



streathamcommon.org
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Easter Egg Hunt Prizes only whilst stocks last!

Common Knowledge

From the Chair

Here we are again heading into spring and hopefully out of Covid! By the time you read this, the Covid testing station should have been decommissioned, and it will be removed before the end of April. This is good news on two fronts: it is a sign that normal life is returning and we finally get our car park back!

At the end of March, I met with some representatives from Lambeth Council and other community groups to discuss lighting and safety on the Common. We had an evening walk around the Common and tried to identify places where the lighting should and/or could be improved to provide safe walking routes for users of the Common.

We are continuing to follow up with the council regarding replacing the dilapidated fencing around The Rookery Café. It seems the latest delay is due to the supply of the fencing itself. Hopefully this will be rectified soon. We have also arranged to install some new animal-proof rubbish bins on the Common and these should be installed sometime in June, ready for those summer picnics we love so much.

There was a public meeting at the end of March to discuss the development of the Homebase site in Streatham Vale. This project has created a lot of discussion with both residents and community groups. You can both search for (using 100 Woodgate Drive) and comment on the proposal on the Lambeth Planning Portal at planning.lambeth.gov.uk. We have been told it will not too late to do so even after the formal 8th April closing date.

Finally, and once again, I am asking for assistance. We are hoping to be able to run our annual events this year and are looking for helpers, especially for Kite Day. In particular, if anyone has First Aid, Social Media or Graphic Design skills and would like to help with events, or has something to offer our committee, please visit our website, www.streathamcommon.org, select The Friends and then Volunteer or contact me directly at chair@streathamcommon.org. *Tracey Williamson*

Covid Memorial



This raised flower bed in Streatham Memorial Gardens, on the corner of Streatham Common North and Streatham High Road, has been built as a memorial to those residents of Streatham whose death is attributed to Covid-19. It will soon contain an explanatory plaque and will then be formally opened.

Discussions are ongoing about how members of the community might like to engage with the new garden, with a gardening group being suggested as well as the potential for Streatham residents to place a named plaque in memory of individuals on the flower bed's walls. Lambeth Council and local councillors would welcome views on this.

Covid-19 Test Centre - testing in the centre that has occupied the Common's car park since October 2020 ended on 31st March. The centre will be dismantled and moved off site by the end of April and the car park should re-open early in May, subject to any repairs that are needed.

Bee Roads

The grass verge along Lambeth's bit of Covington Way - the stretch with woodland behind it - is to be 'rewilded' as part of a plan to create areas that will attract bees, butterflies and other pollinators.

The so-called Bee Roads project is funded by The Mayor of London's office and will be spread over two years, with a variety of rewilding projects at a dozen different sites in Lambeth including the one along Covington Way. Here the existing turf will be removed and replaced with low fertility soil creating a seed bed. Once seeded, it will be covered with a pegged-down germination fleece and will have a low temporary fence to discourage the area from being walked on.

The community representative for the Covington Way mini-project is past Chair of Friends of Streatham Common and resident of Covington Way, Mike Robinson.

After Life

The new bench, pictured, that appeared for a time in The Rookery has not vanished into the afterlife and will reappear once it can be firmly secured in place.

The bench is one of 25, including six in London, donated to local councils by the



streaming service Netflix and the suicide prevention charity Campaign Against Living Miserably (CALM) to mark the final series of *After Life*. In this darkly humorous series, Ricky Gervais plays the main character, Tony, and is often seen sitting on a bench in the churchyard where his wife is buried, dealing with grief and contemplating suicide. A QR code on one of the bench's plaques enables immediate access to CALM's resources.

From The Guardian 26th Feb 2022

Country diary
Streatham Common,
London

A bright day. Crisp, clear,
cornflower sky. One of those
February days. You know the kind.
Pre-pre-spring. Utterly still. No

Wild Times

This splendid toad was painted one recent day on the side wall of the Inkspot Brewery by a well known (but anonymous) street artist. It overlooks the rather grandly named Streatham Common Woodland Garden, previously an unkempt corner of land which has been transformed as part of the *Wild Times* project by the charity Froglife, in conjunction with the Streatham Common Cooperative.

Wild Times is part of the Leaping Forward for Dementia project led by Victoria Peet for Froglife and supported by the City Bridge Trust. It provides opportunities for people living with dementia (and others) to safely access the benefits of the outdoors, with wildlife gardening sessions and nature-inspired creative workshops. The Streatham Common sessions run every Thursday from 10.00am until 3.00pm and are open to anyone. If you would be interested in joining the Thursday volunteer sessions either email victoria.peet@froglife.org or phone her on 07377970844.



Kite Day

Streatham Kite Day has been one of the most popular events in Streatham for many years. Having had to cancel it in 2020 and with continuing issues from the pandemic in 2021, we ran a low key version last September and went back to the roots of the event with Wind Day. We were planning the return of a fully-formed Kite Day in May this year but have agreed with Lambeth Council to defer the event. The date is now booked and we really look forward to seeing you all on the Common on Sunday 11th September from 11.00am to 4.00pm.

Ours is the only kite festival in London. A family-orientated day out, Kite Day attracts about 5,000 people not only to see amazing aerial displays from some of the best kite flyers in the country but also to fly their own kites. Local community groups demonstrate the amazing voluntary activity in Streatham. There's a live band, a variety of food stalls showcasing a range of cuisines and the Inkspot Brewery runs a bar. We have a couple of kite shops for those who've not brought their own kite and there are children's activities, such as bouncy castles and face painting.

It's amazing when you look out across the common and see the groups of family and friends and the sky filled with multi-coloured kites. If you're interested in taking part you can find out more by emailing streathamkiteday@gmail.com

From the overall organising team to the many stewards on the day, this event is run entirely by Friends of Streatham Common volunteers. Without help, it cannot happen. We need many volunteers at different points throughout the day helping with set up, being a steward for a couple of hours or getting more involved with the overall running of the event. If you could spare a couple of hours or would like to get more involved, please email volunteering@streathamcommon.org

Caroline Hewitt

Events For Your Diary

Easter Egg Hunt, 17th April

For children. In The Rookery any time from 12.00 noon to 3.00pm. Egg prizes whilst stocks last. Optional donation of £2 to Friends of Streatham Common.

Spring Bat Walk, 22nd April

Meet by The Rookery Café at 8.20 pm. The walk will be led by Dr Iain Boulton, from Lambeth Council, and will last about one hour. Bring a torch. Booking essential: email IBoulton@lambeth.gov.uk

Bird Box Survey, 8th May

Help us find out what birds are using which nest boxes on Streatham Common this year. We shall be watching each box to see if young birds are being fed. Bring binoculars if you can. Meet by The Rookery Café at 9.30am.

Great North Wood Festival, 18th June

From 10.00am to 3.00pm opposite The Rookery Café. Featuring a variety of exhibitions, entertainments and walks arranged by London Wild Life Trust, in conjunction with SCCoop and FoSC, in celebration of an extensive ancient woodland that once reached Streatham.

Shakespeare in the Rookery – *Midsummer Night's Dream*, 19th June

An open air production on The Rookery's lawn starting at 3.00pm. Sit on the lawn or bring a chair. Tickets available in advance via The Festival Players website by Easter.

Butterfly Walk, 10th July

Starting at 2.30 pm by The Rookery's main gates. Join Peter Newmark on a leisurely stroll to see which butterflies are around and learn a bit about them. A free event; donations to the Friends of Streatham Common welcome.

Streatham Action has produced a very useful online guide on how to report local crime or anti-social behaviour. It can be accessed by a link at the top of streathamaction.org.uk