

# BTC VOICE NEWSLETTER



Grapes from Friendly Street Allotments



Members at the Co op Away Day

## WELCOME TO THE VOICE GROUP COMMUNITY NEWSLETTER

### Coming up in this edition:

- Page 1** - *BTC coffee afternoon August*
- Page 2** - *Margate Trip 2023*
- Page 3** - *Our new staff member*  
*What is the Voice Group?*  
*Planning for the jubilee*
- Page 4** - *Friendly Street allotments*  
*Children's Competition*
- Page 5** - *Brockley Tenants Away Day*
- Page 7** - *Digital training opportunity*
- Page 8** - *What's on for under 18s*
- Page 9** - *Recipe*
- Page 10** - *Upcoming events*

## BTC COFFEE AFTERNOON



Despite the heat, members enjoyed a drink and a cake courtesy of the BTC Voice Group at The Hill Station on 9th September. It's a great way to get to know other members in a relaxing way and all are welcome.

Don't miss the next one on 4th November, also at The Hill Station Cafe, Kitto Road SE14 5TW.



## MARGATE TRIP 2023

### BTC MEMBER JENNIFER TELLS US ABOUT HER EXPERIENCE

Margate's not all sand and neon arcades, there are other things to do at the popular seaside resort. I went to the Turner Contemporary Gallery. It's been open since 2011 and is a short walk from the main beach. It's a light, airy building and was a cooling place to go to outside of the heat and noise of the beach. Part of the reason for placing the museum in this part of the harbour, is because of Turner's love of the sun's light in the area.



When we went, the Brazilian artist Beatriz Milhazes was in residence. She's a well-known, international, abstract artist. She is known for creating very large abstract canvases, often working with many translucent layers in one canvas. Her work takes on popular culture as well as commentary on the environment. Though she's no longer in residence, you can find out more about the gallery by visiting, [www.turnercontemporary.org](http://www.turnercontemporary.org)

Speaking of the environment, the one downside of my experience was the terrible smells along the coast as result of raw sewage being dumped into the ocean by water companies. Locals say that when it's really bad, people are advised not to swim as they may risk contracting e-coli. You can also enjoy a walk along the coast-line and if you're feeling really energetic, you can walk to Broadstairs (which I've done on another occasion!). It's a peaceful walk away from the bustle of the main beach and as you look out to the ocean, the view also takes in one of the UK's largest wind-farms (Thanet Wind Farm), which you can see in the distance off the coast. I look forward to our next seaside visit- maybe another popular location?

## WELCOME TO OUR NEW STAFF MEMBER

We welcome a new administrative assistant to our office team. Sahana Khatun-Ullah joined us in August. She was shy about having her photo taken for the newsletter but we had a chat in the office.

Sahana describes herself as reliable and hardworking, qualities which she brings to her role here at BTC.

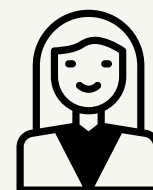
Sahana was happy to see the job advertised on Indeed Jobs as she had been eager to get back into admin work. She had been working in hospitality which was enjoyable but she was eager to utilise and develop her office skills.

"I was a bit daunted as things have changed a lot and I've had some tough interviews."

I asked her about her interview here "Oh it was good," she said, "the people were friendly and I was able to be myself and relax. I was so glad to get the job."

Sahana is originally from East London but has lived in Catford for 20 years. She is a busy mother and her children take up most of her free time.

How is she finding the job so far? "It's not too stressful," she says, "it's just about managing time. It's really nice to meet the members and put a face to the names on the accounts I've come across. Everyone has been very pleasant so far!"



---

**Office Opening Hours 9am to 5pm Monday to Friday**  
**Email: [housing@brockley.coop](mailto:housing@brockley.coop) Telephone: 0208 691 5898**

---

### BTC VOICE PARTICIPATION GROUP

The group is run by members of the co-op who would like to encourage us to connect more through social events that everyone can attend. Meetings are held monthly, usually by Zoom on alternate Tuesdays and Sundays. Michaela sends the link out via email and everyone is very welcome to join.

Members of the group are very friendly and would love to you take part. It's a great way to start to participate more in the co-op and to share your thoughts and meet other people.

See you soon!



### PLANNING FOR OUR JUBILEE

**The coop is 50 in 2024!**

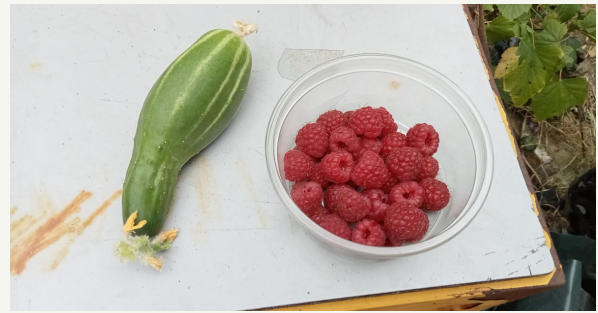
**We still need your ideas and opinions on how we should celebrate.**

**Staff and members are deciding where we should hold our celebration party. We must book by December 2023 or we won't be guaranteed a venue. Please send any ideas you have as soon as possible!**

**Do you have any stories or photos involving the coop over the past 50 years?**

**Would you like to be involved in a photo exhibition featuring our members in their properties?**

**Please get in touch to help plan this amazing anniversary. Send your ideas and let us know if you can help to: [hello@brockley.coop](mailto:hello@brockley.coop)**



## WONDERFUL PRODUCE FROM THE FRIENDLY STREET ALLOTMENTS



### Star Squirrel!

He's not exactly a pet but he certainly has a lot of personality- he's enjoying the sunflower seeds on Drakefell Rd at the moment.

Please send us pictures of your pets - wild or domestic!

## STREET ART COMPETITION FOR BTC CHILDREN! WIN £20 !



This picture was taken somewhere in the middle of Lewisham. If you can tell us exactly where it is you could win £20!

Children aged 8-15 with a parent or guardian who is a BTC member may enter. Please supply your full name and address.

Email: [hello@brockley.coop](mailto:hello@brockley.coop) or send or hand in to the BTC offices: 249

Lewisham Way, SE4 1XF

Hurry! The first correct answer wins!

# BROCKLEY TENANTS AWAY DAY 23RD SEPTEMBER



## PLANNING FOR SUCCESS WITH RAJ KUMAR & WILLIAM ROIG

### **BTC Away Day at the Clarendon Hotel - member Alice describes it:**

14 Brockley Tenants members and 4 staff met at the Clarendon hotel Blackheath on Saturday 23rd for a planning programme led by Raj and William of One Enterprise LTD.

The venue is a historic building and unfortunately, despite reassurances from the hotel management, one member was unable to access the meeting room due to mobility issues. This was disappointing but the rest of us formed into work groups and started the day's events.

We began by introducing ourselves to someone we had never spoken to before. With the ice broken, Raj recapped some issues from the previous sessions in 2016 and 2021. He then set us a thought sharing exercise:

#### ***What could sink the ship?***

In our groups and collectively we discussed what could cause the Co-op to end. Issues such as bad management, corruption, poor financial decisions and staff retention were all explored as well as unexpected national or international crisis. What stood out was the importance of strong management from our committees and the need for succession from the tenant members onto those committees.

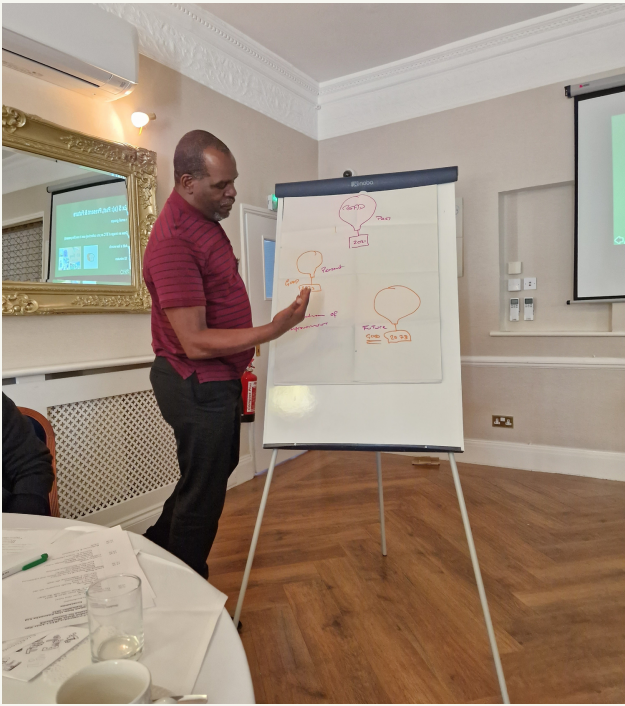
### ***Difficult Decisions***

Our next scenarios included how to decide how much to increase rents by, assuming our groups were a fictional co op. We had to agree on a 4% or 7% increase.



Every group was divided between the need to provide affordable rents during this cost of living crisis and the need to maintain capital for the future. This reflected real decisions made by our management committee recently. We kept coming back to the point that we are a business but we are also a co operative and we care about our members welfare.

We also discussed the issue of reporting domestic violence and whose responsibility that is. This led to discussions on the need to support our staff who have to deal with very many issues, including members with mental health issues, on a daily basis. Could members with experience prove some expert advice in these fields?



# SHAPING THE FUTURE -BTC 2074

## WHAT IS A CO-OP?



The afternoon focused on the co-op's vision for the future, bearing in mind past successes and mistakes.

### **Past, present and future aspirations**

After introducing ourselves to new group members, we created an image and a few words describing how we see BTC in the present. My group imagined the co-op as a tree providing shelter,

knowledge, security and opportunity among many other things. Another group made images of balloons, the past gone, the present still afloat and the future looking hopeful. Other members saw the co-op's journey as a river building in strength and knowledge.

A key issue which returned to the conversation, was whether our members understand and reflect the co-ops principles and values. Do people understand the democratic process? Should new prospective members be asked to undergo an interview to see if they are a good fit for the co-op? Should we be clearer about what is expected from our membership?

### **Collective Responsibility**

We finished by each making a pledge about what we can do individually to support our co-op's mission. Raj and William encouraged us to celebrate the fact that our co-op is still afloat after 50 years. Many other enterprises have not made it. It's time to celebrate and also to think about reinvigoration, action planning and positive re enforcement. Our members are our strength, combining so much talent and knowledge. Ideas included: a skills register, a befriending service, mental health advice, a rules review and a look at how to recruit the 'right fit' members and staff. It was a positive day, thought provoking, affirming and fun. A great way to reconnect.

**BTC member Jennifer Robinson is a social media consultant. She is very kindly offering her services exclusively to the BTC membership. If you need training in online/digital CV building please email [hello@brockley.coop](mailto:hello@brockley.coop) . Places are limited.**

*PROGRAMME TITLE:*

**DEVELOPING YOUR PROFESSIONAL ONLINE CV: AN INTRODUCTION TO LINKEDIN.**

Why should you do the training?

Developing your professional online presence has never been so important as it is today. Prospective employers consistently view candidates' profiles to get additional insights into their capabilities and credibility.

This training will introduce you to the professional online channel, LinkedIn as a means to create, maintain and develop your professional online presence. LinkedIn is increasingly becoming the go-to for people seeking to build their career prospects. No matter your ability or the stage of your career, whether you are a student, working in the creative arts, are an entrepreneur, unemployed or in-between jobs, no matter your age, if you've not had a professional online profile, this will be suitable for you.

Suitable for:

Students, returners to work, people changing careers, unemployed, career-builders, in-between-jobbers, volunteers, building skills, any age, any career sector.

Prior abilities:

Attendees should have an email account, have at least a Level 1 command of English, some (Level 1) computer literacy.

Duration:

Approximately four weeks at one hour per week, times/dates to be negotiated, though it will be held within BTC office hours.

Training content:

1) Intro to social/professional media/Mapping your skills. 2) Creating a LinkedIn profile. 3) Maximising a LinkedIn profile. 4) Planning & scheduling posts, comments and images for content on LinkedIn.

What should you bring?

If you have one, your existing CV, but if you don't, you can still build one using skills etc; if you have one, your laptop, however this is not strictly necessary, but it will limit the number of attendees if you don't.

Start date:

November 2023 or sooner, depending on numbers.

Where will it be held?

BTC Offices - 249 Lewisham Way.



At Deptford Lounge

## Roller skate at Deptford Lounge

Every third Thursday of the month  
For ages 16+

Back by popular demand! Deptford Lounge are hosting another roller disco.

From roller discos to recording sessions, performance art and advice on how to access Arts Council grants...

The Albany and Deptford Lounge are amazing artistic and creative resources in Deptford. Find out more about what's on offer, including their incredible youth programme with free half term activities:



## REZON8 – Free Recording Sessions

Wednesday, Thursdays and Fridays  
For ages 14-25 years

REZON8 is offering free recording sessions to 14-25 year olds two days a week.

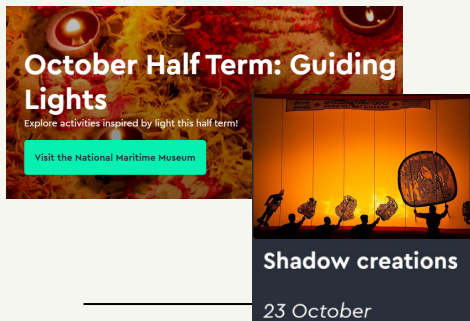
[www.thealbany.org.uk](http://www.thealbany.org.uk)  
[www.deptfordlounge.org.uk](http://www.deptfordlounge.org.uk)

# OCTOBER HALF TERM THINGS TO DO FOR UNDER 18S AROUND LEWISHAM

A great thing about being young in Lewisham is that there are so many things to do in the holidays. And often for free! Here is a taster of just a few things on in our area during October and beyond...

### Greenwich Maritime Museum [www.rmg.co.uk](http://www.rmg.co.uk)

This half term, the Maritime Museum is inspired by light. On 22nd October take part in a programme of arts and performance to celebrate Diwali, ending in a lantern parade through Greenwich. Free - but book a slot online.



Want to get out of Lewisham?  
Take the 172 from Brockley to:

### The National Portrait Gallery [www.npg.org.uk](http://www.npg.org.uk)

The newly reopened National Portrait Gallery has many free activities for families and young people of all ages during half term. Little Explorers has stories, songs and craft for under 5s. Others may like to check out more contemporary works such as 'Self' by Marc Quinn, which is made from his own blood and the portrait of Stormzy and his mum by Olivia Rose



### Horniman Museum and Gardens [www.horniman.ac.uk](http://www.horniman.ac.uk)

October is not only Black History Month but this year marks the 75th anniversary of the arrival of the Windrush. The Horniman is celebrating with many events including the Windrush Front Room, an interactive space where you can handle objects and listen to stories from the Windrush generation.

21-22nd October -drop in/free



# DELICIOUS

## RED PEPPER SOUP



**BTC member Sarah has shared this warming recipe, perfect for an autumn day**



### Ingredients:

- 4 long red peppers
- 1 medium/large onion
- 2 cloves of garlic
- 2 tsp olive oil
- 350g passata
- 600ml vegetable stock
- 2 tsp smoked paprika

### Notes:

- Using bell peppers is also possible, but they are quite wet and don't cook so well at stage 2. Long red peppers are available at Lewisham Market, costing 1.50 for 5.
- The stock does not need to be ready made. A litre of water and a stock cube is fine.
- The chilli powder can be left out or increased as you wish.

### Method:

1. Cut up the peppers and onion into fairly small pieces and the garlic into very small pieces.
2. Heat the olive oil in a large pan and cook the onions and peppers for about 5 mins, stirring frequently.
3. Add the garlic and cook for a further few minutes.
4. Add the smoked paprika and chilli powder and stir for a few seconds to coat the veg.
5. Add the passata and stock and bring to the boil, then simmer for 20 mins
6. Blend the soup with a stick blender until only a few bits of whole veg remain

**We need YOUR recipes! Please send them to:  
hello@brockley.coop**

"THIS IS TRULY A PANTOMIME FOR SOUTH LONDON, WITH A KICKIN BAND, A FUNKY GIANT, MAGIC BEANS, SLAPSTICK ROUTINES, LAUGHS AND SILLINESS GALORE AND PLENTY OF BOOS CHEERS AND SOULFUL SONGS YOU KNOW AND LOVE"



"WILL JACK FULFIL HIS DESTINY? WILL CAROLINE THE COW BECOME A TIK TOK STAR?"

CHRISTMAS PANTOMIME DECEMBER 17TH 2023 CATFORD BROADWAY THEATRE  
EMAIL [HELLO@BROCKLEY.COOP](mailto:HELLO@BROCKLEY.COOP) FOR MORE INFORMATION

### Dates to remember:

Tues 24 October- ManCom 7pm  
Hybrid meeting invite by email

Saturday 4th November - BTC  
Voice Coffee afternoon 2-3.30pm  
The Hill Station Cafe

Tuesday 5th december - General  
Meeting 7pm in person at BTC  
office. Christmas social  
afterwards!

Sunday 17th December-  
Christmas pantomime 1PM  
Catford Broadway Theatre



### DON'T BE A STRANGER!

If you have any comments or opinions on anything in this newsletter or anything else to do with the co-op please get in touch. Please send in your ideas for the jubilee and also any photos, stories and recipes we can share.

We are always looking for star BTC pets for pet's corner. Poems or artwork? Do you have any skills you can share with other members?

Email us at [hello@brockley.coop](mailto:hello@brockley.coop)

