Crossrail scheme divides borough

Campaigners for the disabled say the Crossrail 2 station is needed as it would provide the only step-free access to the King’s Road for the royal borough’s thousands of residents with walking difficulties.

The Crossrail row has now split Chelsea down the middle with both pro and anti sides claiming around the same number of supporters and both lobbies have hired slick PR companies to argue their case.

The pro-Chelsea Crossrail lobby, represented by the London Communication Agency, claims that the proposed new station would significantly improve the lives of 9,000 disabled in

WICKED DATE: West End star Emma Hatton is set to bring her unique powerhouse vocals to Chelsea for a one-night-only gig at the Pheasantry on the King’s Road. The singer, who has just celebrated her 500th performance as the green witch Elphaba in Wicked at the Apollo, Victoria, will follow in the footsteps of a host of entertainment superstars when she takes to the intimate club to perform a cabaret style concert on May 1

See Page 19

Countdown to the Chelsea Flower Show

Under-pressure GPs at ‘saturation point’

HARD-PRESSED London GPs are dealing with more consultations than ever before, according to new research.

Workloads in general practice have gone up by 16 per cent in the last seven years. Now, doctors’ leaders have declared that general practice is in a state of crisis, dealing with more – and longer consultations – at the same time as the recruitment rate of GPs has decreased.

Report, Page 7

Powerful cars driven in west London are the most polluting in Britain, according to official figures

Report, Page 6

Sargent blazes a trail in Savile Row

FOR the first time in four centuries of Piccadilly’s association with tailoring a woman will open her own tailoring house on historic Savile Row.

She is head cutter and master tailor Kathryn Sargent and she says: “I am delighted to be opening a shop on Savile Row. As a tailor it has been a long held ambition of mine, and throughout my career, I have upheld the excellent values of Savile Row. I am thrilled to be making history.”

Report and pictures, Page 11

The band that was always on the move has finally pressed pause for a rock retrospective at the Saatchi Gallery

Capital Nights, Pages 16&17

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THE PAPER SERVING THE HEART OF LONDON
Celebration of respect and generosity

HUGE crowds lined the streets of London to celebrate Vaisakhi, the Sikh New Year and the harvest festival at the weekend.

This is an annual event that has been held by Sikhs all over the world for more than 300 years and, in Britain, for over 40 years.

In Southall, a procession began at 11am on Sunday from the Havelock Road Gurdwara, and continued through the streets of the surrounding area, to finish at Park Avenue Gurdwara. Londoners were also invited to the Mayor of London’s Vaisakhi Festival at City Hall and More London Riverside on Saturday, celebrating the holiest day of the Sikh calendar.

The family-friendly event was free to attend, with activities inside City Hall as well as outside at the Scoop at More London and along the riverside. They include outdoor performances, children’s activities and an exhibition by Sikh artists.

This year’s celebrations took place just before the official Vaisakhi festival on Wednesday, April 13, and City Hall worked with representatives from the Sikh community, including Singh Sabha London East, EY Sikh Network and other groups, to create a culturally rich, enjoyable day that represents Sikh identity and culture.

Vaisakhi commemorates the beginning of Sikhism as a collective faith and London’s celebrations were an opportunity for people from all communities, faiths and backgrounds to experience a festival that is celebrated by over 126,000 Sikhs who live in the capital and 20 million people across the world. Highlights at the festival included a colourful programme of live performances, with folk dance, Gatka (martial arts), turban tying and Shabad Kirtan (Sikh spiritual music). Food (langar) was prepared and offered by volunteers from the Sikh community, which were represented by a variety of information stalls.

Boris Johnson said: “Vaisakhi is the Sikh New Year and I am delighted that it once again came to City Hall. It is a festival celebrated by millions of Sikhs around the world and the values of respect and generosity for people of all faiths and creeds is one that is very relevant to our great city. We worked closely with the Sikh community to create a wide-ranging programme of activities to make it a joyous celebration for all Londoners. Happy Vaisakhi!”

Mankamal Singh from the Gurdwara was excited to be involved for the second year running in the Vaisakhi celebrations at City Hall. The Sikh community is an integral part of the London landscape, whilst maintaining our very visible and distinctive identity. This year’s event continued to give London the opportunity to celebrate British Sikh talent through spiritual music, art, and martial arts as well as other great community projects. We also offered some wonderful activities for Londoners to get involved in.”

Manpreet Singh Othi, from Ashurst D&I network and co-founder EY Sikh Network, said: “We were pleased and excited to be involved again in the organisation of the Vaisakhi celebration at City Hall. As both Londoners and Sikhs, we felt the grassroots approach to the programme focusing on Kirtan and Langar would create a day that was inclusive for both Sikhs and non-Sikhs alike. We welcomed Londoners of all faiths, beliefs - or none - to enjoy, learn and celebrate together through a diverse range of colourful displays and engaging activities.”

With a one-night-only gig at the Hippodrome casino later this month and a brand new musical premiering in October, the First Lady of the West End, Kerry Ellis is once again riding high

Nicky Sweetland, Talk of the Town, Page 20
Celebrities at odds with disabled over rail station

FROM PAGE 1
The borough Against them, the No Crossrail lobby, represented by Media Intelligence Partners, claims the support of 10,000 other residents who fear that the station would destroy the unique charm of the King’s Road village.

“A new Crossrail 2 station on the King’s Road will significantly improve disabled people’s access to the King’s Road,” said a spokesman for the pro-Crossrail campaign.

“There is currently no plan to introduce step-free access at the existing Sloane Square tube station, despite a projected 55 per cent rise passenger numbers by 2030.

“A new station would help to support the Royal Borough’s 1,900 registered wheelchair users, as well as an estimated 7,100 people with walking difficulties.”

The pro-Crossrail side now has the support of a local disability campaign group which has added its voice to that of “50 other businesses, major employers and cultural, educational and medical institutions in Kensington and Chelsea” who back the Crossrail 2 station on the King’s Road.

Action Disability Kensington & Chelsea has announced its support for the proposed station.

“There are currently no plans to introduce disabled access at Sloane Square station, meaning that the lowest tube station at present with step free access is currently Earsls Court—which is approximately 3.5 km away. For this central London location, already ranked fourth in the UK for tourism spend, the present situation is that disabled visitors or those with difficulty walking, can only access the King’s Road by private car, taxi or bus,” said a spokesman for the pro-campaigners. “These proposals would increase the level of disabled access to this major retail and cultural destination, not least for the capital’s estimated 84,000 wheelchair users, 314,000 people with walking difficulties and thousands of others, such as parents with pushchairs, who will benefit from step-free access.”

“The proposed station would also improve access and journey times for patients at three major London hospitals—Chelsea and Westminster, the Royal Brompton and Royal Marsden.”

Jamie Renton, chief executive of Action Disability Kensington & Chelsea, said: “It is imperative that the Crossrail 2 station is built on the King’s Road to significantly improve access for thousands of people, including disabled people with a range of impairments or simply parents with pushchairs, who will benefit hugely from the provision of step-free access at the proposed station.”

However, the No Crossrail campaign—led by celebrity Chelsea residents including Felicity Kendal, Loyd Grossman, Trevor Eve, Chrisie Lunghi, Mark Knopfler and Sir Alan Parker—are now hopeful of new support for their case from Sadiq Khan. The Labour candidate to be London mayor has weighed into the row, saying it will be the job of the next mayor to listen to the loud local opposition to the plans. Mr Khan says that if elected he will call for an immediate review of the current proposals and ask to reconsider Imperial Wharf as an alternative site for the new station.

In a letter to TfL’s chairman of the No Crossrail in Chelsea campaign, Mr Khan said: “It is absolutely crucial that TfL takes residents’ views into account, as well as ensuring the scheme is value for money for the taxpayer. The next mayor will have to listen very carefully to the loud voices coming from local residents opposed to the current plans in Chelsea.

“If I am elected in May, I will ask TfL to review the plans and what can be done to minimise the impact on the local community. In addition, I will ask them to look again at the option of Imperial Wharf as a possible location for a station.”

The No campaigners say the case for a Crossrail 2 station in Chelsea has “unravelled” in recent weeks. A spokesman for the No campaign said: “First, the National Infrastructure Commission has noted the debate around removing the stop at King’s Road. Although this station would provide improved access to an area which has not previously had good Underground connections compared to other inner London areas, a stop on the King’s Road does not provide the strategic interchange or crowding relief provided by other stations.

“Secondly, Transport for London published the results of their public consultation, in which nine in ten Londoners opposed the station. There were 14,716 comments on the proposal for a King’s Road station and 12,437—86 per cent—of them were unsupportive or opposed.”

The No Crossrail campaign also boasts the support of over 10,000 local people and over 80 small and medium sized businesses. It is absolutely crucial that TfL takes residents’ views into account, as well as ensuring the scheme is value for money for the taxpayer. The next mayor will have to listen very carefully to the loud voices coming from local residents opposed to the current plans in Chelsea.

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Local organisations and community groups including sports clubs, charities and youth clubs can bid for grants ranging from £5,000 to £150,000 from The London Marathon Charitable Trust, before Tuesday, 19 April. Grants are intended to support capital projects that inspire people to lead a more active lifestyle and increase the number of people regularly taking part in sport and physical activities.

The London Marathon Charitable Trust was founded in 1981 to encourage more people to become active. Since 1981 it has awarded in excess of £57 million to more than 1,000 projects supporting its aim of providing high-quality, accessible and affordable facilities for sport and physical activity. The trust is able to distribute grants in all areas where London Marathon Events Limited organises participation events, such as the annual Prudential RideLondon cycling event which passes through the borough.

Over the years, the adventure playground in Little Wombourne, Scrubs, the Portobello Green Fitness Club and the climbing facility in Westway have all benefited from grants from the trust.

It seeks to support projects that help get people of all ages off the couch and explore a wide range of sports and physical activities from archery to judo, karate, kung fu to zumba. It is particularly interested in hearing from projects working with:

- individuals who are currently physically inactive or who have low levels of activity
- groups that are currently physically inactive or who have low levels of activity
- children and young people outside of school hours

For more information about the trust or to apply for funding please visit www.lmct.org.uk or call 020 7902 0200 (option 6).
**Inspirational force for good**

Westway Trust chief executive Angela McConville pays tribute to a stalwart of the Trust

LAST week I attended the funeral of Anthony Perry. Anthony was the first Chief Executive, from 1971 to 1976, of what was then the North Kensington Community Trust in what is now the Westway Trust. He was a towering figure in the local community, not least for his work during the early days of the Trust after its establishment in response to blight and destruction of the North Kensington community brought by the construction of the A40 flyover.

In his role at the Trust he also played a key part in helping the modern carnival find its feet, providing office space and land to the first carnival committee, led by Leslie Palmer, who used them to mobilise local people and to support other important work.

And always with the funerals of such beloved people, it was both incredibly sad thinking about such a wonderful and influential man passing away and also inspiring hearing about the many ways that Anthony affected the lives of people in North Kensington. I was never fortunate enough to meet Anthony myself and the tributes paid by those lucky enough to have known him and those whose lives he touched tell the story of the character and the invaluable person he was to so many people.

But it was also a reminder of the reasons why our work has to continue, and why supporting the creative communities across the Royal Borough can make such a difference.

**Credit union hits milestone**

A KENSINGTON-BASED credit union is celebrating the total number of loans it has provided topping the £1 million mark.

Your Credit Union made the announcement at the organisation’s AGM, where it revealed members would receive a two per cent dividend on savings.

Kensington High Street-based Your Credit Union was founded in 2013 and now has more than 1,000 savers and 450 borrowers whose savings are covered by the Financial Services Compensation Scheme.

Chairman, Professor Jonathon Read, said: “It’s an important symbolic target, but also shows how the community can offer a viable alternative to members who need to borrow responsibly rather than with pay day or money shops.

"Because we are a mutual, people’s representatives are engaged in this process and our profits are either distributed to members or re-invested in the business to provide services.

"My aim in establishing Your CU was to show that the mutual community banking sector can be a viable, sustainable business. If we can show that, then we can help guide the sector nationally."

"On a more practical level, it means our lean operating model covers its fixed costs and future growth will go straight to the bottom line for our members.

Professor Read said individuals’ borrowing needs were diverse and could range from restructuring their affairs through to buying a specially-adapted wheelchair to facilitate dealing with a disability.

He added: “The point is to offer a variety of products to the very high interest rates offered by some entities and, of yet more concern, the ill-advised doorstep lending to which some are falling prey.

"Because we can look at non-traditional credit histories, within the bounds of the rules of overall creditworthiness, we have flexibility that high-street lenders sometimes do not have.

Looking ahead to the coming year Professor Read said Your Credit Union would be looking to attract more deposits from its wide London geography and larger sums help us grow more quickly – we can take up to £15,000 from saving members – but we are there for the whole community whatever their savings and income, all together as a commonwealth we are all thrice.

For further information visit: www.yourcu.co.uk or call: 020 7605 6341.

Mrs Brenda Hatcher of St Helen’s Gardens was the only person who cared deeply for the land. Without the land Anthony and the Trust decided to develop their own plans and ask for community feedback. A public meeting was held but in the words of the Trust’s first Annual Report it ‘cannot be described as successful, in that it was not so dominated by people with whom we were already in touch’. Anthony persisted in involving people and what did eventually emerge demonstrated what was possible here and its legacy persists to this day.

In his first Annual Report he reminded of the challenge of our current estate, ‘with all the immense opportunities that exist here. Grappling with the same considerations that we have today – meaningful community engagement, communicating effectively, how to best make use of the 23 acres under the Westway, planning considerations, finding the necessary resources, balancing the desire for space for sports, theatre, music, and open space, with generating an income that made it all sustainable. Anthony persevered and started the creation of a valuable community asset. Our mission is to build on his legacy – supporting the dynamism of the area and reflecting its heritage by working with the diverse creative community here to effectively and sustainably steward the estate.’

Later this year we will be marking Westway Trust’s 45th anniversary. We’ve already begun talking to Anthony’s family about his early actions as Chief Executive and the Trust’s first Annual Report. I am reminded both of the challenge of our current estate, ‘with all the immense opportunities that exist here. Grappling with the same considerations that we have today – meaningful community engagement, communicating effectively, how to best make use of the 23 acres under the Westway, planning considerations, finding the necessary resources, balancing the desire for space for sports, theatre, music, and open space, with generating an income that made it all sustainable. Anthony persevered and started the creation of a valuable community asset. Our mission is to build on his legacy – supporting the dynamism of the area and reflecting its heritage by working with the diverse creative community here to effectively and sustainably steward the estate.’

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**In Pat’s world, the Royal Borough is a sort of Hieronymus Bosch hellishcape in which the needy are neglected, the vulnerable are failed, ruthless developers run rampant and “thousands” are being driven from the borough.

It’s a pure fantasy of course, and a rather dark one at that. Like many a Carryonista, Pat likes to set himself against imaginary dragons secure in the knowledge that he himself will never be burned or bitten. Instead he will continue to live in Kensington and Chelsea and sit on the council, and who can blame him, for the truth is that both are perfectly fine and well-run places. The evidence of that is all around, in a super-abundance.**

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**COUNCILLOR Pat Mason asks you to believe that Kensington and Chelsea is an awful place run by a cruel and brutal Council (Labour attacks council budget 29 March, 2016).**

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Police urged to improve personal safety

BY GEOFF BAKER
geoff@londonweeklynews.co.uk

LONDON police officers have been told to vary their route to work, not to wear uniform when going off-duty and assess their home security as personal safety fears have grown in the wake of last month’s terror attacks in Brussels.

The Police Federation has launched a video and poster campaign urging officers to adopt disguising tactics when travelling to and from work so that they do not stand out as potential terror targets.

“Officers have been advised to vary their routes to work, alter the locations in which they park and wear ordinary clothes on their commute,” says the federation, which represents 26,000 officers in the Met.

“The reminder has come following the attacks in Brussels,” added the PFEW.

A video posted on the Police Federation of England and Wales’s website lists a number of ways in which police officers can protect themselves.

The federation is urging officers to hide their identity badges when travelling off-duty and not to wear ‘half blues’, a civilian jacket worn over a police uniform shirt and trousers.

“There are some simple steps that you can take to ensure your safety. Quite simply, vary your route to work, make sure you don’t wear half blues, conceal your identity badges,” the safety video instructs.

“Don’t be predictable, vary your route, where you park. Think who’s watching, who’s listening. Make sure you book on duty, make sure you book off duty. Make sure people know where you are at all times.”

The PFEW also said police officers should let their federation or line managers know if officers have any concerns about their personal protective equipment, or level of safety training.

The video accompanied a poster campaign that lists safety advice for officers in police stations. The posters warn: Wear protective equipment. Think tactical awareness. Do people know where you are? Think of your security when at home too.”

The PFEW added: “Officer safety is at the heart of our concerns. It’s why we’re working really hard to ensure you are kept as safe as possible both on and off duty.”

The Federation added: “Now more than ever, police officers need to stop and think about their own personal safety, both on and off duty.

“It is essential to always be aware regardless of the situation and we have produced a poster to act as a reminder. These will be on display at appropriate entrances and exits in all police stations. A video message from our chair, Steve White reinforces the points we are asking officers to always remember – to take care and think differently.”

The opening night of a production of Lucia di Lammermoor has been booed by the audience at the Royal Opera House.

The production of Donizetti’s tragic opera directed by Katie Mitchell had been preceded by warnings of explicit sex scenes and violence.

It featured extra scenes that included a miscarriage on stage.

The warnings came after the London venue was forced to apologise following a production of William Tell last year that contained a rape scene that upset many theatre-goers.

Charlotte Higgins, chief culture writer for the Guardian newspaper who was in the audience, called the reception “pretty extraordinary”.

The Oxford Spezzati Chorus and Orchestra will perform first concert on the Sunday evening featuring Mendelssohn’s Lobgesang and English choral classics.

There will be an evening of chamber music featuring the Shostakovich Cello Sonata.

A come and sing day on Saturday will end in a gala concert, A Night in Italy, again under the direction of world famous choral conductor and broadcaster Jeremy Summerly.

Other highlights will be a gala dinner – a great success last year – with dancing to a jazz trio and singer.

There will be school events, architectural walks, a literary talk, art exhibitions and a poetry evening.

The week begins with a festival mass on Sunday morning.

A revamped website is still under construction but detailed information about all the events, including ticket prices which will all be bookable online, will soon be available on www.kofma.co.uk.
Air pollution study points finger at the gas guzzlers

BY LWN REPORTER editorial@londonweeklynews.co.uk

POWERFUL cars driven in west London are the most polluting in Britain, according to official figures.

The 44,700 cars registered in the royal borough of Kensington and Chelsea – dubbed the “spiritual home of the Chelsea tractor” – pump out an average of 177.7 grams of carbon dioxide for every kilometre driven, far higher than the London average of 163.5 grams.

The information – obtained from the DVLA through a Freedom of Information request – also reveals that more than a quarter of cars in the country’s most affluent local authority area exceed the 200g/km level.

This is threshold of the three highest vehicle tax bands for the most polluting cars including the Land Rover Defender, Porsches, Ferraris and the BMW X5.

Other wealthy central London boroughs where residents are more likely to afford sports cars or large SUV 4x4s also appeared near the top of the list. The City of Westminster was second with 173.6g followed by the City of London on 168.4g.

The least polluting cars appear to be being driven in more suburban areas, with Hillingdon at the bottom of the league table. Its 142,455 cars only emitted 152.9 grams of CO2, with global warming and climate change.

Fewer than 10 per cent of the borough’s cars fall into the tax brackets for the most polluting cars, according to the data, which was obtained by mapping software company Esri UK.

Simon Birkett, founder and director of campaign group Clean Air in London, told the Evening Standard: “These numbers show that Boris’ ‘car is king’ policy has protected his richest friends driving gas guzzlers.

“But we don’t need to punish people just because they want a big car sitting in the driveway. Instead we need Emissions-Based Road Charging that hammers or bans those wanting to drive large diesel cars, long distances in the most polluted parts of London at the busiest times of day.”

“The next mayor must embrace smart charging as better, fairer and essential to get London moving and clean its air.”

The figures were released as a survey showed that most Londoners still rank the cost of buying and running a car as more important than its impact on the environment.

More than half of those surveyed said a car’s green credentials was the least important factor in choosing their vehicle.

Sue Robinson, director of the National Franchised Dealers Association, which commissioned the survey, said it had “brought to light a worrying statistic with regards to vehicle emissions”.

She said: “We expected to find emissions at the forefront of the consumers mind however this is clearly not the case.

“We will endeavour, through our members, to help educate the consumer of the importance of vehicle emissions as well as cheap running costs.”

ORGANISERS of the Children in Need fundraising initiative are handing out almost £30,000 to groups and organisations in west London.

Disadvantaged youngsters living in White City, Acton and Fulham in particular stand to benefit after money from the BBC’s famous fundraising telephone was earmarked for three groups and organisations. They will receive a total of £29,540 after the BBC charity announced the latest successful applications for funding.

A grant of nearly £9,845 has been awarded to the London Sports Trust to provide SAFE Camp – a school holiday sport- ing activities initiative for young people around the White City Estate, which has been blighted by crime and anti-social behaviour.

The project, which is delivered by Phoenix High School, works with more than 100 local young people aged from eight and 15, helping tackle anti-social behaviour and improve children’s aspirations. In addition to sports activities, the group will also run sessions around healthy eating, drama and arts and crafts.

A £10,000 prize will also go to the Centre for Armenian Information and Advice, which is based in Acton. It works with local young people from the Armenian community who live in deprived conditions or at risk of exclusion.

It will use the cash to work with around 100 young people aged 11 to 17, offering advice, education, training and appren- ticeships, youth club activities and day trips.

A grant of £9,695 will go to the Starlight Children’s Foundation. It is a grant to welcome many new Little Lyricers to our exciting upcoming autumn season.”

Professor on top of subject

URBAN gardening expert Nigel Dunnet will give a talk on Sunday, April 17, at The Roof Gardens in Kensington.

Professor Dunnet, a leading authority on the role of city plants in countering climate change, will discuss his approach to designing with plants at the borough’s unique venue, high above the traffic.

You can also ask Professor Dunnet questions about his recent projects that include the Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park and the replanting of the roof gardens at The Barbican Centre.

The Roof Gardens/Enchanted Butterfly Club invites you to join them from 9am to 12pm and afterwards there will be a tour of the three themed gardens, where flamingoes wander among the flowers: English Woodland, Tudor and Spanish gardens.

Tickets are £10 for members and £15 for non-members, either at the door or by visiting ticketweb.co.uk/event/324215.

All ticket proceeds go to the Starlight Children’s Foundation.

Tram-tastic

PASSENGERS travelling on the tram network between Wimbledon and Croydon can now enjoy more frequent travel with an extra four trams an hour.

The increased capacity, up from eight to 12 trams an hour, was made possible by an extra platform at Wimbledon station, which was completed late last year.

Transport for London’s director of trams Rory O’Neill said: “The extra trams will help meet increasing passenger demand and make a difference to the customers who use the service every day.”

Lyric theatre’s family award

THE Lyric Hammersmith theatre has been awarded Best Venue for the 2015 Get Creative Family Arts Festival.

Voted for by a panel of expert judges from the arts sector, the awards recognise the outstanding events within the 2015 festival at a ceremony that takes place at the Albany, London.

The productions aimed at children between the ages of two and 11 aim to delight young audiences with travels to space, giraffes and ducklings – and the return of the much-loved family favourite, Raymond Briggs’ Father Christmas, over the festive season.

The annual Get Creative Family Arts Festival is a national festival of arts events for families organised by theatres, orchestras, museums, galleries, community groups and performers across the country.

The Lyric Hammersmith is also pleased to announce its Little Lyric programme’s winners to December.

Artistic director Sean Holmes said: “We’re thrilled to have been awarded best venue, especially as it has been voted for by the public. We are extremely proud of our Little Lyric programme as it is the beginning of our young audiences’ engagement with arts and culture. We hope to welcome many new Little Lyricers to our exciting upcoming autumn season.”

Pudsey hands out charity cash to help children’s projects

DISADVANTAGED youngsters living in White City, Acton and Fulham in particular stand to benefit after money from the BBC’s famous fundraising telephone was earmarked for three groups and organisations. They will receive a total of £29,540 after the BBC charity announced the latest successful applications for funding.

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It will use the cash to work with around 100 young people aged 11 to 17, offering advice, education, training and apprenticeships, youth club activities and day trips.

A grant of £9,695 will go to the Starlight Children’s Foundation.

The grant was made possible by an extra platform at Wimbledon station, which was completed late last year.

Transport for London’s director of trams Rory O’Neill said: “The extra trams will help meet increasing passenger demand and make a difference to the customers who use the service every day.”
**LONDON WIDE**

**BY LWN REPORTER editorial@londonweeklynews.co.uk**

**HARD-PRESSED London GPs are dealing with more consultations than ever before, according to new research.**

Workloads in general practice have gone up by 16 per cent in the last seven years, according to one of the most comprehensive assessments of GP and nurse consultations.

Now, doctors’ leaders have declared that general practice is in a state of crisis, after the study showed that family doctors in England are dealing with more — and longer consultations — at the same time as the recruitment rate of GPs has decreased.

The authors of the study, published in The Lancet, warn that general practice is nearing “saturation point.”

“For many years, doctors and nurses have reported increasing workloads but, for the first time, we are able to provide objective data that this is indeed the case,” said Professor Richard Hobbs, lead author of the study.

The researchers used data from the Clinical Practice Research Datalink — a database where GPs and nurses record all face-to-face and telephone consultations with patients and home visits.

The number of nurse consultations rose by 2.76 per cent. The number of face-to-face GP consultations rose by 6.38 per cent and the number of telephone consultations nearly doubled.

Average consultation time has also increased, with most appointments lasting almost nine minutes. The authors warned that, as the time spent with a patient nears the 10-minute allocated slot, doctors and nurses have little time to perform other duties before seeing other patients.

Although the total number of GPs increased over the study period, the authors said that this actually represents a one per cent decrease in the number of GPs per patient — from 60.9 GPs per 100,000 patients in 2001 to 57.7 GPs per 100,000 patients in 2014.

Professor Hobbs added: “Current trends in population growth, low levels of recruitment and the demand of an ageing population with more complex needs will mean consultation rates will continue to rise. In 2015, GPs in England reported having the lowest job satisfaction rates since records began in 2001. NHS plans to recruit an additional 5,000 GPs will take some time and crucially depend on an improved appeal of general practice as a career choice.

“There are few short-term solutions, but reducing the time doctors need to spend on non-clinical duties may help ease the workload temporarily. More research is urgently needed to fully estimate the knock-on effects of increased workloads in general practice on other sectors of the health system.”

Dr. Maureen Baker, chairwoman of the Royal College of GPs, said: “This report should ring alarm bells for the Government and spur ministers into action to address the crisis in general practice before it’s too late. For too long GPs have been expected to do more and more for less and this perfect storm of rising demand, plummeting resources and not enough GPs can no longer be ignored.

“GPs and our teams are making more consultations than ever before, and our patients are living longer and with multiple long-term conditions, meaning that our workload is growing in complexity as well as volume.

“GPs are responding to demand by offering different types of appointments, such as phone consultations, but, despite our efforts, demand is rising so acutely that this is having little effect in terms of our workload. And the increasing complexity of the work means that the standard 10-minute appointment is increasingly unfit for purpose.”

“But there is a limit to how much more GPs and our teams can do, safely, with the resources available. This pressure is not only bad for GPs, as job satisfaction for general practice plum- mets, but for our patients, who might be finding it consistently difficult to make a GP appointment. There is also a very real link between rising levels of GP fatigue, and our patients’ safety.”

“The Government must take note of the college’s calls for general practice to receive 11 per cent of the overall NHS budget and urgently implement all aspects of the 10-point plan to build the GP workforce.”

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**Russians run out of roubles for real estate**

**RICH Russians are being priced out of their favoured west London neighbourhoods, new figures suggest.**

Research shows that the impact of lower oil prices and the falling value of the rouble has greatly reduced Russian buying power.

Reports that Russian buyers accounted for one per cent of house purchases in top-end boroughs such as Kensington and Chelsea last year, compared with six per cent in 2014. Their share of the housing market in inner-London areas such as Pimlico and Clapham has risen from two per cent to 11 per cent.

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**Parents’ company makes coding fun**

**PORTOBELLO Road is no longer solely a treasure trove for antiques hunters — it is transforming with the digital age.**

A new resident of the historic neighbourhood is a company called blue(shift) coding, who provide computational education for primary school children. Teaching creative coding in top London schools, at inspirational holiday camps and after-school clubs, blue(shift) says it is committed to shaping a new cohort of future innovators.

The aim of blue(shift) coding’s founders, local parents Elizabeth Tweedale and Heather Lyons, is to create opportunities for youngsters to learn to code through fun, play and experimentation. Creative coders themselves, they are passionate about empowering children through technology to become active tech creators rather than passive consumers.

With blue(shift) coding moulding a new generation of young, flexible and creative programmers, will Portobello Road transform into London’s Tech hub of the future?

For more information, you can visit the company’s website www.blueshiftcoding.com

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**Shop from home, collect from wilko**

**From paint to pets, outdoor eating to quick reheat**

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**PIONEERS: Heather Lyons, right, and Elizabeth Tweedale of blue(shift) — a company dedicated to teaching children to become active creators of technology**

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*Offer ends 29/04/16. All products are subject to availability. Please check with your store in advance to avoid disappointment. Also online at wilko.com. Wilko Standard & Medium 2.5Kg 6 per pack 199; 2999557 Wilko Colour Play Midnight Purple 250. C011269 Car Stencil in Post 2633270 Wilko Steel Wheels 5of 5 wheels.
Dramatic exhibition

LONDONERS can journey through 400 years of Shakespearian history thanks to a landmark exhibition to be staged at the British Library.

To mark the 400th anniversary of Shakespeare’s death, the exhibition, called Shakespeare in Ten Acts, centres on the performances that made an icon, charting Shakespeare’s career and how Shakespeare’s plays have been transformed for new generations of theatre-goers.

The exhibition seeks to cast new light on how Shakespeare became the cultural icon he is today through ten key theatrical performances – from the first performance of Hamlet in 1600 to a digital deconstruction for the 21st century from The Wooster Group.

Stand-out items from the British Library’s collections will be on display, including the only surviving play-script in Shakespeare’s hand, one of only six authentic Shakespeare signatures, and rare printed editions including the First Folio, as well as a range of film, paintings, photographs, costumes and props revealing backstage gossip and scandal.

Telling a story of struggles, set-backs and sea-changes, Shakespeare in Ten Acts aims to explore the changing nature of Shakespeare’s reputation – from the ‘bardolatry’ typical of the Romantic era, to well-known Shakespeare detractors like Tolstoy – ultimately proving that his course never did run smooth.

Visitors will be encouraged to imagine how audiences reacted to ground-breaking moments like the first stage appearance by a female actor in 1660 and the first British performance of Othello by a black actor in 1825.

Visitors can experience the glamour of Vivien Leigh’s Lady Macbeth costume, the surprising circus prop from Peter Brook’s radical 1970s A Midsummer Night’s Dream, and the stunning detail of the Globe’s award-winning costumes from Twelfth Night starring Mark Rylance.

Shakespeare in Ten Acts runs from April 15 to September 6.

Clean-up work under way on historic arch

BY LWN REPORTER
editorial@londonweeklynews.co.uk

AN ambitious project has got under way to clean a bronze sculpture on Wellington Arch near London’s Hyde Park.

English Heritage is restoring the Quadriga, which depicts four horses representing the chaos of war and the angel of peace calming them.

Sculptor Adrian Jones began work on a prototype for the sculpture in 1808 before it was cast in bronze and placed on top of the arch in 1912.

But, the BBC reports, “weather pollution and bird droppings have taken their toll on the sculpture.”

In 1891 a plaster model of the Quadriga was exhibited at the Royal Academy, which the then Prince of Wales and future Edward VII suggested would be a suitable adornment for the arch that was being rebuilt while Buckingham Palace, had a look, and drove home again.

But, the BBC reports, “weather pollution and bird droppings have taken their toll on the sculpture.”

Work to remedy corrosion, flaws, cracks and damage where rain has penetrated the sculpture is also being carried out, said the charity. The next phase of the project, currently taking place, is to apply several coats of clear wax, protecting the sculpture from future wear and tear, using blowtorches.

Jones, the artist who created the sculpture, was a recently retired army veterinary captain and self-taught sculptor, who earned a living mainly by selling small bronzes of dogs and horses to his former comrades.

He had never made anything remotely on the scale of the arch and in any case there was no money to pay for it. But in 1907 his patron – now the king – persuaded a rich banker, Lord Michelham of Hellingly, to stump up.

A private messenger sent to Jones’s home to break the good news was so discreet that he failed to indicate just how rich the anonymous donor was: poor Jones quoted £15,000, a price so low it almost bankrupted him.

The Guardian reported that “one archive photograph shows Jones and his studio assistants having a tea break inside one of the gigantic horses. He only saw the Quadriga was exhibited at the Royal Academy, which the then Prince of Wales and future Edward VII suggested would be a suitable adornment for the arch that was being rebuilt while Buckingham Palace, had a look, and drove home again.”
Museum remembers horror of the Somme

BY LWN REPORTER
editorial@londonweeklynews.co.uk

LONDON’S Imperial War Museum is masterminding a series of major events to mark the centenary of the battle of the Somme – including showing the world’s first feature length war documentary in hundreds of venues.

Some 20 million people watched the film, The Battle Of The Somme, when it was released in 1916 with footage of the British preparations for the so-called big push and the opening stages of what became one of the bloodiest battles of the war.

A hundred years on the film, listed by world heritage body Unesco in its “memory of the world” record, will be shown by 126 organisations in the UK and 84 overseas, the Imperial War Museum announced as it unveiled its programme of events to mark the Somme.

These include a major new exhibition exploring war movies from The Battle Of The Somme to The Dam Busters, Lawrence Of Arabia and Saving Private Ryan at Imperial War Museum, London, and a free commemorative evening at the museum on June 30 – the eve of the anniversary.

There will also be screenings around the country of the film accompanied by live orchestras playing the score composed by Laura Rossi for the 90th anniversary of the Battle of the Somme.

Beginning on July 1, 1916 and intended to achieve a decisive victory for the British and French, the Somme became a bloody stalemate on battlegrounds that turned into a muddy quagmire after torrential rains in October of that year. It claimed almost 20,000 British lives on the first day alone and there were more than a million casualties on both sides by the time it ended after 141 days on November 18 1916.

The Battle Of The Somme film is propaganda in nature, with a focus on how well-equipped British soldiers were, the quality of weapons such as Howitzers and the good treatment of the wounded and German prisoners.

But while some scenes – such as the one where soldiers go “over the top” into battle – were staged, it still stands as a historical record of the conflict.

The black and white shots filmed by cameramen Geoffrey Malins and J B McDowell include smiling soldiers marching, fixing wire cutters to their rifles and firing shells, the wounded being bandaged up and given a cigarette, and death and destruction on the front line.

Gill Webber, executive director of content and programming at IWM, said: “Shot and screened in 1916, The Battle Of The Somme was the first feature length documentary about war, and it changed the way both cinema and film were perceived by the public.

“– In the year of its release around 20 million people, half the population of the UK at the time, saw the film, many hoping to see an image of family or friends.”

A hundred years later the “unique” film is being shown by a partnership led by the IWM at venues including universities, libraries, town and village halls, churches and museums, as well as 82 British embassies, and museums in the Republic of Ireland and Germany.

The Battle of the Somme was one of the largest and most well-known battles of World War I. It lasted from 1st July to 18th November 1916 on the banks of the Somme River, in France.

It was also one of the bloodiest battles of war, or of any war before or since. An estimated 1,000,000 men were killed or wounded, including about 485,000 British and French troops.

The intent of the British was to attack and take control of a 24 km stretch of the River Somme. Most historians today agree that the plan was not well thought out.

Before the battle started, the British fired over 1,700,000 shells at the German soldiers, although many did not explode, or missed the targets completely. The German soldiers also sheltered underground to avoid the bombardment.

Almost 60,000 British soldiers were killed, wounded or taken prisoner on the first day of fighting. The Germans killed many officers, having been trained to recognise how they dressed, knowing if they could eliminate the officers the attack may falter.

Trench warfare was common during this time. The conditions in the trenches were cramped and uncomfortable and the drinking water was sometimes collected from holes made by enemy shells.

The Battle of the Somme saw several different weapons being used, including mines, poisonous gas and machine guns. Some larger machine guns needed 12 men to operate them.

Tanks were first used during the Battle of the Somme. The first tank, known as Little Willie, was not able to drive across the trenches and could only reach speeds of about 3 km per hour.

When the battle had ended in mid-November, the British and French soldiers had only advanced about 8km. The battle ended partly because heavy rains made fighting too difficult.

Today there are dozens of cemeteries and memorials in the area around the Somme, including a memorial to all the pipers who died. Farmers still dig up pieces of barbed wire, which they call the iron harvest.

1916 REMEMBERED: the Imperial War Museum has unveiled its programme of events to mark the centenary of the Battle of the Somme. These include a major new exhibition exploring war movies.
lives transformed by gardens that are happier by design

How can you make green spaces like parks and gardens autism-friendly?

The Chelsea Flower Show next month will showcase ways to optimise green spaces for people with autism; a neurological disorder with no known cause that touches the lives of more than 2.8 million people in the UK every day.

Award-winning designer Frederic Whyte aims to showcase autism-friendly gardening at RHS Chelsea next month, with The Pro Corda Garden: A Suffolk Retreat, which will be re-located to Leiston Abbey in Suffolk as a soothing space that will benefit children with autism for years to come.

Mr Whyte said: “Gardens can be wonderful places for people with autism, either providing a calm and safe retreat or an open, free area for running around and relieving stress – ideally both. Making simple adjustments to your outdoor space and creating a low arousal environment that supports their needs, can greatly benefit their wellbeing.”

Inspired by her 11-year-old autistic son, landscape designer Shea O’Neill has similar aims for the RHS Tatton show in July. Shea has designed ACE kids’ Spectrum of Genius, which will demonstrate simple ways to adapt gardens and parks to suit people with autism. She has been on a “journey of discovery” since her son Eoghan was diagnosed with high-functioning autism and has found gardening to be one of the simplest but effective ways of helping him.

Shea said: “For my boy, gardening has been life-changing and I can’t recommend it enough to anybody who lives or works with people with autism. Eoghan wasn’t a happy little boy, but he is happiest in the garden and has been transformed as a result of it.”

Both designers want to raise awareness of the benefits of horticultural therapy for people with autism and show how to incorporate autism-friendly gardening in outdoor spaces.

Their tips include growing edible flowers like dahlias, herbs such as chamomile that can be turned into soothing tea, soft grasses that blow in the wind, using bold colours to stimulate and a sooter palette to calm.

amatography and celebrity spotters at the Chelsea Flower Show last year, along with many other colourful and fragrant displays

pictures: Richard Austin

SHOW STOPPERS: Joanna Lumley delighted photographers and celebrity spotters at the Chelsea Flower Show last year, along with many other colourful and fragrant displays

Countdown to London’s favourite garden party

It is only just over a month until the Chelsea Flower Show unveils its annual explosion of garden colour and pioneering landscape design – and preparation work is already reaching fever pitch.

For the first time ever, an acoustic garden has been entered in the artisan garden category of the historic Royal Horticultural Society show-piece event.

The garden is sponsored by a charity serving people with disabilities, the Papworth Trust, which found its inspiration for the concept while working on the organisation’s “I Can” campaign with deaf solo percussionist Dame Evelyn Glennie.

Her motto is “teach the world to listen.”

Dame Evelyn’s fascination with how the women of the Vanuatu Islands create “sea music” with their hands, water and voices served as an influence for the design of the “Together We Can” garden.

A water marimba uses the natural elements of the garden to create an acoustic pulse.

“One of my aims is to show that you can create music from almost anything,” Dame Evelyn said. “But the bigger legacy will be if we can create the concept of this type of garden in other public spaces.”

Peter Eustance of Symphonic Gardens designed the garden for Papworth Trust and the overall layout of the garden is reminiscent of the structure of the ear. A curving pool with water cascading in it draws the eye by being in the foreground.

Other features of the garden include a woodland backdrop of birch and hazel, a soft planting that is able to sway with the music, and floral soloists to stand out in the botanical symphony.

Anyone who was wowed by the Tower of London poppy installation in 2014 in is in for a treat – because 300,000 commemorative poppies will be unveiled at this year’s Chelsea Flower Show.

The crocheted poppies were created as part of the 5,000 Poppies Project, which began in Australia to mark Anzac Day.

When 250,000 of them had been created, the poppies were displayed in Melbourne’s landmark Federation Square and on Princes Bridge.

Landscaper designer Phillip Johnson is responsible for bringing the poppies to Chelsea, covering a 2,000 sqm area of the gardens of the Royal Hospital Chelsea.

The Chelsea Flower Show has been staged by the Royal Horticultural Society since 1913 and features innovative garden designs and new plants each year.

The 2016 show will take place from May 24 to 28 and you can enjoy full coverage in the London Weekly News.
Kathryn makes history by proving she’s a cut above

BY LWN REPORTER
editorial@londonweeklynews.co.uk

KATHRYN Sargent has become the first female master tailor to open her own store on Mayfair’s historic Savile Row.

Kathryn, who was the first woman in the history of Savile Row to achieve the position of head cutter in 2009, has made history again this week with the announcement – the first time a woman master tailor has launched her own Savile Row shop in four centuries of Piccadilly’s association with tailoring.

She said: “I am delighted to be opening a shop on Savile Row. As a tailor it has been a long held ambition of mine, and throughout my career I have upheld the excellent values of Savile Row. I am thrilled to be making history, although for me being a woman is incidental, I am a tailor first and foremost.”

William Skinner, managing director of Dege & Skinner and chairman of the Savile Row Bespoke Association, said: “It’s fitting that the first woman to be appointed as a head cutter on Savile Row is returning to open a shop of her own.

“She is testament to the continued appeal of Savile Row as the sartorial home of high quality, hand-crafted tailoring.”

The shop will be a sister outlet to Kathryn’s established atelier on Brook Street, tailoring for both men and women. The house does not have a specific style, Kathryn’s approach to her craft, from the initial consultation to the finished garment, is tailored to the wearer, their lifestyle and requirements.

Before setting up her own business, Kathryn was the first woman in the history of Savile Row to rise to the esteemed position of head cutter at Gieves & Hawkes, one of the Row’s oldest and most prestigious bespoke tailors. This was the culmination of 15 years’ hard work at the firm where Kathryn had been lucky enough to work alongside many great craftsmen, including Robert Gieve, one of the last members of the founding family to work in the business.

Kathryn discovered her passion for tailoring while studying at fashion college and decided there was only one place to learn the real art of tailoring – and that was Savile Row.

She explained: “I learnt not only the craft and how important each step in the process is, but also the importance of the client and the personal service.”

She has now placed these values at the centre of Kathryn Sargent Bespoke.

Women have for centuries been present in the back rooms of the tailoring profession as finishers and assistant tailors but Kathryn is the first of a new generation of women making their way to the top of the business in client-facing roles. Since the year 2000, when she won a coveted Golden Shears award (a prestigious master tailors’ trophy), Kathryn has worked with clients from all walks of life, including leading members of the British and other Royal families, actors of stage and screen, politicians from all continents and leaders of industry – as well as those that simply aspire to have the very best in the world of bespoke tailoring.

She is inspired by the art and craft of tailoring. An avid collector of cutting manuals and books on the craft dating back in some cases more than 150 years, she blends her knowledge of the revered craft beautifully with her own eye for style, which was refined by three years at fashion college, following a number of years of studying art.

Bank opens new branch

METRO Bank’s rapid expansion continues in 2016 with the opening of its 41st store – on the King’s Road in Chelsea.

The bank is inviting Chelsea residents to join colleagues for its grand opening celebrations on Friday, April 15 and Saturday 16.

It has employed around 20 people from the area. They will be led by Carl Maw, store manager, and Adam Johnson, local director. The new bank can be found at 234, King’s Road.

Metro Bank launched in July 2010 with what it says is “a focus on providing unparalleled levels of service and conveniences to customers – testament in its early until late, seven day store opening.”

“Despite our rapid growth, our goals remain the same: to deliver unparalleled customer service. Thousands of people have joined us for the levels of service and convenience that we offer, and we’re thrilled to be able to bring a true banking alternative to the Chelsea community. We look forward to welcoming personal and business customers on our journey as we revolutionise UK banking.”

All change at station

MAJOR improvement work is now under way at Paddington Tube station.

It means that Bakerloo line trains will not call at the station until mid-August. During this time, Transport for London engineers will be removing the original pedestrian escalators and installing new ones, which will open the way for further 20 years and will be more reliable as the Tube carries more customers.

Engineers will also continue to dig a new 165-metre tunnel underneath the station so customers can go between the Bakerloo line and the new Elizabeth line platforms, which will become operational from December 2018. The new pedestrian link will incorporate escalators, lifts, stairs and new passageways in order to make changing between the Tube and the Elizabeth line as easy as possible for customers.

Currently around 165,000 customers use Paddington Tube station daily – with 82,000 people using the Bakerloo line. When the Elizabeth line starts running from December 2018, the number of customers using TFL services at Paddington is expected to increase to 248,000.
Outspoken newspaper columnist Katie Hopkins is to present her own show on LBC.

The controversial Hopkins, a former contestant on BBC’s The Apprentice, was a guest presenter on the radio station a year ago and enraged listeners over her Sun newspaper column in which she compared migrants to “cockroaches”.

One angry caller told Hopkins she was “selling a completely false rhetoric to the nation” which was “disappointing and dangerous, really upsetting”.

When the caller said the situation was to go back to the governments of the countries migrants were coming from, Hopkins replied, “I’m going to shut you down there because to be honest it’s boring the life out of me.”

She will present a Sunday morning programme on LBC, which broadcasts on FM in London and on digital nationwide, with the broadcaster promising she would bring “straight talking and honest commentary to the weekend schedule”.

Hopkins’ LBC show from 10am to midday is part of a new weekend schedule which also sees former tennis player and breakfast TV presenter Andrew Castle present the weekend breakfast show on Saturday and Sunday.

In other changes, LBC presenters Andrew Pierce moves to Friday evenings, while Petrie Hosken and Olly Mann are both leaving the station.

James Rea, managing editor of LBC, said: “LBC leads the way in opinionated, intelligent radio in Britain. With their incisive opinions and wealth of life experience, I’m excited to welcome Katie Hopkins and Andrew Castle to the LBC team. Katie has already proven to be a hugely popular guest presenter and she will now bring her unique style of straight-talking to our weekend schedule.”

90,000 risk losing vote

MORE than 90,000 Londoners risk being disenfranchised ahead of the mayoral elections, according to latest figures.

In 2014 the process for electoral roll registration changed so that instead of one member of the household being able to register every adult at their address, each individual must register themselves.

Londoners wanting to take part in the election on May 5 are being urged to check they are registered.

“Our figures show a like-for-like decrease in London elector volumes for 2016 of over 92,000,” explains Lisa Hardstaff of credit information experts Equifax. “In addition, we’ve seen an increase in consumer enquiries about electoral registration. This suggests that some consumers don’t realise that they are no longer registered on the electoral roll, which means they won’t be able to have their say on who should be the new mayor of London.”

Whilst the electoral register primarily allows people to vote, it can also have an impact when applying for credit. The electoral roll information appears on an individual’s credit report, and is used by lenders to verify an applicant’s address. This makes it a vital step in becoming credit ready, when shopping around for deals.

London residents can check if they’re registered to vote by contacting their local electoral registration officer. Details can be found on www.gov.uk. Consumers can also check that they are registered at their current address on their Equifax Credit Report, as well as check other information that will be used by lenders when assessing credit applications.

The Equifax Credit Report is accessible for 30 days free simply by logging onto www.equifax.co.uk/Products/credit-report

Taxi fare card charge is axed

The extra charge imposed on passengers who pay their fare by card in London taxis has been abolished, Transport for London has announced.

Cab users who pay with a credit or debit card were previously charged an extra £1 or 10 per cent of the fare, whichever was greater.

The new arrangement means passengers should never pay more than the fare displayed on the meter whatever payment method they use.

All black cabs in the capital will be required to accept card payments by October following a decision by the TfL board earlier this year.

Transport bosses claim taxi drivers are being compensated for the cost of accepting cards by the minimum fare being increased by 20 pence, bringing it to £2.60.

Garrett Emmerson, TfL’s chief operating officer for surface transport, said: “We are pleased to be able to reduce the cost for taxi passengers paying by card, as people now use them in every aspect of their lives.

“The acceptance of these types of payments in all taxis from October will be a huge plus for Londoners, visitors and drivers.”

- TAXI FARE CARD CHARGE IS AXED

- WHAT KATIE DID NEXT: A RADIO SHOW

- OUTspoken NEWSPAPER COLUMNIST KATIE HOPKINS AND POPULAR BROADCASTER ANDREW CASTLE HAVE NEW RADIO PROGRAMMES ON LBC

- SKYSCRAPER RISES ABOVE ITS CRITICS

- London looks set to get another glass skyscraper after the developers behind the 22 Bishopsgate Tower won support to block “right to light” complaints that could have stopped the project in its tracks.

- The building will reportedly be the tallest in the Square Mile, and came up against stiff opposition from neighbours and campaign groups who said it would leave their homes in shadow and compromise their “right to light”.

- But developers working for AXA Investment Managers - Real Assets and Lipton Rogers warned that such battles could prevent the building work from progressing.

- And the City of London Corporation Planning and Transportation committee has now voted to temporarily acquire the site so that the construction work can go ahead without any threat of injunction.

- A spokesman for AXA IM – Real Assets and Lipton Rogers, said they remain committed to working with all their neighbours in an open fashion, as well as the City of London, as they progress “this important scheme”.

- The spokesman said this decision was “a positive step forward” in allowing them to bring forward the development of 22 Bishopsgate within the intended timetable.

- LONDON WIDE

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- A spokesman for AXA IM – Real Assets and Lipton Rogers, said they remain committed to working with all their neighbours in an open fashion, as well as the City of London, as they progress “this important scheme”.

- The spokesman said this decision was “a positive step forward” in allowing them to bring forward the development of 22 Bishopsgate within the intended timetable.
WITH every year that passes, rather impertinent critics of The Queen’s super-fit health regime must increasingly want to hide themselves in a shed at the bottom of the garden and not answer the door to probing hacks who argue, “but you said”. Although one of the Government’s chief scientific advisers called it “nonsense” and no less august a body than the BMJ has reportedly described Her Majesty’s regime as “witchcraft”, it would seem that the smart money is going on whatever is bubbling in the cauldron, rather than what the experts say.

For as The Queen marks her 90th birthday on April 21, that she has reached such an excellent age is largely due to her lifelong trust in homeopathy. Everywhere that Her Majesty goes she is accompanied by a small case of special cures and tinctures and, although doctors do not care to admit it, it is because of her herbal little helpers that she rarely gets a cold or any other sort of complaint.

But still one would argue that as both The Queen and the late Queen Mother have been avid fans of homeopathy and as The Queen Mother died at the age of 101, the glaring probability is that it works seems to be rather evident.

But still the medics won’t swallow the pill of the proving. A few years back, David Colquhoun, a pharmacologist at University College London, denounced the herbal practice as “utter nonsense”. “Homeopathy cannot work. That is as reliable a scientific conclusion as any other.” In other words, if homeopathy did work, we would have to rewrite major parts of basic science textbooks, including physics, chemistry, and biology.

When tested clinically, despite their utter lack of plausibility, homeopathic potions are shown to lack efficacy. So not only should they not work, they in fact don’t work.” Although scientists and medics are clearly insistent in their opposition to this snake oil, the royals keep up-ending their claims that it doesn’t work. Homeopathy has been part of royal life since 1835, when King William IV’s wife Queen Adelaide was cured of a serious illness by it when all other medicine failed. Since then many members of the royal family, including Queen Mary [1865-1953], George V [1865-1936], Edward VII [1841-1910] and Edward VIII [1894-1972] have used it to assist living long and healthy lives.

Like his mother, the 67-year-old, fit as a fiddle Prince of Wales is a great believer in the medicine that makes medics see red. As long ago as 1982 he was telling the BMA that they had got homeopathy wrong. “I have often thought that one of the less attractive traits of various professional bodies and institutions is the deeply ingrained suspicion and outright hostility which can exist towards anything unorthodox or unconventional,” he told the shocked docs.

“I would suggest that the whole imposing edifice of modern medicine, for all its breathtaking successes, is like the celebrated Tower of Pisa, slightly off balance.” He was of course condemned as some sort of lunatic, much in the same way as he was ridiculed for his views on sustainability and organic farming. And yet time has proved him right on those “radical” concepts and it’s a good bet that many more of his mother’s birthdays will do the same on this issue.

BY GEOFF BAKER

An interesting contrary view was put forward with devastating logic by Rachel Roberts, the chief executive of the Homeopathic Research Institute. “The Royal Family have huge resources and access to everything medicine has to offer, yet they choose homeopathy,” said Ms Roberts, “Why would they use it if it doesn’t work.”

Now the Science-Based Medicine group has weighed in against those like The Queen who put their trust in the alternative medicine. “Homeopathy is a prescientific medical philosophy based upon the fanciful notions that like cures like, which is really an expression of sympathetic magic, and that extreme dilutions of a substance can retain the magical essence of the substance.”

“We tested clinically, despite their utter lack of plausibility, homeopathic potions are shown to lack efficacy. So not only should they not work, they in fact don’t work.” Although scientists and medics are clearly insistent in their opposition to this snake oil, the royals keep up-ending their claims that it doesn’t work. Homeopathy has been part of royal life since 1835, when King William IV’s wife Queen Adelaide was cured of a serious illness by it when all other medicine failed. Since then many members of the royal family, including Queen Mary [1865-1953], George V [1865-1936], Edward VII [1841-1910] and Edward VIII [1894-1972] have used it to assist living long and healthy lives.

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ALTERNATIVE: Charles favours homeopathy

Ideas for suitable 90th birthday present reach a Peake

LET us hope that British astronaut Tim Peake has his wits and Box Brownie about him on April 21, so that he can provide the present that would make The Queen’s 90th birthday uniquely special and most memorable. In the past Her Majesty has on occasion received pretty ropey presents and although her wit is at her wittiest and dearest say that what she appreciates most in a gift is the thought, rather than its cost or splendour, even her kindly attitude must have been stretched by the 1lb bag of salt once given to her by the governor of the British Virgin Islands [because it was tradition, apparently] or the couple of CDs of the songs of Madame PENG Liyuan, bizarrely presented last year by the husband of China’s first lady, President Xi Jinping.

Since The Duchess of Cambridge revealed in ITV’s recent royal documentary that The Queen was delighted by her Christmas present of a jar of home-made chutney, because love, time and care went into the making of it, gift-givers around the world must have been relieved as to what to give Her Majesty for her 90th. Although the Government says “The Queen’s 90th birthday is a truly national event and provides a great chance for all of us to reflect on the extraordinary work Her Majesty has given this country for more than six decades,” somewhat typically it has yet to announce precisely what present it will be giving Her Majesty on behalf of a grateful nation, and one suspects that the style-less cost-cutters may try to go for the chutney option, or even a bag of more salt.

In fact, such has been the complete and utter absence of any mention of a gift in the Government’s many postings of the arrangements for Her Majesty’s birthday, it would not surprise many if the matter of a present has been overlooked and that soon a Whitchall flunky will be sent down to HMV in Oxford Street to see if there’s a good three-for-two deal going on Madame Peng’s greatest hits. However, if Downing Street PRs would like to give themselves more class than their handling of recent events suggests that they have, they may care to get on the phone to Major Peake with a request that he takes a birthday snack.

On the night of Her Majesty’s birthday, celebratory beacons will be lit all over the UK to celebrate the event. As there are to be at least 1,000 such bonfires, one might imagine that they would be visible from space. And therefore photographable.

And as never before in The Queen’s 90 years has one of her subjects been a European Space Agency astronaut, such a framed picture may be a hugely-symbolic and suitable gift. On the other hand, David Cameron could always bring out the Branston.

Where to see a royal this week

FULL details of events in the ever-busy diaries of the many members of the Royal Family are available from the official website www.royal.gov.uk but here’s their schedule for the week ahead

April 12
- Princess Alexandra, as Honorary Freewoman, The Worshipful Company of Clothworkers, will attend a Reception at Clothworkers’ Hall, Dunster Court, Mincing Lane E3.

April 13
- Princess Alexandra, as Patron, will visit The House of St Barnabas, 1 Greek Street, Soho Square.

April 16
- The Countess of Wessex, as President, opens the headquarters, 17-19 Buckingham Palace Road.
- The Duke and Duchess of Gloucester, as President (Her Royal Highness), Royal Academy of Music, will attend the Senior Finals of the Mars in Competition, Royal Festival Hall.

April 19
- The Duke of Edinburgh, as Colonel-in-Chief, The Queen’s Royal Hussars (The Own and Royal Irish), will attend a Lunch at the Cavalry and Guards Club, 127 Piccadilly.
- The Princess Royal, as Patron, Opportunity International United Kingdom, will hold a Dinner at St James’s Palace.
- The Princess Royal, as President, Animal Health and Trust, will attend a Reception at The Caledonian Club, Halkin Road SW1.

Press release

London Weekly News

ROYAL LONDON

What’s the secret to royal long life? It’s homeopathy, naturally

HEALTHY DEBATE: The Queen’s confidence in homeopathy has divided opinion

ALTERNATIVE: The Princess Royal and Countess of Wessex

ON DUTY: The Princess Royal and Countess of Wessex

ON DUTY: The Princess Royal and Countess of Wessex
Kipferl Kneipe and Kitchen

A CONTEMPORARY but cosy hidden gem, set just off the Portobello Road, Kipferl Kneipe and Kitchen is the perfect pit stop at any time of day, writes Nicky Sweetland.

The specialist Austrian coffee house and restaurant is part of a group of acclaimed eateries which first came to London in 2004. With an enviable reputation for bringing the very best in Viennese food to London, Kipferl Kneipe and Kitchen opened in the winter of 2014 and was designed by Benedict Wilhelm.

The Golborne Road restaurant is more of a wine bar, or Heurigen, as they say in Austria, and the focus is on serving selected Austrian wines and beers together with Austrian tapas – small dishes to share.

I visited on a dreary Saturday night but my evening was soon lightened by the fresh decor and wonderfully attentive service from the excellent and highly knowledgeable staff. As I’m no expert on Austrian cuisine, I took my lead from the waiting staff and was treated to a veritable feast of delectable dishes, with tastes and textures which I had never before experienced.

I started with a crisp and light Hugo Spritzer, which is white wine, elderflower cordial and mint and acted as an ideal accompaniment to my first course, a deliciously tangy Tiroler Schlutzkrapfen, with spinach and cheese – and served with brown butter.

For my main I was advised to try the Spinatknödel with Bergkaese and Blattsalat – spinach dumplings with organic mountain cheese from Vorarlberg, brown butter and green leaf salad, with an unusual but exquisite spiced red wine. The spinach dumplings, although very filling, weren’t too heavy and when coupled with the leafy salad and almond flakes, provided a grand mix of flavours.

To round off my decadence, I finished my meal with a piece of classic Austrian apple strudel served with vanilla ice cream and a mild coffee – and all were excellently prepared and presented.

Kipferl pride themselves on being a bit of a Geheimtip – a “little secret” – but with their quality, authenticity, consistency and attention to detail, this fantastic restaurant won’t stay a secret for long.

SECRET: Nicky Sweetland visited Kipferl Kneipe and Kitchen on a dreary night but her evening was soon lightened by the fresh decor and attentive service by the ‘excellent and knowledgeable’ staff.

A little taste of Austrian hospitality revealed.

VIENNESE SPECIALS: Some of the delights on offer at Kipferl Kneipe and Kitchen

Spelt pudding with prunes

MARK HIX RECIPE OF THE WEEK

S PELT grains make a hearty and robust version of a rice pudding. Although it’s quite creamy, it is relatively healthy, especially if you use low-fat milk.

I’ve used the baker Richard Bertinet’s prunes steeped in Armagnac, which he gave me a couple of years ago, but you could make your own version, or use morello cherries in eau de vie, or a fresh fruit compote.

Ingredients (serves four)

- 100g spelt, soaked in water overnight and drained
- 4 prunes
- 1.2-1.5ltr milk
- 100g caster or granulated sugar
- 120ml condensed milk

Method

PUT the spelt in a pan with a litre of the milk and the sugar, slowly bring to a simmer and continue simmering very gently for about 35-40 minutes, stirring regularly. During cooking, feel free to add more milk if it’s getting dry.

Once the spelt is tender, remove from the heat and transfer to a bowl and stir in the condensed milk. You can adjust the consistency with more milk if you wish, then top with a prune, and serve it hot or cold, or just at room temperature.

If you want the old-fashioned baked effect, with the skin on, just pop it into an oven-proof dish, pour a little milk on top and bake it in a moderately hot oven for about 30 minutes.
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**Capital nights**

**EDITED BY GEOFF BAKER**

**HAT** can there be left to achieve for the band that has already done it all? As the enduring rock’n’roll icons of the last 50 years, the Rolling Stones are the living legends of their art. But having conquered the stage and the screen, their story is now being re-told in freeze frame, writes Jack Dixon.

Yes, the band that was always on the move has finally pressed pause for a rock retrospective at the Saatchi Gallery.

**Exhibitionism** – a carefully crafted trip down memory lane for Stones aficionados – opened to critical acclaim last week.

The musical history trip recounts the band’s half-century in the spotlight, unearthng an array of artefacts, instruments, clippings and costumes. “Musicians always like to talk that it’s all about the music. It isn’t, of course,” Jagger once said. “It’s about what you wear, what you look like, what your attitudes are – all of these things.”

The exhibition spans every aspect of the Stones’ legendary career – from their early days living in their tiny flat in Edith Grove to the dizzying success of the 60s and 70s, the countless world tours and the string of hit films, right the way up to the Hyde Park homecoming in 2013.

It includes a stunning collection of guitars, battered and bruised after five decades of music-making, a patchwork wall of tour posters, a visual timeline of the band’s music videos and behind-the-scenes photographs that capture Mick, Keith, Ronnie and Charlie at work in the recording studio.

But, as Jagger says, being in the Stones was about so much more than the music. And **Exhibitionism** also takes visitors inside the design of the unforgettable tongue and lips logo, displays the intricacies of the band’s stage set-ups in a series of scale models and creates its own catwalk with a closer look at Jagger and Richards’ most iconic outfits.

**Treasures from their travels, items rare and unseen offer a glimpse inside the band’s colourful backstory.**

As Martin Scorsese, who directed the 2008 film **Shine a Light,** reveals in **Exhibitionism**, above, and outside... 

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**No Stone unturned**

**IRRESISTIBLE FORCE** Inside **Exhibitionism**, above, and outside...

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**What they said about **Exhibitionism**

WHERE the great achievement of the Bowie exhibition was to take us inside the head of rock’s greatest enigma, this show takes us no closer to understanding what makes the Stones tick – or indeed to wondering if we should care what makes the Stones tick. Whatever misgivings you may have about the Rolling Stones, this show will make you realise how much you’ve had them in your life, through the magically funky riffs churning from the speakers as much as anything you actually see. As Scorsese says, when he watched the Stones’ films he realised their music was ‘part of me’. It’s a sentiment many will echo while walking round this hugely entertaining exhibition.

MARK HUDSON, Daily Telegraph

As is the modern way, visitors to the career-spanning official Rolling Stones exhibition – a stone’s throw from the Chelsea flat the band’s principals shared in 1962 – exit through the gift shop. And there you may see the function “the world’s greatest rock’n’roll band” serve these days: generating an awful lot of money, for themselves, of course, and for those granted the privilege of using their brand. Fancy a Pringle sweater with the Stones’ lips insignia? That’ll be £420. Perhaps some officially endorsed pyjamas? Why thank you sir, £285 please. There’s even a small Turnbull & Asser Stones-themed gentlemen’s wear collection.

MICHAEL HANN, The Guardian

**THIS exhibition brings to life the most rock and roll band of the 21st century. Not to be missed.**

HALINA WATTS, Daily Mirror

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**Miller’s tale a promising one**

**Andy Welch introduces south west London’s premier rocking singer-songwriter**

**M**isty Miller first appeared in 2011, aged just 16, with a raft of whimsical folk songs. She had blonde hair and a summery air of innocence. She’s been away for a while, doing other things, and that’s not slang for going to prison. In fact, she was busy working on her music and has had something of an image overhaul. Her hair is now jet black, and there are piercings and tats.

Her new rockier sound, which can be heard on **Best Friend**, is still there in all its glory, but is perhaps better served by her new rocker sound. Search YouTube for the stripped back version of that track for the full effect.

In 2011, comparisons were made to the likes of Laura Marling and even Lily Allen, but now, her music brings Chrissie Hynde and Wolf Alice more to mind.

“There’s a power in simplicity,” she says, summing up her approach to songwriting, and, listening to the anthemic **Happy**, she has a point. Her forthcoming album is autobiographical but not to the point it’ll alienate anyone.

“At points over the last few years, the title of the album would have been a little too close to the bone,” Miller admits. “I don’t think I’d be able to call it that if I was still lost in the fog.”

Her second album, called **The Whole Family Is Worried**, was released on April 8, the same day as single **Girlfriend**.

She also tours the UK with her band from April 13, kicking off in Exeter. She’s at the Moth Club in Hackney on April 25. To find out more, go to www.facebook.com/misty miller music while her official site can be found at www.misty miller.com. To stream her music, go to www.soundcloud.com/misty miller, and to buy or pre-order her new album, visit iTunes.

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**GIRL POWER: Misty Miller**
I T’S Laurence Fox’s first day of rehearsing for a new a play. And he’s not happy.

“It’s sitting around, doing a read-through and it’s terrifying.”

In truth, he’d probably much rather be home, playing his guitar. Since first picking up the instrument 17 years ago, when he was 20 (“A friend was playing and it sounded really cool, so I wanted a go”), he thinks there are fewer than 10 days when he’s not played it at some point. Aside from Bruce Springsteen songs, which he loves playing, he says he’s always preferred writing his own material than playing covers, and estimates he’s got about 60 finished songs under his belt.

First for Fox

Selecting the 11 that feature on his recently released debut album, Hidden Patterns, then, was a long and slow process.

“There are some that I now wish were on the album.”

Yorkshire-born Fox admits. “I put one on what I thought I was the final version of the album, but it’s not on there. Caused the record company great annoyance... But on the whole, they have been very good!”

The oldest of the songs on the album, Rise Again, was written 10 years ago – around the time Fox was first appearing in ITV’s Inspector Morse spin-off Lewis. Despite his acting career, he says he always knew he’d release an album.

“Well, I think I thought I always would. I put a lot of time into it, put that way, and I had a sneaking suspicion that it would eventually happen. If I want to do something, I normally do it.”

Of course, his fame as an actor brought with it preconceptions when he announced he was releasing an album.

“Like anything in life, it’s a combination of both things – me being known as an actor both opened and closed doors. ‘I didn’t know what to expect’, is something I’ve heard a lot, or people are pleasantly surprised when they hear my music,” he says. “I suppose it is weird to switch between things like this. I only really get concerned about criticism from people who haven’t listened the album. If someone has taken the time to listen to it and doesn’t like it, then fair enough, but if it is prejudiced and won’t listen to it, but decide to have a negative view of it, then I am bothered.

“You can’t be one of those people commenting on things you don’t know about,” he adds. “But really, I don’t care about criticism because ultimately, I did this for me. I want to share it with people, but really it’s for me.”

It would be easy to think that Fox would see releasing music as something of a sideshow, a hobby even, with little risk attached. Not so, he says, arguing that the pressure is hugely on with the release of Hidden Patterns.

“It’s a solid album, full of laments on love and loss, which say as much about Fox’s record collection – lots of singer-songwriters, Coldplay and Mumford & Sons no doubt feature – as anything else.

“I am proud of what I have done, and I want people to hear it. I really want people to listen to this. But at the same time, I am relatively private. You don’t see me, or the wife nowadays, flouncing around going to parties,” he says (Fox has been married to actress Billie Piper since 2007 and they have two children together).

“I am fairly private with my thoughts and emotions, so there comes the pressure, really, putting my head above the parapet. That is the pressure, exposing myself, asking to be judged. Why would anyone want to do that?”

With privacy so important, is he not worried about listeners reading into his song’s lyrics, looking for clues about his life?

“I think if people do that, they will get it wrong, most of the time. But there are definitely enough clues in there. The lyrics are the most important thing to me. You can’t have a song without lyrics, so they do mean a lot, and with them being written over 10 years, it’s like a diary.”

Rise Again, for example, was written a long time ago, about an old relationship of Fox’s and sees him telling himself what to do.

“Listening back to those lyrics, I see that I was a lot more courageous then,” he confesses. “I am a lot less courageous now than I was. When you have kids, you become really protective and I’d never do the mad things I used to do when I was younger.

“I still have a relatively crazy life, but I am much more cautious. I drive very carefully now, for example. I think I don’t need drive at 80mph, I’ll go at 70 like I’m meant to, and things like that.”

He says his music and acting are very much two different sides to himself, with the former being very intimate and personal, the latter more interpretive.

“I realised this morning when I was in this read-through. I’m in charge of my music, as much as anyone can ever really be in charge of anything, but it’s my words, my music and so on. Acting is someone else’s words, and playing a part, which requires you go outside of yourself.”

Now he’s getting back to acting having concentrated on music for some time, he says it feels unfamiliar, but Fox is confident it’ll come back to him.

“It’s similar to how predictive text has taught me not to spell properly,” he says. “You lose an ability, if you don’t use it all the time.”

Laurence Fox’s debut album Hidden Patterns is out now. He begins a UK tour on May 17 and plays the 100 Club in Oxford Street on May 23. For further details, visit Fox’s dedicated website www.laurencefox.co.uk
Sensational show from a legend of musical theatre

Bonnie Langford
Hippodrome Casino

The West End women season at the Hippodrome casino was kicked off in style on Friday evening with stage star Bonnie Langford performing a one-night-only cabaret.

The pint-sized performer raised the rafters with her set, which included a plethora of songs from her illustrious career, writes Nicky Sweetland.

From Langford’s first stage appearance at the tender age of just three months old, the iconic performer has enjoyed tremendous showbiz success, from appearing in Gypsy with Dame Angela Lansbury to more recently gracing our screens as Carmel Kazemi in EastEnders.

Her almost sold-out showcase at the Hippodrome saw Bonnie take the audience on a journey through her career with medleys from some of the shows with which she has become synonymous, including Peter Pan, Chicago and, of course, Gypsy.

Coming from a true legend of the world of musical theatre, Bonnie Langford’s show had all the glamour and pizzazz of a big Broadway spectacular, with the true triple threat performer showing she hasn’t lost any of her verve, with high kicks, the splits and even a vault onto the grand piano.

After some hilarious anecdotes and some sensational songs including a moving tribute to Cilla Black, Bonnie was joined by Anton Du Beke for a glitzy foxtrot and later by her fresh faced EastEnders co-star Danny-Boy Hatchard for a charming duet of Too Good to be True and Something Stupid.

Slick and fast paced, this was cabaret at its very best performed by theatrical royalty.

Classic fairytale will be a Shaw thing for Christmas

Sadler’s Wells will be filled with adventure this Christmas as the world premiere of Matthew Bourne’s The Red Shoes will take up residency as part of a nationwide tour.

Bourne and his New Adventures company announced this week that the beloved fairytale, which was also an Academy award-winning movie, would run a Christmas season at the venue.

The Red Shoes has seduced audiences and inspired generations of dancers with its tale of obsession, possession and one girl’s dream to be the greatest dancer in the world. Victoria Page lives to dance but her ambitions become a battleground between the two men who inspire her passion.

Creating the coveted role of Page will be the Australian dancer and New Adventures principal, Ashley Shaw. Shaw is currently wowing audiences around the UK and receiving rave reviews for her performance as Aurora in Bourne’s Sleeping Beauty. She has been dancing with New Adventures since 2009, performing many of the company’s leading female roles including Nutcracker, Lana in The Car Man, Kim in Edward Scissorhands and the title role in Cinderella. This will be her first created role in a new production.

Bourne said this week: “It has been a long held ambition of mine to bring The Red Shoes to the stage as a dance/drama. It is set in the theatrical world of a touring dance company. It is actually about dance and dancers, a world that we all understand so well.”

“However, the film’s genius is to make that theatrical world at times surreal, larger than life and highly cinematic. My challenge will be to capture some of that surreal, sensuous quality within the more natural theatre setting.”

He added: “It has also long been an ambition of mine to bring the incompressible music of Bernard Herrmann to the stage. It has been fascinating to discover how much of this music lends itself to story-telling through dance and this production will, I believe, be the first full length ballet to celebrate his unique music.”

Bourne’s magical new adaptation of the legendary Powell and Pressburger film reunites him with his regular collaborators and New Adventures associate artists and the team that brought you the world wide hit, Sleeping Beauty – Liz Brotherston (set and costumes), Paule Constable (lighting) and Paul Groothuis (sound).

The world premiere is set to a new score arranged by New Adventures associate artist Terry Davies using the mesmerising music of golden-age Hollywood composer Herrmann (most famous for his collaborations with Alfred Hitchcock, Orson Welles and Martin Scorsese), whose work ranges from the witty and playfully robust to the achingly romantic and bitterweet.

Full tour schedule and more information at www.new-adventures.net
People Places and Things

Occasionally you come across a production which is so powerful, you can’t help but shed a tear and People, Places and Things at the Wyndham’s Theatre is one such production, writes Nicky Sweetland.

Since its premiere at the National Theatre, Duncan Macmillan’s play has become one of the most talked about productions to hit the London stage this year, and after immersing myself fully by taking an onstage seat, I can see why.

The audience is taken on an extraordinary journey of helplessness, yet joy, as Denise Gough illustrates the suffering of those affected by addiction.

Gough’s portrayal is truly enlightening as she plays an actress with an alcohol and drug habit. She seeks therapy but can’t help but hide behind a mask of deceit as she combats the denial and selfishness which are such typical trademarks of a substance abuser.

Every movement and every glance of Gough’s performance is chillingly accurate and for anyone who has been touched by the issues of addiction, they act as a painful reminder of how terrible living with the condition can be.

From the onstage vantage point you feel as if you are an inmate of the clinic and can fully appreciate Bunny Christie’s wonderful set and Jeremy Herrin’s fantastic direction.

Barbara Martyn and Kevin McMonagle offer great support, particularly when playing the long-suffering parents in the heart-breaking final scene, but it’s entirely Gough’s show and a role for which she quite rightly won the Best Actress Olivier award last week.

This play beautifully develops both the comedy and tragedy associated with addiction and its effects on loved ones. This is a must-see show which is well worth watching from the onstage seats.

People, Places and Things runs at the Wyndham’s Theatre until June 18. For more details you can visit the website nationaltheatre.org.uk

Veteran of Wicked lines up one-night Chelsea showcase

WEST END star Emma Hatton is set to bring her unique powerhouse vocals to Chelsea for a one-night gig at the Pheasantry on the King’s Road.

The hugely talented singer, who has just celebrated her 500th performance as the green witch Elphaba in Wicked at the Apollo, Victoria, will follow in the footsteps of a host of entertainment superstars when she takes to the intimate club to perform a cabaret style concert on May 1.

The showcase follows a sell-out Christmas show at Kettner’s in Soho, and the release of an acclaimed EP, Merry Christmas Darling, which reached number one in the iTunes jazz chart and featured a duet with the brilliant Anthony Strong. The track Mad About the Boy is the most downloaded on the London Gay Big Band’s album Brave, recorded at Abbey Road.

The show at the Pheasantry is part of the London Festival of Cabaret and will feature songs by the singer-songwriters that have inspired Emma, including Carole King, Sara Bareilles and Eva Cassidy.

Emma said: “Music is what drives me. I live and breathe it. Some of the songs I’ve chosen for the evening are those that have touched me in such a way that I feel compelled to share my interpretation of them in the hope that I can communicate my joy of their music to everyone.”
Night out with Kerry before tragedy strikes

WITH a one-night-only gig at the Hippodrome Casino later this month and a brand new musical premiering in October, the First Lady of the West End, Kerry Ellis, is once again riding high, writes Nicky Sweetland.

Fresh from a European tour with long-time collaborator, Queen guitarist Brian May, the singer is looking forward to getting back to London and sharing some new music and new stories with her legions of devoted fans.

Ellis will star in the new musical, Murder Ballad, in October at the Arts Theatre in Westminster and perform a song from the show on the Piazza stage at the Olivier Awards recently.

I caught up with Kerry following her performance to find out about the new show and to hear about her cabaret at the Hippodrome.

She told me about the performance. “It was a bit bonkers really. The last time I performed at the Oliviers was with Barry Manilow. He was the headline and it was all very glamorous and crazy, but that was a good few years ago. I’ve been back and watched but haven’t performed since, so to perform a new show and you know, to pretty much open the ceremony outside was quite something, really. I felt quite brave to do it because it was a song that nobody knew from a musical nobody knows about. It was quite interesting but I loved it because it was really nice to have all that support there.”

Murder Ballad centres around Sara (Kerry Ellis), a young New Yorker who is torn between her dangerous ex-boyfriend and her reliable husband. Led by asexy bartender who serves as the show’s narrator, Murder Ballad documents the details of the torrid affair with vibrant pop-rock tunes.

Kerry said: “It’s a four hander. It’s only ever been off Broadway, so this will be the UK premiere of it, so for me it’s really interesting to do a new show. I wanted to do something where I could create again and also I’m excited about working in The Arts, which is a really small and intimate place. It’s nice for me to be able to do something so intimate.”

Ellis has played a host of leading roles over the years, including Eliza Doolittle in My Fair Lady at the Theatre Royal, Elphaba in Wicked at the Apollo Victoria and most recently, Grizabella in Cats at the London Palladium. Despite performing numerous solo shows and cabarets, the entertainer sees this new musical as a completely different challenge.

“I’ve been in an intimate environment as myself, talking about shows, but have not been in that environment playing a character, so it will be strange but interesting and that’s part of why I took it on. I think when you’ve played so many big roles in big theatres there comes a point, because those roles don’t come up all the time, when you’re looking for something new, something that’s going to challenge you in a different way – and this is perfect.”

The new rock musical played two acclaimed runs off Broadway and explores the complications of love, the compromises we make and the betrayals that can ultimately undo us. With a title like Murder Ballad, it’s no surprise that the treacherous love triangle ends in tragedy, but Kerry is remaining tight-lipped about who meets their demise in the show.

“It’s a love story, so there’s a bit of a love triangle. Eventually there is a murder but I’m not sure if I’m allowed to say who it is or who’s done it, so I’d better not. It’s all about emotions and all about how we are led by our emotions and what drastic outcomes can come from being scorned or being jealous or being absolutely lethal.”

Before she embarks on another foray onto the West End stage, Kerry is looking forward to returning to the Hippodrome Casino on April 29 to perform some of her favourite songs with her band in the opulent venue.

“I haven’t done a show there for absolutely ages, so when they came and asked me if I would do a night there, I said yes. I’ve got some new stories to tell. I’ve been on tour with Brian May, I’ve done Cats, I’ve done various concerts, so I thought it was probably about time that I went back and did a show at the Hippodrome.”

With songs and stories from her career and musical arrangements by virtuoso Craig Adams, the cabaret style show is a must-see for fans.

Kerry says: “I’m going to do it slightly differently. I’m going to have a slightly different band set-up. I’ve got my two backing vocals, piano and guitar, so it will be a slightly different sound. It’s not my complete stripped back, just me and a piano, but it’s not me and a band. It’s an acoustic sound I guess. I’ll be talking about things that I’ve done and things that I’m doing. It’s basically me catching up really, so I’ll be telling a few stories about what’s going on.”

Tickets for Kerry’s show at the Hippodrome casino are limited, so if you would like to see the performer up close and personal, book soon.

For further information on the gig at the Hippodrome you can visit the website hippodromecasino.com and to find details of Murder Ballad you can take a look on website murderballadmusical.co.uk

This time critics are kind to Maggie

MAGGIE Smith was presented with the Critics’ Circle Award 2015 for Services to the Arts at a private lunch held at the National Liberal Club in London on March 31, receiving an engraved crystal rose bowl. The event was hosted by Jeffery Taylor, president of the Critics’ Circle, and our correspondent, Sir Peter Ustinov. Dame Judi Dench and Dame Helen Mirren.

“Maggie, pictured, said: “I feel very, very, honoured. I know people say and I’ve certainly said I don’t read the critics, which a lot of actors say very airily, but believe me, you get to know what’s there.”

“But I did learn a lesson once – I was sitting in a hotel with Frank Finlay, who was a wonderful actor. We were filming Othello, but there was a newspaper there and I read it; there was a review in there and it was absolutely lethal and truly frightening. It was for The Master Builder at the National, and I remember bursting into tears. “Frank gave me a big hug and said, ‘what you must think about is how many actresses you’ve made very happy. I don’t know if the critic who wrote that is here, but it was a very good lesson.’”

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Talk of the town

A FILM which charts the life of everyone’s favourite winter Olympian, Eddie The Eagle Edwards, is on release in the UK this month and is expected to be a box office smash hit – with its central character still holding a very special place within the hearts of the nation, writes Nicky Sweetland.

The film boasts an all-star cast, with Taron Egerton playing the titular ski jumper, Hugh Jackman as his coach Bronson Peary and Londoner Ania Sowinski as his inspirational PR guru Carrie.

The starry premiere of the hilarious biopic took place in Leicester Square last month – and I took the opportunity to catch up with Ania to find out a bit about the film.

The actress had just returned to her central London home after attending the Oscars in Hollywood and told me about the film.

‘It’s obviously his sort of story of how he defied the odds and expectations to end up at the 1988 Olympics.’

Ania grew up in North London and started to work professionally on stage from a young age. Her first appearance was in the National Theatre’s production of Sondheim’s Sunday in the Park with George. She was just seven in 1988 when Michael (Eddie the Eagle) Edwards made his bid to become Britain’s first ever Olympic ski jumper. The plasterer turned high flying hero evokes fond memories with the actress, who has scored an abundance of small screen successes with shows including BBC1’s Luther and Silent Witness.

She said: “I’m just old enough to remember. I think I was about eight or seven coming up to eight in 1988. I can remember it being on the TV, I can remember people talking about him, my brother did impressions of him and so I do remember him very much being a personality more than a ski jumper.”

Edwards competed and finished last in both the 70 metre and 90 metre ski jump events at the 1988 Winter Olympics in Calgary. His embodiment of the heroic underdog earned him widespread adulation from the viewing public, although many within the sport branded him an embarrassment. Edwards gained a celebrity status, with many feeling he perfectly represented the ideology of the Olympic movement, as an amateur sportsman who was fulfilling his dream to compete on the world stage.

The rules of the sport were changed for subsequent competitions, which meant the feat could never be repeated, but Eddie the Eagle Edwards’ story went down in history. Ania admits she was surprised when she heard they were making a film about the much loved Hanke.

I think, have a little bit of craziness about you to want to hurl yourself off of a 90-metre drop.” The stunt man on the film had to modify their techniques to replicate the plucky Englishman’s less than perfect approach to the sport.

“It was terrifying to watch let alone do and I think you have to be one of these adrenaline fuelled dreamers, as he was to actually do it.”

The film portrays the close bond which Eddie had with his father, who desperately wanted him to continue in the family business. Hugh Jackman plays the fictional character of ski jump coach Bronson Peary.

“Part of the real story of this was the relationship between him and his dad and that then carries over to him and Hugh because there’s ultimately a father figure there as well.”

The new film has obvious echoes of the classic 1993 movie Cool Runnings, which starred John Candy and was based on the true story of the Jamaican bobsleigh team. Ania confesses that the stunt film even gets a nod which fans will be able to look out for.

“There is a little mention in there for people. If you know the story and the idea you’ll definitely get the pointer to it at that point.”

Eddie the Eagle is directed by Dexter Fletcher and also features Jim Broadbent and Christopher Walken alongside Jackman, who is known as being one of the nicest men in Hollywood. I asked Ania if the stories were true.

“I couldn’t praise him enough. He’s a true professional, an ultimate mate and always happy. We laughed a lot on this set constantly and I think that’s a testament not just to Hugh but to Dexter Fletcher, who brings such a great energy to a film set.”

The late eighties were not known as being the most stylish era for fashion, and many of the iconic images of the time depict the sports stars in garish shell suits which were all the rage. Ania managed to swerve the polyester for the film however, with more of the power dressing style reflected in her costumes. The actress did admit to having made the fashion faux pas as a child however, albeit not entirely of her own doing.

She told me: “I don’t think I ever did own one. I was more of a goth girl as a child. My first TV job was a sitcom called Waiting for God, with Graham Crowden and Stephanie Cole, and I played their grandchild. They made me wear a hideous pink shell suit and I was not a pink girl. I was more of a tomboy so I think that put me off for life. I have to say the costume in the film is fab and it represents shell suits in this new really cool way.”
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LONDON BOROUGH OF HAMMERSMITH AND Fulham
ROAD TRAFFIC REGULATION ACT 1984
SECTION 14(1)
(TEMPORARY PROHIBITION OF TRAFFIC)

1. The Council of the London Borough of Hammersmith and Fulham hereby gives notice that in order to facilitate crane operations to be carried out in or in the vicinity of a building within the area of the above named road, it intends to make an Order the effect of which would prohibit vehicular traffic in a section of the above named road.

2. Whilst works are in progress, or whilst the authorised traffic signs are displayed, no person shall cause any vehicle to proceed, stop, wait, load or unload in Beaufort Mews.

3. An alternative route for traffic in article 2 would not be required.

4. Exemptions would be provided in the Order to permit reasonable access to premises, so far as it is practical without interference with the execution of the said work and for works vehicles, any vehicle being in connection with police, fire or ambulance purposes and anything done with the permission or at the direction of a police constable in uniform.

5. The Order would come into operation on the 12th April 2016 and would be valid for a maximum period of 18 months or until works are completed, whichever is the sooner.

6. Works would be expected to commence on Tuesday 12th April 2016 and last for 7 days. The dates specified are for guidance and informative purposes only and works may extend outside these dates.

Dated this 7th day of April 2016
Nicholas Ruxton-Boyle
Chief Transport Planner
Transport and Highways

THE LONDON BOROUGH
OF HAMMERSMITH AND Fulham
ROAD TRAFFIC REGULATION ACT 1984
(SECTION 14(1))
(TEMPORARY PROHIBITION OF TRAFFIC)

1. The Council of the London Borough of Hammersmith and Fulham hereby gives notice that in order to facilitate crane operations to be carried out in or in the vicinity of a building within the area of the above named road, it intends to make an Order the effect of which would prohibit vehicular traffic in a section of the above named road.

2. Whilst works are in progress, or whilst the authorised traffic signs are displayed, no person shall cause any vehicle to proceed, stop, wait, load or unload in a section of Seagrave Road between its junction with Rickett Street and No. 33 Seagrave Road.

3. An alternative route for traffic in article 2 would be in place via Hillyard Road, Ongar Road and Lillie Road.

4. Exemptions would be provided in the Order to permit reasonable access to premises, so far as it is practical without interference with the execution of the said work and for works vehicles, any vehicle being in connection with police, fire or ambulance purposes and anything done with the permission or at the direction of a police constable in uniform.

5. The Order would come into operation on the 16th April 2016 and would be valid for a maximum period of 18 months or until works are completed, whichever is the sooner.

6. Works would be expected to commence on Saturday 16th April 2016 and last for 2 days. With back up dates scheduled for Saturday 23rd April 2016 and for the week beginning 30th April 2016. The dates specified are for guidance and informative purposes only and works may extend outside these dates.

Dated this 16th day of March 2016.
Nicholas Ruxton-Boyle
Chief Transport Planner
Transport and Highways

THE LONDON BOROUGH
OF HAMMERSMITH AND Fulham
ROAD TRAFFIC REGULATION ACT 1984
(SECTION 14(1))
(TEMPORARY PROHIBITION OF TRAFFIC)

1. The Council of the London Borough of Hammersmith and Fulham hereby gives notice that in order to facilitate crane operations to be carried out in or in the vicinity of a building within the area of the above named road, it intends to make an Order the effect of which would prohibit vehicular traffic in a section of the above named road.

2. Whilst works are in progress, or whilst the authorised traffic signs are displayed, no person shall cause any vehicle to proceed, stop, wait, load or unload in the above named road, it intends to make an Order the effect of which would prohibit vehicular traffic in a section of the above named road.

3. The parking restrictions on the Clem Attlee Estate will operate as follows:

(a) the parking restrictions to operate Monday to Saturday 9am - 8pm;
(b) every vehicle must be parked wholly within a marked parking bay (vehicles are not permitted to park in any other areas on the estate, including footways);
(c) parking permits to be issued in accordance with on street parking permit charges as set by the Council in respect of motor vehicles that is to say passenger vehicle or goods vehicle the overall height of which does not exceed 2.28 metres.
(d) only vehicles displaying a valid resident’s parking permit or an valid contractor’s parking permit or an activated SMART Visitor permit relating to the Clem Attlee Estate were be permitted to park in a permit holders parking bay;
(e) resident’s parking permits and SMART visitor’s parking permits to be issued only to eligible residents of the Clem Attlee Estate;
(f) residents permit only be issued to residents who can show that their vehicle is registered at they home address on the Clem Attlee Estate;
(g) only vehicles displaying a valid resident’s parking permit or an valid contractor’s parking permit or an activated SMART Visitor permit relating to the Clem Attlee Estate were be permitted to park in a permit holders parking bay;
(h) a motorcycle, may be left in a parking bay free of charge, provided the use of that part of the parking place is not closed or reserved by order of the Council;
(i) where a parking bay is indicated as being for the use of a disabled person’s vehicle, only a vehicle displaying a disabled person’s blue badge may be left in that parking bay;
(j) where a bay is indicated as being for the use of loading only, a vehicle may wait for the purpose of delivering or collecting or loading or unloading the vehicle at premises adjacent to the loading place in which the vehicle is in siting for a period not exceeding twenty minutes and not return to that loading bay within one hour.

A copy of the proposed Orders, the Council’s statement of reasons for making the proposed Orders and documents giving more detailed particulars of the proposed Orders, can be inspected during normal office hours on Mondays to Fridays inclusive until the end of a period of 6 weeks beginning with the date on which the Orders are made, or as the case may be, the Council decides not to make the Orders.

3. The parking restrictions on the William Church Estate would continue to operate (without any charges) as follows:

(a) the parking restrictions to operate 9am-10pm;
(b) every vehicle must be parked wholly within a marked parking bay (vehicles are not permitted to park in any other areas on the estate, including footways);
(c) parking permits to be issued in accordance with on street parking permit charges as set by the Council in respect of motor vehicles that is to say passenger vehicle or goods carrying vehicle the overall height of which does not exceed 2.28 metres.
(d) only vehicles displaying a valid resident’s parking permit or an valid contractor’s parking permit or an activated SMART Visitor permit relating to the William Church Estate were be permitted to park in a permit holders parking bay;
(e) resident’s parking permits and SMART visitor’s parking permits to be issued only to eligible residents of the William Church Estate;
(f) resident’s permits only be issued to residents who can show that their vehicle is registered as kept at their home address on the William Church Estate;
(g) only vehicles displaying a valid resident’s parking permit or an valid contractor’s parking permit or an activated SMART Visitor permit relating to the William Church Estate were be permitted to park in a permit holders parking bay;
(h) a motorcycle, may be left in a parking bay free of charge, provided the use of that part of the parking place is not closed or reserved by order of the Council;
(i) where a parking bay is indicated as being for the use of a disabled person’s vehicle, only a vehicle displaying a disabled person’s blue badge may be left in that parking bay.

A copy of the proposed Orders, the Council’s statement of reasons for making the proposed Orders and documents giving more detailed particulars of the proposed Orders, can be inspected during normal office hours on Mondays to Fridays inclusive until the end of a period of 6 weeks beginning with the date on which the Orders are made, or as the case may be, the Council decides not to make the Orders.

3. Any person wishing to object to the proposed Orders or make other representations should send a statement in writing to the following address:
Transport and Highways Group, Highways and Engineering Division, Environment Department, Town Hall Extension, King Street, Hammersmith, W6 9JU until the expiration of 21 days from the date on which the notice is published.

Dated this 7th day of March 2016
Nicholas Ruxton-Boyle
Chief Transport Planner
Transport and Highways
LONDON BOROUGH OF HAMMERSMITH AND FULHAM
ROAD TRAFFIC REGULATION ACT 1984
SECTION 14(1)
(NUCLEAR MOWS)
TEMPORARY PROHIBITION OF TRAFFIC
1. The Council of the London Borough of Hammersmith and Fulham hereby gives notice that in order to facilitate the works, the works in the above named road, it intends to make an Order for the effect of which would prohibit vehicular traffic in a section of the above named road.
2. Works will be in progress, or whilst the authorised traffic signs are displayed, no person shall cause any vehicle to proceed, stop, wait, load or unload in Lawrence Mews.
3. The alternative route for traffic in Article 2 would not be required.
4. Exemptions will be provided in the Order to permit reasonable access for premises, so as it is practical without interference with the execution of the said work for works vehicles, any vehicle being used in connection with police, fire or ambulance purposes and anything done with the permission or at the direction of a police officer.
5. The Order would come into operation on the 30th April 2016 and would be valid for a maximum period of 18 months or until works are completed, whichever is the sooner.
6. Works will be expected to commence on Saturday 30th April 2016 and last for 1 day. The dates specified are for guidance and informative purposes only and works may extend outside these dates.

Dated this 6th day of April 2016.

Nigel Pallace
Executive Director for Transport
Hammersmith & Fulham Council
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Closing date: 4.00pm on Friday, 29th April 2016

For full job descriptions please visit
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South Norwood Hill
35 hrs pw (Monday-Saturday) - (£14,000 - £15,000 per annum)
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El Khayatii pushing for starting chance

SUPER-sub Nasser El Khayatii hopes his stoppage-time winner for Queens Park Rangers against Charlton Athletic will earn him more playing time in W12.

“I don’t want to be on the bench every week, so you have to show what you can do when you come on. That’s what I did today,” said the Dutchman after his first goal for Rangers secured a 2-1 London derby victory at Loftus Road on Saturday.

“It’s great to be here and I’m giving everything, I’m quite confident that I’m going to do well here.”

El Khayatii was reunited with Jimmy Floyd Hasselbaink whom he’d signed the midfielder from his former club, Burton Albion, during the January transfer window.

But the manager has continued to chomp and change his starting line-up, with opportunities to score having been limited. El Khayatii had to wait until the 85th minute on Saturday when he came on for Junior Hoilett. Hasselbaink sung his fellow countryman’s praises after QPR’s back-to-back London derby victories at the expense of the promotion-bound Addicks.

Great potential
He said: “When you leave Nasser one-versus-one, he is always going to cause problems. He has great potential – and is different to what we have here.

“He can go left, he can go right. He loves getting the ball in tight spaces.”

El Khayatii’s right-foot angled curler into the roof of the net from 12 yards was hailed as one of the Championship’s goals of the day.

“It was a finish of real quality, he showed what an asset he can be for us,” continued Hasselbaink.

“I’m really pleased for him because he’s given us a lot of options – and we’ve got to be careful of that.”

Seb Polter and Tjarron Cherry had chances before Matt Phillips gave QPR a lucky victory when his cross eluded everyone and ended up nestling in the far corner of the net just seconds before the half-time whistle.

Callum Harriott was unfortunate to see his shot hit the bar, before Jordan Cousins scored on the run of play on 62 minutes. Ademola Lookman and Igor Vetokele wasted great chances to put Charlton in front, while Phillips should have had himself a second goal instead of shooting tamely at the legs of keeper Nick Pope.

We had a big chance to kill the game at 1-0, and if we’d have taken that, I’m confident we’d have gone on to score three,” said Hasselbaink.

“But we didn’t take it, they equalised, and then we are really grateful to our keeper to give us the platform to go on and secure all three points.”

With the scores level at 1-1, Alex Smithies made a stunning save to deny Igor Vetokele in the 89th minute.

“We owe a lot to Alex for the save at the end,” said Hasselbaink. “It was a fantastic save and then Nasser did what he does best.

“I feel dejected – but satisfied with the victory,” added the QPR boss.

“We weren’t at our best, especially in the second half, but the boys showed character and resilience in abundance to keep going – and that really pleases me.”

Return to action
A highlight of the afternoon was the return to action of Jack Robinson, who had played the full 90 minutes on his QPR debut, 13 months after sustaining an ACL injury while on loan at Huddersfield Town.

“Jack played his first match in 13 months – and understandably got just crap just after the hour – but I could’ve changed it, because we’d already lost (James) Perch to a thigh injury and replaced him with (Cole) Kpekawa,” Hasselbaink explained.

“Cole had to defend straightaway. It meant the first time at this level, but I was happy with his application.

“We had some things going against us, I am really satisfied with the boys.

“They kept going, kept striving for the winner even when it wasn’t easy at times – and it came right at the end, which is always very satisfying.”

Firmly rooted in midfield, 11th-placed Rangers go back on the road with visits to two promotion-chasing teams, Cardiff City on Saturday and Brighton next Tuesday.

Question is, will El Khayatii be given a chance to prove himself from the start?

FAMOUS FROM BACK PAGE
always plays for the full 90 minutes of every game and puts on a player needs external motivation, whether it’s material or a position in the team, then they think they are slipping away already.

Hoddle replaced Mourinho in January and views his second interim spell in charge of Blues with a mixture of pride and regret.

“Yeah, of course I would have loved to have won all the games, but it was impossible in the Premier League. I would have loved to have gone unbeaten but that is now broken. It is difficult when you come out of a situation like we did in December, to come in and from the first day to win, win in sequence.

First of all you have to repair some things. I tried to do that, and as a result we had draws. So it was good to have drawings to get the confidence back.

“I would have loved to have had two or three more victories at that time but it was too big a transition from nothing to 100 per cent.”

ANOTHER player who has a rare outing under Guus Hiddink at Swansea was goalkeeper Asmir Begovic, who has had to understudy Thibaut Courtois for much of the season. Amid growing speculation that Courtois is one of the players who has told Antonio Conte that he wants away from Stamford Bridge, Begovic was handed the gloves at the Liberty Stadium.

He said: “In the first half we weren’t at our best but in the second we played better and put in a good performance. We were just unlucky and couldn’t get the goal.

“We were expecting a tough game, they were fighting to get to the magical 40-point mark, but we couldn’t get it.”

“Tie had a couple of half-chances where we would have liked to have done better, but it just wasn’t meant to be. We gave it a good go in the second half but ran out of time.”

Begovic hadn’t played since the FA Cup victory over Scunthorpe in January. “It meant a lot, it was nice to get a start and play again,” he said.

“It was been a bit but that nice to take off the cobwebs in the few minutes. After that was pretty good. You want to know you’re part of the manager’s plans and the club’s plans.

“We have a job to do. With six games left, we have to give our best in every game and finish as strongly as we can.”

ON ‘good team finishing the season strongly in Chelsea’s ever-impressive under-18s who once again won through to the FA Youth Cup final, where they will face Manchester City. The first leg is earmarked for City’s impressive academy stadium on April 22, with the return at The Bridge on April 29.

Youth team boss Joe Edwards was delighted and relieved that his side reached their fifth consecutive FA YAC final, this time at the expense of Blackburn Rovers.

Already 1-0 up from the first leg at Blackburn, they finished off thejob at Stamford Bridge on Friday, goals from Dujon Sterling, Jacob Maddox and ex-Primlco Academy School student Tommy Abraham saw them a 3-1 win on the night and a 4-1 aggregate victory.

He said: “It’s a huge credit to everybody that works in the academy at this club.

“We’re part of a group of players in particular, who have been in our system from such a young age, that shows the work that has gone into recruiting them from our doorstep and then developing them over the years.

“We are a club that have the resources to go out and buy the best young players in the country, and even Europe, if we wanted them. But this is probably the most homegrown group of players we’ve had in the competition.

“They are some of the best young players in the country and to get that all so close to home is the dream, because we want to see Chelsea kids out on the Stamford Bridge pitch with the first team.”

That view is echoed by all Blues fans, too, but how far up the Chelsea food chain that sentiment goes remains to be seen.

John Terry, the last of the truly homegrown stars to grace the first team, does not expect to be around next season to inspire the next generation.

That job alone is worthy of a contract.

Paul Lagan
Conte can’t keep Terry

John Terry’s lingering hope that Chelsea owner Roman Abramovich will change his mind and hand him a new one-year deal have been dealt a near-fatal blow.

Terry’s contract expires at the beginning of July and it’s looking increasingly likely that the talisman, who signed pro forms in 1997, will exit the Stamford Bridge door for the final time as a player when this season ends.

Following Blues’ 5-1 rout of MK Dons in the FA Cup in January, Terry revealed to LWN Sport that the club were not going to renew his contract. Since then behind the scenes talks have taken place but we understand no deal has been offered.

The club held out a potential olive branch to Terry and his legions of supporters that they must wait until the new manager had been appointed before any further comment could be made.

Italian boss Antonio Conte was unsurprisingly announced as next season’s new ‘head coach’ – not manager – and went to the club’s Cobham training complex to meet the players last Tuesday, before returning to Italy to oversee his country’s Euro 2016 finals preparations.

Conte will formally take over the reins in SW6 from interim coach Guus Hiddink when Italy are no longer in the tournament.

Terry was holding out for Conte to demand that he stay and thus put pressure on the Chelsea board to perform a U-turn.

Contract extension

But LWN Sport understands that Terry was told by Conte that his contract had nothing to do with him, thus ending any hope of a contract extension.

Terry has been out of action with an ankle problem for the past two weeks and failed to travel with the first team for Saturday’s match at Swansea City, where an insipid performance cost them a 1-0 defeat, echoing their very worst under Jose Mourinho.

According to Hiddink, who is now just marking time, Terry was: “Training on Saturday morning and then playing the game (on TV).”

“I told him, ‘get your treatment’. Hopefully, he and Gary Cahill will be involved as soon as possible.”

This certainly could have been my mistake. “This is not what we want to do. When we lose players of his undoubted quality.”

Asked if Terry should be offered a new deal, a resigned-looking Hiddink said: “That’s up to the club. I cannot look into the short future.”

Pressed on his opinion, he said: “It is not always important what I think.”

Chelsea and Terry have six matches left to play in 2015-16 but the limp, disinterested way many of the senior players performed against Swansea suggests that they can’t wait for the season to end.

Those who expect to be playing in the Euros in France in June will be hoping to stay injury-free.

But how many more will be exiting along with Terry remains to be seen.

Conte’s title of head coach seems to have defined his role perfectly and it looks like he won’t be getting much of a say on transfer dealings. He will be told to stick to the squad assembled and get them back up the Premier League table.

But this will be a squad bereft of any European football next season, as even participation in the Europa League looks a distant hope.

Currently languishing in 10th position, the reigning Premier League champions will have to bide their time in the wilderness as Leicester City and, most galling of all, Tottenham Hotspur parade themselves among Europe’s elite in the Champions League.

Hiddink was keen to end his five-month tenure with a legacy which had the promotion of several youngsters firmly stamped on it.

While Ruben Loftus-Cheek has been around for a while, it’s under Hiddink that he’s getting useful minutes under his belt.

But the Dutchman has some paternal advice for Loftus-Cheek: “It’s important for Ruben to get used to the intensity of the games,” he said.

“Although sometimes players might not be playing good, and I’m not just talking about him, we let them go and have the experience of 90 minutes, like we did with Ruben in the game against Villa. He had cramp on 70 minutes. We could have substituted him but we let him go on. But if a game is tight, like when you are 1-0 down, then we have the right, and I will do so, to make the substitution.”

But the absence of European football at Stamford Bridge next season will almost certainly halt the promotion of youth as Conte inherits the hard task of regrouping with the addition of experienced players taking priority.

Another youngster to benefit from Hiddink’s presence is Burkina Faso striker Bertrand Traore. While he failed to make an impact as a substitute on Saturday, the youngster has impressed with his attitude.

Responded well

Hiddink said: “Traore could have gone on loan in the winter but I said to him, ‘I think it is better you stay here half a season’, and he wanted to stay too. We made a programme with him. He responded very well and made progress – not just in the beginning of January, but February too.

“But you have to make this progress in training. If the gap is too big, I don’t want to put him in a big pond, where he is drowning, so he has to keep up to that level.”

It won’t just be the younger players who have to impress Conte between now and next season. Those experienced players who want to stay need to prove their worth, too.

“Of course, everyone has to fight for his position,” added Hiddink. “But not just that objective. I think when you play for Chelsea, you must be proud and...”

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