

Views from the Hill

NEWSLETTER OF THE TEWKESBURY LODGE ESTATE RESIDENTS' ASSOCIATION Spring 2022



Ding Dong Merrily On High!

There was great rejoicing on the Hill just before Christmas when the popular Carols by Candlelight event was given the go-ahead. Santa hats off and thanks to the singers, musicians and volunteers who pulled out all the stops and ensured that everything went well despite the gathering gloom on the day.

The lights were magical, both in the Triangle, where tiny lanterns lined the path, and at 28 Horniman Drive, where the bright illuminations welcomed everyone and where there was ample space for everyone to distance safely. Twinkling reindeer helpfully pointed the way to the stollen and warm mince pies and to the large urn of mulled wine!

In the Triangle, the tree tops glistened above the choir sheltering beneath the gazebo and strings of lights festooned the branches - a beautiful sight to behold in the winter darkness. Families gathered with their lanterns and song sheets and, fortified with extra rations of pies and cake, joined the chorus. There was even playing of the merry organ (well, keyboard and ukuleles



to be precise!) to lead the way in a lively programme of well known carols and traditional songs. An evening which brought great comfort and joy to all, particularly after last year's restrictions. In addition, just over £200 was raised for the homeless charity, Crisis, thanks to members' generous donations.

Tina Hildrey

Bleak midwinter with twinkly bits added...

Forthcoming events

Annual General Meeting

Date and venue to be agreed, but will be somewhat later this year. It is usually held at Horniman Primary School, subject to availability and any Covid restrictions that might be in place. As well as updates on TLERA activities, there are invited speakers on subjects of interest to members, with opportunities to raise concerns and share ideas for any changes they would like to suggest.

Jubilee party, 4 June in the Triangle bordered by Horniman Drive, Liphook

Crescent & Rocombe Crescent

Details to follow, but will be free to members.

Garden Opening Sunday, 5 June, 1pm -5pm

Five gardens on the Estate will be opening their gardens for the National Garden Scheme (NGS). As well as seeing the very different gardens, there will be plants for sale, and tea and homemade cakes to enjoy. Entry to all the gardens will be £8 (free for children under 16yrs), with all money raised distributed by the NGS to cancer and caring charities,

Message from our Chair

"Nothing is so beautiful as Spring", Gerard Manley Hopkins

Spring is, at last, in the air and it is a time for new plans and projects as we get back on track after winter and after the restrictions of the last two years. As our activities start up, membership subscriptions will be collected again but, at

only £5 per household, I am sure that you will agree that it's still a bargain! The Association has been going for over 60 years and works extremely hard to make sure the area is maintained and improved for the whole community. Whether you have just moved in to the area or have been here for many years,

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Valerie Ward

you will know that we live in a special part of London which needs to be protected. Please do let any new neighbours know about the good work we do and encourage them to join too.

We are excited to be putting together an unrestricted programme of events for the year, which started off with the Easter Egg Hunt on Sunday 17 April. The Queens's Platinum Jubilee weekend at the beginning of June will be filled with celebration including our own street party, and the National Garden Scheme (NGS) Open Garden day is also scheduled for that weekend. There are plenty of other plans in the pipeline but do let us know you have any event ideas for the future.

One of the Association's original and key tasks is to monitor planning applications and respond

where appropriate. Over-development continues to be one of the biggest threats to our environment and to the character of the area. However, keeping on top of applications and of changes to planning rules and regulations is a huge challenge. If you have an interest or any expertise in this area and are willing to help, please contact me as soon as possible.

I know that the Estate is full of brilliant people who love the area and we always need enthusiastic volunteers to get involved with all aspects of the Association's work so that we can keep doing what we do. It could be: tree planting; traffic monitoring; environment protection; social events, or any other aspect of community life. Please do get in touch with me to find out more.

Valerie Ward

Membership and subscriptions

As members will know, we did not collect subscriptions last year. They are used to fund our programme of free community events and the printing of newsletters etc., but Covid restrictions meant that communication with members had to be electronically. However, we hope that life can now return to normal. As you will see from the enclosed envelope, subscriptions will remain at £5 per household. Any paid by new members since April 2020 will be carried forward to cover 2022.

If this newsletter is your first contact with the Association and you wish to join, then please contact your road representative whose name is listed in the back page. Alternatively, you can contact me directly via membership@tewkesburylodge.org.uk. You can find out more about TLERA on our website www.tewkesburylodge.org.uk and there you can find information about events and campaigns, as well as previous newsletters and lots of useful links.

Carole Abrahams, Membership Secretary

Greening our Estate

Thanks to the generosity of our members, we now have the magnificent number of 54 newly planted trees on our Estate. However, on February 18th, Storm Eunice felled two large trees on Tewkesbury Avenue. Within two weeks of the storm, the residents of Tewkesbury Avenue had raised funds for the planting of five replacement trees, and the Council will be assessing their proposed planting sites this summer. As the organiser of the Tewkesbury Avenue scheme said, "We want our Avenue back!".



Wind versus tree...
And the winner is:...



It is impossible to plant street trees on pavements designated for pavement parking and at road junctions. Such areas appear neglected and are ideal locations for pavement planters. We have set up a working party to develop a plan for planters across the Estate. As with street trees, the funding will be raised by groups of residents who will water and take care of the ones on their street. This is an exciting project and could add significantly to the greening of our Estate. Fortunately, we have several landscape architects living here who are developing a plan for us which will work across the Estate as a whole while leaving scope for local creativity. It will, of course, have to be approved by the Council.

Elsewhere on the Estate, the snowdrops we planted two years ago in the green at the top of Ringmore Rise flowered in February and have now been reinforced by others provided by our Gardening group. Tête à tête daffodils were also planted (as part of the same Greening Fund grant from the Council) and have thrived and are now in bloom. It is hoped to add more in the Autumn. In addition, more Cotoneaster horizontalis shrubs were added to the one already there – their flowers are a magnet for bees, and provide berries for the birds in the Autumn and Winter.



There were also native Bluebells planted on the Green as well as in the Liphook Crescent/Horniman Drive Triangle, our other local green space. Birdsfoot Trefoil has been there for many years, but last summer they spread round most of the perimeter. Also known as 'Eggs and Bacon' and 'Tom Thumb', Birdsfoot Trefoil is the main food plant of the Common Blue Butterfly which might turn up in the Triangle, although the blue butterfly that we are most likely to see there or anywhere else on the Estate is the Holly Blue. This small butterfly is blue when seen close up but grey from a distance. Other wild flowers in the Triangle include Yarrow in the summer and Hawkbit in autumn. It was sad to see the Birdsfoot Trefoil mowed down last summer, but the Council have said they will leave it uncut this year, apart from a strip round the perimeter. It would be nice to celebrate the Platinum Jubilee with the Triangle in full flower!
 Stuart Checkley
stuart@streettreesforliving.org

Editor's note: A huge thank you to Stuart who has done so much in such a short time to make our Estate an even more greener and pleasant place to live!

New trees on the Horniman Triangle

This winter 41 trees have been planted on the Horniman Triangle opposite Horniman Gardens. The first tree was funded by members of TLERA, who were concerned by the threat to trees on and around our Estate. The next two trees were funded by other local groups of residents. These three funded trees then served as matched funding for our part of a much larger application from the Council to the national Treescapes fund. This application was successful and resulted in 38 more trees funded for the Horniman Triangle.

The trees planted were native trees such as will have grown on this site for hundreds, probably thousands of years, as part of the historic Great North Wood. Some of these trees, like the Common Hornbeam, will grow to a substantial height and age and will store tonnes of carbon. Cockspur and Rowan will provide berries for birds in autumn, wild Cherry will add spring blossom, and Hazel will hopefully produce nuts for wood mice. There will also be 20 Hawthorn saplings to repair the hedge around the playground and these, together with Holly trees, will protect the playground from traffic pollution from the South Circular. The very damp area at the bottom of the hill, where two large Willows thrive, has been planted with two more

waterside trees - Alder and Aspen. In the course of researching the site I found an area of spontaneous oak regeneration. Just above the playground, 20 Oak saplings are growing well on rough ground and adjacent to a very old Oak.

By planting native trees, we are helping to repair a gap in a wildlife corridor between One



Tree Hill and Sydenham Woods. One benefit to members of TLERA in doing so is that our gardens will be more part of this corridor. Last winter we heard a Tawny Owl calling from the Horniman Nature Trail and one even hooted from the roof of my house in Liphook Crescent. The owls could soon be back and maybe even one day the hedgehogs?

Stuart Checkley

Area Rep: Forest Hill, stuart@streettreesforliving.org Charity Number 1185165

Stuart will be doing a guided tree walk around the Horniman Triangle on Saturday May 14th from 2.00 to 3.00pm. We will be meeting at the Café behind the playground and anyone interested is welcome.

Reservoir site

*Reservoir...
A hirsuit past...*



As reported in our last newsletter, most of the vegetation and much of the topsoil has been removed from the disused Victorian reservoir site (bordered by Honor Oak Road, Canonbie Road, Rocombe Crescent, Horniman Drive and Liphook Crescent) and much of the remaining depleted surface has been covered in plastic. There has been no further onsite activity on the part of the owner since then.

*...and the current
“close shave”*



As long-standing members will know, the Reservoir Site is recognised by the Council as a Site of Interest for Nature Conservation (SINC). In spite of the distressing destruction of its once exceptionally rich natural environment, the site's status is unchanged from a planning perspective.

The Residents' Association, which has opposed two previous applications for development on this site, will oppose any future development plans and is pursuing all other measures and avenues that are available. As soon as we know what is proposed for the site, we will oppose the plans. It will also be important for individual members to make their views known to the Council. On the last two occasions, we organised a petition which demonstrated the strength of local opposition, and we will do the same again using an online solution.

Jeremy Newell

Crime and Policing

For those of you who are current members of TLERA (and have supplied your email address) you will be familiar with our Police Liaison and Crime Cascade postings. I am responsible with liaising with the police and have been in this role for a few years because I am now seeing the third change of Sergeant in charge of the Forest Hill Police team!

The way the post works is if you have been a victim of crime, let me know by email and I will pass that information on to those registered on the TLERA database. I am sensitive to the fact that frequent postings might raise anxiety levels so I am cautious about emailing residents about every single incident, placing an emphasis on which notifications might be of value. Residents can then be alerted to a description of the offender(s), the car registration that might

have been involved, or some suspicious activity together with some crime prevention advice.

Increasingly, I have formed the view that we have to work together to protect ourselves and deter opportunists. Police detection rates are sadly quite low. The growth of CCTV cameras has been helpful but the number of convictions remains poor and the courts are still struggling post-Covid. I am registered with the national Neighbourhood Watch and also connected to the local Lewisham Neighbourhood Watch. I encourage everyone to contact the police directly themselves, but occasionally I will take up issues on behalf of residents.

Every three months the local Forest Hill Police Ward have a meeting and I represent the concerns of residents in our area. I believe it is

important to foster a good relationship with them so that this area does not get overlooked. I welcome other residents on the Estate to attend meetings to represent specific concerns. Please contact me at any stage if you wish to do so at christinem.noon@gmail.com

I can only email those who are registered on the database so it is important that you contact the membership secretary Carole Abrahams if you haven't yet given us your email address, or have changed it.

Christine Noon



Save our butterflies!

Butterfly Conservation recently released the results of their 2021 annual Big Butterfly count – it showed the lowest butterfly count recorded since it began. Three quarters of butterfly species have declined in the past four decades and moth numbers have declined by over a third in 50 years. This will have a big impact on the populations of birds and bats which eat them. So now is a good time to think about what changes you can make in the garden to help butterflies, moths and other insects.

- One of the easiest ways is to leave an area of lawn unmown. Long grass is eaten by various moth caterpillars and will be home to bugs, spiders and much else. It will also help to encourage wildflowers such as clover, buttercups and daises to come through, but you can plant some - plug plants can be bought from

wildflower suppliers

- Plant more single flowers that are a good source of pollen and nectar for butterflies and bees - hardy annual seeds such as Cosmos germinate easily from seeds scattered where they are to grow. Perennial plants such as hardy geraniums, lavender and sedum and shrubs such as *Cotoneaster horizontalis* also provide flowers that are a magnet for bees and berries that are eaten by birds.
- Love your weeds! Dandelions are vital for springtime butterflies and new queen bees, giving them a big hit of nectar in the colder months.
- If you're thinking of planting a tree, crab apple, willow, hazel and birch offer food for a huge range of moth caterpillars.

The RHS says that as only a small minority of the many species of slugs and snails are a threat to garden plants, they should not be referred to as garden pests, but rather garden visitors! As well as providing food for birds (and hedgehogs), they provide a vital role in clearing up dead material.

The Association will continue to work with the Council to encourage more flowers in our community green spaces in the Triangle and on the Ringmore Rise Green.

Tina Hildrey



Comma Butterfly

The Spring Garden

The first cut of the grass has framed the garden well. *Prunus x subhirtella* 'Autumnalis', a great small garden cherry tree, has had an abundance of pale pink flowers all winter, and the scented shrub *Coronilla glauca* 'Citrina' started a display of pale lemon scented flowers in January that will continue until late April. A *Berberis Darwini* is covered in tiny orange flowers and the *Euphorbia Wulfenii* just gets

better and better as the lime green flower heads fill out to their full glory. No attention required! Together with the *Magnolia Stellata* with its stunning star shaped white flowers and a camelia with its masses of cerise flowers both looking wonderful against a pure blue sky, they all make a great backdrop for the emerging spring flowering plants.

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Prunus x subhirtella
'Autumnalis'



The *Brunnera macrophylla* with delicate pure white flowers has spread slowly to form a great clump, and I am enjoying the variegated *Arum italicum* 'Marmoratum', its white line wavy green leaves surrounded by black grasses in a small circular bed. In a shady spot omphaloides with brilliant blue flowers are just getting going as are all-time favourites such as forget me nots, muscari (grape hyacinths), and primroses being reassuringly reliable; the native plants spring up where they like to be and that turns out to be the best place and always raises the spirits! Hellebores have been bountiful and lovely this year, and the gorgeous daffodils are emerging and swaying in the breeze. A sure sign of spring to brighten our days.

Alice Hutton

Garden Waste Subscription Renewal 22/23

Residents with garden bins should note that your garden waste subscription runs from 1st April so is now due for renewal; the cost is £85. Many neighbours share a bin to manage the cost and to make use of any spare space available. The Council sends the garden waste collected for composting and it is then used for soil improver, horticultural blending or bagged for general use. Apparently, so far in 2022, approximately over 4,000 tonnes of garden waste has been composted.

You can renew online at
www.lewisham.gov.uk/gardenwaste or email
gardenwaste@lewisham.gov.uk

Bin there, done that...



Forest Hill Library update

The Forest Hill community library is once again open seven days a week and has recovered well from the coronavirus restrictions. There are new plans for improvements this year following

successful bids for funding, including redecoration and refurbishment of the popular children's section. Additional funding has also been secured to finish the library's garden infrastruc-

ture next year to include a seating area for visitors and volunteers.



The Library has lots of study space, with free PC and WiFi that you can access with your library card. There is also a programme of free regular events for all ages, so do go onto their website

<https://fhlibrary.co.uk/> to find out more. Opening hours are 9am-7.30pm Monday to Thursday; 9am-5pm on Friday; and 10am-4pm at weekends. As one of the busiest libraries in Lewisham, volunteers are always needed for a variety of tasks from checking books out and back and reshelving books; helping users access the computers; or getting involved with running the various regular activities. No

previous experience necessary, and you need only to decide each week when you will be available. So if you can help do contact Stephen Bruce at the library at Stephen@fhlibrary.co.uk or call 0208 244 0634

The library is self-funding and residents can also help by becoming a friend (£29 per annum) or a patron (single payment of £300).

New to the Estate?

If so, you may be interested in knowing how the Tewkesbury Lodge Estate Residents' Association (TLERA) came into being.

TLERA represents the 700 or so households within the area bordered by Forest Hill Road, Honor Oak Park, Wood Vale and London Road, working on behalf of all residents to maintain and improve the character of the area. Its name came from a large house, Tewkesbury Lodge, built in the 1850s in Honor Oak Road near the bottom of Horniman Drive. Extensive land to the west and south of the property was acquired, and a folly added in about 1880 at the highest point of the garden of the Lodge. It is now in the back garden of a house in Liphook Crescent, and has a grade II listing.

In 1927, the London County Council proposed the creation of an open public space on the Tewkesbury Lodge Estate 'by reason of the situation of the grounds... and the view obtainable from there'. It would effectively form an extension of the Horniman Gardens. However, developers moved in and demolished the Lodge when the third and final owner died in 1930. Building of the largely detached or semi-detached houses began a year later in what the estate agents advertised as one of the best spots in London.

In 1960, the occupants of some of these homes formed the Tewkesbury Lodge Estate Residents' Association to oppose the construction of a tower block near the summit of the hill on the site now occupied by Horniman School. Many of the residents were original owner occupiers who enjoyed living in houses that had wonderful views over London. So the construction of an 11 storey block of flats was definitely not welcome! Following a well organised campaign by the Association, planning permission was refused. Another high rise development on the site of what was Honor Oak Station in Wood Vale was also subsequently opposed. Although not able to prevent building on this site, the Association was successful in getting the height of the blocks

reduced from fifteen to eight storeys.

After the early successes opposing undesirable planning developments, the Association's objectives rapidly broadened to encompass the protection of both the built and the natural environment. As well as a long record of co-operative contact with Lewisham's Planning Department, we also take an active interest in such other matters as policing, transport and traffic management, and the built and natural environment.

In 1960, local people thought the character of the Estate was worth preserving, a sentiment that many of us would agree with more than sixty years later! This view has been passed on to their successors over the years, with preservation of the character of the area remaining a major objective of TLERA.

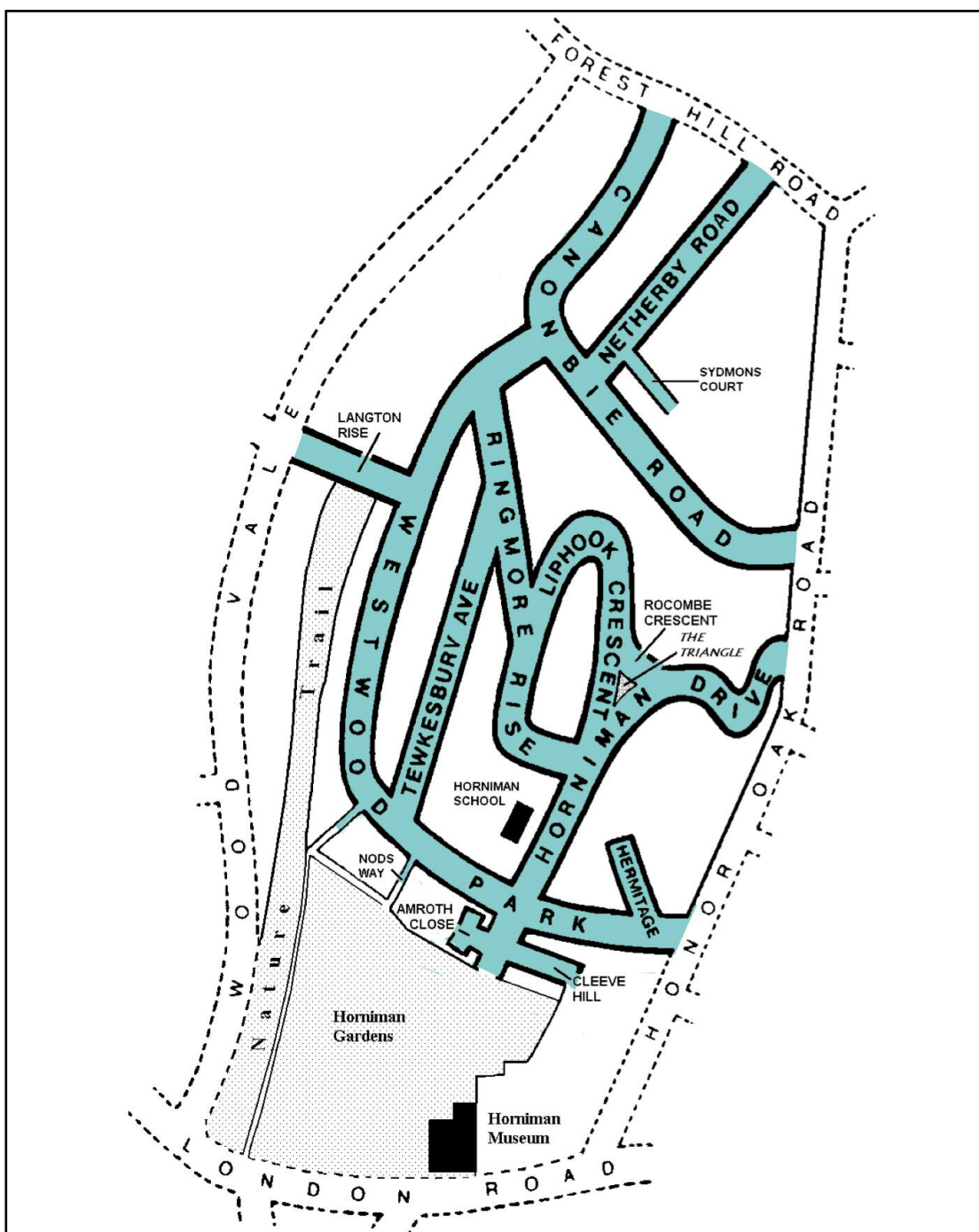


New Faces

The Association is pleased to welcome the following new member to the Committee. Paul Ewen and his family moved to Canonbie Road almost exactly a year ago. Previously they lived in East Dulwich, and Paul is originally from New Zealand. Already they've got to know some wonderful people on the street, and as well as the great views, they love Helena and David's Scots Pine at no. 76!

Paul will be taking over from Anne Bowers as a road representative. I'm sure you will join me in welcoming Paul, and also thanking Anne for her work for TLERA.

Paul Ewen



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