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# BRIXTON BUGLE

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Above: Brixton Chamber Orchestra played at the ceremony to switch on the lights of the Christmas tree sponsored by Brixton Business Improvement District

Right: Pupils from Lansdowne school worked with staff from Squire and Partners architects to create lights for the firm's 'Winter Windows' on Ferndale Road

## BRIXTON'S SEASON OF GOODWILL

Brixton's people and businesses have, once again, come together to help those who are lonely and in need at the worst time of year to be so.

From individual donations to gifts from large multinationals, Brixton is seeing the real spirit of the season at work.

So many organisations – from the Brixton Soup Kitchen to the Norwood and Brixton

Individuals and businesses show they care

Food Bank – are now working to help people that it is unfair to single out any one of them.

But the experience of a relative newcomer to the long list

of Brixton's charities reveals just how special our community is. Compliments of the House (COTH) has a simple model: it collects surplus food from outlets prepared to help and distributes it to people in need with the minimum of fuss.

As well as keeping perfectly good food out of landfill, COTH offers people it helps a back-to-work scheme.

Local traders and volunteers have been mucking in to make sure COTH new premises at 2a Market Row, courtesy of owners Hondo Enterprises, is spruced up for the festive season.

Brewers decorators centre on Acre Lane supplied the materials and paint and volunteers provided the muscle.

COTH distributes food to those in need for from 7 to 9pm on weekdays

Founder Sinead Browne says: "We welcome anyone who is need of a meal or support. We are currently partnered with 30 local businesses and run a Back to Work scheme that supports our guests back into employment.

"Once they're ready to go back to work, we arrange 12-week, part-time placements for them with our food partners.

"If it's a good fit, it can turn

**INSIDE  
YOUR FREE  
COMMUNITY PAPER**



**VOLUNTEER ...**

... It's fun!

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They found a home in Brixton

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# Duke of Edinburgh gets its licence after concessions

By Alan Slingsby

In a decision seen by many as crucial for the future of Brixton's important night-time economy, and for its overall future development, Lambeth council's licensing sub-committee in November agreed a new licence for the Duke of Edinburgh pub on Ferndale Road.

The normally staid proceedings of the committee were interrupted by spontaneous applause on several occasions as both opponents and supporters made heartfelt presentations of their points of view.

In a dispute that kicked off when England surprised everybody in last year's men's football world cup, a group of local residents, backed by police and council departments, were seeking restrictions on the pub's operations that its owners said would make its business unviable and force it to close.

More than 1,000 pages of evidence were before the three-person committee.

Efforts on both sides to reach a compromise, helped by local councillor Joshua Lindsey (Labour, Ferndale), had seen the differences between the council's licensing department and the pub's owners, Solitaire Restaurants, boiled down to just one issue: how many customers could be accommodated in the pub's huge garden?

Along the way, these efforts created a list of more than 80 conditions that the pub agreed to and must meet to get and keep a new licence. This was, said leading licensing barrister Gary Grant, unprecedented in his experience.

He was appearing for the pub along with a solicitor and pub manager Stevie Mulgrave – a measure of the importance of the licence to its owners.

## 'Small but vocal'

The opponents of the licence application, described by Gary Grant as "a small but vocal group", were represented by Ferndale Road resident Mark Buttery, who has lived there since 2010; Cllr Lindsey also explained their concerns.

They said local people had problems with queues outside the pub and people leaving it, and that residents whose homes were next to the pub's garden could not enjoy their own gardens and suffered disruption inside as well.

Buttery said the noise from the pub was not permissible in a residential area. It went on from noon to 10pm and there could be as many as 1,000

people in the garden.

"I've come to dread the first warm days of spring, as I know I can no longer enjoy my garden," he said.

He wanted a limit of 350 people allowed in the garden.

Earlier Gary Grant had made the case for the pub, a listed building, pointing out that some of the complaints raised by residents were the direct result of orders issued to it by various departments of Lambeth council.

He also questioned opposition to queues to get into the pub and its garden, pointing out that the alternative to orderly queues supervised by pub staff was large numbers of people milling about in the streets outside.

Duke of Edinburgh manager Stevie Mulgrave assured the committee that the proposed compromise of a maximum number of people in the garden of 550 was the lowest the pub could go without being forced to close.

## Brixton pub closures

It was the supporters of the pub who drew applause. Michael Smith, director of the Brixton Business Improvement District, began by reading from a seemingly never-ending list of Brixton pubs that have closed in recent years.

He stressed the importance of the night-time economy and the employment it provides for local people and the taxes it pays.

Steve Byrne, whose catering business is based at the pub, said he and the six people he employs would lose their jobs if the pub was forced to close.

Carlos Benavides of Los Siempre Secos sports and social club, representing the Latin American community, said the Duke of Edinburgh had hosted a group watching football every Saturday for the past 20 years. He said the pub was "our base and focal point".

Noah Halperin, who has lived in Brixton for 16 years, pointed out that the pub had had quiet and busy periods over the years. He also stressed its community value: "Kids, pets, sport, knitting clubs, runners. This is not somewhere people are just going to party".

After nearly three hours, the members of the committee, Fred Cowell and councillors Linda Bray and Rezina Chowdhury, retired to consider their decision.

Supporters of the pub rejoiced when Cllr Cowell returned to announce that the limit for the garden would be set at 550. The decision is subject to appeal.



Corpus Christi choir sings at the Winter Windows ceremony. Below: one of the windows and the crowd of parents and others wait for them to be illuminated



Brixton's Christmas got under way at the end of November with two recently instituted but already traditional events.

This year's Winter Windows at architect Squire & Partners' Ferndale Road Department Store headquarters, an eight-window illuminated installation, was created by students from Brixton's Lansdowne School working with architects and model makers from the practice.



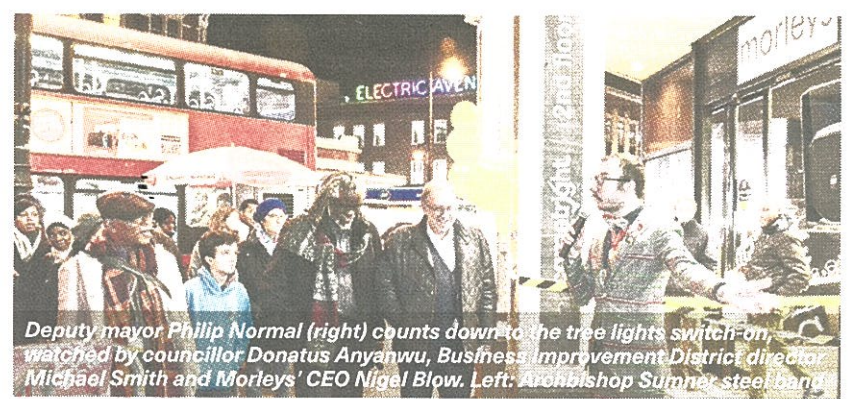
Around the corner next to the Bowie mural opposite the Tube station, Philip Normal, deputy mayor of Lambeth, joined Morleys chief executive Nigel Blow to switch in the lights of the Brixton Business Improvement District (BID) Christmas tree.

Passers-by stopped to listen to the Archbishop Sumner school steel band from Kennington and the Brixton Chamber Orchestra – who played

seasonal music as darkness fell.

Nigel Blow said that the Morleys Store Group now has eight stores, but the whole group is still called Morleys and its first store, in Brixton, will next year get a multi-million pound refurbishment, confirming the company's continuing faith in Brixton as a top place to shop.

Also on hand were local councillors and BID representatives.



Deputy mayor Philip Normal (right) counts down to the tree lights switch-on, watched by councillor Donatus Anyanwu, Business Improvement District director Michael Smith and Morleys' CEO Nigel Blow. Left: Archbishop Sumner steel band

# Could you foster?

Pop in for a chat and join us for a coffee at Café Nero in Morleys

The fostering team will be holding walk in information sessions every Wednesday from 10.00am to 12.00pm.

Call us: 020 7926 8710 or online: [lambeth.gov.uk/fosteringandadoption](http://lambeth.gov.uk/fosteringandadoption)

Location: Café Nero, Morleys  
472-488 Brixton Road, Brixton, SW9 8EH

