

## **Walthamstow Notes**

### **Teacher's Resource for 1960s**

#### **Background**

By the start of the 1960s Walthamstow, like other places, had largely recovered from the effects of the Second World War. New flats had been built, some of them in the newly fashionable form of high rise blocks. Houses had been repaired. Bomb sites had been built over. There was more money about, and more jobs.

Along with the extra money, more consumer goods were available. Fashion clothes at affordable prices had arrived. Labour saving devices such as washing machines and vacuum cleaners were in the shops. And with full employment and good pay, there were better holidays and more possibility of time off, and the energy to enjoy it, in the working week.

For the younger generation, this was a time of expanding horizons. The new universities that began to welcome students in this decade offered higher education to many young people who would previously have thought this was "not for them". And colleges nearer home offered training, while changes in secondary education offered the opportunity of leaving school with some qualification to many more young people.

Along with other new possibilities, this was a time when many young people had more freedom and more opportunities than ever before. The term "teenager" came into general use; for the first time, many young people had influence over their futures. And, on a smaller scale, many young people had a first taste of independence, making many decisions for themselves and relishing the music, entertainment, transport and food that were available to them.

This was a time, too, when many new people came to live in the area. There were jobs available, and, increasingly, houses and flats. Many of them had been specifically recruited to come to the UK to work in factories, in the new NHS and in the public transport system. Many of them settled down happily, but not everyone.

Not everyone was comfortable with the changes. And for those broken or bereft by the war, they came too late. But for many, this was a time of hope.

## Activities

This series of activities involves participants in looking at what life was like in 1960s Walthamstow – homes, fashion, music and dance.

- It's 1964 and you have moved into a flat in one of the newly built high rise blocks. You and your family are excited, especially because the kitchen has all the latest fittings and gadgets. Using the illustrations on the site and on the links to help you, create a drawing of the kitchen and describe what is in it

You have recently arrived in Walthamstow from another country (using your own knowledge, you decide where). Thinking very specifically about food, decide on a day's menus including anything you would like to have. Would everything be available in Walthamstow? If not, what changes might you make?

- You are going clothes shopping in Walthamstow, and are looking for a new outfit to wear at a party. Again looking at the illustrations, and at what people are wearing in the film clips, what are you looking for? Please provide a sketch. You are 17 at this time and part of the first generation to think of itself as teenagers.

- You and a group of friends are planning to set up your own band, inspired by the Beatles and other music of the time. You need to rehearse and to create some moves to go with two audition pieces. Using the information on this site and your own knowledge of 1960s music, create your audition piece.

- The Twist is the fashionable dance of now. You need to get good, so rehearsal is called for – you want to shine at your next party.

You are going to audition to for a Sunday slot at the Granada, the venue where the Beatles, among many others, played the main auditorium. The manager gives new young bands an opportunity to play on Sundays in return for £5. What happens?

Write a review of your band's first gig.