Newsletter
Winter 2022



West Wickham
Residents' Association

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Advertising in WWRA magazine……

Our advertising rates for 2022 are:-

Full page (A5) inside	£150	13 cms wide x 19cms high
Half page	£ 75	13 cms wide x 9cms high
Quarter page	£ 38	13 cms wide x 5cms high

Publication dates are early March, June, September and December

Deadline dates are January 20th, April 20th, July 20th and October 20th

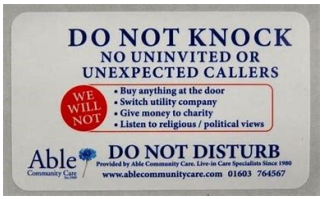
Please contact the Editor for more information

It's that time of year again…..

Once again this year we are indebted to Tim McColloch of McColloch Roofing for his offer to fund and provide the Association's Christmas Tree. Knowing that its traditional place on the roof of the library toilet block will not be available in the future, we are looking at Town centre sites which are suitable for the tree. Hopefully, the tree will be in its new position by the time you read this.

Since 2019 Able Community Care (ablecommunitycare.com), a Norfolk company, has given out at no charge, almost 80,000 'DO NOT KNOCK' door stickers to older and disabled people who do not wish to answer the door to strangers. Able Community Care is a nationwide live-in care provider which was established in 1980. Originally, they just gave out door stickers to their clients, but the demand has grown and now they receive requests for the door stickers from around the UK.

If you represent or work with a group of older or disabled people and would like to receive door stickers to distribute to them, please email to: info@ablecommunitycare.com with how many you would like to receive and an address to send them to - no addresses will be kept or passed on.



I heard from a reliable source that a Sunday in October just gone marked the 59th anniversary of when a young musician, later known as David Bowie, played at the main hall in Sussex Road to an audience estimated to be 500. The Hall Trustees are considering an event to celebrate the 60th anniversary next year and welcome any suggestions. If you have suggestions, email them to me and I will pass them on.

In the Autumn Newsletter we published an email address for member's use when reporting or enquiring about a traffic or transport issue. We're having technical difficulties with that address and cannot retrieve messages so, if you have used this address, please resend your message to our main enquiry point at info@westwickhamresidents.com

The Committee wishes all members a happy festive period and a healthy and peaceful New Year. This includes our much valued band of Road Stewards who also deserve significant thanks for the work they do in delivering this Newsletter and keeping us in touch with the many issues affecting residents.

Editor

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- Come along to Medhurst Hall, Sussex Road, West Wickham at 8.00pm on any Tuesday evening between September and May and meet us.

- Log on to www.wwphotosoc.org.uk to see more of our work and look at our Programme of Events for Season 2021/22.

- Email us at info@wwphotosoc.org.uk We will respond to your queries/questions.

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News from the High Street



Christmas is coming ….. and a very big thank you to the Christmas lights team for all their hard work throughout the year. Many of us have enjoyed Karin's fund-raising homemade jams.

We have some new shops to welcome to the high street. **Buttoned Up**, working in conjunction with the Bride's shop next door, has everything you need for weddings, special events and business wear. Buttoned Up is owned by Allan Olding and Becky Griggs and they have much experience in the menswear business. Open every day except Wednesday - appointments only on Sunday. Late night opening is on Thursday.

New to the high street is the **Mobile Vape Exchange** who also sell and repair mobile phones

Jani, a fast food restaurant, recently opened with an extensive menu of burgers, wraps, pancakes, waffles, shakes and mocktails

We would like to welcome **Make Me Local** to the West Wickham business community. The Digital Marketing agency moved from previous premises in Bromley to Lion House, 86 Station Road, on 12th September 2022 following substantial growth in their team. Make Me Local owner, Nathan Kelsey adds: "Everything we do at Make Me Local is about helping local businesses grow online and connect with local customers.

We say a sad farewell to **Lloyds Bank** which will have closed its doors on the 5th December. Thank you for your service to the community over so many years.

Many Congratulations to **Under 1 Roof** (under1roof.com) who have celebrated 18 years providing the residents of West Wickham with many of the items they cannot purchase elsewhere. Kevin is also now offering a general household maintenance service - pop in or email justoddjobsuk@gmail.com.

Don't forget the **West Wickham Pantomime Society's** Jack and the Beanstalk at the Wickham Hall, Sussex Road, 6th - 14th January www.westwickhampanto.org

Merry Christmas to all.

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TRAFFIC & TRANSPORT

New Timetable on the Hayes Line

I'm sure you're all aware of the railway timetable changes which take effect from the 11th December 2022. There has been much anger and frustration expressed by commuters who use several of the stations on the Hayes line, about the lack of a direct service to the City of London. When something similar was proposed some five years ago, the Association opposed the changes, particularly as they were not mentioned in the consultation carried out the previous year. In 2018, we, along with other Residents' Associations on this line, urged our local MP to get the proposals changed. At the time of writing, some Bromley Councillors and our MP, Bob Stewart, have been involved in petitioning Southeastern to reinstate direct Cannon Street services. If the new timetable has been implemented, then this action had little or no effect.

Southeastern say all trains on the Hayes line will now go to London Charing Cross and passengers for London Cannon Street will have to change at London Bridge. Those travelling to St Johns and New Cross should change at Lewisham. Southeastern say the changes will mean space on trains where it's needed most, a more consistent timetable throughout the day and more trains running on time.

Peak Between 0700-0959 there will be 13 services to London Charing Cross and between 1600-1859 there will be 12 services from London Charing Cross to Hayes.

Off-peak and Saturdays 2 trains per hour will call at all stations to Lewisham and then London Bridge, London Waterloo East and London Charing Cross.
2 trains per hour will call at all stations to Ladywell and then fast to London Bridge, London Waterloo East and London Charing Cross.

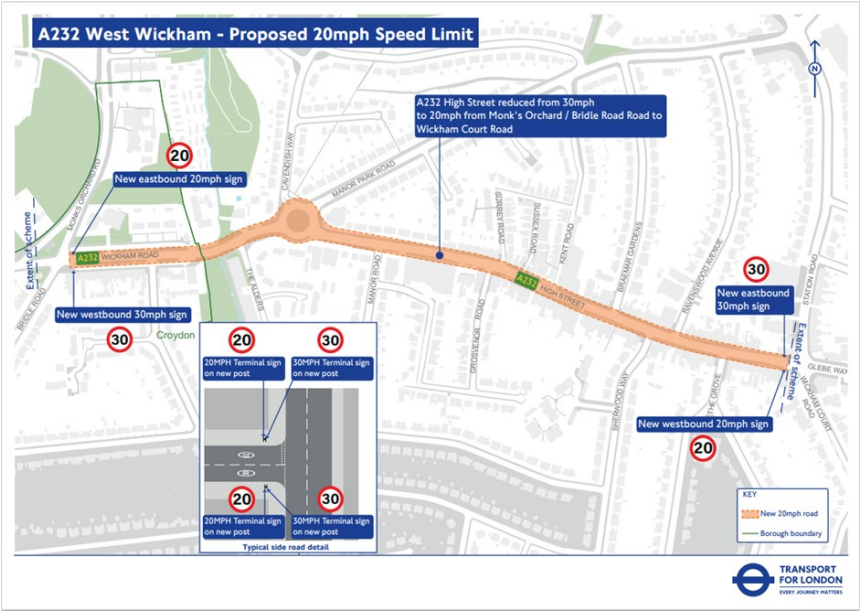
Sundays 2 trains per hour will call at all stations to Lewisham then London Bridge, London Waterloo East and London Charing Cross.

20mph speed limit on A232 West Wickham High Street

Transport for London (TfL) plan to reduce the speed limit to 20mph on the A232 between Station Road and Monks Orchard Road, as part of their commitment to eliminating all fatal and serious injury collisions on London's roads by 2041. This is part of their plan to reduce the speed limit by 10mph on more than 140km of the Transport for London Road Network, i.e. the roads for which TfL is responsible, essentially the Red Routes.

TfL say that the speed at which people are driving or riding is the most important factor in both the likelihood of a collision occurring and of the severity of the outcome. The benefits of lower speed limits are wide ranging including reduced frequency and severity of collisions and increased cycling and walking confidence. A person walking is up to five times more likely to be killed if hit by a vehicle travelling at 30mph than if they were hit at 20mph. As more and more people are choosing to walk and cycle, this lower limit reduces the risk of them being killed or seriously injured and makes streets less polluted.

Work is planned to start by May 2023 and will involve installing new signs and road markings as well as temporary lamp column mounted banners. TfL will write to residents closer to the time letting them know when and where they will be working and what to expect in terms of any local disruption. Visit haveyoursay.tfl.gov.uk/lowering-speed-limits to provide comments on the planned 20mph speed limit. Here you will also be able to find out more information about the Lower Speed Limits programme and plans for other locations across London. You can also submit questions or comments about the plans, by email to LocalCommunitiesandPartnerships@tfl.gov.uk



Parking to go cashless

Councillor Bennett commented "It has been Council policy since 2019 to move towards cashless parking. The machines are 25 years old and are being cannibalised to keep others in service. They are prone to robbery and the cost of collection is £75,000 a year. A report to the Scrutiny committee in November will recommend that the machines in car parks are removed next year and those on streets by 2024. Parking charges are an important part of the Council's income which would otherwise have to be raised in council tax. It has to be remembered that users are motorists - accessing RingGo or paying by phone call requires far less skill than driving a vehicle weighing well over a ton on the road."

Methods of payment will be by using the RingGo app, text or call using mobile phones. The Council have promised to install adequate signage and an education programme in using these alternative methods. The Association remains very concerned about whether some residents would be able to cope without a cash or card alternative and we continue to talk to our Council representatives.

Friends of West Wickham Library



"Travelling in Latin America"

A talk by David Gilmore

Wednesday 11th January 2023 @ 2.30pm

"Biggin Hill Memorial Museum"

Speaker to be confirmed



Wednesday 8th February 2023 @ 2.30pm



"The History of San Francisco"

A talk by Peter Braithwaite

Wednesday 8th March 2023 @ 2.30pm

All talks are held at West Wickham Library - doors open from 2pm

(fwwl@btinternet.com)

Glebe Way, West Wickham

Entry: £2 members (£3 for couples) & £3 for non-members
Meetings may be subject to alteration without notice.
Programme correct at time of printing

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ENVIRONMENT

Wickham praised by Bromley Biodiversity Partnership (BBP)

The Bromley Biodiversity Partnership (BBP) is looking for help in wildlife surveys and would be very grateful if residents could send hedgehog records to bromleybiodiversity@gmail.com. West Wickham was praised for both promoting the 2017 survey and finding good numbers in that survey. Now the BBP want to check that the population, which seemed to be doing well in 2017, is still thriving.

The BBP will be asking for help in further wildlife surveys, such as toads in the spring, then stag beetles and swifts in summer. This sort of evidence can help justify planning interventions, such as a requirement to put swift bricks in new buildings or extensions. Swift records are now being sent to RSPB Swiftmapper website, and to see records for LBB go to swiftmapper.org.uk and zoom in to West Wickham. The new Library building will have swift bricks installed.

Pollution watch

Please keep an eye out for pollution in the Beck as it runs through High Broom Woods. On Sunday 2nd October, foul water was going in to the Beck from a pipe (that emerges from under the adjacent Caravan Park), turning the stream a cloudy grey for its entire length downstream through the woods to Eden Park. This was still happening the following day. If you see anything, please call the pollution hotline free on 0800 807060. Take photographs and send any photographs or videos (with the pollution incident reference number you were given) to ics@environment-agency.gov.uk



The Beck in High Brooms Wood



Richard Barnes (WWRA Committee)

West Wickham Open Spaces

150 hazel whips are to be planted on West Wickham Common in spring 2023 by volunteers from West Wickham and members of Langley Park and Langley Silhouette Rotary clubs. This follows on from a similar successful planting in Spring Park. They are managed by the City of London Corporation under the care of their Ranger, Kieran. He will guide the planting efforts, probably in March, whilst the hazels are still in their dormant phase. There is always ongoing maintenance to preserve the ecology, however, Covid set back some of the plans by two years and now there is a catch-up exercise which requires the help of enthusiastic Volunteers. (See how to volunteer at the end)

The work at West Wickham Common involves the removal of fast-growing bracken, holly, and self-seeded birch that have encroached onto the Heathlands. When this is completed, heathers will return and so will pollinators. Unfortunately, heaths cannot manage themselves.

Both areas have interesting histories as ancient woodlands and heathlands. For those who have not ventured along the woodland paths in West Wickham Common you will find an Iron Age Fort circa 600 BC. The wood is also renowned for being the site of a very old gnarled hollow oak tree said to be used as a setting for Sir J E Millais 1852-53 painting 'The Proscribed Royalist' - a scene of 1561.

In Spring Park, Spring will be ushered in by a wonderful bloom of white wild Spring flowers. The picture was taken on April 2nd 2022; it is of woodland anemones, close to a well worn path in the woods. See if you can find them!



A success of both Parks management was recognised by an award to Fly the Green Flag from the Green Heritage Charity, 'Keep Britain Tidy'. Well done woodland staff and volunteers.

How to be a volunteer. Meet the last Friday of each month with the Ranger from 10 am to 3pm, Contact 01372 279083 or email to city.commons@cityoflondon.gov.uk

J Stuart Talbot (Environmental lead Langley Park Rotary)

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The Crone of the Night *Richard Gowing*

I'm sad to announce that I've recently moved away from West Wickham, to pastures new in the West Country. I will miss the 'old neighbourhood' with its winding woodland trails, city-edge farmland and many parks to explore. My new house and neighbourhood are altogether different, but there are some things in common relating to their natural history.

It must have been on the second or third night after moving into the new property that I heard a familiar '*hoo-hoo-hoo-hoo*' sound arising from outside. Directly opposite my house is a mature pedunculate oak (*Quercus robur*) growing over an old field pond. Surrounding the property boundary on one side is a high elm (*Ulmus* sp.) hedge. Each of these habitats is a remnant of the old farmland predating my estate. The perfect habitat for a tawny owl (*Strix aluco*) it appears. And so it was that several nights before I departed West Wickham, in early October 2022, the same sound echoed through the Bromley night. You may be well versed in our neighbourhood's nocturnal fauna or the presence of tawny owls may be news to you. Either way I hope the following provides a few items of interest.

The '*hoo-hoo-hoo-hoo*' sound is generally something people are familiar with. On hearing it, one immediately visions the large, piercing eyes, the parabolic face, the feather-concealed beak and the upright, confident outline of an owl. This owl sound and shape pervade children's story books, films and literature. In fact, the tawny owl's call is perhaps the archetypal owl sound we all learn when young. However, the tawny owl is the only British species that makes this sound. There are four other regularly occurring species, which we won't talk about here, each with their own distinctive calls.

It may surprise you to know that it's specifically the male tawny owl which issues the '*hoo-hoo-hoo-hoo*' call. The female tawny, if in ear-shot and remotely interested in her potential suitor, sounds-off with a harsh '*keewik*' sound. One is rarely lucky enough to see a tawny owl and it is through this auditory mechanism that one can begin to understand the night behaviour of this elusive member of our avifauna. The presence of both male and female birds, in suitable woodland habitat, possibly indicates an established or formational breeding territory.

One of the central purposes of the male tawny's call and, indeed a key purpose of all bird song, is to defend territory in preparedness for breeding. When you hear a '*hoo-hoo-hoo-hoo*' call, what you are actually hearing is a male tawny setting-up a base and advertising to would-be partners that it is a suitable place to

breed. The call also serves a second purpose in driving away other owls. Perhaps the habitat where calls are heard contains many suitable trees for nesting and an abundant supply of food that is worth protecting. The female tawny must assess this for herself when selecting a partner. The male tawny owl is a vigorous and aggressively territorial bird. It will respond rapidly to other calling owls or those foolish enough to imitate its call. A salutary tale is that of noted British wildlife photographer Eric Hoskins (1909 – 1991) who suffered an accident in May 1937 when, returning to a tawny owl photographic hide late at night, he was struck in the face by the owl. Its claw penetrated his left eye and the resulting infection led to its loss.

The tawny owl is renowned for being a woodland bird although it does occur in parks and greenspaces supporting large trees. I recognise its presence in West Wickham as a reminder of the neighbourhood's environmental past. One need only examine the National Library of Scotland's website, which offers free-to-view historic maps of the UK. The Ordnance Survey 'six-inch to the mile' map published in 1871 clearly shows a giant nexus of woodland absolutely dominating large parts of what is the residential land we now know as West Wickham, Addington and Shirley. The current Spring Park, which you *might* consider to be a large woodland by modern standards, represents approximately 5 – 10% of historic woodland cover levels in this area (my estimate). Parts of our neighbourhood were probably more like a working forest than a suburban area in times past.



The realm of the tawny owl

The tawny owl's home range is typically established in the late-autumn and defended throughout the winter until the spring when breeding occurs. This is why Autumn/Winter is a good time to find an owl by listening for its calls. Tawny owls will nest in a variety of places but have a distinct preference for tree cavities. They take quite readily to artificial sites such as purpose-built nest boxes. You may notice tawny owl boxes around some of Bromley's parks. They tend to be constructed as a vertical box with the opening at the top and are distinct from other bird nest boxes. After setting-up and defending a territory, they breed in late Winter and are likely to lay their first eggs in early spring. Incubation is said to take around 30 days and fledging of young occurs after about five weeks. However, young owlets may remain close to the nest, often perched on branches close to the nest site. They are partially dependent on their parents for several months after fledging.

Tawny owls feed mostly on small mammals, especially mice and voles. However, they may also take small birds, amphibians, large insects and earthworms. The latter are taken from short-grassland, when the worms are foraging above ground. Tawny owls have even been known to take bats on the wing. It is possible to understand the diet of a tawny owl by studying its pellets. Birds regularly cough-up the indigestible parts of their meals (for example, mammal bones and fur and the tough wing cases of beetles). By breaking the pellets apart one can identify some of the prey items to species level and build up a detailed picture. Small mammals such as the bank vole (*Myodes glareolus*) and wood mouse (*Apodemus sylvaticus*) are likely to form part of its diet in West Wickham.

Throughout history the owl has been a symbolic bird in folklore. Once upon a time tawny owls were a source of fear and anxiety. It is said that in Celtic mythology, the owl was a sign of the underworld and its call was thought to signal approaching death and misfortune. The species' Gaelic name '*cailleach-oidhche*' is a reference to the Celtic Goddess of Death, the blue-faced crone of winter and death. The species has a range of other names in folklore denoting this symbolism including 'the night hag' or 'corpse bird'. Interestingly, not all historic cultures took this stance. In ancient Greece, the owl was a symbol for Athena, goddess of wisdom and strategy and this symbolism has entered into the modern conscious. The collective noun for owls 'a parliament of owls', which perhaps also shows a more benevolent evaluation of this species (depending on one's view of our dear parliament at the present time). Amusingly, the Harry Potter franchise of films has introduced owls as mystical pets and useful creatures to whole generations of young children.

If you are interested in seeing or hearing a tawny owl in West Wickham, your first act should be to open you window of an evening, when the din of the days road traffic has subsided for the night. Then simply listen to the cool night air. Autumn and Winter are good times to do this. I have heard tawny owl on Wickham Court Road and Corkscrew Hill. Further afield I have heard tawnies whilst cycling home to West Wickham through places like Dulwich, Sydenham and parts of South Norwood. I was once paid to conduct a survey for tawny owls in Hyde Park to assess the impact of a winter funfair event on this Westminster priority species. After several hours of trying we did indeed find them. It made for a rather fun Winter adventure to be able to roam across this central London location in the depths of a winter night. Typically the bird will need some mature trees and shrubs and a degree of broadleaved woodland. Without these

things the bird is less likely to be observed. For the more intrepid among you, take a stroll through Spring Park or Well Wood at night. In the winter one can certainly hear male and female owls calling and in the early summer it is also possible to hear the whispery, fizzing calls of newly fledged owlets calling their parents for food. On a warm June evening in 2020, during a lock-down exercise stroll through our local woods, my partner and I were enthralled by four young owlets hopping from branch to branch whilst both of the parent birds brought them fresh prey. Certainly one of the best wildlife sightings we have ever had. If you do find a tawny owl, please share your sighting with the London Wildlife Trust and Greenspace Information for Greater London:

wildlondon.org.uk/campaign/record-your-sightings/owl-prowl

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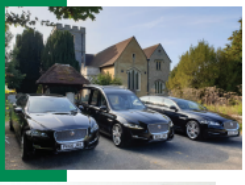
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Wickham Court

According to the Domesday Book, in 1086 the manor of Wickham had 24 farmers and their families, 13 serfs, a church and a mill. Most of the 2500 acres was woodland. In 1469 a Norfolk farmer Henry Hayden bought the manor. These were troublesome times with the Wars of the Roses, so he pulled down the timber and mud manor house and built a new one of brick. It had no windows in the outside walls but there were arrow slits in the turrets at each corner. In the centre there was a courtyard. This is the oldest brick built house in Kent and is listed Grade 1.

In 1580 it was bought by John Lennard of Chevening and Knole for his son Samuel. It stayed in the Lennard family for about 350 years. In about 1630 substantial alterations were made to put mullioned windows in the outside walls, cover over the central courtyard and install a Jacobean staircase and build a two storey front porch. In the late 19th century a substantial new wing was added. In 1928 Sir John Lennard died and his son, who had emigrated to Canada, sold it to the Selsdon Park Hotel Group who raised the roof to provide an extra floor. In 1952 it was bought by Coloma College and has remained in educational use ever since.

Peter Leigh (WWRA Committee)

Further wartime memories

The memories evoked by Dr Brian Philp's series about his wartime experiences living in Langley Way, have spread far and wide. I received the following from Bernie Martin who now lives in Somerset but lived in Pickhurst Rise during the 1940's.

"A friend of mine, living in West Wickham, sent me the interesting article in your Residents' Association Newsletter for this Spring, about the bombing in the 1940's. My parents and I lived at 39 Pickhurst Rise. We had an Anderson shelter, originally in the garden but it was always flooded due to an underground stream, so my father moved it to inside the back room of the house. The immediate neighbours, a middle-aged lady and her daughter, shared our shelter as they didn't have one.

The bombs fell just a few houses away destroying most of their house next door and sending a load of debris onto the front of our house, destroying the roof, the first floor and the ground floor. I still have this vivid memory of looking up and seeing blue skies through this great hole in the roof. I was only 5 years old at the time and I didn't really appreciate the horror of it all. I can still remember seeing my father sweeping the stairs and I have often wondered how on earth my parents coped with it all. Reading your chilling but so very interesting article, it is amazing we were all still alive. But I can also vaguely remember the kindness of people willing to help.

I read Dr Philp was at Hawes Down school. I was also at this school so no doubt our paths must have crossed briefly from time to during that period, running in and out of the shelters trying to continue with lessons during the air raids. Such memories!!"

Editor

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Churches Together in West Wickham - Celebrating Christmas 2022

Church Services have resumed after the Covid pandemic and are providing an important element of spiritual well-being for people in West Wickham and the surrounding area. Please see the details of what is happening to celebrate Christmas on the individual Church's website listed below. You will receive a warm welcome.

Coney Hill Baptist Church
Coney Hill Road
West Wickham BR4 9BU

www.coneyhill.com

St John's Church
Layhams Road,
West Wickham BR4 9HJ

www.stjohnsww.com

St Francis Church
Ravenswood Avenue
West Wickham BR4 0PW

www.stfranciswstwickham.co.uk

West Wickham Methodist Church
Hawes Lane
West Wickham BR4 9AA

www.bromleymethodistcircuit.org.uk

St Mark's Catholic Church
High Street
West Wickham BR4 0LT

Saintmarks7@btinternet.com

St Mary's Church
The Avenue
West Wickham BR4 0DX

stmarywestwickham.co.uk

Emmanuel United Reformed Church
The Grove
West Wickham BR4 9JS

www.godwithus.org.uk

West Wickham & Shirley Baptist Church
Wickham Road
Croydon CR0 8EH

www.wwsbc.org.uk

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Councillor's Corner

The Councillors who represent West Wickham Ward, attend our committee meetings. They have no voting rights, but we do get the chance to air and debate issues face to face and they often take away actions and commitments arising from these discussions. We have asked them to provide regular updates on the progress of issues most frequently raised by members and items of interest to the Town. This is their first report.



Our West Wickham Councillors:
Nicholas Bennett, Hannah Gray and Mark Brock

Welcome to our West Wickham Residents' Association newsletter update that we hope to bring you in every edition. We thank the West Wickham Residents' Association for allowing us this platform to inform residents of the work your Ward Councillors have been involved in. We also hope this helps provide information that residents may not be aware of or would like further details about. Our contact details are on the inside cover of this newsletter if you wish to make contact with any or all of us about anything that you may wish to raise. Please remember that we are here to support our residents with any local issues that are within our power to help with.

West Wickham Leisure Centre Along with residents we are waiting for revised plans to become available. We are very much in support for some form of improvement to the whole complex and hope to have something to report back to the community by the end of the year.

West Wickham Library This exciting revamp of the Library will be starting shortly! We are awaiting information on where the temporary Library will be sited while the works are taking place and will be sure to make this information available to residents once we have it.

Fix My Street Bromley Council have recently improved the Council Website. One of the features that has been improved on the website is Fix My Street. Residents are urged to use this to report issues such as graffiti, road defects or cleansing issues amongst other things. Please use the web address: fix.bromley.gov.uk/

Report It If you have issues such as missed waste collections from your property, street lighting problems or dumped rubbish along with many other issues, this can also be reported on the website via the following link: bromley.gov.uk/report

We are open to suggestions from residents if they would like us to feature anything on these updates about the work that we do locally or if they would like us to support any ideas that they have to make our part of the borough even better.

Hannah, Mark & Nicholas

M E Horstead

Disabled Adaptation Specialists

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Would you like to make your loved ones live easier?

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www.horsteads.com or call 0208 402 1685



"I would like to say thanks to the two guys who were absolutely brilliant and are a credit to your company.

The work they did to our bathroom has changed my wife's quality of life and I would like to thank you so much." Mr & Mrs Brushwood





A worthwhile Quest

Quest is a non-performance and non-profit theatre group based in West Wickham, who explore theatrical elements without public performance. It gives participants a chance to explore stagecraft without the pressure of putting on a show.



Mercedes Yearley

I spoke with Mercedes Yearley who runs the group. She is a drama teacher with over 15 years experience. She started Quest as a passion project and wants to use her skills to benefit and support her local community, with plans to reach further afield in the future. In a typical Quest session participants can expect to improve their acting techniques including improvisation, vocal work and exploring texts. You don't have to have any prior experience, it's all about building confidence and learning something new. They also focus on community, the chance to make new friends and to feel part of a local group. To that end they organise regular group trips to see shows in local theatres. They also explore select scripts to help participants get a deeper understanding of the text, and then as a group go to watch the show. Quest also uses their funds to help subsidise the ticket cost, making theatre accessible for all.

Lastly, they offer support. Drama is a fantastic activity for anyone suffering from isolation, anxiety or mental health issues. It helps you to be active and to express yourself in a safe environment. Although they are not mental health professionals, they believe community projects like this are key to supporting good mental health.

Quest is located at Theatre62, Wickham Theatre Centre, Corkscrew Hill, BR4 9BA and they run 'drop-in' sessions every Wednesday between 11:30 – 13:30. To cover expenses, participants are asked to pay what they can with a suggested amount of £5 per session. Come and join them for a session, bring a friend and explore "theatre for the soul".

Email : questsoultheatre@gmail.com

Tel: 07864 759013, Facebook: @theatreforthesoul





Janet Stockwell & Ian Evans

Editor

Rotary West Wickham

We wanted to do something different this past summer and we found the opportunity to provide residents in West Wickham and the surrounding areas with something for all ages to celebrate the Platinum Jubilee and what West Wickham has to offer. We held a Jubilee Tea Party for around 65 guests and carers, a free bicycle safety check "shop", pottery painting and a 'dino-craft' workshop, with moving dinosaur models on hand to entertain children.

The highlight, however, has to have been the 'Prom in the Park' in Blake Recreation Ground, West Wickham on 20th August. An estimated 1,000 people attended this free entry event. Children enjoyed face painting, balloon modelling, entertainers and magic in the afternoon. There was music for those a bit older in the evening from the Renegade Blues Brothers and reggae band Dread Centre. The event closed with a 'Last Night of the Proms' finale featuring favourite opera pieces, including a singing contribution from the Mayor of Bromley who is also a West Wickham Ward Councillor, Hannah Gray. The event raised over £1,450 from contributions and donations, all of which will be given to local charities and good causes.

After a 3 year absence, our Firework Display and Music Spectacular returned on 5th November and will have been held by the time you read this. However, we're looking forward to other Winter events including our Christmas Fair and our Christmas Collections. To find out more about Rotary West Wickham, contact Barry Fenton on 0751 4358364 or email fentonbarryrotary@gmail.com

Ian Leach (WW Rotary)



Crime Reporting

Many people have been asking themselves lately whether they should report crimes or criminal activity to the Police. What can or will the Police do about it? The answer to that question is that we should definitely report such matters to them.

If the Police are aware of crime, they can target their patrol patterns in an effort to catch and deter the criminals responsible for it. As citizens we should not delay in reporting crimes that we have witnessed in the hope that others will do it for us.

There have been instances recently where house owners with CCTV footage of criminal activity have failed to pass such evidence on to the Police. You may think that what you have on camera is insignificant. However, the Police may be able to identify known criminals from viewing it. At the very least such footage will allow them to gather useful intelligence about the persons involved, such as their description and their crime method.

If you witness a crime taking place where the suspects are still at the scene or if anyone is seriously injured or in immediate danger, you should not hesitate to RING 999. If you subsequently realise that you have witnessed a crime or you have been a victim of crime you should RING 101.

West Wickham ward has a dedicated policing team. However, they do not patrol the area on a 24 hour basis. If you want to contact them about any non-urgent matter, you can do so by ringing 020 8721 2608. If the officers are not on duty or they are busy they will get back to you as soon as they can. You can also contact them by email at SNMailbox.WestwickhamSNT@met.police.uk.

If as a community, we do all we can to help the Police combat crime we can hopefully make West Wickham an even safer place to live.

John Amos (WWRA Committee)

Defibrillators

Following the item about externally sited defibrillators in the Autumn Newsletter, I'm grateful to Kate Dyer, a Churchwarden at St. Francis Church, for informing us that they have now installed a public access automated external defibrillator (AED) outside the Church in Ravenswood Avenue. It is on the external wall of the Church Hall so is available to use 24 hrs a day, 7 days a week.

There is also an AED located at the entrance to West Wickham station.

PLANNING

Application for a car wash in the High Street car park

This application attracted the highest number of objections we have seen for a long time – around 190 at the time of writing. It proposes the change of use of 14 car parking spaces in the car park on the south side of West Wickham High Street, to be used as space for a car wash including a container for storage and staff office. The application can be viewed on the Council's website under reference **22/03216.** We objected for the following reasons: -

"The High Street is a Red Route and has very limited on-street parking and, off-street parking capacity will soon be adversely affected by the removal of more than 60 car park spaces under a permitted development of the Station Road/Croft Avenue car park. A justification used for the closure of the Croft Avenue car park, was that there is plenty of capacity in the remaining car parks.

From the application, there appears to be inadequate thought or provision made for the run-off of dirty and detergent laden water, either into the car park itself or to the rear gardens of the residential properties which back on to the proposed site. The site is adjacent to the rear gardens of at least 10 residential properties in Grosvenor Road and Springfield Gardens. The noise pollution daily throughout the year from this source will adversely affect the resident's full use of their properties and, consequently, their quality of life.

The shops, banks, pharmacies and other businesses in West Wickham are convenient for residents, provide employment and are a valuable resource. If the Town is to thrive and retain a vibrant High Street which attracts visitors from far and wide, many with disabilities, the retention of these parking spaces is essential."

If a planning application is not controversial, the planning officers can approve the application without it being passed to a committee of our elected representatives for a decision. However, Councillors, for whatever reason, can 'call the application in' to a full committee meeting so that elected representatives make the decision. We have very good links with our Ward Councillors and one of them, Councillor Mark Brock, sits on the planning committee. He has assured us that he has asked for this application to be 'called in' should the planning officers be minded to approve it.

38-40 Croydon Road (Wickes DIY in Coney Hall)

This application was submitted in January 2021 and was first mentioned in our Winter 2020 Newsletter. Although not strictly in our area, this is a development which will be of interest to many residents of West Wickham. The developers propose demolition of the existing warehouse while retaining and altering the existing façade and the erection of a mixed development including a basement, a ground floor with two retail units and 61 residential units to the upper floors. In September the application was granted permission subject to a legal agreement. Details of the proposals including the legal agreement can be found on the Council's planning website under reference **21/00091.**



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