Portas Pilot win marks turnaround for retail in Sydenham

Following retail guru Mary Portas’ independent review of failing high streets in December 2011, the government and the GLA made £2.7m available to run a series of pilots to trial her recommendations. Thanks to the efforts of a dedicated group of volunteers, Sydenham, Forest Hill and Kirkdale’s joint bid for up to £100,000 of government funding to revitalise the high streets won one of 15 Portas’ Pilot grants in the second round of bidding.

Having narrowly missed out in the first round, the initial bid for approximately £80,000 funding was fine tuned and enhanced by £100,000 of matched funding towards town centre improvements for Sydenham and Forest Hill from the planning gain agreement attached to the Phase Two development of Bell Green, along with a further £15,000 from Lewisham.

The Portas Review identified the need to put the heart back into the centre of our high streets, re-imagined as destinations for socialising, culture, health, well-being, creativity and learning, as well as places that will develop and sustain new and existing markets and businesses. High Streets should become places where we go to engage with other people in our communities, where shopping is just one part of a rich mix of activities. The new high streets won’t just be about selling goods.

The Forest Hill, Kirkdale and Sydenham pilot will comprise three key projects to test this ambition:

**Jack and Jill**
Two high street shops (one in Sydenham, the other in Forest Hill) will be renovated for creative community engagement via exhibitions, showcasing local products, business workshops, pop up events and use as a Town Team base. These will be used to engender a sense of place and gather details of people’s current shopping habits and their ambitions for the High Street.

**The Shop Revolution**
A high impact project with lasting sustainable benefits, Shop Revolution will introduce landlords and leaseholders to the concept of ‘meanwhile’ use – short term leases which keep the unit in use between tenants. Up to 12 vacant units will be refurbished and let on a “pop up”, or trial basis, giving new businesses the chance to test their business skills.

**Market Makers**
More than a market, this will build on the success of the Girton Road Car Boot Sale and the Forest Hill Food Fair to pilot offerings in Sydenham, Forest Hill and Kirkdale with the aim of finding long term tenants for our vacant units. By giving traders the opportunity to test market demand for their offering, they will be able to refine their business plan before committing to a long term lease.

Councillor Chris Best, Cabinet Member for Community Services at Lewisham Council, said: "Our pilot was chosen over many others because we demonstrated a real vision for our high continued on page 5…

Cllr Chris Best and members of Forest Hill and Sydenham Societies celebrate news of the success

IN THIS ISSUE

The Greyhound – what’s going on? • Forest Hill Pools nears completion • Profile: Mary McKernan
Open House London 2012 • Horniman Museum • South London Photographic Society • Royal British Legion
**SYDENHAM SOCIETY CONTACTS**

**Chair**
Annabel McLaren  
chair@sydenhamsociety.com

**Treasurer & Membership**
Roger Feather  
membership@sydenhamsociety.com  
020 8778 4318

**Newsletter Editor**
Pat Trembath  
news@sydenhamsociety.com  
020 8659 4903

**Newsletter Design & Layout**
Julia East  
news@sydenhamsociety.com

**Newsletter Distribution**
Pat Trembath  
020 8659 4903

**Conservation & Planning**
Barbara Kern  
conservation@sydenhamsociety.com

**Events**
Jackie Aldridge  
020 8778 5455  
Mob: 07837 838710

**Roads & Transport**
Ilse Towler  
ianj.towler@btinternet.com  
020 8778 3743

**Local History**
Steve Grindlay  
localhistory@sydenhamsociety.com  
020 8699 6398

**Contact Address for post**
Sydenham Society  
35 Bishopsthorpe Road  
Sydenham  
SE26 4PA

**YOUR LOCALLY ELECTED OFFICIALS**

**LOCAL MEMBERS OF PARLIAMENT**
Jim Dowd MP for Lewisham West and Penge  
Tessa Jowell MP for Dulwich and Upper Norwood  
c/o House of Commons London SW1A 0AA

**LEWISHAM COUNCILLORS**
Civic Suite Lewisham Town Hall Catford SE6 4RU  
020 8314 6000

**Bellingham Ward**
Alan Hall  
Ami Ibitson  
Jacq Paschoud

**Forest Hill Ward**
Anne Affiku  
Alex Feakes  
Philip Peake

**Perry Vale Ward**
John Paschoud  
Alan Till  
Susan Wise

**Sydenham Ward**
Chris Best  
Liam Curran  
Marion Nisbet

**BROMLEY COUNCILLORS**
Bromley Civic Centre Stockwell Close BRI 3UH  
020 8464 3333

**Crystal Palace Ward**
John Carvin  
Tom Papworth

**Penge and Cator Ward**
Peter Fookes  
John Getgood  
Katherine Bance

**SOUTHWARK COUNCILLORS**
Town Hall Peckham Road SE5 8UB  
020 7525 5000

**College Ward**
Helen Hayes  
Lewis Robinson  
Andy Simmons

**OTHER CONTACTS**

**Community Police Teams**
Community Police contact non-emergency numbers for Lewisham have all changed to 0300 123 1212

For emergency dial 999  
For non-urgent police matters dial 101

For environmental noise nuisance call:  
Lewisham Council 020 8314 6000  
Bromley Council 020 8464 3333  
Southwark Council 020 7525 5000

---

**Sydenham Society Contacts**

**LOCAL MEMBERS OF PARLIAMENT**
Jim Dowd MP for Lewisham West and Penge  
Tessa Jowell MP for Dulwich and Upper Norwood  
c/o House of Commons London SW1A 0AA

**LEWISHAM COUNCILLORS**
Civic Suite Lewisham Town Hall Catford SE6 4RU  
020 8314 6000

**Bellingham Ward**
Alan Hall  
Ami Ibitson  
Jacq Paschoud

**Forest Hill Ward**
Anne Affiku  
Alex Feakes  
Philip Peake

**Perry Vale Ward**
John Paschoud  
Alan Till  
Susan Wise

**Sydenham Ward**
Chris Best  
Liam Curran  
Marion Nisbet

**BROMLEY COUNCILLORS**
Bromley Civic Centre Stockwell Close BRI 3UH  
020 8464 3333

**Crystal Palace Ward**
John Carvin  
Tom Papworth

**Penge and Cator Ward**
Peter Fookes  
John Getgood  
Katherine Bance

**SOUTHWARK COUNCILLORS**
Town Hall Peckham Road SE5 8UB  
020 7525 5000

**College Ward**
Helen Hayes  
Lewis Robinson  
Andy Simmons

---

**SYDENHAM SOCIETY CONTACTS**

**Chair**
Annabel McLaren  
chair@sydenhamsociety.com

**Treasurer & Membership**
Roger Feather  
membership@sydenhamsociety.com  
020 8778 4318

**Newsletter Editor**
Pat Trembath  
news@sydenhamsociety.com  
020 8659 4903

**Newsletter Design & Layout**
Julia East  
news@sydenhamsociety.com

**Newsletter Distribution**
Pat Trembath  
020 8659 4903

**Conservation & Planning**
Barbara Kern  
conservation@sydenhamsociety.com

**Events**
Jackie Aldridge  
020 8778 5455  
Mob: 07837 838710

**Roads & Transport**
Ilse Towler  
ianj.towler@btinternet.com  
020 8778 3743

**Local History**
Steve Grindlay  
localhistory@sydenhamsociety.com  
020 8699 6398

**Contact Address for post**
Sydenham Society  
35 Bishopsthorpe Road  
Sydenham  
SE26 4PA

---

**THE SYDENHAM SOCIETY is an independent group representing the interests of local residents. Sydenham Society News is non-partisan, non-political and non-commercial.**

**ARTICLES PLEASE!**

If there is something you would like the society to tell everybody, or a local issue you feel strongly about, please send your article, maximum 300 words, to the editor.  
Sydenham Society News is read by many local residents, old and new, so please spell out all acronyms and explain anything that a newcomer might not understand.  
All articles are subject to editing by the Editorial team.  
Email your article to the editorial team at: news@sydenhamsociety.com or send hard copy to 97 Longton Grove SE26 6QQ.

**Disclaimer**
The views expressed in articles are those of named contributors and should not be regarded as statements of policy of the Sydenham Society.

---

**E-NEWSLETTER**

Want to be kept informed about news and events in SE26?  
If you haven’t already signed up for the Sydenham Society e-newsletter, you can do so by visiting www.sydenhamsociety.com and forwarding us your email address. You’ll then be sent our regular e-newsletter packed with local news and information about what’s going on in Sydenham and the surrounding area.

---

The deadline for articles for the next newsletter will be **Friday 02 November**
The Greyhound – What is going on?

In response to serious concerns expressed by local residents, questions to Lewisham planners include:

1. When can we expect to see a planning application submitted for the retrospective building of the basement and the internal layout?

2. Rebuilding of the pub brick by brick – externally is the roof line still the same, will the front facade have oriel windows including curving glass, can we expect to see a wooden balcony rail, will there be decorative wooden eaves in three places, can we expect to see chimneys in the same position as previously?

3. Internal layout – with regard to the lobby entrance will this retain two sets of double doors, and what is the intended positioning of the tiles from the drinking corridor?

4. Have the planning officers signed off the Greyhound design for the rear wall?

5. Landscaping - where are the trees going and what soft landscaping can residents expect to see? So far there is no indication of any landscaping on the piazza – although this was shown on the drawings of the frontage.

A revised April application included two new self contained flats on the first floor and in the roof space and omitted the community facility on the first floor. This application has now been withdrawn as it did not meet the expectation of rebuilding the structure, like for like.

It is understood that Planning officers from Lewisham Council are still waiting for Purelake to submit revised drawings for the pub which will, hopefully, show an appropriate rebuilding of the public house. It is also understood that until the planning conditions are met by the developer the site cannot be handed over to Hexagon for the 40 new affordable homes or for occupation of the two commercial units – one of which is expected to be Sainsbury’s.

Meanwhile hopes of a new pub for the Cobbs Corner area being opened by midsummer 2012 have been dashed.
Investment in Sydenham – help shape the future

Join us at the next Sydenham Assembly at the Grove Centre at 11am on Saturday 8 September and find out about progress on the new youth centre from our young people, the Portas pilot funding as well as the latest on the start of Sydenham Road improvements.

TNG – The New Generation youth centre

“Young people need exciting places where they can just be themselves and safe places where they can access support and grasp opportunity. Places where we can offer positive challenges. Places that say ‘you are important; we care.’”

Sir Steve Redgrave, myplace Support Team Ambassador

With the expectation of a legacy from London 2012 this is a project with a real local legacy inspired by young people linking with the community from an impressive building with a strong name and brand. If you want to get involved in the community offer please let me know as the building is now taking shape in Wells Park Road.

Sydenham Road improvements

After a long consultation period and discussion with transport partners the contract for the improvements to Sydenham Road and Station Approach has been let. Following the moratorium on any roadworks during the Olympics a September start date has been agreed and works are programmed to commence on site the week beginning 17 September 2012 for 52 weeks. The main contractor appointed for this project is J B Riney & Co Ltd. An evening meeting is being arranged for late August where the contractor will introduce themselves and outline their initial works and traffic management programmes so that local traders will have the opportunity to ask questions.

Portas Pilot funding

The Forest Hill, Kirkdale and Sydenham pilot was chosen over many others because we demonstrated a real vision for our high streets that has strong support from the local community as well as the involvement of a wide range of local partners.

The Council is fully behind the pilot and now that we’ve secured the funding, I hope many more people will want to get involved, to think about exciting and innovative ways of rejuvenating our high street, including new street markets, start-up opportunities for new businesses and creative exhibitions.

Please let me know if you want to get involved including joining the Town Team, opening a market stall or just helping to make it happen.

Chris Best, Councillor for Sydenham Ward and Chair of the Sydenham Assembly
Tel: 020 8659 6445. Cllr_Chris.Best@lewisham.gov.uk

News from Sydenham Wells and Mayow Parks

Despite the changing weather, ranging from early spring’s Mediterranean heat to monsoon rain from April, these two splendid parks continue to invite our community to enjoy the scenery and the events held there. And both parks continue to achieve Green Flag status, with Mayow Park’s Grow Mayow awarded Community Green Flag status.

In June, in brilliant sunshine, Lewisham’s Mayor, Sir Steve Bullock, “planted” a Black Poplar in Sydenham Wells Park to celebrate the Queen’s Diamond Jubilee, and officially opened the cricket square in Mayow Park. In August, with the Friends of Mayow Park, I helped raise the Green Flag for Mayow Park and accepted Sport England’s £43k cheque, which goes towards Mayow Park’s Pavilion refurbishment, which is an integral part of the ParkSport project to reintroduce cricket into two of our finest parks, Mayow Park and Hilly Fields. The refurbishment’s initial works estimates, including the upgrade of two changing rooms on the first floor, facilities for officials and disabled users, public toilets and the creation of a café space on the ground floor; were approximately £100k. The funding comes from Lewisham’s Green Scene with Glendale securing £45k from s.106 funds (planning gain money) and Sport England’s Places, People, Play legacy programme grant, with the balance from Lewisham’s parks improvements budget.

Following a competitive tender process, Glendale have appointed building contractors to agree a final design, and incorporate all necessary repairs into the works programme. The timetable is for the design to be ready by mid-August and, with approval by the Friends of Mayow Park of the contractor, the works will begin in September; with completion due by January 2013.

Once works begin, an assessment of further investment for a fully operational café, and expressions of interest will be invited. The café’s main objectives will be to provide locally sourced ingredients, be open throughout the year on a sound business model, and to ensure clean public toilets during operational hours. The hope is that the café will be open to the public by the end of April 2013 ready for next summer.

Cllr Susan Wise, Councillor for Perry Vale ward and Cabinet Member for Customer Services. Tel/Fax: 020 8699 6520. Cllr_Susan.Wise@lewisham.gov.uk
The condition of the underpass in Forest Hill has long been a thorn in the sides of local residents. After what must be 10 years of pressure from both the Sydenham and Forest Hill Societies news, at last, from Lewisham Council that the total funds required for the refurbishment of the Forest Hill pedestrian subway have been safeguarded.

The improvements will include installation of new drainage channels to pathway and track bed, resurfacing of the footpath, cleaning, repairing and painting over the mural ready for fresh artwork, and cladding the walls and ceiling of the section under the tracks (the part currently painted white). The works will be carried out at the same time as the lighting is replaced under the Skanska PFI contract.

An extra £28,000 has been made available by Lewisham Council as part of monies set aside for improvements to the East London Line Extension to repair the treads of the steps, and the handrails will be replaced by DDA compliant grab rails at each end of the underpass.

In total over £150,000 will be spent on the subway starting in September, finally bringing the subway up to the standard that residents in Forest Hill and Perry Vale and visitors to the area deserve.

**Forest Hill subway to be refurbished – at last!**

The condition of the underpass in Forest Hill has long been a thorn in the sides of local residents. After what must be 10 years of pressure from both the Sydenham and Forest Hill Societies news, at last, from Lewisham Council that the total funds required for the refurbishment of the Forest Hill pedestrian subway have been safeguarded.

The improvements will include installation of new drainage channels to pathway and track bed, resurfacing of the footpath, cleaning, repairing and painting over the mural ready for fresh artwork, and cladding the walls and ceiling of the section under the tracks (the part currently painted white). The works will be carried out at the same time as the lighting is replaced under the Skanska PFI contract.

An extra £28,000 has been made available by Lewisham Council as part of monies set aside for improvements to the East London Line Extension to repair the treads of the steps, and the handrails will be replaced by DDA compliant grab rails at each end of the underpass.

In total over £150,000 will be spent on the subway starting in September, finally bringing the subway up to the standard that residents in Forest Hill and Perry Vale and visitors to the area deserve.

**News from the LoveCleanStreets Network** info@lovecleanlondon.org

**How to use the LoveCleanStreets app**

**What Can I Report?**

You can report all kinds of issues with LoveCleanStreets. The most popular reports are about graffiti, dumped waste and pot holes. But loving where you live is a team activity! Why not share the things you love about your area, a fantastic park, local landmark or a well-swept street? Better still, why not share the little things you're doing to keep the place clean and tidy? Use our FYI IFI Category to report those times you pick-up the odd bit of litter and put it in the bin. That way you can encourage others to follow you lead.

**Where Can I Use LoveCleanStreets?**

Anywhere! We get reports from all over the world. Our app knows which local authority or utility company can deal with your report. And our team follow-up reports to encourage a positive response. We handle 10,000 reports a month – and your report could go to an authority department or a contractor for completion – it can be complex behind the scenes but it is simple for you: see it, report it and walk on. Usually in less than 40 seconds.

We’re constantly refining our mobile apps and adding new features. You can now see local reports on your device, update existing reports or start one. You can also ‘nudge’ our administrator to provide additional feedback if you feel the job hasn’t been resolved to your satisfaction. You can also save reports to be sent later.

Be sure to search your app store for the latest version of LoveCleanStreets and try these great new features.

**Be Inspired by 2012**

LoveCleanLondon, part of the LoveCleanStreets Network, was chosen to help keep London clean for the 2012 Games. We want you to keep posting reports from across the UK throughout the games and beyond!
News from the Friends of Home Park

Edible Open Gardens Day – Saturday
15 September from 11am to 4pm

Friends of Home Park will be hosting Edible Open Gardens Day in the Home Park Community Garden, located within Home Park. This is part of a wider event and many community gardens will be hosting similar events. There will be signs at Sydenham Community Library to direct you to the Home Park Community Garden.

Capital Growth, facilitating the Edible Open Gardens Day, say that, “This event is a great way of promoting your space to the local community and showing off all of your hard work over the summer!”

Liz Cranwell-Ward, expert Gardener in Residence, will be giving a talk on the work being done in the Home Park Community Garden; the beds will be on display and there will be an opportunity to talk to stakeholders about their involvement in the garden (other activities are also planned). The Community Garden stands on what was for many years an unused and derelict space. Friends of Home Park working with Lewisham Council, Haseltine Primary School, Hyde Housing and supported by Capital Growth, have transformed this space into a wonderful and vibrant garden, so please do come and visit us.

For more information on the work of Friends Of Home Park and Capital Growth please go to http://www.homepark.wordpress.com/ and http://www.capitalgrowth.org/

Anthony Scully, Chair, Friends of Home Park

Friends of Mayow Park

In 2011 both Mayow Park and Grow Mayow were awarded Green Flags. I am pleased to report that they have been re-awarded for the year 2012-2013.

Plans for the refurbishment of the pavilion are about to be realised. Lewisham council has recently received a grant from Sports England of £43,800. Together with money previously accumulated from various sources there is approximately £110,000 available for the work which is hoped to start in September. The first floor will contain changing rooms for those taking part in cricket and football in the park and the ground floor will comprise a cafe and public toilets, which will have disabled access. A licence/lease for the cafe will be advertised and it is hoped that the cafe will open in time for the start of the new cricket season in 2013.

The current cricket season – the first for many years – opened with a small ceremony on 20 June. And the sun shone brightly!

Hilary Jarrett, Treasurer, Friends of Mayow Park

Sydenham Wells Park News

The weather has been quite unreliable – either the weeds have been growing or they have been drowning!

In July the Green Flag judges confirmed that Sydenham Wells Park has been awarded another Green Flag for 2012.

The children’s playground is in need of extra and newer play equipment and grants are being applied for. The water-play area has been restored to working order. Other good news is that the tennis courts will be refurbished before next season. An outdoor tennis table has been installed in the corner plot of Taylors Lane and Wells Park Rd, opposite the new youth club currently under construction.

Due to Arts Council funding cuts The London Bubble Theatre was unable to perform in the park again this year but they haven’t given up, so we hope to see them next summer. We have had donations of trees, including a Black Poplar to mark the Queen’s Diamond Jubilee and in May we held a Plant Sale to raise money.

The next Sydenham Wells Park Improvement Group (SWPIG) meeting will be on Tuesday 11 September at 4.30pm in the maintenance hut (Wells Park Rd entrance). Anyone interested in improving Sydenham Wells Park is most welcome to attend.

Monika Mitchell, Chair, Sydenham Wells Park Improvement Group
A suitable site was eventually found, a large field in Dartmouth Road that already had a church school, Holy Trinity, in one corner. The field was once part of Sydenham Common (more than 500 acres of common land bordered by Sydenham Hill, Westwood Hill, the railway line between Sydenham and Forest Hill Stations, Westwood Park and back to Sydenham Hill alongside the Horniman Museum and Eliot Bank) which was enclosed between 1810 and 1819, divided into plots and awarded to those who already owned land in Lewisham. 

The field on which the pools were to be built was awarded to the vicar of Lewisham who decided to let it as allotments to help compensate those who had lost their common rights. The field became known as Vicar’s Field and in 1875 the vicar agreed that a small part of it could be used for a new church school. In 1884 the vicar agreed that another part of the field should be used for the new pools. By 1901 this part of Vicar’s Field had a church school, a library, an industrial home and a swimming pool, a vital hub for both Sydenham and Forest Hill providing local people with opportunities for learning and self-improvement, health, exercise and cleanliness, facilities no less important to us than they were to the Victorians. The rest of Vicar’s Field remained as allotments until the development of Derby Hill Crescent in the 1930s.

The principal architect of the new pools was Thomas Aldwinckle (1845-1920) who, for most of his working life, lived in Forest Hill at Church Road (1875-1885) and Dacres Road (1886-1908). Aldwinckle also designed Shaftesbury House, Perry Vale; Ladywell Baths and Louise House as well as the Shooters Hill Water Tower and Kentish Town Baths. 

The foundation stone for the new pools was laid on 3 May 1884 by Lewisham’s disgraced first mayor, Theophilus William Williams, chairman of the pools commissioners.

While the pools were being built there was one fatal accident. Williams Holmes, a carpenter, fell from the scaffolding. He was taken to Guy’s Hospital where he died.

On 2 May 1885 the pools were formally opened by the Earl of Dartmouth, Lord of the Manor of Lewisham, before “a large audience consisting of ladies and gentlemen”.

The original pools were a vivid illustration of the class system of Victorian England. The two swimming pools were intended to separate first from second class customers. They had their own ticket office (6d for a 1st class ticket, 2d for 2nd class), their own waiting rooms and their own pools. The pools were open 6 days a week from 6am to 9pm and Sunday morning. This was for men; there were “special arrangements for use by ladies” who could only swim on Monday, Wednesday and Saturday while the men were at work. Mixed bathing made a tentative appearance in the late 1940s although 1st and 2nd class tickets continued into the early 1950s.

There were also 23 cubicles with private slipper baths. These too were divided by class and although men and women used them at the same time, women had their own separate entrance at the side of the building.

During the winter months the pools were closed for swimming and the 1st class pools boarded over so that concerts, fairs, bazaars and public meetings could be held.

Perhaps the best known person associated with Forest Hill Pools was the swimmer Linda Ludgrove. She lived with her family at Eddisbury House, Sydenham Hill from 1957 until 1966 and attended Sydenham School. In 1962 and 1966 she won five gold medals and one silver medal at the Commonwealth Games. At the Tokyo Olympics in 1964 she represented GB in the 100 metres backstroke, coming 6th, and the 4x100 metres medley relay, coming 5th. Linda trained at Forest Hill Pools in the evenings, after they were closed to the public.

And now we have new pools, incorporating the most important part of the original building. After more than a hundred years not only have the four buildings on Vicar’s Field survived but three of them are still providing the same services that they were originally built for. We can only hope that a suitable solution will be found for Louise House.

Steve Grindlay
Forest Hill Pools

Work is now nearing completion on the redevelopment of the Forest Hill Pools. The beautifully restored Superintendent’s House, which first opened in 1885, has recently undergone an £8.9million redevelopment project and now houses part of the stunning new leisure centre.

There will be a grand re-opening by the Mayor of Lewisham, Sir Steve Bullock, on 22 September and members of the public will be able to take a tour of the fully accessible centre and try out the pools and some of the activities that will be on offer. As well as a state-of-the art gym (50 stations), two fitness studios, a café, a 25m swimming pool and 16.7m learner pool, the centre will also have community spaces for hire from £15 per hour.

The pools will be open daily Monday to Friday from 07.00 till 22.00, and on Saturday, Sunday and Bank Holidays from 07.00 till 18.00. As we go to press details of the planned timetable are not available but the website promises personal training, dance classes, Pilates, swim school and zumba.

Fusion, who will run the facility on behalf of Lewisham, advise that at present there are 40 classes on Forest Hill Pools timetable ranging from Yoga to spin and that these are classed to suit all ages and fitness levels. Further information will be available on the Fusion website shortly.
The gents’ changing rooms and loo – best room in the house!

The boiler room

Larger studio

The training pool

Signage

Kitchen and cafe

Gym – still to be fitted out
Future secured for Swimming in Forest Hill

A tale of four campaigns

Since 1995, when British Petroleum closed its employees’ sports centre in Lower Sydenham, the future of swimming in Forest Hill was in doubt. Renamed ‘the Bridge Leisure Centre’, the BP facility was taken over by Lewisham Council who, in March 1996, took the decision to close Forest Hill Pools as surplus to the Council’s then requirement of four pools.

A strong ‘Save Forest Hill Pools’ campaign was mounted, supported by residents of both Forest Hill and Sydenham. It included a packed public meeting at which local residents let it be known, loud and clear, that the pools would only be closed after a fight by the community as a whole. On 19 April, following the collapse of the roof of Downham Pools and its subsequent closure, the decision to close Forest Hill Pools was reversed. Roof repairs to the Forest Hill Pools costing £100,000, due to be carried out in July 1995, were eventually carried out in 1997.

In 2005 following a debate about whether a one or two-pool facility was needed at Forest Hill consultations were carried out with the local community as to whether to refurbish the existing building or to demolish and rebuild a one-pool facility. The future of Louise House, already boarded up was not part of the discussion.

With no definite outcome from the public consultation, in March 2006, the Mayor, Steve Bullock, decided in favour of refurbishment. Five weeks later due to roof structure failure, the pools were closed and an “intrusive survey”, already planned, was brought forward. The outcome showed extensive repairs were needed to both roofs, and replacement boiler, heating system and pipe-work were also needed along with new electrical systems. Residents were told that it was possible to rectify the infrastructure but there was no guarantee this would not fail again after 10 years. It appeared that refurbishment was no longer an economic option.

After the pools had been closed for two years it was learned that a decision had been taken to demolish both the pools and Louise House and a group of Stakeholders, representing community interests (including the Sydenham Society), were invited to work with officers on future designs for a planned new pools and leisure centre.

Concerned at the threat of early demolition of the heritage buildings without replacement designs in place residents started a “No Demolition without Design” petition. As a result of pressure the Mayor agreed that demolition would not take place until autumn 2008 when designs had been consulted on throughout the wider community.

During that summer three design options were offered to the community. Each option “turned its back” on the Grade II listed Library and the scale of 5- and 7-storey buildings seemed inappropriate for the immediate area and would, more than likely, not have satisfied English Heritage (a statutory consultee where adjacent listed buildings are involved) if plans for demolition had gone ahead.

Concerned about the loss of heritage buildings along Dartmouth Road a new “Save the Face of Forest Hill” campaign began and, in May, local resident Tim Walder applied to have Louise House “spot” listed. In August 2008, a very surprised council and equally surprised local residents learned that this application had been successful and plans for the autumn demolition of Louise House and the pools collapsed.

In February 2009 the Stakeholders were presented with two further options for a leisure facility in the area. The frontage block on Dartmouth Road could be retained with a new pools/leisure facility built behind and to the side, with cross subsidy funding from housing on an empty industrial site on Willow Way, off Kirkdale, but there were financial drawbacks to this scheme and it would take several years before work could commence.

The alternative was an early start on a new leisure facility on the Willow Way site with swimming available by 2011. Cross subsidy from housing on the Dartmouth Road site would help to underline any capital shortfall. This option meant that swimming would be removed from Forest Hill Town Centre and great concern was expressed about the loss of a major regeneration opportunity.

A third campaign to “Keep Swimming in Forest Hill” was mounted and a petition to retain swimming on the Dartmouth Road site, attracting 6000 signatures, was presented to the Mayor in May 2009. On 15 July the Mayor took the decision to retain swimming on the Dartmouth Road site.

Retention of swimming on the Dartmouth Road site has been a long, hard battle fought by the local community over many years. Since 1996 there have been four campaigns to retain swimming in Forest Hill, all supported by the Sydenham Society. The outcome has been a victory for common sense. Forest Hill Pools, the oldest pools in London, served the community well since they were opened in 1885. They are close to the local town centre, to public transport and within walking distance of many local schools in SE23 and SE26. It was logical that a modern facility should be built on the existing site and the heritage frontage retained and reused. With the Superintendent’s House refurbished, 21st century leisure facilities, a new entrance and landscaped linear park, the future for this area of Dartmouth Road is looking brighter than it has for many years.

Pat Trembath

Louise House

Lewisham Council are inviting expressions of interest in Louise House, the Grade 2 listed building between Forest Hill Library and the newly refurbished Forest Hill Pools.

Because of the nature of these public buildings in Dartmouth Road, the council hopes that a new use for Louise House for the benefit of the community, possibly as artists’ studios, can be found. It is understood that anyone showing an interest will need to ensure that activities taking place within Louise House and the Old Laundry is also commercially sustainable. For further information please contact Hilary.Renwick@lewisham.gov.uk
Mary McKernan

Mary is a member of the Sydenham Society and sits on the Conservation and Planning Sub-committee.

Mary lived in Sydenham as a young child until her family moved to Letchworth Garden City. Letchworth Garden City played an important role in the development of modern urban planning and theory in the twentieth century. It was perhaps the fact of growing up in such a well-planned town that engendered a love of local history and town planning which persists to this day.

Mary has spent most of her working life in television. She has had an eclectic career, and enjoyed working on a wide variety of programmes. Her work ranged from doing continuity on BBC dramas such as “Five Children and It”, researching documentaries on Irish History to producing gardening series. She was involved in many programmes about planning and architecture, where she was lucky enough to work with people such as Roy Porter and James Stirling.

Mary is currently freelancing and has returned to her first love: history. She’s planning to set up her own production company, and is concentrating on developing stories about World War I from the perspective of ordinary folk. Mary is a Member of the Orders and Medals Research Society and the Society of Genealogists. She also has a love of old roses and brought a vibrant pink “Madame Isaac Pereire” from the garden for me to smell! This rose was planted not just for its colour and fragrance, but because it was of the right time period for her house.

Mary returned to Sydenham ten years ago when her husband Ray Bravo’s work as a Broadcast Engineer brought them to the area. She says this was ‘serendipity’ and she feels this was the right thing, perhaps that “the end of all our exploring will be to arrive where we started and know the place for the first time”*. Her mother now lives in Hampshire and Mary values the shared memories that have been evoked by her return to the area. She likes the access to green spaces, and believes our local parks are more informal than London parks generally. She says they are like an “extension of your garden” [I mention that Mayow Park was specifically laid out for recreational use].

Mary is a member of the Society’s Conservation and Planning Sub-committee because she feels strongly about the need to protect a quality living environment through well thought-out planning, and calls for enforcement action where planning rules have been blatantly contravened. She feels the Council should be more proactive in supplying guidelines to householders – especially in Conservation areas. She would also like to see more “joined up” thinking between the various disciplines of Planning, Building Control, Roads and Environmental departments. She regrets the loss of pub function rooms and believes that we need more community gathering places. You will probably find Mary at the society Quiz Nites. She loves quizzes and crosswords and regularly tackles the Enigma Code in the Radio Times. Mary’s passion for town planning, her ability to take the ‘long-term view’ and her propensity for tackling knotty problems will prove useful for the society and we hope that, now serendipitously returned, she is here to stay.

* T.S. Eliot: “Little Gidding from the Four Quartets”

Sue Grindlay

This is the fourteenth in a series of articles on members of the Sydenham Society. If you would like to be featured in this series, or know someone whose views would be of interest to other members, please contact Sue Grindlay on 020 8699 6398 or sue.grindlay@gmail.com

Have your say on parking in Lewisham

Lewisham Council is responsible for managing fair access to parking spaces in the borough and it is undertaking a review of its parking arrangements that have been in place for 10 years. The review is necessary to meet the growth in the number of Lewisham motorists expected in the future and as part of the review a public survey will run from now until 28 September.

The evaluation will consider all aspects of parking in the borough including: residents, visitors and business parking; parking permits and parking payments.

This survey will be crucial in finding out people’s views and ensuring parking in the borough is redesigned and fit for the challenges of the future.

Take part in the survey and have your say on parking in Lewisham. All respondents who provide their contact details will be entered into a prize draw for a chance to win £250 worth of high street vouchers. To take part, go to: www.lewisham.gov.uk/news/pages/parkingsurvey2012.aspx
Open House London 2012

Over 750 buildings and events are taking part in the 20th anniversary of London’s greatest architectural showcase. A highly anticipated fixture in the capital’s cultural calendar, Open House London is a truly city-wide celebration of the buildings, places and spaces where we live and work.

2012 means 20 years of Open House London and of the Open-City organisation as a whole. In recognition of this significant milestone, Open-City is presenting a festival which will be unprecedented in breadth, scale and reach over 22 & 23 September. It will be a unique opportunity to see, explore and learn about London’s amazing architecture and design over 48 hours. More than 750 buildings of all kinds will open their doors, alongside a programme of neighbourhood walks, engineering and landscape tours, night-time openings, urban jogs and experts’ talks – all for free.

This year’s theme ‘The Changing Face of London’ explores issues that are relevant to local communities and how the built environment is evolving – including the design of homes, the impact of climate change, the role of architects and contemporary design in revitalising places and above all showing how good design can make London a more liveable, vibrant and enjoyable city.

Highlights include:

- **Iconic landmarks and towers including 30 St Mary Axe (aka the Gherkin), Heron Tower and Tower 42**
- **London’s infrastructure revealed with the Institution of Civil Engineers – including rides on the new Emirates Airline cable car, boat tours to the Thames Barrier and the Hoo Peninsula, engineering walks and site visits to major construction and engineering sites**
- **East London Transformation – discover all about the transformation of East London and the Lea Valley with expert-led events showcasing the regeneration of areas surrounding the Olympic Park.**
- **Nearly 50 projects with Landscape at their heart with the Landscape Institute – including the newly landscaped Granary/King’s Cross and Leicester Square, and the vast green roofs and insect hotel at 20 Triton Street**
- **Several open Embassies with the British Council’s International Architecture and Design Showcase**
- **Showcase of 100 private homes, architects’ homes and groundbreaking housing developments – from contemporary award-winners to vintage 50s and 60s designs**
- **Eco, zero carbon and retrofit buildings, with the chance to talk to experts, see measures in action and discover how you can implement changes in your own home**
- **Win a weekend stay at the 5* Hempel Hotel, London’s premier boutique hotel**
- **Speak with planners, architects and engineers on how they create successful buildings and cities**
- **Maggie’s and Open House London Night Hike on Friday 21st September – a moonlit walk through London with the opportunity to see Open House architecture and raise money for Maggie’s Cancer Caring Centres**
- **Special events and openings on Saturday night including evening film screenings at the Haggerston ‘I was here’ event and Midnight Apothecary: Liquid Engineering, cocktails with a difference at the Brunel Museum**
- **Activities for kids and families, from architectural model-making to quiz trails**
- **20 years of Open House celebrated with a special hardback book, published by Ebury Press and in major bookshops from 16 August, giving an insight into 100 Open House buildings; plus the Open House Memory Bank on Facebook**
- **Chart-topping Open House app for iphone from the appstore**
- **Archibus tour with Arriva – win a place on an architectural whirlwind tour by historic Routemaster bus**
- **Photography competition in partnership with Architects’ Journal, The Photographers’ gallery and Lomography**

Victoria Thornton, Director of Open-City comments: “Open House is a unique annual event, offering people across London the chance to explore and learn about the ‘changing face’ of the capital’s architecture. Last year 89% of participants said the Open House event was the best way to get under the skin, become more knowledgeable and engage in the dialogue about the capital’s architecture. This year we’re excited to be celebrating 20 years of Open House London with a special 48-hour programme of buildings, walks, tours and talks taking in some of the London’s most spectacular architecture.”

Full details of buildings and events will be published in the 2012 Guide and can be ordered online.

Website: www.openhouselondon.org.uk
Facebook: http://www.facebook.com/pages/Open-House/57147807198
Open House Memory Bank: http://www.facebook.com/OpenHouseMem

St Christopher’s Hospice
Dame Cicely Saunders Concert Series
Thursday 4 October, 7.30pm. ‘An evening of Song’ with Sarah Fox who will sing songs by Poulenc and Strauss, accompanied by pianist Malcolm Martineau.

Thursday 1 November, 7.30pm – The Twelfth band. An evening of Renaissance music with traditional music from France, Sweden and Ireland. The band uses an unusual assortment of instruments including nickelharpa, hurdy gurdy, viola da gamba, flutes, mandolin and mandola. Tickets for both concerts are £12.50 and include canapés and wine during the interval.
**News from Horniman Museum**

This autumn the Horniman Museum and Gardens has a variety of exhibitions and activities to keep the whole family entertained.

On 29 September the British Wildlife Photography Exhibition opens. This free exhibition showcases the winning entries of the 2011 British Wildlife Photography Competition, demonstrating the rich diversity of wildlife living in Britain today. In September ten winning photographs from a London Look Photography Challenge, which the Museum ran in July 2012, will be on display in Gallery Square. The photographs capture what those taking part see as the spirit of London.

Ongoing exhibitions include our major temporary exhibition, The Body Adorned: Dressing London, which explores how body adornment has become a part of London life across times and cultures, and The Art of Harmony exhibition which features rare and ornate musical instruments from the Horniman and V&A collections.

The Horniman is hosting an array of adult courses this autumn. Courses are open to adults of all abilities and must be booked in advance. You can join a friendly Gamelan ensemble every Tuesday from 18 September to 27 November (except 30 October), 7-9pm, £60 for 10 sessions. Or take the opportunity to improve your physical fitness, posture and flexibility with our Yoga course on Tuesdays (18 September – 27 November) 6.30 – 8pm or Saturdays (22 September – 1 December) 10.30am – 12pm, £70 for 10 sessions.

On Sunday 16 September take part in a one day course, Late Summer in Watercolour, and develop your watercolouring and observation skills using the wonderful views from the Gardens Pavilion.

Join us for an assortment of family activities this autumn, including Busy Bees - lively sessions for Under 5’s during the week, and an assortment of weekend activities such as Hands on Sessions, Art Makers, Nature Explorers and Tales from the Horniman. For more information visit our website: www.horniman.ac.uk

**Sydenham Community Radio**

Sydenham Community Radio (SCR) has moved to Sydenham Community Library and is broadcasting online, Wednesday to Sunday each week.

It is totally run by volunteers and always needs more so, if you are interested, please get in touch. It offers introductory training to anyone who wishes to learn how to present or edit a programme. Volunteer meetings for new people are held on the second Thursday of each month at the Golden Lion Pub, Sydenham Road starting at 8.00 p.m.

SCR has recently conducted phase 1 of an intergenerational project and recruited its first intern (a local graduate) as studio manager.

It needs a new chair and more directors for its AGM on 29.10.12. In spite of all its volunteers’ efforts, SCR still needs to raise funds. To this end, please support SCR’s events:-

- **A Community Car Boot Sale on the second Sunday morning of each month** (next one on Sunday 9th September 2012)
- **A comedy night, quarterly on the second Thursday** (next one on Thursday 10th October 2012)
- **A quiz night @ £2 per head on the last Wednesday of each quarter** (next one 26.9.12) in the back room at the Golden Lion Pub, Sydenham Road. Advance bookings just for you or for a table are welcomed.

Should you wish to make a donation, SCR has a page on localgiving.com

For further information on events, to book a pitch at the Boot Sale or to volunteer to help with any of the above, email: info@sydenhamradio.co.uk

For more details go to: www.sydenhamradio.co.uk

**Crystal Palace Park**

The High Court challenge to the Secretary of State’s approval of the Masterplan, which includes the sale of Caravan Site for residential apartments, has failed. Mr Justice Keith ruled that, although there is “very strong presumption against development on such land” he found that, there are “very special circumstances which were sufficient to outweigh this”.

Bromley’s decision to approve the Masterplan in December 2009 therefore stands.
**The South London Photographic Society**

The South London Photographic Society is the rather grand name for what is essentially a camera club for people interested in photography. It is also one of the oldest camera clubs in the country with its origins going back to 1889. Yes, cameras were around then.

We call ourselves SLPS for short. We meet Monday evenings from 8pm to 10pm at the Baptist Church in Perry Rise, Sydenham and are always looking for new members with new ideas about photography and a new way of seeing a picture. We are all amateurs with levels ranging from beginner to very advanced, with everyone willing to share their knowledge of photography, camera equipment and software (post processing).

Some are fanatics about photos taken just “in camera” and others love to “play” on their computer for hours and “enhance” their photos with Photoshop and other software programmes. We welcome anyone interested in photography. See our website for more details: www.southlondonps.org.uk

We hold regular competitions with separate entries for advanced and “improvers” and hold regular meetings on photography related subjects and arrange photoshoots. We also take part in external competitions with other camera clubs. In a recent poll of members (we currently have just over 30 members) everyone said that their photography had improved since joining the club.

The club is for people interested in improving their photography. However, we do NOT teach photography in classes at the club. All aged 18 and over are welcome to attend for 3 evening sessions to see what we get up to before having to make up their mind to join.

**The Royal British Legion calls on Londoners to help**

**Volunteers needed to organise this year’s Poppy Appeal at Bell Green Sainsbury’s**

The Royal British Legion in London needs special volunteers to help organise this year’s Poppy Appeal at Bell Green’s Sainsbury’s.

Sainsbury’s Hypermarket on Southend Lane, Bell Green, has kindly agreed to let the Poppy Appeal host a stall and manned collection for the full 2 weeks of the Poppy Appeal and now we need to find the volunteers to run it.

The Poppy Appeal this year runs from October 27 to November 11 and there are a whole range of volunteering opportunities for people to get involved, so whether you have got a lot of time to give or just an hour or two, why not join us.

Volunteers are crucial to the success of the Legion’s annual Poppy Appeal. We need an army of volunteer collectors in October and November; in addition to the London team that needs people throughout the year to help with the mammoth task of the organisation behind the collections.

To find out more about the daytime and evening volunteering opportunities available for the Poppy Appeal please contact: Alice Fisher, Community Fundraiser – South East London: 0207 863 3347/Mobile: 07833 095 96 or email: AFisher@britishlegion.org.uk

**Sydenham Film Club presents MARLEY**

Thursday 25 October, 7.30pm at the Golden Lion, Sydenham Road

Fresh from rave reviews in cinemas comes the definitive biography of Bob Marley the musician, revolutionary and legend, from his early days to his rise to international superstardom.

From Academy Award-winning director Kevin Macdonald (Touching the Void, The Last King of Scotland) comes the story of a towering figure of musical history, whose music and message has transcended different cultures, languages and creeds to resonate around the world today as powerfully as it did when he was alive.

Made with the support of the Marley family, the film features rare footage, incredible performances and revelatory interviews with the people who knew him best. Tickets £5 on the door.

www.facebook.com/SydenhamFilmClub

**Local Assemblies**

Sydenham Assembly – Saturday 8 September at Grove Centre, Jews Walk 11am – 1 pm

Forest Hill Assembly – Monday 8 October – time and venue to be confirmed

Perry Vale Assembly – Saturday 27 October – time and venue to be confirmed
DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

If you have a suggestion for a Syd Soc event please call Jackie Aldridge on 020 8778 5455.

Wednesday 3 October  6.45pm
A History of Westwood House and its surroundings
– talk by Steve Grindlay at Westwood House, 9 Westwood Hill
Local historian, Steve Grindlay, will give a talk about the history of the house, its immediate surroundings and the interesting and famous people who lived nearby. Westwood House is now a Care Home for elderly people. The talk, which is free, will start at 6.45pm and will last about an hour. There will be drinks and nibbles to follow.

Tuesday 9 October  7.45 pm – Quiz Nite. Sydenham Society’s popular quarterly Quiz Nite in aid of a local charity held in the rear room of the Golden Lion, Sydenham Road. Contact Jackie 020 8778 5455 or Pat 020 8659 4903 to book a table for your team. Individuals are welcome as teams can be formed on the night.

Friday 26 October  7.30pm – Club 26 meets to eat at the ever popular Trattoria Raffaele in Sydenham Road. Phone 020 8778 6262 and mention you belong to Club 26 when reserving your place.

AROUND AND ABOUT

Friends of Home Park Edible Open Gardens Day. Sat 15 September from 11am to 4pm. See p.6 for full details.

Sydenham Garden Autumn Fair. Sat 29 September 2012, 11am to 3pm at Sydenham Garden, Wynell Road, off Mayow Road, (also entrance in Holland Drive, off Queenswood Road). Plants, art and crafts, jams and vintage stalls. Enjoy delicious cakes and freshly made pancakes whilst listening to music. For children there will be plenty of ‘hands on’ activities. Entry £1 and 50p for concessions.

Friends of Beckenham Place Park. Sun 7 October – Fungi Walk. This is an identification walk not a pick to eat walk! Meet at the Mansion at 1.30pm.

Sydenham Film Club presents MARLEY. Thurs 25 October, 7.30pm at the Golden Lion, Sydenham Road – for further details see p.14.

St Christopher’s Hospice – Dame Cicely Saunders Concert Series – Thurs 4 October and Thurs 1 November – see page 12.

SyDENHAM SOCIETY MEMBERSHIP FORM

Yearly cost of membership
Individual (includes partner)  £6.00 per annum
Senior Citizen (includes partner) £5.00 per annum
Postal Member (includes partner) £8.00/£7.00 per annum

Name______________________________________________

Address ____________________________________________

__________________________________________________ Post code __________

Tel day ____________________ Tel eve ____________________

Email ______________________________________________

Renewal is due in January. Postal members are those resident outside SE23 and SE26 postal areas. Subscriptions can be paid by cheque or Standing Order. Please make cheques payable to The Sydenham Society.

The Sydenham Society STANDING ORDER

Bank details for standing order

Name of your bank/building society _______________________

Address of your bank/building society ______________________

Account Number: ___________________________ Sort Code __________

Signed __________________________

Your Name (please print) __________________________

Please pay the Sydenham Society (Lloyds Bank plc, Sydenham Branch, Sort Code 30-98-42, Account no. 052441(0) the sum of £6/£7/£6/£5 (please delete as appropriate) on 5 January each year until further notice. This replaces any Standing Order in favour of the ‘Sydenham Society’.

Please return to: Roger Feather, 71 Hall Drive, Sydenham, London SE26 6XL Tel: 020 8778 4318 Email: membership@sydenhamsociety.com
Greyhound public art competition

This is a visual of the winning artwork that will appear on the rear wall of the Greyhound Pub (although the final one will be a little different to this with a lower horizon so the greyhound is more visible). It's an image of a Greyhound made up of images of Sydenham.

TO MAKE IT WORK YOUR IMAGES ARE NEEDED
Lee Newham of Designed by Good People, winners of the Greyhound public art competition, is asking for images to be submitted to him by 8 October and a disclaimer will also need to be signed allowing free use of all images.

He says,”They can be anything to do with Sydenham. Old photos, family photos, landscapes, artworks, doodles, images of parks, places, people…anything Sydenham related. There is no limit to the amount of images you can send in (but we will edit and vet them).

“They need to be supplied digitally to as high a resolution as possible. They’ll be cropped square (around 10cm x 10cm).

“You will need to fill in a disclaimer online, please don’t forget to do this before submitting your images. We have set up a mechanism for getting your permission to use the images for the mural (you retain copyright) and collecting images via our blog (see below).”

http://whatifsydenham.wordpress.com/2012/08/08/be-part-of-the-greyhound-wall-artwork/

WELCOME TO NEW MEMBERS

A warm welcome to the following new members:

Helen Akif
Emma E Ashby
Judith Barrett
Ana & James Elliott
Rachel Firth
Mark Jedski

Angela Sasso
Sally & Kevin Smith
Linda Whitlam
Svetlana Pavlova
Lisa Gayle

POSTAL MEMBERS

Members are reminded that subscriptions for 2012 are now due. Please contact me if you are unsure whether you have paid for this year. As notified previously, the charge for receiving the newsletter by post is £2 per annum in addition to the prevailing subscription rate. Postal members who have not already paid the increased amount for 2012 are asked to send me payment for the balance and, where appropriate, adjust their standing orders for subsequent years.

Many thanks

Roger Feather, Treasurer  Tel: 020 8778 4318
Email: membership@sydenhamsociety.com

www.sydenhamsociety.com
Covering all aspects of local community matters ■ Member of the London Forum ■ Member of Civic Voice