



# BATwords

## Newsletter No.35 – Feb.2019

### Reminder about Monday 4<sup>th</sup> March

#### An Evening with Barry Shiraishi

Invitation to a FREE social get-together on  
**Monday 4<sup>th</sup> March 2019 at**  
**Baldwyns Park Baptist Church Hall**  
**Dartford Road Bexley DA5 2AY 6.45-8.45pm**  
**For ‘An Evening with Barry Shiraishi’**  
**talking art.**

A well known local artist with interesting ideas  
 We are organising another of our popular gathering of  
 artists and invite you to bring along a piece of your work  
 or offer a short performance. Musicians welcome too.  
*Light refreshments and a raffle with good prizes.*

**Do hope we will see you there.**

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 Our Summer exhibition information will  
 be circulated in a few weeks but in the  
 meantime you might be interested in  
 another OPEN in Dartford

#### **The Summer Exhibition 2019 – Sir Peter Blake Gallery**

The hugely successful Summer Exhibition is  
 returning to the Sir Peter Blake Gallery and  
 promises to be bigger and better than ever before.

Now in its third year, the Summer Exhibition  
 showcases the very best local art works created by  
 local people. Whether you're a professional or  
 amateur artist, this is an open exhibition where  
 everyone is welcome to enter.

For more information and an entry form visit  
[dartford.gov.uk/gallery](http://dartford.gov.uk/gallery) or pop into the gallery.

The closing date for entries is the 29th March 2019.

The exhibition will take place from the 10th May to  
 the 27th July 2019.

The Sir Peter Blake Gallery is located in the same  
 building as Dartford Library and is curated by  
 Dartford Borough Council on behalf of Kent  
 County Council's Libraries, Registrations &  
 Archives service

[Dartford Borough Council Website](http://www.dartford.gov.uk)

### Stables Gallery's Future

Our thanks to Sheila Ottley for her  
 persistence and passion in efforts made  
 to retain the gallery for its intended  
 purpose. It seems to be going ahead  
 with shop but less intrusive. We will  
 watch the space!! Sheila managed to  
 get us into the Newsshopper.  
 Reproduced here if you missed it:

Wednesday, February 20, 2019

### Artists raise concerns about plans

Concerned artists turned out at Bexley Council to seek answers over controversial plans for a gallery at Hall Place.

The council has already approved proposals to revamp the historic mansion, including merging the gallery with a new shop to increase footfall.

Part of the £600k investment will be a new playground, artisan market and visitor hub – but artists in the borough say their beloved gallery will be impacted by plans to downsize it.

A row has broken out over the future of the gallery at the Grade II listed attraction, with artists fearing the move would drive the scene out of the borough.

Speaking at a scrutiny meeting, Sheila Ottley said artists were being disproportionately affected by the plans.

Mrs Ottley, who has been exhibiting at Hall Place since the 70s, said: "I support many of the exciting investments you are making however, to date, my colleagues and I are struggling to understand how a shop will help support self-sustainability as my understanding is previous shops have struggled to turn a profit.

"Are you comfortable taking steps to significantly reduce the Stables' size when it is, one, a natural cultural fit, and two, it supports the borough's art scene and is a driving force in returning groups, and, three, provides a safe space for the older artist community?"

The revamp of Hall Place – which will have a charge imposed on residents who want to visit the gardens – are part of a wider plan to move the attraction into turning a profit and being "self-sustainable".

The plans for the gallery have already been rejigged in light of concerns from the art community.

Cllr Peter Craske told the audience of artists that the revamp is needed to keep Hall Place running.

He said: "The plans are arguably things that should have been done in previous years. We worked with a retail consultant and have taken their advice on the shop, the layout and the choice of goods.

"It will bring in substantial income and support the move to self-sufficiency.

"The layout of the gallery and the shop have been amended, and part of it will be moved into the new visitors' centre. That will ensure the gallery has a better ambience.

"We are investing in new furniture to display new art – the key components of the gallery will be retained following the refurbishment so it still fits the site and reflects the nature of the site and supports the borough's art scene.

"As part of the layout, everyone who comes will go out through that way so hopefully that will generate more visitors."

Local artists have already set up a petition asking for the plans to be rethought.

Mrs Ottley said the voluntary organisation would struggle to survive if the plans move forward as they are.

Speaking after the meeting, Mrs Ottley said: "We are pleased to have raised our concerns to the council about the proposed changes to the Stables Art Gallery.

"While we are strong and passionate advocates for retaining the gallery in all its glory, we are reassured that the council is listening and will continue to scrutinise its planned refurbishment."



**The group making their feelings known**