

BROCKLEY SOCIETY



Issue 144 November 2018
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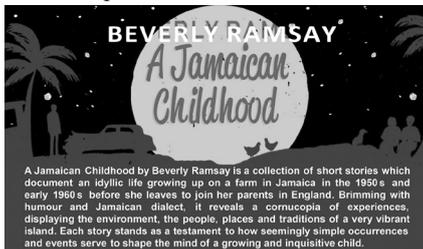
Delivered free to 4000 households in Brockley Conservation Area
three times a year: March, June and November www.brockleysociety.org.uk

BROCKLEY SOCIETY

Annual General Meeting

Wednesday 14 November, 7.30pm
St Peter's Church
Wickham Road, SE4 1LT

7.30pm *A Jamaican Childhood*: Writer Beverly Ramsay will discuss her childhood in Jamaica and arrival in England and read from her new book of stories. Join the discussion and bring similar experiences.



Find us on Facebook:
A Jamaican Childhood

Now available on amazon

8.45-9.30pm: Annual General Meeting:

Election of officers (Chair, Vice Chair, Secretary and Treasurer) and committee members. Email chair@brockleysociety.org.uk if you wish to stand for a position or help on a sub-committee: Planning (see p6); Hilly Fields Fayre; Brockley Voices reminiscence project, MidWinter Warmer; Communications & Admin; Street Trees for Living; Breakspears Mews Community Garden or new projects.

MidWinter Warmer for seniors

Saturday 16 February 2019, 1-5pm
Brockley Social Club,
240 Brockley Road, SE4 2SU

Hilly Fields Midsummer Fayre

Saturday 22 June 2019, 12 noon to 5pm



Windrush 70th anniversary marked at Fayre

Hilly Fields Midsummer Fayre on 23 June was one day after the 70th anniversary of the arrival at Tilbury docks of the Empire Windrush – the ship that brought nearly 500 Jamaicans and other islanders to the UK in response to post-war labour shortages.

A considerable number settled in Wickham Road and adjacent streets and Brockley became home to a significant Caribbean community.

To mark the anniversary, Goldsmiths designer and lecturer Rose Sinclair, helped by three volunteers, ran a weaving workshop at the Fayre, encouraging participants to craft a response to the legacy of the Windrush generation and share reflections and memories through writing and drawing.

About 200 people participated. Thirty squares of fabric were woven on custom mini-loom; 40 memories and responses were shared and there were rich exchanges with the researcher and between participants.

In the context of the ongoing scandal of deportations and denied access to public services perpetrated by the Home Office against the Windrush generation and their children, the activity provided a way for

the Brockley community to reflect on the legacy of migration from the Caribbean and elsewhere.

'The final piece was intergenerational,' said Rose Sinclair. Unlike previous weaving events, the cards were much more political and historical, with many more children's voices shared through drawings. 'Some people just cried when they read the cards,' she recounted.

The daughter of the male subject of the book *Small Island* by Andrea Levy, participated and engaged with other visitors to the stand.

Another woman recounted that her mother also came on the Empire Windrush as a Polish refugee.

Visitors of all ages thought the Windrush generation had made a positive contribution to British society. Children were able to engage by drawing and the simplicity of the design tasks enabled everyone to engage.

We were also celebrating 70 years of the NHS. A nurse who came from the Caribbean in the 1950s described the very hurtful racial abuse she suffered during her first years of nursing.

Brockley Open Studios Artists' Christmas Fair

Saturday 24 November, 12noon-4pm
St Peter's Church, Wickham Road

Brockley Community Christmas Market

Saturday 8 December, 12 noon to 6pm
Coulgate Street, SE4 2RW,
by Brockley Station

Remembrance Sunday

11th November, 10.45am – 12.15pm

Join the Friends of Brockley & Ladywell Cemeteries for their annual commemoration of the fallen of the First World War.

Meet at the Ladywell Cross of Sacrifice for the two-minute silence and wreath-laying. This will be followed by a walk via three relevant graves to the memorial in the Brockley Cemetery for a further wreath-laying.

As the day is also Armistice Day the event is starting earlier than usual so context can be given to the event. Please come when you can and leave when you want.

Deptford Borough War Memorial

Lewisham Way, SE4 1SX.

10:45am Sunday 11 November 2018

Service and two-minute silence

In August 1918, 6,000 people attended a service on Hilly Fields in support of the First World War, which inspired our 2015 mass photo in the same place.

January Pantomime at Greenwich Theatre

Sunday 6 January, 1pm

Yes, a January Panto this time, to end the school holidays with a bang! Limited performance dates and very early block bookings meant we couldn't get enough tickets to satisfy Brockley's demands before Christmas.

Brockley Society books a block of 150 tickets, which reduces adult prices to £18 while Children pay £14. They are sold on a first-come-first-served basis until they run out.

Book on Brockley Society's website at <http://brockleysociety.org.uk/shop/> and select how



many adult and children's tickets you want, plus £2 postage. Pay with PayPal or credit card. Your tickets will be posted to you.

Please book before 15 December to be sure you receive your tickets in time.

Nazanin Zaghari-Ratcliffe

The joy of both four-year-old Gabriella and her mother, Nazanin Zaghari-Ratcliffe, when Nazanin was granted a three-day furlough in late August. A former Brockley resident, Nazanin was arrested after visiting



her parents in Iran and jailed on ludicrous charges of spying, a political pawn in international relations. Her husband Richard Ratcliffe has been campaigning for over 900 days for her release.

- It is hoped that the play, *Looking for Mummy: Nazanin's Story*, by Emi Howell will come to the Jack Theatre next year — hopefully with a happy ending.

Diabetes Peer Support

10-11, 17-18 November

Healthwatch Lewisham's Diabetes Peer Support groups have been running across the borough for one year and this pilot project is keen to show what has been achieved and to hear from the local people whose lives have been changed for the better as a result.

Thursday 15 November, 2pm until 4pm
St Laurence Centre, 37 Bromley Rd, Catford, SE6 2TS.

Speakers and refreshments.

Free event, all welcome.

Let's get educated on Type 2 Diabetes. This illness can now be controlled through diet and exercise. Come and learn more about it. 020 8690 5012 - Healthwatch Lewisham for more information.

www.healthwatchlewisham.co.uk/diabetes-peer-support-groups/

BROCKLEY SOCIETY

President: Gillian Heywood, MBE

[@broc_soc](http://www.brockleysociety.org.uk)

Chair..... 020 8692 3829

chair@brockleysociety.org.uk

Fayre..... fayre@brockleysociety.org.uk

Newsletter..... news@brockleysociety.org.uk

Local history..... localhistory@brockleysociety.org.uk

Planning & conservation.....

planning@brockleysociety.org.uk

Planners, architects and others with conservation knowledge or interest are welcome to join our planning and conservation group. See planning email above.

Trees..... info@streettreesforliving.org

Breakspears Mews Community Garden.....

breakspearsmews@brockleysociety.org.uk

Join our occasional email circulation about

Brockley Society and local events:

email_chair@brockleysociety.org.uk

Everyone living in the Brockley Conservation area is automatically a member of the Brockley Society. The Brockley Society welcomes all.

Newsletter copy deadlines:

1 February, 1 May, 1 October

Email to news@brockleysociety.org.uk

Advertising rates - back page

Brockley Better Streets

Brockley Better Streets

We've all had too many risky experiences in our neighbourhood streets and want to make things better.

Thanks to everybody who completed the website survey and gave their views at the summer fayre. The key messages were:

- 90% of respondents are concerned about clean air in Brockley
- 90+% are aware of at least one road accident on their own street or in Brockley
- Rat-running was the biggest concern (78%), followed by speeding (72%) and volume of traffic (70%)
- Few people score their street well on the 10 Healthy Streets' indicators
- The streets most frequently mentioned as a concern are Tressillian, Brockley and Geoffrey Roads, Brockley Cross, Harefield and Wickham Roads

The good news is that Lewisham Council is committed to 'Healthy Streets', the bad news is it is a 20-year plan.

The Mayor of London is targeting 80% of our journeys to be on foot, by bicycle or public transport. We've got to make our streets healthier, safer and more welcoming for all to improve our health, boost business and connect communities. If you'd like to help shape how our local streets develop - join us.

To make a difference now we want to trial some 'streetkit' in partnership with Sustrans. This can be quickly and safely set up to test residents' proposed changes to their streets. We want to hold a **Community Design workshop on 25 November**. Come and help work through designs you'd like to implement next year.

Check out the workshop details and crowd funding here: www.brockleystreets.co.uk

Primrose Quartet

Concert in aid of St Christopher's Hospice

St Augustine Church, One Tree Hill,

Honor Oak Park, SE23 3LE

Friday November 16th at 7.30pm

Works by Schubert, Brahms and Faure

Tickets £15, concessions £8, under 10s free.

Lee Green Open Studios

10-11, 17-18 November

More than 40 artists are exhibiting their work in 18 venues around Lee Green. Over two weekends the streets will be buzzing with families and groups of friends following the art trail around the area, visiting private studios, community venues, galleries and cafes. Free workshops and talks are available at some venues.

Collect a stamp at each venue to enter a prize draw to win a £100 LGOS art voucher. There is also a children's art trail with the chance to win your favourite art rock and exhibit on our on line gallery.

The Open Studio leaflets are available around the borough or visit www.leegreenopenstudios.com for a map and further details. **Admission Free. Weekends 10-11, 17-18 November from 12 -6pm**

Aladdin's Cave closes

As we go to press, a two-day auction on 26-27 October marks the end of this flamboyant and bewildering architectural salvage business. Loampit Hill will be a less colourful place. We wish owner Kathy Kirby well in the future. Planning permission has been granted for flats and a commercial unit in its place.

A Mythic Understanding: Inspired by David Jones

Exhibition: 6 November – 14 December 2018

Camberwell College of Arts

Peckham Road SE5 8UF

Mon–Fri: 10am–6pm. Sat: 12pm–4pm

To mark the centenary of Armistice Day and the end of the First World War, Camberwell College of Arts, UAL, will present a major project that explores the life and themes of the work of artist, illustrator and poet David Jones, CH, CBE (1895–1974).

Brockley-born Jones was just 14 when he first attended what was then Camberwell Art School. At 19, he volunteered to fight in the war, enlisting for service with the Royal Welch Fusiliers. Jones remained a private throughout the war, fighting for longer than any other British writer and his wartime experiences had a profound effect on him both emotionally and artistically, shaping much of his output for the remainder of his life.



For a pre-Christmas pantomime you can enjoy *Aladdin* at the Broadway Theatre in Catford. For some performances all tickets are only £15, or £13.00 for groups. Box Office 020 8690 0002 or broadwaytheatre.org.uk

Understanding Dementia

Community information seminars at Leah Lodge Care Home

Three sessions: 6th, 13th, 20th November 2018, 2pm to 4pm

Refreshments provided.

Do you care for a family member or friend who has dementia? Would you like to learn more about dementia in a supportive group environment?

Leah Lodge Care Home specialising in dementia care, in collaboration with St Christopher's Hospice, is running a series of three afternoon sessions delivered by St Christopher's nurses skilled in dementia care. Each session will cover a different aspect of care, including improving communication skills, understanding certain behaviours, practical strategies and how best to look after yourself.

The sessions will provide you with the opportunity to meet other people in similar situations and enable you to share your experiences in the strictest confidence.

To book a place please call Geoff Pride 020 8318 2272.

Leah Lodge Care Home, Blessington Road, London, SE13 5EB leahlodge.haa@cinnamoncc.com | www.cinnamoncc.com

Brockley Festival of Ideas for Change...

... not for now. Our Steering Group felt we needed more people with ideas, and of course time and energy, to stage a successful Festival even by March 2019.

Maybe Brexit and a possible General Election are concerning people more at the moment than other issues, however important.

Our 2016 Festival of Ideas for Change was held in Prendergast College. In 2017 it was in Lewisham College. Both were extremely successful events, involving local speakers and a large local audience. You can view the record of both these inspiring events on Brockley Society's website.

But we are not abandoning the idea of another Festival. We had identified three themes of importance to Brockley:

- The experience of the Windrush generation and its children and grandchildren
- Loneliness and isolation across the generations
- Women in Brockley in the 21st Century

If you have thoughts about how to develop them – or other ideas for change in Brockley and beyond – and are prepared to put time and energy into creating another Festival in autumn 2019, let us know! Email chair@brockleysociety.org.uk



Breakspears Mews Community Garden

We have had an exciting summer at the community garden. We again ran our popular senior gardening club, held a fun botanical illustration workshop during the Brockley Max Arts Festival, ran a stall at the Hilly Fields Fayre, and visited other gardens and allotments.

Our Open Day in July also featured Lewisham Swifts showing how to protect this charismatic and threatened bird, a drawing workshop run by Lewisham ArtHouse and a wonderfully tasty pot luck dinner for all our volunteers.

Our volunteers have worked hard to keep the raised beds watered during the hot summer and in return have had an abundant harvest.

The garden is winding down for the winter, but we are planting some winter vegetables and starting to plan for next year.

More info: breakspearsmews@brockleysociety.org.uk

Anita Compton

In August, Tyrwhitt Road lost one of its oldest residents. Anita had lived at number 58 for over 54 years and had celebrated her 90th birthday last October. She was thrilled to have reached such a



notable milestone and had a lovely day, with a stream of well-wishers coming in to congratulate her. This was all the more remarkable because she grew up in Spain during the civil war of the 1930s, and like many, she and her family suffered severe hardship. This experience no doubt contributed to a serious illness, which had a lifelong impact, though one of her favourite stories was about waking up in a morgue!

She came to England as a young woman to work and learn English. After a while she met Maurice, the love of her life, who sadly died in 1996, after Anita nursed him tirelessly at home for three years following a severe stroke. They had travelled and worked together and Anita could turn her hand to virtually anything from mixing concrete to interior decorating, as well as being a very talented cook and gardener.

She was also a keen amateur still-life artist, most of her pictures being of flowers. Latterly, they made a beautiful home and garden together and, as some people will know, they often won Brockley Society awards for their front garden displays. They also shared a love of cats, giving a home to many over the decades – particularly the lost, the injured and the homeless. Anita cared about all animals and was a financial supporter of several animal charities, as well as feeding the local birds, foxes and squirrels.

She will be remembered for her friendly smile, readiness to chat, sense of humour and willingness to help anyone she could. She will be much missed by her friends and many local residents, as well as the local wildlife.

- Anita's beautiful gold-edged, six-piece Czech dinner service has been donated to be raffled or auctioned to raise money for a street tree in her memory and in recognition of her love of trees and gardening. We will publicise details when they have been finalised.

Sunday Lunch with Street Trees for Living



Russell Miller at
The Stephen Lawrence Centre
Sunday 7 October 2018.

What a great day! Sixty people enjoyed a delicious lunch at The Stephen Lawrence Centre, hosted by Street Trees for Living, raising money for street trees which clean the air and provide a canopy of nature over Lewisham's streets.

Russell Miller was the star attraction, and he was brilliant. Following a half-hour talk and another half-hour's Q&A he took us



The walk round Brookmill Park's magnificent trees

on a walk round Brookmill Park. Russell is very knowledgeable both as a tree expert and in matters of how to get things done, he is founder of Hackney's 'Tree Musketeers', and chair of The Ancient Tree Forum. He told us many fascinating details about how trees flourish, how they can be helped in their early years, how we should decide what kind of tree to plant and where.

Russell has invented a charming way of measuring the girth of a tree which he calls 'a cuddle'. How many times do you have to stretch your arms out to get around the tree?

It was nice to hear that the beastly 'leaf-mining' larvae which are eating our horse-



Photo: Eannoin Marshall

Russell Miller explains the bark on a London Plane, *Platanus x acerifolia*, in Brookmill Park

chestnut trees (since 2002) are themselves beginning to be eaten by other creatures!

The occasion was inspiring. The Stephen Lawrence Centre is an exciting building, designed by David Adjaye architects and faced in patterned glass by Turner Prize-winning artist Chris Ofili. It harmonises beautifully with its tree-filled surroundings. The staff are very welcoming and helpful.

As someone said after the day 'Even if you didn't like trees before, after hearing Russell speak you would want to go out and plant one straight away.'

Front Garden Sale 2018

About 75 houses in Brockley and Ladywell took part in the annual Coordinated Front Garden sale on 8-9 September. Some had great success, others less so — and rain did not help.

For one family it went really well: they raised £85 for Down's South London which they wanted to do as a friend's little sister has this syndrome.

'We hung balloons and they unquestionably attracted attention. My daughter also modelled dog balloons - small, medium, large

tails - and accidentally, one giraffe. One little boy particularly loved giraffes, or kindly said he did, so that was perfect.'

Brockley Society advertises this coordinated event through our newsletter, circular email, website and twitter, but publicity depends heavily on the participants putting up posters. The final list and a map were displayed on our website brockleysociety.org.uk.

We intend to run the event again next year, probably 7-8 September 2019. To participate, email frontgardensale@brockleysociety.org.uk

A hectic summer for Brockley Society's planning group

The summer has been busy for Brockley Society's planning group, which meets monthly to examine planning applications in or adjacent to Brockley Conservation Area.

We have dealt with over 113 applications, including large and complex applications like 159A Upper Brockley Road, 72 Loampit Hill, the Brockley Barge and the expansion of Ashmead School (see right). These may involve consultation meetings with planners and the applicant where we seek to influence the application, aiming to conserve and enhance the conservation area.

We have dealt with issues relating to Ashby Mews (see below) and have prepared a survey about Brockley's mews. We have reported planning infringements to enforcement.

On a more positive note we have tried to assist residents with advice on proposed planning applications or questions about other planning issues.

Our planning group is formed of volunteers with a mix of local and professional knowledge who share these tasks in their own time. Collating the lists of granted, refused and pending applications since the previous

newsletter is time-consuming and we have not managed it this time. Our apologies: it will disappoint those who enjoy looking through the lists.

At our AGM we elect the planning committee for the year ahead and welcome new volunteers with expertise in planning or architecture, with knowledge of the conservation area, or a willingness to take on collating the lists for the newsletter or learn about planning and conservation.

Ashby Mews gate and tarmac await retrospective planning application

Gates appeared at the northern end of Ashby Mews SE4 in April 2018, followed by tarmac in June. Brockley Society received a large number of email, phone and face-to-face complaints



First the gates ...

expressing considerable anger. At each stage we spoke to the mews owners, or 'frontagers', who had taken these measures, explaining Brockley Society's opposition to them, and stating that closing off a right of way and creating a gated community was totally at odds with Brockley's vibrant and open community, developed over many decades.

We published our view on Brockley Society's website and other social media that:

- retrospective planning application was needed for the gates
- all mews frontagers along the entire length should have been consulted
- free access for pedestrians as well as delivery and emergency vehicles needed to be maintained
- planning permission for the resurfacing was required because of Brockley Conservation Area's Article 4 compliance

Aware of mounting anger in the community we arranged a meeting on Thursday 19 July

at Myatt Garden School to explain the legal and planning ramifications and to consider the next steps. About 60 people attended. The meeting was lively but civilised and the group of mews owners who had installed the gates and laid the tarmac were listened to respectfully and in full.

Representatives from Brockley Society's planning group explained our objections



... then the tarmac, like a suburban business park

on three specific aspects, regretting that the mews owners had not consulted us before proceeding. In the following discussion issues were aired on both sides in a constructive way.

The clear view of the majority of participants was that closing the pedestrian access was a mistake. Some people had walked through Ashby Mews for decades – in one case for 67 years from the age of three. The meeting also heard that numerous other mews owners had not been consulted about these changes. Concern was expressed about long-standing drainage problems affecting properties in Upper Brockley Road, which could be made worse by the tarmac.

The group of owners who had made the

changes stated that they would submit a retrospective planning application for the gates, which would provide an opportunity for the public to comment or object. Speaking for the group, Sam Djavit stated: "We will leave the pedestrian gate open."

Discussions with the planning department are proceeding on whether Article 4 compliance was required for the tarmac. As we go to press we are still waiting for the planning application to be submitted and understand that Planning Enforcement may take action.

Mews survey

Ashby and all Brockley's other mews fall in the area developed by the Tyrwhitt-Drake family from the mid 1850s. Deeds stated that each land plot fronting and within the Mews would include half the width of the mews access lane, to be maintained by the owner but with free access use by other frontagers and members of the public and with access for emergency and delivery vehicles and use of the wider central lay-bys for turning.

Brockley's mews, byways and quasi mews are a unique feature of the conservation area: all very different; very special and quite unlike the posh mews of central London. Campaigns to enhance and protect the idiosyncrasy of the mews go back more than 40 years and are intrinsic to the foundation of Brockley Society and the establishment of the conservation area.

As the mews are well-loved and valued by people who live and work in Brockley we are conducting a survey on their use: please see www.brockleysociety.org.uk

Life with brain injury for a graphic book

Brockley-based comics artist Wallis Eates is set to produce a graphic book about brain injury survivors in collaboration with the charity, Headway. Currently crowdfunding with the publishers Unbound, *Like an Orange* is due out next year.

Eates spent six weeks with members of Headway at their Submit to Love art studios. Here the charity provide people who have acquired a brain injury with the support and resources to become practising artists as part of their rehabilitation.

Uniquely, the book will incorporate artworks made by the survivors that she met over this period, feeding them into comic panels that tell their stories. The reader will see directly how individuals with a brain injury express themselves, as well as how their stories inspired Wallis as an artist.

'I loved my time in the studio,' says Eates. 'It was such an inspiring place to be and that's what I want to capture in *Like an Orange*. It will be full of unique stories and artwork, exploring what it is to face challenges to memory, identity, ability, and to develop a whole brand new voice.'

Eates has been practising as a comics artist for five years, specialising in autobiographical subject matter and collaborative community based projects, most recently at Deptford Does Art, exhibiting works she created at Double Jab boxing club.

Unbound are crowdfunding publishers that support authors to realise their ideas and bring them to life. You can learn more about *Like an Orange* and support the project by going to Eates' page on the Unbound website at www.unbound.com/books/like-an-orange

Bringing in the bins

The Environmental Protection Act requires you to place your bins at the edge of your property by 6am on the day of collection and to take them back onto your property before the end of that day. Wheelie bins may not be left outside your property borders at any other times.

Most Brockley residents follow this routine. However, some of our pavements have become unsightly and unsafe with 'left-out bins'.

Brockley Society is working with Lewisham's Strategic Waste & Environment officers to stop bins being left on the highways. Suggestions include a 'bin amnesty' to collect unwanted bins and asking tenants to consider sharing. Officers will consider other measures. Please email envirocasework@lewisham.gov.uk to arrange collection of an unwanted bin, or to help a neighbour who does not have access to the internet.

Ashmead School Expansion

Council ignores pollution dangers to children's health

Expansion proposals for Ashmead school include a large building and new entrance on Lewisham Way, opposite Lewisham College (LeSoCo). The plans were passed by Lewisham council's Planning Committee B on 11 October.

Since the application's submission in December 2017 Brockley Society has participated in discussion with the architects and planning officers, aiming to influence the proposals in terms of both design and location, with limited success. At the Planning Committee meeting our objections centred on two main points:

1) The need to protect long views of the Stone House from Memorial Gardens in Lewisham Way.

The Stone House was built in the 1770s. Its historic significance and value is reflected in its Grade 2* listing, putting it in the top 8% of listed buildings in the entire country. Historic buildings are a non-renewable resource. A negative impact of the school proposals is that the new building will obscure views of the Stone House. Brockley Society proposed moving the new building further north by a small amount, thereby protecting views of the house, and also St John's Church beyond and, more importantly:

2) The proposed new school entrance on land to be annexed off Lewisham Way raises serious safeguarding issues:

- Pupil arrival, departure and assembly will be on a dangerous road, the A20 Red Route, which had 24,736 vehicles daily in 2016 and a fatality a few days before the planning meeting.
- Pupil arrivals will conflict with students arriving at Lewisham College across the road.
- The bus stop and pedestrian crossing directly in front of the proposed entrance cause idling engines and stronger emissions as vehicles accelerate. This will increase the already high air toxicity on this busy main road.
- Our concerns are further highlighted by the sad death in Catford of 9-year-old Ella Kissi-Debrah from asthma, now believed to be caused by illegal levels of pollution on the South Circular.
- We believe this proposal conflicts with the Mayor of London's Air Quality Strategy to locate school entrances away from busy roads.

Brockley Society's proposal to move the building further north would remove the proposed entrance on Lewisham Way. The existing public land on Lewisham Way should remain, avoiding the need to fell three mature trees, which contribute to improving air quality. The Ashmead Road entrance could be modified to handle increased pupil numbers.

Noise and air pollution affect children's cognitive development and increase the risk of asthma. Several parents attended the planning meeting, reflecting a substantial number of other parents, neighbours and future parents who are concerned about these issues.

The Planning Committee's unanimous vote seemed to have been driven more by a formal need to justify the extended school rather than by the safety of children. As we felt let down by Councillors we are exploring the possibility of follow-up actions via the GLA through our London Assembly Member Len Duvall and Vicky Foxcroft, MP.



Accommodation Available

This small Charity Almshouse offers modern one-bedroom flats in secure private grounds with landscaped gardens in Central Lewisham, with easy access to transport links and the local high street.

Key Workers and Public-Sector workers most welcome to apply.

We have been granted temporary permission

by The Charity Commission to amend our eligibility criteria while building plans are considered. We are currently able to offer affordable housing to those under the age of 60 within Lewisham, subject to other qualifying criteria.

Visit www.lpcharities.co.uk or contact us by

Post: Lewisham Parochial and Almshouse Charities, Clerk's Office, Lloyd Court, Slagrove Place, Ladywell, SE13 7LP

Phone: 020 8690 8145 or 020 8314 0717

Email: admin@lpcharities.co.uk

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Friends of Hilly Fields

We've had a busy year in the park, with the spring planting of our 'new forest'. We thought we were in luck with the downpour that followed, but the record breaking heatwave meant we had our work cut out with watering. On the plus side, we have some impressive new volunteers who diligently returned throughout the week to water. Exercise and good works, what's not to like?

There was a raised eyebrow or two when we said we were putting the new basket swing outside the playground, to send the message that play is for everyone, especially teenagers. The fact that the top beam fractured is not particularly down to abuse, but is a fault with the timber and the design: it should really be able to cope with as many people as can fit on it. The manufacturers have agreed to replace the timber frame.

After much deliberation and more fine tuning, our new signs to replace the very outdated ones are on their way from the blacksmiths. Some of you may remember a bus went through the fencing at the top of Vicars Hill. We have added our funds to the insurance money so that the boundary can be upgraded with estate railing. Once this has been installed, we'll start the new planting, paid for by a MPGA grant. We'd welcome some new volunteers to help with clearing and planting and, most importantly, ongoing watering.

The more money we raise, the more planting we can do, so please help by buying our tote bags from the cafe ... the perfect Christmas Present.

In September we heard great news from the Big Lottery that our grant 'Walk on the Wildside' had been successful: focusing on events that will get children out into the park throughout autumn winter and spring. We have a story especially written for the park, a lantern-making workshop with celebratory procession, scavenger hunts and printing workshops. If you want to keep up to date, we try to post on our website, the Facebook page, Hilly Fields SE4 and the notice board at the cafe.



Friends of Hilly Fields stall at the Fayre



Hilly Fields Midsummer Fayre 2018



Rose Sinclair (right) explains the weaving at the Windrush Stories workshop

Hilly Fields prefabs

Our dry summer had some unexpected consequences, including lines of variation in grass colour on Hilly Fields which mysteriously appeared on the dry ground on the edge of Hilly Fields Crescent and Montague Avenue. It transpires that they were the site of approximately 50 prefabricated houses (prefabs) that were built after World War II as temporary housing for people who had lost their homes through bombs or slum clearance. Single storey bungalows, they were built on waste ground and parks all over London. They had a planned life of 10 years but some have lasted much longer.

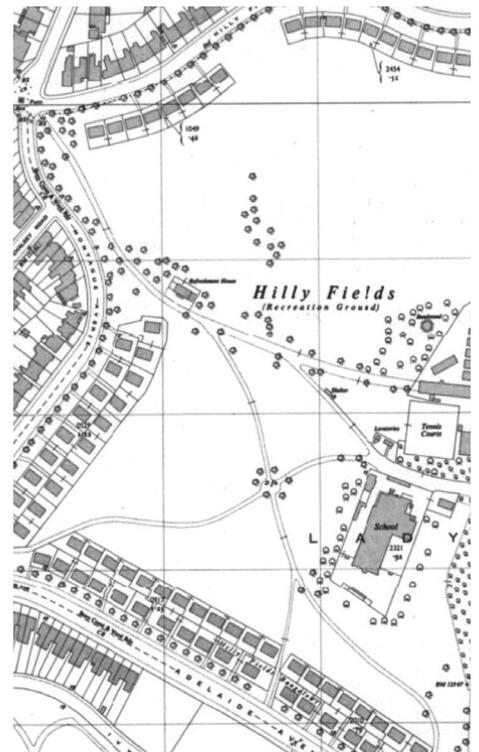
One of the residents of a Hilly Fields prefab was local girl Rita Darragi. We went to look at the site of her home and talk about her memories. She moved there in the mid 1950s when she was seven and lived with her family at number 34 Hilly Fields Crescent. Compared to their former home in Blackheath which was being demolished as a slum, the prefab was luxurious: an inside loo, a bathroom, a fitted kitchen – all the latest mod cons. Surrounding her prefab was a cottage garden which was full of hollyhocks and runner beans. The front garden had a row of roses including the 'Peace' rose celebrating the end of the war.

Hilly Fields was more remote in those days, with no 484 bus. Rita's mum bemoaned



Rita, where her prefab house stood

walking the length of Tyrwhitt Road with her heavy shopping! The family lived there for



The 1949 survey map shows the open ground of Hilly Fields circled with prefabs – Hilly Fields Bungalows – with a double row along Adelaide and Montague Avenues, and a single broken line on Hilly Fields Crescent.

nine mostly happy years, with milk delivered and Danish pastries on a Saturday when the baker called. Some of the houses opposite were still being built.

'It was like living in the country, having the fields as a continuation of our garden', said Rita. It's hard to imagine it now.

If you lived in a local prefab please get in touch with Brockley Society's oral history group, Brockley Voices, via chair@brockleysociety.org.uk.

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