapplied his “moral” Gothic architecture as stick-on ornament.

The book was meticulously researched and written by Jon Newman of Lambeth Archives and the Herne Hill Society’s Vice-Chair, Laurence Marsh. It concludes with a detailed and fascinating review of the historical and social context of Herne Hill and Denmark Hill as the area evolved during Ruskin’s lifetime, and his family’s place within it. It includes a specially-commissioned map of John Ruskin’s South London c.1870 by David Western. Priced at £14, it is available through the Herne Hill Society’s website, <https://www.hernehillsociety.org.uk/publication/s/sunset-over-herne-hill/>

*This notice missed our last newsletter due to lack of space, with 3 other books highlighted.*

### Remembering Jeff Thomas

Friends of Windmill Gardens reported the death in January of Jeff Thomas, who had retired as a trustee in November. He had signed up as a volunteer in 2015, following a tour of the mill, and became increasingly active both with the organisation of the Friends, and in a practical role at their events. He was one of the core team of volunteer millers producing flour from the 1902 millstones.

Jeff was born in Wales, grew up in Bridgend and went on to study architecture at Cardiff University, but soon moved into information technology. In 1986 he moved to London, initially in the IT department of the Home Office, then with IBM until taking voluntary redundancy in 2015. He returned to full-time work in Central London in 2019.

He bought a flat in Brixton in 1994 and became an active member of the Holmewood Neighbourhood Association. He used his IT and photography skills to document the Friends activities and to create short videos for visitors.

His untimely death at the age of 55 is a sad loss, and his friends at the windmill miss his strength, calmness and creativity.

*News from Friends of Windmill Gardens.*

### Nelly Roberts plaque

There is a lot of competition for Historic England’s blue plaques, so we were unsuccessful with our bid to mark the home (and studio) of Nelly Roberts, long-serving orchid artist at 92 Loughborough Road. We are supporting Tracey Gregory’s efforts to install a plaque by other means, so there may be a crowd-funding appeal soon.

### Work in Progress

There are several topics currently being researched in odd moments that eventually will result in future newsletter articles, web pages or even new publications. If you have a query on a local history topic, we will try to point you in the right direction, though our time for research is very limited.

## Wellbeing and Creative Activities

### Get Creative at Art4Space

A series of events are coming up at their studios at 31 Jeffreys Road, SW4 6QU.

**Spring Crafty Workshops for children** and families during the Easter holidays. Free with priority for children receiving free school meals or with disabilities or special educational needs, food included but max. 10 per session, so book promptly!

Monday 4 or 11 April, 2-5 pm (12-18 years),  
Tuesday 5 or 12 April, 10 am – 1 pm (mixed),  
Wednesday 6 or 13 April, 11 – 2pm (mixed),  
Thursday 7 or 14 April, 9 am -12 (age 5-8s and families),  
Friday 8 April, 11 am to 2 pm.

**Creative Remedies – mixed media projects with LGBTQ+ focus:** Wednesdays 10 am to 12-30 for 10 weeks from **4<sup>th</sup> May** (except 1<sup>st</sup> June). Free and all materials provided, for Lambeth residents with a low income or unemployed, but only 12 places on offer.

**Creative Community Champions:** Fridays 10 am to 12-30 for 10 weeks from **6<sup>th</sup> May** (except 3<sup>rd</sup> June). A collective textile project, free and all materials provided, for Lambeth residents with a low income or unemployed, but only 12 places on offer.

All enquiries to [jewels@art4space.co.uk](mailto:jewels@art4space.co.uk) – you may need to complete a jotform for the adult courses.

### Longfield Hall

This community hall is at the corner of Burton Road SW9 and Knatchbull Road SE5, across the street from the Minet Library/ Lambeth Archives. They have a busy programme of dance, fitness and wellbeing sessions:

Monday & Thursday evenings: Capoeira.  
Mondays at 10 am: Pilates.  
Mondays at 12-30 pm – Dance & Meditation class with Regina.  
Mondays 4 pm: Perform drama classes for children.  
Monday evenings: The Directors Playground (for young actors and directors).  
Tuesdays at 10 am: 50+ Yoga with Laura.

Tuesday evenings: Zumba with Molly Dye.  
- Butoh dance class with Aleks.  
Tuesdays to Saturdays: Ballet, Tap & Stage Club (McAlpine Dance).

Wednesdays, 10 am: Longfield Voices choir.  
Wednesdays 1-30 pm: Everyone can dance.  
Wednesday evenings: Yogafusion with Kevin.

Thursday evenings – Yoga with Sarah.  
Fridays at 10 am: 50+ Box Fit with Michelle.  
Fridays: Adult ballet and tap (McAlpine Dance)  
Saturdays, 10 am: Tai Chi with WuShu London

More details on their website at [www.longfieldhall.org.uk](http://www.longfieldhall.org.uk)



*Tai Chi session at Brixton Tate Library, 2019: sessions are still run at Windmill Gardens.  
DL/img-5069.jpg*

### Garden Visits

Each Spring, the Dulwich Society circulates a glossy booklet of local gardens opening to visitors over the summer months. No Brixton examples this year, but they still managed to include examples from Herne Hill, Camberwell, Forest Hill and Sydenham in addition to their Dulwich core. Details are also on the website at [www.dulwichsociety.com/gardens](http://www.dulwichsociety.com/gardens)

Not far from Tulse Hill Station, at 323 Norwood Road SE24, several garden openings at the **South London Botanical Institute** are listed:

Sunday 24 April, from 2 pm to 5 pm;  
Thursday 19 May, 6 pm to 8 pm;  
Sunday 12 June, from 2 pm to 5 pm;  
Saturday 30 July, from 2 pm to 5 pm;  
Thursday 19 August, 6 pm to 8 pm;  
enquiries to [info@slbi.org.uk](mailto:info@slbi.org.uk)

## Beyond Brixton

### Cherry Blossom Time

Mak Gilchrist of the **Edible Bus Stop** recently highlighted the London Blossom Garden, part of the Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park at Stratford. In the past few weeks, the trees have been coming into bloom, so try to take a look soon, before they fade again.

### Fulham Palace Green Meet

Another excuse to cross the Thames – visit heritage site Fulham Palace for a family-friendly event on **Sunday 8 May**. The Green Meet is a chance to discover and celebrate the value of nature, ecology, biodiversity and sustainability through a variety of activities for all ages. Browse the green market and discover eco-friendly options from stallholders and local businesses. Listen to keynote speakers discuss all things green in the talks tent. Explore nature and sustainability through tours and demonstrations. Enjoy live music, educational workshops and family yoga.

Admission is free (suggested donation £2); some paid activities can be pre-booked via the website: [www.fulhampalace.org/greenmeet](http://www.fulhampalace.org/greenmeet)

Event open 11 am to 4 pm. Fulham Place is in Bishop's Avenue, SW6 6EA. The historic home of the Bishop of London, the last bishop moved out in 1973 and it has since been managed by a charitable trust, together with its 13 acre botanical garden.

### Low Line to cross Lambeth

Lambeth and Wandsworth appointed two firms of architects last month to develop proposals for extending the Southwark Low Line project into their boroughs. The present Low Line is a signposted walking and cycling route running alongside historic railway viaducts, stretching from Bankside to Bermondsey via London Bridge station, all within Southwark.

Lambeth has said the extension would create a continuous route from London Bridge to Battersea, connecting communities, boosting the use of railway arches and adding new space alongside. The consultants appointed are Allies & Morrison (based in Southwark Street SE1) and Ash Sakula Architects.

*Information from Building Design, 15.3.22*

### Survey of London continues

This series of volumes continues to document the historical development of the old districts within Greater London. It's a thorough but gradual process - our part of Lambeth was covered in 1956, while the volume for the north end of the borough appeared back in 1951. The next in the series should appear in June, dealing with **Whitechapel** in two volumes, a total of 960 pages costing £150. It can be ordered from Yale University Press or the Paul Mellon Centre – see <https://paul-mellon-centre.ac.uk/publications/>

### Station Hall, Herne Hill

Much closer to home, the first-floor space above the booking hall of Herne Hill Station has been refurbished as a community hub, completed last summer. The project has spun off from the Herne Hill Forum and is now managed by a separate Charitable Incorporated Organisation with its own trustees. More information can be found at: <https://www.stationhallhernehill.org>



*Open House London provides access to many City buildings each year. CU/2019.09.21.LOH.02.*

### Open House & Open City

Properties are currently being signed up for the Open House London Festival, which will take place in **September**. This year the event sponsor is Rightmove, so expect private housing to dominate the listings!

Open City, the parent body, are offering a series of on-line talks, guided walks and tours of selected sites in the meantime. In particular, they have 12 hours of live broadcast tours of pioneering housing projects from around the world during Saturday **9 April**. More details of all events on their website at <https://open-city.org.uk/events>

### Council Elections

Elections for all 63 seats on Lambeth Council will take place on **Thursday 5 May**. Following a review by the Local Government Boundary Commission, wards have been re-arranged to even out the number of electors, and most wards will have a new name. Across the borough, 12 wards will be represented by only 2 councillors, while the other 13 will still elect 3 councillors. Those “smaller” wards around Brixton will be Rushcroft (most of the former Coldharbour ward), Stockwell East and Myatt’s Fields (these two formed by splitting the old Vassall ward).

Brixton Buzz has previously highlighted that several Labour councillors have given up well before the election, but no by-elections were called, leaving residents under-represented. The News from Crystal Palace blog reported a month ago that 21 of the current 55 Labour councillors are not standing for re-election. So expect a lot of new faces, whatever the mix of political parties.

An ongoing concern is that most councillors will have little effect, because the Council is run by only a dozen of them as Cabinet members, each largely unchallenged within their field of authority. There is a petition to return the Council to a more inclusive way of working which gives all the councillors a voice – see the website: <https://lambethref.co.uk>

*Alan Piper.*

### Big Decisions

Still we wait for the Mayor’s hearing of the planning application that he called in for the **Hondo Towers** proposal in Popes Road. The process has already been delayed by Hondo’s consultants submitting a raft of extra papers last November, so we are not sure if the GLA planners are still reading through all the planning documents (and the resulting objections) or if the Mayor is trying to avoid embarrassing Lambeth Labour candidates by bringing the project back into the public eye in the run-up to the Council elections.

The other major development proposal in the Town Centre is for the Pop Brixton site where Lambeth selected **London Square** as their

developer partner. Fortunately, like their competitor, they concluded that it made more sense to retain International House, which should allow earlier achievement of the workspace and training elements of the brief. London Square have already been active in Streatham, where their housing development near Streatham Hill Station included the Streatham Space Project, a small community theatre. They are expected to start consulting on their Brixton proposals in May.

### Cheaper access to Kew Gardens

Just as we were wrapping up this issue, news filtered through of reduced 2022 ticket prices at Kew Gardens (and at Wakehurst, its sister site in Sussex). For all receiving Universal Credit or Pension Credit, admission is now just £1. Even for other adults, tickets booked 2 days in advance are £15, which is £2.50 lower than last year. Pre-booking preferable, at [www.kew.org](http://www.kew.org) where all relevant ticket prices and visitor details can be found.

### Brixton Hospitality

Despite difficult trading conditions, it was announced at a well-attended meeting of the Brixton BID last month that the night-time economy is already back to pre-Covid trading levels, accounting for 40% of the £2 billion that people spend in Brixton each year, but that the conventional retail/services side is recovering more slowly.

The BID is developing a Twinning relationship with Harlem in New York, to be celebrated by a Festival programme from **3<sup>rd</sup> to 7<sup>th</sup> August**.

Hospitality generally, rather than retail, continues to attract new and ambitious firms. The Big Hospitality e-bulletin announced the re-opening of the **Market House** (originally the Coach and Horses at 443 Coldharbour Lane) after refurbishment. It had re-opened last September as Indian restaurant Karakan, which proved to be short-lived.

Now cult chicken brand Wingmans are taking over the kitchen. Alongside, there will be a range of craft beers from London Fields Brewery and Brooklyn Brewery, as well as a cocktail menu, while the new owners promise “diverse musical programming” with DJ booths on both floors.