

Message from the St John's Chair - Litsa Breingan

Hello! My name is Litsa and I took over as Chair of SJS in February 2019. Despite pandemic, lockdown and anything else you could throw at us, the St John's Committee continue to work hard to bring some colour and joy into our lives, as well as supporting the less fortunate, where we can.

You can **get in touch** with me anytime directly here: chair@st-johns-soc.org

Along with those featured in this newsletter, here are some of our achievements in the last few years:

- Greening Fund applied and got for St John's Garden. And we are supporting Friendly Gardens to do the same.
- Supporting local groups, like Florence Rd Resident's Group.
- Supporting our local food banks (Kath's Place and St John's Church)
- Setting up Station user Group with MP, Vicky Foxcroft, as Chair with a focus on improving accessibility
- Taking part in The Brockley Society Front Garden Sale
- Supporting the campaign to keep Wavelengths Pool open

We have many more ideas and plans but most importantly **we would like to hear your plans and ideas.**

It has been a great pleasure working with such a skilled and talented committee and meeting so many positive residents who share my enthusiasm for living in such a wonderful area with wonderful residents.



The logo takes inspiration from the mural on our bridge & traditional street signage

This newsletter is sponsored by Source the Area which is a pioneer search engine to aid the masses in choosing the right location to live in. The site was founded in 2019 to fill a gap in the market and provide potential homeowners with the reliable information they need to make a decision about their next local neighbourhood.



Source the Area

<http://www.sourcethearea.co.uk>

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You are getting this through your letterbox or in your inbox because you live in St John's. And as someone who lives in this area you are an automatic part of **The St John's Society**. Lucky you! Open to anyone (from the age of 14 upwards) we get together every few months to work out ways to make our area better, easier, more beautiful, safer, more ecological & also fun for us all.

Once a year we normally get together at the pub to talk about what happened last year and what we want to focus on this year. For now we are keeping it on zoom as there is a lot of illness about.

**Join our Annual General Meeting to have your say
8pm on 13th of February 2023
Zoom 99734759528 or press here**



What lies ahead for St John's Society in 2023?

- **Street Party** - We will be applying for permission and funding for another street party. If you would like to be a part of this please do get in touch chair@st-johns-soc.org
- **Monthly litter picks** will start again in April, supported by Lewisham council to supplement the weekly street cleaning which is a huge undertaking for just one, excellent, person.

What is St John's Society?

Find out more on our website - <https://st-johns-soc.org/>

Instagram - @stjohnsse8

Twitter - @stjohnsse8

Facebook - thestjohnssociety

Sign up to our (very infrequent) email list: <https://st-johns-soc.org/#contactus>



What did we do in 2022?



Street Party - A snapshot of Cliff Terrace on 5th June on the amazing Jubilee weekend. Extraordinarily generous spirit from all who came. What a lucky community we are, to have each other. St John's Society worked with newly elected local councillor Ayesha Lahai-Taylor to devise and then apply for permission for a street party. We hope to do another one in 2023.



St John's Society mentioned in parliamentary proceedings

After working with our local councillors and MP to challenge changes in Southeastern Rail's timetable MP Vicky Foxcroft mentioned our campaign in parliament in December 2022. St John's Society will continue to seek a better timetable, access and services from SE Rail in 2023.

Greening St John's

The sub-committee formed to focus on **Greening** has been doing extraordinary work. In May 2022 we declared a climate emergency. St. John's believe that local communities will need to embrace a green agenda in order to thrive.

GREENING CONVERSATIONS - our free monthly talks with brilliant guest speakers at The Brookmill pub have been going brilliantly. We have three more to come, first Monday of every month at 8pm. All welcome.

- **6th Feb** - Trees. Everyone loves trees don't they? But they are disappearing from our streets.
 - **6th March** - Community and cohesion
 - **3rd April** - Pride of place.
- Speakers announced fortnight ahead of each.

RAIN GARDENS

Thornville Street Rain Garden

- In May 2022, the St. John's Society successfully bid for £10K from Thames Water to convert part of Thornville Street into a rain garden. This 'grey to green' project is one of many they are looking to deliver to ease pressure on the sewer system.



We are currently working with Thames Water and Lewisham Council to complete design and hope to build it in the spring! Find out more at <https://stjohns-soc.org/rain-garden>. The plan is that this pilot project will lead the way forward for many more rain gardens and associated greening initiatives within St. John's.

Christine Bewick-Cronin of Friends of Friendly gardens:

During 2022 we had the wall by the old paddling pool rebuilt, work has also started on removing the wall by the table tennis table to discourage people gathering behind it at night. We're still hopeful that during 2023 we will get written approval from Thames Water re:drinking water fountains in both play and dog parks as well as picnic tables and benches in the play park. A raised bed planter has been installed by the entrance on Friendly Street and planting will commence soon with spring bulbs and herbs. Also 18 June 2023 is International Picnic Day as well as Fathers Day and we are aiming to hold a community picnic in the play park, where all are welcome, bring your own food, blankets and music, make new friends enjoy a free day hopefully in the sunshine. **Get in touch** friendsoffriendly@gmail.com or on social media.



Borough of Culture - We applied for and gained a Borough of Culture grant. Trashy Happy Times, run by local artist Alma Tischlerwood, supported by Claire Hallam, created art out of rubbish and educated dozens of children along the way.

Join our Annual
General Meeting
8pm on Zoom 13th
of February 2023
Zoom:
99734759528



Fly tipping & anti-social behaviour

Residents should continue log concerns on the **Love Clean Streets app**, that will lead to them being cleared away. But if you want the council to investigate whodunnit do please also report it to:

envirocrime.enforcement@lewisham.gov.uk

The best way to do this is to send time stamped photographs of any bagged or boxed fly tipping along with evidence of anything that may contain details of the perpetrator.

Any further concerns about **anti-social behaviour** need to be reported to CER@lewisham.gov.uk and/or licensing@lewisham.gov.uk.

TREES

The St. John's Society provided support for a successful crowdfunding by St John's residents, of £1,050, to plant three new street trees on Albyn Road: one to replace the beautiful old cherry tree on the corner of Albyn Road and St John's Vale that was felled by the storm in February 2022. On Friday 22nd April, the 1st New Cross Scouts, Glendale and the St John's Society combined to plant three young trees in St John's Garden, from a selection donated by the Queen's Platinum Jubilee Fund.

We've also been awarded £2k for street trees with SELCHP. These trees will be focused on the areas most required within St Johns and will include the planting of native species on Tanners Hill, Friendly Street and St Johns Vale. More tree funding to come in 2023.

Need advice on planning?

Once a month St John's Society has a group of planning gurus who meet to review applications in the area. Since 2021 we have reviewed around 30 planning applications, providing formal feedback to Lewisham council. Do get in touch if you are struggling to understand how to jump through the complicated hoops.

The gurus also contributed feedback and ideas to local policy, including the Lewisham Local Plan and the Small Sites SPD.