

BROCKLEY SOCIETY

Charity No. 1201209

Annual General Meeting

Wednesday 20 November 2024, St Peter's Church, Wickham Road, SE4 1LT

Chair's Annual Review 2023 / 2024

1 October 2023 - 30 September 2024

I am going to end with a very specific appeal which flows from this report. I hope you will still all be following by then.

50 years of Brockley Conservation Area

Our very successful conference, **Conservation - Legacy and Innovation**, in Lewisham College on 21 October 2023, fell within this financial year and celebrated Brockley Conservation Area's 50th anniversary. It began with the specially commissioned short film of Nick Taylor, author, former councillor and Brockley resident, which highlighted the threatened damage to the Victorian houses before the conservation area was designated. To understand the area today I recommend watching it on Brockley Society's website. John Moreland's 284 photos of houses in Brockley 50 years ago are available on our website for free use. He and Gillian Heywood MBE opened the conference.

Brockley Society's new constitution as a **Charitable Incorporated Organisation (CIO)** retains the pre-existing **associate membership**: open to all, no matter where they live. It also allows for **voting membership** for those who would like more active membership. We are still in the process of developing what this means beyond having voting rights.

Planning and conservation

The bedrock of Brockley Society is its **Planning Group**, chaired by Chris Johnson RIBA. It meets monthly to consider planning applications in the Brockley Conservation Area. Chris will give more detail in the Planning Report. Last year we highlighted the heavy and unsustainable dependence on the vast expertise and experience of Chris Johnson, a founding member of Brockley Society. We are pleased to welcome new members to our Planning Group, but we need more people to step forward to share some of his responsibilities.

Collaboration:

We collaborate with Lewisham's other amenity societies: Ladywell, St John's, Brookmill Road CA, Telegraph Hill, Sydenham and others. We participate in the borough's Community Planning Forum. We belong to the London Forum and Civic Voice to keep abreast of London and national planning and conservation issues. We participate in London Open House Festival and are members of the

Victorian Society and the National Council for Voluntary Organisations. Locally we collaborate with other community organisations such as the Brockley Max Festival, Brockley Open Studios, Friends of Hilly Fields, and Friends of Brockley and Ladywell Cemeteries. We are keen to collaborate with all community groups, large or small.

A chronological list of activities

Wednesday 15 November: Our 2023 AGM heard **C J Schüler** spoke about his book *The Wood That Built London*, which draws on historic documents, maps and environmental evidence to chart the fortunes of the Great North Wood that once covered much of Brockley to Croydon, and the battles fought by locals and the London Wildlife Trust to save what remained.

11 February 2024: **Lunch for Brockley Conservation Area's Elders.** As part of the 50th anniversary, 13 people attended a lively event. Apologies are due for failing to inform Brenda Huthwaite, who was the 1974 treasurer.

March 2024 onwards: After a wet winter **Breakspears Mews Community Garden** began opening again at regular times and for special events such as for Brockley Max Festival, Brockley Open Studios and the London Open House Mews Walk. Schools and Lewisham College student groups have also participated. The garden offers a welcome end to guided mews walks and continues to make a valuable cultural contribution to the local community. I want to pay tribute to the team who maintain the garden through all weather.

Wednesday 19 June: We shared an **Open Meeting** with **Brookmill Road Conservation Area Society** to hear author Nick Higham talk on the history of London's water supply and his book, *The Mercenary River: Private Greed and Public Good*. The meeting was held in the building Blueprint for All, overlooking the Ravensbourne River, whose aquifers offered the 'gold standard of water purity' in the 19th century.

Saturday 22 June 2024: **Hilly Fields Midsummer Fayre** was once again enjoyed by 6,000 or more adults and children. This is a large event and is central to Brockley Society's community role. But it doesn't just happen — it is the work of scores of volunteers! I want to make special mention of the Fayre's organising committee who met weekly at the end to coordinate arrangements. We seek others to join the central organising team.

Friday 5 July: Brockley Society's informal **BBQ at the Stone Circle** on Hilly Fields was cancelled because of unending heavy rain

Monday 22 July: we held a **Brockley Society Drop-in** at Parlez, next to Brockley Station: an informal event for anyone who wanted to know more about the conservation area.

Saturday 3 August: The second **Lewisham Way Youth & Community Centre Reunion Family Day** was organised in Luxmore Gardens in collaboration with past users to celebrate the Centre's 40-year vital role until its closure in 2016. Several hundred people, including past users, their children and the general public, enjoyed the band and speakers. Cllr Jacq Paschoud brought greetings on behalf of the Mayor.

Saturday / Sunday 7 & 8 September: **Coordinated Front Garden Sale** (12th year): Over 100 houses in Brockley, Ladywell and St John's registered to participate in this quirky event. Sales experience varied from poor to excellent, but people enjoyed talking to their neighbours and other locals and the forecast bad weather didn't materialise.

For **London Open House Festival** we ran two events:

Saturday 21 September: **An Architectural Walk in Brockley.** We have held historic walks in the past, but this new venture aimed to look at the buildings in Brockley's High Victorian enclave, its historic trees and original lanes and mews. Jane Hearn gave background details to about 30 people.

Sunday 22 September: **Brockley's Historic Mews Walk** Three guided walks through Ashby, Wickham and Breakspears Mews were led by Sara Corrin, Mel Loveday and Juliet Johnson, ending with refreshments in Breakspears Mews Community Garden. The walks were enjoyed by over 70 people on a beautiful day.

Telephone boxes: The K2 telephone boxes are 100 years old. In 2012 Mel Mason discovered that the three Grade II listed boxes on Lewisham Way, decommissioned by BT, could be bought by Brockley Society as it is a charity.

Defibrillator: I am very pleased to announce that a project, led and coordinated by Lorna Jackson, to install a defibrillator in the middle telephone box on Breakspears Road has been successfully completed and is now available 24 hours a day. Lorna worked with students and staff from Lewisham College's Construction Department to repair the box beautifully to English Heritage and BT specifications and to install the life-saving equipment. The phone box is now registered on the national defibrillator network, The Circuit, and is regularly checked by a team of volunteers, including Lewisham College students.

Libraries: The Tyrwhitt Road phone box houses a general library and the Wickham Road box a children's library. Sorting and tidying the books is cared for by a number of volunteers, including Michael Peacock. The libraries are much used by the community and we get reports that they are highly valued. But when we found the shelves denuded as large numbers of books disappeared, presumably to be sold, we decided to stamp the books to indicate this is a community project.

Plans for our fourth phone box in St Margaret's Road have still not formed.

Newsletter, communications and social media

Brockley Society's newsletter records our activities, reflects our wider community, and is distributed by over 50 volunteers three times a year to 4,000+ houses, shops and cafes in Brockley Conservation Area and beyond. We would be happy for it to be more widely distributed by anyone willing to deliver it.

Our **Website** brockleysociety.org.uk is the main window of our activities. Brockley-relevant **circular emails** go roughly monthly to over 1600 addressees who have asked or agreed to subscribe — one measure of the breadth of our "associate" membership. Our social media presence needs strengthening using **Twitter/X, Instagram** and occasionally **Facebook**.

Archives and records: We are grateful to a local family who house our archives. We hope to return to sorting and managing them in the new year.

Brockley Voices: Our dormant oral history project needs revisiting. Our trustees have discussed the need to use some of our funds to record the rich oral history which exists locally and is in danger of disappearing, which brings me to **the appeal I mentioned at the beginning:**

To establish a historical project

We have looked at and recorded the the area's Victorian and early 20th century history to some extent. But the post-war 20th century and the Windrush contribution is in danger of being erased. Major housing shortages after the war meant some large houses had 12 or more people living in them. Houses fell into disrepair. People lived in pre-fab houses on Hilly Fields until the 1960s. Who were they and where did they go? As they moved on, West Indians facing housing discrimination, moved in. I have been told that in the 1960s and 1970s the composition of the Brockley area was 40 to 60 per cent Windrush and Caribbean with some African residents. Brockley had its share of racist attacks and discrimination. Although the Battle of Lewisham, burning down the Moonshot Club and the

New Cross Fire have been recorded elsewhere to some extent, the wealth of history in Brockley must be unearthed and recorded. Sybil Phoenix is Brockley's best known community activist. There are others and there are the ordinary people who led ordinary lives which will be forgotten if we don't record them. Nick Taylor's film on the history of the conservation area highlighted the huge responsibilities connected with what is known as "gentrification" — moving into someone else's area and proposing changes without being aware of the area's rich inheritance.

Project teams

How can we do this? It can't be done by the trustees alone. BrocSoc's past initiatives have been achieved by sub-groups taking on individual projects: the Stone Circle, the Big Photo, Breakspears Mews Community Garden, the tree committee that became Street Trees for Living, two Festivals of Ideas, two Conservation Conferences.

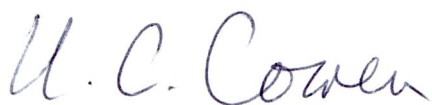
Now we need a project team or teams and individuals to step up to this challenge:

- A team could coordinate recording the memories of people who lived through the post-war period
- Record or interview your neighbour or relative
- Research your own house with the local history library
- Ask people to send us pictures and other items of interest about past life in Brockley
- Look at newspapers in the local history library
- Search Brockley Society's archives for interesting material
- Gillian Heywood's Victorian research should be organised into a printed book or pamphlet

If you want to assist in this, please let us know tonight or afterwards.

Committee and volunteers

Many thanks to all on our Management Committee for their work over the year. To our regret, Lorna Jackson is standing down and we thank her for her several years of work on several fronts as a trustee. Thanks also to our Planning Group, Fayre and Breakspears Mews Community Garden committees, our social media team, to speakers at events, those who deliver the newsletter, the volunteers who check the phone box libraries, and others who contribute to Brockley Society on so many fronts, with activities large and small. It is inspiring to be part of this community.



Clare Cowen
Brockley Society Chair
18 November 2024

Treasurer's Report, year to 30th September 2024

Basis of preparation ¹

The accounts for the year follow. In line with the requirements for charities (specifically Charitable incorporated organisations) of this size the accounts are prepared on a receipts and payments basis and are exempt from preparation in line with SORP 2015. They are unaudited; no Independent Examination has been carried out, as the charity's income was below the value for which an Independent Examination is required by the Charities Commission.

Financial position

The balance on the current account was £35,404.08. The balance on the CCLA deposit fund balance was £9,109. Total funds available to the Brockley Society are £44,678.26.

Income

Overall net income for the year ending 30 September 2024 was £23,671.23.

In 2024 the Fayre once again remains the major source of fundraising for the year. Total gross income generated by the Fayre was £21,142; costs were £15,271, generating a net profit of £5,871. This is consistent with profits in previous years. We also managed to recover some outstanding invoices from prior Fayres and newsletter adverts.

Expenses and Cost of Sales

Expenses and Cost of Sales increased in the year comparative to previous years. This was in relation to charitable activities of the Society and in particular in relation to the defibrillator project, feasibility study for BMCG, BCA50 event and Lewisham Way Youth & Community Centre: Annual Reunion Day.

Reserves

Our current reserve policy, set to ensure Brockley Society can cover minimal activities and expenditure for the next 2 years, is set to a reserve of £12,500.

Remuneration / Refunds

No trustees of Brockley Society have received any remuneration during this financial year. 11 Trustees and volunteers for Brockley Society received reimbursement for expenses made on behalf of Brockley Society for a total of £3,466.02 – the majority of which were related to the Fayre.

Governance

These accounts reconcile to the current bank account of the Society held with Barclays, as well as the PayPal balance and cash held. The CCLA balance is the prior year balance. There were no withdrawals from the CCLA account during the financial year.

PUBLIC - 1 GOV.UK Charity reporting and accounting: the essentials March 2015 (updated following The Charities Act 2011 (Accounts and Audit) Order 2015)

Charity Commission Database Updates, Annual Returns and Register Checks have been filed for all years to 30/09/2023.

Treasurer

17/11/2024

BROCKLEY SOCIETY ANNUAL ACCOUNTS
For Period: 01/10/2023 to 30/09/2024

	Current year Restricted £	Current year Unrestricted £	Current year Total funds £	Prior year Total funds £
FUNDS AS OF START OF YEAR	0.00	47,852.31	47,852.31	44,688.45
INCOME				
General Sales	0.00	224.11	224.11	902.55
Subscriptions	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Fayre stalls	0.00	5,255.00	5,255.00	5,700.00
Fayre catering stalls	0.00	3,220.00	3,220.00	2,830.00
Fayre advertising	0.00	3,400.00	3,400.00	2,630.00
Fayre sponsors	0.00	2,000.00	2,000.00	3,500.00
Fayre income	0.00	7,267.00	7,267.00	4,354.87
Newsletter adverts	0.00	1,800.00	1,800.00	1,360.00
Donations to BrocSoc	0.00	182.65	182.65	295.70
Donations for Trees	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Donations to BMCG	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Investment Income		322.47	322.47	0.00
Various			0.00	0.00
TOTAL INCOME	0.00	23,671.23	23,671.23	21,573.12
LESS COST OF SALES:				
General Purchases	0.00	-5,437.00	-5,437.00	-1,835.74
BMCG purchases	0.00	-2,400.00	-2,400.00	0.00
FAYRE purchases	0.00	-15,271.00	-15,271.00	-12,873.65
TREE purchases	0.00		0.00	0.00
Total	0.00	-23,108.00	-23,108.00	-14,709.39
LESS EXPENSES:				
Advertising		0.00	0.00	0.00
Printing	0.00	-2,715.00	-2,715.00	-2,669.00
Postage and Carriage		0.00	0.00	-34.50
Stationery	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Books, Magazines etc		0.00	0.00	0.00
Hosting Fees and IT Consumables	0.00	-155.88	-155.88	-498.34
Audit and Accountancy Fees	0.00	-90.19	-90.19	-90.00
Professional Fees	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Bank charges		0.00	0.00	-55.32
PayPal charges		-2.79	-2.79	0.00
Donations	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Insurance	0.00	-773.42	-773.42	-353.02
Other	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Total	0.00	-3,737.28	-3,737.28	-3,700.18
TOTAL COST OF SALES + EXPENSES	0.00	-26,845.28	-26,845.28	-18,409.57

INCOME LESS EXPENSES	0.00	-3,174.05	-3,174.05	3,163.55
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OTHER MOVEMENTS

PayPal moved to Barclays	0.00		0.00	0.00
Cash deposited into Barclays	0.00		0.00	0.00

FUND AS OF END OF YEAR	0.00	44,678.26	44,678.26	47,852.00
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Statement of Financial Position

	Current year	Current year	Current year
	Restricted	Unrestricted	Total funds
	£	£	£
Bank current account balance on 30th Sept of the year	0.00	35,404.08	35,404.08
CCLA Charity deposit funds on 30th Sept of the year		9,109.00	9,109.00
PayPal balance on 30th Sept of the year		165.18	165.18
Held as cash	0	0.00	0.00
Total Bank and Cash accounts	0.00	44,678.26	44,678.26