

Views from the Hill

NEWSLETTER OF THE TEWKESBURY LODGE ESTATE RESIDENTS' ASSOCIATION Autumn 2026



Scarecrow Garden Party

Sunday 18th October, 2pm-5pm, Hilltop, 28 Horniman drive

*Cakes for sharing
crows for scaring
quiz for thinking
tea for drinking
tales for telling
plants for smelling*

Scarecrow Treasure Hunt with prizes!

- Great Scarecrows of the past
- Scarecrow stories, songs and games

Cake and Tea with Worzel Gummidge

The proceeds of all sales will go to the National Garden Scheme charities including Macmillan, Marie Curie and many others.

Free entry for TLERA members so book early and mention your house number and road!

Limited numbers so please book by e-mailing:

hilltopstorygarden@gmail.com, stating number of tickets required.

All welcome, particularly extra adults who might like to read stories to children and help with the treasure hunt.

Non member entry £5 per adult and each child over 3.

*Make your own mini
scarecrow for a parade.*



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We want to hear from you!

TLERA is engaged in a wide variety of activities on the estate, including the crime cascade, planning engagement, and protecting our green environment. We also organise several social activities, such as the Easter egg hunt and Christmas carols, and have an enthusiastic garden group.

We have launched a short 'Have Your Say' survey to get your feedback on TLERA's activities as well as to help shape our priorities for the year ahead. It only takes a few minutes to complete — please share your thoughts via <https://tewkesburylodge.org.uk/get-involved/tlera-community-survey/>.

This is the QR code to the survey:



What TLERA does

Crime

- Running a crime cascade to make members aware of immediate security and crime issues
- Giving general security advice by providing periodic updates and communication
- Encouraging engagement with the Police Safer Neighbourhood Team, with emphasis on contributing accurate information into Police and intelligence gathering activity
- Liaising between residents and the Police when appropriate
- Encouraging members to take an active interest in our streets to contribute to deterring criminal activity

Planning

- Screening all planning applications from our area
- Objecting to proposals which would damage our green environment
- Organising campaigns to oppose larger plans such as a recent plan to develop the Telecom Mast site

- Supporting a member's successful attempt to prevent HGVs entering the Horniman Gardens through Westwood Park and Horniman Drive, during the current works on the Nature + Love project

Enhancing our green environment

- 70 street trees planted and watered on TLERA streets
- Greening fund grant obtained to improve the Ringmore Rise Green
- Re-wilding the Rocombe Crescent Triangle with 15 species of wild flowers recorded
- 50 trees planted on the Horniman Triangle and 30 Oak saplings now protected

Social Activities

- Autumn scarecrow garden party
- Christmas carols with Santa
- Easter Egg Hunt on the Triangle

Pat's Secret Garden

When you walk through the gate into Pat's garden, it feels like stepping into The Secret Garden. Hidden away in The Hermitage, it is a place of cobblestones, wisteria, sculpture, birdsong and surprises in every corner. It is hard to imagine that when artist Pat, now aged 93, first arrived at the Coach House in March 1970, there was no garden at all. The property had been the billiard room and stables for one of the large Georgian houses on Honor Oak Park.

"There was no garden, and the house was uninhabitable," she told me when I visited

recently to hear some of her memories of life on the Hill.

Pat is one of TLERA's longest-standing residents and has been part of the community for more than fifty years. Many of us know her through her beautiful garden, her artwork, or the National Garden Scheme openings that have become a fixture of life on the Hill. But the story began with a dilapidated building that most people would probably have walked away from. After suffering bomb damage during World War Two it had lain empty and then been used as a storage depot before lying empty again for a further three years.



*Of all lies,
art is the
least untrue.*

Gustav Flaubert

Pat came to the Coach House through her work as a sculptor. After creating a large sculpture for the late Lord Rayne's garden, she was offered the tenancy of the property he still owned. What she found was a real challenge: a neglected building that needed extensive renovation.

Pat recalls "In the early days I really only wanted to work on the garden," said Pat. But I was camping in here, with no water or electricity so I had to make it habitable first."

Fortunately, she had help. "My mother was incredibly practical and we set to, learning as we went. We mended roofs, installed electrical wiring, laid floor boards, cut glass, replaced sash cords and laid bricks, including the sets in the courtyard. We plumbed, plastered, painted inside and out. One summer I even took all the windows out and refurbished them all."

Later, her mother moved in permanently when the hayloft was converted into a flat. Together, the two women gradually transformed both the building and the courtyard and then started on the soft furnishings, laying carpets, making roller blinds and upholstering old furniture. Today, anyone who has visited Pat's Open Studio or Open Garden can see the results of their work.

Yet creating the garden was only part of the journey. Becoming part of the community on the Hill took longer.

Like many people who move somewhere new, she had to find ways to meet people. In Pat's case, gardening provided the answer.

"It was through the garden that I met people on the Hill." With her mother she opened her garden first in 1982. Her mother propagated hundreds of plants, raising significant sums for charity through plant sales. Looking through their old records it was clear how much time and effort they both devoted to supporting charities. After that first opening when an astonishing 350 visitors came

The opening led to friendships with fellow gardeners and joining TLERA's Garden Group. The Coach House also gave Pat something else she needed: a place for her art.

"When I first came and saw the area where my studio is, I realised it was somewhere I could work and show my sculptures."

In those days she carved stone and marble.

Today, in her nineties, she finds stone too hard to carve, so she concentrates on clay and ceramics. Visitors to her garden still enjoy discovering her sculptures tucked among the plants and the variety of artwork on display in the old stables.

One of the things that struck me most during our conversation was how often gardening, art and community overlapped. Pat's garden brought people together, her artwork attracted visitors and friendships grew through shared interests.

She also remembers all the community events on the Hill over the years, including helping to marshal local children's activities on the Three Peaks Challenge.

"It linked us old people with the children and with the school," she says. "And that was lovely."

Perhaps that is what this story is really about. Not simply a garden, or a house, or even fifty-five years of history, but the connections that make a neighbourhood feel like such a special community.

Pat's story is just one of many.

As we put together future newsletters, we'd love to hear from other residents. Whether you've lived on the Hill for fifty years or moved here last month, you have a story to tell. What was the Hill like when you arrived? Who welcomed you? What has changed? What memories would you like to share?

If you'd be willing to be interviewed, or if you have photographs, memories or anecdotes about life on the Hill, please get in touch.

*Pat in her little
hermitage paradise*



TLERA Security Update July 2026

Since the last security update, the TLERA security rep, Christine Noon, has handed over to Paddy Redding (Canonbie Road). Christine has been in the role for some 15 years and has achieved a great deal to make TLERA a safer area. Most notably she set up the Crime Cascade, which has proven a valuable means of getting security information quickly and efficiently disseminated. Paddy comes to the role from the British Army (25(ish) years) and experience in the security risk management world. He can be reached through the crime cascade system.

Paddy attended a joint Perry Vale/Forest Hill Ward Meeting on 26 February (the June meeting has been postponed), from which a number of interesting points arose. The first is that the Police crime stats differ to ours. The Police were asked to verify how their stats are structured and originated so that we can ensure the information we feed to them is better aligned with their requirements and that crimes we note are also shown on the Met system.

The Police and TLERA crime stats for our area are attached; the top table shows the crimes that have been recorded by the Police each month since January 2026. The lower table shows those that have been reported via TLERA. While the Met stats' geographical boundary maps onto TLERA's area well, it is not exact; please bear this in mind when you look through the figures. All crime types have been included, and one or two make for uncomfortable reading.

TLERA has historically focused on vehicle related crime (the most visible category on the estate) and it is notable that the Police have more vehicle crimes recorded than TLERA does, so we can be sure information is getting to them even if it might not be visible to TLERA. As we go forwards, we encourage everyone to use MetEngage to report information to the Police, and to call 999 if they see a crime on the estate; pulling Police into the estate will do much to discourage crime by showing criminals we are alert to crime and that the Police are responsive to our area.

Given the amount of suspicious activity around the estate, one thing we can all do is improve the quality and completeness of the information we feed to the Police. To this end, you are encouraged to use the aides memoire attached

to this article when describing people and events. You are also encouraged to keep a copy of them on your/your family members' phone and near your comms devices so they are to hand if you need them (particularly if you are apprehensive, as they will help you to focus on, and note down the key information). They have been disseminated through the Crime Cascade so you can get them from there easily.



It is important to feed as much information into the Police as we can. At the Ward meeting we heard how a description of an item of clothing identified on two separate occasions enabled a search Warrant to be obtained, which led to an arrest and conviction. This is because the Police could identify the same individual undertaking drug dealing activity more than once, which enabled them to clear the legal bar for a search Warrant to be obtained. Had the clothing only been seen once, the chances of getting a Warrant would have been significantly reduced. Please do feed any information you might have to the Police – once they have it, they can collate it with other information to build their intelligence picture and you may just enable them to clear a hurdle that results in a Warrant being issued or an arrest being made.

One of the issues discussed during the Ward Meeting was the importance of taking an interest in what is happening around the estate. Criminals hate their faces being seen, so if you have the opportunity to spend a few minutes out in front of your house each day, you may deter scouts and ne'er do wells. If we become known as an area in which residents are alert to what's going on we may well find our local crime rate falls.

*You'll go in the back
of a black mariah, if
you don't squawk...*

If you see a crime or suspicious activity, please call 999. Even the sound of a siren can deter criminals and there is always a chance they will be caught. Even if they are not caught, a fast follow up can improve the chances of catching criminals later on, as well as deterring further visits to our streets.

It's worth noting that the Police are about more often than we think; they undertake uniformed and plain clothes patrols during the day and at night. They also periodically manage their shifts to flood the TLERA area during the dark hours. That said, they are a small team and they have many demands on their time, so they cannot always respond as we might wish. With this in mind, the importance of our reporting and proactive engagement with the Police cannot be underestimated.

involved. More to follow on this in due course.

Describing People

Report what you can; don't worry if you cannot remember everything. It's important to write your description down so you know what you reported – often things are forgotten if you've been scared or are worried. Add in information that you remember later on (date/time it so you remember if you are asked about it)

Physical Appearance (Head-to-Toe)

- Sex/Gender: Male/Female.
- Race/Ethnicity: Apparent race (e.g., Caucasian, Hispanic, Asian, Black).
- Age: Estimated age (e.g., "Approximately 30-35 years old").
- Height/Build: Best guess, or relative descriptions (e.g., 6'0", slender build,

	TYPE OF CRIME	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Total
		26	17	19	12	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	74
Police	ASB	1	6	5										12
	Bike Theft													0
	Burglary	1	1	1										3
	Criminal Damage/Arson	10	2	2	1									15
	Other Theft	1		1										2
	Public Order		1											1
	Robbery													0
	Sex and Violence	9	5	6	5									25
	Shop Lifting													0
	Theft from Person				1									1
	Vehicle Crime	4	2	4	4									14
	Weapons				1									1
		Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Total
TLERA		3	3	3	2	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	12
	ASB	1			1									2
	Bike Theft			1										1
	Burglary													0
	Criminal Damage/Arson													0
	Other Theft													0
	Public Order													0
	Robbery													0
	Sex and Violence													0
	Shop Lifting													0
	Theft from Person													0
	Vehicle Crime	2	3	2	1		1							9
	Weapons													0

The Police are keen that we encourage everyone to download and use the MetEngage web service, which connects us directly to the Safer Neighbourhood Team (SNT). MetEngage compliments the emergency numbers and should be used to report non-urgent concerns. It's a good resource because it enables us to feed in small bits of information, which can be used to build and enhance intelligence gathering, and which may result in Warrants being issued (as was the case with the drug dealer mentioned earlier) and arrests being made. At the Ward meeting there was talk about cameras around the Estate, but the collected opinion was that these are unlikely to be authorised because of the cost and complexity

muscular, overweight).

- Hair: Colour, style, length (e.g., black, buzz cut; blonde, shoulder-length).
- Facial Hair: Beard, moustache, clean-shaven.
- Distinguishing Marks: Tattoos, scars, moles, piercings, glasses, Clothing and Equipment.
- Headgear: Type and colour (e.g., black baseball cap).
- Upper Garment: Shirt/jacket colour, style, and insignia.
- Lower Garment: Trousers/skirt colour and style.
- Footwear: Shoes or boots.
- Accessories: Bags, vests, watches, or jewellery.

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What to keep in mind if you are the witness or victim of a crime.



Crime types and distribution on our estate

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Behaviour and Demeanour

- Actions: What the person is doing (e.g., loitering, acting nervous, taking photos).
- Direction of Travel: Where they went, including the direction of travel (e.g., "moving north on Main St").
- Interaction: Who they are speaking with or avoiding.

Describing an Event

- What: eg Car theft/theft from car/flasher etc
- When: Date and time – don't worry about exact time eg overnight/between 0100 and 0530
- Where: eg CR no 245

What happened: eg I saw 4 men trying to steal an exhaust pipe from car reg XX56TBG. (Remember to fill in the personnel description for all those involved too).

What are you/others doing about it:
eg I yelled at them and they took off in car reg YY75PPP towards Netherby Road.
They left a glove and 3 spanners in the road;
Police informed, items not moved.
Police due to visit.

Open Gardens in May



We struck lucky for our Open Gardens event- this year which we organise in conjunction with the National Garden Scheme (NGS).

After a week of hail and thunderstorms it dawned clear on 17th May. Even the sun came out, so visitors could enjoy tea and cake on the lawn. Three gardens opened to raise money for the NGS charities - many worthwhile causes including MacMillan Cancer Care, Marie Curie, Parkinson's UK, Mind and many others.

Many thanks to all the people who baked delicious cakes, propagated plants for the plant sale and helped on the day. £3,668 was raised, with 10% of it going to our local hospice, St Christopher's.

As you will have read, Pat, the very first NGS Garden Opener on our Hill is still opening her garden now, forty-four years later!

Changes at the Council



Annabelle Roberts

Following the Local Elections on May 7th Lewisham has a new Mayor from the Green Party, Liam Shrivastava. Forest Hill has two new Councillors, also from the Green Party, Fergus Navaratnam-Blair and Annabelle Roberts. Peter Bernards from the Labour Party was re-elected. And before the local elections, Sophie Davis stood down as Councillor to take up her new appointment as Special Advisor to the Government. We are very grateful to Sophie for all that she did for us over many years. We would also like to thank Peter for his contributions to the Planning Committee and particularly his support of Dennis Stevenson's objection to the proposal by

Hornimans to bring HGVs onto the Horniman Gardens though Westwood Park and Horniman Drive. Without Peter and Dennis we would have had HGVs rumbling up Westwood Park and the Horniman cul-de-sac for the last 18 months: thank you both!.

Many of us have written to Fergus and Annabelle. Stuart Checkley , Dennis Stevenson and Jacqueline Priestley had a productive meeting with them about local concerns about unexpected impacts of the Horniman Nature + Love project. Since that meeting Fergus and Annabelle have raised with the Director of the Hornimans concerns about the obstruction to private pathways from gardens onto the Nature Trail. They also had another meeting to discuss a number of other issues, including the replacement of the Poplars which we have discussed in this Newsletter. We are very grateful for the energy and seriousness with which our new Councillors are taking our concerns about the impact of the Nature + Love project on all of us and most particularly those whose houses look out onto the Horniman Gardens and the Nature Trail.



Fergus Navaratnam-Blair



Street Trees For Heat Waves

This stunning Lagerstroemia was planted in a sheltered sunny spot on Horniman Drive in 2018. Coming from China via the Mediterranean this tree rarely flowered in England until the last 10 years, and even then only on hot summers, and usually at the very end of the summer. This is the first time that our Lagerstroemia has flowered as early as July. Watch out for its autumn leaves, which will also be spectacular.

Also shown here is another heat loving tree that is thriving on our estate. Chitalpa Tashkentensis was cloned by an eccentric genius in Tashkent behind what was then the Iron Curtain. It was an unlikely clone of two completely unrelated trees - the Desert Willow and the Indian Bean Tree. Its leaves come from the Desert Willow

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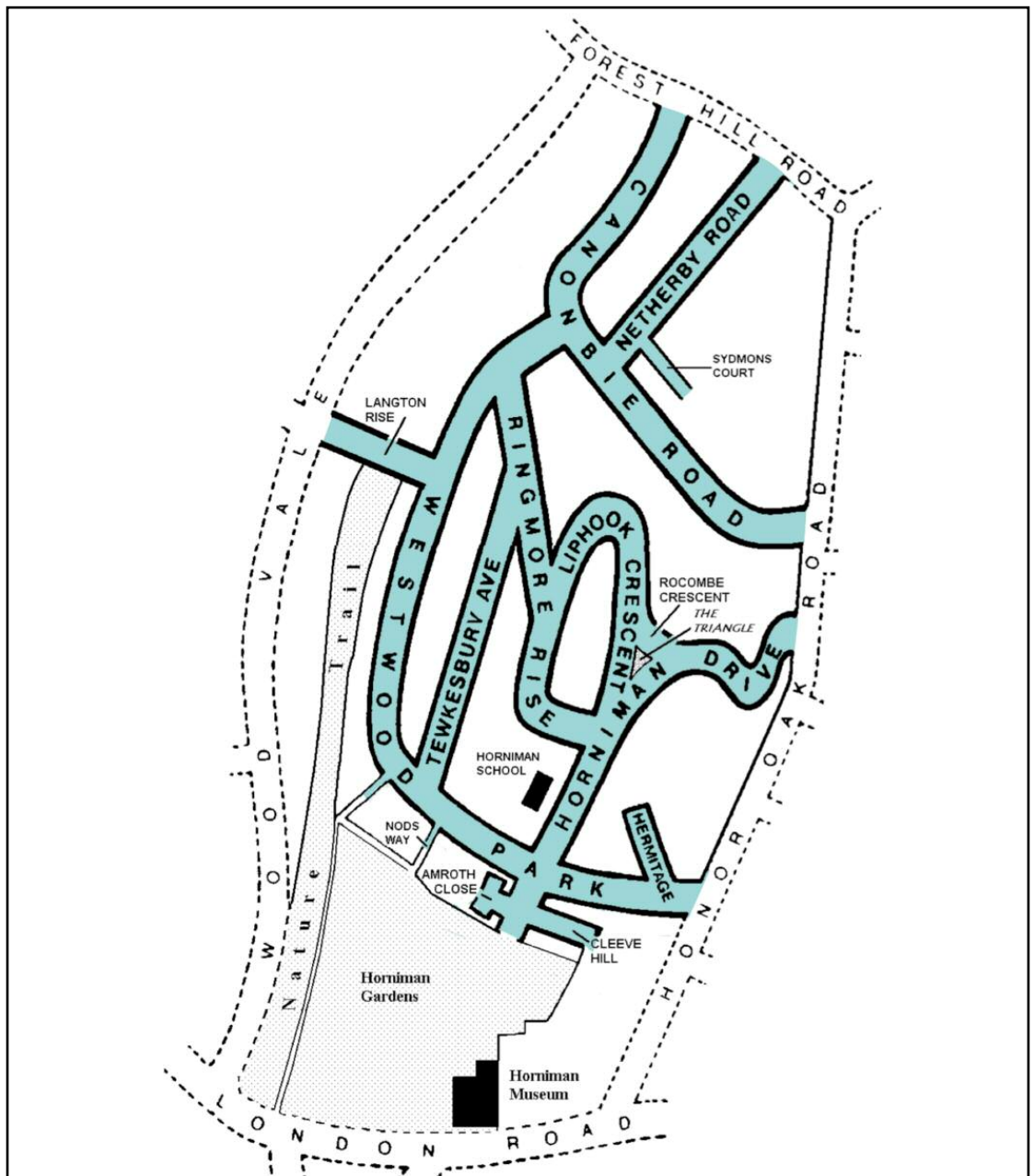
*And now in
Technicolour©:
The Lagerstroemia
on Horniman Drive.*

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but its flowers bear no relation to either of its parents.
(Check out the yellow flowers of the Indian Bean Tree in a front garden at the junction of Ringmore Rise and Horniman Drive, and you will see what I mean). The flowers of *Chitalpa Taskentensis* are stunningly beautiful, and a pair of these trees can be seen at the bottom of Ringmore Rise. A mature example can be admired in Lancaster Avenue in Lambeth.

If you are thinking about a tree outside or near your house, please contact me at stuart@streettreesforliving.org. We have funded and watered 73 trees so far, but there is plenty of room for more.
Stuart Checkley

*The Chitalpa on
Ringmore rise.*



This newsletter was compiled and edited by Frankie Locke and Stuart Checkley. Design and layout by Michael Schlingmann. Contributions from members are very welcome and can be e-mailed to us at secretary@tewkesburylodge.org.uk