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# CAMBERWELL QUARTERLY

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The magazine of the Camberwell Society  
No 201 Summer 2019 £1.50 (free to members)

[www.camberwellsociety.org.uk](http://www.camberwellsociety.org.uk)



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LOCAL SOCIETIES, VENUES AND EVENTS

We recommend checking details

**Brunswick Park Neighbourhood**  
Tenants and Residents Association  
Patricia Ladly 020 7703 7491  
[tandra.brunswickpark@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:tandra.brunswickpark@yahoo.co.uk)

**Brixton Society**  
[www.brixtonsociety.org.uk](http://www.brixtonsociety.org.uk)

**Burgess Park, Friends of**  
[www.friendsofburgesspark.org.uk](http://www.friendsofburgesspark.org.uk)  
[friendsofburgesspark@gmail.com](mailto:friendsofburgesspark@gmail.com)

**Butterfly Tennis Club**  
[www.butterflytennis.com](http://www.butterflytennis.com)

**Camberwell Arts**  
Promoting the arts in Camberwell  
and Camberwell in the Arts  
[camberwellartsfestival@gmail.com](mailto:camberwellartsfestival@gmail.com)  
[www.camberwellarts.org.uk](http://www.camberwellarts.org.uk)

**Camberwell Gardens Guild**  
Membership enquiries to:  
Pat Farrugia  
17 Kirkwood Road, SE15 3XT

**Carnegie Library, Friends of**  
[foclchair@gmail.com](mailto:foclchair@gmail.com) or  
[foclmembers@gmail.com](mailto:foclmembers@gmail.com)  
(for membership queries)

**Concerts in St Giles' Church**  
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[www.music@stgiles.com](mailto:www.music@stgiles.com)

**Dulwich Picture Gallery**  
College Road, SE21 7AD  
020 8693 5254  
[www.dulwichpicturegallery.org.uk](http://www.dulwichpicturegallery.org.uk)

**Herne Hill Society**  
Jeffrey Doorn  
020 7274 7008  
Membership:  
Herne Hill Society  
PO Box 27845, SE24 9XA  
[www.hernehillsociety.org.uk](http://www.hernehillsociety.org.uk)

**Maudsley Learning**  
ORTUS learning and events centre,  
82-96 Grove Lane, SE5 8SN  
[www.maudsleylearning.com](http://www.maudsleylearning.com)

**Minet Conservation Association**  
020 7737 8210  
[www.minet.fsnet.co.uk](http://www.minet.fsnet.co.uk)

**Nunhead Cemetery**  
Linden Grove, SE15. Friends of  
Nunhead Cemetery (FONC)  
020 8693 6191  
[www.fonc.org.uk](http://www.fonc.org.uk)

**Peckham Society**  
Peter Frost  
020 8613 6757  
11 August  
Central Peckham Walk  
[www.peckhamsociety.org.uk](http://www.peckhamsociety.org.uk)

**Ruskin Park, Friends of**  
Doug Gillies  
020 7703 5018

**SE5 Forum**  
[SE5Forum.org.uk](http://SE5Forum.org.uk)  
[comms@SE5forum.org.uk](mailto:comms@SE5forum.org.uk)

**South London Gallery**  
65 Peckham Road SE5  
Open:  
Tuesday to Sunday – 12pm-6pm,  
closed on Monday  
[www.southlondongallery.org](http://www.southlondongallery.org)

**St Giles, Friends of**  
16 Sears Street, SE5 7JL  
[robertcope@hotmail.co](mailto:robertcope@hotmail.co)  
[www.stgilescambewell.org](http://www.stgilescambewell.org)

**Wells Way Triangle Residents**  
**Association**  
Andrew Osborne  
[WWTRACamberwell@gmail.com](mailto:WWTRACamberwell@gmail.com)



Cover: Concert at Ruskin Park  
Friends of Ruskin Park.

Farewell and Hail

Farewell – and thanks. Farewell Ari and Maria! The AGM of any organization is not always a highpoint, but those who heard Ari speak will remember his Camberwell anecdotes and insights as well as his to-be-missed presence in Cruson. His generous gift of fruit on the night was entirely typical of the man. All will wish Ari and Maria well.

Farewell too to Pesh Flowers and the GX Gallery – you will also be missed – and what a shame that individual and long standing local businesses should move online – though most will understand the realities of the high street.

Farewell to frequent buses to London – and no thanks to those who will make us wait at Elephant and Castle or stand in the less frequent buses already full of commuters.

All hail – and thanks! All hail the initiatives to promote Camberwell. By publication of this Quarterly you will have seen or be about to see the painting of bridges and the floor signage and maps in Denmark Hill station, and so thanks to those who generously donated to help reach the 150 donors required to access the mayor's matched funding by the deadline.

All hail the new website! We hope you will find it usable and useful.

No hail – on Camberwell Open



Nick Mair

Gardens day! Though there has been copious rain we had suitable sunshine and ever better cakes at the annual summer event. A lot of allotment was visited and admired as were the huge range and number of gardens – 27 gardens for £3.00 is pretty good value by anyone's standards.

1950s photos?

Do you have photos of  
Camberwell in the  
1950s and 1960s?

Camberwell Quarterly is looking  
for illustrations of this period.

Please contact Margaret Powley  
Baker, the Editor 020 7701 4417

McNeil Road and Stories Mews are ever greener – even if the Greendale planting was all cut by the Council! All hearty at the Camberwell Arts Party – something Camberwell does well.

**Nick Mair**  
[chair@camberwellsociety.org.uk](mailto:chair@camberwellsociety.org.uk)

STAINED GLASS  
WINDOWS



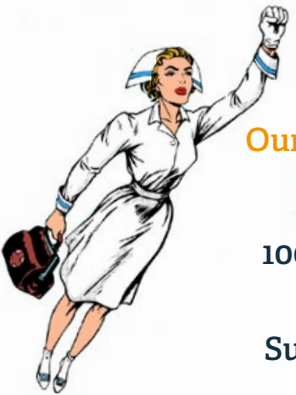
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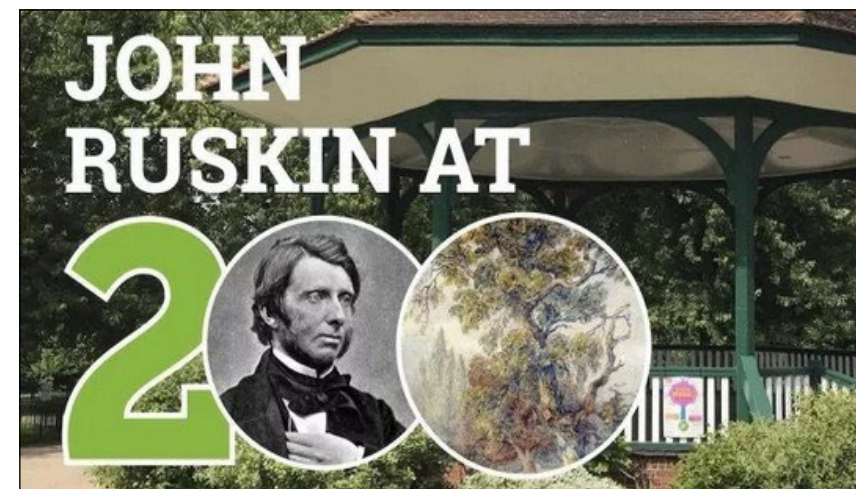
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*Roy Brooks*





picture Russell Beale

What would a Victorian gentleman, gazing out of his study window onto the fields of Camberwell and Herne Hill, think if he was transported, all of a sudden, to the Camberwell of the 21st century? What if the Victorian in question had imagined, somewhat ahead of his time, important parts of the landscape we now take for granted – the NHS, the state school system, even the realities of climate change?

John Ruskin was born two hundred years ago this year. In a way, we have Ruskin to thank for the view from the crest of Ruskin Park into the site of King's hospital. It was by reading John Ruskin that Clement Atlee, the Labour Prime Minister whose government created the NHS, was first introduced to socialist ideals.

This year, the Friends of Ruskin Park – a voluntary organisation that supports the park – is organising a free festival of events and ideas to commemorate the complex and varied life of John Ruskin and ask how we might remember him today. FoRP organises regular events in the park, including a popular Summer Fete and bandstand concerts throughout the summer. Building on this connection with the local communities, 'John Ruskin at 200' also looks forward. Through a programme of walks, talks and workshops, we want to ask the question: how do we remember John Ruskin today? We aim not only to explore Ruskin's relationship with the area, but also to ask: what is

the area's relationship with him? Answers and ideas will feed into one of FoRP's long term ambition: to create a permanent memorial to John Ruskin in the park that bears his name.

During May and June, the Brixton-based poet Francesca Beard ran poetry workshops with three very different groups in and around the park: year 6 pupils at Lyndhurst Primary School (children on the cusp of the transition to secondary school); year 7 and 8 pupils at The Charter School North Dulwich (young people becoming teenagers); and students at The Recovery College, part of the South London and Maudsley NHS Trust (SLaM). The Recovery College runs workshops and courses that aim to provide the tools to make recovery happen, co-led by people with experience of mental illness and trainers from professional backgrounds. Beard asked workshop participants to take inspiration from Ruskin's approach to nature, beauty, justice and society. The resulting poems were personal, political, and performed to crowds at the Ruskin Park summer fete, on 22nd June. And the programme stretches on further into the year. In July and September, local writer and historian Jon Newman will lead four, free walks that explore 'John Ruskin's territory', based on new research Newman is carrying out with Ruskin's archives at Lancaster University. In November Dr. Suzanne Fagence Cooper, the author of *Why Ruskin Matters* (Quercus, 2019) will be giving a talk at Carnegie Library on Ruskin's

relevance today. And, from early July until November, Carnegie Library will host an exhibition of materials from Lambeth Archives, relating to Ruskin's Denmark Hill.

Ruskin Park was created in 1907, following a local campaign and named by the campaigners after the celebrated intellectual and reformer. The inaugural address at the opening ceremony declared that the purpose of the park was to 'perpetuate the memory of Ruskin, who lived and worked for so long on Denmark Hill, and who would so greatly have deplored the destruction of its beauty' adding that 'every Open Space saved from the builder renders London permanently more healthful and enjoyable'.

Shortly after he died in 1900, the Daily Mail published a letter from the vicar of Herne Hill: 'Mr Ruskin was far more intimately connected with this place than any other. I am sure that the admirers of Mr Ruskin's genius will feel that some fitting memorial of him...where his genius formed itself and with which he had such lifelong ties.'



Festival events attract all ages

'John Ruskin at 200' aims to remember the man in all his complexities, and to be inspired by his approach to the world. Rather than ask what a Victorian would think of us, then, we should ask – what do we really think, when we look at our world with clarity, integrity and rigour?

If you have thoughts on 'how we remember John Ruskin' please contact us by email, or leave a suggestion in the box that accompanies the exhibition.

Mary Paterson

## JOHN RUSKIN: *flawed genius, polymath and associate of the Pre-Raphaelites.*

A polymath of boundless energy, talent and extraordinary complexity of character, John Ruskin was typical of the Victorian Sage. A leading art critic, writer and publisher of polemical prose who sought to cause widespread cultural and social change. He would have approved of today's environmental movements. He went further than conservation, anti-consumerism, and protection of land and wild life, to a fundamental belief in the spirituality of all mankind and the beauty that is Nature; a reverence for what human endeavour designs and makes through artisanship and craft and with a lasting respect for the worker in the factory. He carried in him an idealised medieval spirit of place, time and hierarchy, rejecting "the coldness" of his century's prevailing classicism.

### Romantic era in Camberwell

Six years older than Robert Browning, another child of Camberwell, Ruskin loved the Romantic poets and was a Newdigate prize poet himself. He fell in love several times, mostly with younger women

He was a traveller all his life emulating a habit of Lord Byron, and of course J.M.W. Turner of whose work he was the champion and defender. Alfred, Lord Tennyson called in on him to see his Turner collection in 1855

A handsome iron plated engraved plaque mounted on a plinth, dating from 1925, marks the spot of the house he lived in, 26 Herne Hill. This replaced a plaque of 1909 from another of the family properties, 163 Denmark Hill, subsequently demolished for the layout of Ruskin park.

This house had broad acres without. Within there was an elegant workroom for the avid reader, book collector, artist and draughtsman into which Ruskin evolved. It was here that he fell in love in 1841 with Euphemia, the daughter of his father's associate, a Scot called George Gray and his wife Sophia. Parental disapproval of the match was not helpful as the marriage was a disaster, the union ending with a nullity suit delivered to Denmark Hill. The desperate Effie had fled into the arms of John Millais. There were happier outcomes to his association with the Pre-Raphaelites: the Art School and Gallery reflected his and their ethos aiming for the best artistic and technical education for all classes in the district. Ruskin wrote, "The teaching of Art is the Teaching of all things."

His most remarkable local legacy and the only survivor of such work by him is the East Window in St Giles Church. This was the Ruskins' parish church; their (only) child must have sat for hours beneath its gabled transepts. Steeped in the Gothic style he developed a personal vision that the Gothic embodied the moral truths. The style expressed 'meaning' as a combination of the values of strength, solidity and aspiration – all

written, as it were, in stone. The stone tracery with five lights and circles above is in the 13th century style. Ruskin described the church's east window design as mainly Edmund Oldfield's but the treatment of the colours, predominantly red and purple, and the treatment of the Biblical subject matter was directly attributable to the medieval glass of Chartres and French cathedrals.

As an adult he passionately sought to promote his theories across the visual arts referencing the version of Gothic Revival exemplified by St Giles' own architect, Sir George Gilbert Scott with whom Ruskin later collaborated on the nearby Camden Chapel, now the Registry. Its present use would have appealed to him: true art and craft involved the whole community.

Oldfield was a friend from Ruskin's brief but significant schooldays in Grove Lane. After regular home schooling (his religious mother whipped him, obsessively kept him by her, and constantly at his studies) he was taught the Classics, Maths and French and tutored for Oxford by the school's progressive Evangelical Thomas Dale, later Professor of English Literature at King's College London.

Ruskin's parents were first cousins. This could explain the close knit, hot house atmosphere of the boy's upbringing. There was instability on the paternal side – John James's own father was a bankrupt suicide; this made for a certain isolation, an uncommonness. John James, with Scottish acumen, worked single mindedly to build up a successful sherry and wine business (the family had come south from Edinburgh). John was influenced by his father's impressive collection of British watercolours, easily purchased, inexpensive compared to their more sought after continental equivalents. John James and Margaret Ruskin lovingly took their clever son for cultural trips abroad and excursions through Britain. The famous son was to produce majestic literary and artistic masterpieces; "The Stones of Venice" and "The Seven Lamps of Architecture",

## Ruskin Festival Events

### Exhibition

'Ruskin Lived Here'  
curated by Lambeth Archives,  
Carnegie Library  
3rd July to 12th November.  
Library opening times.

### Walks

'A Walk through  
Ruskin's Territory'  
led by Jon Newman  
6th July (2.30pm)  
9th July (6.30pm)  
10th September (6.30pm)  
14th September (2.30pm)  
Meet at the portico  
in Ruskin Park

### Talk

'Why Ruskin Matters'  
by Suzanne Fagence Cooper  
12th July, Carnegie Library

All events are free, but please  
book for the walks and talk.  
[www.friendsofruskinpark.org.uk/johnruskin200](http://www.friendsofruskinpark.org.uk/johnruskin200)



volumes of “Modern Painters” among myriad publications and art work.

When, at the end of the marriage, Ruskin he returned to the house at Denmark Hill and wrote poor Effie out of his autobiography Praeterita. He does refer to four houses in Herne Hill that at various times his family owned.

He described 163, Denmark Hill as commanding seven acres of healthy ground...half of it sloping to the sunrise, the rest prudently and pleasantly divided into...kitchen gardens, a fruitful bit of orchard and chance inlets and outlets of wood walk” (the future Park).

#### A moralist

He disliked the concept of making

money. Was this a curmudgeonly reaction against his anxiety-driven businessman father, or was it to espouse those much higher moral ideals which he was taught by the more down to earth, humourless and dedicated Evangelical mother, Margaret? She taught him to read the Bible from beginning to end, and then to start over, committing large portions to memory. Its language, imagery and parables had a profound and lasting effect on his attitudes and writing. In January 1865 he delivered, in Camberwell Hall, Grove Lane his famous lecture on “Work” published later in his volume on Political Economy. In contrast he disapproved of the Great Exhibition and when Prince Albert’s building was moved to Crystal

Palace and he could see it from the top windows of his house he hilariously compared it to “a cucumber frame between two chimneys”.

#### A traditionalist

He complained about the new railway spoiling his view. Would he have set off on his frequent travels from Denmark Hill station? He abhorred everything to do with railways and he left the area for ever in 1872 following his Romantic poet hero Wordsworth to Coniston where he kept a coach to travel in, until his death in 1900.

*Cathy Brookes-Baker*

## Camberwell Identity



*Photo AM Briscoombe*

**P**upils from Sacred Heart School art club in Camberwell opened the first mural to be painted as part of Camberwell’s place identity project.

The Camberwell mural by Lionel Stanhope, famous for his vintage typography, is on Camberwell New Road under the railway bridge right next to Sacred Heart School.

The colours were chosen by

the pupils from Sacred Heart who said it best reflected how they see Camberwell – Culture, Colour, Cool, Community, saying that these colours give life to the bridge.

Jordan Naylor, Art teacher at Sacred Heart explains “We have been studying Bob and Roberta Smith – promoting the arts with text art. So, this mural is really relevant to the pupils’ work and it is great to be involved

in something representing Camberwell’s community.”

Eddie Burton, Customer Service Manager at Network Rail, who are funding the mural, said: “Our experience across South London is that these artworks inspire pride in people’s neighbourhoods and encourage people to respect railway bridges and other structures.”

## A Camberwell to be proud of

**C**amberwell used to be one of the most important boroughs in South London. But research by SE5 Forum between 2017 and 2018 showed local people feel Camberwell is now overlooked, its identity overshadowed by Peckham and Brixton, its shops closing.

The Society has banded together with Camberwell Arts and SE5 Forum to form a Camberwell identity group to create a brighter High Street, more business for local traders and a Camberwell to be proud of. Since September 2018 the group, which includes brand experts, artists, teachers, representatives from churches, mosques and estates has been meeting – and its first project, the mural opposite was completed in July.

Key activities in 2019

#### January to June

Consultation 300 surveys, market stall, engagement with churches, mosques, nursery, meetings with Sceaux Gardens, Elmington, Glebe Estates, workshops with Scouts and Sacred Heart School.



*Consultation on the Green*

#### May to August

Crowdfunding for lamppost banners along Denmark Hill, to lead the millions of visitors to King’s and the station down the high street to discover the cafes, shops, green spaces and galleries of Camberwell. We won Mayor for London match funding for all pledges.

#### July 12th

The unveiling of a Camberwell mural on the Network Rail Camberwell New Road railway arches by Sacred Heart pupils who chose the colour scheme. Next step find mural venue



on each of the main entrances to Camberwell – Peckham Road, Denmark Hill, Camberwell Road.

the Natural History Museum brand and Stockwell park signage

#### September

Launch of a Travel Guide to Camberwell – the essential companion for those in search of the real SE5, developed in collaboration with local community groups and the South London Gallery

#### October

Camberwell banners installed

Consultation on a brand identity for Camberwell will take place in September. Contact: chair@camberwellsociety.org.uk

*Jess Bishop*

#### End July

Partnership with Govia Thameslink to signpost Camberwell from Denmark Hill Station including a map of Camberwell and floor vinyls to encourage visitors to venture further into Camberwell

#### August

Launch of a narrative and brand story to unify all sectors and provide Camberwell with a distinctive space to occupy versus Peckham, Dulwich and Brixton. An external competition attracted 17 applications and was won by Jim Sutherland who designed



# A Union Chapel for Camberwell?

Sean O’Connor shares plans to make St Giles the Union Chapel of South London

I have lived in Camberwell since 2001. I was immediately struck by the low-rise nature of the area, a small community set within the broader conurbation of London, a village in itself. I thought this might betray Camberwell’s more ancient past, a semi-rural retreat of market gardens and orchards far from the frenetic streets of Victorian London. So perhaps it’s no surprise that this summer I found myself involved in a story straight out of THE ARCHERS; how best to raise money for the local church organ?

I write with some understanding of THE ARCHERS as I was Editor of the programme from 2013 to 2016 and created the story of the abuse of Helen Archer at the hands of Rob Titchener. This made something of a media moment with calls to Women’s Aid in unprecedented numbers and donations to women’s charities reaching record levels. There were even questions raised in the House of Commons about how the story had successfully dramatized the new laws regarding coercive control.

## Camberwell Beauty

Over the summer, you may have noticed some rather smart posters or postcards for Camberwell Beauty, modelled on the old orange and white penguin paperbacks. This striking design was conjured by local photographer, Tom Leighton, who has previously documented his love for the local area in his delightful photos series, 36 Reasons to Love Camberwell.

Camberwell Beauty was presented at St Giles Church this year as part of the Camberwell Arts Festival. The event came about from my discussions with Tom and his wife, Jordana – an arts producer – who moved to Camberwell in 2008. They married in St Giles in 2016 and a month later, discovered that Tom’s great grandmother had married in the very same church in 1894. So

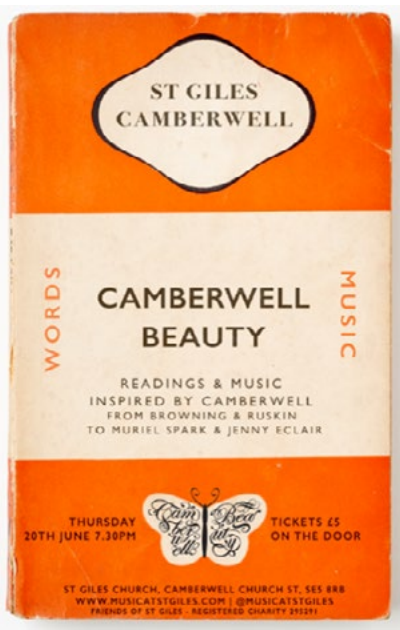


Illustration Tom Leighton

there’s clearly something about the village nature of Camberwell that drew the Leightons to it. They have a huge enthusiasm for the area and when we chatted, they outlined some fantastic ideas about developing St Giles as a focus for the whole community of Camberwell, not just the congregation that visits for religious services.

## Organ appeal

Learning that the rare 1844 organ at St Giles was in desperate need of repair (it was last repaired in 1961), Tom and Jordana along with organist Ashley Valentine conceived of Organoke and it was an immediate and spectacular hit when it premiered at the 2016 Camberwell Arts Festival. It’s a wonderful evening of communal singing with a five-piece band and the magnificent organ at the centre, hosted by the extraordinary music hall chanteuse, Ida Barr (the alter ego of performer Christopher Greene). It’s a unique, genuinely uplifting and joyful experience – and it’s born and bred in Camberwell. Now pretty much a local institution, it’s always a sell-out.

In May and June this year, Jordana and Tom re-launched the church as a performance space with Music at St Giles – The Summer Series: a month of midweek, early evening concerts.

As part of this season, Camberwell Beauty was a celebration of all things Camberwell, a wonderful way to spend a midsummer evening enjoying readings and music, much of it inspired by writers and artists who have lived in, or been inspired by the Camberwell area.

We included excerpts from Ruskin’s Autobiography including his recollections of designing the East window at St Giles, as well as a complete reading of local boy Robert Browning’s The Pied Piper of Hamelin. At the same time, the audience enjoyed more contemporary writers such as Jenny Éclair’s satirical novel of 2000, Camberwell Beauty, and a reading of the last scenes of Bruce Robinson’s Withnail and I. (Who could forget the iconic Camberwell Carrot?) A particular highlight was the readings from Muriel Spark who wrote many stories, poems and novels, including her masterpiece, The Prime of Miss Jean Brodie, whilst living just off Myatt’s Fields in Baldwin Crescent. And with a nod to midsummer, we added some magical passages from A Midsummer Night’s Dream. These readings were accompanied by music inspired by the local area – Mendelssohn’s Spring Song – originally known as Camberwell Green, the music hall classic, Knocked ‘Em in the Old Kent Road and Florence Welch’s You’ve Got the Love.

What could be more like an ARCHERS story than a group of locals getting together to raise money to fix a church organ? So I managed to persuade some members of the cast of THE ARCHERS to leave Ambridge for the night and come to SE5; Carole Boyd, who plays Lynda Snell, James Cartwright who plays P.C. Burns and Louiza Patikas and Annabelle Dowler, who play Helen and Kirsty. The combination of local creativity, the beautiful surroundings of the church on a midsummer evening and some very familiar Radio 4 voices, made it an electric and eclectic evening.

## Union Chapel of South London

Camberwell Beauty and events like it are just the start of making St Giles a dedicated performance venue over the next few years, establishing it as a vital community space, but with a London-wide reputation, much like the Union Chapel in Islington. As well as the organ, we have ambitions to fix the church clock and the floodlights that used to highlight Gilbert Scott’s extraordinary Gothic design. At the same time, we’re focused on fundraising to make accessible toilets at St Giles, which will benefit congregation and concert-goers alike. All these initiatives are simply to focus the church as a building at the heart of the community it serves, which is, after all, what this magnificent building has been doing in varied ways for nearly two hundred years. Long may it continue.

So watch this space for more events in the Autumn and leading up



Carole Boyd who plays Lynda Snell in the Archers gave a reading. photo Tom Leighton

to Christmas. The eighth Organoke will take place at St Giles on Saturday 14 December and tickets

will go on sale in October. This event sells out fast so be the first to know by signing up to the mailing list: <https://www.organoke.com/newsletter>

To find out more about the Friends of St Giles and how to become a supporter, please email: [friendsofstgilescamberwell@gmail.com](mailto:friendsofstgilescamberwell@gmail.com)

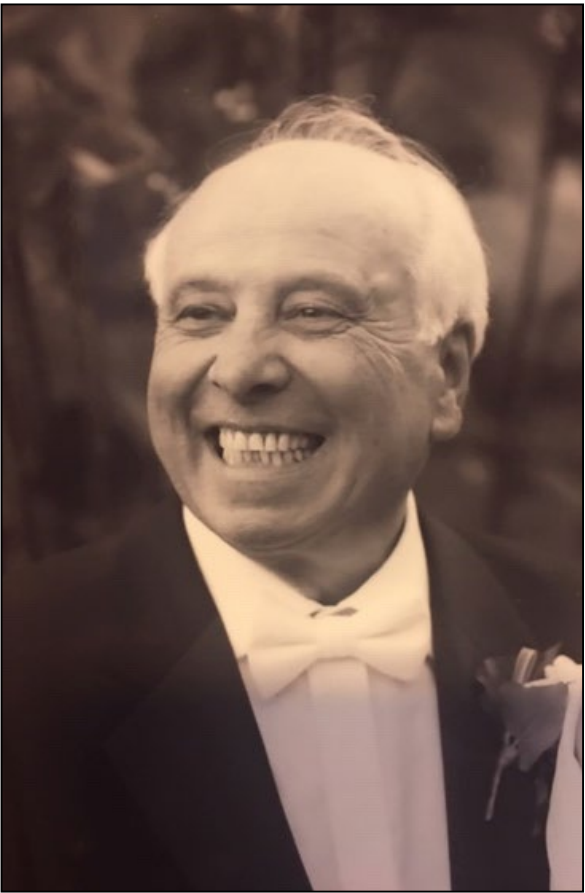
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# Obituary



Long-term Camberwell residents will remember the kindly, cheerful face and courtly manners of Alberto Petrozzi, hairdresser to Camberwellians young and old, who died aged 87 on 24 May 2019. Alberto was born in South Shields in 1932, the youngest of six. Things had been extremely difficult in Italy, which is why his parents had emigrated, and remained so for the next twenty years, as Alberto discovered when his family returned to Italy where his father served in the Italian army and his oldest son, Alberto’s brother, served with the opposite side with the British. After his return to Britain in 1949 when he was 17 he trained to be a hairdresser and worked for a fashionable hairdressers in Gerard Street, Soho, where he cut the hair of footballers and famous singers such as Toni Dalli. He opened his own premises in Camberwell New Road in the late ‘50s, and in the mid ‘60s he moved to larger premises opposite Camberwell Green, where he worked right up until his death. He used to cut my hair ‘alla tedesca’ – ‘like the German’, i.e. short, with the number 4 clippers. He was very funny and interesting if you got him talking, for he’d seen lot of life and met a lot of people. Once he missed out one side of my head and my wife had to send me back to get the rest cut. He married the lovely Loretta, who survives him, in 1969 and they had two children. He was very well known and much loved by the community.

Rupert Maas



# Open gardens 2019



A hens view



Refreshments at 34 Grove Lane



Allotments

Willing to open your garden to Society members next year?  
Contact: **Camilla Mair** Email: maircamilla@gmail.com

This year Camilla Mair asked me to open my garden – again, she is so persuasive! However, it was a good thing as two large empty spaces in my borders last year obviously had to be filled up and I was forced to do it. The cool spring and plenty of rain helped everything to be brilliantly green and I even had a reasonable show of flowers.

My garden at 9 Grove Park is entered through a rear gate via Lettsom Gardens. Last year I hung up the Lettsom Gardens posters – showing their history and that of Dr Lettsom – on a wall. The wall was above an uneven, empty bed left after I had had a huge lacebark tree (*Hoheria angustifolia*), obscuring my magnolia, taken down. The posters were read avidly by many visitors to the garden – so this year I had to do something new.

Many years ago, I studied botany and I have a binocular microscope, which I set it up on my garden table. My main exhibit was the underside of a leaflet (pinnule) from my tree fern (*Dicksonia antarctica*) the sporangia were not ripe but, as I had kept the leaf under the microscope all day, the lamp had heated the spore cases up. All through the afternoon the sporangia were bursting open pinging bright yellow spores all over the place. Even the young visitors could use the microscope and see the action. I also could show the difference between the male and female flowers of my kiwi vine (*Actinidia chinensis*) which had just come into bloom. The kiwi is dioecious i.e. has separate male and female plants. I have one of each to set fruit as my variety is not self-fertile. The kiwi flowers were covered in bumbles and honeybees from the hives in the Camberwell Gardens Society allotments, which are just over my garden wall.

It was altogether a rewarding experience opening my garden, which has many wildflowers to attract insects and a spectacular *Magnolia soulangiana* with two trunks. One enthusiastic young visitor immediately wanted to climb it. The magnolia is incredibly twisted and gnarled. I think it was probably planted in the 1950s as the trunks have expanded considerably since I moved in 50 years ago.

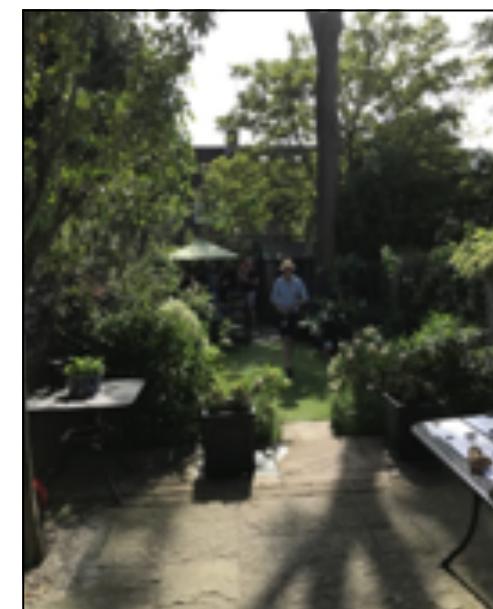
Alison Telfer



There was colour



And learning



And greenery



And tea



And Alisons Magnolia



And flowers

Photos Camilla Mair, Marie Staunton



## Growing a green and healthy neighbourhood



*Myatt's Field bandstand*

Stroll through Myatt's Fields Park on a sunny day and it is still recognizable as the green space that opened to the public 130 years ago. The layout of the park has remained largely the same, with a few sympathetic additions to facilitate more recent uses such as additional children's play activities. The buildings surrounding the park, which are mostly residential, have retained their original character. Because it is off the beaten track there is little in the way of traffic pollution or noise to disturb the peace. The park is a full of activity. On a typical sunny day there is football practice, a gardening group, a busy play area for young children and lots of people relaxing in the sunshine, chatting to friends over a coffee at the very popular Little Cat cafe. Produce from the garden is for sale – a bunch of freshly picked greens is a bargain for £1.



*Little Cat café*

Vauxhall Bridge opened in 1810 rapidly followed by the expansion of the transport network south of the river. Camberwell rapidly changed from being a rural village to a densely populated suburb. The land for the park was given by William Minet in 1889 to the London County Council for use as a permanent open space. The Metropolitan Public Gardens Association spent £10,000 on the layout, which was designed by Fanny Wilkinson, one of the first professional women landscape gardeners, and a campaigner for women's suffrage. The park commemorates Joseph Myatt, a former tenant and market gardener known for his rhubarb, strawberries and cabbages, which he sold in Covent Garden.

### **Vera Brittain's war**

During the First World War the park housed a military hospital in huts. Vera Brittain describes her experience there as a nurse in her memoir Testament of Youth. During World War II trenches were dug to provide residents with shelter from German bombing raids. Myatt's Fields became a conservation area in 1979, following a campaign by residents with the support of the Minet family, who still own much of the land in the area. In 2000 a group of regular park users got

together to discuss how to improve the park, and in 2003 the Myatt's Fields Park Project (MFPP) was set up. Because of their efforts the park was renovated at a cost of £3million. The work was completed in 2010. Fast forward to the present day, and the MFPP is a registered charity with eight employees which runs the park in partnership with Lambeth Council, and has links with numerous other community organisations.

Victoria Sherwin, one of the founder members of MFPP, is now the Community Development Manager. Even in pouring rain in a seemingly deserted park she explains that there is still plenty going on under cover. Myatt Fields Park Project is a community business, whose vision is to grow a green and healthy neighborhood. She reels off a string of impressive statistics to demonstrate the ambition and achievement of the project. In addition to being responsible for the management of the park, the project hosts a varied programme of public events throughout the year, including a Midsummer fair, a live music programme on the bandstand during the summer months, a Harvest Festival, and Christmas carols. There's also a wide range of smaller scale activities, from yoga to bat walks, sleepovers, African drumming sessions and gardening clubs for adults and children.

### **Healthy sustainable food**

Dodging the rain, Victoria enters the huge greenhouse where Fabrice Boltho is working. He is one of the community gardeners responsible for growing plants, not just for MFPP, but also to distribute to twenty-four local voluntary groups. The park lays great emphasis on healthy, sustainable food production, and since 2013 they have organised nearly 500 community food activities. These ventures require a lot of fund raising and the project has secured significant amounts of money over the years from a range of sources including the Big Lottery, the City Bridge Trust and the Heritage Lottery Fund. In addition to covering day to day maintenance and repairs,

Lambeth Council has recently committed £500,000 to renovate the Depot. This group of single storey buildings on the edge of the park in Cormont Road serve as the headquarters for MFPP as well as for Streetscape Social Enterprise, which provides apprenticeships in landscape gardening for long term unemployed young people. The Depot renovation, which is due to commence shortly, will provide much needed additional space and improved facilities including a community meeting, eating and cooking space.

The Little Cat Cafe is run by the Infante family, who live nearby. It's open seven days a week from 9am to 5pm, except in bad weather – the picturesque building is tiny, so all the seating is outside. Nevertheless, it is nearly always busy, except on days of heavy rain when it closes. There is an impressive menu on offer, from drinks and snacks through to a range of salads, pizzas and breakfasts. All are freshly prepared on the premises from healthy ingredients, some of which are sourced from the park's greenhouse and garden. Eliza used to be an accountant but changed career path three years ago when her son Daniel was born. Corporate life conflicted with her family responsibilities. The cafe is very much a family affair – husband Mario is the chef, her brother Omar works there too, along with Eliza's mother Melony who also volunteers in the greenhouse and nature garden. The family is originally from Ecuador although Eliza and Mario met in London. They go back to visit every year and are keen to ensure that Daniel stays in touch with his



*Sunday market*

roots. In addition to running the cafe, Eliza has also recently taken on the part time post of park manager which will draw on her financial expertise, as well as her knowledge and experience of the park.

### **Sunday market**

In 2018 the park played host to a regular Sunday Market, which included a range of food and craft stalls, alongside children's activities and live music performances. It was very popular, but the organiser has now moved away from the area. For a while the future of the market was in doubt. MFPP were reluctant to allow a commercial operator to take over, as there were concerns that they would allow stalls that did not fit with the project's vision. Fortunately, MFPP decided to take over the management despite the extra workload. The market started up again on 19 May. On that first day the park was buzzing as usual. Lots of families were making use of the

excellent play facilities, children and adults were having tennis coaching at the regular drop in classes, and there were various football activities. Some people were walking their dogs, others just strolling in the sunshine or chilling out on the benches or on the grass. The very popular Sunday lunchtime music events on the bandstand are due to start again soon.

On a recent Sunday the cafe was busy serving brunches and drinks, and a table had flowering plants for sale from the greenhouse. Nearby, surrounding the bandstand, the market was getting down to business. There is an emphasis on fresh, healthy food, in line with MFPP's ambition to foster a healthy neighborhood. There were stalls selling fresh meat and fish, salads and vegetables, as well as a range of breads, cakes and pies. A stall run by MFPP was selling produce from the garden and greenhouse such as pots of basil, lettuces and chard. The basil was in a cardboard pot, in line with the emphasis on recycling and cutting down on plastic waste. A craft stall was selling a range of items, including cards and prints, fabrics and fashion. The stallholder was a regular at the market last year when up to twenty stalls traded every week and is confident that as word spreads of its return, it will be as successful this year. It is a great place to meet friends, buy plants and be part of a green and healthy neighborhood.

*Alison Kirby*



*Growing healthy food in the greenhouse*



Camberwell business dynasties – the Francis family



Nisha and Fay in Head to Toe

Ensconced behind the pearly padded reception desk at Head to Toe, owner Nitsa is in a reflective mood. In her hand is a neatly written chronology of the three generations of her family since they arrived from Cyprus 72 years ago. Behind her, styling hair, is daughter Fay, who will soon take over the salon. She belongs to the fourth generation of Nitsa’s family running a business in Church Street.

Head to Toe, Cruson and the Vineyard are some of Camberwell’s longest established businesses. All were set up by migrants from Davlos in Northern Cyprus.

Poverty propelled Nitsa’s grandfather, Zakou Koumis, a farmer, to leave the blue waters, white sand and sun-bleached churches of this small village and take his chances in London. He got a job in a café at 15 Camberwell Church Street (where Wuli Wuli now stands) where he met fellow worker Fountza. She also came from a village near Davlos. They married and soon saved enough to buy the business. In 1947 Camberwell was gritty and unfashionable and property was cheap. The Koumises ran a very British café, serving spotted dick, shepherd’s pie, steak and kidney. Soon children Fay, Andy, Helen and Mary arrived.

Charming and popular with

customers, Mr Koumis was a strict Victorian father at home. School leaving age was 15, but he broke that law – taking his daughter Fay out of school at 14 to work as a waitress in the family café. That’s where she met the man who was to become her husband.

1960s

Back in Davlos in the early ‘60s life was hard. Shepherd Paul Haralambous had an outstanding voice and was offered a prestigious place as a chorister. But with seven of their own children and two adopted ones, all sharing a two-roomed cottage, Paul’s parents could not afford to forgo Paul’s wages. Word was in Davlos that there were jobs to be had in London. So, with no English and £20 to his name, Paul came over here, found work as a kitchen porter and started sending remittances home.

He became a customer at the Koumis family café. Where he met Fay, was deemed a suitable husband and they married. In time his father-in-law sold the café to Paul and Fay. They transformed it into the Rochester Steak House. Then bought the launderette next door at 13 Camberwell Church St (now the pharmacy). Property was still cheap in the early 1960s. Paul brought four of his brothers and sisters over to

Camberwell. By this time the flat above number 13 was becoming crowded. So, Paul, Fay and their children, Floria, Vaso and Andy moved to Herne Hill where Nitsa was born. The Haralambous family started a steak house in Greenwich.

Others in the Davlos region had heard about Camberwell and soon much of Church Street was being run by families from the region. Next door was the Apollo travel agency run by Mikey from Davlos. His brother Manolis ran the accountants next door to that. Down the street, a solicitor’s office was run by Christos who came from the same village as did Mr Theopilous who ran the San Remo Grill also in Church Street. Stavris, who runs the Vineyard in Camberwell Grove, was from the same area. Ari came from a village near Famagusta and bought Cruson from a family from Davlos.

Cypriot community

The growing Cypriot community revolved around an informal club in the basement of number 13 Church St and St Mary’s, the Orthodox Cathedral in Camberwell New Road. The Greek Orthodox Church took over the Cathedral in 1963 from the Catholic Apostolic Church (a group which followed the Nicene creed, flourished from the 1890s, reaching a peak of 315 churches; by the 1960s, most congregations had disappeared and now only one, in Maida Vale, remains). Nitsa remembers her father’s involvement in financing the cathedral when it was purchased. The Cypriot community was “supportive,” she says. “We were friends and family, and everyone helped each other out.” But by the end of the 1970s, families started to drift further out of London.

Nitsa remembers helping in the Greenwich steakhouse on Saturdays and attending Greek school every Sunday at St Marys Orthodox Cathedral. Treats were trips to the cinema – Camberwell had an ABC and an Odeon. School was Mary Datchelor, the girl’s grammar at the bottom of Grove Lane. There she was known as Helen.

The school closed in 1983. It was

sold to Save the Children, who later moved to Farringdon after selling it to developers. It has now been converted into flats. The teachers were excellent, though strict. Nitsa enjoyed Christmas especially – making up Christmas food boxes and taking them round to Camberwell families and singing the Messiah. But the uniform was “awful”: blue with bright yellow stripes, like a bee. “When we turned up for hockey or netball against Sacred Heart or JAGS, the other school-girls would tease us, going ‘buzz, buzz’.”

Head to Toe

After O levels, Nitsa wanted to start work. At five foot one and a half

inches, she was too short to join the police. Instead she qualified as a beautician at the London School of Fashion, off Oxford Street, and opened Head to Toe in 1988. She also bought 13 and 15 Camberwell Church St off her brother. She married George Francis a civil servant of Greek heritage and had two children, a boy and a girl. Her daughter Fay started helping in the salon aged 14. But Nitsa’s hope of keeping the business in the family seemed dashed. Her son went to university and then into computer graphics and animation. Daughter Fay trained as a beauty therapist in her gap year, but then decided to go to university and study psychology.

After graduating she worked as a session stylist at Elstree Studios among other places.

But ten years ago, Fay decided to join the business. After her recent wedding to a George Liassides from North London, also of Cypriot extraction, she is now ready to take over from her Mum. What has Fay learnt from three generations of her family’s businesses in Church Street? “Work hard, keep calm and remember every customer is important; so treat them all well and all the same “

Marie Staunton

Camberwell clip

St Giles Churchyard has new friends

St Giles Churchyard Friends is a new informal group set up to preserve and enhance the character of St Giles Churchyard, to keep it a safe and pleasant place to visit, to walk through, or simply to enjoy a few moments of calm. To join email: [StGilesChurchyardFriends@gmail.com](mailto:StGilesChurchyardFriends@gmail.com) The website is being developed at: <https://sites.google.com/view/stgileschurchyardfriends/home> This autumn they will be planting a new bed at the south end of the churchyard with a grant from Southwark’s Cleaner, Greener, Safer Fund and are looking for volunteers to help. The friends aim to support a regular maintenance schedule, investigate whether the dog exercise area should be labelled and more secure and perhaps get a new noticeboard. For the history of the Churchyard see: <https://masons23.wixsite.com/cdmason/camberwell>



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Roy Brooks, 1958



Planning

Planners and developers have been out on the streets this summer.



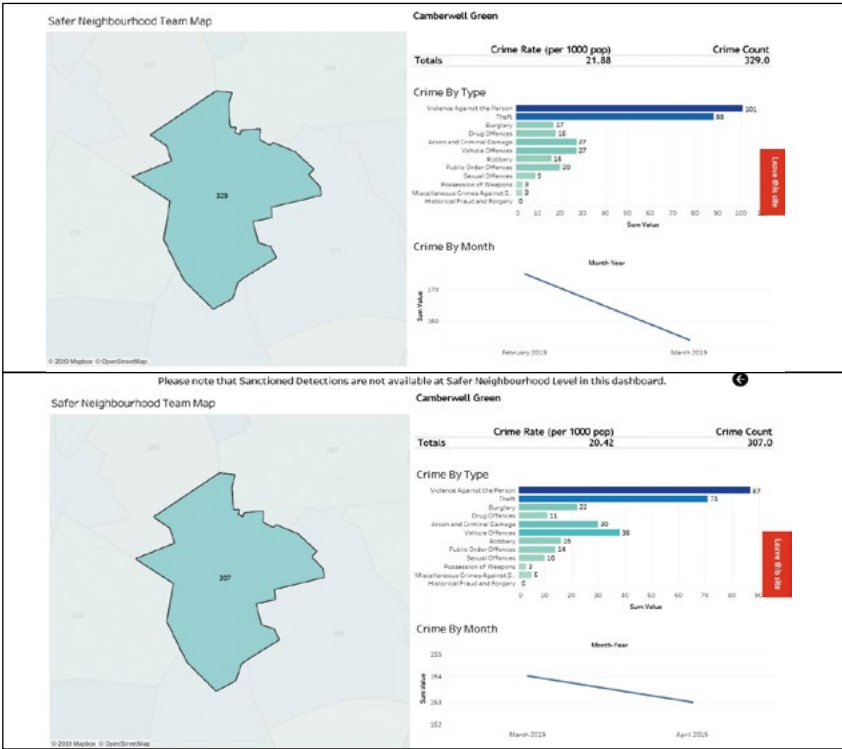
Res Publica held a street Art Jam during Camberwell Arts Week to engage the community in their planning application for the Valmar Road site behind the Co-op. The application includes a hotel, workspaces and a gallery as well as houses and flats.  
MJW the owners of Butterfly

Walk held an exhibition in the shopping centre to consult on their new proposals for the site. In the current scheme Morrisons stays in the same place, the new hotel reduces in height and the public square is now internal to the development avoiding disruption for residents of the Colonnades. The community meeting space is no longer in the plans. However a two screen cinema is proposed and a playground behind the new houses and flats on Daneville Road. There was some concern expressed at the consultation about the look of the proposed new building “bland and not very Camberwell” MJW intend to submit their plans in October.  
Southwark Council were also out consulting on the Camberwell Area plan. In late 2018, they received funding from the Mayor for London

to develop a vision for Camberwell, to make it a better place for people to live work and visit.  
A consortium of planners and architects is working until August 2019 to produce a plan for Camberwell and a long term vision. They will apply for larger funding to the Mayors Good Growth Fund for three projects to support the vision.  
They are currently looking at improving Camberwell Station Road with a better route through to Camberwell Green, developing a walk through the hospital from Windsor Walk to the Town Centre and improving the cross roads of Wilson Road and Peckham Road.  
To see the panels shown at the consultation go to: <https://www.southwark.gov.uk/regeneration/regeneration-projects/camberwell-regeneration/camberwell-area-plan>

Crime in Camberwell is going down

Between February and May crime went down in Camberwell according to Metropolitan Police figures. See charts provided by Camberwell Green Designated Ward Officer PC Shane Richardson. According to Mark Webb chair of the Camberwell Green Safer Neighbourhood Team Ward Panel police have succeeded in bringing local gun dealers to book in three major recent cases. One involved two men in the Elephant and Castle smuggling pistols into the UK via the Channel Tunnel. Four men in Peckham were caught doing the same thing. Seven people were sent down for a total of 77 years for manufacturing ammo and firearms in Catford, but selling in Oval / Kennington. According to Mark it was “the largest ammunition haul the Met. had ever uncovered”.



The Society’s comments on recent planning applications

The Society looks at all planning applications within the SE5 area. We advise the relevant planning authority where we object or support an application and when we have decided not to comment or object.

**19/AP/024 26 BROMAR ROAD, LONDON SE5 8DL**  
*Conversion of single-family dwelling house to 3 flats and the construction of a 6m side extension and a basement extension.*  
The drawings show the property in isolation. The drawings do not show this mid-terrace property in context and seem inaccurate, as from Google, the property clearly has chimney breast/chimney stacks that do not appear on the drawings.  
The proposal is to excavate a basement floor to create one of the flats as part of the proposed conversion of this single-family house into three units.  
The effect of excavating a basement on the adjoining properties in this steeply sloping street must be a concern.  
This basement flat would gain some daylight from the front but little to the subterranean windows shown with small lightwells, serving the rear bedrooms. The rear ground level is equal to the upper ground floor level.  
A large internal area noted as kitchen/dining will receive no natural light.  
Overall flat sizes given appear adequate, but the accuracy of the plans is questionable.  
Conclusion: OBJECTION

**19/AP/1123 FIRST FLOOR AND SECOND FLOOR, 82-84 CAMBERWELL CHURCH STREET, LONDON SE5 8QZ**  
*Change of use of level 01 and level 02 of the host property from unoccupied and unused B1 (Office) to C4 (Residential HMO). Replacement of windows to rear elevation only from timber and crittall to white upvc.*  
This is a conversion to seven bedsits, a communal kitchen and two WC/ shower-rooms.  
The corridors run along the Camberwell Church Street side and

rooms face South to the back over a large ground floor rear extension relating to the existing ground floor uses.  
This is a very basic/minimal looking conversion. Externally we will not see any obvious changes. Some air bricks to vent a cupboard window repairs and redecorating.  
So, nothing to like but also nothing visually to object to except perhaps the rear windows being changed to UPVC. The existing rear windows are a poor mixture.  
Proposed comment: NONE

**19/AP/1150 DOUGLAS BENNETT HOUSE, MAUDSLEY HOSPITAL, WINDSOR WALK, LONDON, SE5 8AZ**  
*Demolition of the existing building and erection of a new five storey building to accommodate a new in-patient mental health facility comprising 8 wards together with associated landscape works.*  
The mental health facility proposed by this application is unsympathetic to its surroundings in scale and design.  
Massing: the 5 storey building plus rooftop plant room is out of scale with the existing Victorian terrace which the Camberwell Society has worked hard to protect from unsympathetic re-development in the past. It will be clearly visible from Denmark Hill Station uphill from the site.  
Design: The Windsor Walk elevation proposed is not sympathetic to the existing buildings adjacent. Its large areas of brickwork and render and extraordinary protruding glazed and angled corner contrast unhelpfully with the orderly succession of vertical and horizontal lines of the rest of the street elevation.  
Conclusion: OBJECTION  
Bulky and inappropriate

**19/AP/1341 33 GROVE LANE, LONDON SE5 8SP**  
*Construction of two new storeys above the existing property*  
The original scheme proposed 2 additional stories to which the Society would object to the

overbearing nature of the extension. There have been revised plans and elevations submitted on 25 June showing a single storey glazed extension set back from the facade and similar in nature to the glazed extension to the southern end of Mary Datchelor House and subservient to the overall street composition. The society has no objection to these revised proposals

**18/05425/FUL Higgs Industrial Estate, Herne Hill Road SE24**  
*Proposed Development*  
**1. Excessive Height, Density and Visual Impact:**  
The new proposal for the Higgs Industrial Estate includes a 17 storey high building with an adjacent 11 storey block. Other proposed buildings on the site rise from 2 - 8 storeys. We believe that the maximum height in this location should be no more than 8 storeys, as in the previous approved design. The site has not been identified in the local plan for tall buildings and therefore does not comply with Lambeth’s own policies. The scale and height of the proposal also would not fit into the local streetscape and the visual impact would be overwhelming. The tall elements of the development would have an impact on views from Ruskin Park and would also affect the nearby Loughborough Park Conservation Area.

**2. Transport Capacity:**  
City-bound train services stopping at Loughborough Junction Station are at full capacity and would not be able to cope with the significant increase in resident numbers. Local bus routes are also already overloaded.  
The development is car free and residents would not have the option of driving to work either.

**3. Employment Floorspace:**  
We welcome that employment floorspace is retained, but the proposed increase by 11% compared to the previous application leads to the massive overdevelopment of the scheme. The proximity of commercial units to the residential

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accommodation would also restrict its use which raises the question if all of the employment floorspace can be fully used.

4. Infrastructure:

Another massive increase in resident numbers would cause more pressure on oversubscribed schools and GP surgeries which may not have space to expand.

5. Façade Design:

All street facing facades are brick clad and reinforce the bulky appearance of the whole scheme. The lack of any setbacks of the elevations along Herne Hill Road would not allow for sufficient space for any trees. The design fails to conform to Lambeth Local Plan policies Q8 and Q9. Conclusion: OBJECTION Does not comply with Lambeth’s planning policies.

18/AP/2876  
THE OLD DISPENSARY,  
325 CAMBERWELL NEW  
ROAD, LONDON SE5 0TF  
Construction of a two storey extension to create a new three-bedroom dwelling.  
The proposal is to make use of the side access alley and side door to access the existing first floor kitchen, lost to the rear of the site as the flat entrance, kitchen and living area, before a wrap round corridor to reach the front of the site. To erect a two storey front extension designed to sit in front of the dramatic

lantern rooflight; the key feature of this historic building which is overshadowed, surrounded and lost from public view.  
The building is one that defines Camberwell and is part of its history; to make such a change to this building would be an unacceptable loss. The lantern might be viewed from within the Public House but externally the view will be lost from both the gap on Camberwell Green and from Camberwell New road albeit standing back at a distance or from the upper deck of the bus. This is a unique building and should not be tampered with.  
Conclusion: OBJECTION

19/AP/0469 21-23 PARKHOUSE STREET, LONDON, SE5 7TQ  
Demolition of existing building and erection of two blocks (Block A and Block B) of 5 storeys and part-7/part-10 storeys (total AOD 35.86m). Block A comprises 5-storey block for commercial/employment use (962 sqm). Block B comprises ground floor commercial/employment use (129sqm) and 33 residential dwellings (3 x studios; 6 x 1b flats, 18 x 2b flats, 6 x 3b flats) and 1 accessible car parking spaces with associated landscaping, cycle parking and refuse store.

1. Height, Density, Visual Impact:  
The new proposal for this site on the edge of Burgess Park is for a 10 storey high building with an adjacent 5 storey block. The site has not been identified in the local plan for tall buildings and therefore does

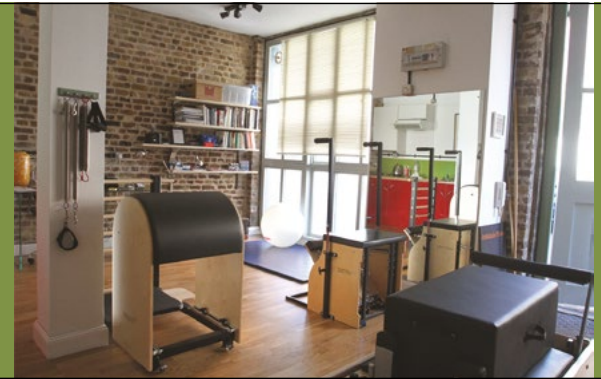
not comply with Southwark’s own policies. The scale and height of the proposal also would not fit into the local streetscape and the visual impact would be overwhelming, as it would not respect the low-rise character of the area. The 10 storey high element of the development would have a negative impact on views from Burgess Park and would also affect the nearby Grade II listed former church of St George.


2. Exemplary Design:

The proposal is not of ‘exemplary design’ because:  
- The development will provide 805 habitable rooms per hectare, but the acceptable range for this site is 200-700 habitable rooms per hectare. Density is too high.  
- 9.1% of the dwellings are studio flats, but the maximum should only be 6%.  
- Only 18.2% of the residential units are suitable for at least 5 occupants (the minimum is 20%).  
- Bathrooms do not have natural light.

3. Impact on Burgess Park:

The proposal would have a detrimental impact on Burgess Park, a ‘Site of Importance for Nature Conservation’ (SINC), overshadowing the wildlife area and affecting users of the park. There has been no ecological assessment of the implications for biodiversity. Conclusion: OBJECTION Does not comply with planning policies. Should be refused.





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MEMBERSHIP:  
Annual membership costs £20 (household) £15 (individual) or £10 (concessionary)  
Membership form available online:  
www.camberwellsociety.org.uk

PLANNING:  
email: planning@camberwellsociety.org.uk

The Camberwell Society is the recognised amenity society for those living, working or interested in Camberwell.



# The **PRINT** Guru

**P** **r** **i** **N** **T**

Please call or email Nick  
to discuss your printing requirements

invitations poster signs stickers folders brochures  
envelopes labels stable tents event tickets  
menus **printing** letter heads  
business cards flyers  
calendars magnets posters  
post cards canvas prints  
notepads greeting cards catalogs rack cards  
counter cards sales sheets  
news letters gift certificates  
hang tags door hangers

**T:** 01689 606116

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