

Views from the Hill

NEWSLETTER OF THE TEWKESBURY LODGE ESTATE RESIDENTS' ASSOCIATION

Winter 2017



Carols by Candlelight

On December 4th around 100 TLERA members, friends and children gathered in the Triangle (the enclosed garden between Horniman Drive and Liphook Crescent) to sing traditional carols and seasonal songs, 'heedless of the wind and weather' - it was cold and very breezy! It was the first time that the Association had held such an event, which as well as being a get together for TLERA members, was a fundraiser for the charity *Crisis at Christmas*.

The Triangle was beautifully decorated with candle bags and fairy lights. There were mince pies and stollen, and the mulled wine mostly flowed freely. The carols were led by a small group of singers from the Estate, with the song sheets illuminated by hand held candles in jars. All in all it was a lovely event which members really enjoyed, and £220 was raised for the charity.

It is hoped that this will become a regular event. If any other singers or musicians would like to join in the planning for next year, please do get in touch. Thanks to everyone involved for helping to make this such a success.

Beatrice Jackson

Editor's note: The Association received messages, cards, and notes to say how much members had enjoyed the event. A huge thank

you to all who helped to make it such a success, including Beatrice who put together the programme, our wonderful singers who gave up their time to rehearse (and gave the

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less vocally-gifted the courage to join in...), Rowena and Rita for the mince pies and very much appreciated mulled wine, and David and Neil for manning the gate. A special thank you should also go to Naseem, who arrived early and proved to be an invaluable help in lighting all those 75 candles in very windy conditions just before everyone arrived!

Dates for your diary

• AGM

Tuesday, February 21 at Horniman Primary School starting at 6.30pm.

- *Easter Egg hunt*
Sunday, April 16 at Hilltop, 28 Horniman Drive between 10am – 1pm.
- *NGS garden opening*
Sunday, May 21 between 1-6pm.

NGS garden opening

It's official – our 2016 opening for the National Garden Scheme raised more money than any other garden in the south-east of London! Six of our garden group members plan to open

again next year on May 21, and are hoping to raise even more money for cancer and caring charities. Our thanks to the members who helped to make the 2016 event such a success.

Happy New Year to all our readers!

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Valerie Ward,
Chair

Chair's report

Despite some problems – the Summer Picnic had to be cancelled, and all efforts to find affordable cover for the annual Fireworks event were unsuccessful - 2016 finished on a very positive note for the Association. Six members were welcomed to the Committee, and several more became involved in the organisation of two new TLERA events in the Autumn and at Christmas. Additionally, we now have a Facebook page as well as our website to keep members informed about what is happening in

and around the Estate and give them an opportunity to give us feedback more readily, and share their views and concerns with other members.

I think it's true to say that the injection of new people and ideas has really revitalised TLERA as we move into what we hope will be a happy and successful 2017 for the Association and all its members.

TLERA AGM

Details about our forthcoming AGM will be delivered separately in the next few weeks. As well as a short AGM, there will be several presentations on an environmental theme: the new Butterfly House planned for Horniman Gardens, an update on our street tree campaign,

and an overview of wildlife in and around the Estate from Daniel Greenwood, who lives in Canonbie Road and works with the London Wildlife Trust. So do come along and enjoy a glass of wine while hearing about the progress the Association has made in 2016 and what is planned for 2017.

Meet your neighbours in cyberspace!

The Association now has its own Facebook group. If you have a Facebook account, come and join the group. Log in to your account and search for Tewkesbury Lodge Residents' Association, or you can find it at <https://www.facebook.com/groups/456579781396938/> It is a closed group, which means that the administrator controls who can join the group, which is restricted to paid-up members of TLERA. Any member of the group can post onto it. Only members of the group will be able

to see what is posted on the page and make comments on it.

If you don't use Facebook but want to join the conversation, then go to www.facebook.com and follow the instructions to create an account with whatever privacy settings you prefer. Once you are logged in, then search for Tewkesbury Lodge Residents' Association. You will be able to find out what's happening on the Estate. And you will also be able to share your own thoughts on matters of interest.

Carole Abrahams
carole@abrahams.org.uk

Night Walk

Between the downhill side of Horniman Gardens and the nature trail there is a footpath that is a delight in summer. With trees on either side one can enjoy the pleasant illusion of being in the countryside. In winter it's a rather different matter. For some years a few parts of this

path have been under water after heavy rain. I won't be the only person who has arrived home with wet socks as a result. The problem has been getting steadily worse as

vegetation and even small trees grow in the ditch that was once able to absorb the rainfall. In winter, when Horniman Gardens closes at 4pm, the footpath – known locally as the night walk - has added importance for those of us who live in the Westwood Park/ Tewkesbury Avenue area, for it serves as our most convenient link to and from the bus stops on the South Circular Road.

Over the last few months I have been trying to get the local council to clear the ditch so as to lessen the danger of the path flooding. The last feedback I had from them included the following:

"I have spoken again to the highway inspector and we will not enforce against vegetation unless it is clearly obstructing the public highway. The inspector does not feel that the vegetation is the actual cause of the water on the footway and in any case this is not something we would take enforcement action over."

All right, it's not quite as bad as this...



Following periods of exceptionally heavy rain, such as we have had recently, some roads and footpaths will experience water ponding, but this should drain away and/or dry up fairly quickly.”

Tree watch 2017: the good the bad and the ugly

Among the ugliest sights on our Estate are the bases of some of our roadside trees.



The photograph shows five roots radiating out from the base of a London plane tree in Horniman Drive close to Horniman Gardens. Whereas in a natural environment leaf mould would cover the root ball of any growing tree, here tarmac seals off the root ball from the water and nutrients which it obviously needs. The large structural roots themselves push up through the tarmac which bulges and cracks along the course of the root. The ridges of broken tarmac are a hazard to passers-by and so the Council must do something. In the example above two cracks in the tarmac have been filled in with fresh tarmac. In other cases a root has been ground down and covered over with tarmac. But for financial reasons nothing more radical has been done which might prevent recurrence of the damage to the pavement.

Thus, in this way, 95% of the roadside trees on our Estate are presently damaging the pavement - and when the remaining 5% mature they are likely to do so as well. And the area of damage is more than one might imagine. In the case of trees that are adjacent to paving stones each tree has on average cracked or displaced seven paving stones which have now been removed.

But it does not have to be like this. The second photo shows the base of a Scarlet Maple growing in Court Lane. Instead of tarmac the base of this tree is a square of earth, which is

So it seems that for Lewisham Council this issue does not matter. A less complacent view has emerged from my soundings with local residents...

Michael Levin

both mulched and weeded and also provided with a tube for deep irrigation. Furthermore, the square of earth is surrounded by a concrete barrier that diverts any root that is inclined to grow laterally along the surface of the earth and towards the pavement. As a result the pavement is not damaged. In fact 80% of the street trees in Court Lane cause no significant damage to their surrounding pavement as opposed to the comparable figure of 5% for our Estate. In view of the financial climate it would not be reasonable for us to ask for Court Lane conditions for all our trees. However, in the case of new plantings it may be possible to provide each of the features of a Court Lane tree base. This could be done without changing the paving or tarmac outside the base of the tree.



Preliminary conclusions

Valerie Ward has suggested in an earlier newsletter that some of us might be willing to sponsor a street tree. I am looking into the possibility of sponsoring not only trees but also the barriers around them, since the barrier seems to be the difference between a tree that will enhance the attractiveness of a street and a tree that will damage the pavement. Unfortunately, there may be no cheap solutions to the problem of the well-established tree that is already causing serious damage to the pavement. However, by monitoring the effects of the Council's interventions we may be able to persuade them to consider longer-term solutions.

Stuart Checkley

The Court Lane solution

Autumn Harvest on the Hill

A new event in the Association calendar is born! The afternoon of Saturday 8 October saw the inaugural TLERA Autumn Harvest take place.



The Heath Robinson approach to apple pressing

Put together at short notice following the unavoidable cancellation of the Fireworks, the event was designed to be an alternative celebration of the season of "mist and mellow fruitfulness". Drawn by the announcement in the Autumn newsletter and by the jazzy bunting and posters put outside on the day, a number of members came together to banish the change of season blues and to enjoy the best of Autumn on the Estate. The bounty of Forest Hill and the ingenuity of our membership were used to produce a wonderful range of activities and tasty offerings that could be shared by all.

It has to be admitted that this year's local apple harvest was disappointing in the extreme and so the

12 apple varieties for tasting- all grown locally

main idea of a community apple pressing to generate litres of luscious local juice was going to be tricky even before it was realised that the promised professional apple press could not be obtained in time! However, not to be deterred by such setbacks, Rowena Lowe, using a commendable degree of improvisation, put together our very own Heath Robinson press, consisting of two chopping boards and a series of clamps. Enough juice was produced for all present to drink a thimble-full and everyone declared the resulting nectar to be delicious and, interestingly, much sweeter than the original apples.

Continuing the apple theme, a range of wonderful locally grown apples was available for tasting with details of the varieties provided. It was incredible to taste the differences and to confirm that we do not need to settle for tasteless continental offerings. The mulled cider also proved a big hit with the adults while children could supplement their fruit juice intake from cartons.

But refreshment was by no means limited to apples as Committee members had raided their larders to produce a splendid, seasonal spread. Three hearty, homemade soups were on offer, pairing harvest crops with unusual flavourings: carrot and cardamom; leek, potato and lavender; and spicy pumpkin and coconut. Crusty





bread, vegetable crudités and cheese completed the savoury offerings. Then it was time for cake and once again our local bakers did not disappoint, with their own twists on traditional fruit-based recipes: apple and almond; chocolate and beetroot; plum; and pumpkin pie – all worthy of the Great British Bake Off.

As the weather was kind, the planned children's activities could go ahead in the garden so the creativity of the younger generation was also on display. Autumn leaves, berries and seeds were used to make stunning pictures and wonderful decorations. Brightly coloured lavender bags were filled using the dried flowers from Garden Club members' gardens, and budding gardeners were able to plant daffodil bulbs with expert guidance. And, as if that was not enough, there were traditional Autumn stories being read in the Story Hut at the end of garden – magical.

A big thank you to all those who made the event possible and particularly to Frankie Locke for allowing it to take place at Hilltop. Thanks too to everyone who came along at such short notice and for joining in with gusto. We are reliably informed that there will be a bumper harvest next year, so do let us have your feedback and ideas to make Autumn Harvest 2017 an even more fabulous celebration of the fruits of Forest Hill.

Tina Hildred



Forest Hill Library

It was not only the entrance to Forest Hill library that changed in 2016. It became a community library when V22 took over the day to day running of the building, together with several key local organisations including the Forest Hill Society and the Forest Hill Traders Association. Although the Council remain responsible for the books, shelving, self-service terminals, library cards etc., the Library will mainly be run by volunteers.

V22, an arts organisation, already held the lease for Louise House, the building adjacent to the Library. They had successfully raised the capital funding to refurbish that building and create artist studios and community spaces. As well as retaining the fundamental role of the Library, V22 would like to develop art-related activities, and to integrate the building into the

complex that includes Louise House and Forest Hill Pools. As well as developing a specialist art section and organising talks and symposia and small classes, they plan to host activities on topics of interest to residents, ranging from ancestry to Lego clubs. These proposed uses will complement and enhance the library services whilst providing an income stream for the building.

If our library services can be maintained under the new arrangements, there is clearly the opportunity for V22 and its partner organisations to develop a different sort a community hub that would provide new and exciting opportunities for residents. As reported in our summer newsletter, the Forest Hill Society had already recruited more than 80 volunteers to

continued on next page...

"The very existence of libraries affords the best evidence that we may yet have hope for the future of man".

T.S. Eliot

A track would have been better than a trailer...



help run the Library, but more volunteers are needed. If you are available during the day or

Transport and Travel

On 22nd December, a Southern Railway carriage caused an unexpected travel delay at the bend between Westow Street and Central Hill. On a trailer of course, since there is no track up there. But that was not the only Southern delay our area has suffered in the last few months. Jim Dowd addressed Parliament on the 8th December:- "...the service (from Forest Hill to Waterloo East) has never been as unreliable and as chaotic as it is today". We are lucky that in Forest Hill we also have an Overground service, which has been performing well but, even when Southern runs properly, the Overground during rush hour is full. When Southern is on strike, passengers are left standing on the platform at Forest Hill and risk being late for work.

So, it is particularly bad news that the 2018 Southern timetable is proposing three fewer rush

in the evening for a few hours per week to help ensure a successful future for this important asset to Forest Hill, do find out what is involved by going to <http://fhlibrary.co.uk> or calling into the Library.

Footnote: You can also support the new community library by joining the Friends of Forest Hill Library. Annual membership costs £30 for which you will receive a friendship card that covers everyone in your household and a regular newsletter about events at the Library and in the wider community. Many local shops and restaurants are offering discounts to Friends of the Library. For more information, go to <http://fhlibrary.co.uk>

hour trains between Forest Hill and London Bridge. This is not the only adverse change to the timetable. Southern are also planning to drop all Forest Hill to East Croydon services - instead it will be necessary to change over from a West Croydon train at Norwood Junction to get to East Croydon and Gatwick.

What should we do? The first Govia timetable consultation closed on the 8th December, but feel free to write in anyway, to GTR 2018 Timetable Consultation, East Side Offices, Kings Cross Station, London N1C 4AP (or email

gtr.timetableconsultation@gtrailway.com). There is a second consultation planned for the second quarter of 2017, so at this stage just briefly express your concerns for the future service, and ask to be added to the update list, so that you may participate in the second phase consultation.

Longer term there is clearly a need for further rush-hour relief specifically on our Overground trains to Canada Water. I understand from the experts that it would be feasible to squeeze in a couple of additional rush hour Overground trains from Crystal Palace, which would help. To request this, a letter to Transport for London will be necessary - you can mention the upcoming Southern cutbacks as a reason for concern. Perhaps if we tweet TfL with pictures of the poor unfortunates left behind at rush hour (on a regular basis) at Honor Oak Park and Brockley, they will get around to doing something about increasing the service?



Planning

At one of our periodic update meetings with senior staff at the Horniman Museum and Gardens last year, a proposal to erect a Butterfly House on the site of the unoccupied Lodge just inside the Horniman Drive gate was outlined. The plans were reviewed and discussed in more detail at the next meeting of the TLERA Committee, who agreed that it would be an addition to the Gardens that would be enjoyed by adults and children alike.



The new structure would be lower than the existing building and sympathetic planting on the outside would help the structure to blend into its surroundings. However, the views of members who would be most affected by the proposal would need to be sought before any formal letter of support was sent to Lewisham's Planning Department.

Two members of the Committee visited the homes of all members living in Cleeve Hill, Amroth Close, and the part of Horniman Drive between the Gardens and Westwood Park to

explain the proposal and get their feedback. The few who could not be contacted after several attempts were left an information sheet and a contact number to call with any comments or queries.

Some residents are already concerned about problems caused by delivery lorries, as well as visitors to the Museum trying to park their cars close to the Horniman gate - this disruption would only increase during the demolition and construction phase. However, overall residents felt that a glasshouse would be a better alternative to the building currently on the site, and were supportive of the Butterfly House proposal.

The Association will continue to liaise closely with the Horniman team who have assured us they be responsive and considerate to members within the immediate vicinity throughout the project

*The site before...
...and after*



A new Butterfly House in Horniman Gardens

The Horniman Museum and Gardens will open a Butterfly House this summer, following a successful planning application to Lewisham Council. The new attraction will offer visitors an immersive experience, in a specially-planted indoor garden that will be home to a colourful range of free-flying, exotic butterfly species. The Horniman is currently in the process of appointing a contractor, with work starting shortly to demolish an existing, unused building, making way for the glasshouse and surrounding landscaping.

Victoria Pinnington, Director of Communications and Income Generation at the Horniman, says: "We're thrilled to receive planning permission to create this wonderful

new experience for our visitors. Butterflies are beautiful and fascinating creatures which play an important role in ecosystems around the world, and we can't wait for our visitors to enjoy and learn about them close up. The Butterfly House will be an additional attraction in an underused part of the Gardens, making a day at the Horniman even more memorable."

The Butterfly House complements the Horniman's current Living Collections, including alpacas, jellyfish and bees in its Animal Walk, Aquarium, and Nature Base. Tickets to the Butterfly House will go on sale later in the year, in advance of the summer opening. Horniman Members will enjoy free, unlimited visits. See www.horniman.ac.uk for more information.
Alison McKay

New faces



Michael Levin



Dave Leslie

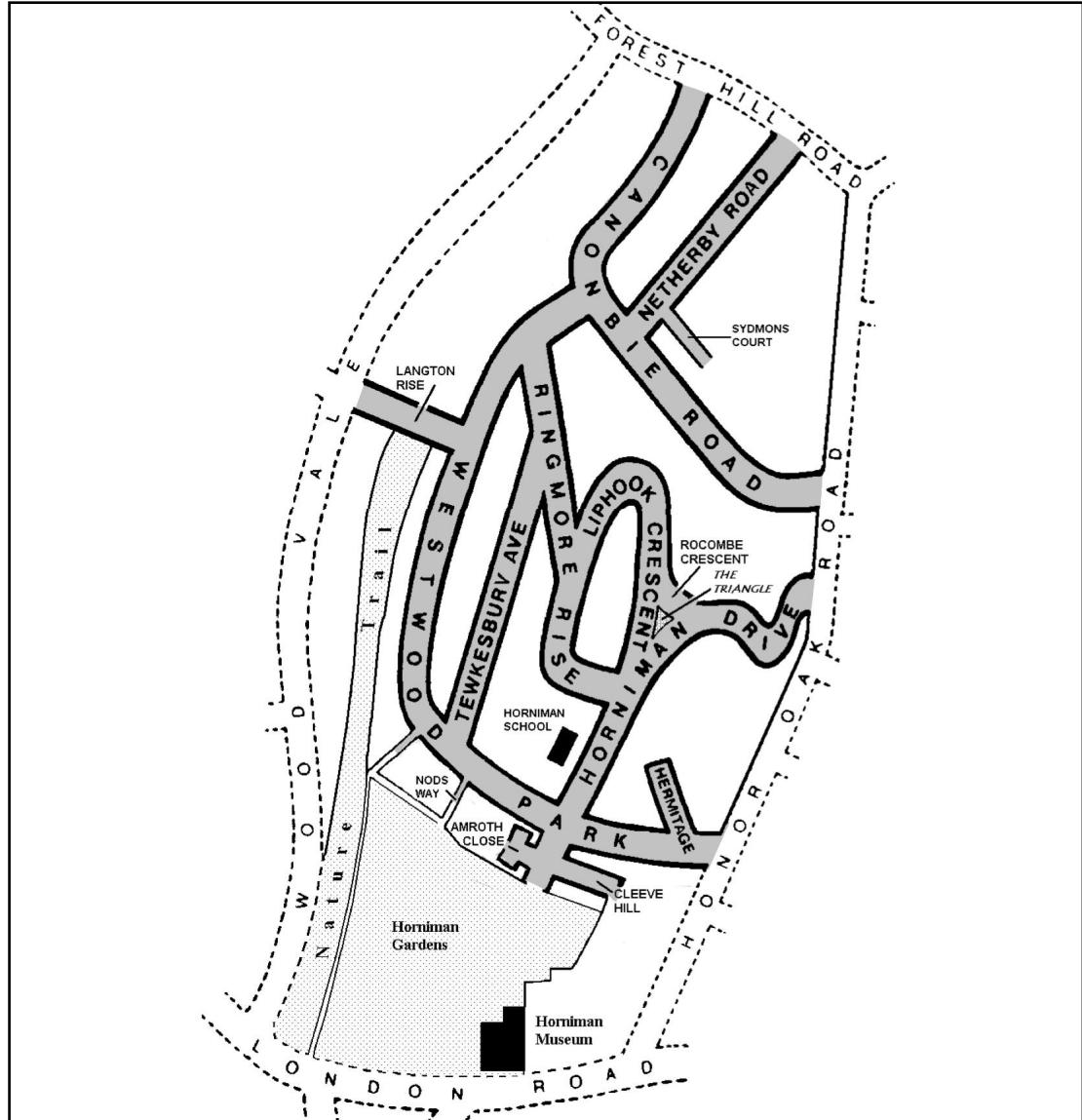
Two new members of the Association have recently joined the Committee. Michael Levin is now the road representative for part of Westwood Park and will also liaise with the Council on any problems with our built environment. Dave Leslie will keep members informed of any traffic and transport issues in the area.

Michael Levin

Michael has lived in Forest Hill since 1979, taught at Goldsmiths' College from 1978 to 2006, has three daughters who have all now left home, but his wife and two dogs are still around to keep him company. In summer he likes to watch cricket at the Oval, and in winter watch football at Dulwich Hamlet. But all the year round he can be seen in Horniman Gardens walking one of both of his Shetland sheep dogs.

Dave Leslie

We moved from Crystal Palace to Forest Hill back in 1991, attracted mainly by a larger house, but wishing to retain the sweeping views we had become used to over there. But a further good reason for me to be right here in Forest Hill is that my work frequently involves day trips to (unromantic) business park locations all over Britain. I therefore appreciate and utilise the fantastic transport links which London has to offer. Over the years, I have learnt the various travel tricks, which enable me to get to pretty much any office in the UK by 10am, and still be back home in time for (late) supper. It is therefore quite appropriate that I join the TLERA committee specifically for the brief on Traffic and Transport. My wife, Michele, works over in Balham as a school nurse whilst our son, who was extremely well looked after by Horniman Primary School, is now rather grown up and currently studying at Kent Uni.



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