



Newsletter

Wandsworth



Khan stands defiant: "I simply cannot accept these Government proposals for TfL, which would hit Londoners with a triple whammy of higher costs at a time when so many people are already facing hardship."

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London's transport cash crisis: who do you blame?

Intense negotiations are under way between the government and London's Mayor Sadiq Khan over a second bailout for Transport for London. It has been accompanied by what the tabloids call "a war of words" between the Mayor and the Prime Minister (and former mayor of London) Boris Johnson. Johnson claims that Khan "had effectively bankrupted Transport for London before coronavirus even hit."

But the Daily Mirror says "figures show that Khan was bringing the deficit down. TfL was bankrupted by coronavirus - passenger numbers collapsed and costs rose." Khan hit back. Johnson, he said, "had lied": TfL's deficit had ballooned to £9 billion when Johnson was Mayor. "Before Covid I was fixing his mess at TfL- reducing the deficit by 71% since 2016. "

According to the Financial Times, the Transport Secretary Grant Shapps "has threatened to seize control of Transport for London unless Sadiq Khan accepts a package of measures". Such measures would include higher council tax, extending the congestion charge zone to the north and south circulars, and scrapping free travel for children and older Londoners. The South Circular is very much on our patch.

Yes, another blame game. Is the Mayor right to put up a fight? What would life be like without your Freedom Pass? Email: u3anewswands@gmail.com

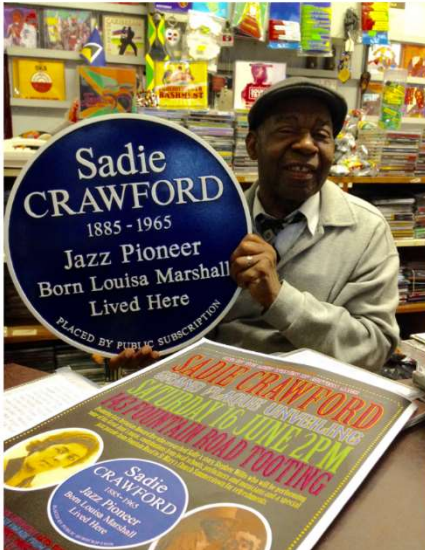
Are you in danger of succumbing to hurkle-durkling? We want to know!

NEWSLETTER TEAM
 Don Brind and Peter Martin are keen to hear from you
 Please email us at u3anewswands@gmail.com
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QUESTION OF THE WEEK: IS THIS WORSE THAN THE WAR?
 "It's not a word I've heard in a long time" – so said an elderly Paris resident, armed with mask and gloves for a shopping expedition. "A curfew. That's for wartime, isn't it? But in a way I suppose that's what this is." Is this how you feel? Please let us know: u3anewswands@gmail.com

WORD OF THE WEEK "Curfew"
 "Curfew" is a contraction of the original French *couvre-feu*, meaning literally "cover the fire". In medieval Europe it was common for a bell to be rung at a certain hour in the evening indicating that all fires must be covered or put out in order to prevent domestic fires from accidentally burning down whole villages or towns.

BLACK HISTORY MONTH REMINDS US OF TOOTING'S MUSICAL ROOTS



Sadie Crawford spent her childhood at 143 Fountain Road and was one of the first British female musicians to play with American jazz greats such as Louis Armstrong. Indeed she is believed to be the first British female musician to feature on a jazz recording – and the first woman to be commemorated in Tooting with a blue plaque. She performed internationally and spent the last 30 years of her life in America, returning often to England to visit family members.

She is an example of the area's musical roots. Her plaque is number 13 on the Tooting Black History Cycle Trail we featured last week. There is also a campaign to raise funds for a plaque on Mitcham Road on the site of an old recording studio, celebrating the forgotten musical heritage of Tooting.



BLACK HISTORY MONTH: SLAVERY: BLAME WHERE BLAME'S DUE?

Member Jill responds to recent writings in this newsletter on slavery and Black History Month.

While applauding the "Black Lives Matter" movement, I am thoroughly perplexed by their concentration on British slave traders who were patently without scruples in making money. However, they were not alone: they BOUGHT the slaves from indigenous slave dealers. (I don't think they could have kidnapped enough slaves to fill their boats.) I have not heard any condemnation of African slave dealers from those pulling down statues of British slave boat owners. There were slave markets in every West African port. The Trade had been going on for centuries and maybe still is, undercover. The North African Arab slave dealers had raided many countries, including Britain, in the sixteenth century until the Royal Navy was strengthened by Oliver Cromwell a century later. Researching on line, I find many articles about slave trading in Africa. But they don't seem to have reached the Public Ear. Two wrongs do not make a right, the old saying goes, – but two wrongs should be condemned in the same way, I believe. It is time to move on and build a truly multi-racial society.

We asked how Covid-19 was impacting on your daily life. What changes do winter and more restrictions bring?

Lyn is sure she is not the only person guilty of HURKLE-DURKING lately ... it is an old Scottish word meaning to laze in bed when you should be up and doing things!!

HELPING US TO COPE: AN INVITATION FROM THE MEDICAL SCHOOL

Dr James Erskine presents 12 strategies to navigate Covid-19 and to look after our mental health. The good doctor is involved in Psychology and Behavioural Medicine and his work focuses on building human capacity to cope with traumatic events. The Medical School is inviting us to join them and engage with the event during the Q&A as he explains each method. You can book your place at <https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/125149937833>



and we stay with St George for our Joke of the Week



A couple of hikers were tramping through the countryside and had lost their way, so by the time they arrived at the George and Dragon – the village pub where they'd arranged to stay for the night – the doors were locked and the owners had gone to bed. They knocked timidly on the front door. A head appeared at an upstairs window and shouted, 'Go away. Don't you know what time it is? We're closed.' And the window slammed shut! Undeterred, the hikers knocked again. 'What is it now?' demanded the head. 'Could we speak to George this time please?' asked one of the hikers.