

Community updates for Sydenham Assembly 17 June 2023

Join the Sydenham Assembly coordinating group

The assembly coordinating group are keen to involve more people in the planning of the assembly meetings. This group meets four times a year approximately 5 weeks before each meeting to plan the agenda. If you would like to participate, please email Cllr Jack Lavery (the current Sydenham Assembly chair) at jack.lavery@lewisham.gov.uk.

If you'd like to include anything in our next Sydenham Assembly newsletter and/or this community updates document, please contact sydenhamassemblyLA@lewisham.gov.uk. Please note, these updates are from a variety of sources and don't necessarily represent the views of the Council or local councillors.

Transport Issues

Silverdale/Bishopsthorpe Road Modal Filters

An active travel scheme introduced in Sydenham to increase walking and cycling, reduce car journeys and improve road safety is set to be made permanent following consultation with local residents.

Modal filters in Bishopsthorpe Road and Silverdale will be retained and converted into camera-enforced restrictions, with access for emergency service vehicles.

Modal filters prevent through-traffic on certain streets in order to reduce the number of car journeys made in the area and encourage walking and cycling. This helps to reduce air pollution, lower carbon emissions and improve road safety, supporting Lewisham Council's work to improve people's health and wellbeing, tackle the Climate Emergency and make Lewisham a net-zero borough by 2030.

The Bishopsthorpe Road and Silverdale modal filter schemes were introduced in 2020 during the COVID-19 pandemic. These measures originally aimed to help people make more journeys on foot and by bike while public transport capacity was reduced due to social distancing, as well as supporting wider plans to reduce unnecessary car journeys, lower carbon emissions and improve air quality.

As part of a review of the trial scheme in Sydenham, local residents were asked to share their views on the modal filters. The results of the consultation survey showed that:

- Respondents tended to agree that modal filters had a positive impact on walking and cycling (48% agree vs 42% disagree), improved road safety (48% agree vs 37% disagree) and helped reduce unnecessary car journeys (45% agree vs 44% disagree).
- 43% of respondents said they thought modal filters helped to reduce traffic and congestion, compared to 45% who disagreed.
- Respondents tended to agree that retaining the modal filters with camera-enforcement would have a positive impact on road safety (46% agree vs 37% disagree).

disagree), reduce noise pollution (44% agree vs 38% disagree) and improve air quality (44% agree vs 38% agree).

- 43% of respondents agreed that retaining the modal filters with camera enforcement would help encourage people to walk and cycle and reduce unnecessary car journeys in the area, compared to 43% who disagreed.
- 43% of respondents indicated that they thought retaining the modal filters with camera enforcement would help reduce traffic and congestion, compared to 44% who disagreed.

Taking into account the consultation survey responses and the Council's broader strategic aims to reduce the number of car journeys made in the borough and encourage walking and cycling, the Council has decided to make the modal filters permanent and convert them into camera-enforced restrictions.

Converting the filters into camera-enforced restrictions will help reduce issues for emergency service vehicles, as well as preventing the filters from being tampered with and reducing the cost of maintenance.

Cllr Louise Krupski, Cabinet Member for Environment and Climate Action, said: "Reducing unnecessary car journeys and supporting more people to walk and cycle is a vital part of our mission to tackle air pollution, reduce carbon emissions and improve road safety. Retaining and improving this active travel initiative will help support a continued shift towards more sustainable modes of transport, helping tackle the Climate Emergency and improve air quality in the borough."

The consultation also showed that some residents and local councillors were concerned about traffic displacement and congestion in the wider area. In response to these concerns, plans are being developed to improve traffic management and road safety at the junction of Sydenham Road and Mayow Road, including changes to the traffic lights system, with the aim of reducing traffic and congestion on the surrounding roads. Proposals for improvement works at this junction will be shared with residents, ward councillors and other local stakeholders later this year.

As part of the Council's wider transport strategy, work will continue to secure funding for other schemes to support active travel and reduce traffic and congestion, working in partnership with local ward councillors and Transport for London. Plans are also in place to expand air quality monitoring in the area, as part of the Council's work to reduce pollution and improve air quality in the borough.

Traffic orders to make the modal filters on Bishopsthorpe Road and Silverdale permanent will be issued later this month and works to convert the physical filters into camera-enforced restrictions will take place this summer. Residents on these roads will be notified via post when these works are due to take place.

Housing Issues

Sydenham welcomes new residents to Sydenham Groves, Sydenham Road

Sydenham councillors are delighted to see residents move into the Peabody scheme of 29 new homes at Sydenham Groves, 154 – 158 Sydenham Road. These new eco-friendly homes have energy efficient heating and lighting, thermal windows, water

efficient and green roofs to support our efforts to tackle the climate change. The ten three bedroom houses have gardens and the 19 flats are a mix of one, two and three bedroom homes with balconies. There are 14 parking bays (including 4 disabled spaces) with electric charging points plus dry secure cycle spaces. They are a mix of shared ownership and social housing with provision for commercial units on Sydenham Road – a welcome addition to Sydenham.

Planning Issues

Willow Way Development

Just across the ward boundary in Forest Hill ward, an application for 60 new homes, with associated landscaping, amenity areas, cycle, car parking and refuse/recycling stores at 21- 57 Willow Way was refused in March. The applicant was proposing 50% affordable housing by unit (30 units), for which the tenure split would have been 70% Social Rent (21 units) and 30% Shared Ownership (9 units). The decision document (including reasons for refusal) and other application documents can be viewed via the Council's website under reference number DC/22/129789. As it standard officers would have offered to meet with the applicant to discuss reasons for refusal and next steps for pre-application engagement should the applicant wish to submit a revised scheme.

Proposed development at Markwell Close and Hensford Gardens

Local councillors have been updated that these two schemes will not be progressed at this time due to concerns around the financial viability as a result of rising costs of production in the construction industry. Councillors have requested local residents have comprehensive update asap.

Bell Green Neighbourhood Forum News

Provided by Julia Webb on behalf of the BGNF

Major redevelopments at the Gasholders and Livesey sites

Barratt's application is for 3 blocks ranging from 5 to 15 storeys, with 261 homes & 867 square metres of commercial units on the gasholders site. Barratt will fund 4% affordable housing; reaching the minimum level of 35% relies on securing a grant from the Mayor of London. Public comments include 68 objections, & 2 in support. On 22nd May, 32 documents were revised, with minimal changes to the exterior. Closely-packed blocks are unusual locally, where tall buildings are set in parkland. The height in proximity to the 3 Grade II listed structures of the Livesey Memorial Hall is a concern.

Both developments are car-free, except for disabled residents. Parking will rise in surrounding streets, so a Controlled Parking Zone is suggested. The site's Public Transport Accessibility Level (PTAL) is 2; the London Plan suggests car-free developments at level 4 (0 = very poor to 6b = excellent). Without substantial improvements to public transport, car-free developments compromise existing users' level of service.

The gasholders site was decontaminated for commercial use, so will require further remediation for housing. The scheme's foundation design must avoid the site's heavy metals contaminating the groundwater.

Apex Capital Partners are unofficially consulting on their plans for the Livesey site, but not with Lewisham. They must undertake urgent works to protect the Livesey before they can apply. No such work has been undertaken, and the building's condition is a huge concern.

The Bell Green Neighbourhood Forum's over 80 local residents & business owners, aim for good growth in the area. Lewisham has refused us Neighbourhood Forum designation; we are registering as an amenity society while still negotiating. Our expert panel of local architects, engineers, and environmental consultants are generously contributing to our planning responses.

If you live nearby, then please do join the Forum itself, just email bellgreennf@gmail.com. The expert panel welcomes new members, willing to give a couple of hours of their skills, at their own convenience. We are particularly keen to find experts on contaminated land remediation, and biodiversity. Our next major meeting is 30th September, 11am-1pm.

Sydenham Safer Neighbourhood Team update

Since our last Assembly, our team has remained the same. PS Jamie Foreman remains our ward Sergeant, PC Homshaw as the Dedicated Ward Officer, PC Lumley has now become a permanent member of the team and PCSO Peter Okonji as our Dedicated Ward PCSO.

We have focused on vehicle crime recently. We have recovered a number of stolen vehicles and returned these to their owners. We set up a catalytic convertor marking event in Bell Green Sainsbury's where we had over 100 vehicles inspected and approximately 30 vehicles marked. We have also focused on anti-social behaviour on Sydenham Road including beggars and street drinkers and we have patrolled our local parks, particularly on late shifts, to deter ASB as the weather gets warmer. We have undertaken various weapons sweeps and recovered a number of knives which have been seized and investigated.

We continue to visit victims of beat crime such as burglary and offer crime prevention advice and provide reassurance. Our crime prevention advice includes considering CCTV and motion sensor lights, ensuring all windows and doors are locked, marking property of high value/noting serial numbers and securing property left in sheds or outbuildings. Similarly, if you are due a delivery, please ensure you have organised a safe place so that parcels are not left on door steps.

Our Sydenham Ward Panel continues to run every three months, our next one being held in 25th July 2023. The panel is a great opportunity for the SNT team to get together with residents to discuss new concerns and discuss priorities accordingly. If you are interested in coming along, please email us at Sydenham.snt@met.police.uk and we'll be happy to get you involved. We can also be contacted on 02086493598.

We urge you to report any crime as soon as possible. In emergency situations, please do not hesitate to call 999. In non-emergencies please dial 101 or report online. The more reports we get, the easier it becomes for us to understand and solve problems, allowing us to create a safer neighbourhood for all.

Community Activities

‘Helping Hands’ Food Bank Launched in Sydenham

Cllr Jack Lavery was delighted to join the 'Helping Hands', Food Bank launch event last month. It will be accessible every 1st & 4th Wednesday of each month between the hours of 12:00 - 3:00pm. This Food Bank is run by the Sydenham Seventh-Day Adventist Church in partnership with St Michael's Church on Champion Crescent, Sydenham SE26 4HH. There will be tea and biscuits available free of charge, alongside the standard food parcel. Feel free to pop in. Donations are welcome.

Rehoboth Community Outreach

Rehoboth Community Outreach club started reaching out to vulnerable families in 2013, offering befriending, parenting & life skills training. Over time the services evolved expanding to offer mentoring to young people, employment skills training and a food bank. In March 2014 Rehoboth started receiving requests for support with addressing the increasing issue of food poverty amongst the single homeless living in hostels and the local street homeless, this saw the launch of the Community Lunch Club. Initially the lunch club was feeding 20 people every Monday with a 2 course hot meal. But this number quickly grew to 150 people a week when Rehoboth partnered with Miriam Lodge providing meals to their most vulnerable homeless residents. The partnership has expanded and Rehoboth Community Outreach Club now provides over 400 meals weekly across 5 homeless local hostels, vulnerable elderlies and families that are struggling. We are open Monday and Thursday between 11am – 2pm. Week nights we drop off chill food and sandwiches which are donated by supermarkets in the community. We also provide a soup social with home cooked vegetable and chicken soup with rolls to some local homeless hostels each Friday.

The generosity of our local donors business and others in neighbouring community like Nandos, Brixton Cake Shop, Sainsbury's Forest Hill, Neighbourly, Food To Donate, Lewisham Food Network, and Lewisham Food Bank on Malham Road (Hope Christian Centre), along with the financial donations from London Community Foundation and individuals in the community that make it possible to provide our services free to vulnerable individuals and families. The community outreach service is facilitated by a team of 25 volunteers who cook, serve food, clean, deliver the meals, and provide the befriending, mentoring and training activities. Rehoboth hopes to double its feeding programme to 450 meals a week by the end of 2020; to support at least 50 homeless people to capacity build their employment and life skills, enhancing their potential of accessing employment, education and training opportunities. The Rehoboth Community Outreach Club aims to contribute to breaking the generational cycle of poverty and deprivation within families, inspire hope & healing in the heart and soul of vulnerable individuals and communities and

encourage peace, unity and respect across generations. We seek and appreciate further financial, time and resource donations that enable us to meet our vision of UK communities free from food poverty and benefiting from sustained upward social and economic mobility for everyone. A donation of £2.50 provides one complete two course hot meal; £15 can purchase a box of chicken to go towards 30 meals. For further information please contact us. You can find out how to donate here <https://rehobothcommunityoutreachclub.org/donations/>

Ageing Well in Lewisham

Since 1999, Ageing Well in Lewisham has worked to reduce isolation and enhance the mental and physical well-being of older people in the borough, regardless of faith or culture. Our NCIL-funded activities encourage social interaction, mobility, and creativity. They welcome newcomers to join our warm and friendly groups. No need to book and your first visit is FREE.

The Befrienders singing group has recently hosted sessions at Venner Road Dementia Café and Homewalk House, and is looking forward to collaborating with other groups for older people at Trinity Laban's upcoming Summer Celebration event. Tuesdays, 10-11:45 am, The Grove Centre, 2 Jews Walk, Sydenham, SE26 6PL, £5.

The Crafts Plus group has been growing and trying out different techniques in 3D collage, lolly stick sculpture, decorative plant pots, and more Tuesdays, 1-3 pm, The Grove Centre, Sydenham, £4.

In Fitness & Fun group members enjoy a lively, mostly chair-based exercise session sweetened with bingo or a quiz afterwards. Our instructor is trained in delivering to a range of mobilities and gets great results. Wednesdays, 10-11:45 am, The Grove Centre, £4

Ageing Well in Lewisham is looking for a gentle exercise instructor for our weekly class delivered to older people in Sydenham. We need a dynamic, reliable instructor who can deliver to all mobilities. The exercise would be mostly seated. We are open to different styles—Zumba, yoga, pilates etc. Class time: Wednesdays 10:45-11:45 am at The Grove Centre in Sydenham. Class size is usually 15-20 people. Pay is £40 for the hour.

Please contact Winnie Carlson at info@ageingwellinlewisham.org; 0208 698 3735

Sydenham celebrates the coronation

SEE3 were pleased to organise a Tea Party to celebrate the coronation of King Charles III at the Sydenham Centre on Monday 8th May. It was an intergenerational event for our diverse community with the police cadets waiting on our guests. We were royally entertained by Eleanor Meynell from enSEmble26 who gave us a rendition of favourite songs as well as a singalong to well-known popular tunes. Thanks to our volunteers who included Cllr Chris Best, as Chair of SEE3, Annabel McLaren as Secretary, chief cook and bottle washer Heather Mallinder as well as everyone who joined us for a very enjoyable afternoon.

SEE3

SEE3 is a local organisation that supports the high streets in Sydenham, Forest Hill and Kirkdale. The website see3.co.uk is a great resource for residents as it contains a comprehensive listing of all local businesses. It is also a place where you can discover what is happening in the area – including the wonderful range of entertainment, yoga and pilates classes, quiz nights and special events, the listings are regularly updated and will help you keep up-to-date with what is happening in the community.

SEE3 is also responsible for some of the brilliant events we have grown accustomed to locally. The recent Coronation Tea Party was organised in the Sydenham Centre on Monday 8th May. It was an intergenerational event for our diverse community with the police cadets waiting on our guests. We were royally entertained by Eleanor Meynell from enSEmble26 who gave us a rendition of favourite songs as well as a singalong to well-known popular tunes. The Easter Bonnet workshop on Easter Saturday 15 April was followed by a parade in the high street with our Easter bunnies. We are planning to contribute to the Sydenham Fun Palace and will be running the Halloween Trail followed by the costume competition.

We support High Street traders sometimes financially to help them put on special events as we have for Spontaneous Productions and the Poodle Club. If you are a trader and would like to let us know about your special event please do so at see3traders@gmail.com.

Sydenham Library Update

Following a big reduction in opening times over the past few months, it's good news on the future of the library: V22 Communities and the Library Service have developed an approach that resolves the pressing issue of the financial sustainability of the library. This should restore pre-Covid operations and hours later in the year.

They are also looking at options to restore the Café, and resolve a number of building related issues, that will all contribute to the sustainability of the community library. Clearly, your support is much appreciated particularly if you are interested in volunteering at the library.

The Friends of Sydenham Library and your ward councillors are continuing to monitor the situation and press to secure the long-term renovation and maintenance of the building as well as a quality library service.

Sydenham Community Project

As always Sydenham Community Project continue to host events and raffles throughout the year to brighten up Sydenham. We are launching our Christmas Card competition on 25 June. We invite all schools in the area as well as any resident to participate whether young or old, artist or not. We look to have your Christmas card printed and on sale in Sydenham and online. Any medium welcomed. Submit entries to sydenhamcommunityproject@gmail.com

To stay posted on upcoming news join our new Facebook page @sydenhamCommunityProject sign up to our newsletter by visiting our website at www.sydenhamcommunityproject.com.

Forest Hill & Sydenham Women's Institute

Forest Hill & Sydenham Women's Institute is a really friendly group of local women from all walks of life who meet on the 2nd Monday of the month at The All Inn One Pub on Perry Vale SE23. Every month offers something different from talks to workshops on a variety of topics such as: gardening, massage, cross stitch, home spa and croquet. In July we are having a picnic in Mayow Park and will do some watercolours. If you want to make new friends and really feel part of our local community do come along. Our next meeting is on Monday 12th June. See you there!

Insta @wiforesthillsydenham

Facebook @ Forest&SydenhamWI

Twitter @ ForestHillWI

email @ foresthillwi@gmail.com

Events

June is Pride Month

The pride flag is flying outside the Civic Suite in Catford for the month of June. The Council will join the London Pride parade for a second year on Saturday 1st July.

I Can Be Collective's LGBT+ Cabaret night takes centre stage on Saturday 17th June. This should be a brilliant evening showcasing the very best of South London's Queer scene <https://www.broadwaytheatre.org.uk/events/catford-lgbtplus-cabaret>

Broadway Theatre Windrush Day Celebratory Event

HMT Empire Windrush arrived at Tilbury Docks in June 1948, carrying passengers from the Caribbean. It's a moment that helped define modern Britain. This year marks its 75th anniversary. To commemorate, the Broadway theatre is hosting a special one-off event. Join for a fantastic evening of performance – expect live music, spoken word, dance and more – as we honour the incredible contributions of the Windrush Generation and their descendants in Lewisham and beyond. Free tickets are available for over-65s on our website or you can collect them from Catford Library during normal opening hours. These will be allocated on a first come, first served basis. <https://www.broadwaytheatre.org.uk/events/windrush-75-the-lewisham-story/>

Sydenham Artists Trail

Weekends 9/10 and 16/17 September

The Sydenham Artists Trail returns for its 15th year with nearly 100 artists exhibiting their talents in 20+ venues, large and small, in Sydenham, Kirkdale, Forest Hill and Bell Green.

We are delighted to welcome back many old favourites (and young ones!) including the Sydenham Garden artists, the Brockley Potters, Havelock Walk artists and many painters, photographers, printers, jewelers, textile and glass makers exhibiting in their homes, studios, the Sydenham Centre and Forest Hill School. There is even an artist in Kyoto, Japan exhibiting virtually!

We are looking forward to the ever popular Open Exhibition at the Anna Lovely Gallery displaying the work of another 100 artists.

This year the artists at Whirled Art studios in Bell Green and Stansted Road will open their studios with photographers, florists, toy makers, book illustrators, milliners, textile designers, painters and ceramic artists displaying their skills - expect drama, amazement and cocktails! And if none of that appeals there's even a circus school (who knew) just behind B&Q at Bell Green who will amaze you with their aerial skills, performance art and body painting.

Finally this year we will promote the Artists Trail with taster exhibitions in the Dolphin pub, Gurkhas Nepalese restaurant and the High Street Art Gallery with art in many of the shop windows in the area.

Sydenham Arts

Please look at their website for their latest fantastic upcoming events

<https://sydenhamarts.co.uk/whats-on>

Spontaneous Productions

Spontaneous Productions, in association with Kirkdale Bookshop, presents an evening of theatre, music, dance and Caribbean food and culture marking the 75th anniversary of the Empire Windrush landing at Tilbury docks. In June 1948 the Empire Windrush ship brought hundreds of Caribbean people – mostly men, but women also – to England. Invited by the British government, to swell a workforce still feeling the effects of WW2, many found the experience very different from their expectations. YARD AWAY HOME will tell the story of just a handful of those who made Lewisham their new home, celebrating their voices and exploring this incredible period in history, through theatre, music and dance. Expect a joyful, highly entertaining, and powerfully moving performance marking this special occasion! Our creative team has been talking to those who came to Lewisham on the Windrush, and their descendants, hearing their first-hand witness accounts and shaping an original show from their research. Grenadian playwright and director Matanah Maya, with spoken word artist and choreographer Olayinka Sobitan Solomon, have crafted a memorable performance, and you are invited to attend on Sat 24 June at TNG Youth Centre. Sample cultural activities, a mini exhibition and traditional Caribbean cuisine before the show!

Please look at their website for their latest fantastic upcoming events

<https://spontaneousproductions.co.uk>

Sydenham Wells Park Plant Sale

Sunday 18 June, 11am til 2pm, near the flower bed.

Engaging with the Council

Contacting the Council

Lewisham Council's website has links to contact different teams.

<https://lewisham.gov.uk/>. You can also call the switchboard on 020 8314 6000

Contacting your local councillors

You can contact your local councillors regarding concerns about council services. We can then raise these with the relevant teams and get back to you.

- Chris Best chris.best@lewisham.gov.uk
- Liam Curran liam.curran@lewisham.gov.uk
- Jack Lavery jack.lavery@lewisham.gov.uk

Open advice surgeries are held at:

- 10.30am - 11.30am on the first Saturday of each month at Sydenham Library, 210 Sydenham Road, SE26 5SE
- 10.30am - 11.30am on the third Saturday of the month at The Sydenham Centre, 44a Sydenham Road, SE26 5QX

Ask a public question at a Council meeting

Anyone who lives, works or studies in Lewisham can make an enquiry or raise an issue at a full Council meeting by asking a public question. If there is an issue you want the Council to look at, or an area where you believe we can make improvements, a public question is a good way to bring it to the Council's attention. Your question may lead to an investigation or review of the issue you raise and could be relevant to other residents affected by the same issue. Each questioner may ask a maximum of two questions at any meeting. Any question of more than 100 words will be rejected. If more than two questions are asked, only the first two will be considered. More details here

<https://lewisham.gov.uk/mayorandcouncil/influence/councilmeetings>

Complaints procedure

The Council has a complaints procedure to deal with individual casework or complaints if you've tried to engage with the council and have been unsatisfied with the response.

<https://lewisham.gov.uk/mayorandcouncil/complaints-and-feedback/how-to-send-a-complaint-to-us>