A CROSSRAIL station for North Kensington is back on track – and is set to bring with it 5,000 new homes and 2,000 jobs.

Following pressure from Kensington and Chelsea council, London mayor Boris Johnson is now pushing for the Portobello Crossrail station, which had been given up as a no-hoper, to open on the new Elizabeth Line.

The mayor believes that the station at the Gasworks site off Ladbroke Grove could unlock widespread regeneration in one of the capital’s most deprived neighbourhoods and lead to a jobs and homes bonanza.

BY GEOFF BAKER
geoff@londonweeklynews.co.uk

Royal clean-up

EARL'S Court residents were joined by local councillors, the MP for Kensington, the Environment Minister and staff from McDonald's to get stuck in to a deep clean of the central reservation on the West Cromwell Road as part of the borough's efforts for Clean for the Queen. Over a two-hour period 20 sacks of litter and cuttings were collected and the bushes cut back to tidy up the area. Most of the litter consisted of bottles, wrappers and plastic bags – and a trolley was discovered in the undergrowth.

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BORIS pitches in

MAYOR of London Boris Johnson has announced a £1.5 million investment in artificial grass pitches to boost grassroots sports across London. The funding will kick-start the first phase of a ground-breaking programme in London and ensure the capital is at the forefront of The Football Association's five-year plan to improve grassroots facilities in England and reduce reliance on local authority subsidies.

PAGE 2

Rogue tobacco blitz

ROGUE cigarettes, shisha and tobacco worth more than £2,000 was seized last week after a number of spot checks carried out by Trading Standards Officers in the Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea and the London Borough of Hammersmith and Fulham. This work was part of Operation Henry 2, which was part of a national Chartered Trading Standards Institute -co-ordinated project funded by the Department of Health.

PAGE 4

VITAL WORK: Hopes are rising that the Duke and Duchess of Cambridge's work with urban youth charity XLP could help to cut knife crime at this year's Notting Hill Carnival. Last year 57 people were arrested for possession of knives at the Carnival and as fears rise over the extent of the blade culture in the capital, William and Kate's work to support those teaching young people to reject gangs and knife crime has been praised by the Mayor of London and the MP for Kensington. REPORT, PAGE 4

SMB EVENTS

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THE paper serving the HEART of London
Mayor pitches in for grassroots sport

The Mayor of London Boris Johnson has this week announced a £1.5 million investment in artificial grass pitches to boost grassroots sports across London.

The funding will kick-start the first phase of a ground-breaking programme in London and ensure the capital is at the forefront of the Football Association’s five-year plan to improve grassroots facilities in England and reduce reliance on local authority subsidies.

The FA will be working with London boroughs about becoming the first in the country to create their own hub facility to create and manage sports pitches in local communities.

The idea is a trust – consisting of representatives from the local borough, County FA and the Greater London Authority – to run the sports hubs, which would be self-sufficient with their own facilities and could host a mixture of school and community sessions during the day, youth coaching in the evening and week ends and recreational “pay as you play” sessions in the evenings.

The hub trusts will then manage the ongoing development of new and existing all-weather 3G pitches for a wider community use across a number of sports.

A London-wide process is due to be launched later in spring for boroughs to bid for investment to kick-off their hub and football pitch improvement programme.

The mayor’s investment follows a commitment to deliver a grassroots legacy for Londoners when the capital hosts the semi-final and final of the 2020 UEFA European Football Championships.

It is part of the mayor’s £25m grassroots Sports Legacy Programme, which has invested in more than 100 grassroots facilities, delivered sports participation projects to in excess of 400,000 Londoners and trained 13,000 people as sports coaches, officials and volunteers in the capital since 2009.

The mayor, Boris Johnson, said: “There is a massive need for good quality sports pitches in London that can be used all year round and that is why I am investing to ensure the capital is at the front of the queue and reaps maximum benefit from the FA’s programme.

“It makes absolute sense that the good folk who run local clubs and groups across the capital have the opportunity to have a sporting say in the running of their own sports facilities and take the pressure off council budgets.”

The Mayor’s Sports Commissioner, Kate Hoey MP, said: “This is a great opportunity for London to secure the very best quality sports facilities for future generations to enjoy. I’m delighted the FA is prioritising London so early in their new sporting programme and hope that we’re able to bring these multi-sports hubs to communities in every corner of our city. This investment will help build much needed new artificial grass pitches as well as helping to safeguard existing grass playing areas.”

The national hub facilities programme is being funded by the FA, Sport England and the Premier League, which will be delivered by the Football Foundation. As part of the programme, those funding partners will put up to 60 per cent of investment into hub sites in the capital, with the other 40 per cent coming from partners and other funding streams. The hub programme is one of the findings of the FA Chairman’s Independent Commission which revealed there was a dearth of artificial pitches – particularly in London – and there is a desperate need to reduce the reliance on local authority subsidies.

FA chief executive Martin Glenn said: “We are delighted that the mayor is confirming this support for our football hubs programme in London. I commend London’s commitment to a project that will lead to a step-change in the provision of grassroots football in England. Over the next four years, we have laid out the ambitious target of creating football hubs across up to 30 cities to support the delivery of FA and County FA youth development and coach education programmes and to improve the quality of grassroots provision for clubs and teams.”

The Mayor of London’s Sports Facility Fund saw the Football Foundation develop 104 sites across the capital, with every single London Borough benefiting from GLA investment. These facilities are catering for 29 different sports and 15 per cent of participants were previously ‘inactive’, demonstrating how properly-targeted and delivered facilities investment can help achieve a more active population.

Since 2000, the Football Foundation has delivered £1.5 billion of grassroots sport investment on half of its core funders: the Premier League, The FA and the Government/Sport England.
Portobello station plan back on track

The Kensal Gasworks has long been proposed as a site for a possible Crossrail station but in 2013, following detailed analysis, the mayor and Transport for London came to a view that it would not be feasible.

Since then, the Royal Borough has continued to lobby for a station situated within the Kensal Canalside Opportunity Area and revised its proposals to ensure that it could unlock regeneration in the area, along with the Crossrail and HS2 station that is scheduled to open at Old Oak in 2026.

"As a result, the mayor has asked for further feasibility work to be carried out with the intention of resurrecting the scheme," said a spokesman for the council.

"This work will include examining how a new station would impact on the wider rail network, including integration with longer term capacity enhancements planned for the Great Western Mainline.

"North Kensington is amongst the most deprived areas along the entire Crossrail route and has one of the highest levels of unemployment in the capital.

"The area around the proposed station has already been earmarked for regeneration and the mayor believes that the new Crossrail station could lead to the delivery of 5,000 new homes and 2,000 jobs.

"It is estimated that without a new Crossrail station, only 1,500 homes could be built on the site."

The Leader of the Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea, Cllr Nicholas Paget-Brown said: "For a while it did seem our hopes for Portobello Crossrail had been dashed, but the mayor, Network Rail, and we on the council, are determined to achieve the optimum benefit from Crossrail.

"I am extremely grateful to the mayor and to Network Rail for keeping channels open, and am delighted that it now looks as though Royal Borough residents can look forward to riding on the Elizabeth Line in the years ahead."

London Mayor Boris Johnson said: "We have seen across London how Crossrail is transforming vast swathes of land and acting as a catalyst for much needed new homes and jobs.

"By looking again at the options for this station we firmly believe that it could have a similar impact, triggering a much-needed fillip for this part of the capital.

"We are now delving into the detail to see just what may be possible in North Kensington to ensure it does not miss out on the much-needed regeneration Crossrail will bring."

Stretching from Reading and Heathrow in the west across to Shenfield and Abbey Wood in the east, Crossrail will change the way people travel around London and the South East and add much needed new capacity to London’s transport infrastructure.

A fleet of brand new 200-metre-long trains will run on the line, featuring nine walk-through carriages, air conditioning, CCTV and real-time travel information.

When the railway fully opens it will significantly increase the capital’s rail capacity, carrying over half a million passengers per day. Some 1.5 million people will have better access to the jobs and opportunities of London’s main employment centres, and an estimated £42bn will have been added to the economy of the United Kingdom.

Last month, the mayor announced that Crossrail will be known as the Elizabeth line when the new service opens for passengers through central London in December 2018 in honour of Her Majesty the Queen.

Cleaners spring into action for the Queen

EARL’S Court residents were joined by local councillors, the MP for Kensington, the Environment Minister and staff from McDonald’s on Saturday morning (March 5) to get stuck in to a deep clean of the central reservation on the West Cromwell Road as part of the borough’s efforts for the Clean for the Queen initiative.

Clean for the Queen is a nationwide activity to give the realm a spring clean ahead of the Her Majesty’s 90th birthday and residents from Earl’s Court played their part.

The leader of the council, councillor Nick Paget-Brown, joined forces with Rory Stewart MP, Minister for the Environment, Victoria Borwick MP for Kensington, councillor Linda Wade, who represents the Earl’s Court ward, and Marion Hardman from the Clean for the Queen campaign.

After meeting up outside Earl’s Court Tube station the group headed for the central reservation that runs along West Cromwell Road, one of the busiest in the capital.

The reservation had been identified as being in need of some attention. Armed with cutting tools, rakes, gloves and black sacks, the intrepid cleaners got to work.

Over a two-hour period 20 sacks of litter and cuttings were collected and the bushes cut back to tidy up the area. Most of the litter consisted of bottles, wrappers and plastic bags and a trolley was discovered in the undergrowth and removed.

Speaking after the event, councillor Nick Paget-Brown said: “Firstly, I want to thank everyone who got involved. This was a team effort and even though I say so myself I think we have left West Cromwell Road looking better than we found it. I am very pleased that we’ve been able to play our part in Clean for the Queen.”

TIDY PROPHETS: Kensington MP Victoria Borwick with some of the Clean for the Queen team in Earl’s Court on Saturday. Over a two-hour period 20 sacks of litter and cuttings were collected and the bushes cut back to tidy up the area.
Royal help could cut carnival knife crime

BY GEOFF BAKER

HOPES are rising that the Duke and Duchess of Cambridge’s work with urban youth charity XLP could help to cut knife crime at this year’s Notting Hill Carnival.

Last year 57 people were arrested for possession of knives at the Carnival and as fears rise over the extent of the blade culture in the capital, William and Kate’s work to support those teaching young people to reject gangs and knife crime has been praised by the mayor of London and the MP for Kensington. Last week the royal couple made their second visit to XLP, the charity which works in 70 schools and communities across London and mentors up to 1,800 young people every week. The Duke and Duchess made the visit in order to encourage the mentors who have been trained by the charity and meet the young people they support.

The royal visit coincided with a police crackdown on knife crime in Kensington and Chelsea, where local police working on Operation Razor seized knives including one discovered hidden in bushes outside a school in the royal borough. Kensington MP

Trade in rogue tobacco busted

CIGARETTES, shisha and tobacco worth more than £2,000 was seized last week after a number of spot checks carried out by trading standards officers in the Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea and the borough of Hammersmith and Fulham.

This work was part of Operation Henry 2, which was part of a national Chartered Trading Standards Institute-coordinated project funded by the Department of Health.

With the aid of specialised sniffer dogs, trading standards officers discovered the illegal tobacco concealed in false ceilings and cabinets in eight of 14 shops visited across both boroughs. Some of the tobacco believed to be counterfeit whilst the remainder was seized as it did not show the required information, such as whether the tobacco was duty paid or carried the required health warnings.

Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea and Chelsea and Westminster borough, Cllr Tim Ahern, said: “The sale of illegal tobacco is a growing problem which has been proved by the lengths some unscrupulous traders will go in order to conceal their illegal goods.”

“Other agencies have discovered the contents of illegal tobacco cannot always be determined and therefore, it is completely plausible that potentially harmful unknown ingredients are contained within the products.

An investigation is now under way.

CSIs chief executive Leon Livermore said: “The illegal trade costs taxpayers about £2 billion per year in lost revenue and is known to fund organised crime networks and criminal gang activity. About 80,000 people die from smoking-related diseases each year in England alone, costing the over-stretched NHS an estimated £8 billion.

“Together, we are winning the battle and figures show that the market share of illicit cigarettes has dropped from 21 per cent to nine per cent in the last decade. Intelligence-led investigations like Operation Henry 2 keep illegal tobacco off the market and help stop the devastation caused by knife crime, our public need to see these criminals put behind bars.”

Livermore also thanked the 25 volunteers who campaigned in support of XLP this summer.

Kensal makes compelling case

REGULAR Kensington and Chelsea News readers will know, perhaps rather too well, that the council is a firm and long-standing supporter of a Crossrail 2 station in Kensington. This has been less discussed in recent years that we have also campaigned for a Crossrail 1 station on the site of the old Kensal gas works.

For various technical reasons, our station proposals received a flat “No” back in 2013 but we did not despair. We believed that the logic for the station still stacked up and so we pressed on with our lobbying, and with refining our proposals in an effort to address the engineering issues.

And guess what, Boris has just asked Network Rail to look again at our proposals.

That work will be getting under way soon. It’s not yet a done deal, of course, but I’m convinced the mayor and TfL want, if at all possible, to overcome the technical challenges and build a Crossrail station at Kensal.

There are compelling reasons for doing so. The gas works site is 67 acres. With a station that site will be limited to about 1,500 new homes. With a station it could provide up to 5,000. And there would also be thousands of new jobs, and much else besides. That’s justification enough. But there are other benefits too.

We may be a red-trouser wearing Tory council, but we have a vision for North Kensington. Over the next decade or two, it is going to undergo very significant regeneration and we intend to take that opportunity to correct the architectural errors of the past and dramatically improve life for our residents.

We hope to restore traditional street patterns, introduce garden squares and open spaces, and we mean to build “tenure-blind” homes with the community living together on streets rather than separated by estates.

And first into those new homes will be our existing tenants and if they want to, our leaseholders as well. These are noble ambitions and a Crossrail 1 station would make them all much more viable.

Crossrail 1 would be great for Kensal, great for North Kensington, and great for the Royal Borough as a whole.

I have been accused in the past of being a bit messianic about public transport, but I really do believe we are on the brink of a transport revolution in this country.

Crossrail schemes and high-speed schemes are going to slash journeys times and spread prosperity. In London, journey times will be just a fraction of what they presently are.

It’s our duty to make sure all our residents, current and future, can get the maximum benefit from that revolution. That’s why the council is fighting for Crossrail 1 in North Kensington and Crossrail 2 in Chelsea.
LO N D O N  W I D E

Millions too scared to use Night Tube’ says report

BY GEOFF BAKER

In the same year, the latest for which figures are available, there were 1,251 recorded sex attacks on buses and the Tube, an average of 24 a week.

The report states that although overall crime – including robbery, fraud, and drugs use – on public transport has fallen, ‘violent assaults and sexual offences have increased’.

It adds: ‘The Night Tube is due to start running in the near future. A recent survey showed that 36 per cent of Londoners say they would feel unsafe taking the Tube late on a Friday and Saturday.’

The crime committee found that irrespective of whether crime figures are up or down, the perception of many people is that late-night London transport is dangerous and frightening.

‘Fear of crime on public transport is as much of a problem as crime itself. We found that there is no direct correlation between reported crime levels and fear of crime. Passengers often perceive their risk of crime to be higher than official crime statistics indicate,’ says the report.

Of particular concern to the crime committee is the rise in the number of sex attacks on London buses, which increased from 483 recorded offences in 2012-13 to 684 in 2014-15.

The committee is unhappy that bus staff have not been trained to spot and deal with sex abuse – and that bus companies say the earliest they can give the training will be next year.

Sarah Green, End Violence Against Women, highlighted to us the significance of the training that has been delivered to frontline transport workers about what constitutes unwanted sexual behaviour.

However, we were informed that bus contractors have not received this training. Recognising that this is a concern, TfL told us that it has done a ‘number of activities with the bus operators and the bus drivers’ and that next year it is ‘revamping bus driver training and will work with the bus drivers directly to make them aware of how to deal with unwanted sexual behaviour and respond appropriately.’

The committee believes it is vital that bus drivers receive adequate training in responding to unwanted sexual behaviour as a matter of urgency.

Despite the efforts of the Met, British Transport Police, TfL and the City of London Police to work together to reduce crime on public transport, they do not have the confidence of Londoners and consequently many crimes are going unreported, it is claimed.

‘Despite this positive partnership working, and falls in reported crime, perception of the police and TfL’s response to crime and anti-social behaviour has declined marginally year on year for all modes of transport. This is a concern,’ the report states.

While partners are making positive strides in tackling crime on the transport network, a large proportion of crime and anti-social behaviour on public transport is not reported. This may be due to a reluctance to delay a journey, the absence of someone to report to, the belief that the report will not be taken seriously, or a lack of confidence that the offender will be caught.

The committee is concerned that huge numbers of Londoners are already too scared to use the Night Tube and buses at night because of the rise in the number of attacks. The report reveals that in 2014-15 there were 8,367 recorded violent attacks on the buses and trains, an average of 23 a day.

FEARS: Many will be too scared to use the Night Tube, a report says
It's official (well, sort of) – we're the best city in Europe if not the world

BY LWN REPORTER
editorial@londonweeklynews.co.uk

LONDON is Europe’s economically powerful city but must position itself to succeed in a changing and growing global economy, according to a major new report published by the Mayor of London.

London: The Global Powerhouse provides a data-rich analysis of the city’s competitive position. It outlines how London ranks against other global cities and highlights the challenges and opportunities that it faces.

The report investigates the city’s position in the global economy on a range of indicators and measures, including competitiveness, foreign investment, tourism, a destination for global company headquarters and major sporting events. It concludes that London outstrips Paris as Europe’s leading global city due to its business-friendly approach and puts the city on an equal footing with New York on many measures.

While 20 years ago, London’s economy was dominated by financial services, the report showcases the range of vibrant economic clusters that are now driving activity across the city. Although sectors such as law, consultancy and banking ensure London has the highest number of skilled mobile jobs of any city in the world, including New York, the capital is now also home to emerging clusters that offer huge potential in life sciences and financial technology.

The report has been written for Boris Johnson by his chief economist Dr Gerard Lyons. Mr Johnson said: “London is a truly colossal commercial and economic dynamo, driving job creation across the country and acting as a magnet for investment and opportunity. This report proves that London is leading the way as Europe’s leading city and highlights some of the factors that will determine its future success.”

The city faces a number of challenges that will determine its future success, including the impact of globalisation, according to the report. It argues that the world economy is changing dramatically, with the emergence of new economic forces such as China and India, who pose both an opportunity and a threat to London’s dominance. The report states that London needs to play to its economic strengths and ensure it positions itself to succeed and prosper in this changing and growing global economy.

The report also argues that the future economic and financial success of London is not reliant on whether the UK is in the European Union or not. It echoes the sentiments of The Europe Report: A win-win situation, which was published by the mayor in 2014 and argued that London has nothing to fear from leaving the EU and would continue to thrive.

At a regional level, the report highlights work carried out by the independent London Financial Commission which puts forward the case to devolve more spending to the capital, allowing it to keep the stamp duty raised here. The report supports that call but argues that rather than concentrating on new tax raising powers for the city, the focus should be on spending money more efficiently.

Dr Lyons said: “By delving deep into the vast reams of data and surveys on global cities this report proves that London stands on an equal footing and beats almost all of its counterparts worldwide.”

Landlords are less confident

The proportion of landlords in central London who intend to sell property has quadrupled since last year’s summer Budget, according to new research from the National Landlords Association.

Just four per cent of landlords in central London had plans to sell property when surveyed before last year’s Budget. However, the figure has almost quadrupled, rising to 19 per cent, when surveyed in January this year.

The 15 per cent increase in intention to sell property is the highest witnessed across the UK over the last six months.

The restriction to mortgage interest relief for individual residential landlords – announced during last year’s summer Budget – will leave many landlords worse off, forcing some basic rate tax payers into a higher tax bracket and leaving higher and additional-rate payers with considerably bigger tax bills.

The NLA has labelled the changes the Turnover Tax, because landlords’ tax will be calculated on the rental income they earn, rather than their profits.

Richard Lambert, chief executive officer of the NLA, said: “We are seeing a loss of confidence across the board as many landlords realise they won’t be able to remain in the market. If landlords follow through with their intentions over the coming months this could lead to a massive sale of property, as we have previously warned. However, this may not be a straightforward process, especially for those with stock in low demand areas.

“We urge those considering selling up to think about when they will need to do so, and to plan ahead now in order to minimise the risk of money as a result of a failure to sell.”

World record, imagine that!

STUDENTS and staff at London Business School have broken a new Guinness World Record for the most nationalities singing the same popular song simultaneously.

More than 200 students, faculty and staff of 71 nationalities from around the world took part in the world record attempt, in which they simultaneously sang ‘Imagine’ by John Lennon.

Participants dressed in their home country traditional dress. Tarana Shrivastas, senior affairs officer, Student Association, London Business School, said: “Our Guinness World Record showcases the diversity of the London Business School community and our communal spirit.”

The record was verified by a Guinness World Record adjudicator and independent stewards, who were at London Business School, which has buildings in Regent’s Park and Taunton Place.

Check out our chicks

SPRING has officially sprung at Hyde Park Pre Prep and Preparatory Schools, as students adopt and raise a family of baby chickens.

Based on Elstavon Place in South Kensington and Connaught Village in Hyde Park, the schools joined forces with Living Eggs – an educational organisation which aims to teach children about caring for animals, the natural life cycle and where food originates – to adopt 10 unhatched Rhode Island Red chicken eggs at both sites.

After arriving at the school last week in a specially designed incubator, students were shown how to check the eggs’ electronic thermostat in order to maintain the ideal temperature for a high hatch rate. They were also taught about the life cycle and embryotic development of the chicks ahead of them hatching at the school.

Webcam feeds and social media updates meant parents and students could view the incubator and monitor for any births, and students were able to regularly visit the incubator throughout the day in between themed lessons around nature and animals.

During the course of the week, all 20 chicks successfully hatched and students were then able to create a ‘brooder box’ complete with a heat light, beddy, food and water. After living at the school for two weeks, the chicks will then be fully adopted by pupils’ families.

Hyde Park School has also launched a fish amphibian tank, where pupils are able to see baby newts hatch, and will be launching a fish amphibian tank this week. The chicks will then be able to view the in-plant, and students could view the incubator and monitor for any births, and students were able to regularly visit the incubator throughout the day in between themed lessons around nature and animals.

Students and staff at London Business School have broken a new Guinness World Record for the most nationalities singing the same popular song simultaneously.

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A MAYOR FOR ALL LONDONERS

THE COUNCIL ESTATE BOY
WHO’LL FIX THE TORY HOUSING CRISIS

I’ll give Londoners – not overseas investors – first dibs on the genuinely affordable new homes I’ll get built. I’ll make renting more affordable and protect the green belt.

SADIQ KHAN FOR LONDON

Vote Labour Thursday 5 May
AMBITION plans to provide 24,554 new homes and create new neighbourhoods across the capital were unveiled this week.

London mayor Boris Johnson has pledged an additional £200m to designate another 11 housing zones, which stretch from Havering to Kingston and Enfield and bring the total number planned in London to 31.

The mayor says the aim is to boost housing supply, stimulate building and produce the new low-cost homes London needs to meet its growing population. The 31 zones are estimated to deliver 77,000 new homes, of which 34 per cent will be affordable, alongside transformational regeneration of key town centres, train station hubs and housing estates.

Mr Johnson made the announcement as he officially opened a new affordable housing development in the heart of London’s West End. Trenchard House, spanning across Broadwick and Hopkins Street, is a former direct Metropolitan Police hostel, on Greater London Authority-acquired land released by the mayor. The site has undergone a £54 million redevelopment to build 78 new homes, including 65 affordable one to three bedroom apartments.

The affordable apartments are known as intermediate rent, with some offered at 75 per cent discount to market rates. Exact rents are based on residents’ incomes, and many of them work night shifts in the theatres and bars surrounding Soho and will now be within walking distance of their jobs.

The site, which had lain vacant for almost 13 years, is one of the 414 hectares of land transferred to the mayor with every surplus site owned by City Hall now released for development. The intermediate homes are part of the 100,000 affordable homes the mayor is on track to deliver by the end of his term.

Mr Johnson said: “Meeting the unprecedented demand for housing after 30 years of historic failure to build new homes is a critical issue affecting the capital. That is why I have led an enormous programme of regeneration with my 31 housing zones that will transform communities across London, creating nearly 80,000 new homes, plus new transport hubs and schools.

“This fantastic new housing development in the heart of the West End is delivering a lifetime to hard working local people who were priced out of Soho and desperate to reside nearby their places of work. These apartments are just some of the 100,000 new affordable homes being delivered over my two mayoral terms. This site forms part of more than 400 hectares of developable land the GLA inherited and which I have now released every inch of, to ensure as many homes as possible are built throughout London.”

Dolphin Living have partnered with Barratt Homes to provide the development and have worked with Westminster Council to ensure that the intermediate rent homes are prioritised for local people on housing waiting lists. The lower rents mean that people earning the London living wage can rent properties (minimum annual incomes of £24,000). Some three bedroom apartments (with a rent of £202 per week) represent a 75 per cent discount from local market rents.

Jon Gooding, chief executive of Dolphin Living, said: “We recognise that there is a growing disconnect between wages within central London, and market rent, and we at Dolphin think it is crucial that we continue to provide good quality rental accommodation for those workers who keep this city alive.

“It is for this reason that we’ve sought to ensure that we have new homes to rent at discounts of up to 75 per cent of the market rate, and ones that will be affordable for couples earning the new national living wage.

“This scheme has been a fantastic opportunity for Dolphin Living to deliver genuinely affordable housing for working people, on a site formerly owned by the public sector, which had lain dormant for years in one of London’s most high profile cultural and social quarters.

“Number 2 Hopkins Street provides a rare, but a fantastic opportunity for those working in, and around the area of Soho to reside here as well.”

One new resident who has just moved in with her partner, said: “We couldn’t be more pleased as we are now both a few minutes’ walk from work and feel extremely lucky to have found such a lovely, spacious flat in the middle of Soho which despite the extraordinarily prices of the local housing market, is actually affordable for us.”

The mayor’s office said: “As part of the mayor’s commitment to double housebuilding, London’s housing zones will unlock hundreds of hectares of brownfield land across the capital. The special status has been awarded to areas identified and packaged up by local authorities. It removes all unnecessary planning restrictions, allows us to work with the funds to maximise development, and fast track work and supporting infrastructure.”

LONDON WIDE

Boris opens door to 24,500 new homes

BY LWN REPORTER editorial@londonweeklynews.co.uk

MORE than 100 people punched in to jab and hook when a new Westway Trust project to bring boxing to North Kensington began last week.

British Lionhearts in the Community, a project to engage London communities in non-contact boxing activities, spent an afternoon giving free lessons under the market canopy at Portobello Green.

Currently there is only one amateur boxing club in the Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea but British Lionhearts’ free coaching proved so popular with men and women of all ages that now the sessions are to become a regular event.

The organisation also ran sessions at Kensington Leisure Centre and at Stion-Manning Catholic Girls School, where Natasha Jonas, the first British woman to ever box at the Olympics met the pupils.

“British Lionhearts in the Community and Westway Trust will now be working together to bring the non-contact boxing sessions to Westway sports and fitness centres on a regular basis,” said a Trust spokesman.

Richard Powes, from British Lionhearts in the Community, said: “We think there’s a huge demand for non-contact boxing sessions from all ages and types of people. At other sessions we’ve had three generations of women from the same family coming along.

“We’re looking forward to working with Westway Trust in the future to bring more amateur boxing to the borough.”

One resident, Christina, who took part in one of the sessions, said: “I had a great time boxing, I never thought it could be so much fun and tiring. New respect for those boxers out there! I feel like I’ve had a full body workout. I’d definitely recommend it to anyone.”

Stephen Wren, director of sport at Westway Trust, added: “It was great to see so many people getting active and trying a new sport. Westway Trust is committed to creating more opportunities for people to be more active, particularly those who might normally miss out like older and younger people.

“I hope that by working with great organisations like British Lionhearts in the Community we can open up more ways for people to get active under and around the Westway.”

IT’S A KNOCKOUT: Non-contact boxing sessions attracted plenty of support

Boxing sessions prove a big hit

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PARKINSON’S UK - CHANGE ATTITUDES. FIND A CURE. JOIN US.
Residents and traders help shape future of the Westway

In recent weeks I’ve used this space to talk about the big picture of what Westway Trust aims to do – stimulate enterprise and economic vitality, support health and wellbeing, champion local arts, heritage and community activity, and contribute to environmental improvements – and to seek your input into how we go about partnering with the local community to achieve these aims.

This week I want to talk about the project that’s had the working title of ‘Portobello Village’ and how we’re working with local residents, market traders, business owners, community groups and charities to make big improvements to this part of the estate for the benefit of North Kensington.

The area of the Westway estate that sits either side of Portobello Road and includes the vintage market, the covered shopping arcade, Portobello Green, Acklam Village, a small car park and various shops and restaurants is one of the most recognisable parts of the estate.

It’s a key part of keeping the area vibrant and when the traders and retailers that help give it so much life told us that their businesses were struggling and the area needed work to bring it to life we wanted to respond.

We spent a long time consulting those who would be affected and developing proposals to share with the community.

Many of you will remember the initial drawings that we published and the response to them. There were significant criticisms of those early ideas and how they were communicated so we took a step back and listened again.

The message that came through loud and clear was that people valued the area and wanted it protected and that doing nothing and letting it slowly decline as visitor numbers dropped and businesses regularly changed hands was not an option.

Your number one concern when we started this process was the continued presence of the vintage market so we plan to add more facilities for the traders and introduce measures to increase the number of people visiting the market.

The passion for more arts and community activities in the area also sung out in your feedback so we’ve added two new flexible spaces that will be able to serve the needs of many different parts of the community. Equally we know that the open spaces aren’t as welcoming as they should be, with few people choosing to dwell for long in the Portobello Green park, so we are creating plans to open that up and bring more activity to that vital green space.

We also want to improve the public realm more generally in the area to create more open, better quality public spaces that can support trade and activities.

Throughout the process we’ve continued to meet with local community groups and activists to seek their input. We’re also in regular conversations with the Royal Borough and Transport for London to make them aware what the community wants and ensure their support for what we’re proposing. Before we finalise the next stage of proposals and ask for feedback on them from the community we are conducting another round of conversations with local residents.

Members of my team will be going door to door in the area around the Westway to check that we’ve understood your feedback correctly, that the principles of what we are proposing are in line with community priorities, and to ask what people want to see realised in the new cultural and community spaces.

The guiding principles we’ve distilled from this consultation process have had a positive response amongst many local groups. In recent weeks we’ve provided updates to the Market Streets Action Group and to our member organisations – and their responses have been encouraging, with some really constructive further feedback.

So I’m confident that as we knock on nearly 2,000 doors in the coming weeks we’re heading in the right direction, and I look forward to hearing what you think.

If we don’t manage to speak to you at home or reach you directly another way that doesn’t mean we don’t want to hear from you. You can call us, visit us, email us or keep looking on our website and social media for other ways to get involved.

Green hopeful pledges to protect arts

SIAN Berry, the Green Party candidate for Mayor of London, is promising to rewrite London's planning rules to protect fringe and other arts venues.

If she is elected mayor she will also set up a register of spaces in empty buildings to provide a home for arts and cultural organisations under threat from property speculation.

And she will boost small arts organisations and emerging artists with new advertising policies on London’s transport network. These will include a requirement that digital advertising space in Tube stations is dedicated to art projects for one minute every hour.

She said: “The West End and major players such as the Royal Opera House continue to earn global admiration. But despite great initiatives such as live streaming to cinemas, those venues remain largely off-limits to most Londoners.”

“For people on ordinary incomes, the premises that matter more are fringe theatres, music venues and local arts centres – many of which are currently battling to stay open in the face of rising rents or predatory property developers.

This squeeze is in danger of stifling the grassroots creativity for which London has been justly renowned for generations. We have to think about values other than profit in this great capital of ours.”
PATIENTS may be unable to access essential healthcare services if pharmacy funding is slashed in the latest wave of NHS cutbacks, west London chemists have warned.

Pharmacy owners said some outlets were facing closure and others could lay off medical staff as a result of plans to save £170 million.

Almost 1,000 visitors to the Elephant & Castle shopping centre in South London signed a petition launched by the National Pharmacy Association against the proposals.

“Now west London’s pharmaceutical community is seeking to rally public support behind the campaign,” said Claire Ward, chair of the Dispensing Pharmacists Association.

Chris Soteriou, owner of DR Evans Pharmacy in Notting Hill, said he was concerned about cuts to the payments pharmacists receive to subsidise the cost of dispensing prescriptions.

“Once you have cut all the dispensing payments, pharmacists will be invisible,” he said.

Mr Soteriou has run the pharmacy in Elgin Crescent since 1989 and has written to local MP Victoria Borwick and Kensington and Chelsea councillors to seek support in defending the business from cuts.

He warned against the possibility of moving the work of dispensing prescriptions to centralised ‘hubs’, which could lead to vulnerable patients facing longer journeys.

“I think it will put people’s health at great risk because some people are totally reliant on us to pick up their medicines from their local pharmacy,” he added.

“We deliver to patients, we request medicines for them, we chase up doctors. There is a lot of work that we do which goes unnoticed and will only be realised once we are gone.”

The Department of Health has revealed plans to cut funding for independent pharmacies from £2.8 billion to £2.63 billion a year.

“Once you have cut all the multiples, it does not mean that much – they will absorb the costs. But for small independents it means possible closure.

“One problem is that pharmacies will lose money but more importantly patients are going to lose out.

“[The Department of Health] is trying to reduce waiting times by sending patients to us but we will not have time for them. The problem they are trying to fix, they are only going to make worse.”

The NPA joined forces with the British Pharmaceutical Students Association and other bodies to collect hundreds of signatures in London recently.

“If the funding is slashed in the latest wave of NHS cuts, it will become the standard way to reduce discomfort and scarring for patients. Imperial College cardiologist Dr Zachary Whinnett said: "Wireless pacemakers signify a major advancement in cardiac pacing.

“We are helping to lead the way in mainstreaming these devices which I hope in time will become the standard way to pace people’s hearts.”

PATIENTS with heart problems could soon be fitted with “wireless” pacemakers, thanks to an innovative new trial at a west London health trust.

Doctors at the Imperial College NHS Trust, which runs the Hammersmith and Charing Cross hospitals, said the technology represented a “major advancement” in pacemaker design that would reduce patients’ risk of infection.

Standard pacemakers are designed to emit an electrical pulse when the heart is beating too slowly.

Typical models have a generator that is fitted in the chest with leads running through a vein into the heart. But experts have now perfected a new design that does not require a generator or leads, reducing the risk of infections and speeding up recovery time.

The Micra Transcatheter Pacing System is only 24 millimetres long and is implanted directly into the heart muscle via a vein in the leg.

Two patients at the Imperial College Trust tested the device, which is also expected to reduce discomfort and scarring for patients.

“W e deliver to patients, w e request medicines for them , w e chase up doctors. There is a lot of work that w e do w hich goes unnoticed and w ill only be re -

The announcement has sparked warnings that some pharmacies will be forced to close or offer a reduced service.

Sailesh Pindolia, owner of the Bush Pharmacy in Shepherd’s Bush, said the plans to cut funding would “make a bad situation worse”.

He added: “For the bigger multiples, it does not mean that much – they will absorb the costs. But for small independ -

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“W e deliver to patients, w e request medicines for them , w e chase up doctors. There is a lot of work that w e do w hich goes unnoticed and w ill only be re -
IS Downing Street taking a huge risk by setting the date for the In-Out, do the hokey-cokey, Euro vote so close to The Queen's birthday party? Patriotism collides with EU referendum

HELL-BENT on improving its relations with Kensington Palace, the BBC is poised to go a funny way about it by commissioning a new drama in which The Queen dies, Prince Charles abdicates, tanks are used to protect the royal family against rioters as Prince Harry is drawn into a sex scandal and the Duchess of Cambridge is painted as an earring-wearing, blind lady Macbeth.

After seeing the contracts to cover many royal events awarded to rivals ITV – including the recent Prince’s Trust anniversary film, The Queen’s 90th birthday party at Windsor and a special coming documentary in which the Duchess of Cambridge gives an exclusive interview about living with her mother-in-law – the BBC is set to not exactly improve its standing at the palace with a television adaptation of the controversial play King Charles III.

That the play depicts Duchess Kate as a poisonously-ambitious and foul-mouthed schemer is not expected to help much. King Charles III has been well-known to theatre-goers since it premiered at the Almeida Theatre two years ago. Although it was praised highly by the critics, The Daily Telegraph's Charles Spencer noted, “I would deferentially suggest that the Prince of Wales gives it a miss”.

But there is a big difference between a production for the theatre and the same adapted for television and the palace may be dismayed that the provocative and contentious drama is to be now revealed to millions with a new version for BBC2.

The new drama was announced by Charlotte Moore, BBC Controller of TV channels, who noted that “risk taking, innovation and originality has to apply to everything we make”. There is certainly no absence of risk in the BBC’s commissioning, indeed it could even lead to a writ.

When the play first went on in the West End, the Daily Mail’s theatre critic Quentin Letts noted: “By the end, Kate is surprisingly ‘vile and nasty’ — as nakedly greedy for royal power as one of Lear’s bad daughters. Traditionally, royals don’t sue, but if a theatre to portray any other living person in such a light, it might well find itself on the sharp end of a defamation action.”

The royalties will not be portrayed at their best in the production, which includes scenes of Prince Harry going on all-night benders to clubs and a kooky house after falling for a republican girl, the Duchess of Cornwall slapping Prince William during a row, and Kate dropping the f-bomb as she fights dirty to preserve the sovereign birthrights of her husband and son.

The drama centres on Charles clashing with the Government after he refuses to sign a Bill that would limit the freedom of the press. When the Prime Minister reacts by threatening new laws clipping the royals’ wings, Charles dissolves Parliament, causing riots in the streets of London as tanks and armed guards are lined up to defend Buckingham Palace.

As civil war looms, Kate stiches up Charles in a secret, William-promoting deal with politicians that drives the king to fury, making him abdicate and leaving the throne for his son. Happy families it is not and one shouldn’t imagine that the BBC will win too many royal exclusives after it is screened later this year.

Although the play’s creator Mike Bartlett is very happy about the sensitive screening, “I’m so excited to bring King Charles III to BBC Two. The play has always had the ambition to be an ambitious, provocative, yet popular national story, written to explore the possibilities and contradictions of a figure and a family that we all think we know so well.”

“It can now reach a wider, national audience,” said Mr Bartlett as his and Ms Moore’s chances of knighthoods went flying out of the window.

Birthday party patriotism collides with EU referendum

IS Downing Street taking a huge risk by setting the date for the In-Out, do the hokey-cokey, Euro vote so close to The Queen’s 90th birthday celebrations, and will Her Majesty now come under pressure to be seen out wearing a beret this summer? Will Prince Charles be leaned on by Whitehall express a love of onions and Bolognese? Or can a large number of members of other royal families of Europe be expected to “just happen” to pop over to London in the spring and early summer, ostensibly to wish Her Majesty many happy returns?

If the huge crowds and celeb ratios of The Queen’s golden and diamond jubilees are an indicator, No 10 may have dropped a clanger by calling for the vote to be held on June 23, less than a fortnight after the nation celebrates Her Majesty’s birthday. This is because most royal anniversaries and jubilees have historically stoked up proud feelings of Britishness and analysis are wondering whether a hangover from the national partying scheduled for June 10 to 12 may leave us feeling more nationalistic than internationalist, and therefore more likely to vote No to staying in Europe.

Anyone who was in the massive crowds in the Mall for the jubilee events of 2002 and 2012 will remember that there weren’t a lot of European flags getting waved in the sea of Union banners and if a similar pride off Britain overwhelms us this year, the Brexit that Downing Street fears could become a reality.

Although both No 10 and Buckingham Palace insist that the Queen will remain strictly neutral in the matter of Europe, those of us with bells on the other one do not underestimate the importance to both sides of even the slightest indication of Her Majesty’s personal view, especially as the level of political argument about Europe has descended to the level of “you smell because you do”.

However, following the political row in 2014 which followed The Queen’s alleged comment that the Scots needed to “think very carefully” about independence and the recent disquiet over Prince William’s reported signalling in favour of Europe, let alone the current ruck with The Sun over the claim that Her Majesty is taking carpentry lessons in order to construct a ‘frogs out’ barricade at the Palace, or some such, the spin doctors will want to resist any overt signs of favouritism by the royal family, like the Duke of Edinburgh wearing lederhosen for the Trooping of the Colour.

Royal watchers suspect that Downing Street will instead try to encourage more subtle displays of royal European unity. For instance, a planned State Visit to London by Spain’s glamorous King Felipe and Queen Letizia was due to happen around now but it was postponed because of political difficulties at home in Madrid. It may be more advantageous for the In campaign if the visit is rearranged for some time between May and June when the 90th birthday fervour is in full swing. Similarly, it would not astonish those who doubt that the In-Out battle will be fought on an even playing field if the royal families of Belgium, Denmark, Sweden and the Netherlands were highly-visibility seen to visit London laden with birthday prezzees.

Those of an especially-suspicious nature might equally not be astonished if, as a for instance of the sort of smoke and mirrors PR which is expected to come into play, the unbelievably-glamorous Princess Charlotte of Monaco also may just happen to be in town to pay her respects. It would not take a genius publicist to imagine the huge pro-Euro news coverage which could be gained if William, Kate and Harry were to take Gucci model Charlene Wittstock and Princess Tatiana of Greece and Denmark in tow, to cement a winning impression of Europe’s most glamorous young royals united.

Such a PR tactic could prove more advantageous for the In brigade than the subtle-as-a-malit lent stumpy seemingly dreamt up by the Foreign Office last year, when everyone including Blind Pew spotted the ostensibly intervention of Government policy in The Queen’s speech during her visit to Germany, when she announced to a banquet in Berlin the “division in Europe is dangerous”, a claim which of course had nothing whatsoever to do with Downing Street.

One can hear the late-night brainstorming already: “Now Kate in lederhosen, that work...”
From bad to verse: will the national anthem be sentenced to death?

BY GEOFF BAKER

As Labour MP Toby Perkins vows to continue his campaign for God Save The Queen to be ditched as England's national anthem, there is talk that a compromise re-write could be in store – with a re-wording of the second verse which even some royals think is a bit dodgy.

Prince Charles has admitted that the words to the contentious second verse are somewhat dodgy, a feeling shared by his grandfather.

Royal biographer Alan Michie revealed that when the first General Assembly of the UN was held in London in January 1946, in honour of the occasion King George VI “ordered that the belligerent impertinent second stanza of God Save the King to be rewritten to bring it more into the spirit of the brotherhood of nations.” But 70 years on and a re-write has still yet to come about, consequently those who are uneasy about the wording still have to endure the possibility that enthusiastic monarchists may take occasions like Her Majesty’s forthcoming 90th birthday as a good reason to embarrassingly lurch into the little-sung second verse which bullishly casts republicans like Jeremy Corbyn as unscrupulous.

O Lord our God arise, Scatter her enemies, And make them fall: Confound their politics, Frustate their knavish tricks, On Thee our hopes we fix: God save us all.

However, critics of the offending stanza – described by Prince Charles on the occasion of his mother’s Golden Jubilee as “the politically-incorrect second verse” – should perhaps consider themselves fortunate that the nation no longer sings alternative verses which used to be popular.

One such was the verse penned in 1745 on the eve of Field Marshal George Wade’s move to put down the Jacobite uprising and demolish Hadrian’s Wall. Although the lyrics were still in print until 1926, we can imagine the outrage they could cause if sung today.

Lord, grant that Marshal Wade, May by thy mighty aid Victory bring, May he sedition crush, And like a torrent rush, Rebellious Scots to crush, God save the King.

We can also imagine the fit that it would cause in Whitehall if tradition was so pedantically invoked as to include another verse that was added around that time, the one that damnifies the clergy as dishonest too:

From France and Pretender Great Britain defend her, Foes let them fall, From foreign slavery, Priests and their knavery, And Popish Reverie, God save us all.

Although Mr Perkins’ Bill was talked out of any chance of debate in Parliament recently, the Member for Chesterfield says his fight will go on, insisting that a move to drop God Save The Queen is not about undermining the monarchy.

“I’m sure the monarchy is as popular as the rest of us that the issues of Britishness are quite sensitive,” says the campaigning MP. “If England is being seen by the other home nations as having procured what is the British national anthem, that is potentially very damaging.”

However, the smart money is running on God Save The Queen remaining the national anthem but that it will be tweaked to remove mention of knavery when Charles becomes king.
IFTY years after he led England to the greatest victory since the Second World War, the national treasure of all national treasures, Bobby Moore, is to have his glorious and brave personal story told on television at last.

ITV is to make Tina And Bobby, a three-hour drama which will reveal the moving story of the original golden couple, the tale of the England and West Ham legend’s life with his childhood sweetheart Tina Dean, from their humble beginnings to the heights of superstardom.

The drama will reveal bravery that many of Bobby’s fans never knew, that when he led the England team out at Wembley Stadium in 1966 he was already fighting the cancer that was to take him so tragically young.

Based on Tina Moore’s memoir, Bobby Moore: By The Person Who Knew Him Best, the tribute is an epic love story about an ordinary boy, a true son of the working-class East End.

The formers Smiths frontman is friend to Bobby Moore, is to have his personal story told on television at last.

At last, a fitting tribute to cup hero

MOORE MEMORIES: Bobby Moore and his teenage sweetheart Tina Dean, main picture, and the England captain in iconic red strip whilst on honeymoon in Majorca, Noel Cantwell, Malcolm Allison and their respective wives joined them, and Tina began to realise she might have to share Bobby with the world of football.

As Bobby’s career flourished, Tina was happy to consider herself the first WAG, though she struggled to master life as a suburban housewife. She befriended some of her fellow WAGS - Judith Hurst, Kathy Peters and Janice Sealey – and pregnancy with their first child gave her renewed purpose.

Then in 1965 the ‘golden’ couple were dealt a devastating blow: Bobby was diagnosed with testicular cancer and faced a career threatening operation. With the World Cup around the corner it looked as if Bobby wouldn’t be eligible to play but, against all the odds, he fought his way back to fitness and the rest, as they say, is history.

England’s victory made Bobby and Tina national celebrities and they experienced amazing highs, including the birth of their son Dean. Their heady lifestyle did take its toll, though the marriage survived. However, when Bobby’s career waned and business ventures failed the cracks started to show and Tina began to realise that the biggest challenges were still to come.

Director of drama Steve November and controller of drama Victoria Fee have commissioned Tina and Bobby for ITV.

Tina and Bobby became national sweethearts in a time when the whole of Britain seemed youthful, successful and optimistic,” said November.

“Tina has reason to be called the first WAG, the Moores were the first celebrity football couple and the nation fell in love with them. Tina and Bobby is a personal and frank insight into their lives and we’re delighted to commission the drama from Kieran Roberts and ITV Studios.”

Most people will know the story of Bobby Moore’s achievements as captain of club and country – the only Englishman ever to lift the football World Cup,” said executive producer Kieran Roberts.

“Far fewer will know the story of his life with Tina – a love story every bit as dramatic and epic as Bobby’s exploits on the pitch. We are thrilled to be dramatising Tina and Bobby’s amazing story for ITV.”

Heaven knows he’s mayoral now

UCH like many things in life, Morrissey has a love/hate relationship with London. In his song the indie idol has spun stories that capture both the magic and the malevolence of the big smoke

Whether as a teenage journeying south to take up a backscrapper’s job at the local YWCA, or celebrating the city as “the home of the brash, outrageous and free”, the capital has been a constant character in Mozzer’s lyrics.

So perhaps it was not a complete surprise when the singer announced last week that he was “seriously considering” a late run for London mayor.

A statement released on his website announced that the Annual Welfare Party had asked him to enter the race as their official candidate.

The former Smiths frontman is famous for his fiery attacks on the meat industry and, given a platform, let fly with typical flourish. The “milking-drinking population” were condemned of torture, he said. And the “sanctimonious disaster of animal agriculture” must be brought to an immediate end.

So what exactly would a London under the rule of Moz look like? Presumably the capital’s rotisserie of late night chicken shops would be first on the chopping block, and Battersea Dogs and Cats Home could be forgiven for anticipating a healthy handout from City Hall.

Maybe his songbook will shine a light on what else we can expect. He famously wailed how “heavenly” it would be to do alongside his beloved underneath the wheels of a double decker bus, so perhaps public transport won’t be top of his priorities.

The Royal Family can expect to be turfed out of Buckingham Palace if The Smiths’ 1986 album The Queen Is Dead is anything to go by.

And Sir Bernard should probably fear the worst too, with Moz having confessed in lyrical form his passion for “the romance of crime”.

Few artists have made such an impact as Morrissey in attempting to make political points through the medium of pop music.

Heaven knows, City Hall would be his biggest stage yet.
A few words on Sir George Martin, a musical visionary, the greatest producer of rock and roll. As everyone knows, it was George who insisted that The Beatles sped up "Please Please Me," the song that had originally written as a Roy Orbison-style blues, and in doing so gave the single that infectious spirit which propelled the band to their first UK No. 1, their first Top 40 hit in America and thereby changed the sound of music forever.

Lesser known is the true story that it was in part George’s big heart that gave The Beatles their earlier and first hit with "Love Me Do," after he backed off from insisting that they released a different song -- "How Do You Do It?" -- because he kindly understood that they “didn’t want to be laughed at.”

When the young scruffs from Liverpool first recorded with George at Abbey Road in 1962 they wanted to break the mould of the times, which was basically that bands recorded professional writers’ songs, not their own material.

In keeping with the traditional way, George had Mitch Murray’s "How Do You Do It?" in mind for his new signings and suggested that they recorded it. “We listened to the demo and said, ‘It’s a hit, George, but we’ve got a song called ‘Love Me Do’,” Paul McCartney recalls.

“George said, ‘I don’t think yours is such a big hit’. We said, ‘Yes, but it is to us, and it is what we’re about. We’re trying to be blues, we’re not trying to be ‘la da da da da’’. We’re students and artsy guys, we can’t take that song home to Liverpool and we’ll get laughed at.’”

George asked that The Beatles learnt up "How Do You Do It?" anyway. But when they returned to Abbey Road and played it for him, he could see that they hated it. These days, many a top producer, let alone the head of a record label -- as George was at Parlophone -- would make a band record what they wanted, irrespective of their disquiet.

But no other producer is ever has been George Martin. Faced with his young charges looking distinctly miserable at the idea of releasing such a poppy song, the great man relented and went with "Love Me Do" -- although not before adding his genius touch by saying, “Can anyone play harmonica? It would be rather nice. Couldn’t think of some sort of bluesy thing, could you, John?”

Dah da da-da dah, and with that the greatest band in the history of music was born, enabled, coaxed and always lovingly-cherished by the man of whom Paul last week said, “if anyone earned the title of the Fifth Beatle, it was George.”

It will surprise nobody – but gladdened many – if Paul was now to mount a tribute to George at the Albert Hall. Although they may need a bigger stage to fit in all of the greats who would want to honour him.

Almost 20 years ago George put the call out for stars to help him with a benefit concert for his beloved island of Montserrat, where he had a studio which, like much of the island, was destroyed by a major volcanic eruption. Among those who signed up to join George’s band for that Music For Montserrat concert at the Albert Hall were Paul McCartney, Elton John, Eric Clapton, Mark Knopfler, Sting, Phil Collins, Carl Perkins, Jimmy Buffet, Midge Ure, Ray Cooper and many more.

If a tribute to George gig is now staged there will be a rush of top artists wanting to take part in a salute to the glorious gentleman without whom it would not have been.

**Geoff Baker**

**MIXED EMOTIONS: George Martin, Paul McCartney and Ring Starr**

It is regarded as one of the greatest albums of all time – but until now it has never been performed live in its entirety.

Lucky Londoners will be the first – and perhaps only – music lovers to hear Carole King play 1971’s Tapestry from start to finish.

The New York singer-songwriter set box offices alight when she was announced as the headline act at the Barclaycard presents British Summer Time event in Hyde Park – destined to be among the capital’s most memorable concerts of 2016.

Applauding the city for its support of her recent musical, King revealed how thrilled she was to be coming home again.

“I want to begin by thanking Londoners for making Beautiful: The Carole King Musical so special,” the singer said. “And now I’m coming to London and can’t wait to perform Tapestry from beginning to end for the first time ever. How perfect to be doing that in the heart of one of my favourite cities.”

The hits that King penned in the early 60s with her then husband Goffin – "(You Make Me Feel Like A) Natural Woman for Aretha Franklin, The Locomotion for Little Eva and Pleasant Valley Sunday for The Monkees, to name but a few – came to define the decade in American pop.

But it was Tapestry, the album she wrote after divorcing Goffin and moving to California, that became her lasting legacy.

The album has sold more than 25 million copies worldwide and sealed King’s place among popular music’s all-time greats.

The Hyde Park show in July will also feature performances from ex-Eagles drummer Don Henley and King’s own daughter, Louise Goffin, who released her seventh album last year.

King added: “I can only say that there is nowhere else I’d rather be on July 3 than Hyde Park in the great city of London.”

**ICONIC ALBUM: Carole King’s classic 1971 LP release Tapestry is one of the top selling albums in music history but a few – came to define the decade in American pop.**

**MAKE sure you do not miss the last chance to get tickets to see “the guitarist’s guitarist” Robbie McIntosh when he makes his home-coming to The Half Moon in Putney on Saturday, the gig is tipped to be one of the greatest of the year.**

For Sutton-born Robbie, the lead guitarist of The Pretenders, Paul McCartney and John Mayer, the Half Moon show will be a return to his old stamping ground and West London’s top music venue is expected to be packed with his pals.

“I used to go to the Half Moon years ago in my late teens. I’d go and see Morrissey Mullen there, Jim Mullen being one of my favourite guitarists, it was more of a jazz pub in those days,” says the axeman rated in the music business to be up there with Eric Clapton as Britain’s finest guitarist.

It will be a night to remember. Tickets, £12 in advance and £14 on the door, from www.halfmoon.co.uk

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**TV’s musical salute to the Brian Epstein story**

CASTING is about to start for the most-sought and most-challenging roles of year and every young actor under the sun will be wanting to win a part – to play John, Paul, George or Ringo in a new TV series that tells the story of their legendary manager Brian Epstein.

The series, based on Vivek Tiwary’s best-selling graphic novel The Fifth Beatle, is destined to become one of the great music TV triumphs as, unlike every other Beatles-related drama, the producers have secured the rights for songs from the Lennon-McCartney catalogue to feature in it.

The Fifth Beatle was developed as a feature by Simon Cowell’s Syco Entertainment and now it is to be made as a four-hour series by Sonar Entertainment for screening worldwide.

“I have always been fascinated by Brian Epstein and his story,” said Cowell. “He played a huge role in The Beatles’ incredible success and, I believe, he remains the most talented manager ever. Yet his story has never been fully told.”

“The Fifth Beatle recounts the true story of the legendary Beatles manager and his effort to drive the unknown band from playing in a Liverpool cellar to unparalleled international superstardom. Epstein overcame great obstacles, both personally and professionally, being a gay man in a time and place where homosexuality was a felony.”

“This story of the man behind the rise of the Beatles will captivate fans around the world and make for a compelling series that is both intimate and epic,” said Sonar’s executive vice president Tom Patricia.

Tiwary added: “Brian Epstein’s story is rich in inspiration and is set amidst a backdrop of great cultural change and the legendary history of the Beatles, so an event series truly feels like the only way that we can do Brian justice. “We’re going to do wonderful things with the extra creative room afforded to us.”
Talk of the town

IT’S all about West End women at the Hippodrome Casino over the next few months because Club 11 London has teamed up with the Leicester Square venue to bring the very best leading ladies to the intimate stage for some hugely anticipated one-off gigs, writes Nicky Sweetland.

The programme of cabaret-style events kicks off with an evening with Bonnie Langford on March 31 that will see the legendary entertainer regale audiences with songs and stories from her illustrious career. The star, who is currently starring as Carmel Kazem in BBC1’s EastEnders, will be joined by some very special guests for the show, which is likely to be a fantastically glitzy spectacle.

Wonderful West End women provide songs, laughs (and some tears)

The April 15 event will see Anna-Jane Casey grace the stage with an “up close and personal” concert. One of the West End’s leading ladies for over 20 years (Cats, Billy Elliot, Chicago, Forbidden Broadway, Sunday In The Park With George), Anna-Jane is known for her phenomenal range of talents. The versatile performer will thrill with a diverse track listing which will include Bruno Mars, Jerry Herman, Stiles and Drewe, Edith Piaf and Amy Winehouse.

Anna-Jane will perform with her jazz trio under the musical direction of Paul Herbert and will feature a special guest, yet to be announced.

Casey will be followed by the queen of the West End, Kerry Ellis, who will bring her solo band to the Hippodrome on April 29.

Ellis is currently performing around Europe with her friend and mentor Brian May as part of their One Voice tour but the singer will bring her unique vocal talents back to London for just one night when, along with virtuoso musical director Craig Adams, she will showcase some of her favourite musical theatre and rock standards from her most recent, self titled album.

Closely following on May 5, Frances Ruffelle is bringing her critically acclaimed solo show, I Say Yeh-Yeh, to the Hippodrome for the first time. Frances is known for creating the role of Eponine in the original production of Les Miserables, for which the iconic actress won a Tony Award.

The show offers a comic insight to Frances’ own true-life story from heartbreak to empowerment and brings a certain “je ne sais quoi” to songs you thought you knew.

The show includes a brand new version of On My Own arranged by award winning Gwyneth Herbert, who will also be performing with Frances in this unique evening with a French twist.

Lastly, the celebrated West End club will play host to an intimate evening with the much-loved actress Claire Sweeney on June 2.

Claire is a singer, radio presenter and TV personality who rose to prominence as Lindsay Corkhill in Channel 4’s Brookside. Since then she has enjoyed a hugely successful career on both stage and screen – which has included roles in the original series of both BBC1’s Strictly Come Dancing and Channel 4’s Celebrity Big Brother, in which she came second.

The invasion of the West End women will begin on March 31 and with more special guests still to be announced, promises to be a cabaret season not to be missed.

If you would like to book tickets you can visit the website hippodromecasino.com

West End musicals Chicago and Guys & Dolls alongside Patrick Swayze. As a TV presenter, Claire has hosted prime time shows Here Comes the Sun and Challenge of a Lifetime, as well as four series of 60 Minute Makeover.

She has made regular appearances on shows such as Loose Women, This Morning and Lorraine, to name a few.

She was in the original series of both BBC1’s Strictly Come Dancing and Channel 4’s Celebrity Big Brother, in which she came second.

The West End women will begin on March 31 and with more special guests still to be announced, promises to be a cabaret season not to be missed.
Joyful Nell delights in this right royal romp

Nell Gwynn *****

AFTER proving a rousing success at Shakespeare’s Globe, Jessica Swale’s Nell Gwynn swung into town last week with high expectations – and it did not disappoint, writes Nicky Sweetland.

The play, which is set in 17th century London, follows the rise of a guttersnipe orange seller who becomes one of Britain’s most celebrated actresses and catches the eye of King Charles II. Not bogged down with too much historical bolstering however, the production has an almost Blackadder feel to it, with the audience invited into the backstage world of the theatre where women were a mere decoration and the idea of one becoming a successful performer was just a pipe-dream.

The vivacious Gemma Arterton leads the cast with an absolute gem of a performance as the cockney miss who steels the king’s heart but has to contend with the consequences of being seen as a second class citizen.

The play cleverly interjects feminist values without them becoming the whole subtext of the plot, with Arterton’s bawdy and joyful Nell promoting the perfect amount of feminine guile alongside some courageous cheek.

Arterton is without doubt the fulcrum around which everything else revolves but with a truly stellar cast of quality performers around her, the stage is at all times filled with a captivating and endearing style.

David Sturzaker brings a very Hugh Laurie element to his Charles II while Greg Haiste, whose head is stylishly adorned with hosiery for much of the show, adds a touch of the pantomime dame to proceedings. Jay Taylor and Michael Garner also impress but it’s Michelle Dotrice who gives everyone a lesson in comedy with spectacular one liners, a bit of perfectly timed slapstick and the ability to bring the house down with just a side-wise glance.

This was a thoroughly charming and enjoyable evening which I predict will leave you humming a merry tune and skipping with joy all the way home.
Lyric at its radical best

A Midsummer Night’s Dream Lyric Hammersmith

If the Lyric Hammersmith is known for one thing, it’s the theatre’s unique and interesting takes on classic works. The resident company is famous for taking famous shows and bringing them into the modern age without allowing any of the original charm to be lost, writes Nicky Sweetland.

This has been abundantly obvious over the last year, with the Olivier-nominated Buggy Malone, the very urban Cinderella and the wonderfully bleak Heron all fulfilling the criteria. Sean Holmes and Stef O’Driscoll once again bring a luscious dose of the obscure to the Lyric’s production of the Shakespeare comedy A Midsummer Night’s Dream. The play was originally performed in this format back in 2012 when it was cut down and made much more free in readiness for Latitude Festival. With many of the original cast reprising their roles, it is a great opportunity to explore the silliness and outlandishness of the Bard’s script with some excellently inserted modern verse to achieve a contemporary twist.

With fairies, a play within the play and spells of love flying back and forth, this dreamy show lends itself well to a bonkers interpretation and with Ed Gaughan’s stand-up comedy you get a mirthful melodrama which is exceptionally funny. The themes of the tale remain the same, but the setting is wonderfully fresh and any of the more boggy dialogue is removed or replaced with modern pros and improvised idioms by the cast – who are passionate and yet earnest about their product.

It’s fantastic to see the Lyric’s youth programme once again providing the platform for some exceptional talent to blossom, with Hammed Animashaun making the step up from Buggy Malone to playing the lovesick Demetrius with apparent ease. It’s very much an inclusive ensemble performance however, with the musicians and stage crew also playing a big part in the action.

On the evening on which I attended the cast conducted an enlightening Q and A session with the audience, which was made up in a large part by students. I spoke to co-director O’Driscoll afterwards about the impact of the show in this, the 400th anniversary of Shakespeare’s death, and also about the Lyric’s impact on the local community at Hammersmith.

She said: “What’s fantastic about this show is the audience experience. It’s very much making the step up for some exceptional talent to blossom, with Ed Gaughan’s stand-up comedy you get a mirthful melodrama which is exceptionally funny. The themes of the tale remain the same, but the setting is wonderfully fresh and any of the more boggy dialogue is removed or replaced with modern pros and improvised idioms by the cast – who are passionate and yet earnest about their product.

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Helping hands bring this show alive for adults

BY NICKY SWEETLAND

The outrageously funny puppet musical Avenue Q brings its very unique style of mayhem and madness to the New Wimbledon Theatre this week.

The triple Tony award winning musical has been described as “Sesame Street for grown ups” and is undoubtedly not for those who are easily offended – but offers a laugh-out-loud funny script with sensational music and some very cheeky puppetry, writes Nicky Sweetland.

The show has been touring the UK following its acclaimed West End run and will visit Wimbledon from March 14 to 19.

I had a chat to experienced puppet coach Nigel Plaskitt about his continued role in the show.

Nigel said: “I train the actors how to use the puppets and get involved in the casting sessions. I usually spend about three weeks with the cast and then I view the show every two or three weeks just to make sure everything is still hanging together.”

It has been Nigel’s job for the past 10 years to train all those involved. And if you think it looks easy you should think again, he said.

“It’s actually extremely difficult and not everyone can do it. The actors make it look easy but it takes a lot of practice and co-ordination. There is a huge amount to think about and that’s where I come in by teaching them how to use the puppets.”

He says the puppets themselves are not heavy and indeed are made to be really light as they have to be easy to move around. But he says for the actors it is all about learning how to move in a totally new and unnatural way that is the tricky bit.

Nigel’s illustrious puppetry career started with TV and film and it’s only within the last 12 years that he has become involved in theatre. He told me: “I started out doing a children’s show in the 1970s called Pipkins, which was a pre-school show. Then I started working for Spitting Image, the satirical show which ran for about 13 years.”

The master puppeteer then began his association with the Jim Henson company, who were shooting The Muppet Show at Elstree studios while Nigel was working on Pipkins. He went on to work on the classic family film Labyrinth, which starred the late David Bowie, as well as all of the big Muppets’ Christmas Carol, which starred Michael Caine as Scrooge.

Avenue Q tells the story of a recent college graduate named Princeton who moves into a shabby New York apartment all the way out on Avenue Q. There, he meets Kate (the girl next door), Rod (the Republican), Trekkie (the internet expert), Lucy The Slut and other colourful types who help Princeton finally discover his true purpose in life.

For more on Avenue Q visit the website avenuequk.com

DECLAN Bennett leads the cast in the Regent’s Park Open Air Theatre production of Jesus Christ Superstar, which runs from July 15 to August 27.

The original lead in the London cast of Once (Phoenix), Bennett has also appeared in Boy George’s musical Taboo (Venue Theatre), Rent (US tour and Broadway), American Idiot (Broadway) as well as on BBC’s EastEnders as Charlie Cotton. As a solo singer-songwriter, his latest album Record-Breakup was released as a live acoustic version in 2013. Bennett, pictured, achieved five UK Top 20 singles, and a UK Top 20 album with Brit Award-nominated boy band Point Break.

Celebrating 45 years since Tim Rice and Andrew Lloyd Webber’s seminal musical first hit the stage, Jesus Christ Superstar is directed by Timothy Shade and has a legendary score, including I Don’t Know How to Love Him, Gethsemane and Superstar.

Musical direction is by Tom Deering (Made in Dagenham, From Here to Eternity), design by Tom Scott (Constellations, Les Liaisons Dangereuses) and choreography by Drew McOnie (Jekyll & Hyde and Olivier Award nominee for Best Choreographer for In The Heights).
Funny how Julie delivers musical styles brilliantly

Julie Atherton at the Crazy Coqs

JULIE Atherton, one of the best star West End performers of recent years, made her debut at the Crazy Coqs last month for a run of cabaret performances to showcase her brand new album, writes Nicky Sweetland.

The album, called Rush of Life, has a grand mixture of styles and genres of music which perfectly showcase the singer’s very unique style of delivering ditties and ballads side by side.

Audiences at the club in Soho were treated to an assortment of highlights from the record, along with some guest star performances.

Atherton is best known for her West End stage work and has appeared in some of the biggest musicals in town, including Avenue Q and the celebrated musical adaptation of Sister Act alongside Sheila Hancock. She is currently playing Zedal just off Piccadilly Circus – and has become well known for offering an outlet for performers to get up close and personal with their fans.

Atherton was wonderfully at home in the setting, sipping and telling funny anecdotes as if in a bar filled with mates. Her vocals are simply gorgeous, with deep resonant tones, so when she treated the room to A Great Big World’s hit, Say Something, and her self-penned Whoever You Are, the room hushed to a pin-drop silence.

The comedy turns are really Atherton’s forte however, and during the evening at the intimate club she regaled onlookers with Portrait of a Princess and then a hilarious Put a Party Hat on a Cat, for which she was joined on stage by her friend and West End colleague Laura Pitt-Pulford.

Another showbiz pal, Olivier winner, Katie Brayben gave Atherton a break when she performed a sublime rendition of the Joni Mitchell classic Both Sides Now.

With more top special guests joining the star for the rest of the week, including Great British Bake Off’s Mel Giedroyc and another Olivier award winner, George Maguire, I’m sure the audiences at the Crazy Coqs were left hoping that this is the first of many residencies by the ultra-talented Miss Atherton.

AN all-star cast has been announced for the special three-week run of Forever Plaid at St James Theatre Studio.

One of the most popular and successful musicals in America and now performed internationally to great acclaim, Forever Plaid comes to St James Theatre Studio and will star Jon Lee alongside Keith Jack, Matthew Quinn and Luke Striffler as the heavenly quartet who get one final chance to give the concert they never gave. The Plaids sing nostalgic hits Rags To Riches, Love Is A Many Splendored Thing, Catch A Falling Star, Three Coins In A Fountain and many more – all in glorious harmony with patter that will keep any audience rolling in the aisles.

Join the boys of Forever Plaid for a runners-up in BBC’s talent search Any Dream Will Do but then went on to achieve success in the touring version of Joseph and the Amazing Technicolour Dreamcoat.

Matthew Quinn plays Smudge and Luke Striffler plays Francis to make up the 50s-style harmony quartet. Forever Plaid was first performed off-Broadway in 1990 and continues to be performed internationally. It was made into a film in 2008. Join the boys of Forever Plaid on a humorous and ‘heavenly’ journey through some of the greatest close-harmony songs of the 50’s.

For more details visit the website stjamestheatre.co.uk

Revealingly, a critically acclaimed run of FAME: Not The Musical in 2014, the Menier Chocolate Factory has announced the world premiere of David Baddiel’s new show My Family: Not The Sitcom. This is a massively disrespectful celebration of the lives of Baddiel’s late mother, Sarah, and dementia-ridden father, Colin. It’s a show about memory, ageing, infidelity, what we can and can’t say in an over-policed moral culture, and gay cats.

Baddiel, pictured, returns to the Menier Chocolate Factory following FAME: Not The Musical which discussed his strange relationship with celebrity and what it is like to live a life in (and out of) fame. His other theatre work includes the stage adaptation of his hit indie film The Infidel which ran at Theatre Royal Stratford East in autumn 2014. Baddiel was first known as one of the stars of The Mary Whitehouse Experience and then Newman and Baddiel In Pieces – both for BBC Two. In 1992, with Rob Newman, he performed to 12,500 people in the UK’s first ever arena comedy show. In 1994 Baddiel and Frank Skinner created Fantasy Football League and they, along with The Lightening Seeds, wrote the iconic unofficial England anthem which perfectly showcase the singer’s very unique style of delivering ditties and ballads side by side.

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**MARK HIX’S RECIPE OF THE WEEK**

**Salmon caviar potatoes**

Serves four

I suggest that you use medium-sized baking potatoes for this dish (ideally weighing about 200g). Alternatively, and depending on the shape of the potatoes, you could get away with using two larger potatoes cut in half, or even small new potatoes which you could serve as a canapé or snack.

**Ingredients**

- 120-150g salmon caviar (keta)
- 2 spring onions, halved lengthways and finely chopped
- 110ml white wine
- ½ tbsp double cream
- 1 tbsp finely chopped chives
- 1 small shallot, peeled, halved and finely chopped
- 1 tbsp finely chopped parsley
- 1 tsp Dijon mustard
- 1 tsp white wine vinegar
- 1 tsp Dijon mustard
- A pinch of salt and black pepper

**Method**

Bake your potatoes and mix the mashed potato with the spring onions. While the potatoes are crispening up in the oven, put the shallots in a pan with the white wine and simmer until the wine has almost evaporated then add the cream. Remove from the heat and whisk in the butter until it’s melted and emulsified. Season to taste and stir in the chives.

To serve, refill the potato with the hot mashed potato and spring onion mixture to the top and then spoon on the salmon caviar, covering the whole surface of the potato. Spoon the sauce on to warmed serving plates (not hot) and place the potato on top.

**TOP SNACK: Salmon caviar on a baked potato, by Mark Hix**

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**It doesn’t have to be fish fingers every night**

The best of both worlds combine taste and flair at Bella Cosa

OFFERING the very best in Italian fine dining Bella Cosa is a true hidden gem in the heart of Canary Wharf where you can sample exquisite food and the very finest wines alongside the waterfront in a contemporary and wonderfully relaxed environment, writes Nicky Sweetland.

The restaurant, which opened in October, is fast gaining a reputation for its unique blend of the very best Italian and Japanese cuisine comprising sumptuous Mediterranean flavours coupled with immaculate presentation by chef Kentaro Torii.

My companion and I allowed our hosts to choose our menu for the evening and with their guidance, we enjoyed a veritable plethora of tastes and styles of food.

Our fine dining experience included meaty octopus with pesto, fried polenta with baccala and a celeriac mousse, ham and truffle chips served in seashell ramekins.

We were afforded the opportunity of sampling accompanying wines and, along with tasting many of the other dishes, a major highlight was the richiramisu to finish.

With a relaxing beer corner upstairs next to the casual dining area and an open and airy downstairs restaurant for a more chilled pizza and pasta experience, Bella Cosa provides everything you could possibly desire from a good quality evening meal.

For more details you can visit the website bellacosarestaurant.com
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- PRIVATe ADVERTISERS ONLY.
LONDON BOROUGH OF HAMMERSMITH AND Fulham

PROTECTION OF TRAFFIC

1. The Council of the London Borough of Hammersmith and Fulham hereby gives notice that in order to facilitate utility installation works to be carried out in the above named roads, it intends to make an Order which prohibits vehicle traffic and suspends a loading bay in sections of the above named roads.

2. Whist works are in progress, or whilst the authorised traffic signs are displayed, no person shall cause vehicle to proceed, stop, wait, load or unload in Argyle Place at its Junction with King Street.

3. Works are in progress, or whilst the authorised traffic signs are displayed, the loading bay on King Street outside Nos.110 to 114, shall be suspended.

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

5. Exemptions would be provided to permit reasonable access to premises, and to the said works and for works vehicles, any vehicle being used in connection with the said works and any thing done or permitted at the direction of a police constable in uniform.

6. The Order would come into operation on the Wednesday, 6th April 2016 and would be valid for a maximum period of 18 months or works are completed, whichever is the sooner.

7. Work shall commence on Wednesday, 6th April 2016 and last for 3 days.

Nicholas Ruston-Boyle
Chief Transport Planner
Media Sales Executives - Field and Telephone Sales

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Book-keeper

Capital Media Newspapers Ltd is the parent company of some of London’s oldest local newspapers, South London Press, The Mercury series and London Weekly News series based in South London and we are also Pulmans View From series in Dorset.

Due to a recent change of ownership and re-organisation, the Penge office is looking for a Book-keeper.

The successful candidate will be an all-round accounting person who can deal with the Purchase Ledger, the Credit Control and Sales Ledger as well as other sundry accounting functions.

Along with the relevant qualifications to do this job, the successful applicant will have an excellent work ethic, able to work to deadlines, prioritise work load during busy times and roll up sleeves to help during quiet periods.

Contact Karen Sheppard
Tel: 020 8768 4903
Email: karen@slp.co.uk
Rampant Rangers up for capital gains

THE first 2-0 and the last two in a row, two wins in a row and a rare local derby victory for the West London side. The victory gives them a chance to win the Capital Cup for the first time in 10 years.

Speaking after Saturday’s emphatic win, QPR manager Tony Hoilett said: “We are very pleased with the performance of the players and the fans.” Junior Hoilett’s superb goal effort – QPR’s goal of the season – gave Rangers a 1-0 lead at half-time before two second-half goals in the five-minute flurry from today gave him the team the platform to score the goal.

“Hoilett deserved his goal – it was a lovely pass and a good finish,” Chery said after his man-of-the-match award and is clearly relishing the key No.10 role which allows him to maximise the space behind the forceful, though at times awkward-looking, Polter, an archetypal centre-forward.

Enjoying role

The Dutchman has now scored eight goals in 19 starts for R’s since his summer move from FC Groningen.

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Put things right

Hasselbaink added: “We had a point to prove to ourselves after Fulham. We spoke about it at length and we were all so determined to put things right.

“We knew how important this game was for the fans, for everyone who has watched the club – the club itself has been connected to the club – but it was just as important to the players. You could feel the energy of the boys and the energy from the stands.

“The fans were our 12th man – they pushed the team forward. I was very happy with the application of the players and the fans.”

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Costa fracas adds to misery

By LWN reporter Paul Lagan

Having already received a yellow card, the Brazil-born Spanish striker reacted petulantly on 85 minutes to a challenge from Gareth Barry. Costa got up from the ground, confronted the veteran midfielder with a chest-bump, quickly followed by a meeting of heads, before moving his mouth down to Barry’s neck.

Less forgiving

Perhaps realising how incriminating that would look, Costa then put his arm round Barry as if to say ‘Sorry, mate, I didn’t bite you, let’s forget the whole thing’.

The trouble was that referee Michael Oliver was less forgiving and brandished a second yellow card to Costa, followed swiftly by a red.

Barry followed Costa off the pitch minutes later after receiving a second yellow for tripping Cesc Fabregas. That Chelsea were already 2-0 down thanks to a brace by ex-Blue Romelu Lukaku only added to the frustration felt by the travelling fans that Costa had let them down once again.

Chelsea's hierarchy went directly into crisis management mode, something they have become expert at in recent years, with a club spokesman saying: ‘Diego spoke to club officials after the game and expressed regret over his reaction to the challenge from Gareth Barry that led to his red card, but Diego was also very clear that he did not bite him at any point during that altercation.’

At the time of going to press, the FA has yet to comment on the incident but if it’s not in referee Oliver’s official report, they have the option to charge Costa, should they believe that he did bite Barry.

Even if they don’t find him guilty of that offence, the fact that a protesting Costa failed to leave the field immediately means that they could still level a charge against him.

With a couple of FA suspensions already in his locker, Costa could conceivably be banned for 10 matches, effectively ending his season.

As Hiddink enters the final months of his second tenure at Chelsea, he is quick to defend his volatile 28-year-old striker. Replying to suggestions that Costa is at times unmanageable, the Dutchman said: “In December, when I did not know Diego from the inside, I did feel that a bit. You could not know that and react to that. But now when you see him, I would say that I have got sympathy for him.

“Nevertheless, I also talk about how we can control him. I have said many times I don’t give any guarantee – he is not a machine but a human being – that he will not at one time explode again. “I brought in some young guys, like (Bertrand) Traore, but they have to step up.

Hiddink is well aware of his striker’s fiery reputation.

“During my spell here I haven’t seen him go over the edge,” he said. “Maybe this is the first time, in his frustration at not being totally fit. This is an accumulation of frustration – and then he reacts. The opponent also makes it a big theatre, if the opponent knows that you are vulnerable.”

Hiddink’s contract ends on July 1 and it’s widely expected he will be replaced by Italian national manager Antonio Conte. So what condition will Chelsea be in by then?

“That is easy to ask but difficult to answer,” he said.

“In my position, I’ve been asked to be interim manager and I think it’s not good for me to step on a path and put my footprint on it. The people who are in charge, they must make the analysis.”

The current crop of players are presumably playing for their Chelsea careers, then?

“Of course, of course,” he said. “First of all as a player, when you are playing at a big club, also a smaller club, you have to be proud to be there. It’s a privileged situation. And every now and then, though not every day, my players should think about that. But they should show that they are worthy of playing in the Premier League and at a big club.

“When the finals come, then you don’t have to talk about motivation, it is already there.

“But now, in difficult times for the club, it’s always good to see who is standing up. For me, that is important, to see how they react in difficult times.”

Focused on Craven Cottage

Fulham head coach Slavisa Jokanović admits his team is in “trouble” after Saturday’s gut-wrenching 2-1 home defeat by fellow strugglers Bristol City, which leaves the west Londoners just two points above the relegation zone.

“Fulham Rotherham United –rejuvenated under their new former QPR boss Neil Warnock – couldn’t find a goal and had to settle for a point to leave the Cottagers still in danger in the lower half of the Championship and third in successive games.

But Robins hit back in the second half, levelling through Marlon Pack before Lee Tomlin’s free-kick won it with a minute left. Bristol City leapfrogged Fulham into 19th place.

“We started the game very well and played good football,” said Jokanović. “We didn’t control the second half. We started very confused and made many mistakes. They put us in big trouble with a simple push and we started to be scared at set-pieces.

“We played with a different mentality in the second half and without enough power. I tried to make some changes but they didn’t do enough. We need to be men in this situation.”

Results earned by the two sides immediately below them in the table also went against Fulham, Rotherham United – rejuvenated under their new former QPR boss Neil Warnock – showed the fighting spirit lacking at Fulham as they came from down seven with seven minutes left to play to force a 3-3 draw with Derby County, while Milton Keynes took a surprise point from a 1-1 draw at high-flying Hull City.

Goal difference crucial

Fulham’s far superior goal difference compared to the four teams beneath them could yet prove decisive as they enter the most critical phase of the season.

A section of the 20,316 home crowd boooed the men in white off the field after their third consecutive defeat at Craven Cottage, where they have won only one of their last seven matches. Losing this ‘six-pointer’ was a huge blow that puts the club under great pressure.

Moussa Dembele wasted a fine chance to extend Whites’ lead in the first half after being put clean through by Ryan Fredericks. The young Frenchman capped a sub-standard performance by showing his disgust at being replaced by Cauley Woodrow five minutes from the end. With precious seconds ticking away on another poor defeat, his slow, sulky walk to the touchline angered some supporters who now regret that his hopes for move to Tottenham fell through at the end of the January transfer window.

Jokanović admitted: “Our fans are unhappy. We’re in a relegation battle, this is very clear. We’re in trouble, it’s evident.”

The stats don’t lie. Fulham have conceded more goals – 63 – than any other team in the second tier and kept only three clean sheets all season. Only Colchester United (84), bottom of League One, have let in more in the top five divisions.

Even more alarmingly, Fulham have squandered 22 points from winning positions.

Continued on page 27

RAMPANT RANGERS STING BEES - page 27

This week at STAMFORD BRIDGE

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Continued on page 27

Fragile Fulham ‘in trouble’

By TONY MCDONALD

Continued on page 27
March
FREE WILLS MONTH
helping great charities

Please see list of participating solicitors list on back page

www.freewillsmonth.org.uk
Charities are paying for people aged 55 and over to have simple Wills written or updated provided they apply during Free Wills Month.

If you're making your Will as a couple, only one of you needs to be 55.

This is your opportunity to make a lasting difference by leaving:

- A share or percentage of your estate. Half of all gifts left to charities are a share of the person's estate after family and friends have been remembered. These gifts save you having to decide on a precise amount to leave.
- A sum of money such as £500 or £5000.
- Specific gifts, such as jewellery, furniture, shares, collections or property.

Free Wills Month is restricted to people who contact a participating solicitor during March.

Taking part is easy

Just call a participating solicitor for an appointment. See the back of this supplement for a list of firms. You can also see the list on the Free Wills Month website:

www.freewillsmonth.org.uk

An up to date Will written by a solicitor ensures your wishes are respected. It also avoids difficult decisions and legal complications for your loved ones. Free Wills Month allows you to provide for family and friends and leave a gift to your chosen charities too.

Free Wills Month is intended for people aged 55 and over. If you're making your Will as a couple, only one of you needs to be 55. The campaign pays for simple Wills. If your Will is more complex you can pay the solicitor for any extra work.

A legacy to charity costs you nothing now
The Free Wills Month charities

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www.ageuk.org.uk

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We put our belief into action, reaching out to those who need our help most. We passionately believe that no-one is beyond hope, and anyone can turn to us for the care, compassion and practical support they need to turn their life around.
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It’s all in the planning
It is helpful to the solicitor if you have thought about your intentions before your appointment. You can download the Will Planner from our website to help you plan ahead.

On behalf of the charities that will benefit from your kindness and generosity – a heartfelt ‘thank you’

www.freewillsmonth.org.uk