

News INBRIEF

Free recycling for Christmas trees

LEWISHAM: A free Christmas tree recycling service is being run. Trees can be left at any one of 12 collection points until January 28. The locations include Hilly Fields by the entrance in Hilly Fields Crescent, Brockley, and Deptford Park in Scawen Road, Deptford. ● Visit www.lewisham.gov.uk for more information.

Resolution ideas from the town hall

LEWISHAM: People looking to set new year resolutions can get tips from the council. Ideas include activities such as volunteering, saving money, getting fit and recycling. ● Visit www.lewisham.gov.uk for more information.

Photography class ...for women only

LEWISHAM: Women-only photography classes will be run at Lewisham Arthouse in Lewisham Way next month. The 10-week courses start on January 24 and 26, on Mondays and Wednesdays from 6-7.30pm.

Grant brings derelict garages back to use

COMMUNITY VOTES FOR WORTHY CAUSES

Ready to renovate

● **WATERLOO** Action Centre in Baylis Road, Waterloo, gets £50,000 to revamp its premises, which are open to the community. Chairwoman Sara Bredemear said: "It's brilliant - and testament to the enormous team effort from all our staff, volunteers and the local community who worked together to tell people what we did and why we wanted the money. "We're really grateful to the people who voted for us so strongly. "Renovation is something we've wanted to do for ages, and now we get to have new toilet facilities and put in soundproofing so more people can use the building at the same time. "We want to get the roof done and get more equipment for our day care centre for older people." ● A £75,000 grant goes to the Wellfield Centre in Wellfield Road, Streatham, to be used on repairing its community centre, meeting rooms and office space.

EACH year Lambeth council invites residents and local groups to decide which community projects will get a share of a £250,000 cash pot. A total of 12 bids were in line for sums, from £25,000 to £100,000. NADIA GILANI speaks to some of the winners



WHEELS OF FORTUNE: From left, Stephen Edwards, Hannah Lewis and Choman Saeed from Remade in Brixton

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A PROJECT to transform disused garages into a workshop for creative recycling has come top in a public vote to win a £100,000 grant.

The Brixton Reuse Centre will be housed underneath a residential block in Paulet Road near Lilford Road, Loughborough Junction.

The 36 garages have been left derelict for more than a decade.

The scheme polled 52 per cent of all votes in the Your Borough Your Budget scheme. It will be managed by Hannah Lewis, 31, and Stephen Edwards, 49, of Remade in Brixton, part of the Transition Town Brixton initiative.

The global movement works to reduce the impact of climate

change and oil dependency in local communities.

Mr Edwards said: "When we talked to residents in the area we discovered that the garages had been an area linked with antisocial behaviour, drug use and people dossing and leaving junk.

"People haven't been happy with nothing being done with them. Those we spoke to were really happy about our plan to bring them back into use."

The 50m by 16m site will be turned into a "mini-industrial" space with storage areas for waste materials, training and workshop rooms, office space, an information centre and a community shop.

The different areas will be taken up by "reuse" groups dedicated to transforming the waste into new items.

Mr Edwards added: "We're going to have a depot for all the materials that come in from the council or other charities, groups and residents who can't get rid of stuff.

"It will all come in and be sorted and stacked until we can ascertain what to do with it, or we may divert it to one of our reuse groups.

"There will also be a shop where they can sell the remade things, and if people have got an appliance they need fixed they can bring it along."

The group is part of the London Community Resource Network, a charity that supports organisations and communities working to manage resources sustainably.

● Visit www.remadeinbrixton.org for details.

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Money will go towards minibus

SOUTHSIDE Rehabilitation Centre in West Norwood will be spending its £25,000 prize on a new minibus.

The charity in Knights Hill, West Norwood, helps support people with mental health issues by offering them training and employment to help them back into work.

The organisation, which provides jobs and training in catering, clerical work and computer training, cleaning, laundry and runs a photocopy shop, got 60 per cent of the votes.

It will now be able to replace its 21-year-old Volkswagen minibus to transport its members to their training placements. The charity's general manager, Stephanie Correia, said: "We've wanted a new minibus for two years but didn't

have the money, being a charity. We use the bus to take people who are training as cleaners to centres, residential homes and offices for work placements.

"If we have any money left over we'll also get some equipment for our printing shop. We felt rather anxious about it because we were competing with children's activities.

"We didn't think we would win, because mental health isn't cool.

"That's one of the reasons we decided to bid for it, to raise the profile of our organisation and increase awareness of mental health.

"We really want to thank everyone who supported us, particularly in West Norwood, our customers and people living in the area."