

The Brixton Society Newsletter

Winter Issue : January 2025 : No.256



FIFTY YEARS ON

The Brixton Society is fifty years old this year. We have not yet decided how we will mark this milestone but mark it we must, surely? Let us know if you have any innovative ideas.

Alan Piper's brief history of the society (pages 10 & 11) evokes the French saying, "plus ça change, plus c'est la même chose". So much has changed in the half century and yet we find ourselves fighting the same battles: overblown development proposals totally out of keeping with the area; trying to preserve the best of the past; the need for decent housing; continuing traffic problems.

Of course, the society itself has changed a great deal since then. The producers of that first newsletter could not have dreamt of producing this one on a computer with all its graphic and other capabilities. Nor could they have envisaged a website and the social media revolution.

I write "they", but to far too large an extent "they" are "we". The demographic of the society's activists is heavily slanted to the retired generation. That is understandable insofar as we have more time available for this sort of activity, but we do need to attract younger people in to help and ultimately take over the reins.

EDITORIAL

This seems quite a common lament, not only in civic societies but in many other organisations. Specialist groups such as the Cinema Theatre Association, which does such excellent work recording cinema history and helping to preserve our cinema heritage, find it difficult to recruit younger members. Societies for hobbyists are likewise struggling.

It's not that the younger generation don't care; they do care passionately about many issues. The question is, how to best go about advancing a cause. I remember someone who organised an on-line petition against the George IV pub on Brixton Hill being turned into a Tesco which had attracted some 3,000 signatures saying that Lambeth could not ignore that. Sadly, they did, and when I responded that the problem was with planning permitted development rights, he was not interested.

I fear that people brought up to expect instant answers from Google have not been schooled in how to engage with the complexities of modern society and look for simplistic answers. This is being exploited by some politicians and media moguls to the detriment of democracy.

The bottom line is that if all the answers were easy, we would have found them by now. This is not a cry of despair but a call to arms to keep fighting for the best outcomes possible.

Here's to the next 50 years.

Diary & Events

BRIXTON COMMITTEE DATES

Our Executive Committee meets monthly at 7:00pm on the second Thursday, to plan activities and agree our responses to current issues.

Meetings are at the Vida Walsh Centre, 2b Saltoun Road SW2 1EP, facing Windrush Square.

These meetings are open to any of our members, but if you want to join in or raise a specific issue, please contact the Secretary at least a week before at:
secretary@brixtonsociety.org.uk

Our Planning Committee meets on the Tuesday before each Executive Committee meeting. To raise a planning issue please email:
planning@brixtonsociety.org.uk

The next dates are:

- February 13th & 11th
- March 13th & 11th
- April 10th & 8th

LOCAL HISTORY WALKS

The society runs history walks throughout most of the year with just a short winter break. The next ones are:

Brixton Market Heritage Walk

- Saturday 8 March
- Saturday 12 April

Thereafter our market walks will run on the second Saturday of the month until December. The dates will be confirmed in future newsletters.

If a group of people (minimum 6; maximum about 12) would like to have a market walk on a different day, please email:
marketwalks@brixtonsociety.org.uk giving as much notice as possible and we will see if we have a volunteer walks leader available to accommodate the request.

Details and bookings for all walks:
brixtonsociety.org.uk/events

Walk this way...

We are now compiling our schedule of guided walks for the summer months, for which you should receive a printed programme with our Spring Newsletter. This is a final reminder if you want us to include any particular corners of Brixton – a route that you missed last time, or somewhere that you have always wondered about, or just an excuse to learn more about your own street or estate?

We need to hear from you by Sunday 25 January so that we can feed in our list of walks to the overall schedule which will be compiled and published by the Lambeth Local History Forum. Please respond to info@brixtonsociety.org.uk or tell Alan Piper (020 7207 0347).

WOMEN OF LAMBETH CEMETERY

Tracey Gregory and Geoff Simmons lead a tour of Lambeth Cemetery highlighting some of the incredible women buried there. From entertainers, campaigners, to crooks and women of war.



They will, of course, be talking about Loughborough Road orchid artist Nelly Roberts too, three years since a plaque on her unmarked grave was unveiled.

Saturday 29 March 11.30am-1.30pm

Blackshaw Road London SW17 0BY

Main entrance to the cemetery NOT the crematorium entrance.

womenlambethcem.eventbrite.co.uk

FREE ILLUSTRATED TALK

BRIXTON'S FOUR-LEGGED PERFORMERS

Join Tracey Gregory and Brixton Society to hear about the many performing animals that walked the streets and trod the boards in Brixton.

Thursday 20 March

Brixton Library

Doors open at 6:15pm for a prompt 6.30pm start. Finish by 7:45pm.

Free (donation appreciated) light refreshments.

Booking essential:

[Brixtons4leggedperformers.eventbrite.co.uk](https://brixtons4leggedperformers.eventbrite.co.uk)



Tracey, who runs Loughborough Road Histories, has long had an interest in Brixton and Lambeth's entertainers of the 19th and early 20th centuries. You can find out more about some of Brixton's music hall entertainers in the Brixton and Beyond Music Hall collection on Layers of London:

layersoflondon.org/map/collections/music-hall-brixton-and-beyond.

FUTURE TALKS

This illustrated talk by Tracey, on Brixton's animal entertainers, is the first in a new series of Brixton Society talks that we aim to hold quarterly featuring a range of speakers on Brixton's diverse and fascinating history.



Brixton Windmill

Future events include:

23 February - a Milling & Baking Day.

29 & 30 March - first Open Weekend of 2025

Sunday 13th April - Easter Family Day

For details of these events and the regular activities at the windmill, see:

brixtonwindmill.org/all-events



FRIENDS OF BRIXTON LIBRARY ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Saturday 18th January 2025

11:00am to 12:00pm

Brixton Library Main Meeting Room

Refreshments will be provided.

SUMMARY AGENDA:

1. Introductions, Apologies, Thoughts, Thanks and Welcome
2. Community Tai Chi and Wellbeing updates:
3. Overall FoBL budget update.
4. Gardening updates:
5. FoBL leaflets.
6. AOB

Diary & Events

LAMBETH ARCHIVES

Lambeth Archives is pleased to be exhibiting the work of local photographer and journalist Christopher iCha.

iCha has been documenting Brixton since 2013, “attempting to capture the good, the bad, and the ugly to get a fuller picture of that particular moment in the history of the area”.



“The Endz” is slang for the “Hood”, or “neighbourhood” But it also “the means-to-an-end” or financial indulgences that help us to make ends meet. So, The Endz Game photo BrixHibition highlights and explores these themes, with iCha’s extraordinary candid images of daily life on the streets of Brixton.

Copies of iCha’s work and zines will be on sale. iCha has published much of his work in a Zine format.

The exhibition is open during Lambeth Archives’ normal opening hours until January 23rd.

lambeth.gov.uk/libraries-0/lambeth-archives

BLACK CULTURAL ARCHIVES

TEMPORARY CLOSURE

The notice below is on the BCA website blackculturalarchives.org

Important Update from BCA 9 Dec 2024

BCA is unwaveringly committed to collecting, preserving, and celebrating Black British history.

The trustees and senior leadership team are focused on enhancing BCA’s impact and ensuring that it can deliver for its beneficiaries for generations to come.

After much consideration and with the best interests of the charity and our beneficiaries at heart, we have decided to pause external-facing operations at BCA. This means that the 1 Windrush Square site will close temporarily from 1 February 2025 onwards. However, our reading room and archives will remain open on an appointment basis, and our learning services will continue.

In addition, Lisa Anderson has decided to move on from her role as BCA Managing Director after three years of service and will leave the organisation on 31 December 2024. The Board is committed to ensuring a smooth transition and will share updates regarding the next steps for leadership at BCA in due course.

Implementing this pause will enable BCA to become more fit for purpose and to deliver on its mission and values more effectively. Our goal is to come back as a stronger BCA, ready and eager to continue serving the communities that depend on us.

Sharmaine Lovegrove

BCA Board Chair

Beyond Brixton

LONDON'S LOST GARDENS

This little exhibition at the Garden Museum was announced in our last Newsletter and continues until 2nd March. It shows a range of gardens and other green spaces which gradually succumbed to London's outwards and upwards growth.

However, there were a couple of snags in my view, one being the captions in small print, set very low on the walls and a struggle to read. Sadly too, they repeat the error from the main gallery display that William Curtis's Botanical Garden was buried by the growth of Waterloo Station. Graham Gibberd established long ago that it was sited between the Old Vic and the Young Vic, and a fragment still survives as the Ufford Street Recreation Ground.

For details of all Museum events, see: gardenmuseum.org.uk

DULWICH PICTURE GALLERY

One of the perks of being Secretary is getting first sight of invitations to press previews of exhibitions like the Tirzah Garwood exhibition, which continues until 26 May. This follows 10 years after their exhibition on her better-known husband, Eric Ravilious. Both their lives were cut short: Eric perished on active service as a war artist, while Tirzah remarried in 1946 but succumbed to a recurrence of cancer in 1951, spending her final months in a nursing home while continuing to paint.

The sequence of rooms follows her career, opening with some mischievous youthful wood engravings and devoting the final room to oil paintings made in the last year of her life. In between, highlights are a series of fantasy landscapes with her children's toys, such as a toy train, in the foreground, and a sequence of "house portraits" from around her village, in low relief and set in shallow boxes.

For full exhibition details, see: dulwichpicturegallery.org.uk

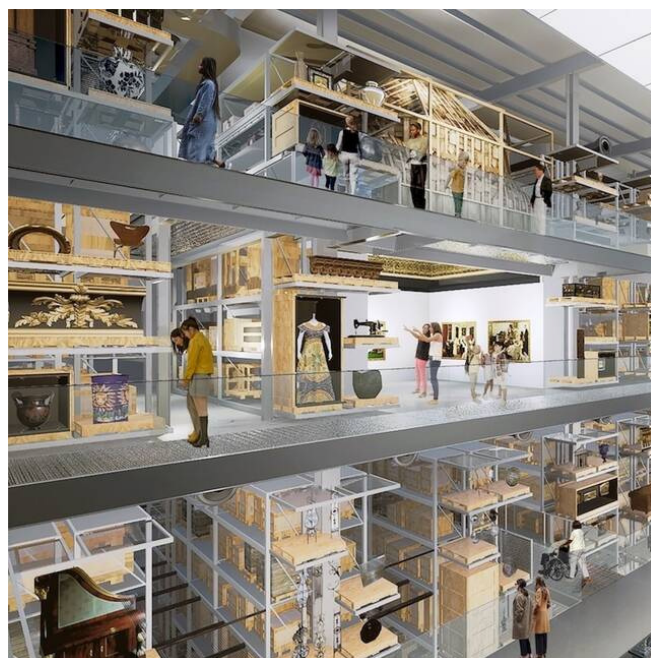
INSPIRAL LONDON TRAIL

It's 10 years since a series of walks and events were begun by a group of artists based in South-East London. They will be continuing their activities in 2025, with two walking festivals centred on the borough of Greenwich, including Black history connections. For dates and details, see: inspirallondon.com/events

SECRETS OF THE THAMES

Advance notice that the London Museum Docklands branch is mounting a special exhibition on Mudlarking, opening on 4th April. It will showcase fascinating finds from the Thames foreshore, where the tide exposes debris from London's past twice a day. For more details, see londonmuseum.org.uk

V&A EAST STOREHOUSE



Another expected opening in East London will be their Storehouse in the former Olympic Park at Stratford, from 31 May – see: vam.ac.uk/east

Alan Piper.

Changing Plans

We expect to be busy through 2025 with several policy changes and plan updates due to appear. And that's in addition to the steady flow of planning applications, large and small, proposed within our catchment area. Here's a round-up of what to expect.

NATIONAL POLICIES

The Government published its updated National Planning Policy Framework early in December. It was broadly welcomed by the construction industry but amenity groups are concerned about densification of suburban areas and erosion of the Green Belt around most urban areas. The underlying weakness though is continued reliance on developers providing a percentage of "affordable" housing as the main route to meeting social housing needs. Until the Government has the confidence to commit resources to providing social rented housing again, little progress will be made.

UPDATING THE LONDON PLAN

Led by Deputy Mayor Jules Pipe, GLA planners are preparing a new plan for Greater London as a whole, updating the 2021 version. Another round of consultations is promised for **March**. Reports have already been published on affordable housing, infrastructure and climate change, while guidance has been published on student housing and digital connectivity to clarify current policies.

JOIN US IN MAKING OUR OWN BRIXTON PLAN

When the Brixton Neighbourhood Forum was founded in 2011, it was with the prospect in mind of preparing our own Neighbourhood Plan. In the early years, there were no great concerns over Lambeth's Town Centre plans, but nowadays the planners appear to prioritise property developers over the local community,

with no restraint on building heights or protection of amenities.

The Forum agreed at its November meeting to seek authority to make a Neighbourhood Plan and wheels have been set in motion. Help with research has been offered by students from the UCL/Bartlett planning course. There will be a follow-up meeting on **Monday 13 January**, 6-30 pm at the Advocacy Academy, 2 Beehive Place SW9 7QR (off Brixton Station Road).

We intend that the plan should cover 3 complete Council wards – Acre Lane, Brixton North, Rushcroft – plus the northern part of Rush Common ward as far as Josephine Avenue. We have taken account of existing forums around us, but using Council wards will help us to gather statistics and organise a ballot to approve the plan at the end of the process.

The first step is for the Forum and its area to be designated. Although the Forum has built up an impressive mailing list of organisation members, recognition depends on the number of **individual members**, whether living or working in the catchment area. We need a few more such members to get this over the line. You can help us by signing up as an individual member - I can supply a form by e-mail or a paper copy through your letterbox, but I need it back before the end of this month.

I should make it clear that we are not asking people to agree to a plan that somebody else has drawn up. Rather we are inviting you to join us in making a plan together. During 2025 there will be a series of events in order to reach different sections of the community, local businesses as well as residents and community groups.

Alan Piper
apiperbrix@aol.com

Bellevue Mansions and a threatened greenspace

OVERDEVELOPMENT

Typical of the “overdevelopment” that threatens our area is an emerging proposal from **Hyde Housing** to replace Bellevue Mansions on Clapham Road, build over the adjacent recreation ground and children’s nursery at the rear on Rhodesia Road and remove the houses at 1-19 Grantham Road, SW9.

ENGAGEMENT

So far, there has been limited engagement with residents of Bellevue Mansions, and in November Hyde representatives met with residents of the Grantham Road houses managed by Lambeth Self-Help Housing Association.

ARCHITECTS

Architects Karakusevic Carson have drawn up options with various combinations of refurbishment and rebuilding, but the latter includes at least one tower block even taller than the nearby Arden, Becket and Pinter Houses built by Lambeth in the 1960s. There has been no consultation yet with the wider community that will be impacted by this

development, just vague references to a possible event this month. A ballot of Bellevue Mansions residents is expected in early summer 2025.



Bellevue Mansions

Plans for Pop Brixton and International House

SCALED BACK EXPECTATIONS

In the face of rising building costs, the stagnant economy and the extra expense of providing a second staircase within any high-rise apartment block, Lambeth Council has had to scale back its expectations for planning gains from developing the Pop Brixton and International House sites in the centre of Brixton.

Although there will still be “affordable” housing within the residential tower, this will no longer

be Council housing, but instead will be provided through a housing association, meaning that the tenants will be nominated by the Council but pay higher rents. The “affordable” share also reduces from 50% to 40%.

Similarly, there is also expected to be a reduced proportion of “affordable” workspace within International House. In the meantime, the existing uses of both sites are being allowed to continue until March 2027

Alan Piper

The Tesco Supermarket Site in Acre Lane

EXAMINATION IN PUBLIC

In February 2025 Lambeth’s SAPD (Site Allocations Policy Document) comes up for examination in public by a Government planning inspector. One of the sites included is the Tesco supermarket site in Acre Lane which, if the SAPD is approved, could be developed to include blocks of flats up to fifteen storeys high.

Just to be clear, the SAPD isn’t a planning application as such. It’s a list of sites across Lambeth which the Council considers suitable for development. It’s an important document, however, because the SAPD indicates what kind of developments Lambeth planners would be minded to approve if the owners submitted planning applications.

CONSULTATION

In 2022 Lambeth planners published an initial draft of the SAPD and invited comments from the public.

The Brixton Society, along with residents living in neighbouring terraced housing in Baytree and Porden Roads, submitted strong objections to Lambeth’s plans for the Tesco site. The SAPD was revised and eventually approved by Cabinet in 2024. We were sad to see that Lambeth planners appear to have taken no account of our objections – in fact the revised proposals are, if anything, more objectionable than the original ones.

We said that we had no problem with the idea that this site could be developed to produce much needed housing. However, we argued that the location close to the Town Hall in Acre

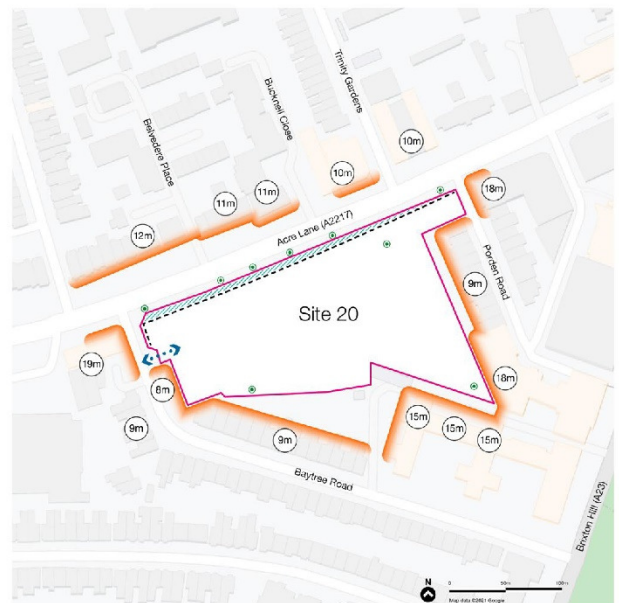
Lane, where neighbouring buildings only go up to five or six storeys, is not suitable for very tall buildings. At up to 15 storeys, they would be the tallest buildings in Acre Lane, they would dominate views of the Town Hall and would overshadow two storey terraced houses to the rear.

We argued that the SAPD should include more detailed guidance on building heights across site with a maximum of six storeys in the centre and front and three storeys at the rear where they overlook two storey terraced housing. We hope that the inspector decides to agree with us.

Vivienne Lewis

Vision for Proposed Site 20: Tesco, 13 Acre Lane SW2

- Key**
- Site boundary
 - Indicative building line
 - Retail servicing route to be retained
 - Sensitive residential neighbour
 - Height in metres of existing neighbouring building
 - Tree of value
 - Widened footway



Local Heroes

Remembrance

REMEMBRANCE SUNDAY

Last Remembrance Sunday fell on the 10th of November and, as usual, there were ceremonies at the African and Caribbean War Memorial in Brixton and at the Stockwell War Memorial.

The Brixton Society had wreaths laid at both ceremonies by volunteer members. Douglas Pinheiro kindly did the honours for us at Stockwell whilst Annick Alet did so at Brixton.

Annick has provided this personal reflection on the experience.

The event it is an important recognition of those who paid the ultimate price for the rest of us to live in a world at peace. I always feel particularly honoured to be chosen to lay the wreath.

I arrived in good time and really enjoyed the event, which was interesting and well organised, everything going smoothly notwithstanding minor hiccups with the sound technique or indeed potential safety hazards with the Windrush Square paving slabs so slippery by wet weather. I didn't get a



programme that seemed to be distributed only to the personalities; and government and military representatives but Nairobi Thompson and Dr Jak Beula took us through the proceedings. Unity and peace were the chosen themes which was truly welcome given the difficulties encountered in previous years when two ceremonies were organised on the same day.

This year, faith leaders of four different religions took part in what turned out to be a lovely event, for which even the weather behaved. The morning drizzle coming to an end, the audience

gratefully put away their umbrellas. Further to the usual military parades and representatives' speeches enhanced by a local drumming group, highlights were the arrival of 99 year old veteran Gilbert Clarke; the performance of Claude McKay's poem 'If we must die'; the laying of the wreath by local MPs Helen Hayes, Florence Eshalomi and Bell Ribeiro-Addy; Reverend King (Sam King's son) inviting the audience to say to all military and service people 'thank you for your service' today and every day; and a Ceremony of

Peace performed by the four faith leaders just before The Last Post's moving interpretation ahead of a two minutes' silence.

New Year Honours

BRIXTONIANS HONOURED

MBE

Lorraine JONES-BURRELL
Founder and Chief Executive Officer,
Dwayne Simpson Foundation CIC Ltd.
For services to Young People and to
Tackling Knife Crime

Pastor Lorraine was appointed a Member of the Order of the British Empire.

dsfcic.co.uk

BEM

Steadman Earl SCOTT
Coach.
For services to Young People
and to Sport

Steadman, co-founder of the Afewee football academy, now based in the Brixton Recreation Centre, was awarded the British Empire Medal.

afewee.org.uk/

50 years of the Brixton Society

LAUNCH MEETING

The Brixton Society is about to reach the 50th anniversary of its launch meeting, which took place on Thursday 30 January 1975 at the former Effra School, Effra Parade, SW2. This was the result of a gradual process of different local interests coming together to deal with common issues facing Brixton as a whole.

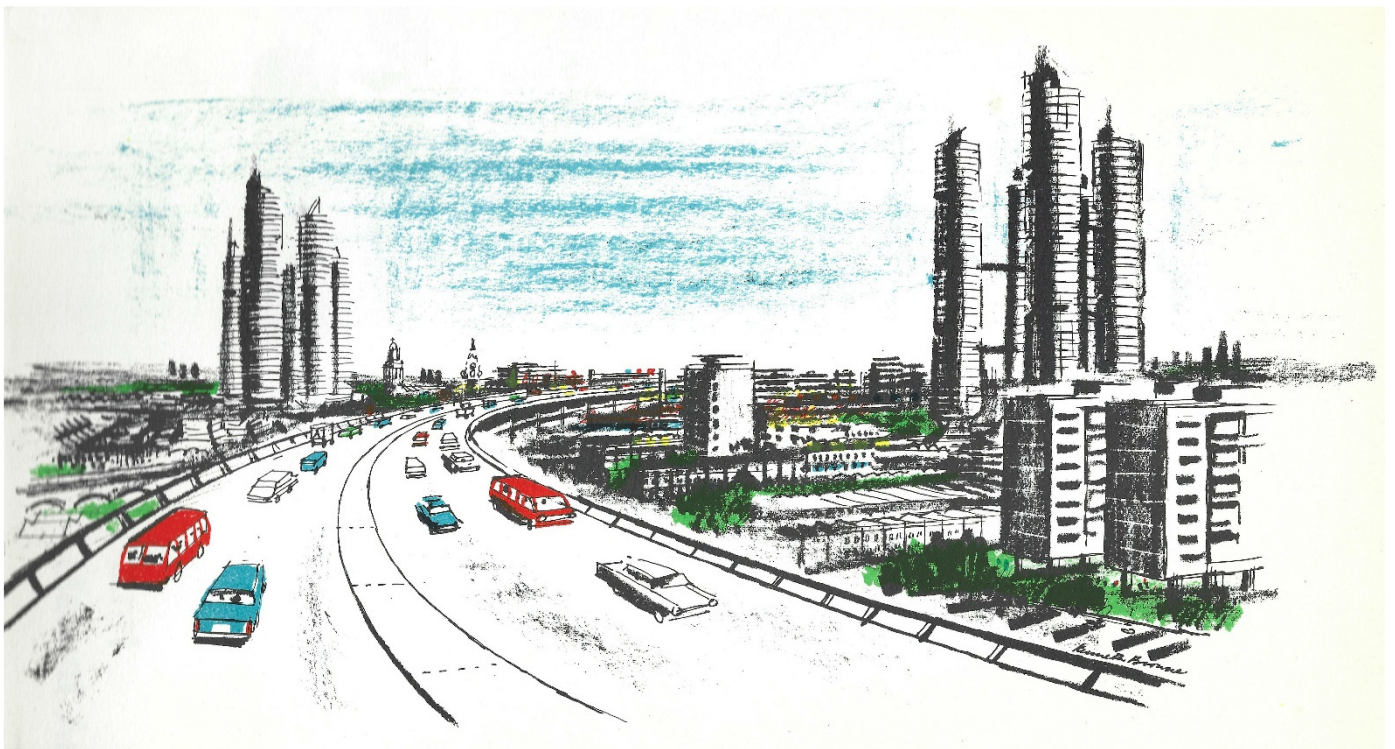
TOWN CENTRE RENEWAL

Winding back the clock a little further to the summer of 1971, the Underground station had just opened, and Lambeth Council unveiled its plans for the Recreation Centre to be built in Brixton Station Road, with a multi-storey car park (the first of 9 planned) to be built alongside. This was intended as the centre-piece of a massive renewal of the Town Centre, which was also projected to feature several 50-storey residential towers.

At the same time, work was underway on the Angell Town and Stockwell Park estates, followed soon after by the Moorland estate and the “barrier block” of Southwyck House, designed to screen the estate from motorway noise, though the urban motorways had been cancelled before work even started.

COMPULSORY PURCHASE ORDERS

Lambeth Council proposed to continue this process of demolition and rebuilding across several more neighbourhoods close to the Town Centre. This began with Compulsory Purchase Orders (CPOs) to buy up the Victorian houses, then slowly moving people out, demolition and eventually new Council housing would be built. Early on, the process had been about removing slum properties and fitting in more residents in the new flats but increasingly it was removing homes in good condition along with the bad, while there was growing concern at the number of houses left empty while the last occupants of a street were bought out or evicted.



What might have been: the 1969 Masterplan for the Town Centre was being pursued until 1984.

Local History

RESISTANCE

In each of the areas threatened by CPOs, residents began to come together to resist the Council's demolition plans. These areas of older housing had provided affordable home ownership, often from ethnic minorities, and owner-occupiers soon found themselves working with squatters and tenants from middle-class backgrounds who better understood the legal processes. Yet it was a steep learning curve for each residents' group, and they soon realised the value of networking with similar groups in other threatened areas around Brixton.

Gradually the Council had to scale back its ambitions as residents began to expose flaws in its statistics, supported by a few vocal councillors. Residents' groups were able to demonstrate at public inquiries that refurbishing the Victorian terraces would house at least as many people more quickly and cheaply than the clearance programme, and the Secretary of State agreed.

TURNING THE TIDE

By 1975, the various residents' groups and activists felt that the tide was beginning to turn in their favour, even if some of the big CPO decisions were yet to come. They had been discussing how to come together to protect and promote Brixton as a whole, and in particular, the Town Centre which had fewer residents in those days.

From the outset, the new Society aimed to encourage the conservation of older buildings and began researching the history of the area, though promoting good practice in refurbishing and adapting existing buildings remains an important strand of our work.

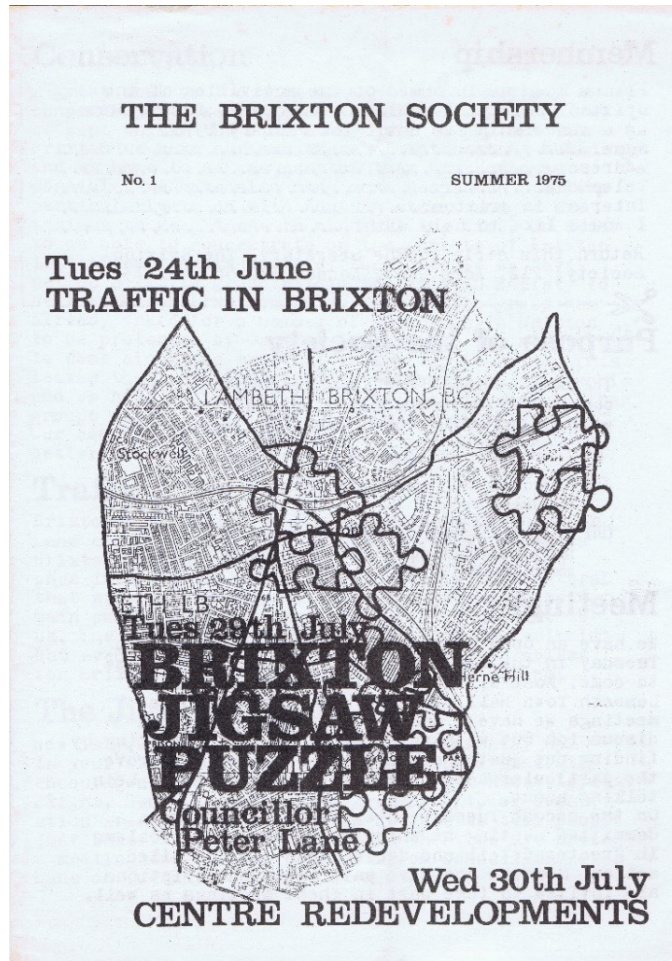
NEWSLETTERS

Newsletters for members began to appear in a basic form from June 1975 and have expanded over time. The first of our local walks took place in February 1976, originally intended as a joint exploration to identify potential additions to conservation areas.

It proved harder to sustain a regular programme of talks, so these have long been limited to special occasions. By the time we published a series of Town Trails in 1984, we were already mounting displays at events like the Lambeth Country Show.

It has always been important to defend local amenities, so we have supported Friends groups to champion libraries and green spaces. There were already amenity societies active in Vauxhall, Clapham and Streatham, and links were soon established, followed by registration with the Civic Trust as the national umbrella body at that time. All these elements continue in our work today, even if priorities and networks change over time.

Alan Piper



Our first newsletter was one sheet of A4 folded to give 4 A5 pages. This was the front page.

Local History

Pope's Road



POSTCARDS

Postcards are a great source of historic images and have often featured in our newsletter. The decade before the First World War was the golden age of postcards from when it is possible to find images from almost any street in the area, even quiet, unremarkable residential roads.

The above image is different in a number of respects. It is clearly post-WWI from the fashions: 1920s-30s? It is not stamped and postmarked, which would have dated it more precisely. However, it has been written on. The text fills the back and breaks off mid-sentence and we must suppose the missive continued on another card or piece of paper. What is there, is intriguing.

It would be so nice to know about the writer and, of course, how their message ended.

MESSAGE BEGINS

This is just a small corner of Brixton Market under the Railway Bridge. There are three streets of Stalls, one is never lost for a mornings entertainment by visiting this part of Brixton. Mrs Lobb could tell you about it. People come from all parts of the South of London to do their shopping here. Shops remain open at Brixton till seven o'clock Mon, Tues, Wed & Thurs, eight o'clock Fridays and nine o'clock Saturdays. Will has only been to the Markets with me once to do the shopping, he said he was never called Dear so often before. Everyone is Dear to the Costers. I have learnt a lot about shopping since I arrived in England first, I find that peaches, grapes, etc, are not only to be bought at West End Stores at outrageous prices, of course they ...

... and there it ends!

Bill Linskey

M & S in Brixton

FOOD STORE

The Marks and Spencer store in Brixton Road spent most of 2024 behind hoardings, but finally re-opened on 20 November, now as simply a food store. This resolved a limitation of the original building, that it was not big enough to show a full range of clothing (and sizes) as well as the growing food offer. That has been an issue for other chain stores in Brixton over the years, with limited sites restricting their stock and driving customers to shop at competing town centres.

Marks and Spencer have had a presence in Brixton since 1903, initially trading from a railway arch between Atlantic Road and Brixton Station Road. The range of goods was a little different then, mainly housewares, as illustrated in our heritage walk booklet on Brixton Market:



This is very similar to when the original partners first traded from a market stall in Leeds.

THE PRESENT BUILDING

The present building alongside Dorrell Place was built in 1931, replacing Francis & Son (Exchange Stores) which was featured in Newsletter 243 (Autumn 2021). This represented a step up for the firm when competitors were also seeking a foothold in Brixton. Thus BHS (then British Home Stores) opened their first London branch on the other side of Dorrell Place soon after, in an 1877 building which was a mirror image of Francis' old store (now Superdrug).



Photo: Alan Piper

Around 1956, M&S took over the former Bon Marche Arcade to provide more space for its clothing displays. This included several arches below the railway viaduct. Its original entrance is still indicated by a green faience archway alongside the railway bridge, directly above what is now the shop window of the bakery section.

CLOTHES

If you are still wondering where to find M&S clothing ranges, they opened a clothing-only store simultaneously in the refurbished Battersea Power Station, though for years I have just taken the train to Bromley for their branch in The Glades shopping centre.

WELL RECEIVED REDESIGN

From both social media and word of mouth, the re-launch seems to have been well received. Externally the changes are mainly re-styled graphics, but internally the finishes are a mix of new murals and exposed brick, which is seen to best effect on the old railway arches over the bakery and hot food counters. The redesign was led by local architects Squire and Partners, following an earlier assignment to review design standards across all M&S outlets.

Alan Piper.

The Dogstar

INTRODUCTION

Saddened by the closure of a Brixton institution, David Warner found this intriguing story from the pub's history.

The Dogstar closed recently by administrators in insolvency and was then for a time squatted. A sad, and hopefully not permanent end to a noted Brixton pub, known until recently as "The Atlantic" – and one of whose landlords – Lloyd Leon – was noted as Mayor of Lambeth during the legal tussle between Ted Knight and the Tory government in 1985.

This case concerning The Atlantic – and also The Black Horse public house (now the Halifax Branch at 398 Brixton Road) - is noted in Old Bailey records from 1885. The speed of the Police response here is amazing but may be accounted for by the Police Station at the time being roughly where Carlton Mansions is, just under the railway bridge by the Atlantic pub.



THE CURIOUS CASE OF THE COUNTERFEIT COINS

Session Date 19th October 1885

GEORGE KIRBY and ROLAND FAIRBROTHER are charged with "Unlawfully uttering counterfeit coin."

Witnesses for the prosecution:

GEORGE ALBERT BRAZIER . I was serving in the bar of the Black Horse, Brixton Road, on 3rd October, just on 7 o'clock—I saw the two

prisoners there—I won't be quite sure about the elder one—there was a woman with them—Fairbrother called for some stout, and put down a shilling—I bent it in the tester, and said to the manager in the prisoners' hearing, "This shilling is bad"—he then spoke to the prisoners.

FREDERICK WILLIAM FIELDER . I am manager of the Black Horse, Brixton Road—on 3rd October, about 7 o'clock, I saw the prisoners served with some liquor, which came to 4d.—Fairbrother ordered and paid for it—I saw the boy take this coin up and test it and bend it—I saw a mark on it where it had been bent—I said to Fairbrother, "This is a bad one"—he said, "Is it? I did not know it was bad," and tendered a good one—Kirby and a woman were with him—they all drank together.

JOHN THOMAS WATSON . I am manager of the Atlantic Tavern, Brixton—about 9.45 p.m. on 3rd October the two prisoners and a female came in—Kirby called for some liquor, and tendered a shilling—

I broke it and found it was bad—I said, "Have you any more?"—he said, "No, my governor gave it to me in my wages"—I gave him in charge.

REGINALD COUNTER (Policeman W 78). I was called to the Atlantic public-house on this night, and saw the prisoners there together—the manager showed me a broken shilling, and said Kirby had tendered it in payment for a pot of beer—I took him in custody—when nearing the station he said, "Fairbrother, my governor, paid me the shilling for my wages, and if he is in the habit of passing counterfeit coin I did not know it"—he followed Kirby to the station—he made no answer to the charge—I made inquiries on

Town Centre Focus

the morning of 5th October—Fairbrother was at the police-court—Mr. Fielder identified him, and he was taken in custody and charged with being concerned with Kirby in uttering a counterfeit shilling to Mr. Fielder—he replied, "I have got into a fine old mess"—I found on Kirby 1s. 4 1/2 d. good money—he gave his address, 101, Clapham Park Road—I found from inquiries that he lived there with his father—Fairbrother gave his address, 106, Effra Parade, Brixton—I found from inquiries that he lived there—it is a private house.

Witnesses for the Defence.

JAMES FAIRBROTHER . I am a lath-render and builder, of 52, Moreland Street, Stockwell—the prisoner is my brother, and is foreman at my yard in Shepherd's Lane, Brixton—he sells goods retail there, and takes money from day to day when I am away—he is paid every Saturday, sometimes £2, sometimes 30s. or 35s.—he has worked for me six years, and I have never known him to keep a penny—I have bailed him—Kirby works under him, and drives a horse and cart.

Cross-examined. My brother had been working for me the whole week, and on this Saturday up to 5 or 6 o'clock, and he would pay himself and Kirby out of the money he received, which would be £2 for himself and 15s. for Kirby—he would have accounted to me on the Monday for that, but he was arrested and had not sufficient time—he took more than £2 on Saturday.

Kirby's Defence. I had the shilling paid to me in my week's wages, and I went to the public-house and put it on the counter, and they broke it.

Fairbrother's Defence. When I gave him his money at the Black Horse I was not aware it was bad. He gave it me back and said, "That is a duffer," and I gave him another. If that is the shilling, I do not know how I got it.

VERDICT: NOT GUILTY .

The **COMMON SERJEANT** stated that both prisoners left the Court without a stain on their character.

The Brixton Brewery moves production out of Brixton but retains a base in the heart of Brixton

PRODUCTION

Brixton Brewery have outgrown their production site in Brixton and have taken the decision to move production away from their dedicated main brewery on Dylan Road to a dedicated state-of-the-art brewery in Enfield, North London. The business started in an arch on Brixton Station Road in 2013.

HEINEKEN

In 2021 it was acquired by Heineken. Brixton Brewery's website says : "We are incredibly proud of what we've built in Brixton, and the way we've worked hard to stay true to our roots as a community-based brewery.

It's exciting to see more and more people discovering Brixton Brewery – we recently became the UK's fourth largest craft brewery – but that success has meant we are now having to manage production across multiple brewing sites to keep up with demand."

NEW FACILITIES

A new meeting facility and workspace has already been completed in the heart of Brixton, next door to their Taproom and original small-batch brewery, where they will continue to produce their range of Limited Edition beers.

The Conservation Volunteers Biodiversity Action Team South



JOIN THE BIODIVERSITY ACTION TEAM – SOUTH

The Conservation Volunteers Biodiversity Action Team South operate from our tool Lambeth base at Vassall Road. We run regular task days on Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Thursdays, our minibus leaving the office just after 9am and returning between 5 and 5.30pm. To join us for a day, book a place by email or telephone.

BROCKWELL PARK

Current activities include winter hedge laying works on the western perimeter of Brockwell Park.

CONTACT DETAILS

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About the Brixton Society

Understanding the past, looking to the future

Member of Civic Voice and the London Forum of Amenity and Civic Societies

Registered Charity No. 1058103
www.brixtonsociety.org.uk
✂ @BrixtonSociety

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Joining the society on-line: www.brixtonsociety.org.uk/join-us
Ordinary membership £10.00 per annum
Unwaged / over 60s £5.00 per annum
Corporate £25.00 per annum