

**A COMMUNITY ART PROJECT
CELEBRATING THE HEROES OF
SE25**



SOUTH DRAWWOOD

**Portraits by Jonny Kemp
Interviews by Elizabeth Walters**

South Drawood is a project conceived by Jonny Kemp and Lizzie Walters.

Jonny drew portraits of 38 independent businesses, volunteer groups, and other individuals from South Norwood, London, SE25. Lizzie Walters interviewed each one. The portraits and their interviews were displayed in the gallery of Stanley Arts, a beautiful arts venue on South Norwood Hill.

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WELCOME AND CONTENTS

About the artist

Jonny Kemp is a full time English teacher as well as an artist, playwright and theatre critic. Jonny has drawn and painted since he was a teenager but decided to pursue English at University. He now teaches English in a sixth form in north London and somehow finds time to pursue his other hobbies. He has written several plays, one of which was shortlisted for the WRaP 2020 playwriting competition from the London Playwrights blog and another which was performed at the Hope Mill Theatre in Manchester in November 2021. He also reviews plays for the London Pub Theatres website.



A few years ago Jonny began going to life drawing classes in Crystal Palace, which reignited his passion for art. During lockdown he spent hours drawing and painting and has since attended several courses at the Art Academy London. He has even passed on his artistic passion to his students, running a life drawing club after hours at his college. Jonny came up with the idea of South Drawood as his way of 'giving South Norwood a cuddle'.

About the researcher

Lizzie is currently studying for a PhD in community development at City, University of London. Her passion for people, society, and community is further reflected in her voluntary work, having previously volunteered at a winter night shelter, tutored teenagers online during the pandemic and mentoring at the Baytree Centre in Brixton. She believes everyone in the community is as important as the next and deserves to have their story told. She is also at her happiest when she is out in the community, talking to people and creating connections - which was a massive bonus to the project.

It would be Lizzie's dream to one day facilitate a community centre, organising events and supporting local people around her. But for now, she pursues with her studies and spends her free time exercising, wandering around the city or visiting galleries and the theatre. She even makes her own clothes when she has the time!

Although Lizzie doesn't live in South Norwood she feels like a honorary resident. Speaking to the locals and meeting so many friendly faces has also made her feel like she has more connection with the area compared to her home in Stockwell.



Giving South Norwood a cuddle.

Jonny moved to South Norwood in 2017. He did so for reasons similar to many other people. It's more 'affordable' than other parts of London. It feels like it's 'up and coming'. There's lots of green space. There's a ten minute train to London Bridge.

In this time, he's seen so many wonderful changes and additions to the area. Many of the businesses who are part of this project did not exist when he moved here, or certainly didn't have a premises.

In fact, for personal reasons, he almost moved out of Norwood in late 2020. The pandemic altered his view on things, and it felt like time for a change. But, in the end, he didn't move. He reinvested himself in SE25. He wanted to be part of the positive change. But how?

He felt that South Norwood deserved to have its people represented in a positive way. The area can get some bad press, but this wasn't what he knew to be true. He wanted to bring together all the people that contribute, that work tirelessly to make it what it is.

His first plan was to draw everyone who worked on the High Street. He thought maybe the business owners could put up their portrait in their shop, in the window or behind the counter. He quickly realised this would be almost impossible: there are dozens of businesses on that street! And besides, what about Portland Road? Selhurst Road? Online businesses?

So, he discussed it with Lizzie, who suggested branching out to include local community groups, and writing the stories of each of them.

We would just do as many as we could in the time that we had. I would draw, she would interview. We had no idea how many we would include, how many people would want to be part of it. We thought 15-20 would be a good number.

THE IDEA

Our method was simple: walk into any shop, cafe, or business, and hope that they were interested.

First we spoke to Nick, at the Craft Beer Cabin. This place is a community hub in its own right, and Nick graciously agreed to be part of our project. However, the first portrait Jonny drew was of Bobby at Yeha Noha: as one of the longest running Norwood businesses, he is something of an institution.

Jonny worked from photos; teaching full time meant he would never find the time to match our schedules to draw from life. Sometimes the subjects were happy for him to snap them right there and then; sometimes, they sent him a photo of their own choosing! If they had time, Lizzie interviewed them straight away, but she had to catch up with many more in the following months. This was certainly true when some businesses contacted Jonny directly asking to take part once he started to share on Instagram. She then wrote these up into the texts displayed at the exhibition.

Jonny sketched out each portrait in pencil first: it's a brave or foolish artist who goes straight in with pen. He then went over and added most of the detail with fine liner pens. There is still a large element of risk here: the pencilwork is just a simple outline, and mistakes can still be made.

He did the vast majority of these during the long autumn and winter weekday evenings after a day of teaching. Despite this, I wanted as many as we could. The target of 15- 20 became 25, became 30, became...



THE PEOPLE

Here we go then.

The 38 individuals, businesses, or community groups we spoke to, their portraits, and their stories: 42 drawings in total.

We hope you enjoy discovering more about what makes South Norwood an amazing place to live.



BOBBY

CAFE YEHA NOHA



Yeha Noha Café and Bar opened in South Norwood in 2012; Yeha Noha means 'wishes of happiness and prosperity'. The owner, known locally as Bobby and self-proclaimed 'Godfather of the community', is proud to be one of the longest running cafés in South Norwood. He calls the café a 'community hub' and a 'place for everyone'. Every customer is welcome whether it's for a coffee, a sit-down meal or a round of drinks. Yeha Noha even won Best Café in Croydon in 2016

Bobby has been living in South Norwood for over twenty years. After working in the City in the hospitality and management industry, he decided to start his own venture with his wife. Bobby spent time researching areas to open his business, looking at Crystal Palace and Croydon but decided to settle in South Norwood. He saw potential in the area and wanted to create 'something for everyone'.

Bobby loves the diversity of the area and the spirit of South Norwood. Every time a new business opens in the area he likes to go and welcome the newcomers, not seeing them as competition but instead part of building a community. In the coming years he hopes to see more restaurants and innovation in the area. Bobby even has plans to open another business himself in South Norwood, so watch this space.

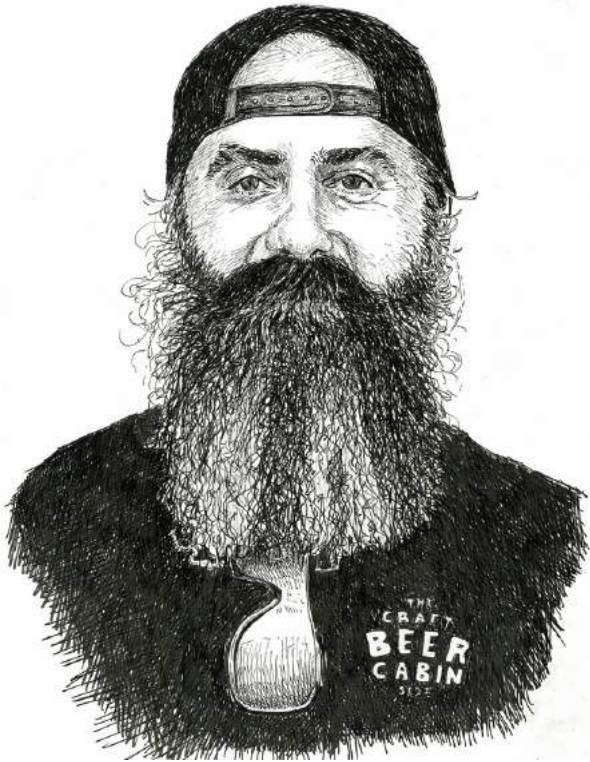
Interview with Bobby, Owner of Yeha Noha Café and Bar, October 2021

Yeha Noha Café and Bar

19-21 Station Road, SE25 5AG

NICK AND JOSIE

CRAFT BEER CABIN



Nick and Josie opened The Craft Beer Cabin in August 2018. Nick's day job is in the craft beer industry, giving him knowledge of the market; the business started up as a passion project for the couple. They originally lived in West Norwood and started with a stall at West Norwood Feast, which runs on the first Sunday of every month. They quickly saw a gap in the market for a mobile craft beer business and bought a black cab and converted it into a mobile bar. Due to their success with the market stall and the mobile bar customers began to ask when they would open somewhere more permanent.

When Nick and Josie were looking to buy a house, they decided to settle in South Norwood. Around the same time, they also found the opportunity to turn their Craft Beer Cab into the Craft Beer Cabin, in the heart of South Norwood. The Craft Beer Cabin has now been open for four years.

Nick and Josie love meeting new faces and over the years The Craft Beer Cabin has had its own community grow with many regular customers. Nick describes The Craft Beer Cabin 'like a cosy living room', creating a welcoming atmosphere. One of the most rewarding parts of the job for Nick is seeing customers interact with one another and swap phone numbers. The couple have made new friends themselves through the business and have found many other young families moving to the area in similar positions to themselves. The business has created a rewarding opportunity to build new connections through what started out as their passion project.

Supporting local businesses is very important to them. In the coming years Nick hopes to see more pride in the high street with the current empty shops building a bigger community in South Norwood.

Interview with Nick T, Co-owner of The Craft Beer Cabin, September 2021

The Craft Beer Cabin

210A Selhurst Road, SE25 6XU

NICK, AMELIA, AND SAM

CRAFT BEER CABIN



MATTHEW

WALNUTS AND HONEY

Walnuts and Honey opened in 2018. The owner, Matthew, had always wanted his own business, watching both of his parents run do so when he was a child. The shop specialises in cakes: Matthew was inspired by the anime show Yumeiro Patissiere, which follows a young pastry chef. Like in the anime, Matthew loves experimenting with flavour and has come up with many creations in the past. He looks at flavours which work well together and then modifies them: for example, taking chocolate and orange and replicating another sweet flavour with citrus, such as toffee and yuzu. However, his experiments don't always work, with his self-described worst flavour combination being peppermint and liquorice ('great in tea, but not in cake!').

Matthew grew up in London and wanted to open a shop based around his roots. When Walnuts and Honey was a mere idea, he had a market stall at the Clocktower Market to gauge demand for his creations. While he was on the market, he would see the store he currently occupies, which was then a former record shop, and just before he was about to sign the lease for another property on the high street, he took on his current premises instead.

The community around South Norwood is Matthew's favourite thing about the area. He says he has lived in other areas of south London which have 'no soul' compared to the 'indominable spirit' of South Norwood. From the litter picking society, to the 'save the library' group, Matthew says the people are all so friendly and have the community at heart.

Matthew points out that now people can shop on the internet so easily, people aren't as fussed about products anymore but want experiences. He hopes that there will be an increase in the night time economy, bringing niche and creative ideas to the area. Above all, Matthew wants to see more community spaces created.



Interview with Matthew, Owner of Walnuts and Honey, October 2021

Walnuts and Honey

27 Station Road, SE25 5AH

AMINA AND ASLAMA

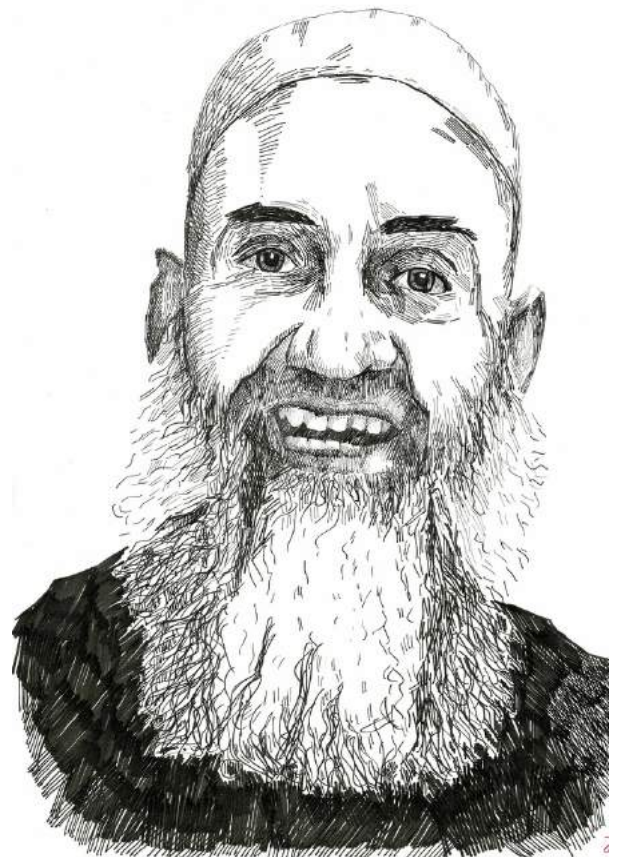
JANNAH PERFUMES

28 Station Road has been run by the Maliks for several years although it has only recently become Jannah Perfumes. Prior to this, it was the Amina Malik Gallery. Amina is an artist, and originally worked from the studio behind what was to become her own gallery. The gallery served a diverse clientele and Amina offered refreshments which she freshly made and served herself. The gallery also ran a series of workshops to encourage more local people to get into art, offering something for everyone. But then in early 2022 Amina decided to take on a new venture with her father, Aslama, and the pair opened up the perfume shop.

Aslama worked as a mechanic for almost 40 years before he has passed his business on to his son in 2021. He has always loved perfumes and Amina says since she remembers him always smelling fantastic when she was a child. Aslama says that perfume brings out character in a person and what people choose to wear says a lot about them as a person. Shifting to the perfume shop has been an opportunity for them to spend more time together and they both enjoy bringing something unique to the area.

Amina loves the diversity of South Norwood, seeing both such a range of people and the fact that area has so much to offer. In the future she would like to see more places to eat in South Norwood and, naturally, more creative spaces. Meanwhile, Aslama would like to see more support for smaller shops like theirs, rather than people buying online. He notes that even the centre of Croydon is much quieter than it used to be and would love to see a bustling high street in South Norwood.

Interview with Amina and Aslama Malik, Owner of Jannah Perfumes, April 2022
Jannah Perfumes
28 Station Road, SE25 5AG



JONNY AND ALAN

NO. 241 NORWOOD



Jonny, the owner of No. 241 Norwood is proud to have opened an environment for people to meet, relax, eat and drink. Prior to opening the space, Jonny owned The Pizza Project, a mobile pizzeria travelling around Surrey with a café in Merstham. It was while running The Pizza Project that Jonny met Alan, now head barista at No. 241 Norwood, in the Merstham pizza café. Alan came in to the café and ordered a specific coffee, which straight away made him stand out to Jonny as clearly being a coffee connoisseur. He watched Jonny make the coffee and congratulated him on it when it was delivered to him. The two of them got chatting and that day Jonny had offered him a job.

Alan then helped Jonny to understand more about tea and coffee, always looking for opportunities to learn more. Jonny knew he wanted to open a second business and it was during his second viewing of the space No. 241 Norwood inhabits that he knew it was the place for him. He said it was Nick from the Craft Beer Cabin who persuaded him that South Norwood was an area to invest in. Since opening he says he has never felt a tighter community where he is more involved with his customers.

Jonny wants Alan to be recognised for how hard he works to make No. 241 Norwood operate. Alan recruited all of the team (who are all local to Norwood) and together they are looking at how to develop the business further. 'The proof is in the pudding' for a formula which works well and they want to develop out to serving specialist alcohol as well.



Interview with Jonny, Owner of No. 241 Norwood, October 2021

No. 241 Norwood

241 Selhurst Road, SE25 6XP

SANA

HOLISTIC HEALING



Sana has lived in South Norwood for 14 years. A few years ago, she received a promotion while working in a school and working in such a high stress job took a large toll on her. She began looking into holistic treatment for herself, starting with yoga and meditation, before getting into sound and reflexology. She notes what a big difference the treatments made on her wellbeing although being sceptical at first, as, being a science teacher, holistic treatment went against what she believed and taught.

Converted to the art, Sana decided to train as a reflexologist herself. She explains reflexology to me as treating someone from the feet upwards, feeling the nerves which indicate a lot about the body. She has also been qualified for over two years as a sound healer. She now works part time at the school to make more time for her holistic work, including running workshops and wellness circles.

Sana loves living and working in South Norwood. She notes that it is the first place she has lived where she has felt such a sense of community. However, Sana thinks the high street's appearance does not reflect the people in the community. She describes the shop owners like friends and wants more businesses to open and help develop the high street. The area has been growing for several years now and Sana hopes it continues to do so.

Interview with Sana, Reflexologist, Reiki Therapist and Sound Healer, October 2021

Sana Holistic

Target Health Clinic, 121 South Norwood Hill, SE25 6DD

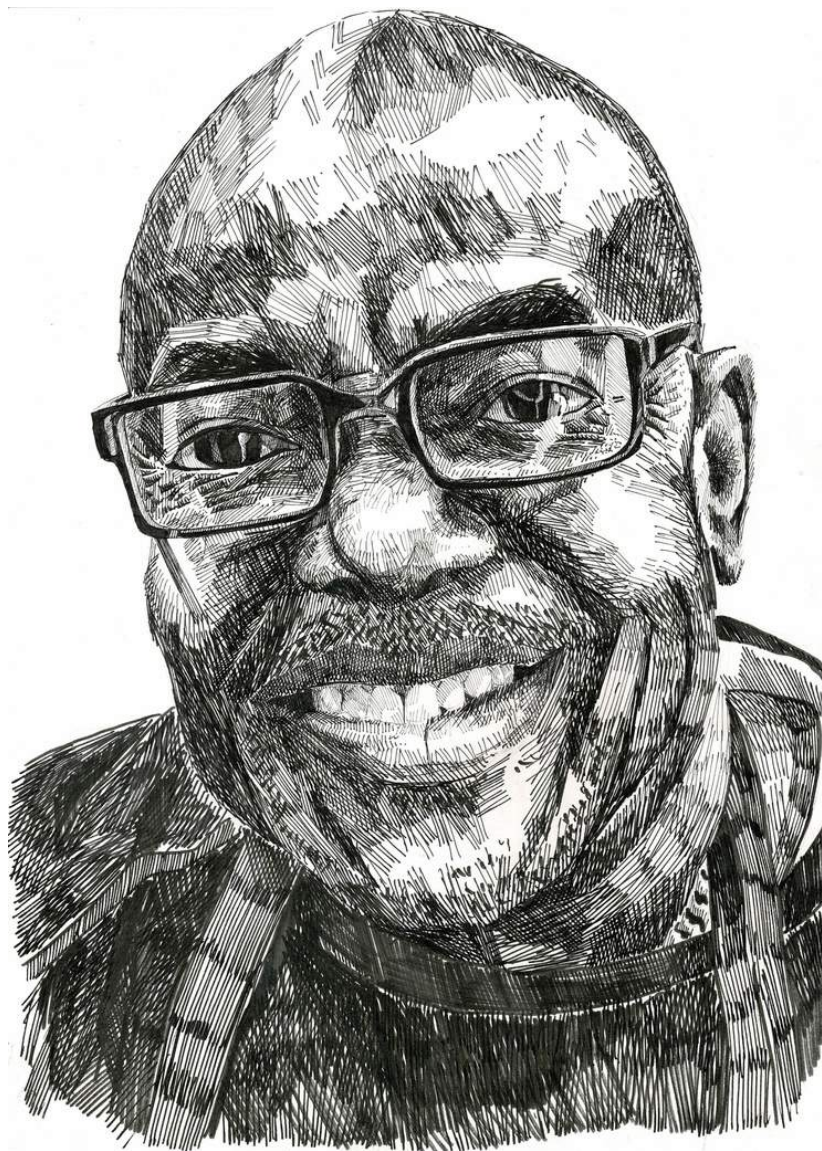
LEN

L.A. CARR KEYCUTTING

L.A. Carr Shoes Repairs & Key Cutting has been open for ten years. The story of how Len, the owner, acquired the store is a charming one. Len had lived and worked in Brixton for 30 years and had his mortgage with Northern Rock. When the building society fell through, Len looked to move, and made an appointment with Northwoods Estate Agent in South Norwood. While he was waiting for his appointment, he sat and admired the high street and thought it would be a great place to open his next venture. After his appointment with the estate agent, Len asked about if they had any shops in the area for rent but unfortunately they didn't. As Len went to leave, another gentleman was on his way in, and did the awkward dance of trying to step from side to side to let the other pass. It just so happened that the gentleman he had bumped into when he left was going into the estate agent as he had a shop to let. This soon became L.A. Carr Shoes Repairs & Key Cutting.

Len would like to see more parking and better transport to help South Norwood develop. He believes the area is not best accessible for people to come to due to the lack of networks and short term parking. There are plenty of great places for people to explore, shop and get their hair or nails done, but there needs to be a means of doing this. Len also highly recommends a visit to South Norwood lakes for anyone visiting the area.

Interview with Len, Owner of L.A. Carr Shoes Repairs & Key Cutting, October 2021
L.A. Carr Shoes Repairs & Key Cutting
214A Selhurst Rd, SE25 6XU



NICOLA

BLOOMING DESIRES

Nicola, the owner of Blooming Desires, decided to study floristry at college when her son went to University. At first she worked with other people but then started her own market stall. This grew into a shop but she then decided to scale back down to the stall, which can be found Tuesday to Friday 11.00am - 4.00pm and Saturdays 9.30am-4.00pm on the corner of Station Road. She sells a wide range of plants and flowers, and kindly helped me choose a range of plants which would be safe around my cat (conveniently labelled on her stall with 'paws' meaning they are safe to have around pets). She also arranges flowers to order for weddings, funerals and any other occasion.



Nicola lives in Crystal Palace but South Norwood seemed the perfect place to start her business. She loves the sense of community in the area and she knew so many people in the area. As I had this discussion with her at least four people she knew walked past the stall and stopped to say hello. She even joked with me that she finds it hard to come shopping in South Norwood now due to the number of people who will stop and chat! But she says this community spirit and friendliness is what drew her to the area.

With a lot of empty spaces still in the area, Nicola would like to see more independent businesses. She appreciates how much South Norwood supports their local businesses and wants to community to be able to explore what is available to them.

*Interview with Nicola, Owner of Blooming Desires, October 2021
Station Road, SE25 5AH*

YIAN

YIAN THE BARBER

Yian has had his barber shop on Portland Road for seven years. His Dad owned the property in 1993 (known then as Barber Jack) and then sold to it to another employee. But Yian made an offer on the property due to the sentimental value it held for him and took it on as Barber Jack and Sons in 2014.

Yian used to play football in Cyprus and once upon a time wanted to pursue his passion. However, when he moved to the UK he trained to be a barber in the family business and has never looked back. He loves how his job allows him to meet new people.

When Yian's father had the property, he says that all of the shops were open. Yian proudly notes that his father had one of the first barber shops in the area. Yian would like to see more of the shops open and more diversity in the area catering to the diverse population of South Norwood.

*Interview with Yian, Owner of YIAN
January 2022*

*YIAN (Barber Jack and Sons)
15 Portland Road, SE25 4UF*



JUSTINA AND GARETH

LITTLE MOUSE CHEESE

Little Mouse cheesemonger is one of the newest additions to South Norwood. The business is a product of a new-found lockdown passion, when Justina and Gareth became interested in cheese and attended courses from the cheese academy. Justina previously worked at the Tate Modern, and during lockdown found she had free time to explore both her new interest and also the area surrounding South Norwood. She grew up in Tooting, and Gareth has lived in South London for 15 years, but the couple decided to move to South Norwood to settle down and have since fallen in love with the area.



Little Mouse started in the South Norwood markets and developed into the shop and tasting room in November 2021. It was Justina's dream to revive an old high street shop and they're both delighted to be part of the restoration of both their own shop and the local area. Justina took redundancy from the Tate Modern and now works for Little Mouse full time, with Gareth still working for a food sharing app which hopes to reduce food waste. Environmental sustainability is important to the couple, with their produce being locally sourced where possible and they want to shorten the supply chain to make sure everyone is paid fairly. For example, they have a vast range of British cheeses, their wine comes from small producers and is sourced from a local wine importer, their chutneys are made in West Wickham and Bermondsey and their staff are local to South Norwood.

Gareth and Justina have found their business a steep learning curve but have enjoyed every moment of it. They both love that they are adding variety to the high street, proclaiming 'the cheeseboard game in South Norwood is going to be great!'. The couple want to encourage anyone thinking of taking a similar venture to push themselves to do so. They say the community support of South Norwood has helped them progress so far and they would like to see more businesses open which are also run by South Norwood locals.

Interview with Justina and Gareth, owners of Little Mouse, December 2021

Little Mouse

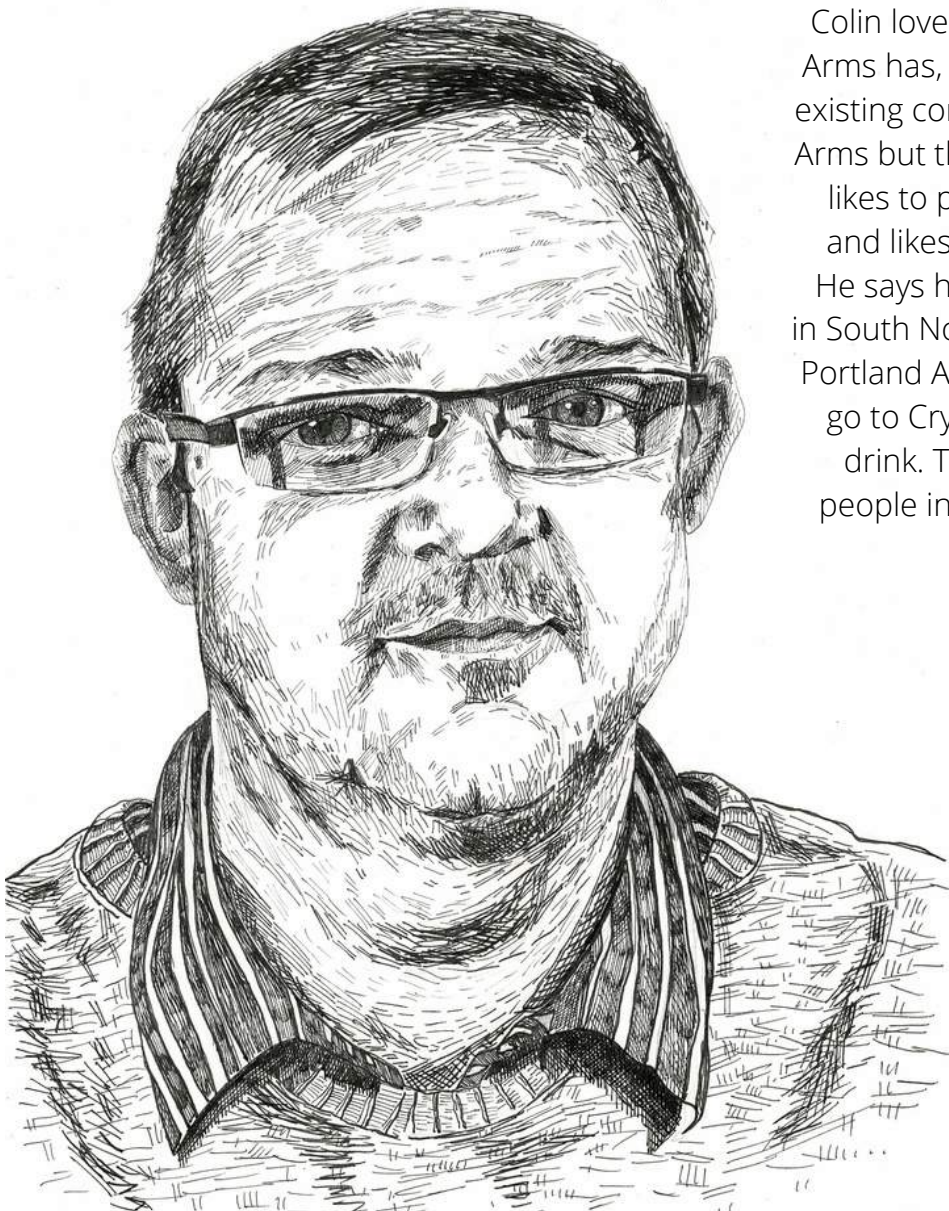
212A Selhurst Road, SE25 6XU

COLIN

THE PORTLAND ARMS

The Portland Arms is a dog and family friendly pub on Portland Road. The pub is part of the Cityglen Pub Co., a group of independent local pubs rooted within their communities. The manager of the Portland Arms, Colin, says that the pub serves a wonderful and diverse community where everyone is accepted.

Colin was born in Belfast but has lived in London for 15 years. He originally trained as a butcher, but lost work with the BSE outbreak. He managed his first hotel when he was only 26 and worked in many hotels since. He has also managed several pubs in South London but has now been working at the Portland Arms for four years.



Colin loves the customer base that the Portland Arms has, calling them the 'salt of the earth'. The existing community are very loyal to the Portland Arms but they are always seeing new faces. Colin likes to push the boundaries of the pub serves and likes to meet the desires of his customers. He says he would like to see more places to eat in South Norwood, and more competition for the Portland Arms noting too many people currently go to Crystal Palace for an evening of food and drink. The pubs need to join together to keep people in the area with pubs being the heart of the community.

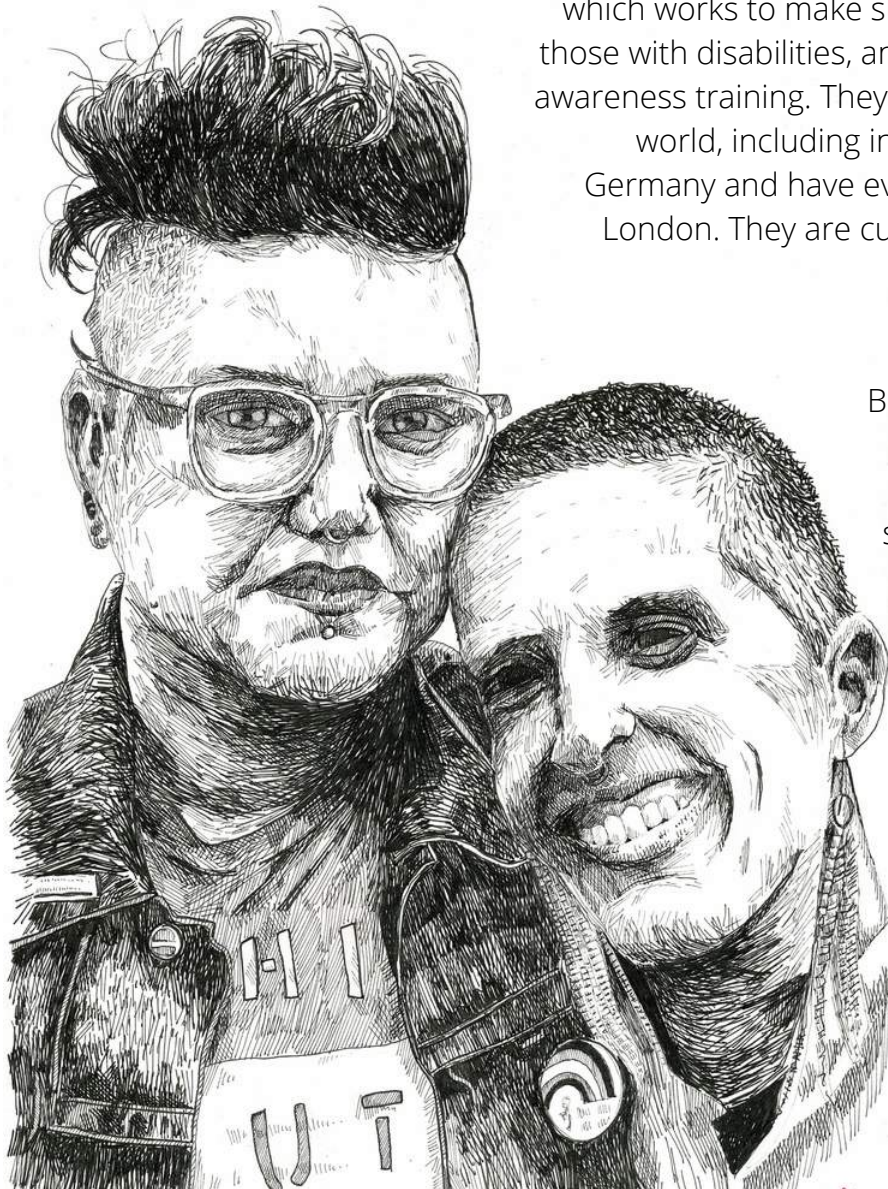
*Interview with Colin, Manager of the
Portland Arms, December 2021
The Portland Arms
152 Portland Road, SE25 4PT*

AL AND AMELIA

QUIPLASH

Quiplash describe themselves as queer crip access artists. Amelia and Al are the brains behind the group and have very personal connections to their mission. Amelia and Al are both queer and Amelia is blind. Amelia has a background in theatre and academics, while Al is a visual artist, so the couple brought their passions together to create a space for them and others with accessibility needs. Back in 2019 Amelia wanted to get into drag but found that the industry was not very accessible for the visually impaired. They wanted to address this, so got together with access workers to create their own show with Al working as the producer and Quiplash was born.

The group now has two different strands: the performance strand, which works to make shows more accessible to queer people and those with disabilities, and consultation work in queer and disability awareness training. They currently have 70 active clients all over the world, including in Canada, Brazil, Switzerland, Argentina and Germany and have even worked with the Wellcome Collection in London. They are currently struggling to meet demand and are hoping to expand very soon.



Both Amelia and Al love living and working in South Norwood and are excited by the 'micro-culture' the area has. They want to see the local community grow, seeing more accessible spaces in Norwood. Part of Quiplash's mission is to give people more knowledge of the world and how different people experience the world in different ways. They hope the area will regenerate carefully, bringing new businesses to the area without driving up prices which push the locals out.

*Interview with Amelia and Al, founders of
Quiplash, December 2021
Quiplash
<https://www.quiplash.co.uk>*

LILI

JUJU TATTOO STUDIO



Juju tattoo studio used to be based in central London before moving to South Norwood. Made up of a team of three, Kasia and Lili (business partners) and Fernando, Juju is a tattoo shop which is customer based, with Lili calling it a 'community tattoo shop'. They blend and work with the community, moving out of central London as they wanted to be part of a neighbourhood. They had a vision of a new style of tattoo studio. Traditional tattoo shops are known to be dark and dingey, but Juju is far from it. The studio is bright, the artists make all of their customers feel welcome and at ease and in the warmer months there is a waiting area outside the shop in the sun.

Lili was originally a hairdresser before turning to tattoo artistry later in life. She says that when she did it felt 'like home' and says she will never leave the profession until she retires. Both Kasia and Fernando have artistic backgrounds but all three are equally talented.

Lili loves the friendliness of South Norwood and notes how homely it feels. She would like to see more tender love and care in the area, and suggested a neighbourhood watch could be a good asset to the community due to the reputation the area has. She highlights that the great transport links in and out of the centre are a major benefit which will pull more people into the area.

Interview with Lili, partner in Juju Tattoo Studio, May 2022

Juju Tattoo Studio

25 Station Road, SE25 5AH

JAMES AND KY

A HOUSE LIKE THIS

James and Ky met in 2010 and bonded over their shared love of music and design. They have always wanted to start a business together and one day the opportunity presented itself. In the run up to Christmas 2017 James had been making candles for friends and the pair saw a gap in the market of South Norwood. They now sell handmade candles, wax melts, incense, diffusers and skincare products online and at local markets. The name A House Like This came from when the pair would look for inspiration for their own home online and would keep saying to each other 'I want a house like this!'.



James's favourite collection they sell is the Mindful Edit Essential Oils Collection which is perfect for 'explorers, storytellers and dreamers'. The scents have been chosen to uplift and calm the body, and the collection comes with a QR code which sends customers directly to a tailor-made playlist to enhance the aromatherapy experience. James notes that mindfulness is central to A House Like This and they want to make mindfulness more accessible to others

James and Ky moved here in December 2016. They love walking their dog around the country park and lake. James says that this the first area they have lived which feels like a community. They love the quick transport links into London Bridge and see the area as a 'hidden gem'. In terms of the regeneration of South Norwood, James would like to see more independent shops open in the area as he is keen to support small businesses like theirs.

Maybe one day we will see A House Like This on South Norwood High Street!

Interview with James, Co-owner of A House Like This, April 2022

A House Like This

www.ahouselikethis.com

PAUL AND LAURA

COMMUNITY KITCHEN



South Norwood Community Kitchen started five years ago, after Paul and Laura had worked on a similar project elsewhere. Paul's background is in housing and Laura's is in the community sector, and the pair saw a need for a community food hub as, although the area is changing and developing, there are still a lot of people in need of support. They refer to themselves as a 'one stop shop', as anyone who comes to the kitchen will be helped. They are not needs based and anyone can benefit from the organisation.

When the project first started anyone who came to the kitchen would share a meal together, but now their network is so vast they can no longer cater to such a large group. COVID changed a lot for them. Their user base went from around 50 to up to 200. Throughout the pandemic they organised food deliveries to make sure no one would go hungry.

They are supported by the Felix Project (previously FareShare) and also get private donations as well as from organisations such as a Butchers in Bromley. Now anyone can pay them a visit on Saturday mornings to get food packages and even support in things such as writing housing applications if it's needed. The pair hope to branch out to run more community projects, such as a mental health garden and running activity clubs. They are heavily involved in the re-opening Socca Cheta on Portland Road and the Community Kitchen can now be found there.

Interview with Paul and Laura, Founders of South Norwood Community Kitchen, February 2022
South Norwood Community Kitchen
www.southnorwoodcommunitykitchen.co.uk



VALERIE

THE ALBION

Valerie has been the manager of the Albion pub for two and a half years. Prior to this she worked at the Jolly Sailor, with a strong background in hospitality, also having worked at the Harvester on Beulah Hill while her children were little. She also was a bus driver for 11 years for Transport for London, and knows the 417 route like the back of her hand.

Valerie enjoys pub life as every day is different and she meets so many diverse people. The Albion is situated on South Norwood High Street and has many faithful regulars although Valerie is always happy to welcome new punters. The pub boasts a small garden to relax in the summer and they often screen sport inside, so fans of football, rugby, cricket, snooker and golf will not be disappointed!

Considering Valerie has spent so much time working in the hospitality sector of Norwood she is keen to see regeneration. Like so many others she notes that the empty shops going to waste and she remembers a time when all shops used to be open. She misses having a pound shop on the high street and would like to see more clothes shops and restaurants in the area.



Interview with Valerie, Manager of The Albion, December 2021
The Albion
26 High Street, SE25 6HA

CIARAN DANCE

CIARAN DANCE DESIGNS

Ciaran's background is in architecture but left the industry feeling it wasn't the easiest place for a woman. She still does architectural work as well as interior styling but she is her own boss and spends the majority of her time making bespoke lampshades. Her friend Sarah (of Red Kite Plants) suggested she started making and selling lamps as Ciaran used to do events at the Dulwich Women's Institute. She now fills her loft with lampshades, all different designs, colours and sizes which are sold online and at local markets. Her favourites are her 'hidden range', which is where one design is seen on the outside of the lampshade, but once lit up a different pattern shines through. She also makes lampshades to order so anyone wanting their own personal design should get in touch!



Ciaran has lived in London since 1999, originally living in Clapham, before moving to Camden, then Dulwich and finally to South Norwood in 2015. She takes part in various community groups in the area and loves the friendliness of South Norwood. Her favourite elements of the area are the green spaces and the good transport networks into central London. Alike to so many others, Ciaran would like to see the empty shops filled as there is so much wasted space on the Highstreet. She would like to see more variety and would personally like to see a bakery and deli filling some of those spaces.

*Interview with Ciaran, Owner of Ciaran Dance Design,
April 2022*

*Ciaran Dance Design
<https://www.ciarandancedesign.com>*

MEL

LAKES CAFE

Anyone who strolls down to the South Norwood Lakes should definitely pay the Lakes Café a visit. Mel has been running the Lakes Café for seven years. She originally started in the business making gluten free cakes for the previous owners, but when they wanted to move Mel saw the opportunity to take over. Before this she ran a gluten free cake stall at Crystal Palace market. She was diagnosed with coeliac disease at 13, so gluten free cooking and baking is a part of her daily life. Her cakes are far from the dry and dull bakes people often associate with gluten free baking and she really shows how you don't have to miss out on flavour or texture so they're definitely not to be missed.

Mel has been living in South Norwood since 2007 and her husband grew up around the area. Her favourite part of the area is the lake which she is so grateful to work next to. She wants to see more of the shops on the high street in use and suggests a book shop and a toy shop would bring something new to SE25.

Interview with Mel, Owner of Lakes Café, February 2022

The Lakes Café

25 Avenue Road, London, SE25 4DX



NICKY

NIX HAIR AND BEAUTY



Nicky has been in the premises of her salon on Portland Road for 16 years but it has only been Nix Hair & Beauty for the last six. Before this she did a few pop-up salons, such as in South Norwood Social Club on Enmore Road, which let her use their premises for five months before she opened her current salon. Nicky studied hairdressing when she left school but ended up working in human resources for a long time before making her way back to hair. She would also like to open a nail bar one day.

Not only does Nicky run her own business but she runs the South Norwood Business Network, along with Nicola of Blooming Desires. The business network meet twice a year and offer ongoing support to local businesses in the area. They also work with the WeLoveSE25 App to promote local events and offers. Her experience of running her own business in South Norwood and supporting many others means that she can't imagine running her business anywhere else. Nicky says the South Norwood is the perfect example where every race, religion and political stance can live alongside one another. The diversity and community spirit that South Norwood have are her favourite things about living and working in the area.

Interview with Nicky, owner of Nix Hair and Beauty, April 2022
Nix Hair and Beauty,
283 Portland Road, SE25 4QQ

CIARA

YOGA MELA



Yoga Mela is a yoga studio which offers several different types of yoga class, both in person and online and catering to all abilities. Some examples of the classes they run include hatha yoga, chair yoga, pregnancy yoga and even a 'Dads and Dudes' class which often involves a trip to the Craft Beer Cabin afterwards! The studio opened in January 2020 although Ciara, the owner, had been running yoga classes from Stanley Arts for about four years prior to that. The studio has been home to several different businesses in Norwood before it became Yoga Mela, including a discount store, car garage and carpet shop. The back room which is used for drinking tea after class was formally the MOT station in the garage and now is a world away from what it used to be.

Ciara worked in fashion before she decided to go travelling and fell in love with yoga. She notes that she felt so different and much happier practising yoga, having let go of her previous stressful life. She wants to help others feel the same way. Yoga can do so much for people but Yoga Mela has the added bonus of bringing a yoga community to South Norwood.

Similar to many other Drawood interviewees, Ciara is so happy she moved to South Norwood, saying it is "full of hidden gems". She says she is seeing more people take care of the area but notes that more bins are needed to keep rubbish off the streets. She is grateful to be part of the regeneration of South Norwood and likes the diversity of the area wanting it to cater to everyone's needs.

Interview with Ciara, owner of Yoga Mela, January 2022

Yoga Mela

239 Selhurst Road, SE25 6XP

AMINA AND REEM

COMMUNITEA CAFE



The vegetarian and vegan café which is Communita has been on South Norwood Highstreet for around four years. Amina and Reem originally set up as a social enterprise, Yalla Hub, wanting the help migrant refugee women and ethnic minority women. Although the pair had no previous experience in hospitality, they needed a physical space to run their enterprise and so Communita was born.

They took on the café to support their enterprise and their vision has changed over time. While helping others is still at the heart of what they do, the café now takes up the majority of their time. One of the projects they support is Palm & Fig, which runs workshops for women and children, and make and sell handmade dolls which are sold on Etsy.

Amina says that the people of South Norwood are what make it so special and she loves how the local businesses support each other. She calls the friendliness and mutual support a 'beautiful dance that we're all in'. Understandably, the pair would like to see more small, local businesses move into the shops on the high street, with the community taking ownership of the area.

*Interview with Amina, co-founder of
Communita, April 2022
Communita
80 High Street, South Norwood, SE25 6EA*



DIOAN

TRANQUILLITY CORNER CAFE

Only a five minute walk from South Norwood Country Park is the Tranquillity Corner Café, owned by Diaon Wright. Diaon takes pride in being the only coffee shop in the locality on Portland Road. Diaon is a teacher by background but found her profession changing over the years and decided to leave to become a private tutor. However, when the opportunity arose, she decided to open her own business with her current shop was previously owned by a niece of one of her friends. Rather than changing the business completely she has put her own spin on it. Customers are indulged by her and the menu has been adapted to give more variety to the area.

Diaon only opened her business a week before the first COVID-19 lockdown but managed to pull through selling takeaways. She notes that home workers would come and get their lunches from her and this continued throughout the pandemic. The friendly faces she sees make her day and she says that seeing dads taking out their children are her favourite clientele.

For Diaon, giving back to the community is as important as receiving. She says she would love to see more support for business owners to be able to develop their businesses. She notes that Portland Road could do with a bit of love and care, saying the council should provide better lighting and more cleaning which would make the area more appealing for everybody. However, Diaon notes that residents in South Norwood are lucky by many of the facilities they have available to them, such as Stanley Arts and so many other amazing local businesses such as the others represented in the South Drawood project.

Interview with Diaon, Owner of the Tranquillity Corner Café, January 2022

Tranquillity Corner Café

128 Portland Road, London, SE25 4PL



OLGA

CAFE TERRA



Café Terra is a little bit of Portugal in South Norwood. The menu is written in Portuguese and a lot of the dishes on offer are traditional Portuguese delicacies. Olga, the owner of Café Terra, was born in Madeira and keeping her traditions alive is important to her, as reflected in the café. She has always worked in catering but was made redundant during the COVID-19 lockdown and saw an opportunity to do something new for herself. Her café is friendly and family orientated and customers like to come to the café to chill out in the relaxed atmosphere. Olga also offers a downstairs space where different local groups come to meet and customers can go to relax.

Like so many others displayed, Olga loves the community of South Norwood. She notes how the community help each other out. She is a prime example of this, saying on Sundays she likes to go and have breakfast over the road from her own café, in No. 241 Norwood. She sees the area changing and developing, with so much potential on offer. Olga would like to see more bins on the high street to reduce the amount of litter. She also says that decorations would really brighten up the main roads, such as flowers or lights at Christmas.

Interview with Olga, owner of Café Terra, January 2022

Café Terra

208a Selhurst Road, London, SE25 6XU

JOHN

SOUTH NORWOOD COMMUNITY FESTIVAL

The man behind the famous South Norwood Community Festival is John Rother, who also runs the SouthNorwood.net website. He has lived in South Norwood for all his life and got involved in the community life about 15 years ago litter picking and selling raffle tickets. He then took over the South Norwood Community Festival (previously the South Norwood Arts Festival) ten years ago. The budget for his first festival was a mere £150 and back then people would sit on the street and the stage was made out of pallets. The festival began to grow and once it had moved into South Norwood recreation ground the council became more involved and has grown to the event it is today.

His community involvement does not stop there though, although John builds websites for his day job, he still finds time to organise a jam night in the Conservative Club one a month and he also used to help out with Stanley Arts.

John's favourite parts of South Norwood are the parks and lakes. As a child he used to take his BMX bike around the country park and play pitch and put, so the park has a dear place in his heart. He also likes to go and take photos around the South Norwood Lakes in his free time.

In the development of South Norwood John would like to see more restaurants bringing people to SE25. He says that there should also be more parking, which would encourage people to come and spend more time here.

*Interview with John, organiser of South Norwood
Community Festival and southnorwood.net
April 2022*

<https://southnorwood.net/>

<https://www.sncfest.org/>



JOY AND DAVE

BLUEJAY CAFE



Winner of the Pride of Croydon Award 2022 and known for being a favourite of rapper Stormzy, the Blue Jay Café originally started as a five year plan for Joy and Dave but the business is still thriving 14 years later. They have watched their community live and grow with Joy saying they are all a big family. Joy previously worked in schools and as a counsellor, and her caring nature continues within the Café. A lot of the locals have worked for her in their teenage years as well as a lot of their own family serving customers and making the food.

Joy and Dave like to support local projects and will take part in anything which comes their way. They also note the special relationship business owners have with one another in the area. However, when the pair were looking to open the café they started their search around Crystal Palace but then fell in love with South Norwood and haven't looked back.

Joy and Dave have seen South Norwood develop and change over the years Blue Jay has been open. Joy says that she would like to see more activities in the area for young people. She takes great joy in employing young locals as 'they are the future', and she would like to see more services to support and encourage the young people of South Norwood to achieve great things.

Interview with Joy, Co-owner of Blue Jay Café, April 2022
Blue Jay Café
2 Market Parade Portland Road, London, SE25 4PP

BRADLEY

ROCCO DELI

Rocco Deli can be found in the garden of the Clifton Arms just opposite Selhurst Park stadium. Bradley, the owner, told me he had only been there three months when we met in January 2022. Originally from Southampton, he has worked in restaurants all of his life and usually worked front of house. Before taking on his own venture he worked in a restaurant in Soho, but like lots of other people, the pandemic changed his perspective. The Clifton Arms is his local, after moving to South Norwood four years ago, and as he knew Ewalina the landlady he decided it was time to start his own business.

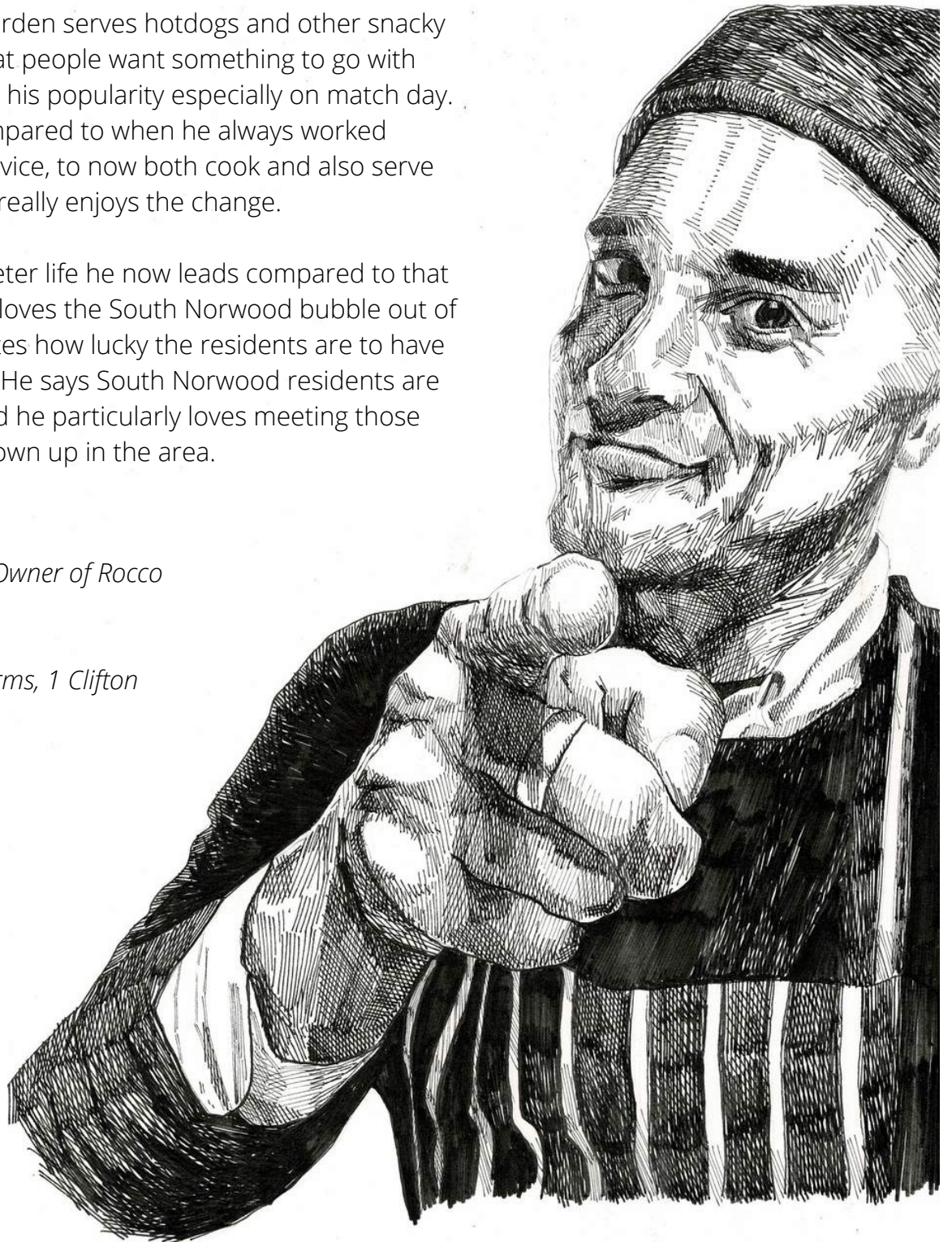
His truck in the pub garden serves hotdogs and other snacky foods. Bradley says that people want something to go with their drinks, and notes his popularity especially on match day. It's quite a change compared to when he always worked purely in customer service, to now both cook and also serve his customers, but he really enjoys the change.

Bradley prefers to quieter life he now leads compared to that of central London. He loves the South Norwood bubble out of the city centre and notes how lucky the residents are to have so much green space. He says South Norwood residents are very down to earth and he particularly loves meeting those who have lived and grown up in the area.

Interview with Bradley, Owner of Rocco Deli, January 2022

Rocco Deli

Garden of The Clifton Arms, 1 Clifton Road, London SE25 6NJ



DAN

STANLEY ARTS

Dan joined Stanley Arts in 2019 as part of the regeneration of the building. The group, who were looking to re-do the building, didn't know what to do with it, but with Dan's background in arts it seemed obvious to him to turn it into an arts venue. Dan's background is in theatre, although he originally trained in academia getting a doctorate in physics! He is now the venue director of Stanley Arts and has been a massive help in putting together the exhibition as well as coordinating other events and overseeing the general upkeep of the building.

Dan commutes down from Finsbury Park to work in SE25 (he can cycle in in 55 minutes!) He loves the diversity of South Norwood and says how interesting it is for him to be at the centre of the community. South Norwood doesn't have a town hall but Stanley Arts is used for many council functions and other events. The building is there to serve all needs of the community, both the geographical community who live in the area and then communities of interest such as Queer Arts based groups. He notes that the building can bring so much culture to South Norwood which will help with the regeneration of the area. Anyone is welcome to enquire with him about finding a space within the building to cater to their needs whether that's for a wedding, putting on a show on the main stage or hiring a space for a smaller event.

*Interview with Dan, Venue Director of
Stanley Arts, April 2022
Stanley Arts
12 South Norwood Hill, London, SE25 6AB*



SARAH

RED KITE PLANTS

Like so many of the others you read about in this exhibition, Sarah of Red Kite Plants decided to change careers after the COVID-19 pandemic. She used to work in the fashion industry but decided to do a gardening and royal horticultural society course to develop her gardening skills in her free time. Many people on the course were taking the course for a career change so when she was furloughed and subsequently made redundant in the pandemic, it seemed the perfect opportunity for her to start her own gardening business. She started off making window boxes and caring for friends' gardens, which turned into weekend work and then garden maintenance and bigger design work. She now offers a range of gardening services for her ever-growing clientele. Her business is also nature friendly, not using any harsh chemicals in their products, using peat free compost and not using any petrol fuelled tools.

Sarah moved to south London four years ago as her husband was working in London. When she went on maternity leave she managed to explore the area much more than before and discovered all the green spaces and parks South Norwood has to offer. In the development of the high street she would like to see the shops filled, saying a bakery, tapas restaurant and a gift shop would be the perfect new businesses for her.

Interview with Sarah, Owner of Red Kite Plants, April 2022

Red Kite Plants

www.redkiteplants.co.uk



TOP: EMMA, HARRY, SUWANNEE, DAVID BOTTOM: JOAN, CHRIS, SUE, STOYANKA

FRIENDS OF LOVE LANE GREEN



The Friends of Love Lane have put a great amount of time and effort into changing the green space at the end of Love Lane. The organisation started in 2015 although one of their members has been campaigning for the land for over 30 years. When the council wanted to sell of the land around three decades ago Joan would do sit ins on the land to stop the council from selling it off. She is still heavily involved today saying for her it is about 'taking pride in my community'. The group started by clearing the fly tipping in the area over when Emma organised a cleaning day and over 30 people attended and the group has grown from there. They now have 10 committee members and run a series of volunteering days, facilitating the development of the space.

The group make are self-described 'opportunists' who use of a lot of the objects which are left on the land for their projects. For example, their water butt and compost bin were fly tips which they repurposed. They have also recently made a pond out of an old sandbox which is seeing toads start to visit. Their volunteers come from all walks of life and are a variety of different ages. Most of their funding comes from donations but they have also been supported by WeLoveSE25. Every year they enter the RHS London in Bloom competition and are confident that one day they will win!

Interview with Emma, Chris and Joan, Committee members of the Friends of Love Lane, April 2022

Friends of Love Lane

Love Lane Green, London, SE25 4NG

www.twitter.com/lovelanegreen

SAMANTHA

BOOK LOVE

Samantha of Book Love had a long career in television, mainly working with independent film companies. She felt conflicted in trying to do the right thing and telling her own truth but following the demands of her job. She said that one day she decided "F**k this. I can't tell your stories anymore, I have to tell mine".

Samantha first remembers experiencing racism at nine years old. She wanted to be an angel in her school nativity play, and the nuns that ran the school said no as she did not look like how angels were meant to. Her mother was from Barbados, and she also has Welsh blood in her and says that as a woman of dual heritage and multiple backgrounds, she is passionate about promoting inclusion both for herself and others.

As a mother of three, she was starting to sense her children were becoming aware of their own racial identity and she didn't want them to have the same experience as she did growing up and not feeling like she fit in. In September 2016, Samantha wrote a letter for every parent in her children's school, with the schools' full support, inviting them to participate in Black History Month, ran an exhibition with each class about black history and authors came in to sell books. Samantha later took the books to sell at the school playground and realised she was not alone in wanting to spread the message of black and brown brilliance. Originally, she only had self-published books but then wrote to the larger publishers to say they didn't have enough representation of black or brown children. She notes that a statistic released in 2017 showed only 1% of children's books featured a black child.

She found her business boomed with the dominance of the Black Lives Matter movement in the media in the spring of 2020. She had to move her business online due to COVID, but then found that she couldn't keep up with the orders that she received. Her house became a warehouse with a gazebo in the garden to be able to store the books. People in the community came to help her fulfil the orders and she notes how important community is to her. She is passionate about catering to the community and loves to diversity of South Norwood. She says there are a lot of black and brown families in the area and notes that, unfortunately, the area isn't as integrated as it could be. With Book Love, she helps to fill that gap by spreading the words of black and brown authors.

Samantha does note that South Norwood is very lucky to have the green spaces and community hubs such as Stanley Arts. However, she wants to see more people to fill the spaces, fewer invisible landlords and invisible shops, and more people coming to create the community which South Norwood so clearly deserves.

Interview with Samantha, Founder of Book Love, February 2022

Book Love

Available at weare@thisisbooklove.com



EWALINA

THE CLIFTON ARMS

Ewalina has lived in South Norwood for around 16 years, working in different pubs. She was working at The Clifton Arms part time behind the bar when the opportunity came for her to take over in October 2019 just before the Covid-19 outbreak.

Covid-19 was difficult for the pub as it was for all of hospitality. She said that when they could finally open up in the garden it was amazing to see punters out socialising again; however, some people still opted to buy drink to have at home rather than to venture back out again. Luckily the pub is now building back to its buzzing self. Being right opposite Selhurst Park, they only allow Palace fans in on match days and she says the atmosphere (no matter what the score) is always amazing.

Ewalina loves people and says that everyone who comes into the pub is friendly. She is still building up be base of regulars, and likes to give opportunities to other aspiring businesses. Just see Bradley in the garden for a great example (or read his own bio in this booklet under Rocco Deli!). She also has invited punters in to perform at the pub after hearing them sing to their friends around the bar.

Originally from Poland, Ewalina lived in Clapham and Hackney before moving to South Norwood with her partner for their children. The people are her favourite thing about the areas well as the sense of community. She notes that over the last four years the area has been changing for the better. She sees new businesses opening and bringing new things to the high street. She loves to see families out and about, and says that more parks and play areas for children would make the area complete.

Interview with Ewalina, Owner of The Clifton Arms, March 2022

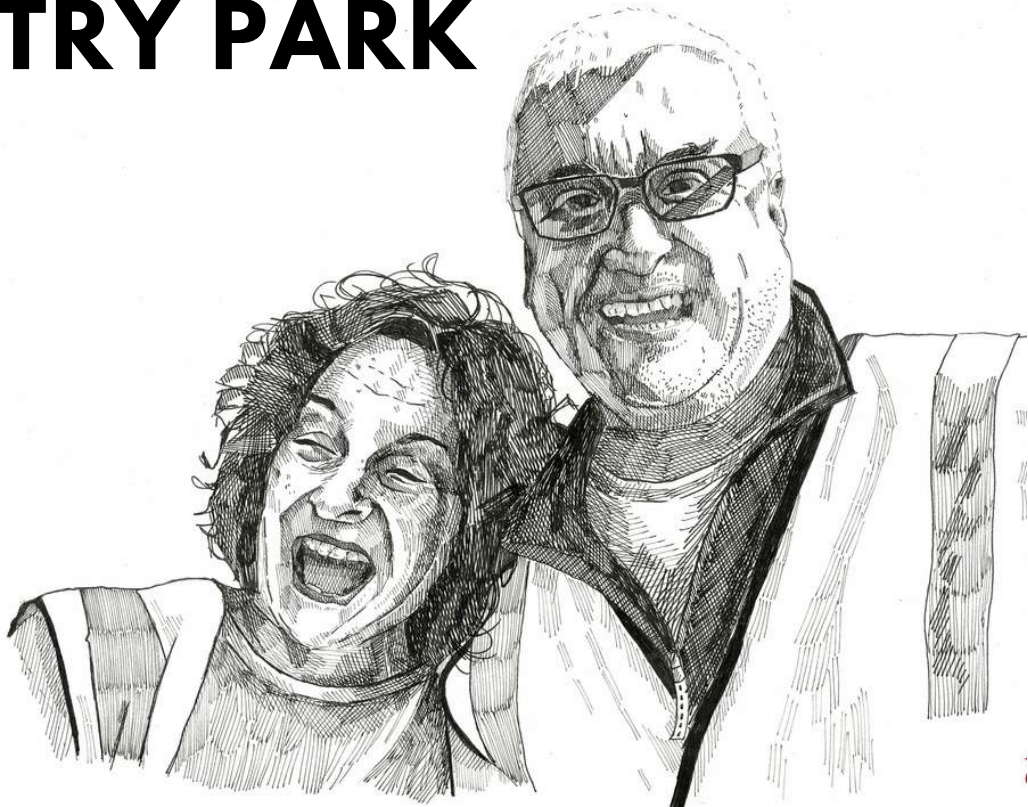
The Clifton Arms

21 Clifton Road, London, SE25 6NJ



SUE AND SUNDEEP

FRIENDS OF SOUTH NORWOOD COUNTRY PARK



The Friends of South Norwood country Park was started in 2014. The main focus of the group is conservation, making sure the wildlife can thrive and habitats are maintained in the 125 acre park. The group was originally set up to work with a warden, but once the role of the warden no longer existed the group continued, with the former warden even continuing to work in the park as a volunteer. The group work on conservation over two days a month. Some of their most recent work has been the '1 Dig Trees' project, which saw around 200 trees be donated this year which have been planted in the country park. The group are trying to build a woodland to replace the current meadow. They have been planting trees for around six years and they are starting to see the rewards of their efforts.

The group's other activities include planting wildflower seeds and litter picking. They have also dug out trenches in the wetlands to improve water management. This has seen birds such as waders flock back to the area. They have also started to see more unusual animals arrive, such as the marsh frog which is not native to the UK.

Sue and Sundeep, two of the volunteers of the country park, feel very fortunate to have a nature reserve in an urban area. They are very proud of it and happy that lots of people discovered it during the pandemic. The couple have lived in South Norwood for around 30 years, and remember the Country Park being built 1989 started conversion from former sewage land to country park. They want to make sure there is something of value for the community and that it is treated with respect.

The couple love living in South Norwood, and are strong believers that South Norwood does not deserve negative press and are proud to live and work within such a diverse area with such a rich history.

Interview with Sue and Sundeep, two volunteers at South Norwood Country Park, April 2022
Friends of South Norwood Country Park
<https://friendsofsncp.org.uk/>

IAN

**FRIENDS OF SOUTH NORWOOD
COUNTRY PARK**



CHRIS PESKETT; CHRIS CLARIDGE

PEOPLE FOR PORTLAND ROAD



People for Portland Road was established around 15 years ago, and Chris Peskett has been a member for the last 13 years. The People for Portland Road are keen to help redevelop the area. They are responsible for the installation of the planters at Norwood Junction station and volunteers maintain their upkeep all year round. They also introduced the Portland Road community garden by Enmore road in 2016. You can look out for plaques on various buildings around South Norwood which make up the People for Portland Road heritage trail which makes a fun and local family activity. Their most recent project is trying to plant 16 trees in the southern end of Portland Road with trees donated by Trees for Streets.

Chris P is one of the well-known residents of South Norwood. Her maiden name (Kennedy) is famous on the high street, with Kennedy Butchers once belonging to her father. Both Chris and her brother worked in the sausage factory when they were younger, and she spent many holidays linking sausages and making sausage rolls. Chris not only volunteers with People for Portland Road, but also WeLoveSE25, Friends of South Norwood Country Park and has also volunteered at the Croydon branch of the Cat's Protection. Every morning she starts her day with a walk to the country park where she fills the bird feeders and picks up litter. The country park is her favourite part of South Norwood but she also notes how friendly the people in the area are. In the coming years Chris would like to see more facilities for young families, as well the empty shops on the high street in use and cleaner streets.

Interview with Chris Peskett, Secretary and Treasurer for People for Portland Road, April 2022

People for Portland Road

<http://www.peopleforportlandroad.org.uk/>

TOP: RUTH, ANDREA, NICK
BOTTOM: SARA, HONEY, KAREN

FRIENDS OF GRANGEWOOD PARK



The Friends of Grangewood Park was founded in 2010 as a way to regenerate the park. The group came together and ran community consultations on what residents of the area want to see which they then feedback to the council. These consultations still run today. People see the group in the park and come to join them to see what they are doing, which is how Karen got involved. When she was new to the area she ended up attending one of the group's AGMs to find out what they were about and has been a volunteer since.

The group also oversee the upkeep of the park. For example, Ruth runs the edible garden. She started it in lockdown as a community food project. There was space in the park which wasn't being used and she seized the opportunity to begin to grow food for the community. Food was grown there in World War Two so why couldn't it be grown there again?

Everyone loves Grangewood park and the friends group have made such a difference to the local community. You can often find them clearing up the park, sweeping leaves and planting seeds. Check out their website for more information of how you can get involved!

Interview with Ruth, Karen and Andrea, Members of Friends of Grangewood park, April 2022

Friends of Grangewood Park

www.grangewoodpark.co.uk/get-involved

ALAN, LYNSEY, CAMERON, JOEL N AND C HOME IMPROVEMENTS



N & C Home Improvements is a family business which has been running for 47 years. It started off as a DIY store owned by Alan at 64 Portland Road, but has since grown with three generations of family now working in the business and the store now occupies 62-64 Portland Road. They supply fittings for kitchens and bathrooms, and also sell general homewares. The store has gathered many loyal customers over the years, some which still order their supplies from the family even once they've moved abroad. They have even sent stock to former customers who have moved as far as Jamaica!

The sense of family and community within N & C Home Improvements is clear. Lynsey notes of how they have factories in Ukraine which has led to the family being very concerned for their colleagues. They have tried to stay in touch with as many people as possible during the war in Ukraine. Closer to home, N & C Home Improvements have been responsible for decking out Socco Cheta with its new bathrooms. During the regeneration of the area Lynsey says she wants the area to stay a little 'rough around the edges' to not lose its character. She would like to see more diverse and independent shops come to the area to represent South Norwood's diverse community.

Interview with Lynsey, second generation owner of N & C Home Improvements, April 2022
N & C Home Improvements
62-62 Portland Road, SE25 4PQ

IAN AND SALLY

THE VICTORY CLUB



South Norwood Victory Club was founded in 1920. After World War One, a group of ex-servicemen came together to found a branch of the National Federation of Discharged and Demobilised Sailors and Soldiers, renting a room one evening a week to meet in. The proposition of a permanent residence came up and they finally managed to take over Park House, 227 Selhurst Road which had been unoccupied since 1917. The club didn't officially open until 1921, celebrating the anniversary of the Battle of Waterloo due to the restoration which was needed on the building. The club has been in operation ever since, running bingo nights, live music and other social events. The club moved from the Royal British Legion to the Club and Institute Union around 10 years ago.

Ian has been working at the club for over 28 years. His father was involved in the club, and Ian and his brother would often accompany his parents there, saying his mother also loved to go to play bingo. He started collecting glasses at the club at 18, then went to university to study aerospace engineering, but at 21 the opportunity came up for him to become assistant steward. By the time he was 30 he was in the position of steward and hasn't looked back since. Sally says he is a great boss to have. She has lived in Croydon her whole life, calling herself 'a proper Croydonite' and says she misspent her youth in every pub in South Norwood. She now loves working at the Victory Club seeing them as her family. Neither of them want to see prices rising and people being pushed out of the area. With both having such deep connections to South Norwood, they would love to see the area cleaned up a little, but wouldn't want a drastic change.

Interview with Ian and Sally, Manager and Server at South Norwood Victory Club, April 2022
South Norwood Victory Club
227 Selhurst Road, SE25 6XY

VERENA AND LYNN

BRUTALIST LIBRARY



In November 2020, Croydon Council announced that they intended to close South Norwood Library, a locally listed building within the South Norwood Conservation Area. The nature of the conservation area is to protect special architectural and historical interests, including the brutalist library. Built in 1968, the library is unlike any other building in the locality. The architecture is familiar to any followers of the popular 1950s brutalist style. The pavement in front of the building was also made into a large mosaic in 2006, with workshops run by Mosaic Art for local school children and community members, showing how the library was once a centre point for the community. The council proposed to move the library to a smaller unit near Norwood Junction station operating on a reduced service. Now as the future of the library is uncertain, and Verena and Lynn are fighting to keep the library alive.

Their action includes protesting, consultation meetings and petitioning to keep the library funded and sustainable. Libraries are fundamental parts of community life and the re-occurring theme of this exhibition is how the local residents do not want any more empty buildings and space going to waste.

Verena believes maintaining the library is critical to the regeneration of South Norwood and making the area better for future residents.

Interview with Verena, April 2022

Brutalist Library SE25

www.brutalistlibraryse25.org

JOHN HICKMAN

LOCAL HISTORIAN

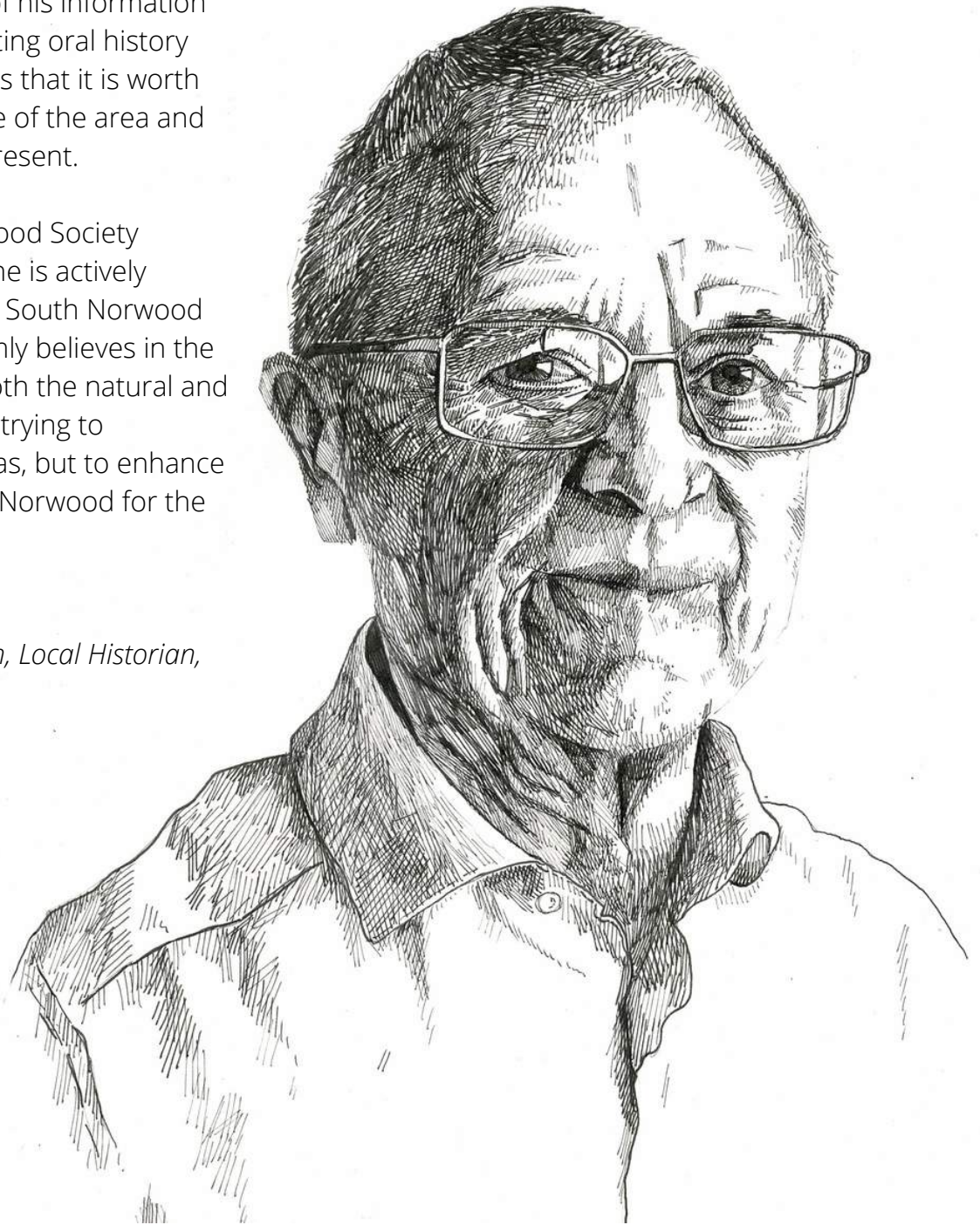
John is known as South Norwood's local historian. Raised in South London, he has always been interested in history, particularly that of Croydon. An early local project was his involvement in the 150th anniversary of St. Mark's church where he mounted an exhibition of those commemorated in the Roll of Honour. This was subsequently made available in booklet form in the church

Other ways John shares his knowledge are through guided walks of South Norwood, Woodside and Beckenham Cemetery, giving local talks. He is also a director of Croydon Natural History and Scientific Society, of which William Stanley, a founder member, was once president. John was elected president in 2015, a post he held until 2020.

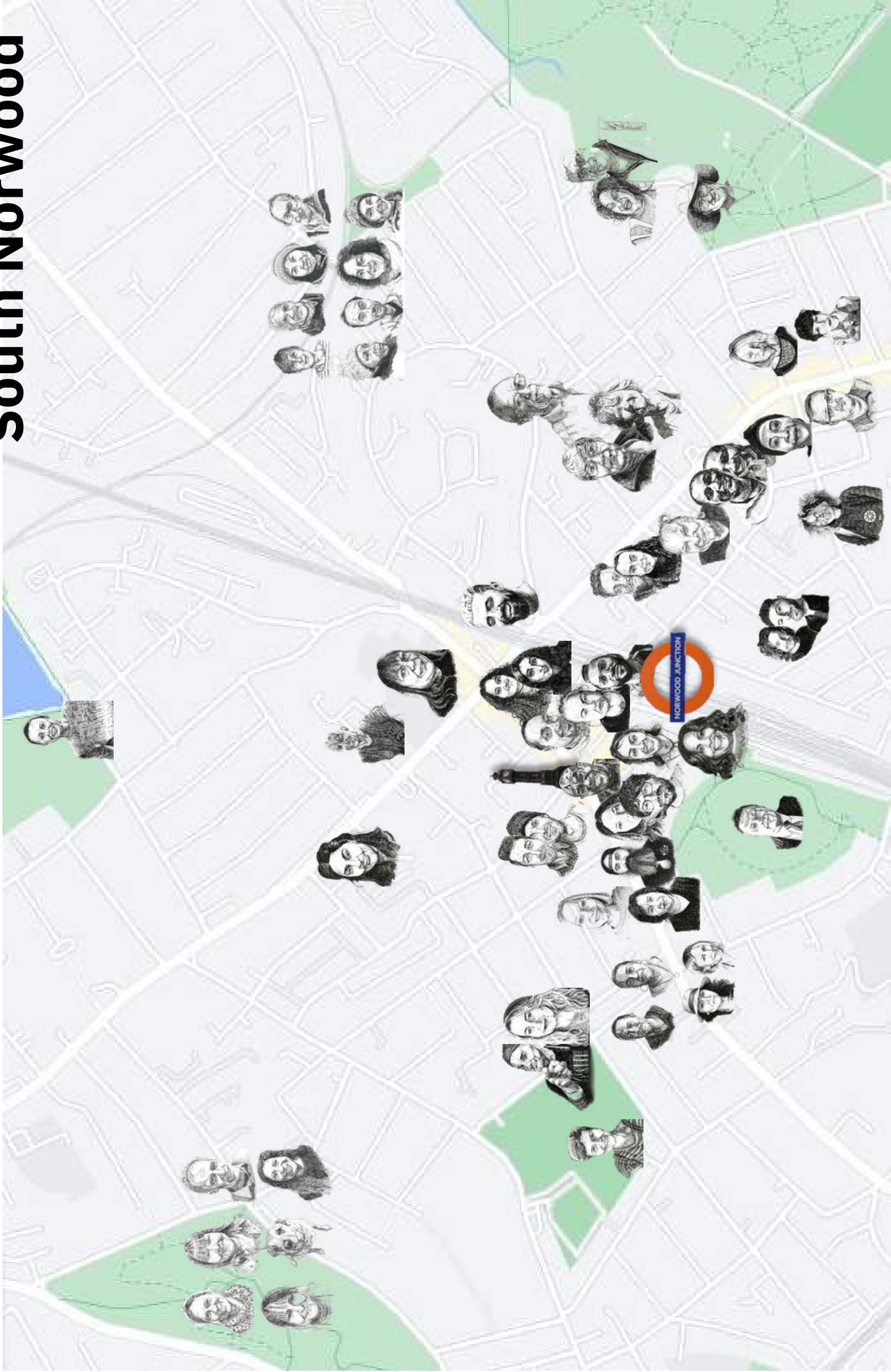
John has gathered much of his information of the area through collecting oral history from residents. He believes that it is worth getting to know the people of the area and the diversity that they represent.

As a member of the Norwood Society planning sub-committee, he is actively involved in monitoring the South Norwood Conservation Area. He firmly believes in the value of our conserving both the natural and built environment; not for trying to reconstruct it as it once was, but to enhance the rich diversity of South Norwood for the future.

*Interview with John Hickman, Local Historian,
April 2022*



South Norwood



N.B. placement of people is almost criminally out of scale



A new art project celebrating South Norwood's community

Local artist *Jonny Kemp* and social researcher *Elizabeth Walters* want to celebrate the people of South Norwood, and would love for you to take part

What this would mean for you:

- Letting us photograph you/sending us a photo of you for Jonny to draw
- Answering a few questions from Elizabeth about your work and what you love about South Norwood
- Displaying the drawing somewhere for the public to see!
- Letting Jonny post the drawing on Instagram, along with info about you and your business

We aim to increase the representation of South Norwood's diverse population and hopefully collate the portraits and answers in a gallery setting in 2022.

Email: jonny.kemp11@outlook.com
elizabethrw96@gmail.com

Instagram: [jonny_kemp_art](https://www.instagram.com/jonny_kemp_art)




Getting started: Autumn 2021

South Drawood

A free art exhibition celebrating the heroes of SE25 with hand-drawn portraits and their own stories



Where? Stanley Arts SE25 6AB
When? 29th July 7.30 – 10pm (with bar!)
 Then 30/31st July; 6/7th August 10am – 4pm

Nearest station: Norwood Junction Buses: 196,157,410,130, 312, 197

WE LOVE SE25  [jonny_kemp_art](https://www.instagram.com/jonny_kemp_art)  
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Venue booked: Spring 2022


A free art exhibition celebrating the heroes of SE25 through hand-drawn portraits and their own stories

SOUTH DRAWOOD



Stanley Arts SE25 6AB

Opening night: 29th July 7.00 – 10pm (with bar!)


WE LOVE SE25 Then: 30+31st July; 6+7th August 

OPENING NIGHT
 29TH JULY 2022. 7PM.

THEN 30/31 JULY
 7/8 AUGUST


STANLEY ARTS SE25 6AB

SOUTH DRAWOOD



FREE ART EXHIBITION

HOW DID ANIME INSPIRE MATTHEW TO OPEN A CAKE SHOP?



Mastery achieved: Summer 2022

At 7pm on Friday 29th July 2022, South Drawood opened its doors for the first time.

Over 150 people came to the gallery to see the portraits. It brought the community together, forged connections, and was generally just poppin'.



OPENING NIGHT

OPENING NIGHT



OPENING NIGHT



RESPONSES

██████████ The underpass idea would be amazing! Well done @jonny_kemp_art and thank you for allowing me to be a part of this exhibition. I will definitely back your idea for the underpass.

1d 5 likes Reply

Hey Johnny

It was a pleasure we totally enjoyed ourselves, it was a great event, bring the community together

Well done to you both
Hope to see you soon

Hi Jonny - well done on a fantastic concept, really well put together too. As a non-South Norwooder, I found the stories/drawings really engaging - and the Stanley Arts space is pretty amazing too! All the best with the second weekend :)

██████████ Congratulations, it looks beautiful 🍌🍌

1w 1 like Reply

██████████ Visited today and totally loved it. Fantastic art work, and it was lovely to be able to put stories to faces. Thank you!

1w 1 like Reply

— View replies (1)

██████████ Such a great idea, and excellent way to meet the small business owners and volunteers of South Norwood.

1w 4 likes Reply

Our pleasure! Thanks for having us. Congrats again. It was a really great night! 🍌🍌🍌



Part of the legacy is this booklet you are reading.

We hope that people enjoyed the work and feel a part of the community, or have had a great introduction to the community.

We will give the portraits to all of the subjects. It feels right that they should end up with their own drawing.

We hope that this is another boost to South Norwood's growth and evolution. We hope that it can retain its character and resist out and out gentrification. We hope the council is able to invest and encourage local business owners to set up a premises, and fund volunteer groups to assist their work.

Maybe they will help for the portraits to be displayed publicly: in the underpass, on lamp posts, that sort of thing.

We hope that other communities, groups, or workplaces will want to celebrate their people in a similar way.

We hope this helps to put South Norwood on the map.

A huge thank you to...

Everyone we spoke to, interviewed, and drew: you gave up a lot of your time, allowed us to stick a camera in your face, nervously waited to see your portrait, put up with my messages and tagging and promoted it yourself.

Dan at Stanley Arts for hosting us, and answering many, many questions

The other Stanley Arts staff (Amie, Moa, James, Ella, Bobby) for their help

We Love SE25 for the mini grant

Everyone who promoted it in some way

Everyone who came to see the exhibition

Everyone who wanted to but couldn't make it

Max for taking so many beautiful photos

You, for reading this

THANK YOU

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