



**BLACK
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BLACKHEATH
+GREENWICH
MAGAZINE**

ISSUE 23 - WINTER 2025

**Blackheath and
Greenwich pub guide**

**Interview: Colin
Blunstone**

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It's always really gratifying receiving all the lovely comments we get about Black and Green Magazine. It is clear that there's a sizeable and growing readership that appreciates our strong emphasis on the best quality editorial, and we hope that you consider it a welcomed free asset to the community.

As well as covering local news and features, our quarterly magazine ventures further than south London, with celebrity interviews, lifestyle, property and travel articles, and much more.

We're hoping that you'll be keen to get involved in our magazine in some way, whether as a reader, advertiser, or perhaps stockist. We'd certainly welcome your views and suggestions, and please send us information, letters and photos you think suitable for the magazine.

Unfortunately, the magazine can't exist from advertising alone, so please consider helping secure its future by taking out a subscription to guarantee your copy (just email us at info@blackandgreen.biz), or perhaps by becoming an investor in this dynamic title.

We hope you enjoy this issue!

The Black + Green team



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What's on

Peter Doig: House of Music

Until 8 February

Serpentine Galleries presents a new project by Peter Doig that explores the role of music, film, and sites of communal gathering, listening and creative exchange within his practice. Transforming the gallery into a listening space, *House of Music* brings together recent paintings and, for the first time, integrates sound into Doig's work. The exhibition features two sets of rare, restored analogue speakers, originally designed for cinemas and large auditoriums. Music selected by the artist – from his substantial archive of vinyl records and cassette tapes accumulated over decades – plays through a set of 'high fidelity' 1950s wooden Klangfilm Euronor speakers. Each painting in the exhibition engages with music in a different way: some depict spaces where music is played or heard, others show musicians performing or people dancing. Many of the works were created during Doig's years in Trinidad (2002–21), a period that deepened his relationship with music through sound-system culture and cinema. Blending personal memory, found photographs, and imagined scenes, these paintings are shaped by the wider cultural context of Trinidad. The exhibition also includes new paintings, which Doig created specifically for this show in his London studio.

Serpentine South Gallery, Mottingham Lane, Eltham SE9 4RW; 020 7402 6075; serpentinegalleries.org; free

Christmas Concerti by Candlelight

Saturday 20 December, 8pm

Experience the magic of Christmas with an unforgettable evening of music by candlelight. Let the glow of flickering candles and the brilliance of timeless masterpieces by Bach, Vivaldi and Corelli fill your heart with festive joy. Performed by international violinist Harriet Mackenzie, profits support the charity Music in Action, which provides music lessons for underprivileged children.

All Saints Church, All Saints Drive, Blackheath SE3 0TH; 0333 666 3366; ticketsource.co.uk/surround-sound; adults £25, £30, children £15

Albany Comedy Night

Thur 18 December 7pm

Showcasing the best of the UK comedy scene, with plenty of familiar faces and fast rising future stars. Resident host Chantel Nash, finalist in the BBC New Comedy Awards 2023, will be joined by a rotating line-up of special guests – previous guests have included Slim, Suzi Ruffell, Kerry Godliman and Fatiha El-Ghorri.

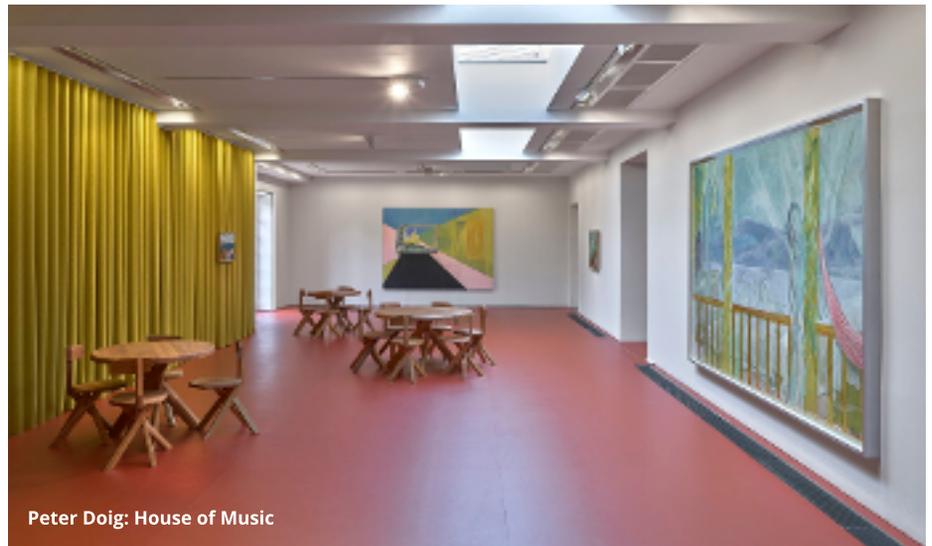
The Albany, Douglas Way, Deptford SE8 4AG; 020 8692 4446; thealbany.org.uk; tickets £11-13

Burns Night Celebration

Friday 23 January 7.30pm

Featuring MC Chris Harrison, the GMFA Ceilidh Band, and Fusion Singer. With bagpiper, Ode to a Haggis, Ceilidh Band and full Burns supper.

Mycenae House, 90 Mycenae Road, Blackheath SE3 7SE; 020 8858 1749; mycenaeohouse.co.uk; tickets £26



Peter Doig: House of Music

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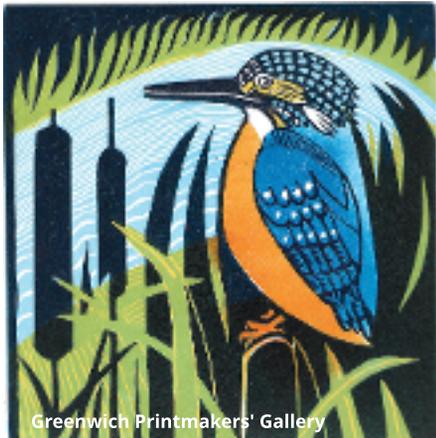
What's on

Prints for Presents

Until 4 January

Members of the Greenwich Printmakers Association invite you to see their newest work in their annual winter exhibition, with artwork created by local artists and spanning a wide variety of techniques, such as linocut, etching, photopolymer and lithography.

Greenwich Printmakers Gallery, 1a
Greenwich Market, Greenwich SE10 9HZ;
020 8858 1569; greenwichprintmakers.co.uk



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Daily

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St James' Court, 54 Buckingham Gate,
SW1E 6AF; 020 7834 6655;
stjamescourt.co.uk

Opera: Mozart's *Così fan tutte*

Thursday 29 January, 7pm

A comedy of love, lies and lessons of life. Playful deception meets its match in Mozart's sparkling comic opera, reminding us that love is rarely as simple - or as certain - as we'd like to believe. Two young officers make a reckless wager: can their fiancées remain faithful when temptation comes knocking? With a mischievous plot hatched by a worldly friend, disguises, mistaken identities, and romantic entanglements spiral into a deliciously absurd tangle. Set to some of Mozart's most radiant and intricate music and sung in English to a translation by Amanda Holden, *Così fan tutte* blends razor-sharp wit with moments of truth and reflection in this vibrant production that proves Mozart knew the human heart all too well.

Blackheath Halls, 23 Lee Road, Blackheath,
SE3 9RQ; 020 8463 0100;
blackheathhalls.com; tickets £25, £35, £40

An Audience With Arthur Smith

Monday 12 January, 7.30pm

From *Grumpy Old Men* to *Loose Ends*, Arthur has carved out a unique space in British comedy as a performer, playwright and occasional wordsmith on *Countdown*. In this

live event he's joined by BBC broadcaster Georgy Jamieson for a candid, unscripted chat about everything from life in the 1980s alternative comedy scene to growing old (dis)gracefully — with a few diversions into family, fame, and fox costumes. Georgy's warmth and insight draw out stories from Arthur's colourful past — from his days sweeping streets and advertising chicken burgers in a fox suit, to penning the award-winning play *An Evening with Gary Lineker* and presenting *Excess Baggage* and *The Smith Lectures* on BBC Radio. This isn't stand-up. It's not scripted. It's a funny, honest, occasionally daft evening with one of Britain's best-loved comedy voices — not in performance, but in conversation.

Greenwich Theatre, Crooms Hill, Greenwich
SE10 8ES; 020 8858 7755;
greenwichtheatre.org.uk; tickets £41.50

London Short Film Festival: British Lives

Saturday 24 January, 8.40pm

As part of the internationally regarded London Short Film Festival 2026 held annually at various locations in the capital,



this selection of short films explores what it means to be British today. Bringing together drama, documentary and animation to reflect the many stories shaping the nation. One of the films, *Stinging Nettles*, was written and directed by local filmmaker Jerusha West.

BFI Southbank, Belvedere Road, London
SE1 8XT; 020 7928 3232; bfi.org.uk; tickets
£12.20-14.00



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**"Success did
seem to happen
very quickly"**

Interview: Colin Blunstone

The celebrated singer-songwriter on his epic career

BY BEN WEST

"I live in Surrey these days - I prefer a slightly quieter pace of life," says renowned veteran singer-songwriter Colin Blunstone, 80, in a surprisingly youthful voice.

I'm not that convinced: for a man in his eighth decade, Blunstone doesn't look like he's thinking of slowing down in the foreseeable future at all. Indeed, with the release of a new documentary about his first band, British Invasion pioneers The Zombies, and four of their albums having been remastered and released (in all formats including limited edition vinyl), he is busier than ever.

"It's surprising. Rod [Argent, of The Zombies] wasn't well about a year ago and I thought life would get quieter," he says. "But it's not happened at all. It's only September, and I've been in America two times this year already, publicising the documentary."

The film, *Hung Up On A Dream*, chronicles the six-decade career of what is one of the longest running bands in the UK. It was released in cinemas across the US earlier this year, and garnered rave reviews. Band admirers, including Paul Weller, Dave Grohl, Harry Styles and Post Malone appear. It is available to watch on Amazon Prime Video and Apple TV.

"I was 18 when I made my first record - Rod was 10 days older than me. For us, success did seem to happen very quickly. We won a competition and the prize was a contract with Decca for, if I remember correctly, one single. But that single was *She's Not There*, and that became a worldwide hit. It wasn't easy, it was intense, but it happened quickly."

Further huge hits with The Zombies, which formed in 1962, included *Tell Her No* and *Time of the Season*. Their 1968 album, *Odessey and Oracle*, was ranked number 100 on Rolling Stone's list of the 500 Greatest Albums of All Time, and the band were inducted into the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame in 2019.

"When The Zombies finished in 1967 it was a very sad time for me, a difficult time too. I didn't know what to do. The music business is very up and down, and one of the first things musicians have to learn is getting thorough the troughs, everyone has them. From 1985 to the early 1990s nothing much was happening for me. I sang on commercials to keep my head above water."

Blunstone has had a very varied career, and as well as working with The Zombies and releasing 10 solo albums, with his celebrated uniquely silky and emotive vocal style in demand, he was guest vocalist on four albums by the Alan Parsons Project, singing hits like *Old and Wise*. He also sang on Dave Stewart's hit cover version of *What Becomes of the Brokenhearted*, and other artists he



The Zombies, photo by Alex Lake

has worked with include Manfred Mann, Mike Batt, Steve Hackett and even Sir John Betjeman and Mike Read. What has been the favourite period of his career?

"I think one of my favourite times was definitely the second incarnation of The Zombies, in 1999. It has been wonderful seeing that develop. Not singles so much, but the albums sold without the help of a major label. We went from playing the back of pubs to some of the largest festivals in the world, like Glastonbury and Isle of Wight, and many American festivals.

"I don't know why our music has endured so well. There's always a slight mystery why some music does endure, while other things don't do so well. The songwriting was so good with The Zombies - the song is so important, it's the cornerstone of every music career."

Does he prefer to play or listen to music?

"That's an interesting question. I love to play music. I don't like music just playing in the background, I'm very selective with what I listen to. But I do enjoy playing. I do like some new stuff but tend to go back to old favourites. I have a theory that you like best the music of your formative years, and for me that was people like Joni Mitchell and Jackson Brown. And Duncan Browne made some wonderful albums, as has Judie Tzuke. As for new stuff, there's a very good young singer Georgie Sweet - her album, *I Swear To You*, is fab."

With a career as long as his, Blunstone must have spent many weeks touring.

"I get into a routine when I'm touring. When you've been doing it a long time there is a routine to it. Not the performing, but getting up, travelling etcetera.

"There's an element of newness on each tour, but after two weeks you really do feel a strong of feeling of routine. It's all super fast, getting that machinery together again. But however long the tour is - two weeks or two months, at the end - the last week especially

- you get homesick."

Having worked in the music industry for so many years, there must have been profound changes.

"The music industry in the 1960s was always a mystery to me, and today it certainly is a complete mystery still. I've never understood it, really. Recording has changed out of recognition. We started with 4-track and now it's digital, for example.

"On one side that's good, but now with there being so many choices it makes it much more complicated and slower, and there is less spontaneity. The major labels aren't as powerful now, as so many people are doing it independently. And radio is not so powerful, as people listen online. But touring is much more important now as record sales earn far less. So you have to look at things in a different way. It's probably why concert tickets are a lot more expensive now, as artists don't have the record sales. You used to make an album and tour an album to promote it but it has gone into reverse - you make the album to promote the tour.

"When you have such a long career it is best to learn all sides of the business, learn about the publishing, recording and touring. It is important to get into sync work, such as commercials and films featuring your work."

Indeed, recent collaborations include *She's Not There* being featured on Chanel ads with Kiera Knightley, and *Time Of The Season* used on the trailer of the Guy Ritchie TV series, *The Gentlemen*.

"One thing that sticks in my mind is that it can be such a long career. When I started, the misconception was that it would last three or four years, but obviously a career can last a lifetime."

That's clearly the case here, and there's no signs of Blunstone beginning to peruse the retirement ads anytime soon.

Further information: colinblunstone.net, thezombiesmusic.com

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AT THE HEART OF GREENWICH SINCE 1979

PUBS

A guide to Blackheath and Greenwich pubs

Greenwich and Blackheath have a great selection of pubs, ranging from historic riverside taverns and charming traditional inns to unpretentious locals' pubs as well as stylish, contemporary bars offering very impressive food menus as well as a sizeable choice of drinks including craft beers, cocktails and wines. Here's a selection.

Greenwich

Coach and Horses

Situated right in the heart of central Greenwich in a corner of the market, this smart and welcoming pub has large sofas, a large open fireplace and outside seating area. A good range of beers on tap (it is a Youngs pub), a wine list and decent food menu including popular Sunday roasts and vegan specials. The pub was first recorded around 1780 and originally had stabling for horses, being a staging post for horse-drawn coaches heading to the Kent coast. It was rebuilt in the late Victorian era, with the current building retaining historic features and becoming locally listed for its architectural significance.

13 The Market, Greenwich, SE10 9HZ; 020 8293 0880; the-coach-and-horses.co.uk

Cutty Sark Tavern

Sat on the banks of the Thames at Ballast Quay, this long-established historic pub boasts a striking Georgian facade and wood-beamed interior. It has a cosy atmosphere, riverside views and a very pleasant outdoor seating area by the Thames. The menu has a good choice of dishes and the beers include a selection of cask ales. Welcoming guests to Greenwich for more than two hundred years, it is located along the Thames Path and is just a stone's throw from the iconic ship.

4-6 Ballast Quay, Greenwich, SE10 9PD; 020 8858 3146; cuttysarkse10.co.uk

Prince of Greenwich

Until 2010 known as the Prince Albert, this quirky Victorian pub is owned by a Sicilian family and serves Italian cuisine. It calls itself a museum pub due to the diverse collection of objects from around the world



The Cutty Sark, Greenwich



The Railway, Blackheath

displayed around its interior, anything from a barber's chair to a whalebone, a colourfully painted tinned fish to a fibreglass rhino's head.

72 Royal Hill, Greenwich, SE10 8RT; 07940 596381; theprinceofgreenwichpub.com

Richard I

This characterful, traditional dog-friendly locals' pub is Grade II listed and the building dates from the early eighteenth century. Located in a charming, quiet road of Greenwich centre, it has by many been known locally as The Tolly, from its previous life owned by Ipswich brewer Tollemache and Cobbold, at which time it was an off-licence as well. It has a sizeable heated beer garden, conservatory, good pub menu and Young's real ales.

52-54 Royal Hill, Greenwich, SE10 8RT; 020 8692 2996; richardthefirst.co.uk

The Pilot

Nestled within a lovely little Georgian terrace of eight cottages on Greenwich Peninsular – strikingly surrounded by the modern skyscrapers of North Greenwich – this cosy pub, dating from 1801, has surprisingly plush and funky rooms to stay in above its cosy and pleasant bar featuring exposed beams, nautical paintings, ship's wheels and the like. The adjacent cottages have quite a history, being artisan housing, built for workers at the nearby tidal mill and chemical works. They were featured in the famous video for *Park Life* by Blur and Damien Hirst lived in one for a while. Little more than a stone's throw from the O2 Arena, the pub has an attractive beer garden and offers traditional and contemporary British dishes and continental standards as well as Sunday

roasts and barbecues during the summer.

68 River Way, Greenwich, SE10 0BE; 020 8858 5910; pilotgreenwich.co.uk

Blackheath

The Crown

This Shepherd Neame pub has been a fixture of Blackheath Village since the 1740s. With a sizeable seating area out front, it has a restaurant on the first floor, regular quiz nights, live music and comedy, and a piano for weekly singalongs. It had a £750,000 makeover in 2024.

47-49 Tranquil Vale, London, SE3 0BS; 020 8852 0326; crownblackheath.co.uk

Hare and Billet

Overlooking a pretty and wildlife-rich village pond with some gorgeous Georgian houses as neighbours, this is probably Blackheath's quietest pub. Beers include examples from small London breweries, which you can



The Coach and Horses, Greenwich

PUBS

enjoy in the pub's huge garden in warmer months - Blackheath itself.

Hare And Billet Rd, London, SE3 0QJ; 020 8852 2352; hareandbillet.com

O'Neills

Situated in the heart of Blackheath Village, this is a relaxed chain pub with big-screen sport, live music and Irish-influenced food and drink menus.

52 Tranquil Vale, Blackheath, SE3 0BD; 020 8463 9230; oneills.co.uk

The Railway

A few steps from Blackheath Railway station, some years ago when pubs were more relaxed about under-age drinkers frequenting their establishments this pub was known locally as 'The Railway Children'. Dating back to the 1800s, it has a sleek if rather dark interior mixing a traditional wood-panelled interior with contemporary touches and has a good range of draught beers, varied food menu, a roof terrace and a part-covered small rear walled courtyard garden.

16 Blackheath Village, Blackheath, SE3 9LE; 020 8852 2390; therailwayblackheath.co.uk

Blackheath Standard

Royal Standard

Established in 1848, the Royal Standard, not far from Blackheath common, is dog-friendly. Mixing traditional wood-panelled with plush furnishings and contemporary touches, it has an inviting rear beer garden.



Royal Standard, Blackheath Standard

44 Vanbrugh Park, Blackheath, SE3 7JQ; 020 8858 1533; royalstandardblackheath.co.uk

Green Goddess

Relatively new to the area, and taking over what used to be the local Barclays Bank, this is not strictly a pub, but instead describes itself as an independent 'beer cafe and microbrewery.' Unsurprisingly, there's a good choice of little-known beers to explore, via keg wall taps for beer, cider and wine and handpumps for

cask ales. It has a rather rustic feel, with a wooden floor, wall of wood behind the bar, and a mishmash of different wooden tables and chairs, and big, bright and colourful lampshades with a plant theme to brighten things up. The bookshelf with books to borrow is a nice touch. It has beer tastings, food nights and other events, and is dog- and child-friendly.

43a Vanbrugh Park, Blackheath SE3 7AA; thegreengoddess.pub

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VENUES FOR HIRE

Discovering your community

BY DANIEL AARONS

It was four years ago that I felt something was missing: a sense of dislocation, and a little lonely. Beyond my personal experience, The Campaign to End Loneliness found that "Londoners are more likely than others in the UK to be affected by severe forms of loneliness – 700,000 of them feel lonely 'most' or 'all of the time'". So we are not alone in feeling alone.

Realising that a shift was necessary, I made what felt like a brave step to join Camberwell Community Choir and I'm so glad I did. I found my voice, discovered I could sing, and realised how good it feels to use this instrument we all have, harmonising with a group. Bolstered by that experience, yet having never acted before, I took the scary decision to sign up to the Dulwich Players, a local amateur dramatics group. By the end of that day, I'd somehow been cast as Mr Bingley in *Pride and Prejudice*. It unleashed creativity & confidence that I didn't believe I had, as well as built lasting relationships. And the feeling of walking on stage for the first time with fellow cast members yields a natural high that is hard to describe.

I discovered how important community and connection is - we need it and if we look it's right on our doorstep. We spend so much time online (more than six hours per day on average), yet a screen can never truly replace the feeling of meeting up, collaborating, or celebrating in a great local space. Think about what fulfils you in your neighbourhood; the weekly yoga class, kid's club, support group or the big family birthday party. These community gatherings are the glue that binds us. And there's a personal benefit too - according to BUPA, people who are part of a team or club are 24% more likely to report that they are happy.

But here's the catch: while the desire to meet is strong, the logistics often hold us back. My curiosity and conversations in the community revealed how difficult it is for local groups and clubs to find suitable venues for



Greenwich Borough Hall

whatever their passion is. It's a frustrating, time-consuming effort, searching multiple websites and playing phone tennis just to confirm basic availability.

Meanwhile, venue hosts - often volunteer community leaders - struggle with the equally complex tasks of manually managing calendars, chasing guests for payment, and establishing trust with new hirers.

This administrative load takes volunteers away from their core work and, critically, makes it harder for vital local spaces to generate the income they need to stay open. Indeed, the rate of closure of community spaces has outstripped opening in London between 2018 and 2023.

This disconnect - between the strong desire to meet and the practical challenges - inspired the creation of my

business, Conveenie.

We designed Conveenie as a simple tool built to help local life happen. For anyone trying to find a space in southeast London, you need the right capacity, right facilities, right time, and the right price. The platform lets you filter by all these things, so you can book and pay instantly, making the entire experience easier and faster.

For the venues themselves, Conveenie handles the heavy lifting: secure payments, calendar availability, promotion and more. This saves time on admin so hosts can focus on the activities that have real value. And by allowing community assets to easily monetise their spare capacity, the platform helps them generate the reliable income needed to keep the doors open and continue serving the neighbourhood.

In Greenwich, the stunning Art Deco Borough Hall uses the platform to make its space easily available for everything from dance festivals to major community gatherings.

Closer to the heath, the Blackheath Cadet Training Centre, for example, offer a huge hall and well-equipped rooms, perfect for performances, training or courses.

Ultimately, our work is dedicated to making real-life connection simple and achievable. Conveenie is a connection facilitator that ensures local groups can easily meet, learn, and collaborate.

By simplifying the administrative tasks, we're ensuring that the local gathering spots that gave me, and countless others, such a sense of belonging, continue to thrive. That is the heart of our mission: connecting communities in the local spaces that matter most.

Conveenie: 07532 022646; conveenie.com



Blackheath Cadet Training Centre



A Turkish delight

With 18 eateries and bars, 12 pool options, an aquapark, live entertainment and much more, you'll not want to leave this luxurious all-inclusive beachside hotel

Many all-inclusive hotels cater for holidaying on a budget: however the Sherwood Exclusive Kemer, as suggested by its name, offers a more lavish experience.

With 492 rooms, the resort is big, but thankfully the buildings are low-rise, framed by pine trees and swaying bougainvillea.

Location

Sherwood Exclusive Kemer has a spectacular beachfront location, sandwiched between the dramatic Taurus Mountains and the glistening Mediterranean. Located in Goynuk, just outside Antalya, the hotel has a private beach, lined with loungers and cabanas.

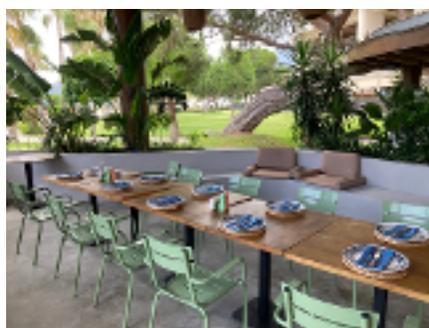


Though it feels secluded, it is just 350 metres from the nearest shops and 6 kilometres from Kemer centre with its nightclubs, restaurants and bars.

It serves as a great base for exploring the region, and a great excursion is the Olympus cable car in Olympus Beydağları National Park, which whisks you to the peak of Mount Olympus (also known as Tahtalı Dağı) at an altitude of 2,365 metres. There's a cafe at the top, allowing you to stay a while and savour the wonderful views, and for an added thrill, you can paraglide through the clouds back down.

The extensive Greco-Roman ruins of Phaselis and the perpetual gas fires emitted by the mythical Yanartaş rock formation are further sites to discover in the area.

However, the sheer range of facilities at this upmarket resort a 75-minute drive from Antalya Airport and a four-hour drive from Dalaman Airport is impressive to say the



least and it's possible you won't want to leave the complex at all.

Hit the beach and pools

The hotel has a number of swimming pools including freshwater, adult-only and kids' pools, plus an aqua park for guests of all ages, with six pools and six waterslides for adults and three waterslides for children.

If that wasn't enough, there's a private 450m sand and pebbled beach complete with sun beds and cabanas. So it is easy to find your perfect spot, whether travelling with family, as a couple, or solo. There's a range of water sports available too.

What are the rooms like?

Rooms are bright, spacious, unfussy and decorated in neutral tones and some have direct pool access. There are a number of room options to choose from, including family rooms and suites, and features may include a sea or garden view, hardwood floors, king-sized beds, rainfall showers, smart TV and capsule coffee machine, depending on which room type you opt for.

Fab food and drink options

For a large resort like this, it is not surprising that there are plenty of bars and restaurants to choose from. There's a huge choice of both Turkish and world cuisine at Fusions buffet restaurant, or you can opt for Turkish a la carte at Turquoise; for Italian there's Basilico and seafood specialities at Mama Cocha.



Laid back Indigo Gusto features Mediterranean dishes in a delightful al fresco setting, and as well as further restaurants there are also snack bars, an ice cream parlour, waffle shop, patisserie and street food.

Added to this are the pool bars, beach bars and lounge bars to choose from. While not everything is included in the all-inclusive deal, the overall range and quality of the food here is very high.

Children's facilities

Of course, children are well served at the resort, and as well as the dedicated children's pools and aqua park facilities and kid's buffets, there is also a children's club



for 4 to 12 years, offering arts and crafts, small team games, sports, movie nights, water-based, story time and drama and music. There is a children's playground with slides, swings and an adventure play area, and indoor play area and TV and movie area.

Sports and wellness

You're guaranteed to return home completely revived with all the sport and wellness facilities available at Sherwood Exclusive Kemer. There's an air-conditioned gym with an aerobic studio, cardio fitness training equipment, free weights and more.

The spa includes a Turkish bath, sauna, steam room and whirlpool, with massage treatments available, while sports enthusiasts can choose between aeroball, aerobics, aqua aerobics, badminton, basketball, dance classes, darts, pilates, table tennis, tennis, volleyball and yoga. There is bicycle hire and an on-site hairdressers too.

Entertainment

As well as racquet and team sports, small team games and water-based activities during the day, when evening comes there's a further array of options: live DJs, karaoke, live music, shows and cabaret, quizzes and discos all beckon when the sun goes down.

The verdict

Sherwood Exclusive Kemer has plenty for everyone, whether you're a family with toddlers or teenagers in tow, travelling solo, as a group of friends or a couple.

It's a place you can party to late, singing along to the live music and ordering a cocktail from the supremely slick bar staff; try a different cuisine each night at the different restaurants, try out all the pools, lounge by the sea or just get a bit of quiet time in your room.

Whatever you plan to do, you won't want to leave!

Sherwood Exclusive Kemer:
sherwoodhotels.com.tr/sherwood-exclusive-kemer

RECIPE

Green Thai Curry Vegetable Soup

BY MEGAN JONES

This hearty soup with a twist offers both comfort and freshness, perfect for autumn and winter.

Roast seasonal vegetables with green Thai curry paste, then blend with soy sauce and stock for layered flavours that pack a real punch. Blitz through a cold slab of butter at the end for a lovely silky-smooth texture, and finish with a simple coriander oil for a fragrant lift and pop of colour.

Makes 2-3 portions

Ingredients

FOR THE SOUP

- 1 small or ½ large sweet potato
- 2 carrots
- 2 parsnips
- 1 tbsp olive or veg oil
- 1 heaped tbsp green Thai curry paste
- A good pinch of salt
- 600ml veg stock
- 1 tsp soy sauce
- 1 tsp rice wine vinegar

A small knob of cold butter

FOR THE CORIANDER OIL

- A small handful of coriander
- 60ml olive oil (or enough to just submerge the coriander)
- A small pinch of salt

Method

Preheat the oven to 180 degrees fan. Peel and chop sweet potato, carrot and parsnip into bite-sized pieces.

Add the vegetables to a baking tray and toss with oil and the curry paste. Roast for 35-40 minutes until slightly golden and soft.

Tip the roasted vegetables into a large saucepan and add the stock, soy, and vinegar. Blitz with a hand blender until mostly smooth, then add a knob of cold butter and blitz again. If needed, gently reheat over the hob and season to taste.

For the coriander oil, blitz all the ingredients together until you have a loose, chunky consistency, then drizzle over the soup. Garnish with extra fresh coriander.



Meg is a recipe developer based in Eltham, known for creating accessible and unique recipes for adventurous home cooks. Her dishes focus on seasonal produce with creative twists and global influences. After living in Singapore and travelling around Southeast Asia whilst at university, Meg felt inspired to bring these flavours back to her home cooking in the UK. Her Instagram page is @gourmet_meg. Since leaving a career in law to pursue working in food, Meg has collaborated with various well-known brands, developing, styling and shooting recipes. When not in the kitchen, Meg can be found walking her labradoodle around Oxleas Wood or eating her way around London with her friends and fiancé.

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8 questions for Aswad's Tony 'Gad' Robinson

BY BEN WEST

Aswad is one of Britain's most successful reggae bands, in terms of both popularity and longevity. Some hail their early material as the greatest roots reggae Britain ever produced, beginning with their 1975 self-titled debut, which highlighted the plight of the immigrant Jamaican in the unfamiliar and often hostile environment of 1970s London.

During this early period in the band's history they were distinctly different from Jamaican reggae acts, in that they wrote songs that dealt with the issues surrounding the experiences of black youths growing-up in the UK.

Others find their later pop-crossover phase more distinctive, when they shifted to funk and soul, resulting in the U.K. chart-topper *Don't Turn Around* as well as other hits. Aswad, which means 'black' in Arabic, have released a total of 21 albums, and are three time Grammy Award nominees. The band has also collaborated with a variety of other artists, including Sting, Burning Spear and each of the ex-Wailers.

Former members include the actor and musician Brinsley Forde and the late Angus 'Drummie Zeb' Gaye, who died aged 62 in 2022.

I caught up with vocalist, bassist and keyboardist Tony 'Gad' Robinson, who has been with the band since 1976.

What do you prefer - playing music or listening to music?

I've never been asked that question. It's a good question actually. Wow, I'm not sure really. I love listening because I've always listened to music but then I enjoy playing music. That's what keeps me going. As a



Tony 'Gad' Robinson, Ben West

band we've always enjoyed playing live. When we started as a live band, before we were able to record, before we had a record deal, playing music was what kept us going. So if I had to answer that question then it would be playing music - but then I love listening to music as well.

What have been your career high points?

I suppose one of the highest points has to be meeting Nelson Mandela at Wembley Stadium, and then I suppose having a number one hit. Reaching number one proved to my mum and dad - who had told me in the beginning that there was no career in music - that a musical career was possible.

What did they want you to do?

My mum wanted me to be the general thing parents aspire to: a doctor, lawyer or something of that kind.

Did you struggle with that in the early days?

No, I didn't. I knew I wanted to play music. But then, when I left school it was like, well, you gotta go and find a job. So I did go out and find a job, I had a job for about two years, and then I had some problem down in the West End, in the early days of Sus

[The 'Sus law' was an informal term for a former British law based on the 1824 Vagrancy Act allowing police to stop, search, and arrest people suspected of loitering with the intent to commit a crime. The law was controversial and heavily criticised for its disproportionate use against Black people and was repealed in 1981 after public outcry and protests.]

After that I just decided that I didn't need to go to the West End, where I was working at the time, and I just put my head into music fully.

How has the music interest industry changed over the years?

My career has been nearly 50 years, and it's changed immensely. You must remember we didn't talk about computers, there was no iPhone, there was no YouTube, there was no social media, that didn't exist. Our social media was magazines and newspapers and radio stations, so that's how we grew up.

I don't know how many people remember Napster, but Napster was like one of the very first things that came to try and change what was going on. And now when you look at the music business, it's basically in this five point five inches by two inches block that the whole world looks into, and you have to have this in your hand because if you don't have this, you almost don't connect to the world.

What has been the lowest point in your career?

I suppose one of the lowest points is me losing my best friend, Angus Gaye, who sang *Don't Turn Around*, because that's just something that I never thought could happen, but it did.

What advice would you give to young people

joining the music industry?

Make sure it is what you want to do. It's not just about money, for us it was the love of doing it, and that's what kept us going. I understand if you have a career then you expect to be able to live off it as well, but the musicians of old got into music because it was something that they loved. But if you've been in the business as long as we have, you know it's never a constant up.

You'll be flavour of the month one day and then six months later you're not, and then you find something that brings you back up again. If you have a hit today, it might take another six years before you have another hit - if you last that long.



Aswad in 2011 photo copyright DZ Studios Photograph Wikimedia Commons

Do you like touring?

We love playing to people. And the audiences really vary around the world. For example the first time we went to Japan when the first song was finished there was no applause from the audience. It was just like a kind of polite nod of the head, and it wasn't basically until we finished the whole set that we actually got applause, because that's how they do it. Now it's changed, I suppose because of TV letting people seeing how people react to music around the world. The last time we played in Japan, the applause came just like everywhere else.

Further information: officialaswad.co.uk

DAYS OUT

A Great Free Family Day Out in East London

For a great family day out - completely for free - head to east London. Only a small stroll separates a couple of great museums, a park and city farm.

There's stacks of toy nostalgia by the pram-load at Bethnal Green, at the **Young V&A** (Cambridge Heath Road, E2 9PA; 020 8983 5200; open daily 10am-5.45 pm; vam.ac.uk/young). Formally the V&A Museum of Childhood, a branch of the Victoria and Albert Museum, the UK's national museum of applied arts, a major revamp in 2023 has transformed it from what was always a great museum into a treasure trove of exhibits, events and activities to stimulate creativity, curiosity and ingenuity for visitors. Some exhibitions have an admission charge.



It is just a short walk to another excellent free museum, **The Museum of the Home** (136 Kingsland Road, E2 8EA; 020 7739 9893; open Tues-Sun and bank holiday Mons

10am-5pm; museumofthehome.org.uk). It contains fascinating reconstructed room displays showing homes from before 1600 to the present. Formally known as the Geffrye Museum, it had a major refurbishment and reopened in 2021 with considerably more exhibition space. It also has temporary exhibitions, art installations, guided tours, and events including workshops, family fun days, film screenings and performances.



Between these museums you can stroll around **Haggerston Park** (Yorkton Street, E2 8NH; hackney.gov.uk/haggerston-park). Facilities include a children's play area, football pitch and a BMX track.

Adjoining the park is **Hackney City Farm** (la Goldsmith's Row, E2; 020 7729 6381; open Tues-Sun 10am-4.30pm; hackneycityfarm.co.uk). Residents include pigs, calves, goats, sheep, a donkey, ducks, chickens, rabbits and other small animals and birds.

If you go on a Sunday, wander around



nearby **Columbia Road Flower Market** (columbiaroad.info). As well as its famous flower market from 8am to 3pm, where the road is packed with endless plants and punters, and stallholders all shouting out their wares and competing ferociously with each other, it has around 60 independent shops selling anything from antiques to vintage clothes and artworks, jewellery and gardening goods - a window shopper's delight.



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Making more of your home

Common challenges and hidden opportunities when extending your home

BY SOPHIE MCMANUS

With strong communities, great schools, green spaces and a lively social scene, Greenwich and the surrounding areas have so much to offer. It's no wonder so many of us hesitate to move further afield just to find a bit more space - and instead start thinking about how to make the most of the homes we already have.

Home improvement projects are exciting - but when balanced with everyday life, they can also feel daunting. As with any major purchase, you can't make the right choices without first understanding what you really want and need. Rush into decisions, and it's easy to overspend or miss out on what would suit you best.

Here's how to make the most of your budget - and your home - to help it reach its full potential.

Challenge 1: build a design brief, live your refurbishment

Most people can't afford to renovate their whole house at once, and that's completely normal. The question I'm most often asked is: "How big an extension could we do?"

The best starting point is to think about your home as a whole, not just the area you want to extend. I begin by helping clients look at how they use their home now, what doesn't work, and how their needs might change. By investing in an early design stage that considers the whole property, you can find clever ways to make better use of what's already there. Sometimes rethinking layouts, storage or light achieves more than simply building bigger.

Ask your designer about split-stage fees - this lets you plan ahead without paying for everything upfront. Also, request your drawings in a reusable digital format (CAD files) so you can pick up later phases easily when your budget or timing allows.

A long-term approach helps you develop your design style, understand how that translates into the details and finishes you love, and plan your renovation in manageable, affordable stages.

Challenge 2: navigating planning permission and regulation

Planning permission can seem confusing at first. Each council has its own guidance, known as Supplementary Planning Guidance (SPG), which outlines what types of designs are likely to be approved - such as roof shapes, materials and how far you can extend. Working with someone who can interpret this information and design with a planning strategy in mind from the start can save time and money. It means fewer surprises, fewer re-submissions and a smoother process overall.



Planning rules aren't there to stop you improving your home, they exist to protect the character of our streets and encourage sustainable design. Good design finds opportunity within those limits. With the right approach, what might first seem like a planning obstacle can often lead to a more thoughtful, creative solution that feels right for both the house and the people living in it.

Challenge 3: budget and sustainability

Making the most of what already exists is one of the most sustainable choices you can make. Reusing and upgrading what you have reduces waste, saves resources and keeps costs down.

Good design also focuses on practical details: reusing plumbing routes, using standard material sizes, and designing around what's already there to reduce waste and save time. Sustainability doesn't have to mean compromise or extra cost. Often, the simplest choices - reusing materials, choosing natural finishes, or designing for flexibility - have the biggest long-term benefit.

A 'fabric first' approach means improving your home's structure before adding new technology. Better insulation, airtight construction and proper ventilation all help keep your home warm in winter and cool in summer. These steps reduce damp, lower energy bills and make your home more comfortable. Planning with sustainability in mind now means your home will meet future

expectations too.

Challenge 4: keep it friendly, keep it formal

Anyone who's lived through a building project will know that surprises can crop up - hidden defects, buried pipework, uneven surfaces. These can cause delays and quickly eat into your budget.

That's why clear communication, good documentation and professional guidance matter. An architect is well placed to guide you through the process, explain the jargon, and help manage risks.

Lets delve into a few of these:

Commission early cost estimates to understand realistic budgets. Ask your engineer for cost-saving ideas and get detailed quotes from reputable builders, not vague estimates. Use a proper construction contract, and make sure your design drawings are complete before work begins - late changes can be expensive.

If you plan to stay in your home during the build, agree a clear site plan for safety and comfort.

Sort out Party Wall Notices, Planning Condition approvals and Building Control sign-offs before starting - these can take time, and delays can be costly. Also, check practical matters early: where your gas meter is, whether your fuse board needs upgrading, or if your drainage layout will

PROPERTY

need altering. Sorting these out in advance prevents expensive hold-ups later.

Challenge 5: but then, who?

In the UK, you don't have to hire an architect to build or extend your home - but working with one often saves money and stress in the long run. Larger firms usually take on high-value projects, but smaller practices (like mine) often offer flexible, affordable services that suit homeowners better.

You'll also see design services offered by builders or technicians. Some are excellent, but not all are properly regulated. If you choose this route, check references, review recent work and confirm they have insurance and a solid financial record.

Architects are legally regulated professionals. We're required to meet strict standards and provide proper contracts, giving you extra security and peace of mind throughout your project.

The key takeaways

Taking the time to plan properly gives you the freedom to enjoy the process - and the confidence that your choices will stand the test of time.

Engage an architect early to explore options before committing to big decisions - this step can be surprisingly low-cost and reveal opportunities you might not have considered.

Think long-term and creatively. Not every space needs to be open plan, and not every room needs to serve one purpose. In past projects, we've had dining rooms with feature doors double as a study or guest room, and moved laundry facilities upstairs to make daily life easier. Flexible, well-designed layouts adapt as your family grows and your needs change.

Finally, simplify where you can. Let your



builder handle the glazing order, allow your kitchen supplier to fit the worktop, and appoint someone to oversee everything from start to finish. Having an architect coordinate the details keeps your project running smoothly, on time and true to the design you invested in.

In the end

Extending or refurbishing your home isn't only about adding more space - it's about rethinking how that space supports your life. With the right strategy and the right team, every challenge can become an opportunity for a more comfortable, efficient and

enjoyable home. There's no single guidebook that covers it all - but my blog is slowly becoming one.

Visit SM Architecture's blog for practical guides, planning advice and real project examples, or get in touch to chat about how our flexible, fixed-fee services can support your next home project.

Sophie McManus is founder of SM Architecture, a Greenwich-based practice specialising in thoughtful residential design

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LOCAL LANDMARKS

Angerstein's beautiful villa

A look at a Blackheath gem, Woodlands

BY DR MARY MILLS

There is more than one place in Greenwich called Woodlands, and the one I am going to write about here is in Westcombe Park and adjacent to Mycenae House, the local community centre. Woodlands was the original house on the site, and today it is occupied by the Greenwich Steiner School.

We have so many beautiful old houses in the Greenwich borough and anywhere else Woodlands would be a star attraction. It's a listed 'Georgian villa' designed by George Gibson on a site described as 'uncommonly beautiful.'

It was built for John Julius Angerstein in 1776. He was an immensely rich City businessman closely involved with the development of Lloyds of London. He may have been the son of a wealthy German family living in Russia, or he may have been the secret child of the Empress of Russia and a British banker - who knows? He was also an art collector and Woodlands was designed to house some of his collection. When he died his pictures became the basis of what is now the National Gallery.

We know of the links many City businessmen had to Afro-Caribbean slavery and Angerstein is no exception. I am aware that the National Gallery has commissioned a vast amount of research on his role in this - and like everything with Angerstein it is much more complicated than it would appear. A page on their website outlines his links both in the business world and that of marine insurance, as well as his involvement in philanthropic work among the 'black poor' and the development of Sierra Leone.

After John Julius's death his family remained at Woodlands and many of the things we have today named for the family was the work of his son, John. This includes the Angerstein Railway: people might remember the problems last year when the railways tried to close the little foot crossing over the line.

Later the house was sold and was passed through a variety of occupants. After the Great War the house became a nunnery



-The Little Sisters of the Assumption. They built the other big house on the site - the one which is now the community centre. In the basement walls are little niches for candles and holy water. In the mid-1960s the nuns moved out and the local community centre on Shooters Hill Road was demolished to make way for the dual carriageway. So Greenwich Council bought the two houses - designating the more recent building as the new community centre.

Once Woodlands was owned by the council, the ground floor became an art gallery, and for a long time it was very successful. However, years of austerity and funding cuts led to its closure. Upstairs was the local history library and archive.

In 2003 the archive was moved out of Woodlands down to the Arsenal site to be part of a borough museum, and then transferred to the Greenwich Heritage Trust. It then closed down because the buildings were wanted for a theatre. There is some

archive access - but very, very limited - and with no means of browsing.

It is difficult to remember just how good a resource the library at Woodlands was. Over the years I visited many local borough archives and they are very mixed, from the interested and competent to the resentful and unhelpful. I always said that 'Woodlands' was easily the best in London.

Since 1998 I've published eight books - all, except one, self published - and five of them are on the industrial history of Greenwich. Another book, on Deptford Creek, is nearly finished. Without that research resource Woodlands provided, writing them wouldn't have been possible. The staff there were terrific. Naming names is a bad idea - they were all great. I would, however, like to remember the late Barbara Ludlow. She had started to research the past of the Greenwich Peninsula and I hope I have been able to successfully continue her work.

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Why you should visit the dentist and hygienist for prevention

We all know that dreaded feeling when you suddenly get a toothache or notice your gums aren't looking quite right. But did you know that regular trips to the dentist and hygienist can help you avoid those painful, costly, and often inconvenient visits later on? Here's why making prevention a priority can save you time, money, and a whole lot of discomfort.

1. Less pain, more comfort

Preventative dental care helps spot potential problems before they turn into something serious. Early treatment means fewer fillings, less need for root canals, and most importantly, less pain. Let's face it - no one wants to be stuck in a dentist's chair, however Sparkly and surrounded by art for hours, when a quick, simple check-up could have spared you all the hassle.

2. Keep your teeth for life

Regular check-ups and cleanings help keep your teeth strong and healthy for years to come. Who doesn't want to keep their natural smile? A proactive approach means your teeth have a better chance of lasting for the long haul, so you can enjoy all the crunchy apples and occasional chewy toffees you like without worrying about your smile.

3. No time off work

Life is busy, and taking time off work for a dental emergency can be a real inconvenience. By seeing a dentist regularly, you're much more likely to avoid

time-consuming treatments down the road. It's far easier to pop into Sparklysmile's office for a quick check-up or hygiene appointment than to take a day off for something that could have been prevented.

4. Prevent wobbly teeth

Gum disease is one of the most common causes of tooth loss, but it's also one of the most preventable. Regular visits to Sparklysmile allow them to spot early signs of gum disease and treat it before it becomes a serious issue. With proper care, you'll be able to keep your teeth solid and secure for years to come.

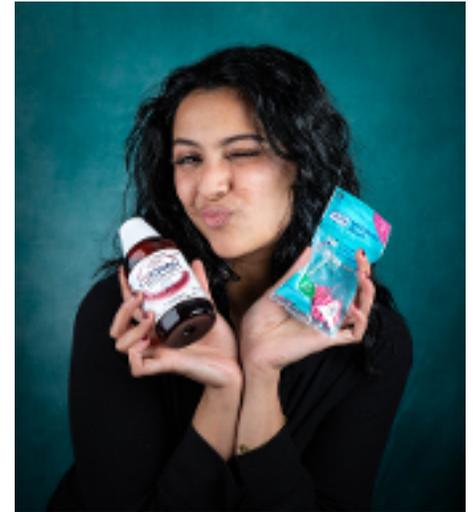
5. Cost-effective care

Think of preventative visits as an investment. The cost of a regular clean and check-up is far less than dealing with the expenses of filling cavities, dealing with root infections, or needing more intensive treatments. By maintaining good oral health now, you save money in the long run.

6. Kissable fresh breath

Nobody likes worrying about bad breath, but regular visits to the hygienists can help you keep your breath fresh and pleasant. Professional cleanings remove plaque and tartar that can cause bad breath, leaving your mouth feeling clean and refreshed.

Sparklysmile in Blackheath believe in a gentle, compassionate approach to dental care. Their kind and caring hygienists make your visits



comfortable and stress-free. Whether you need a routine check-up or just a quick clean-up, they will make sure your smile stays healthy, vibrant, and ready for anything. Don't wait until you're in pain—call today and schedule your preventative visit.

SparklySmile
19 Montpelier Vale, Blackheath SE3 0TA
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A promotional poster for a trek of the Great Wall of China. The background is a photograph of the Great Wall winding across a green, hilly landscape under a clear blue sky. The Great Wall is made of grey stone and has several watchtowers. In the top left corner, there is an orange banner with the text 'COMMUNITY HOSPICE' in white, and below it, 'For the people of Greenwich & Bexley' in purple. In the top right corner, there is a circular logo for 'The Different Travel Company' with '20 YEARS' at the top and 'OF ADVENTURES' at the bottom. The main text in the center reads 'TREK GREAT WALL OF CHINA' in large white letters, followed by '13-21 OCTOBER 2026' in smaller white letters. At the bottom, there is an orange banner with the text 'WALK AN ANCIENT WONDER IN SUPPORT OF YOUR LOCAL HOSPICE' in white, and 'Please contact us to find out more' in purple. Below that, the contact information is listed: 't: 020 8319 9230 | e: events@gbch.org.uk' and 'w: communityhospice.org.uk/GWC'. In the bottom left corner, there is a logo for 'FR' (Fundraising Regulator) with the text 'Registered with FUNDRAISING REGULATOR'. In the bottom right corner, there is the text 'Reg Charity No 1017406'.

Did you know?

More than 600 houses had to be demolished, including one reputedly once owned by Sir Walter Raleigh, in building the first of the two Blackwall Tunnels, which opened in 1897. The other tunnel opened in 1967.



So many rock bands have been photographed in the Greenwich foot tunnel that it has become something of a cliché. Check out Jools Holland's entertaining film *Walking to New Orleans* currently on BBC iPlayer and also on YouTube. Filmed in 1985, the first few minutes feature the tunnel, as well as Paula Yates, Sting, Robbie Coltrane and Gilson Lavis, with appearances later on by Dr John, Rik Mayall, Stephen Fry, Stanley Unwin and others.

When the West India Docks opened in 1802 they were seen as Britain's greatest civil engineering structure to date.

Canary Wharf station is longer, at 265 metres, than the Canary Wharf tower, One Canada Square, is tall (244 metres).



Greenwich Park was Britain's first park to be enclosed, in 1433. It became a royal park in 1427 when Henry V's brother, the Duke of Gloucester, inherited it, and it remains a royal park to this day.



The O2 Arena/Millennium Dome's dimensions and structure reflect Greenwich's connection with the measurement of time, being 365 metres in diameter, 52 metres high in the middle, and having 12 supporting poles, symbolising days, weeks and months of the year.

In the late 1500s the port of London was heaving with activity and in 1620 Docklands was the point of departure for the Mayflower, which took the Pilgrims to America.

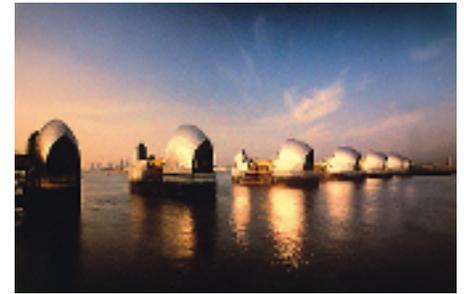
Seven men died in the six years it took to build the first of the two Blackwall Tunnels.

For some years the O2 Arena, aka the Millennium Dome, was both the largest dome in the world and the largest single-roofed structure in the world. However it has now been surpassed in size overall by structures such as the Singapore National Stadium. However, it is still the largest of its cable-suspended type.

The first golf club in England was founded at Blackheath by James I in 1608 while Blackheath Hockey Club, founded in 1861, is the oldest Hockey Club in the world.

A number of houses in Dulwich built after 1913 have a clause in the title deeds attached reserving the right for the landlord (the Dulwich Estate) to tunnel beneath the property in order to establish an underground railway service. At that time plans were mooted for a new tube line, however the First World War caused the

scheme to be shelved.



The Thames Barrier's design is based on gas cooker taps. It is a major local employer, having around 80 members of staff running it. Closing it is not quick - it takes around 90 minutes. It is very much needed: it protects a large expanse of land across London and is said to help protect up to 48 square miles of the capital.

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"My life is so much easier since Hayley calmed the chaos. I recommended her so much, her presence always will bring order to any space, let alone her super power of re-organising the family, she won't disappoint!"
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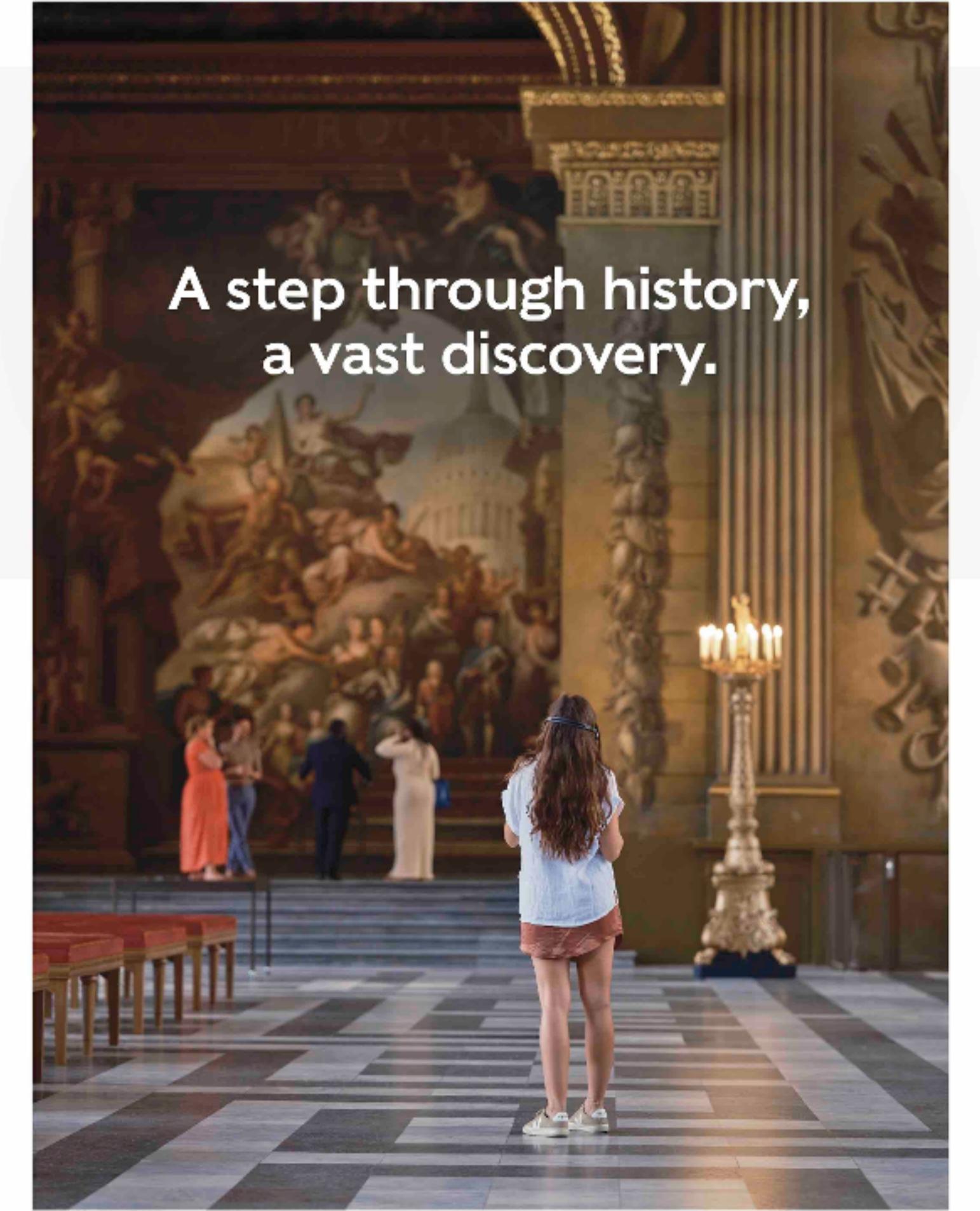
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