It’s over... popular riding stables lose battle of Westway

THE dream is over. Despite an appeal to The Queen, huge protest and eleventh-hour pleas from the community and horse-lovers, West London’s most popular stables is to leave The Westway.

After 25 years of teaching thousands to ride and care for horses, The West London Stables is to move on as its era has been ended by its landlord The Westway Trust.

Despite a desperate struggle to stay, the stables’ much-loved owner Sarah Tuvey is being forced out as the charity which was established for the benefit of the local community refused her pleas to extend her lease.

“I’ve got to go now, there is no doubt about that,” said Ms Tuvey, whose fight has been supported by more than 2,000 residents. “It’s a nightmare but the Trust won’t let me stay.”

Although the lease was ended on July 31st the stables are currently still open for riding – but Ms Tuvey is now urgently looking for new land where she can start again with her team of 22 now-homeless horses and ponies.

“I am desperately trying to find somewhere new to go to now,” she said.

But fears that the ponies may have to be shot if they cannot be re-homed have been allayed. This newspaper has been contacted by a horse-lover who has offered to take in all of the Westway ponies at a horse sanctuary in Sussex.

The sanctuary-owner, who wishes to remain anonymous, said: “The horses can come to me if necessary. I won’t let them be shot.”

The Trust has offered Ms Tuvey more time to prepare to move out – it says several months if necessary – but only if she promises to leave the site, which is earmarked for regeneration as part of The Trust’s “vision to transform Westway into a top ten destination for London, renowned and admired as an epicentre for culture, sport, enterprise and artisan retail.”

Although Ms Tuvey’s stables are being forced to close, The Trust is now hinting that it may allow other stables to set up on its 23-acre site. The Trust organised a survey of local residents to assess the popularity of horse-riding in the area, which it claims is “low”, and it has now ordered another study to discover if there is a future for riding at The Westway.

“Westway Trust’s Board has decided to commission a feasibility study into practicalities and issues in providing horse riding. The study will assess site and facility requirements and financial viability. We expect to complete the feasibility study by October 2015,” said the Trust in a statement.

Reports have recently circulated in the community that the Trust was in talks with the Ebony Horse Club, a Brixton stables headed by The Duchess of Cornwall, to expand to The Westway with an “urban horse ranch” and community learning centre.

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LONDON’S BUSINESSES URGED TO MEET NEW GREEN CHALLENGE

Let’s put more energy into saving energy

The Business Energy Challenge, now in their second year, celebrate private sector businesses who have made the biggest difference to their energy consumption by switching to cleaner, energy efficient technologies and slashed their energy bills in the process.

Last year 58 businesses entered, with reductions achieved through a range of innovative methods, providing previously uncollected data on energy consumption for over 1,000 locations in London.

When added together, the 27 award winners achieved an 18 per cent reduction in carbon emissions, and used 181,992 megawatt hours less energy. The energy saved would be enough to power 10,700 UK households for a year, and equates to a staggering £12.5 million in energy bills avoided.

58 businesses took up last year’s challenge, including household names such as Boots, HSBC, Royal Bank of Scotland and Marks & Spencer.

Global law firm Linklaters, one of last year’s winners, took part in achieving the Mayor’s overall targets for reducing their carbon intensity.

The Business Energy Challenge is just part of the Mayor’s wider initiative to reduce London’s emissions and make the capital greener, healthier place to live and work.

His RE:FIT scheme has seen over 260 public buildings in London retrofitted to reduce carbon dioxide emissions, saving over 29,000 tonnes of carbon dioxide per year. His RE:FIT scheme for residential public sector building has also helped to improve over 111,500 London homes, saving around 30,300 tonnes of carbon dioxide.

The awards are open for entry until September 9, 2015. An awards reception will be hosted by the Mayor on November 16.

More information can be found at the website www.london.gov.uk/bec or business wishing to take part can email bec@london.gov.uk

The award for small and micro businesses will be announced at www.london.gov.uk/bec in the next few weeks.

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NEW plans have been revealed for the Curzon Cinema in the King’s Road which will give Chelsea movie fans more room, more choice and disabled access for the first time.

The new planning proposals will retain the Curzon’s iconic Art Deco front, keep The Trafalgar pub on the King’s Road and provide three screens in place of the existing one.

Cadogan Estates has submitted a planning application for new proposals for the future of 196-222 King’s Road to the Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea, following extensive consultation with local communities.

The body’s planning application has been validated by the council and will be considered by officers before going to the council’s planning committee.

Highlights of the proposals include a new cinema which Cadogan and Curzon have created. This includes a main auditorium which will have fewer seats but more room as the auditorium is to be kept to the same size.

The plans will mean demolition of most of the existing building behind the famous frontage and the main auditorium will be moved from its current position on the first floor to the basement.

“Cadogan has clearly gone to a lot of trouble and consideration into what they are proposing,” said Councillor Sarah Trouncer, who is on the royal borough’s planning committee.

“Clearly they do want to maintain the building so it will keep its Art Deco features,” she said.

The trust said: “We are exploring options with Westway Stables Limited to try and assist with the safe transition of the horses from the estate to wherever there may be a suitable new home for them.”

It has started work on developing the estate in four ‘regeneration zones’, each with its own iconic developments and distinct identity. These zones will see an realise our vision to create a new sports village, a creative industries business district, a retail and cultural reimagining of Portobello and finally a part of the estate dedicated to voluntary community organisations to deliver vital services and flourish.

“By achieving this vision we will deliver huge opportunities for local people, especially in the form of employment, training and enterprise.”

In the meantime, the Trust is now interviewing candidates for a key and demanding role – to act as a cheerleader to improve the charity’s PR image with the local community.

“The Trust is advertising for a new chair of its board of trustees. In outlining the tasks of the new chief, the Trust says: “Your role will be as an ambassador for the Trust, working alongside the Chief Executive to build profile and confidence as the Trust embarks on a new period of property development and estate regeneration.”

Meanwhile, anyone with land to offer the non-homeself Sarah Tuvey and her ponies can contact her at westlondonstables20@gmail.com.

The Trust said: “We are exploring options with Westway Stables Limited to try and assist with the safe transition of the horses from the site within a reasonable timeframe. The terms of the offer are confidential between the parties, but are aimed to ensure the safe transition of the horses from the site. We consider the terms offered are very generous to Westway Stables Limited.”

“While we aim to be supportive of the transition, it is important to be clear, that the responsibility of the welfare of the horses lies entirely with Westway Stables Limited.”

“We believe we have already acted reasonably in providing Westway Stables Limited with five months to transition the horses, as well as offering support for the transition itself. This was in addition to the nine months’ advance notice given to Westway Stables Limited that the lease was not going to be renewed and that arrangements would have to be made to move elsewhere, on the expiry of the previous lease.”

“We recently commissioned an independent review of equestrianism and sport on the site and surrounding area to determine the viable options for the future use.”

“The review did not garner a huge response rate (300 direct respondents and 100 street interviews people out of a population of 40,000) which suggests a lack of demand, despite the independent consultants going to great lengths to establish opinion. As part of the review, other London stables were interviewed, including Ebony, to find out best practice, but there was never any suggestion that they or any of the others interviewed might take over the running of the site.”

The history of equestrianism on the site and its benefits to some disadvantaged people living locally as identified in the review, Westway Trust’s Board has decided to commission an independent feasibility study into practicalities and issues in providing horse riding.”

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Credit union aids the ‘financially excluded’

KENSINGTON and Chelsea’s credit union, which offers a fair, sensible and affordable way for residents to borrow and save money, has so far lent more than £800,000 — and that figure is growing all the time.

Council cabinet member for voluntary organisations and resident engagement, councillor Gerard Hargreaves, became the latest resident to join the borough’s credit union when he signed up recently.

Cllr Hargreaves is one of a number of community leaders and politicians who have shown their support for YourCU Kensington and Chelsea’s credit union which started with help from local housing associations and the council. Cllr Hargreaves said: “There is a real need and growing demand for affordable credit. Credit unions, such as YourCU, can help meet this by assisting those that may not be able to access mainstream high street finance or even have a bank account. I would ask all residents to consider joining the credit union, whether they wish to borrow or save.”

There are an estimated 24,500 ‘financially excluded’ households in the royal borough, each paying a ‘poverty premium’ of up to £1,000 a year through high borrowing costs, additional charges and lack of access to cheaper deals.

For more information go to the website www.yourcu.co.uk or email info@yourcu.co.uk or call 020 7605 6341.

Lord Leighton, artist of note

THE Victorian painter Frederick Lord Leighton has been nominated as an artist whose face should appear on the £20 note.

Lord Leighton, whose former home in Holland Park Road is now Leighton House Museum, was one of 600 visual artists nominated by members of the public during a two month consultation by the Bank of England to find a new design for the £20 note.

Officials at the bank will now begin the task of choosing a shortlist of finalists, before Governor Mark Carney makes the final decision.

One of the key criteria for nominations was that the person must have been a visual artist, such as a painter, architect, photographer, designer or filmmaker. They also had to be both non-fictional and dead.

Leighton House Museum Curator, Daniel Robbins, said: “It is entirely fitting that Frederick Lord Leighton has been nominated. Leighton was renowned as a leading painter of his age, winning many national and international awards and honours. He was also a highly effective president of the Royal Academy and remains the only British artist to have been ennobled.”

A full list of candidates is available on the website www.bankofengland.co.uk

Rejuvenation projects banish gloomy eyesores

AY back in 2006, when I was Cabinet Member for Regeneration and the Environment, we set up the North Kensington Environment Project to tackle what some people called ‘grot spots’.

The term referred to areas, varying in size, character and ownership, that were underused and because of a lack of care had become a magnet for litter, fly-posting and graffiti before they were repainted, new lighting was installed and minor repairs were carried out. The work was well received by residents; over 650 people took part in consultations to choose designs for the bridges.

We are not finished yet. Next in line for a spruce up is Ladbroke Grove London Underground bridge. Its panels will be replaced in the autumn after Carnival.

We did not stop at the bridges; we also turned our attention to the road junctions under the Westway – which were dark and unfriendly places. All have had a refresh, new lighting has been installed as well as new pavements and there have been other streetscape improvements.

Each of these projects has been quite modest and self-contained, but the sum total of all the work is greater than any of its parts.

Transforming an area by improving the physical appearance breathes new life into the surroundings

W e established a pocket park on Elsdon Road and at the corner of Kensal Road and Ladbroke Grove; created an air of foreboding now provide an attractive and bright entrance to North Kensington.

There have been other streetscape improvements.

Starting with a modest initial investment of £150,000, we set about working with partners and landowners to target eyesores and give them a facelift – in the process greening neglected patches of ground.

We established a pocket park on Elsdon Road and at the corner of Kensal Road and Ladbroke Grove; created a wildflower meadow on Acklam Road and turned a disused tennis court into a thriving community kitchen garden at St Quintin’s Avenue, which last year was named allotment of the year runner-up by Ladbroke Grove; created a wildflower meadow on Acklam Road and turned a disused tennis court into a thriving community kitchen garden at St Quintin’s Avenue, which last year was named allotment of the year runner-up by Ladbroke Grove.

And we did not confine our efforts to gardens. The Ladbroke Grove mainline railway bridge and the Golborne Road rail bridge were definitely looking their age and the worse for wear.

Built in the early part of the 20th century to span the Great Western railway route, they were badly in need of some TLC. Both received a 100th anniversary makeover, starting with a deep clean, to remove the years of fly-posting and graffiti before they were repainted, new lighting was installed and minor repairs were carried out. The work was well received by residents; over 650 people took part in consultations to choose designs for the bridges.

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The iron rail bridges that once created an air of foreboding now provide an attractive and bright entrance to North Kensington. In a way they mirror, albeit on a much smaller scale, the elegance of the bridges over the Thames in the south of the borough.
**HUNDREDS of thousands of “prescription junkie” Londoners are facing devastating health risks through long-term use of anti-depressants which are doing them far more harm than good, an expert of anti-depressants which are doing them far more harm than good, a new Parliament-backed campaign group has warned.

Campaigners say one in 10 of all adults in the capital are estimated to be hooked on “happy pills” which they can’t kick because there are no NHS services designed to help them through agonising withdrawal symptoms.

Now medical experts and MPs are coming together to call on the Government to order radical reductions in the number of anti-depressants prescribed.

Planners to get tough on luxury bunkers of basement billionaires

**When Parliament returns in the autumn the all-party group will address a long-term planning issue which caused him “a tidal wave of horrific symptoms”. He said: “Anti-depressants are simply a grand experiment, there is currently no tracking system for the outcome of taking them long-term.”

“These drugs are given 12-week trials and then they are approved for use. But often they are then prescribed for years, or in my case decades, without assessing their long-term effects.”

“No-one has proved that anyone with mental health benefits from these drugs. It is complete baloney that these drugs correct chemical imbalance in the brain – in fact they are causing a chemical imbalance.

“They are not a real cure and people are suffering without knowing that it’s the drugs that are making them suffer. Withdrawal from these drugs is absolutely horrendous and only a dwindling number of charities are providing help. This is an enormous problem that needs a national solution. There needs to be NHS provision of services to help withdrawal and that needs to be mandated.”

Mr Montagu’s father, the Earl of Sandwich, recently told the House of Lords: “Addiction to medicines is every bit as serious an issue as legal highs and controlled drugs. The negative effects of legally prescribed medicines can be devastating and they potentially affect many more people than controlled drugs given the vast number of prescriptions issued every year.”

While huge resources are devoted to criminality, virtually nothing is spent on prescribed drug addiction because it appears that no harm is caused to society; it is society that is causing the harm. Yet a mere handful of charities are coping with increasing numbers of desperate people who become dependent and cannot easily withdraw. Despite the feeble efforts of the Department of Health and a few exceptions among primary care trusts, the devolved NHS and three successive health ministers have virtually ignored the problem.

In England alone last year, there were over 80 million prescriptions for psychiatric drugs. Almost 10 million people in the UK, or around 15 per cent of the population, are taking tranquillisers, antidepressants or other psychiatric medications at any given time, all of which have the potential to create addiction or dependence. Some 57 million prescriptions were issued for anti-depressants in 2014 in England, which is a rise of over 500 per cent since 1992; 11 per cent of women and six per cent of men are taking them regularly.

“The prevalence of depression has not risen since 2003, but prescription numbers are increasing because more patients are taking anti-depressants for longer. Over one million people are long-term users of tranquillisers, including sleeping pills, despite clear guidance that they should be used for no more than four weeks. Tranquillisers are a dangerous group of drugs, including sleeping pills, despite clear guidance that they should be used for no more than four weeks. Tranquillisers, antidepressants, antipsychotics and other psychiatric drugs can all be helpful in the short term, but long-term use – as with cocaine, cannabis or alcohol – is associated with serious harm.

“A large number of patients suffer debilitating symptoms for years following withdrawal from prescribed drugs, while some are left with symp-toms that may persist indefinitely.”

To raise awareness of the dangers of long-term use of antidepressants and prescribed drugs and to form a plan of action, the CEP is organizing the London’s first conference on prescription drug dependency, at the University of Roehampton SW15, on September 18th. The conference, “More Harm Than Good: Confronting The Psychiatric Medication Epidemic”, is open to the public and full details and advice on dependency are available at www.cepuk.org

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**Action call to help thousands of Londoners hooked on ‘happy pills’**

**By LWN reporter GEOFF BAKER**

When Parliament returns in the autumn the all-party group will address the growing problem of dependency on prescribed medication.

It says: “Increasing numbers of prescriptions are given to both adults and children, including benzodiazepines, selective serotonin reuptake inhibitors, antipsychotics, stimulants and painkillers.

“While these drugs may help some people in the short term, there is growing evidence that long-term use leads to worse outcomes, and many patients report devasting persistent withdrawal and other negative effects.

“The group will engage with this issue by demanding appropriate services to help withdrawal and that needs to be mandated.”

Mr Montagu’s father, the Earl of Sandwich, recently told the House of Lords: “Addiction to medicines is every bit as serious an issue as legal highs and controlled drugs. The negative effects of legally prescribed medicines can be devastating and they potentially affect many more people than controlled drugs given the vast number of prescriptions issued every year.”

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**Planners to get tough on luxury bunkers of basement billionaires**

**WESTMINSTER**

City Council is to crack down on the height of billionnaires’ basements – by giving neighbours the say-so on whether the luxury bunkers can be built at all.

From now on, rich basement-builders could be digging themselves into a deep hole that comes out in court if their plans for a bigger home don’t suit their neighbours.

Following thousands of complaints from residents about the noise, dust, traffic problems and fears of subsidence caused by mega-basements, the council is to close a legal loophole that currently allows the wealthy to go underground and get away with it.

The council has announced that it will be using legal powers to stem the flow of mega-basements across central London.

Alongside new policies to limit the size and depth of basement construction, the council will be using an Article 4 Direction to insist that all applications for basements to residential homes now have to be considered through the council’s planning process.

Currently, many basement extensions and conversions can be done under permitted development rights – and therefore without the need for planning permission.

The council is also proposing to defy the hopes and dreams of Westminster’s rich set by giving power to the people next door – if neighbours object to the inevitable months of building work, plans for an iceberg home could be tossed into the air.

Westminster Council’s move follows the lead set earlier this year by Kensington and Chelsea Council, which now limits basement-building to a depth of just one storey.

The move has also been sparked by the city council’s revisions to Westminster’s City Plan, adopted in November 2013, which is the overarching document that governs planning matters in the city.

The Basement Revision provides a policy framework for determining planning applications for basement development beneath an existing building, where that building is residential or is in the vicinity of residential development,” said a council spokesman.

“The city council is proposing to limit basements to a single storey, except in exceptional circumstances, to introduce a measure to limit extent of basements to 50 per cent of the site area and bring forward a new code of construction services to manage impacts on neighbours.”

Councillor Robert Davis, deputy leader of Westminster City Council, said: “All basements will now go before the council’s planning department, allowing neighbours and local communities to have their say and for developers to demonstrate there is no harm to neighbours or to the character of the area.”

The Publication Draft documents for the Basement Revision, and supporting documents, can be viewed or downloaded from the City Plan page on the council’s website, www.westminster.gov.uk
Buckingham Palace given tender touch by engravers

The Royal Mint is to issue its second limited edition £100 commemorative coin, which will depict Britain’s best-known royal building, Buckingham Palace.

Of the 50,000 of the new legal tender £100 coins – available at the face value price of £100 – are to be minted, and each will contain two full ounces of what is known as ‘999’ fine silver.

It follows on from the sell-out success within days of the first £100 featuring Big Ben in December 2014, and the popularity of the £20 face value coin series, the first of which was struck in honour of the birth of Prince George of Cambridge.

It is expected that the Buckingham Palace £100 will receive an equally warm welcome.

In a year that has seen the second birthday of Prince George and the birth of his sister, Princess Charlotte, The Queen’s second great-grandchild, the new £100 coin captures the timeless elegance of the building that is both a family home to Britain’s Royals and a working building, housing the offices of the staff who support the day-to-day activities of the Royal Family.

Director of Commemorative Coin and Medals, Shane Bashett said: “Buckingham Palace is an instantly recognisable architectural icon for the millions of British citizens and tourists who have seen it in person or on film.

The building is an instinctive rallying point in the capital city during times of national celebration and mourning, and was a natural choice for the next design in The Royal Mint’s popular £100 coin series.”

George III bought Buckingham House in 1761 for his wife, Queen Charlotte, and work began the following year to remodel it. Later, George IV would transform the house into a palace. Architect John Nash set about realizing the king’s ambitious plans, but spiralling costs eventually cost him his job and King George never moved in.

Queen Victoria became the first sovereign to take up residence in 1837, however, when she married Prince Albert three years later, the shortcomings of her new home were highlighted. The Marble Arch was moved and nurseries and guest bedrooms were added. Work continued and the palace was finally finished just before the outbreak of the First World War in 1914.

Buckingham Palace was one of the sights that inspired Royal Mint engravers Glyn Davies and Laura Clancy when they took on the challenge of capturing something a little different with their portraits of iconic landmarks. They were motivated to picture the wonders of Britain from the point of view of the thousands of tourists who visit, cameras in hand, to collect their own memories of Britain’s famous structures and sights. In their portrait of Buckingham Palace, the building is seen as though from a tourist’s eye view, across The Mall past the Victoria Memorial.

Holiday rail misery looms

TRAVELLERS hit by last week’s Tube strike now face more misery – action by rail workers is set to trash plans for a Bank Holiday getaway to the beach and the countryside.

First Great Western staff are to stage a three-day strike across the entire Bank Holiday weekend – plus another walk-out on the weekend before.

The Rail, Maritime and Transport union said the strike was being held over threats to jobs, services and safety from the introduction of the new Hitachi Intercity trains.

The operator runs train services between London Paddington and the West of England, South Wales, the Cotswolds and the Thames Valley.

Union members, including guards and platform attendants, will walk out for 24 hours on Sunday, August 23 and for 72 hours from Saturday, August 29. Other members who work on maintenance will strike on August 29 and August 31. All of the strikes will begin at 00:01 BST and end at 23:59.

FGW rail workers held a 48-hour strike earlier this month over the same dispute, causing disruption for tens of thousands of commuters.

The first Hitachi trains will run on the Great Western main line from 2017 and the East Coast main line from 2018.

RMT general secretary Mick Cash said: “Despite strenuous efforts by our negotiators, we have not been able to secure the kind of progress required in the key areas of jobs, services and safety for us to reach an agreement. As a result we have no option but to put further action on.”

The RMT said it had received a ‘lack of assurances’ over job protection for engineers. The union added that it was concerned the role of guards and platform staff would be lessened by plans for drivers to operate train doors and it criticised the proposed removal of buffet facilities from trains.

The new Hitachi Class 800 Super Express trains are capable of running up to 140mph and will first be rolled out on routes between London Paddington and Oxford, Bristol andsouth Wales.

A FGW spokesman said: “Our plans mean more train managers on board our trains, not fewer.

“The key issue remains that we want the driver to close the doors, which is fundamental to our ability to run the faster, more frequent services customers should expect from a 21st century railway. This method has been used safely across the UK rail industry for decades.”

Talks between FGW and the union were continuing at press time.

The mint’s whole story

- The Royal Mint has an unbroken history of minting British coinage dating back over 1,000 years. By the late 13th century the organisation was based in the Tower of London, and remained there for over 500 years.

- By 1812 The Royal Mint had moved out of the Tower to premises on London’s Tower Hill.

- In 1967 the building of a new Royal Mint began on its current site in South Wales, UK.

- There were estimated to be 28.9 billion UK coins in circulation at March 31, 2014, with a total face value of over £4 billion, all manufactured by The Royal Mint.

- In total, nearly two billion UK coins were issued during 2013-14.

- The Royal Mint has long been trusted with the currencies of other countries. It has served more than 100 issuing authorities around the world and currently meets approximately 15 per cent of global demand, making it the world’s leading export mint.

- The Royal Mint has been making official military campaign medals since it was commissioned to make awards for soldiers who fought in the battle of Waterloo in 1815. The year 2012 was of particular significance for The Royal Mint’s medal-making team, with the manufacture of all 4,700 Victory Medals for the London 2012 Olympic and Paralympic Games.

- In September 2014, The Royal Mint launched a new bullion trading website, www.royalmintbullion.com, enabling customers to buy, store and sell bullion coins at constantly updated prices directly from The Royal Mint quickly, effortlessly and securely.

- 24 hours a day, 365 days a year.

- In April 2014, The Royal Mint unveiled plans to develop a purpose-built visitor centre at its headquarters in Llantrisant, South Wales. Construction is expected to be completed during 2016.
Chorus of approval for West End’s big charity match (but one side is left feeling miserable)

THE fourth annual Les Miserables versus The Phantom of the Opera charity football match was staged at Bromley Football Club earlier this month, writes Nicky Sweetland.

The event which has become a firm fixture in the theatreland diary, also included a concert by some of musical theatre’s biggest names, including Philip-pine pop sensation Rachelle Ann Go, currently in Les Miserables, and queen of the West End Kerry Ellis, sporting a very neat baby bump and arriving fresh from a Radio 2 performance with friend Brian May on the Wogan Show.

Ellis also had a family connection to the match with her husband, Luton Town FC coach James Townsend playing for the Les Miserables team.

The event, held this year on Sunday, August 2, was conceived in 2012 as a way of showing support for Melanie Oakley-Dow, who was wig mistress at Les Miserables and bravely battled cancer until her untimely death in 2013. The yearly match has continued since then in her memory and has raised money for various charities, including Great Ormond Street Children’s Hospital and Macmillan Cancer Research.

This year the chosen charity was the Make A Difference Trust, which for the past 25 years has raised funds through the theatre community for HIV and AIDS projects that raise awareness and provide care in the UK and in sub-Saharan Africa.

The atmosphere at the sun drenched Bromley Arena was wonderfully relaxed, with many of the stars enjoying the afternoon with their families. The final score was 6-2 to the Phantom team.

The event was hilariously compered by the indomitable Carl Melaney, whose gags and banter really kept the “ball rolling” even in the final moments when there were a number of stoppages for tiring legs.

If we are to believe the day’s programme, this was the last Les Mis versus Phantom, which if true will be a real shame. It feels like with some more high profile marketing, this could be a really big event on the calendar.

It’s fabulous to get the opportunity to rub shoulders with the cream of West End talent in such a relaxed and family-friendly celebration, but also raise thousands of pounds for good causes.
College has key role in wiping out ‘lad culture’

By Geoff Baker

KING’S College London Students’ Union has been chosen to spearhead a new nationwide drive to stamp out ‘lad culture’ in universities.

The scheme will see nine students’ unions from across the UK working with the National Union of Students to build policy and share best practice as part of its commitment to tackling lad culture on campus.

The project comes in the wake of research that found that 1 in 7 women had experienced a serious physical or sexual assault during their time as a student and 68 per cent had been victims of one or more kinds of sexual harassment on campus.

Other NUS research on lad culture has shown that 37 per cent of women students have faced unwelcome sexual advances while at university while more than 60 per cent of students have heard rape jokes on campus.

Students have also reported that lad culture, alongside supporting sexist ideas, also endorsed a range of discriminatory views including classism, racism, LGBT phobia and ableism – all in the name of a joke, or ‘banter’.

NUS defines lad culture as: “a group or ‘pack’ mentality residing in activities such as sport, heavy alcohol consumption and ‘banter’ which was often sexist, misogynistic, racist or homophobic.”

Under the law, sexual harassment covers “any form of unwanted verbal, non-verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature that has the purpose or effect of violating a woman’s dignity or of creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment for her.”

Rachel Williams, Vice President of Welfare & Community at King’s College Students’ Union said: “I’m very excited that KCCLSU has been chosen for the Lad Culture Pilot Scheme.”

“One thing that struck me was how important it is to have student leaders on board with the campaign.

“These kind of culture changes have to come from within student communities, not just from the top down. We will continue to engage students on the ground in shaping our discussions and policy on lad culture.”

Susana Amoah, NUS Women’s Officer, said: “This work will be challenging at times but we believe it is possible to make real educational change. NUS will be working closely with KCCLSU to identify what its unique issues are and how we can best support their local strategy for tackling lad culture on campus.

“We want to offer support, encouragement and resources to move this work forward on the ground, whilst building our knowledge and understanding of what this issue looks like in different places. It will allow us to create and develop resources that will be relevant and useful to all students’ unions.”

The NUS is recommending that universities do more to promote an anti-lad culture policy, with information for new students in freshers’ weeks and training for all staff.

Passion for the facts

READ any interview with an entrepreneur and they will reveal they are passionate about their business and passionate about being an entrepreneur.

And quite right too; having a passion for something sets you apart. People passionate about running are more likely to be found doing laps of the park than those who aren’t, and business owners who are passionate about their business are more likely to be a success than those who just treat it like a job.

However, there is a fine line between passion and emotion, which is why it’s so important to differentiate between the two, because pure emotion can distract people from the facts.

Just look at the Labour leadership battle. Emotions seem to be getting the better of those eligible to vote, as evidenced by Jeremy Corbyn heading the field with policies that promise better lives for all by re-nationalising energy, rail, and even suggesting putting Tony Blair on trial over his time in the Irish backstop.

Clearly I don’t have much admiration for Mr Corbyn’s brand of anti-business rhetoric, but it’s impossible not to recognise the strong emotion behind what he’s advocating. And I think it’s the emotive power of his genuinely held beliefs, that seems to have convinced many traditional Labour voters and others that what he’s selling will work, despite the evidence of past.

Emotion, it seems, has taken over to the point where the more sane candidates, most of whom realise that state-run energy and railway utilities are not the answer, are trailing in the polls. And should this raw emotion continue unchecked I predict it won’t end well for the Labour party.

It’s also worth mentioning the Ashes. After all, everyone is talking about it, and quite rightly too. But just look at what the cricket pundits were saying before the first ball was bowled in Cardiff.

Most were writing that Australia already had the series in the bag and might as well keep the little urn packed up in their Qantas Airlines flight bag. England had been playing okay recently, so they wrote, but they weren’t the world-beaters that could topple the mighty Aussies.

But our cricketers didn’t let emotions get in the way of the facts. They focused on the wickets, the conditions and the skills and weaknesses of their opponents to get the better of them. Of course, it doesn’t always go to plan as the second test proved. But they continued to passionately believe in the fact that in English conditions their technical ability with bat and ball was superior to the emotional hype surrounding Michael Clarke’s Australians.

So, back to business. When making decisions that affect a business, from hiring and firing staff to choosing suppliers, emotion has to be put to one side.

For example, every week I am contacted by potential suppliers who have the ‘next big thing’ that can improve my business or what I offer my customers.

From app designers and telecom providers to manufacturers of water-saving plumbing products, they all come in with the razzle-dazzle and fancy patter, but I have to look behind their smoke and mirrors to be sure their business is robust.

What if a company I buy an app from to allow customers to book plumbing jobs on their phones goes up in the swanny or even more seriously, a telecoms provider who has control of one of my most important sales tools – my business phone number – goes to the wall, leaving me high and dry?

What they are offering might be the best thing since sliced bread, but I’m not a caveman discovering fire for the first time. I’ve been around the block a few times and, as all business owners should do, be sure the decision is made for the right reasons that will benefit the business and not damage its reputation, operations or financial security.

Emotional reactions to situations can put businesses at risk. Entrepreneurs need to be detectives and assess the facts in front of them. Like Joe Friday would say in American cop show Dragnet, “just the facts ma’am, just the facts.”

Views expressed are those of the author and not necessarily those of this newspaper.
FEARS are growing for the future of the Earl’s Court post office, thought to be at risk of closing due to Government public spending cuts.

A petition calling for the post office to be retained has been launched and a public meeting to discuss residents’ concerns will be held next month.

Kensington and Chelsea councillor Linda Wade is leading the local campaign for the post office to escape the cuts.

Councillor Wade said: “It is understood that the Post Office has to make savings in light of reduced Government subsidies but there is concern that this will place many Crown post offices in Central London at risk and in particular locally, the Earl’s Court post office.

“Post offices are a key-stone business on our High Streets and I would ask that the post office look to their business plan rather than their present short-sighted, short-term slash and burn policy.

“Theyir previous plans, which have included the closure of the King’s Road and Gloucester Road Post Offices with the transfer of services to a franchise model, are failing. Franchisees cannot provide the expertise or services that many customers require, so it would appear that this business model does not work. If the Post Office are looking for efficiencies and income generators perhaps they should undertake an evaluation of the demographics and usage of post offices and see whether, as with any other business, that they need to customise their post offices, to respond to the needs of the local custom.

“At Earl’s Court post office, recently refurbished with expensive automated machines, they did not improve service levels at the counters and did not establish what could be done to achieve greater profitability. Over the last few weeks a petition has been mounted and it tells an interesting story. Many felt that the office was understaffed but all felt that it was essential.”

There will be a public meeting to discuss the future of the post office on Tuesday 8 September from 6pm to 8pm at St Cuthbert’s Centre, Philbeach Gardens. Residents can also sign the petition at https://goo.gl/CLV4Z0.

Residents can also email their view to the Post Office at comments@postoffice.co.uk or call 03457 2344.

Council leader Cllr Nick Paget-Brown said: “I want to urge all residents to respond to this consultation and to come along to the public meeting at St Cuthbert’s and make their views heard. This branch is a valuable community asset in an area that is home to a high number of supported and sheltered housing complexes.”

LOUIS WOLSEY, DEVELOPMENT DIRECTOR OF WESTWAY TRUST, TELLS US HOW THE TRUST WORKS WITH LOCAL GROUPS TO CELEBRATE THE AREA’S RICH DIVERSITY AND TALENT

Louise Wolsey, Development Director of Westway Trust, tells us how the Trust works with local groups to celebrate the area’s rich diversity and talent

T’S Carnival season and at Westway Trust we’re pleased to be supporting two events which make August such a special month for the local community here in North Kensington.

On Monday hundreds of local children had a great time at Notting Hill Nursery Carnival, which was organised by CAPCA – the Children and Parents Carnival Association.

They’ve been doing a great job of this for 30 years now. In fact, many of the children who attended the early Nurseries Carnivals are now bringing their own children to enjoy the fun, which is wonderful to see!

This Sunday, 16 August, sees Carnivals Pioneers Community Day, a chance to come and celebrate with some of the original Notting Hill Carnival pioneers.

The main event, led by Les Palmer, takes place on Portobello Green, Thorpe Close, from 12 noon to 6pm, with an after party ‘limé’ at The Tabemacle until 10pm.

This year’s theme is ‘Founding Mothers’ – remembering the women pioneers who gave birth to and nurtured Notting Hill Carnival, including Rhaune Laslett, Merle Major, Claire Holder, Claudia Jones and Silma Faustine.

Activities for children will include face-painting, bouncy castles, dance contests and costume displays, while the live stage will feature talented local performers and is the highlight of the day’s activities.

The event is also the third annual Mas in the Ghetto: 1973 Remembered.

This marks the year that the carnival was tripled into an international festival, which in 2013 was celebrated with high commissioners and their representatives from Jamaica, Antigua, Barbados, St Lucia, Dominica, Guyana, and Trinidad and Tobago.

You can find out more about the Carnival Pioneers Day and 1973 Remembered on our website, www.westway.org.

These carnival events are a vibrant demonstration of the incredible diversity and flair that characterises North Kensington as an area, and we recognise that as the Trust we are very privileged to be part of it.

We want to play a role, along with other stakeholders, in supporting this talent and cultural richness, which is one of the reasons we have created Westway Presents… This is our series of events, festivals and workshops which we deliver in partnership with local artists and cultural institutions in the borough.

A great example of this is the partnership we developed with The V&A Museum last summer.

This programme saw children and parents from Pimento Supplementary School take part in a series of drama workshops, which culminated in a performance at the museum itself, staged in the medieval and Renaissance galleries during the summer holidays.

There’s an excellent video on the V&A website – go to www.vam.ac.uk now and let’s see if we can help you achieve greater profitability...
New celebration of artistic talent

A NEW arts festival launches next month – an exciting venture that promotes the wealth of musical and artisitic talent across west London.

The Kensington Olympia Festival of Music and the Arts – KOFMA – is being held in the beautiful parish church of St Matthew, Kensington Olympia, on the corner of Sinclair, Mabro and Fielding Roads from Saturday, September 12 to Sunday, September 20.

The week of events, art exhibitions, school events, architectural walks and literary talks kicks off on the Saturday with the monumental Bach Mass in B minor performed by The Oxford Spezzati Scholars, chorus and orchestra under its director Nicholas Mummy.

They are young professionals – mostly lawyers, doctors and accountants – who come together to put on high quality concerts for their own enjoyment and that of their loyal followers. The mass is considered one of the cornerstones of western classical music and represents music from the great composer’s entire musical career.

The Spezzati has performed widely in Oxford, London and Europe with works ranging from Tallis and Byrd to the written and broadcast, taking in Bach, Mozart, Brahms andStrauss along the way.

On Monday and Friday there are historical and architectural walks through the local neighbourhood led by Caroline MacMillan, who has lived in west London most of her life and for several years has been guiding walks in the area. The walks bring life to the buildings, streets and open spaces of Hammersmith. Her walks are informal and informative and she always says, “to be enjoyed.”

The Monday evening concert is Songs from the Shows hosted by Duncan Day who is rapidly establishing himself as a host and producer on the London scene. He will be joined by two top class singers to perform some of the best loved show songs.

On Tuesday morning literary historian Isabel Raphael gives a talk on literary Hammersmith. A former headmistress, she gives regular seminars and talks on a variety of classical subjects, from Aesop’s Fables to Orwell. Mining this part of London, she has revealed a hoard of fascinating people.

In the evening, one of the country’s leading choral groups, The Erebos Ensemble, appear on the latest leg of their 2015 tour entitled ‘A Tale of Two Traditions.’ The programme juxtaposes choral music from two very distinct schools, the early Tudor period and the modern Holy Minimalist tradition. These sound worlds together will come alive in the wonderful acoustic of St. Matthew’s Church.

The Erebos Ensemble has developed quite a reputation in its short career. They are the Ensemble in Residence with the FM’s Proms and work frequently with such groups as Southbank Sinfonia and The English Baroque. The group was founded by its director, Tom Williams, who is a specialist in European music of the Renaissance period and is currently Head of Music at the University of St. Martin in the Fields.

The midweek highlight of the festival will be a gala dinner in the church on Wednesday with entertainment from the Lallennant Trio. Led by Oliver Lallennant, described as the equivalent of a Savile Row suit in musical form, he has received worldwide acclaim for his stylish and virtuosic playing.

The Nell Trio perform works by Brahms and Mendelssohn on Thursday evening. On Friday morning pupils and staff of the local Addison Primary School present a half hour of music and art. In the evening there will be a pop-up cinema when it is planned to show one of the Ealing Studio comics.

On the final Saturday, the 19th, the festival is inviting singers of all abilities to spend the afternoon rehearsing and then to take part in an evening concert of The Faure Requiem, Halleliujah Chorus and Jerusalem. The rehearsals will be conducted by well known choral conductor and broadcaster Jeremy Sumnner.

The concert will also include the Lallennant Trio playing Stravinsky’s Suite Italienne, The Rite of Spring and a miscellany of opera arias.

On both Sundays during the festival, there are high masses, with the choir of Fulham the Rt Rev Jonathan Baker, the celebrant and preacher on the 20th.

St Matthew’s will be open from early until late to provide light refreshments throughout the week. A bar will be selling drinks during the evening concerts.

For detailed information about all the events, including ticket prices – which are all bookable online – go to www.kofma.co.uk. Or just turn up on the day. Tickets for the gala dinner are available through Laura Lampsh on kofma2015@gmail.com or 07779 108108.

Market traders offer tempting tempo

TRADERS will be drumming up support for the Portobello and Golborne Road street market 150th anniversary celebrations later this month.

To celebrate August’s theme of carnival, on August 21 Portobello regular Jerome O’Connor will host a apple juicing demonstration with the Apple Juice Company and a display and demonstration of steel drums, their history and manufacture on pitch 89, which is outside 205 Portobello Road, from 11am until 3pm.

Throughout September traders are staging a market area shopping promotion when shoppers will receive “passports” in which to collect stickers when they spend money at participating businesses. Businesses wishing to be promoted as part of the event must contribute a product or service of any value toward a prize draw.

Forms with complete details are available at the Street Trading Office or via the dedicated website www.rbkc.gov.uk/ourmarkets and must be returned to the office or sent to street.markets@rbkc.gov.uk by Friday, August 21.

On September 12 sections of the Lallemant Trio. Led by Oliver Lalle-

LONDON WEEKLY NEWS

Church’s pure acoustics promise musical treat for concert lovers

ANNUVERSARIES form a key thread in the forthcoming autumn season of Eaton Square Concerts in Westminster.

A special recital from world-renowned Chopin specialist Janina Fialkowska opens the season as she celebrates her 65th birthday year. The Sacconi Quartet mark the 150th anniversary of the birth of Sibelius and Nielsen and the Joyful Company of Singers celebrate 100 years since the premiere of Rachmaninov’s iconic All-Night Vigil.

Clarinetist Julian Bliss presents a programme that rejoices in the delights of his instrument’s repertoire, and so do the Sitkovetsky Piano Trio as they play some of the most popular works in the chamber music canon.

The concerts take place from October 1 to November 5 at St Peter’s Church in Eaton Square. A special recital from world-renowned Chopin specialist Janina Fialkowska opens the season as she celebrates her 65th birthday year. The Sacconi Quartet mark the 150th anniversary of the birth of Sibelius and Nielsen and the Joyful Company of Singers celebrate 100 years since the premiere of Rachmaninov’s iconic All-Night Vigil.

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LIVELY: Portobello Road market.

Blenheim Crescent and Talbot Road adjacent to the market will be closed to vehicles for a local community fashion event.

On September 16 screenings of films made in and about the market will feature at the Portobello Film Festival. These will include a documentary by Fox Primary School students working with the Hammersmith and Fulham Urban Studies Centre and The Food Explorers, and a music video by Jimmi Nolan set in Golborne and Portobello Road on a market day. See the website www.portobellofilmfestival.com for more details.

ENGLISH apple cooking demonstration with a surprise guest chef.

On October 17 there is another market cycling tour organised by Bikeminded, and tastings of English apples from the National Fruit Collection at Brogdale Orchards in Kent.

On November 14 the Christmas lights will be switched on by the traders’ Christmas card art contest winner. The big switch-on will be at 4.45pm in the square. Chiors who would like to be involved should contact mark@rbkc.gov.uk to book.

On November 20 an antiques event is being planned but traders say they need help coming up with a good idea for this, as well as organising and delivering it on the day. Contact the markets development officer at mark.atkinson@rbkc.gov.uk if you can help.

On December 5 at 13 there will be a Small Business Saturday UK Christmas ‘passport’-type shopping promotion. The deadline to sign up for this is November 6.
Caribbean chart-topper set to launch carnival

SOCA superstar Machel Montano, one of the greatest icons of Caribbean music, is to launch this year’s Notting Hill Carnival.

In a coup for Carnival, the chart-topping hero of Trinidad & Tobago is to perform with his full band in concert for one night only – Friday 28 August at the Eventim Apollo, Hammersmith, to supercharge Europe’s biggest street festival.

Machel’s legendary show-stopping performance will kick-off the Carnival weekend when he will be joined by Brooklyn-born, Grammy Award-winning, singer-songwriter Angela Hunte, voted 2014 Soul Train Best International Performance Artist, for an unprecedented night of soca music in the capital.

Machel, best known for the 2015 hit singles ‘Party Done’ and ‘Like a Boss’ will celebrate an outstanding discography of hits spanning 33 years during which he has engaged in collaborations with the likes of Pitbull, Boyz2Men, Wyclef Jean, and Morgan Heritage & Shaggy.

Angela Hunte is one of the most celebrated and sought after songwriters in contemporary music having penned international chart-topping hits such as ‘I Can’ for Nas and the 2009 Top 10 song ‘Empire State of Mind’ for Jay Z which featured Alicia Keys.

Olatunji Yearwood, Trinidad & Tobago’s 2015 International Groovy Monarch title-holder, will also appear on the Apollo stage to demonstrate his own impressive brand of Afrocentric beats and mesmerising dance moves in this presentation.

Skinny Fabulous, winner of the 2015 Power and Groovy Monarch titles in St Vincent & The Grenadines, will add an energetic streak to the already impressive line-up of what organisers say will be “an epic night”.

This promises to be the musical event of the year and all Carnival revellers are invited to be part of Machel stellar celebration of 33 years in music and memories in the electrifying setting of the Apollo,” said organiser Ra Hendricks.

“This once in a lifetime chance to see all-star Soca acts on stage will be greatest Soca concert that the Notting Hill Carnival has ever experienced.”

Tickets available at all Morris Roots Salons and online at www.eventim.co.uk and Ticketsmaster

Have your say on garden idea

KENSINGTON and Chelsea Council is asking residents what they think about the new design and layout proposed for Athlone Gardens.

The park has been affected by the redevelopment of the Wornington Green estate, with sections being temporarily removed from public use to allow for construction site access.

The council expects this arrangement to remain in place for about seven years.

A consultation will run until Sunday 20 September 2015 where residents can see what the council is proposing for Athlone Gardens and give it their ideas and suggestions.

Councillor Tim Ahern, Cabinet Member for Leisure, said: “We have some great plans for Athlone Gardens and I hope residents will take part in this consultation so we can ensure that the plans reflect the local community’s needs.”

Drop-in sessions will be held on Thursday 20 August and Saturday 12 September from 1pm to 3pm and on Thursday 17 September from 3pm to 5pm in Athlone Gardens, W10.

Residents can see designs and CGI of the proposals and find out more at www.rbkc.gov.uk/athlonegardens

They can also email BJT_ELS@rbkc.gov.uk or call 020 7341 5166 with any questions or comments.

When work on Wornington Green is finally completed Athlone Gardens will be returned to its former size, but the shape and layout will be changed.

Road death: man charged

A 31-YEAR-OLD man from Paddington appeared in court on Monday charged with causing death by dangerous driving after a £120,000 Bentley Continental collided with a gardener as he stood directing traffic by his broken-down truck in Notting Hill.

Residents rushed from nearby homes to try save the life of the 23-year-old groundskeeper with Kensington and Chelsea Council contractors Quadron, but he died at the scene of the incident in Pembroke Villas late last Thursday night.

George Claudiu Albu of Porchester Road, Paddington, has also been charged with causing death by driving a vehicle not in accordance with his licence and while uninsured, and failing to stop at the scene of a collision.

The Bentley was reportedly abandoned in the street with its engine left running, lights on and hip hop music playing.

Fly ‘fishing’

IF you have ever wondered what the difference is between a dragonfly and a damselfly come along to the Holland Park Wildlife Area on Saturday, August 15.

Summer is the season when dragonflies and damselflies emerge.

Between 2pm and 6pm Ecology Centre staff will help you hunt for these delightful creatures and in the process explain how you identify them as they hover above the pond.

Booking is not necessary. For more information about Ecology Centre’s events email ecology@rbkc.gov.uk
Bobbies can focus on better policing

I WAS pleased to hear Boris Johnson’s announcement that the majority of our Met police officers on the beat will be getting body-worn cameras within the next year.

This is good news for Londoners, not only making our communities safer places to live, but also allowing local people to hold the police to account.

I hope that the Metropolitan Police will draw up workable rules that tell officers when they need to have that camera switched on, so that as local residents we can still have the confidence to approach our local neighbourhood bobby for a private conversation when we want.

Lady Doreen Lawrence, whose son Stephen was murdered in a racist attack in 1993, has suggested that these cameras should be switched on during every stop-and-search to ensure they

GOOD NEWS: Police in London are to get body cameras are conducted appropriately.

Meanwhile, these cameras could result in huge savings in police and court time. If they work well and are not seen as a threat, over time we may be able to roll them out to other frontline workers – such as transport and health workers – who rely on to keep London safe and moving.

I WANT to congratulate the using heroes working in London’s cybersecurity companies for helping to protect us online.

It is hard to imagine but as you read this there is a major battle going on between cyber security experts and criminals. We don’t see it because there is no dramatic footage to show on TV. Yet multiple attacks are happening every day.

Sadly, many breaches stem from employees storing data in poorly protected ways but thanks to firms like Digital Shadows based at Canary Wharf or Garrison Technology based in Islington, a lot of those attacks are being thwarted or repaired quickly.

While any cyber security expert will tell you that 100 per cent protection is impossible, we can all do our bit to help keep ourselves safe online, especially by using more complex passwords and updating anti-virus and anti-spyware software.

Syed Kamall MEP for London

London Weekly News reader Robert Dangoor, who lives near Kensington Gardens, is a keen promoter of walking, as a ‘feelgood factor pastime’, he says, as well as the most effective and least harmful form of exercise. Robert has submitted this cartoon and writes: ‘I attach a drawing depicting the vast differences between strolling in the park and attempting to park the car. In London the extremes can be very close to each other physically, but miles apart from the resulting consequences!’

London Marathon takes medals back from Russian

IN the latest twist in the athletics doping saga, the London Marathon has stripped Russian runner Liliya Shobukhova of her two medals and is going to court to get more than £50,000 prize money back.

The International Association of Athletics Federations (IAAF) has confirmed that all competitive results achieved by Shobukhova as of 9 October 2009 have been disqualified.

The London Marathon has now annulled Shobukhova’s results in the 2010 and 2011 London Marathons.

“We will take action through the English courts to recover the prize and appearance money paid to Shobukhova in 2010, 2011,” said Nick Bitel, Chief Executive of the London Marathon.

“We will do everything we can to ensure cheaters are caught and do not benefit from cheating and we continue to work closely with the IAAF and others authorities to improve out-of-competition drug testing.”

Any money that is recovered will be used to pay athletes reallocated prize money who, in accordance with IAAF rules, are not eligible to receive the prize money unless or until Shobukhova repays the prize money she received.

Liliya Shobukhova finished first in the 2010 London Marathon and second in the 2011 London Marathon. Those results are now annulled and the official results are now.


CENSURED: Liliya Shobukhova has been stripped of her two London Marathon gold medals.
Queen’s VJ Day salute to war’s forgotten heroes

By Geoff Baker

AFTER 70 years of being the most forgotten servicemen of the Second World War, Britain’s most silent heroes will finally be awarded a long-overdue tribute on Saturday when The Queen leads the nation in a salute to their bravery.

A church service in Trafalgar Square organised by and for prisoners of war of the Japanese and attended by The Queen and the Duke of Edinburgh is to be made the centrepiece of the national commemorations for the 70th anniversary of VJ Day and the end of the war.

And in an unusual move, the Government has issued an official call to the public to turn out to “line the streets” to cheer the veteran heroes whose unparalleled suffering has been ignored for so long.

Many who fought in the Far East conflict that continued for months after the war in Europe ended in 1945 have protested that they were “the Forgotten Army”, but none were more forgotten than the 50,000 British servicemen who were captured by the Japanese and made POW.

After the war the authorities instructed the 37,500 POW who returned to the UK not to talk about their horrific experiences in the cruel camps of the Far East, and when the country first began commemorating anniversaries of the 1939-45 conflict in the 1980s the POW say they were “virtually ignored”.

But now The Queen herself has decided that they should be fully honoured at last. Of all of the VJ Day events organised by the Royal British Legion and the Government and happening in Westminster on Saturday, it is the service at St-Martin-In-The-Fields organised by the Far East POW remembrance association that she has chosen to attend.

In a significant mark of respect, Her Majesty, the Duke of Edinburgh and the Prime Minister will break off from their holidays to lead the congregation of Far East POW and war veterans at the Trafalgar Square service.

Most Far East POW spent over three and a half years in captivity in camps across Far East Asia. They were used as slave labour by the Japanese and 25 per cent of them died as a result of disease, malnutrition, neglect and brutality. Thousands of FEPOW were transported by sea under appalling conditions to be used as a slave labour force for Japanese industrial projects. The transport ships became known as “hellships” due to the conditions on board, which POW describe as like the slave ship transports of 200 years before.

But why is the dreadful history of the FEPOW not widely known? Their welfare and remembrance association’s answer to this is worth quoting in full: “Since the end of World War Two, FEPOW stood apart from other war veterans, in that they largely chose to remain silent about their experiences. There was not the same public interest in their story: few personal accounts were published in the first thirty years post-war and most popular films were about the war in Europe.

BBC in love with historical drama

(especially if it has lots of sex)

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But now The Queen herself has decided that they should be fully honoured at last. Of all of the VJ Day events organised by the Royal British Legion and the Government and happening in Westminster on Saturday, it is the service at St-Martin-In-The-Fields organised by the Far East POW remembrance association that she has chosen to attend.

In a significant mark of respect, Her Majesty, the Duke of Edinburgh and the Prime Minister will break off from their holidays to lead the congregation of Far East POW and war veterans at the Trafalgar Square service.

Most Far East POW spent over three and a half years in captivity in camps across Far East Asia. They were used as slave labour by the Japanese and 25 per cent of them died as a result of disease, malnutrition, neglect and brutality. Thousands of FEPOW were transported by sea under appalling conditions to be used as a slave labour force for Japanese industrial projects. The transport ships became known as “hellships” due to the conditions on board, which POW describe as like the slave ship transports of 200 years before.

But why is the dreadful history of the FEPOW not widely known? Their welfare and remembrance association’s answer to this is worth quoting in full: “Since the end of World War Two, FEPOW stood apart from other war veterans, in that they largely chose to remain silent about their experiences. There was not the same public interest in their story: few personal accounts were published in the first thirty years post-war and most popular films were about the war in Europe.
ROyal intervention: 'The Queen' famously parachutes into the Olympic stadium to herald the start of the 2012 Games.

Scientists have discovered a possible explanation for why so many of the Royal Family are thrill-seekers – the daredevil royals can’t help it because it’s all in their minds.

Following the news that the Duchess of Cambridge has achieved her advanced scuba qualification, meaning that she can join Prince William on 90-foot dives looking for sharks on holiday, royal-watchers have wondered why it is that so many of the nation’s first family are danger-lovers.

The thrill-chasing trait is unusually high among the royals. Most of The Queen’s children and grandchildren have many times revealed an especially high enthusiasm for extreme sports and dangerous pursuits – from Princess Anne’s and her daughter Zara Phillips’ yen for high-risk show-jumping to Prince Harry’s courage is all in the mind, say experts

The answer, according to psychologists and scientists, may be because their brains are wired differently to other, more safety-conscious, people – and to

unconsciously compensate for the demands of speeches, shaking hands and the polite banquets of the rest of royal life.

Research from David Zald, head of psychological sciences, at Vanderbilt University, shows that people differ in their chemical response to thrilling situations. One of the main hormones released during scary and thrilling activities is dopamine, and some people may get more of a kick from this dopamine response than others do as their brains lack what Zald describes as “brakes” on the dopamine release and re-uptake in the brain.

“We’ve found that the density of these dopamine autoreceptors is inversely related to an individual’s interest in and desire for novel experiences,” said Dr Zald. “Our research suggests that in high novelty-seeking individuals, the brain is less able to regulate dopamine, and this may lead these individuals to be particularly responsive to novel and rewarding situations that normally induce dopamine release.”

Other scientists agree that there is strong evidence that thrill-seeking isn’t just about personal choice to share the lives like the royals, but is about their brain chemistry.

“If you ask skiers if they are scared when they are on a high-risk slope, they’ll say they wouldn’t bother to ski the slope if they weren’t scared,” said Seymour Epstein, a psychologist at the University of Massachusetts. “They want a slope that terrifies them. Para-chutists say the same thing. After you take the plunge there’s an immense relief and sense of well-being in facing a fear that doesn’t materialize.”

That kind of exhilaration is particularly appealing to a personality type, known as Type T [for thrill], people who have been studied by Frank Farley, a psychologist at the University of Wisconsin.

People who are high in that trait, Dr Farley said, “seek variety, novelty, intensity and risk.”

“But nobody goes on scary rides like roller coasters, or comes back a second time if they try it,” said Dr Farley. “It’s those with the thrill-seeking personality who come back again and again. They like adventure, like high driving and hang gliding.”

The addiction for physical thrills, Dr Farley believes, may be a neurological need for the biochemical system that comes from intense physical excitement.

One theory is that the brains of thrill-seekers are usually at a lower level of arousal compared with most other people.

This theory holds that the sense of danger and the physical thrill of a roller coaster rideprime a neural network at the base of the brain called the reticular activating system, which in turn heightens the level of activation throughout the rest of the brain.

“They feel truly alive when something triggers their level of brain arousal,” said Dr Farley. Another theory, put forward by Marvin Zeccola, a psychologist at the University of Delaware, proposes that those who need to seek out intense stimulation have an imbalance in a brain chemical, monoamine oxidase, which leads to changes in the levels of the chemicals in some people, lifting them from boredom to excitement.

Dr Epstein added: “It makes you feel very alive to be so scared. When you recognize that something is threatening your full attention so forcefully, all your senses engage. It’s a very different feeling from being in your usual semi-awake state.”

At last, we salute Far East PoWs

FROM PAGE 13

“There are many hypotheses for this silence. A significant number of FEPOW & friends have their ‘collective sense of shame at being a defeated force’. They had been trained, in prison and ready to fight for their country when they, and thousands of other troops, disembarked in the Far East. Almost immediately they were told to lay down their weapons and walk into prison of war camps.

“Perhaps war historians are not motivated to investigate ‘defeat’ in the same way that they do ‘victory’. Defeat holds little honour for survivors. Those in the Far East had little opportunity to make daring escapes unlike their European counterparts at the end of the war, those held in European prisoner of war camps were liberated by copying the forces that had driven back the enemy in hard, bitter and relentless battles.

“There were also relentless battles in the Far East. But it was one defining factor that brought the war there to its swift end. FEPOW owe their liberation to the dropping of two atomic bombs. In the post-war years, the growing and noisy debate about the validity of using such weapons must surely have over-shadowed many FEPOW who may have wanted, or needed, to talk.

“Furthermore, many FEPOW recalled being told not to talk about their experiences, by the repatriating authorities in late 1945. This advice was meant to prevent them from being overwhelmed by the realities of those who had died in the Far East. Other FEPOW felt an unwillingness to share harrowing memories with close family. Some simply expressed their desire to leave the past behind. In later life it became very apparent to FEPOW that there was little public interest in their experience. In the early 1990s the country had commemorations for the first time of anniversaries associated with World War Two. The culmination of the 60th anniversary events, in August 1985, saw the FEPOW story virtually ignored in comparison to the attention given just months earlier to the European theatre of war, the tales of captivity, escape and victory.

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by Geoff Baker

YOU think you do a lot of entertaining, pasta parties for eight once or twice a week, barbecues for your friends and their children? Well, you’re not quite in The Queen’s league, for last year she entertained 62,000 people at her homes.

From state visits to garden parties, receptions, investitures and private audiences, The Queen and her family are the most of hosts. During 2014 over 340 receptions, lunches and dinners were held at Buckingham Palace, at which nearly 11,500 people were entertained. These ranged in scale from an intimate lunch for a few guests to the annual Diplomatic Reception for 1,000 people.

In the 19th century court events were restricted to the aristocracy but now a much broader group of people are invited to events at Buckingham Palace, from community leaders to recovering injured Service men to students of the dramatic arts.

One day, it could be you who gets that special invitation and just in case it might be a good idea to pop up to the Palace over the next couple of months to familiarize yourself with the lie of the land.

This summer, visitors to Buckingham Palace will experience what it is like to attend an event at the invitation of The Queen. Special displays and films reveal the work of Royal Household staff in welcoming the tens of thousands of guests who come to the Palace for a reception, state banquet, garden party or investiture each year.

For the first time visitors can follow in the footsteps of Heads of State, Prime Ministers and all the other VIPs from every walk of life by entering the Palace’s State Rooms through the Grand Entrance.

The Palace Ballroom is set for a state banquet, with the table dressed in silver-gilt centerpieces and candelabra from George IV’s magnificent Grand Service. The detailed preparations required to create such a spectacle, including the arrangement of 2,000 pieces of cutlery for 170 place settings, are captured in an especially commissioned time-lapse film for summer visitors to the Palace.

The Royal Welcome exhibition is just one of dozens now open to the public at the palace. They include:

- Painting Paradise: The Art of the Garden at The Queen’s Gallery, Buckingham Palace until October 11th. The Palace says: “The Art of the Garden reveals the way in which gardens have been celebrated in art across four centuries. Bringing together paintings, botanical studies, drawings, books, manuscripts and decorative arts, the exhibition explores the changing character of the garden from the 16th to the early 20th century. It includes works by Leonardo da Vinci, Maria Sibylla Merian and Carl Fabergé, and some of the earliest and rarest surviving depictions of gardens and plants.”
- Waterloo at Windsor: at Windsor Castle until January 2016. The Palace says: “2015 marks the 200th anniversary of the Battle of Waterloo and the defeat of Napoleon. In celebration of the allied victory, George IV created the Waterloo Chamber at Windsor Castle, a grand space filled with portraits of those instrumental in the victory, among them the Duke of Wellington.”
- Great Kitchen to State Apartment – tours for groups at Windsor. The Palace says: “This tour gives an extraordinary insight into the behind-the-scenes life of Windsor Castle. The Great Kitchen is the oldest, substantially unchanged and still working kitchen in the country and has remained in constant use for nearly 750 years. Your special guided tour begins in the castle’s Winchester Tower with refreshments and an introduction to royal dining. You hear about the elaborate dinners prepared for Elizabeth I, George IV and Queen Victoria and about the preparations for State occasions today. The special visit then continues with a tour of the Great Kitchen itself. It concludes in the magnificent State Apartments, which your group may explore at leisure with a multimedia tour.”
- The State Rooms and Garden Highlights Tour for groups until September 27. The Palace says: “Enjoy a leisurely day out at Buckingham Palace and combine a ticket to the State Rooms with a guided tour of the most remarkable features of the famous garden.”
- The Garden Highlights Tour includes the beautiful Herbaceous Border, the wisteria-clad summer house and Rose Garden, the enormous Waterloo Vase and the Palace tennis court, where King George VI and Prince Philip played in the 1930s. The 39-acre garden is today the setting for The Queen’s Garden Parties. Described as ‘a walled oasis in the middle of London’, it boasts more than 350 types of wild flower, over 200 trees and a three-acre lake.”
- Private guided tours of Clarence House – for groups, until August 30. The Palace says: “For a very special visit to Clarence House, your group can book a private late-afternoon tour of this beautiful residence with an expert guide. The tour begins in the garden, where visitors can see the formal planting added in 2004-5 by The Prince of Wales in memory of his grandmother, Queen Elizabeth The Queen Mother. “This exclusive guided tour includes the Cornwall Room, not seen as part of a normal day visit. The room is hung with 22 of The Prince of Wales’s watercolours painted between 1998 and 2006. The tour concludes with a glass of champagne and a view of the garden. Price includes a guided tour in English, a guidebook and a glass of champagne.”
- Short talk – Fabergé Flowers: Miracles in Miniature on August 20. The Palace says: “Join Curator of Decorative Arts Caroline de Guitaut as she reveals the symbolism and craftsmanship of Fabergé’s exquisite and remaining flower studies.”
- Sumner exclusive guided tours of the State Rooms – until September 26. The Palace says: “Enjoy the splendour of the State Rooms in the company of an expert guide on an exclusive guided tour of Buckingham Palace. The tour ends with a glass of champagne served in the Bow Room.”
- An evening concert at Vauxhall Gardens – September 10. The Palace says: “Join us as The Queen’s Gallery, Buckingham Palace for an evening of live music once enjoyed by visitors to the famous and historic Vauxhall Gardens in the second half of the eighteenth century. Following an introductory talk by Desmond Shawe-Taylor, Surveyor of The Queen’s Pictures, students from the Royal College of Music will perform works by Handel, Arne, J.C. Bach, Giordani and Hook.”
- Creative Course – Design A Garden Inside, September 14-18. The Palace says: “Create your own stylised floral motif inspired by nature over this five-day course. The course will include classes at The Prince’s School of Traditional Arts, where you will craft your own floral design into a full-colour painting to take home.”
- Study day – The Art of the Exotic: Chinoiserie at Buckingham Palace, September 21-22. The Palace says: “This course explores how British craftsmen in the 18th and early 19th centuries invented their own fanciful versions of the East, designing a wide range of fashionable objects, from wall coverings and ceramics to clocks and light fittings.”

For full details, prices and booking details of these and all exhibitions at Buckingham Palace and the other royal homes go to www.royalcollection.org.uk

Events expand to give all of us a glimpse of court life

340 receptions for over 11,000 guests – that’s entertainment!
**BBC’s love affair continues with sexy historical dramas**

by Geoff Baker

**T**hese are dangerous days for the BBC – and they are forcing the corporation to get especially creative.

With the Wastefinder General on their backs in his new role as the Culture Secretary, on the one hand the BBC must maintain the popularity of its drama in order to justify clinging to the lip of the licence fee gravy boat.

But on the other, it has to maintain ‘standards’ and not cause the Wastefinder – Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport John Whittingdale – to institute new restrictions if they go over the top and shock the sizeable proportion of viewers who do not want rooting on their telly.

It’s relatively easy for any broadcaster to up the ante of its drama in the TV ratings, add a lot of sex and the viewing figures will shoot up. Channel 4 has been using that old trick for years. But although surveys show that the majority of viewers do like to see a lot of slap ‘n tickle, the most recent Ofcom report revealed that 33 per cent do not and it’s this third who tend to be the ones who will complain vociferously if Auntie stoops to the ratings-boosting level of its more feral commercial cousin.

It is this ‘no sex please’ contingent that John Whittingdale referred to at the Edinburgh TV Festival a while back when he said: “A large number of people I represent are at times deeply offended by the level.

So you can imagine that there may at first have been a hesitating note in the air when the office of the BBC’s head of drama said it might be time for a bright spark to come in with a proposal to commission a 90-minute screenplay called The Scandalous Lady W.

“What’s it about?”

“Well, it’s a true story, a feminist story, about this teenage heiress from West London with a fortune of millions who turns out to be a bit of a nymphomaniac.”

“Is this Made In Chelsea?”

“No, she’s actually from Brompton… anyway, she gets married at 18 to this Conservative MP who seizes all of her money, but then he turns out to be a cuckold and he lets… “

“Did you say a Conservative MP? And he’s cuckolded by his wife? I’m starting to feel uneasy about this…”

“No but it’s fine, it’s mainly about him being cuckolded by her one lover, this bloke that he let’s stand on his shoulders so the other chap can look over the floor and spy on her in the bath…”

“How many lovers does she have?”

“Errm, twenty seven or eight…”

“And you say this is a true story? A Tory MP’s wife with 27 lovers?”

“Yes…”

“Do you have a dole wish?”

“No, no, it’s absolutely fine, it’s an historical drama…”

“Ok, well then you should have said. Excellent, no problem. Scotch?”

Sex and the historical drama is proving to be a new winning format for the BBC. What you couldn’t get away with in a month of Sundays if it happened in EastEnders is more than permissible if it’s done up in crinoline with a lot of lurchers lazing around on a flagged floor. If it’s in the olden days it can’t be wrong.

Poldark proved the theory of period sex appeal earlier this year when viewing figures rocketed every time that Aidan Turner stripped to the waist in the Cornish love ronp. In the last few weeks Life In Squares, the historical but bed-hopping series of the Bloomsbury group, has similarly added heat to an otherwise overstated summer.

Now The Scandalous Lady W is aiming to keep the BBC’s finger on the racing pulse by taking us back to the 18th century, when London was a lot more level than today.

Lady W is Lady Seymour Worsley, a Georgian gentlemwoman who inherited the equivalent of £60 million at the age of 17. When, shortly after, she married Tory MP Sir Richard Worsley, under the laws of the time which ruled that a wife and her wealth – was a husband’s possession, she lost access to her vast fortune and had to make do with the pin money of, at today’s values, £80,000 a year.

But married life turned out to be something of a disappointment for Lady W. Despite her beauty, the MP was more interested in pursuing influence than chasing her and so she turned to another chap, Captain George Bissett. At first Sir Richard allowed the flirtation, even encouraging it by letting his rival clamber on his back so that he could spy on Lady W in the bathroom.

But when Lady W and the Captain made off to spend several days in a suite at The Royal Hotel in Pall Mall, and did not leave the room except to grab lunch, the MP indignantly reacting by suing the officer for “criminal conversation” and a claim for damages of the modern equivalent of £25 million for the “debt” of his “possession”.

As you’d expect, the court case became the scandal of the time, when at least in the course of defence Lady W let it out that in a bizarre interpretation of a wife’s “duty” she had been “convincing” with these other 26 men.

“I found the story interesting on a number of levels,” says the star of the drama, Natalie Dormer, in a magnificent piece of understatement.

Landing Dormer, now one of the most popular women’s property until 1882 when the Married Women’s Property Act was passed.

“I am a historian and I found it interesting on that level. As a human story it’s a psychologically abusive relationship, but it’s also a story about love, war and sex and all those things. I had sworn that I wasn’t going to get back into a corset for a while because I was fed up with being always in a corset. But it had to be a strong story to warrant me wanting to get back into one. But I found the historical context extraordinary. The real historical fact is so extraordinary and intoxicating. A woman couldn’t inherit her own property or own her own property until 1870 when the Married Women’s [Property] Act.

“It was only 145 years ago. And most women who go round the street tweeting and ordering on their Net a Porter app have no idea how minute the time is that we have had equality.”

In the end, Lady Worsley had the last laugh in this extraordinary story of an early battle for women’s rights.

Although she lost her case – the judge concluded that “Lady Seymour, for three or four years, has been prostituted with a variety of people, that is extremely clear, and extremely plain.” was a Pyrrhic victory for her husband.

The jury were asked to consider their verdict and what sum of money should be paid in damages to Sir Worsley. After deliberation, in which they acknowledged that Bissett had undeniably been unfaithful, an award in excess of £25 million that they asked for, Sir Richard Worsley was awarded the equivalent of £10.

**RIVALS: Natalie Dormer, Aneurin Barnard and Shaun Evans.**

The exceptional actress is already known to fans of period drama for her acclaimed portrayal of Anne Boleyn in that other BBC histrion-rotp The Tudors, in which her quietly kim came off a lot, particularly in an erotic and frenzied scene – now much-viewed on YouTube – in which she seduced Henry VIII in a forest. And that, she says, was not easy.

“You find the motivation for it in your head. With Henry and Anne, you were talking about an intense love affair. In my experience, intense love affairs result in taking your clothes off. “It’s just a slightly tougher day at work. They, love scenes, are daunting in so far as it’s a very personal thing and you are doing it in front of eight other people, closed set or not. “But people would be amazed at how un-erotic the process actually is, because it’s heavily choreographed.”

Like many viewers of The Tudors, Natalie had much sympathy for Anne Boleyn, a woman often smeared by history as a manipulative schemer but in fact a victim of the whims of greater powers.

“She was a pawn in a man’s world, and it’s so easy for us in this post-feminist era to take female rights for granted. “Anne was the first consistent of a British monarch to be aware of image, as Princess Diana was, and they both had this enormous positive effect on people, who were either staunch supporters or who demonised and criticised them.

“As fallible human beings, women fall foul of that polarisation. And what happens to people, particularly women, in the spotlight has not changed in 500 years.”

Like Anne, Lady W was demonized too, by the tales of her love affairs. “It’s been publicised in a scandal sheet of the time – but through opposing the system she revealed the divine right of men to be a shame provided by the jury’s verdict of a British M P whose seizures all of her money, but then he turns out to be a cuckold and he lets…”

“Taking your clothes off in front of a film crew, even on a closed set, is completely harrowing,” said Natalie.

“I am thrilled to be playing a woman who was so ahead of her time. Though our story is set in the 18th century, it challenges and explores the issues still fully relevant today of freedom and equality,” said Natalie.

“Terms of women’s rights, a woman was considered her husband’s property and couldn’t own or even inherit her own property until 1882 when the Married Women’s Property Act was passed.

“I am a historian and I found it interesting on that level. As a human story it’s a psychologically abusive relationship, but it’s also a story about love, war and sex and all those things. I had sworn that I wasn’t going to get back into a corset for a while because I was fed up with being always in a corset. But it had to be a strong story to warrant me wanting to get back into one. But I found the historical context extraordinary. The real historical fact is so extraordinary and intoxicating. A woman couldn’t inherit her own property or own her own property until 1870 when the Married Women’s [Property] Act.

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**The Scandalous Lady W**

BBC2, 9pm August 20
HANDS-ON HISTORY
THIS SUMMER

Sundays – Tuesdays during summer holidays

From explorer to soldier and actress to princess, become a new character each week this summer.

Step into England’s story
FROM some angles, Rick Stein looks like a victim of his own success. So inspiring are his televised cookery quests to India, the Mediterranean and the Far East that every year, fellow foodies follow in his footsteps, thus taking the locations from off the beaten track to on the tourist trail.

“I think part of the reason the programmes are successful is because people want to go to the places we’ve been to,” explains 68-year-old Stein, who adds that it’s “lovely” when people are inspired by the shows.

“Sometimes I say to David, the director, ‘We don’t want people coming here, it will ruin it!’”

Then there’s the way his name is occasionally used in vain after he’s visited an area or a restaurant. For instance, 15 years ago, he had some admittedly “fantastic fish and chips” in a Scottish restaurant.

“They’ve still got this thing up, saying, ‘Rick Stein says this is the best fish and chips in the country,’” he explains. “Well it’s changed hands about three times so some aggrieved customer of the shop wrote to me saying, ‘Do you know what I had the most disgusting fish and chips and they’re saying that you’re recommending it?’”

“In the end I went there and actually took the stuff [the sign] down and walked out!”

Last year the chef, who travels to Australia three times a year to work on his restaurants out there, headed back to the Mediterranean for his latest six-part BBC Two series and accompanying cookery book, From Venice To Istanbul (starting on Friday, August 7).

Between weaving around the Mediterranean and chatting to interesting local characters, including the Albanian guide who “was a good friend of the prime minister Edi Rama, good at her job and had the additional advantage of looking like Audrey Hepburn”, Stein found himself in a “ludicrous situation” in some of the restaurants he visited en route.

If he was recognised, sometimes the “top person” – the one who wouldn’t usually cook, as they’d ordinarily leave that to the servants and cooks – would take the reins in the kitchen to have their moment of glory on the camera, despite “almost never having cooked it before”.

“You’re just thinking, ‘Oh for God’s sake, just get the cook to do it!’” Stein recalls with a grin. “But you can’t tell them that. It can be a bit of a disadvantage if people know who we are and potentially what sort of business that could bring them, so we do try to find people that wouldn’t know us from a bar of soap, but it doesn’t always turn out that way,” he adds.

Though he is recognised in his Cornish home in Padstow, where he “absolutely loves” living and running several businesses, he’s always happy to hop on a plane and explore new nooks and crannies in the world.

“I’ve been travelling a fair bit since I was in my teens, and I just love being away,” he says.

“I don’t know whether it makes you a calmer, happier, more interesting person, but I do like being in other countries.

If you fancy exploring some of Stein’s recipes, here are three recipes from his new book to try at home.

**MESUTS BLUE FISH STEW WITH CHILLI CORNBREAD**

**SERVES 4-6**

- Large handful flat-leaf parsley
- 12 turns/grinds of the black pepper
- 3 tomatoes, peeled and chopped
- 6 cloves garlic, sliced
- 1 lemon, skin and pith removed, sliced
- For the chilli cornbread:
  - 200g plain flour
  - 150g caster sugar
  - 750-800g good-quality vanilla ice-cream, softened a little
  - 150g caster sugar, plus extra to dust
  - 750-800g good-quality vanilla ice-cream, softened a little
  - 4 free-range eggs

1. Preheat the oven to 180°C/gas mark 5. Line a 23 cm x 33 cm Swiss roll tin with baking parchment. Place the eggs and sugar into a bowl and whisk until light and fluffy and thickened.
2. Pour into the lined tin and smooth over with the back of the spoon or a spatula.
3. Hold each end with your hands and twist in opposite directions so it tightens up and forms a cylinder about 7-8 cm wide. Place it in the freezer until required.
4. To make the strawberry jam, put the strawberries and sugar into a heavy-based saucepan and cook on a high heat for 3-4 minutes, stirring every so often, until the strawberries are just starting to soften and there is very little liquid left in the pan. Now remove from the heat, transfer to a bowl and leave to cool.
5. Sift the flour over the mixture and fold in carefully with the whisk or a large spoon.
6. Pour into the lined tin and smooth over with the back of the spoon or spatula until evenly spread out. Bake the sponge for 10-12 minutes, or until just firm to the touch. Place a sheet of baking parchment, that is slightly bigger than the tray, on the work surface and dust with some caster sugar.
7. Turn the sponge out on to the parchment paper, then peel off the parchment on the bottom of the sponge. Place the egg and sugar into a bowl and whisk until light and fluffy and thickened.
8. Remove the clingfilm from the ice-cream and place the ice-cream on the sponge; carefully roll it up. Either serve immediately, cut into 2 cm-thick slices with a spoonful of the strawberry purée on the plate, or freeze until required.

**MESSUTS BLUE FISH STEW WITH CHILLI CORNBREAD**

**SERVES 4**

- 4 small mackerel or herring, scaled and gutted
- 1 tsp salt
- 100ml olive oil
- 1 onion, halved and sliced
- 6 green finger chillies, split open but kept whole
- 1 lemon, skin and pith removed, sliced
- 6 cloves garlic, sliced
- 2-3 jalapeno chillies, deseeded and finely chopped
- 30g soft-light brown sugar
- 6 tbsp water
- 3 large eggs
- 70ml sunflower oil
- To make the cornbread, first heat the oven to 180°C/gas mark 5. Place the eggs, sugar and sugar into a large bowl and whisk until light and fluffy and thickened.
- Preheat the oven to 180°C/gas mark 5. Line a 23 cm x 33 cm Swiss roll tin with baking parchment. Place the eggs and sugar into a bowl and whisk until light and fluffy and thickened.
- Remove the clingfilm from the ice-cream and place the ice-cream on the sponge; carefully roll it up.

**ARTIC ROLL**

- 1 lemon, skin and pith removed, sliced
- 6 cloves garlic, sliced
- 5 green finger chillies, split open but kept whole
- 30g soft-light brown sugar
- 6 tbsp water
- 3 large eggs
- 70ml sunflower oil
- To make the cornbread, first heat the oven to 180°C/gas mark 5. Place the eggs, sugar and sugar into a large bowl and whisk until light and fluffy and thickened.
- Preheat the oven to 180°C/gas mark 5. Line a 23 cm x 33 cm Swiss roll tin with baking parchment. Place the eggs and sugar into a bowl and whisk until light and fluffy and thickened.
- Sift the flour over the mixture and fold in carefully with the whisk or a large spoon.
- Pour into the lined tin and smooth over with the back of the spoon or spatula until evenly spread out. Bake the sponge for 10-12 minutes, or until just firm to the touch. Place a sheet of baking parchment, that is slightly bigger than the tray, on the work surface and dust with some caster sugar.
- Turn the sponge out on to the parchment paper, then peel off the parchment on the bottom of the sponge. Place the egg and sugar into a bowl and whisk until light and fluffy and thickened.
- Remove the clingfilm from the ice-cream and place the ice-cream on the sponge; carefully roll it up.

Either serve immediately, cut into 2 cm-thick slices with a spoonful of the strawberry purée on the plate, or freeze until required.
Future stars say: Annie, get your fun

Annie Jnr Arts Theatre ****

Stars of the future are performing this month in a special celebration of the classic family musical Annie at the Arts Theatre.

The production by Prepare 2 Perform has taken a month’s residency at the Arts Theatre, where it will share the venue with the newly opened Green Day musical American Idiot during the daytime slots.

The cast of 350 is taking its turn to perform the musical made famous by the 1982 film, which tells the story of orphan Annie and her eventual adoption by billionaire Daddy Warbucks.

The project, which saw 2,900 children audition to take part, showcases some of the West End stars of the future in a classically directed but by no means dated adaptation.

I was invited to see the first press performance of the show and was really impressed by the quality of all of the young actors, in particular Matilda Hopkins, who played Annie at this performance and whose energy and charisma held the audience throughout. Jessica Niles as Miss Hannigan showed a maturity that belied her years and has to make her a tip for the top in the future.

I also really loved Sandy, the stray dog who becomes the best friend of the orphan and in this production was cleverly portrayed through puppetry.

Managing this number of children is no mean feat, but all the youngsters were fully committed to the performance and other than a couple of missed cues, this was a fully professional production of a high standard.

Producer – director Matthew Chandler, of P2P Productions, said: “This is a version of Annie specially adapted by the original American creative team to be performed by talented young people. It is a fantastic opportunity for all the youngsters involved – and features one of the greatest child roles ever written.”

With classic songs like Hard Knock Life, Tomorrow and May 15, this is a welcome summer visitor to the West End and with the running time just an hour, is definitely worth a little visit.

Annie Jnr runs at the Arts Theatre until August 31

Back to ‘classroom’ for hard war story

I Believe in Unicorns ***

I have been long tormented about my short attention span so a play pitched at five year olds seemed the perfect thing for me to attend, writes Nicky Sweetland.

With a set that looked like a primary school classroom and a flighty librarian to greet us, the auditorium was a blaze with the ‘blah’ of young children eagerly anticipating what for some must have been their first taste of live theatre.

I believe in Unicorns, at the Vaudeville Theatre, is based on a book by celebrated author Michael Morpurgo and as with his most famous work, War Horse, has the backdrop of war-torn Europe. The writer attended this, the press performance of the play, which is running for a limited spell following a successful season last year.

The tale follows a young boy, Tommy, who hates books and school and who would much rather be outside playing than sitting in a classroom. Morpurgo in fact admitted the character was loosely based on him as a child during the Q and A sessions that followed the performance.

Tommy is forced to join the library, where he becomes engrossed in the stories told by the passionate and infectious librarian, the Unicorn lady.

Performing almost entirely as a narrative, this play was really more like the old BBC TV show Jackanory and although Danyah Miller was engaging as the story teller, I felt the play lacked the sparkle and pizzazz which anything with a Unicorn in the title promises.

The set was very clever and during the more flighty moments of the performance added a little more entertainment, but on the whole I found the show far too rigid to keep my attention.

The fact that the author himself was in attendance did add to the obvious excitement of most, but I think without this, you would need to be very interested in the story for it to keep you entertained.

I believe in Unicorns runs at the Vaudeville Theatre until August 30. For more information visit the website nimaxtheatres.com
TALK OF THE TOWN

The entertainment scene across London

**Music great but I’m still not in love with Tommy**

**Tommy Greenwich Theatre ***

I WAS fortunate last week to be invited to the opening of the much anticipated return of Tommy, the Who’s iconic rock opera, which is in London 20 years after it was last seen in the capital.

The production at the Greenwich Theatre also marks the 40th anniversary of the original film and the 50th anniversary of The Who.

Based on the iconic 1969 double-album rock opera, which later became a film of the same title, The Who’s Tommy is a story about a boy who after suffering a traumatic childhood finds he has an exceptional aptitude for playing pinball. Deaf, dumb and blind, Tommy triumphs over his misfortunes and is set on a path to international superstardom.

As a lifelong fan of musical theatre I still find it strange that some people haven’t heard of some of the biggest West End shows and yet when you mention Tommy, most know exactly what you’re talking about, such is the broad appeal of the phenomenally successful rock group, film and album.

I have to say I find it slightly mystifying as the rock opera style really is not my cup of tea and the story is, for want of a better word, woeful – so I had to put on my objective eyes to watch the new Tommy.

This is a brave production, taking a quite dated format and boldly dragging it up to date with contemporary dance, lighting and set. Musically it is, of course, brilliant and the vocals of the cast were exceptional, particularly from Ashley Birchall as Tommy and Giovanni Spano as cousin Kevin. Birchall played the tormented youth with appeal and masterfully held the stage for virtually the show’s entirety.

The sound quality of the microphones in places was a bit off, however, and some of the more complicated lyrics were lost, which made following the plot even more difficult. I hadn’t researched the story before so I also found some of the early scenes, although artistically great to look at, a little confusing and I didn’t understand the mirror reference at all until it was smashed in act two.

If you’re a fan of the show this will make for a great night and the audience were extremely enthusiastic – but I’m afraid I still didn’t really get it.

**Ramp up the camp, let’s have a party**

**Supreme Fabulettas *****

If you want an evening of pure, unadulterated camp fun, the Supreme Fabulettas at the Leicester Square Theatre is the show for you, writes Nicky Sweetland.

The cabaret performance, which features some of the best female impersonators in the UK, has a residency at the theatre in August before embarking on a highly anticipated world tour.

Vocally superb, this celebration of crowd-pleasing songs is all strung together with a story that follows the group throughout their careers together, including fights, prison terms and ultimate success.

They are kept in line by the indomitable Sheila Simmonds, whose asperic Witt is perfectly pitched and when assisted by her glamorous daughter makes for an hilarious break from the action.

The show is filled with feathers, glitter and glamour from the first moment and the audience is treated to hit song after hit song, ranging from classic Motown to current chart toppers. I would highly recommend it for a night out.

The Supreme Fabulettas’ London summer dates are Friday 14 and Saturday 15 August, Friday 21 and Saturday 22 August, Friday 28 and Saturday 29 August.

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**The exhibition of work by artist Irwin Crotch at Gray MCA**

September 17 to 22

Unseen and rediscovered works by the former Canadian war artist, fashion illustrator and modern painter Irwin ‘Bud’ Crotch (1914 – 1981), will go on sale in an unprecedented selling exhibition by Gray MCA in London this September. The exhibition will present the most extensive selection of works by Crotch in 45 years, from across Europe and North America, including many works that have never before been on public view. The exhibition will feature a total of more than 60 original works ranging in price from £350 - £10,000. Location: Gallery 8, 8 Duke Street St James’s, London SW1Y 6BJ. Opening hours: Thursday 17 September – 9.30am – 8.00pm; Friday 18 September – Saturday 19 September; Sunday 20 September. Monday 21 September – Tuesday 22 September – 9.30am – 6.30pm.

**Buckingham Palace summer opening**

To September 27th

Visit Buckingham Palace, the official London residence of the Queen, this summer. Buckingham Palace is one of the world’s few remaining working royal palaces – don’t miss the chance to see it! Explore the lavishly furnished State Rooms, containing some of the greatest treasures from the Royal Collection. Highlights include paintings by Rembrandt, Rubens, Vermeer and Poussin, Canaletto and Claude. Sculpture by Canova and Chantrey. Exquisite examples of Sèvres porcelain. Some of the finest English and French furniture in the world.

**Sinatra: The Man and His Music at the London Palladium**

To October 10th

The iconic music of Frank Sinatra is brought to life at one of the capital’s most iconic venues in Sinatra: The Man and His Music at the London Palladium. This multi-media concert, which has the support and endorsement of the singer's family, marks the centenary of Sinatra’s birth and features all of his greatest hits including Fly Me To The Moon, New York, New York and My Way. Staged at the West End venue where the legendary entertainer made his 1950 British singing debut, Sinatra: The Man and His Music combines rare and original master recordings with cutting edge technology and never before seen on stage performances of some of Sinatra’s hugely successful music career. Featuring a 24-piece orchestra and a company of dancers, Sinatra: The Man and His Music offers the audience a quite dated form at and thus a truly exceptional, particularly and Cecily Cardew. The gallants must then grapple with the risotto consequences of their hypothetic and with the formidable Lady Bracknell.

 Visit Buckingham Palace, the official London residence of the Queen, this summer. Buckingham Palace is one of the world’s few remaining working royal palaces - don’t miss the chance to see it! Explore the lavishly furnished State Rooms, containing some of the greatest treasures from the Royal Collection. Highlights include paintings by Rembrandt, Rubens, Vermeer and Poussin, Canaletto and Claude. Sculpture by Canova and Chantrey. Exquisite examples of Sèvres porcelain. Some of the finest English and French furniture in the world.

Sinatra: The Man and His Music at the London Palladium

To October 31

Directed by Lyndsey Turner and starring Benedict Cumberbatch, Benedict Cumberbatch takes on the title role in Shakespeare’s great tragedy. Directed by Lyndsey Turner (Pooh, Chimerica) and produced by Sonia Friedman Productions, the Barbican presents an exclusive twelve-week run of this compelling new production in summer 2015. As a country arms itself for war, a family tears itself apart. Forced to avenge his father’s death but paralysed by the task ahead, Hamlet rages against the impossibility of his predicament, threatening both his sanity and the security of the state. The Barican has sold its current allocation of advance tickets. However, small numbers of tickets may be returned or released for advance sale online. Visit hamlet-barbican.com for more details. There are also 30 £10 tickets available as day-seats for sale each day in person. Up to two tickets per person, sold at the advance ticket desk from 10.30am; the Barbican Centre will open from 9am. Returned and late-release tickets may occasionally become available at the last minute on the day of the performance.

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Outside, the dark side is bright

Pinocchio St Paul’s Actors’ Church, Covent Garden

As an entertainment reporter I spend a lot of time inside, so when the opportunity arises for me to enjoy the summer sunshine while still fulfilling my role, I jump at the chance.

Last week I was able to take up the invitation to enjoy some open-air theatre within the grounds of St Paul’s Actors’ Church, Covent Garden, where Iris Theatre are currently performing their adaptation of the Carlo Collodi children’s classic, *Pinocchio*.

The action all takes place within the courtyards, gardens and nave of the church as the audience is moved around to follow the performers though the immersive and interactive story. This was far from the Disney version of *Pinocchio*, with all of the original dark elements put back in to the family fable which tells of the toy maker whose grief after losing his only son to the plague leads him to build a puppet bambino to take his place.

With some magic from the Blue Fairy the marionette comes to life but then must learn some important lessons about trust, honour and truthfulness.

Told through music, puppetry and at times some very good traditional pantomime, this production is of the highest quality, with some really lovely melodies, humour and physical theatre. It is portrayed by an energetic and engaging cast who masterfully show their prowess, both vocally, and with their puppetry skills.

Both fun and exciting, this was a busy event and although most of the audience were adults, the younger participants were mesmerised throughout the fast-paced and wonderfully entertaining piece of theatre.

The major highlight of the evening for me was when we were taken into the jaws of the sea creature, through the portico of the church itself, and found ourselves in the belly of the beast, surrounded by seaweed and plankton for the finale of the performance.

This is a wonderful night of entertainment and one I would highly recommend.

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By NICKY SWEETLAND
LWN Theatre Critic

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Governing Body Lay Member role

Clinical Commissioning Groups (CCGs) are statutory bodies responsible for commissioning health services. They work with patients, health professionals, community groups and the local authority to improve health and health services locally. Southwark CCG has an exciting opportunity for a new Lay Member to join our Governing Body and play an important role in the CCG.

The CCG is made up of 44 GP practices covering the London Borough of Southwark with a total registered patient population of 310,000. Lay members bring different perspectives to the CCG Governing Body, drawn from their varied experiences, professional backgrounds and previous vocational roles. Lay members work as part of the CCG’s Governing Body to help shape the CCG’s work and assist the organisation’s consideration of key issues and opportunities.

Lay members also act to ensure that their colleagues on the CCG Governing Body – and in the organisation in general – consider a range of views across the whole of its business, and where decisions are made, that they are done so on the basis of evidence and sound reasoning. Lay members should understand good organisational governance and act to ensure it is adhered to at all times by the CCG.

Lay Member – Public and Patient Involvement

Time commitment: 2.5 days per month

Remuneration: £7,882 per annum

We are looking to recruit a Lay Member with expertise and experience in the field of public and patient involvement to serve as a member of the CCG’s Governing Body. Your role is to enable the CCG to make sure that in all aspects of our business the patient and public ‘voice’ and the views of local people is both sought and heard. You’ll also see that the CCG acts on this information to improve the quality of the care services we commission.

You will share your expertise and experience of engagement with communities and patients to see that the CCG works to empower people who live in Southwark to take an active interest in their own healthcare.

You’ll work to see that the CCG builds and maintains an effective relationship with the local Healthwatch and draws on existing patient and public engagement and involvement expertise from across the borough. You will also be involved in joint arrangements across the six SE London Clinical Commissioning Group’s, and participate in Governing Body and other meetings.

Applicants will be able to demonstrate a special interest in Southwark, for example, living in the borough, working at or visiting the school, and have some experience of the work that our lay members do at the CCG. This will give participants the opportunity to become involved in relevant aspects of the CCG’s work, with a view to becoming a lay member on the CCG’s Governing Body at sometime in the future.

Future CCG Governing Body lay members

The CCG is also offering developmental opportunities for local people interested in learning more about the role of a CCG lay member. This is targeted at people who may consider applying for similar roles in the future.

The programme is aimed at people with potential, who would like to get an insight and some experience of the work that our lay members do at the CCG. This will give participants the opportunity to become involved in relevant aspects of the CCG’s work, with a view to becoming a lay member on the CCG’s Governing Body at sometime in the future.

This programme is not remunerated; associated expenses will be reimbursed by the CCG.

For an informal discussion about either role, please contact Andrew Bland, Chief Officer of Southwark CCG via email to andrewbland@nhs.net or by telephone to 020 7525 7414.

Closing date: 20th August 2015

You may apply for the Lay Member role and the development opportunity by sending your CV with a covering letter outlining your interest and relevant experience to Malcolm Hines, Deputy Chief Officer, NHS Southwark CCG. Please email this information to malcolm.hines@nhs.net
New season - same problems

A NEW season dawns, in a different league, and five new signings made their Championship debuts ... but there was more than a hint of deja vu about QPR’s 2-0 defeat at Charlton on Saturday.

“It’s the same old story from last year – the finer details of the game killed us again,” bemoaned head coach Chris Ramsey.

“We started really well, were on the front foot creating chances, but when you don’t take them, it becomes very difficult to win football matches.”

“Twenty minutes in I could only see one winner. But we missed some good chances – and fair play to them, they weathered the storm and took the two chances they had.”

Ramsey added: “I was pleased with parts of our game but we need to improve our focus for the full 90 minutes.”

Goalkeeper Robert Green, who (along with Charlie Austin) did more than any player to try and preserve R’s top flight status last season, will not have been pleased by the manner of either of the goals conceded at The Valley.

Half-time sub Watt’s low shot on 52 minutes went under the keeper’s outstretched body at his near-post. The second daisy-cutter, from Fox in the 72nd minute, travelled from outside the penalty area and went across him nestling inside the far corner of the net.

But Ramsey blamed his side’s poor defending in general, rather than single out Green, when he said: “I was disappointed with both goals we conceded. We’ve got to close down the ball quicker as a side.”

“They had two shots on target – plus the one that hit the bar – and then they killed the game off.”

“It’s going to take time but today I thought we had enough to get a result. We let ourselves and our fans down.”

R’s were cheered on by 3,200 fans who travelled to south-east London but how much longer they will see Charlie Austin in the No.9 shirt remains to be seen. Last season’s top scorer had a couple of chances to score before he was replaced (by Sebastian Polter) in the 85th minute.

Austin indicated at the weekend that no big-money transfer back to the Premier League was imminent and he is likely to lead the line again when QPR host Cardiff City on Saturday evening (5.15pm) and visit Wolves next Wednesday.

He made his R’s debut at Charlton in a back four that also included skipper Nedum Onuoha, Clint Hill and fellow newcomer James Perch.

The 23-year-old Hall, who had been on trial at Luton Road in pre-season, worked with Chris Ramsey at Spurs. Hall spent time on loan at Birmingham City and Blackpool last season, playing 19 games in the Championship.

LOFTUS ROAD
RANGERS REVIEW
With Tony McDonald

SURREY became the first county to book their place in the Royal London One-Day Cup quarter-finals after their 36-run victory against Worcestershire at The Kia Oval.

It was their fifth consecutive win in the 50-over competition and the result puts them top of Group A, just ahead of Gloucestershire thanks to their superior run-rate.

Jason Roy grabbed the spotlight with 99 runs as Surrey rattled up 228 for 7, before dismissing the visitors for 292.

With their place in the last eight of the ODC already secured, Surrey have the luxury of going into their last two matches of the group stage – against Somerset at Taunton next Monday and against Gloucestershire at Bristol 24 hours later – knowing they can afford to lose both fixtures.

Surrey resumed their Championship division two title chase against Essex at Colchester, where the four-day game looked to be heading for a draw as LWN Sport went to press on Monday. Rory Burns, with 22 fours in a superb knock of 158, spearheaded the visitors’ challenge as they reached 346 all out in the first innings.

If Middlesex’s season is in danger of petering out early, no-one bothered to tell Nick Gubbins and David Malan.

Both have been in fine form with the bat even though their team has been eliminated from the One-Day Cup competition and trail Championship leaders Yorkshire by some distance in the red-ball game.

Gubbins piled up 141 runs in Middlesex’s impressive haul of 367-6 against Sussex in the ODC at Hove, where they claimed a three-wicket ODC victory via Duckworth-Lewis after rain halted the home side’s response at the end of the 40th over.

He then top-scored with 96 as Middlesex finished on 296-6 against Essex at Colchester, where they lost the ODC clash by six wickets, plus 45 in a 49-run defeat by Nottinghamshire at Lord’s the following day.

Malan wasn’t far behind Gubbins in accumulating 133 runs against Sussex at Hove and he was Middlesex’s top scorer in both innings against the same opposition in the Championship game that was due to end soon after LWN Sport went to press on Monday. Malan followed his 93 in the first innings at Lord’s with 120 not out, the 14th century of his first-class career.

A 27-year-old left-hander who has missed much of the season with hand and hamstring injuries, Malan has now scored 524 runs in just seven championship innings this summer at an average of 104.40.

Unfortunately, four ODC losses in their six completed games means that Middlesex’s interest in the competition is likely to have ended before they entertain Glamorgan in their final 50-over game next Monday (17th).

INDIAN hero Virender Sehwag is the latest big name to join the Rest of the World XI for the Cricket For Heroes T20 charity match at The Kia Oval on Thursday, September 17.

ROB Green was beaten at his near-post in Saturday’s defeat Pic: Rob Newell/Digital South

SURREY book one-day place in last eight

Dragons invest in community spirit

KENSINGTON Dragons FC lead the way on and off the field and are rightly proud of their work within the local community.

Some 69 members of the football club have just taken part in a summer training programme which resulted in 34 obtaining formal FA qualifications and 26 young players improving their footballing skills and making friendships.

Two dozen started and completed a four-day course to obtain the FA Level 1 Award in Coaching Football. The course was taught by three professional tutors from Middlesbrough FA, energetically led by Corey Donohue, and comprised practical and theory sessions on coaching skills as well as training in emergency aid and safeguarding children in football.

With their award, the new coaches can join the FA’s licensed coaches’ Club. This was immediately followed by the FA Basic Referees’ Course involving 19 participants (six of whom had just graduated as coaches).

The theory and practice modules were run by six tutors, also appointed by Middlesbrough FA and led by the experienced Ray Herb.

Five matches

All 19 successfully completed the course and now need to referee five matches over the next few weeks in order to be registered as a referee with Middlesbrough FA.

Both courses were held in the excellent facilities of Burlington Danes Academy in Wood Lane, W12.

The Kensington Dragons tournament winners

The tournament had to go to a penalty shootout and the winning team’s deciding goal was scored by the very last shooter – who 10 minutes earlier was

upset by the thought he wasn’t going to get a turn!

The summer programme was organised by the club’s Education Officer, Graham McCullock. His appointment in September 2014 has enabled the club to establish a continuous development programme for its coaches and managers, as well as organise a unique summer training programme for the wider membership. The plan in 2015-16 is to further develop the programme and also include a Life Skills and a Career planning support component for the players.

Kensington Dragons was founded in 2001 and this coming season will field nine youth teams from under-10s to U18s, who play in the Harrow Youth League, and two adult teams playing in the Middlesex League. The club also intends to start a girls’ section.

By organising the coaching and refereeing courses, Kensington Dragons wanted to provide current, former and future players with wider opportunities, qualifications in football, and to develop other skills such as managing and motivating people, team-working, etc. The club subsidised the cost of the courses, charging only a small registration fee. This was made possible by a grant from the John Lyon’s Charity.
A SMIR Begovic needed to be as confident as his pre-season proclamations suggested as he unexpectedly entered the fray on Saturday against Swansea City, early in the second half, when he replaced red-carded goalkeeper Thibaut Courtois.

While his first act was to pick the ball out of the net from the Bafe Gomis’ penalty that made it 2-2, he oozed calmness and confidence after that – qualities from the Bafe Gomis’ penalty that made it 2-2, he the other nine players needed in having to see out the final 25 minutes for their first clean sheet.

“The problem with Petr is not that we miss him, because we have two excellent keepers. The problem with Petr is that he is an opponent (Arsenal) is better than before. There is still a bit of a physical performance. He is happy with the reaction with his body after such a hard game.”

Looking ahead to Sunday’s meeting with Man City, Mourinho added ruefully: “The only thing I can do is put a second player close to each other and in the last two minutes, probably in the last three minutes, we should have been able to do better.”

One Chelsea team that did do better with 10 men against Swansea was Chelsea Ladies FC, who thrashed Birmingham City Ladies 4-0 on Sunday to return to the top of the Women’s Super League. 

Eniola Aluko put Blues ahead, just before Gemma Davison was red-carded for a second yellow offence. She had been booked for a foul on the Stocks. However, she continued with the game.

But the ladies did not falter and scores from debut England star Fran Kirby, Gilly Flaherty and a second strike by Aluko from the penalty spot ensured all three points for the newly-crowned Women’s FA Cup winners.