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All the latest local news, from a new card for Westminster residents to the return of Sunday markets

BY ALICE CAIRNS



The London Festival

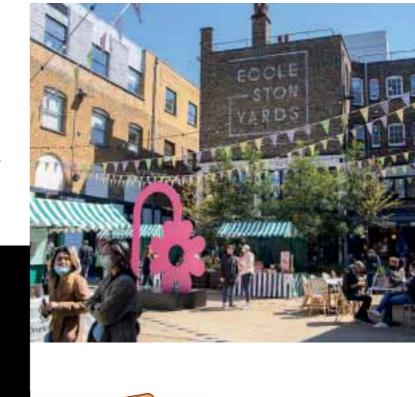
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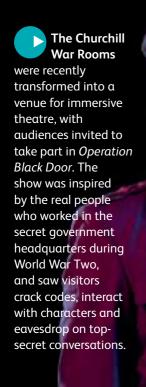




House of Fraser (formerly Army & Navy) on Victoria Street is set to close next summer after 150 years in business. The space will be redeveloped by BentallGreenOak, who plan to create a 15-storey office scheme above a "village square" for retail and community use. The building will have the largest amount of roof terrace space of any commercial property in the West End, and will be designed to reduce carbon usage, including a commitment to being an electric-only building.

The Eccleston Yards Sunday market has reopened. Held from 11am to 5pm every Sunday (excluding bank holiday weekends), visitors can explore stalls selling artisanal gifts including handcrafted homeware, accessories, jewellery, art, ceramics and baked goods. After shopping your fill, you can enjoy al fresco dining accompanied by a weekly changing line-up of live music.





Westminster City
Council has launched
a digital card that will allow
residents to access a range
of local services, including
libraries, galleries, leisure
centres and discounts
on food and drink. The
MyWestminster digital card
can be added to your Apple
Pay or Google Pay wallet.
To sign up, visit
westminster.gov.uk/
mywestminster-digitalcard



HAPPY AND GLORIOUS

Just 20 days after she ascended the throne, the first official photographic sitting with the new queen was granted to Dorothy Wilding. Now, as part of the summer opening of the State Rooms at Buckingham Palace, 24 of Wilding's portraits will be on display alongside items of jewellery worn for the sitting. From July 22. rct.uk



From sculptural installations to starlit cinema screenings, here are some unmissable summer events for your diary



Could there be a more historic backdrop for an evening of open-air cinema? From July 27-31, Westminster Abbey will transform into an al fresco venue, with starlit screenings of Labyrinth, Romeo + Juliet, West Side Story, Dirty Dancing and Bohemian Rhapsody. Popcorn, snacks, cocktails and more will be available on-site. thelunacinema.com

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Jonathan Glynn-Smith

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STILL LIFE

British sculptor Hew Locke has been commissioned to create a new large-scale installation for the Duveen Galleries at Tate Britain. His work, *The Procession*, is a parade of almost 100 sculptures of men, women and children, fishermen, pageant queens, drummers, mechanics, dancers, dandies and more. It's a stunning and unsettling reflection on colonialism and carnival, on display until January 22. tate.org.uk



MEAN GIRLS

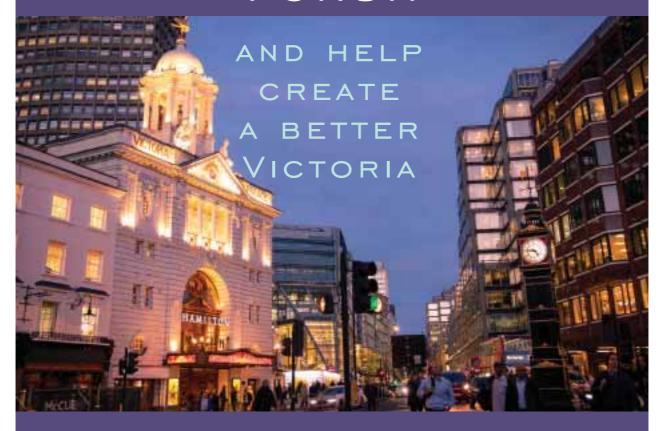
The Other Palace has reopened and is currently home to black comedy musical *Heathers*. Awarded "best new musical" by WhatsOnStage, this wickedly funny show follows a gang of beautiful high school it-girls as their social lives become increasingly cut-throat. On July 10, there's a special signed performance for deaf or hearing impaired viewers. *theotherpalace.co.uk*

GREEN DAYS

Take a sunlit stroll through Westminster Abbey's gorgeous gardens from June 1-29. Hosted by the abbey's head gardener and author of *The Gardens of Westminster Abbey*, Jan Pancheri, the 60-minute tour will take in a range of green spaces including Dean's Yard, Little Cloister Garden and College Garden, the country's oldest cultivated garden. westminster-abbey.org



JOIN THE VICTORIA NEIGHBOURHOOD FORUM



The Neighbourhood Forum is creating a Neighbourhood Plan to set a course for the future of the area. We would like as many people as possible, who live and work in Victoria, to have their say on what should be in the Plan.

Currently we are able to apply for up to 15 per cent of the Community Infrastructure Levy (which is paid by developers building in the area) to spend on improvements in Victoria. The funds currently available amount to more than £800,000.

Once the plan has been completed and formally adopted as part of the formal planning policy however, the Forum will be able to apply for 25 per cent. Think what could be achieved.

Membership is free for residents, businesses, and employees in the area.

Join the Forum at www.yourvictoria.co.uk

The Queen's platinum jubilee will be celebrated from June 2-5, and the Victoria and Westminster areas will be at the very heart of the festivities. From Westminster Abbey to Buckingham Palace, our local links to royalty mean that we can expect a jam-packed programme of events including street parties, art trails, pageants and concerts. Break out the bunting and raid your wardrobe for all things red, white and blue – it's time to celebrate!

BY ALICE CAIRNS



A right royal



Trooping the Colour

On June 2, the colour will be trooped by the 1st Battalion, the Irish Guards, and more than 1,200 officers and soldiers from the Household Division as part of the Queen's Birthday Parade. The journey will begin at Buckingham Palace, and there will be a magnificent fly-past to coincide with a balcony appearance from the royal family.



celebration

The Great Victoria Garden Party

Enjoy the ultimate garden party at Lower Grosvenor Gardens, just a short walk from Buckingham Palace between 12pm and 8pm on May 31 and June 1. Activities on offer include afternoon tea taster sessions, biscuit decorating, a floral workshop, a children's theatre workshop, giant garden games and live musical performances.

There will also be a life-sized golden carriage in the gardens – perfect for photos.

The Platinum Jubilee Pageant

The highlight of the jubilee weekend arrives on June 5, with this breathtaking pageant led by the Gold State Coach. The parade will begin with the chiming of bells at Westminster Abbey, recreating the Queen's coronation. The procession will then travel from the abbey to Buckingham Palace, using street art, theatre, music, circus, carnival and costume to tell the story of the Queen's 70-year reign. Expect the likes of a 21-foot puppet dragon with a wingspan as wide as the Mall, a giant four-tier wedding cake baked by acrobatic chefs, and a "river of hope" created by hundreds of children using silk flags. Whether you attend in person or watch on screen, the pageant promises to be an unmissable and historic spectacle.

Platinum Jubilee Beacons

A beacon chain will light up the UK this June as part of the Queen's platinum jubilee celebrations. Over 1,500 beacons will be lit throughout the United Kingdom, Channel Islands, Isle of Man and UK overseas territories, while the principal beacon will be lit in a special ceremony at Buckingham Palace at 9pm on June 2.

Time for tea

Chef Sally Abé is launching her first afternoon tea at the Orchard Room of Conrad London St James. Named RoyalTea, the delicious menu showcases ingredients that have a royal warrant, and features "Liz's choccy biccy sandwich" – Sally's take on the Queen's favourite biscuit, which includes a biscuitstudded mousse coated in chocolate.

22-28 Broadway

Take the biscuit

Wimbledon enthusiasts won't want to miss these special icing classes at the Biscuiteers cafe. The two-hour sessions, on June 17 and 18, will teach you how to decorate an array of tennis-

themed biscuits, in shapes ranging from strawberries and champagne flutes to tennis whites and rackets. You will come away with a tin of your own expertly iced creations, a certificate of excellence and a 100% cotton Biscuiteers apron.

14-15 Eccleston Yards

Quick bites

From a community cafe to a regal afternoon tea, we discover the latest foodie news

BY ALICE CAIRNS



Royal role

If the jubilee has whetted your appetite for all things royal, you might be interested to know that Buckingham Palace is currently hiring a "demi chef de partie". The successful applicant will be responsible for rotating through all sections of the palace kitchens, preparing food of exceptional quality. A clear passion for food and the catering industry is considered essential.



ROYALTEA AT THE ORCHARD

In celebration of the Queen's Platinum Jubilee, Award-winning Chef Sally Abé has created 'RoyalTea' at the Conrad London St. James. Set in the hotel's stylish tea room, The Orchard, the menu is inspired by Her Majesty's flavours of choice, using ingredients that have their own Royal Warrants. A nod to the regal history of afternoon tea, the savoury options include 'Coronation chicken with baby gem lettuce', and 'Cucumber and white pepper with mint. The sweet selection features 'English Strawberry Victoria sponge' and 'Liz's choccy biccy sandwich' among other delicious treats.

£45 pp, Wed – Sun, 12.30 – 5pm 22-28 Broadway, London SW1H 0BH 0203 301 8080





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STICKS 'N' SUSHI

One of Denmark's favourite restaurants, Sticks'n'Sushi combines their owners Danish and Japanese heritage with mouthwatering results. Serving sushi and yakitori sticks from the grill, this mix of culinary cultures have proved an award-winning combination.

Unit 3-5, 3 Sir Milton Square London SW1E 5EB www.sticksnsushi.com



Go nuts

Crosstown doughnuts has collaborated with nut butter brand Pip & Nut to create two limited edition vegan products. The almond butter cinnamon scroll doughnut is filled with custard and topped with an almond butter glaze and roasted almond nib crumble. The cinnamon scroll almond butter is a smooth nut spread blended with the flavours of a Crosstown doughnut. Try them both before they disappear in July. 14 Sir Simon Milton Square





Full of beans

Located inside Westminster Chapel, New Acre Cafe is a recent addition to Victoria's thriving cafe scene. The house bean blend, "Benedict", is supplied by ethical roastery Old Spike and is named after the patron saint of homelessness. Sixty-five per cent of the profits from each cup goes directly to training and employing rough sleepers. Westminster Chapel, Buckingham Gate

Sweet success

Joe Slater, an 18-year-old student at Westminster Kingsway College, recently represented England in the 2022 Young Chef Olympiad. Participants from across

six continents and 24 time zones competed in a skills test and a cooking challenge, before the top 10 candidates progressed to a final cook-off to decide the winner. Joe won "best vegetarian dish" and went on to come fourth in the prestigious competition.





CAXTON GRILL

Caxton Grill located at St. Ermin's Hotel is a local neighbourhood restaurant serving seasonal food in a relaxed informal environment. Inspired by their rooftop garden, their menu highlights the best of Josper Grill cooking. It features a range of seasonal meat, fish and vegetable dishes that are grilled and smoked to perfection. The restaurant is open 7 days a week for lunch and dinner. Privilege Card holders can enjoy 20% off the lunch a la carte menu.

Caxton Grill, 2 Caxton Street, London SW1H OQW www.caxtongrill.co.uk





NEAT BURGER

Neat Burger serves up a delicious menu of plant-based burgers, shakes and sides, using ethical alternative-proteins that are better for you and better for the environment.

Spanning eight locations around London, a pop-up in New York and a Flagship Manhattan restaurant opening later this year, the brand has big plans to inspire people to make more climate-friendly food choices and create a sustainably delicious future for all.

36 Buckingham Palace Road London SW1W ORE 020 4580 1255 www.neat-burger.com/

THE CLERMONT VICTORIA

The Clermont Victoria plays host to every occasion with a selection of outlets to choose from including The Soak, Reunion Bar, and the Tea Lounge. Casual drinks or formal dinners. Light bites or leisurely lunches. Sitting right in the beating heart of Victoria station, we can offer you everything from breakfast to lunch or dinner, including a delightful afternoon tea menu. Fresh, seasonal, and modern British cuisine in central London, complemented by a carefully curated bar menu featuring craft beers, cocktails, and wine.

The Clermont Victoria 101 Buckingham Palace Rd London SW1W 0SJ 020 7523 5055 www.theclermont.co.uk/victoria/ restaurants-bars





Great Scotland Yard Hotel

The faces of a crime syndicate surround the evidence table as inventive cocktails are served under a bespoke chandelier. Confused? Don't be. This is all part of the charm at Great Scotland Yard Hotel in Westminster, one of London's most exciting new openings that plays on its address as the former HQ of the Metropolitan Police.

An imposing Grade II-listed building, the Jack the Ripper case was investigated here, Charles Dickens was a regular and Arthur Conan Doyle – of Sherlock Holmes fame – frequently used it as a location in his novels.

Now part of Hyatt's Unbound Collection, it briefly opened before the pandemic following a £120 million rebuild. Officially launched in March,

there is much to delight, with careful curation of its cops-and-robbers theme so it never strays into tacky territory.

In the lobby there's a wall of portraits and a plaque with 30 notorious names – from the Rev Jonathan Aitken (convicted of perjury in 1999 and now an unpaid prison chaplain) to Ruth Ellis, the last woman to be hanged in the UK (in 1955 for the murder of her lover). Florrie Holmes also features, a member of the all-

female Forty Elephants gang that specialised in shoplifting. Now immortalised in the name of the hotel's stylish bar, here you will

> find cocktails such as The Brawler and Smash and Grab with a menu of bar snacks and a particularly good burger.

Whisky lovers can settle in at Sibin, hidden by a false bookcase; and afternoon tea (currently a collaboration with perfumery Floris) is served in the Parlour. Meanwhile at much-anticipated Ekstedt at the Yard, a is king with Michalia starred shafe.

fire is king, with Michelin-starred chef Niklas Ekstedt harnessing Scandi techniques alongside seasonal British ingredients.

Rooms make further literary nods to the theme, there is a small but well-equipped fitness centre and a standalone two-bedroom private residence (No 1 The Townhouse). Characterful and atmospheric with plenty of exciting plans in the pipeline (including a champagne terrace on the sixth floor), there is much to admire. If this is prison life, lock me up and throw away the key. 3-5 Great Scotland Yard, hyatt.com

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Room
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To receive your free Victoria Privilege Card, or to provide promotional offers through your business, visit www.victoriaprivilegecard.co.uk



The Westminster

The sleek black Cadillac parked out front smacks of Las Vegas, but the tree-lined path to Tate Britain is unmistakably Westminster. The name, The Westminster, is something of a giveaway too. Previously a Hilton DoubleTree, after an extensive multimillion-pound refurbishment the hotel is now operating independently under Hilton's one-of-a-kind Curio Collection.

In reality, this means there is plenty of personality throughout. A short hop from some of the capital's best-known landmarks – from the Houses of Parliament to Thames House, home of MI5 – the hotel draws playful inspiration from its location, with plaques in the lobby areas assuring visitors that this "is a place of great power and great secrecy... where status and power co-exist alongside secrecy and anonymity".

Dimly lit corridors add to the theme, but the hotel is much more than a whimsical playground. The Cadillac is there for a reason; a nod to the fact that there is a stylish STK Steakhouse on the first floor (only the second restaurant within the group in London) with a menu that offers all-out indulgence from oysters to whole lobsters



and a vast selection of steak that includes Black Angus Tomahawk, Wagyu and USDA Porterhouse alongside all manner of flavoured butters, crusts and sauces.

Bao Yum is an alternative dining option on the ground floor; offering grab-and-go breakfast, lunch and dinner with "bao-centric" options from salads and soups to sandwiches and snacks.

Beyond the 464 rooms (each with floor-toceiling windows and rainfall showers), facilities include a 24-hour gym on the 13th floor, three

> very well-equipped ground-floor meeting rooms and – perhaps best of all – a bowling alley with a private bar for up to 40 quests.

With three new packages launched in recent weeks – a partnership with Lime scooters for eco-explorers, a collaboration with Small Car Big City for classic Mini Cooper rental and a Thames Limo package (the capital's first private water limousine) – it's a hotel that has a lot more to it than first meets the (London) eye.

30 John Islip Street, hotelwestminster.co.uk



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Phil Harding outside The View

t's the end of an era at The View, a residential apartment block a stone's throw from Victoria Station. In April, after more than 30 years – "it would have been 31 this October" – concierge Phil Harding decided to call it a day. The 79-year-old (who turns 80 in June) tells me that health was ultimately the deciding factor. "I suffer from COPD (a chronic inflammatory lung disease) and sometimes my breathing is bad. I felt like I wasn't giving it 100 per cent."

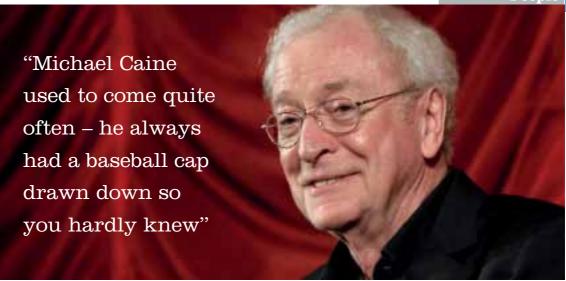
We meet in the lobby of his now former workplace on Palace Street, off Cardinal Place, just days after his leaving do. "They put a party on for me and there were about 40 residents; drinks, a good collection, it was absolutely wonderful. It was emotional too; people were saying it won't be the same."

This morning, residents double-take when they see him – greeting him warmly – and he can't resist helping out the concierge team. "There is somebody at the door Joe," he calls to reception. "Nothing to do with me now, but I'm a spy. I'm being nosy!"

The building, which has 126 apartments and four penthouses, is almost unrecognisable from when he first joined in 1991. At that time there were "only about 20 people living in the building" and a one-bedroom ground-floor flat would have been priced around £260,000. "Now you're looking at £650,000 to £700,000," he says. "It's quite a trendy area compared to what it was."

The landmark building was previously the site of Stag Brewery, which was demolished in 1959. It then became home to Roebuck House,





before being renamed The View following a refurbishment.

From the 1960s onwards, it became something of a revolving door for starry names lured by its excellent location. High-profile figures who have lived here include former prime minister Alec Douglas-Home, Field Marshal Viscount Montgomery and Laurence Olivier, who was supposedly driven mad by Peter Sellers' late-night parties. Sellers, at the height of his Pink Panther fame, moved into the building in 1967, shortly before his divorce from Britt Ekland.

Phil recalls other well-known residents such as Jackie Collins, who wrote a number of books while living here ("she was very, very nice") and visitors like Michael Caine ("used to come quite often, always had a baseball cap drawn down so you hardly knew. He would always say hello").

Albert "Cubby" Broccoli and Harry Saltzman best known for producing the early James Bond films – were regulars and modern-day Hollywood stars such as Penélope Cruz and Tom Cruise have been spotted too (Cruz lived here and Cruise came a couple of times to view penthouses).

Phil, the youngest in a family of 10, joined as a night porter before becoming a concierge. He says there have been some "real characters" over the years, with comedian Max Bygraves a classic example.

"He was a strange man. Cab drivers hated him. He would get out and say to them, 'Have a joint on me' and give them a tea bag. He would say, 'Have you got a piece of paper and pen? I'll give you my autograph for your children', when they hadn't asked for it. He was as mean as the day was long. He would ask one concierge to go and buy him stamps and give him Australian coins and stuff like that."

Equally memorable was a member of Middle Eastern royalty who lived on the seventh floor.

"He had an old Rolls-Royce and he would drive from the car park here to the pub over there [a 20-second journey] every night, have drinks and then come back after an hour or so."

Remarkably, Pimlico resident Phil isn't the longest serving member of staff at The View. One concierge, Frankie, who continues to work night shifts, has been here for 37 years. "Nobody leaves early. Joe has been here 15 years and Jean, who is my wife actually and the manager, has been here around 16 years."

They all have a long way to go to catch up with one resident; a lady on the first floor has been here more than 60 years. "She was the second person here," says Phil.

Reflecting on his time fondly – "I've always enjoyed it" – does Phil have plans for his retirement? "I'm not sure," he says. "I haven't got a yacht or anything like that!"



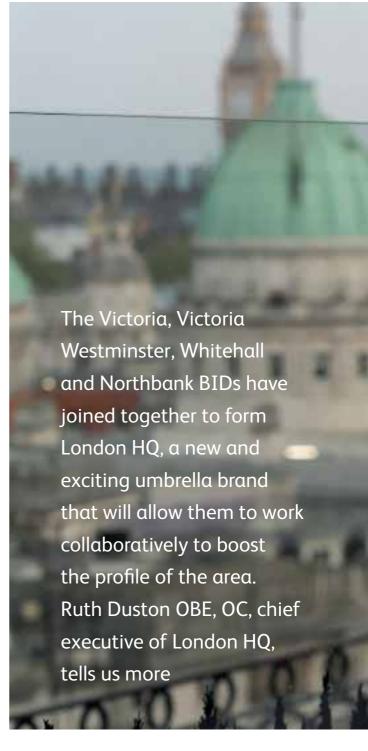
Jackie Collins

he four south Westminster business improvement districts have been increasingly working collaboratively to help boost their profile, amplify their messaging and to take a more strategic view of the future shape of this unique part of central London. Last month I was proud to unveil our new umbrella brand for the four BIDs: London HQ.

The long-awaited government white paper on levelling up is clear on its support of other cities, and the case for supporting areas outside of London that are suffering from poor economic outcomes is a strong one. However, this narrative is often accompanied by a framing against London. In the wake of the pandemic, I believe it is more important than ever that we celebrate our cities, right across the UK, and recognise the significant contribution they make to our shared national prosperity. This must include championing our capital city too. We need to find a new and constructive way to build a positive narrative for London, celebrating the contribution this great city makes and how it boosts prosperity elsewhere, but with the idea of shared prosperity being at the heart of the message.

Business improvement districts are a tried and tested model to turn collective will into collective action – and therefore we are well placed to make a helpful and meaningful contribution to the national discourse. Presenting ourselves under the united London HQ banner is one of the ways the south Westminster BIDs will contribute to this discussion.

I think the London HQ brand is a fantastic way to celebrate the unique assets we are lucky to have in this area. As the Heritage Quarter, the historic base of government and the monarchy and the home of more FTSE 100 HQs than any other BID area, our new London HQ brand enables us to unite under one banner, promoting our area to a variety of different audiences.



Proud heritage

By working together, we will be stronger, be able to do more and have a more influential voice to champion our business community and wider area. Some of this work will manifest itself physically across the local area, but this is also about lobbying policy makers and stakeholders to better advocate for the south Westminster area.

Now is the perfect time for us to launch London

HQ. As the recovery continues, and with Covid restrictions now lifted, we must redouble our efforts to attract workers and visitors back to London, supporting our businesses and destinations. This is a confident and positive statement about this wonderful area at a time when we need to be out there championing our great capital city.

Ten years on from London 2012 and as we



celebrate the Queen's platinum jubilee in just a few weeks, it feels right to be reigniting the sense of pride and patriotism we all share. We recently commissioned some research from WPI Economics and it revealed that the untapped potential of cities across the UK could contribute an additional £63 billion by 2030. As London faces the multiple challenges of rising global competition, the climate emergency, the cost of living crisis and of course the Covid recovery, we need to be doing all we can to support London's future vibrancy. Our work under the London HQ banner will help to amplify the positive messages about this part of central London.

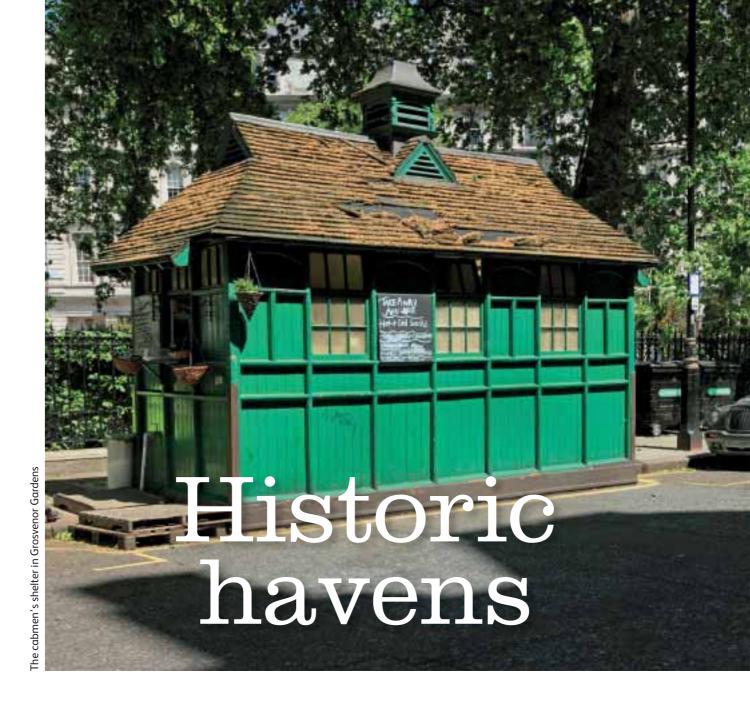
Ruth's favourite local...

Restaurant?
The Goring

Shop?

Shepherds book-binding and stationery shop

Green space or park? Christchurch Gardens



Discover the hidden history
of cabmen's shelters, the
green huts offering warmth,
camaraderie and bacon baps
to the capital's cabbies

BY CORRIE BOND-FRENCH

hey are the intriguing glossy-green huts where bacon has sizzled and countless cuppas have been brewed for more than a century; but if you haven't got the Knowledge, you're not getting in.

Scattered like emeralds across the streets of the capital, cabmen's shelters are little gems of London's history. At their peak, they numbered nearly 70, dinky hut-havens humming with the chatter of cabmen as they sheltered from inclement weather or savoured a full English.

Motorisation, wartime and air raid damage have left just 13 green shelters standing, including at St George's Square and Grosvenor Gardens. They are all now Grade II-listed and still run by the same Cabmen's Shelter Fund that championed their cause in 1875.

Huts could be no larger than a horse and cart, as they stood on a public highway, catering

for few more than 10 men at a time. They are now all painted the same green (Buckingham Paradise 1 by Dulux) and entry is permitted only for hackney carriage licensees; black cab drivers who have mastered the notoriously difficult exam known as the Knowledge – details of London's streets that take years to study.

Non-Knowledge-qualified muggles are, however, able to sample the pleasures of a cabby's repast via the takeaway hatch, where on any given day you might be queueing between an inquisitive tourist and a local music legend who's popped out for a sausage and egg bap.

The Cabmen's Shelter Fund was established by several Victorian gentlemen under the presidency of the Earl of Shaftesbury, who reputedly set up a fundraising appeal after his servant was unable to find him a cab in the snow.

Victorian cabbies had it tough. They were expected to sit "on the box", exposed to the elements in sun, rain, sleet and snow. They weren't allowed to leave vehicles unattended at the cabstand, and as their only shelter available was inside pubs, they had little choice but to pay for someone to mind their cab or risk having it stolen. Once inside, more money was spent on food or drink to claim a space at the fireside.

In 1874 the Earl of Shaftesbury's *Globe* newspaper appealed: "Everyone is familiar with the wretched appearance of poor 'cabby' while waiting patiently for a fare, or in vain attempting to transform some passerby into that profitable commodity. He stamps on the pavement,

"Cabbies had it tough, exposed to the sun, rain, sleet and snow"



PRATT-CREEZES ACCOUNT WAS STABULUSED LINEAR LAN AND AND



Inside a cabmen's shelter. Illustrated London News, 1890

exchanges doleful jokes with his fellows, or, if he has not sufficient energy for these exercises, sits shivering and apparently meditating on the unsympathetic universe."

The capital lagged behind other cities, including Birmingham, whose cabmen's shelters became the prototype for the London shelters. Cabbies paid one penny per day or fourpence per week to use the huts, which offered light, water, a stove and an attendant to provide refreshments and preserve order. It is still prohibited to gamble, play cards or drink alcohol inside.

The cabmen-only ruling was an Edwardian intervention. In 1907 the *Morning Post* lamented the council's restriction of the use of cabmen's shelters to cabmen only. "A hundred circumstances conspire to throw a man into London late at night or early in the morning... He makes his way to the nearest cab rank and finds his man in a shelter aglow with light and rather stuffy with smoke. There is a smell of bacon or sausages or steak frying, and, to the weary wayfarer, it is appetising.

"If he finds the food good and the company interesting, and delays his departure for an hour or two, that is to the credit of the fast-disappearing race of men whose shrewdness and humour and knowledge of London are worth understanding."

A century later, tyres on tarmac have usurped hooves on cobbles, smog is no more, bikes and scooters abound, and still the conversation and the ketchup keep flowing within these beloved green bastions.

Lazy

Sure to be one of the most



Sporty

When it comes to summer sporting activities, water is often involved. The Animal Slater Men's Shorty wetsuit is ideal for staycations or trips abroad. £70, MOUNTAIN WAREHOUSE, 21 VICTORIA PLACE

Animal-lover

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Make dad's day

> Whatever type of dad you have, there is the perfect gift for them all

> > BY SOPHIA CHARALAMBOUS

Spiritual

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27 EATON MEWS SOUTH

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101 VICTORIA STREET

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PALACE ROAD

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GROOMING ROOM,

3 BUTLER PLACE

Architect

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£79, WESTMINSTER ABBEY SHOP,

20 DEAN'S YARD



With an official album of more than 250 photographs of the Queen set to be released in June, royal correspondent Robert Jobson reflects on Elizabeth II's remarkable reign

t is very simple," said Princess
Elizabeth on her 21st birthday to a
BBC microphone. "I declare before you all that
my whole life, whether it be long or short, shall
be devoted to your service and the service of our
great imperial family to which we all belong."

Delivered in Kenya on April 21 1947, that address foreshadowed Elizabeth's dramatic ascent to the throne five years later, and encapsulates her 70-year reign dutifully serving this country. From her televised coronation — the first of any monarch in history — and her post-war leadership to her travels through the Commonwealth; her state visits to Berlin at the height of the Cold War; her relentless charity work and diplomatic aid for the UN; and more recently her inspiring messages during the pandemic, the Queen has been a constant figure in an everchanging world.

It is a truly remarkable story. After all, it is worth reemphasising the fact that Elizabeth was never expected to be Queen. It was only when her uncle, King Edward VIII, abdicated in 1936, so that he could marry divorcee Wallis Simpson, that the prospect of queenship became a reality.

Fittingly, Elizabeth II ascended the throne on February 6 1952 while in Kenya with her late husband Prince Philip, on the eve of an ambitious royal tour. Speaking of her coronation in June 1953, *Time* magazine named her "the personality who best expressed the world's new sense of hope for the future". The *New York Times* went further, arguing her coronation would help protect the world from "another dark age".

In spite of these, perhaps overinflated, proclamations, there can be no doubt that Queen Elizabeth II has consistently acted with poise and dignity, demonstrating a deep sense of empathy and diplomacy during a tumultuous period in British and international life.

Robert Jobson has been a royal correspondent since 1991, and is one of the experts behind *Her Majesty The Queen: The Official Platinum Jubilee Pageant Commemorative Album*, which will be available from June 2. This collection of more than 250 photos from the Queen's reign will be the only official book published to celebrate the jubilee pageant, which will culminate in a grand procession past Buckingham Palace and the Mall in front of vast crowds.

Robert cites Her Majesty's kindness, patience and astute mind as integral to her particular brand of leadership. "I think those [attributes] all help... along with her devotion to duty," he says. "I think she's achieved a hell of a lot."

While she remains a distinctly apolitical figure, Her Majesty's skilful diplomacy has had political ramifications. In 1965 Zimbabwe's then president Ian Smith refused the country's black majority the vote, despite the fact they represented 95 per cent of the population. The Queen wrote to Smith informing him that he could not claim loyalty to the monarchy and the Commonwealth while maintaining his white supremacist ideology. He was subsequently forced to break away from the British crown.

That same year, Her Majesty spoke in West Berlin at the height of the Cold War – the first visit to Germany by a monarch in more than half a century – emphasising the democratic values shared by Britain and West Germany.

Perhaps her greatest diplomatic legacy will be her contribution to Anglo-Irish relations. In 2011

"The Queen is a safe pair of hands [because] it's not a political appointment. It's an appointment based upon service and duty"



a hugely successful state visit saw Her Majesty give a rousing speech at Dublin Castle where she said that Britain and Ireland were "more than just neighbours". Her visit to the Garden of Remembrance in Dublin where she laid a wreath to commemorate the victims of the Troubles was seen as a thoughtful and empathetic gesture.

"There was a sense of reconciliation [in Ireland], and a real sense of warmth that she was able to generate," Robert says. "She broke down so many barriers with her infectious smile and attitude and her courage."

And what of those republicans claiming that the monarchy is an outdated institution in need of reform if not outright termination? "They don't really have a solution or an alternative. I must be honest, most of them are talking from an ignorant base, because they don't really understand what they're talking about," Robert counters. "The institution is intrinsically linked to our constitution, which is actually a very good way of balancing political extremism.

"The Queen is a safe pair of hands [because] it's not a political appointment," he adds. "It's an appointment based upon service and duty. Her influence penetrates many areas of society, not

"She broke down so many barriers with her infectious smile and attitude and her courage"





just through politics, because politics is quite a narrow corridor."

One thing Robert feels people often underestimate is how much work goes into being a monarch. Grand palaces and butler service aside it can, at times, be a near endless carousel of travelling, tours and public ceremonies. A case in point is the Queen and Prince Philip's 1953 Commonwealth tour: the pair visited 13 countries, from the West Indies to Australasia, Asia and Africa, travelling a distance of 43,618 miles, including 10,000 miles by plane, 2,000 miles by car, 2,500 by rail and the rest by sea.

"People underestimate how much work is involved," Robert says. "Prince Charles is pretty much a workaholic in terms of the amount of hours he puts in. And they deeply care. They sit and worry about things on a bigger scale."

Ultimately, it is Her Majesty's ability to adapt while being a symbol for continuity that sets her apart. "The Queen is very funny. She's very witty, she's just a human being [after all]. But she's a human being that has had an extraordinary life," Robert concludes. "She has had incredibly difficult responsibility on her shoulders almost all her life, and yet she's behaved with such dignity throughout and has never let anyone down. She deserves credit and recognition for what she's achieved. It's quite something."



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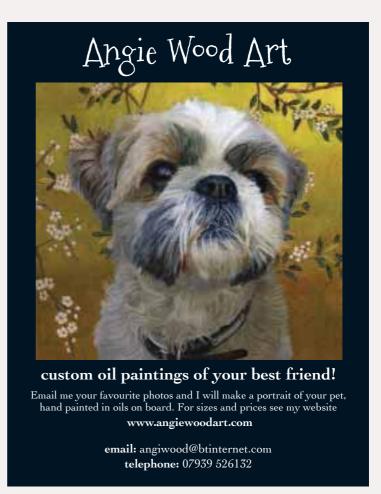
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Why is this the perfect location for your clinic?

There aren't any other surgeon-led medical aesthetic clinics around here, and thus the clinic truly is providing a five-star service where there is a gap in the market. Having worked on Harley Street for many years, I felt a change was needed and Victoria is just the perfect location. It has a combination of fantastic business and residential areas in close proximity, such as Knightsbridge, Kensington, Pimlico and Chelsea. Victoria is also very well connected by public transport.

What do you love about the area?

It's simply buzzing. In Victoria and Westminster you are so close to many of London's best attractions such as Buckingham Palace, fantastic musicals, great restaurants and luxury hotels. There are a plethora of eating and drinking establishments, combined with lots of greenery. I love how it is so lively and beautiful.

What services do you offer?

The Dr Apul Parikh Clinic offers state-of-theart injectable treatments such as anti-wrinkle injections and dermal fillers provided by one of the global leaders in the field. I have over 16 years of experience, lecture at University College London and ensure all treatments are carried out in a safe and subtle manner. The clinic also offers bespoke micro-needling and luxury facials



to improve and maintain skin quality. Lastly the clinic also offers minor surgery, private general practice and counselling services.

QUICK FIRE: Favourite place to eat? TH@51 [at St James' Court, A Taj Hotel]. The food and service are just fantastic.

Best spot for an after-work drink? The bar at the Goring. It is such a special place; the gin and tonic there is superb. They also boast a beautiful whisky collection.

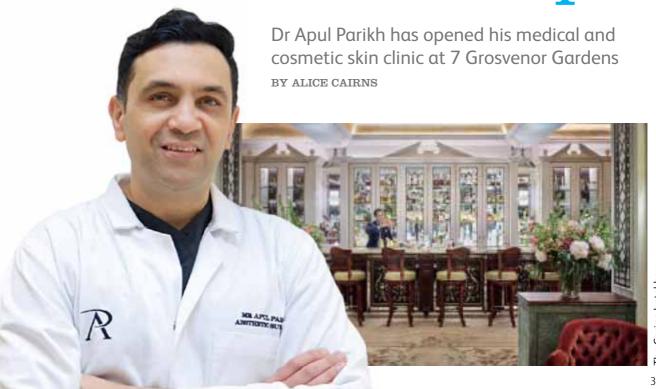
Best morning coffee?

The Rail House cafe.

Favourite shopping destination?

Victoria Place shopping centre – there is literally everything that one could want there.

Skin deep



The Goring hotel bar



How long have you been in Victoria?

Tuckerman has been in the area since 1948 and was set up by Ronald Tuckerman, a Second World War fighter pilot. Initially based on the King's Road in the Swinging Sixties, we then moved to Great Smith Street and are now on Castle Lane.

How is the commercial property market in Victoria currently?

The commercial market has changed significantly over the years, with many faceless office blocks replaced with modern architecturally impressive buildings. A lot of the smaller offices in the backstreets have been converted back to residential, losing over a million sq ft of commercial space. It was a shame to lose some of the really interesting listed buildings from the commercial stock, but many were not fit for purpose.

We have seen a boom in the fashion sector in Victoria and more recently there have been

far more global financial companies choosing Victoria over the City, probably due to the ease of access to the airports and the West End.

Fortunately the effects of Covid have also begun to ease. There certainly hasn't been an influx of vacant office space suddenly dropped into the market.

What services do you offer?

Tuckerman offers advice to commercial investors and occupiers on their property issues, including leasing vacant space and selling investment buildings. We also advise on valuations and rent reviews. We have always been ambassadors for the area and constantly promote Victoria. I am on the Victoria BID advisory board and also run a website called vickipedia.co.uk, which is an encyclopaedic knowledge of Victoria.

QUICK FIRE: Favourite place for an after-work drink?

The garden at the Phoenix.

Business lunch?

The Cinnamon Club.

Morning coffee?

The Royal Quarter Natural Food Hall.

Hidden gem?

The Vincent Rooms.

Local knowledge



"I constantly mitigate risk in my business & it's only logical to do the same in my personal life. Not doing so would worry me"

London based businessman

ensington & Chelsea is one of the mostly highly desirable locations in the world. Home to Royalty, diplomats, business magnates and celebrities. Regrettably with some of the most exclusive and expensive property in the world it is an obvious target to organised international criminal gangs.

Police records reveal there were 3,003 burglaries in Kensington & Chelsea and over 21,600 cases of theft within The City of Westminster in 2021. At a time when police resources are severely challenged, more wealthy residents and businesses are turning to private security to ensure protection for family and property. Behind the doors of many of the most exclusive premises in London there are highly trained professionals, often with a military background, preventing crime and ready to react to threats in seconds.

Alexander Clark, Director of Archer Protection Group based in Piccadilly, speaks about the services his company is offering to residents here in London and across the country.

"It is a sad reality that wealthy areas and people attract crime and frequently more determined criminals. Those criminals also assess risk and there are many individuals and gangs who are prepared to risk more for greater criminal profit. They are also aware that many London homes are unoccupied for long periods allowing them easier access and more time to select and steal the most valuable items. Some of the gangs are extremely sophisticated and will watch a target home, occupants and staff for weeks to determine the best method of attack. On occasion they will not be deterred by a premises being occupied and be prepared to resort to violence if necessary."

"The very presence of clearly competent and professional security is often enough to deter criminals. Archer Protection Group offer a complete range of protective services. We are highly selective in our recruiting and only employ those who have undertaken training with the world's best security academies. Most of our personnel are ex-military or police with impressive track records of success. As the director I cannot allow anything but the very best, the risks are too great."

"We realised that our personnel need to offer a complete range of services to a client. As our teams can be on a property for 24 hours a day throughout the year we ensure their services go beyond just physical security. They have advance emergency medical training and we choose to issue them with the very best equipment including defibrillators (AED). They also have emergency fire training. Our personnel offer services that go beyond security. They are there and equipped to protect property and clients from criminals and multiple threats."

"I believe we must offer our clients the very best, I wouldn't expect them to accept anything less."



Archer Protection Group offer a number of security services including residential security & close protection (bodyguard) teams, yacht security services and consultancy.

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Victoria-based charity the Not Forgotten Association has been supporting wounded veterans for 102 years.

We find out more about its invaluable work

BY CORRIE BOND-FRENCH

he Not Forgotten Association aims to support serving wounded and ex-servicemen and women with disabilities or illness. With longstanding links to the area, it recently moved from Grosvenor Gardens to Buckingham Palace Road.

Initially formed for the "comfort, cheer and entertainment" of servicemen injured during World War One, the charity's centenary celebrations in 2020 were initially scuppered by lockdown while its vital work continued.

It was American-born, UK-based soprano Marta Cunningham who first had the vision for the charity. Formerly a resident performer at Claridge's, Marta devoted most of her time to charity work during the Great War.

On hearing that there were a handful of wounded soldiers undergoing treatment at a nearby hospital, she approached the matron to enquire whether a few lonely patients might enjoy coming out for tea. The matron said she had some 600 such patients so Marta performed for them instead, but was troubled by the lack of spirit among the injured soldiers she met. One was overheard saying, "We don't want no charity, Miss, we are the forgotten by everybody and we'd better stop so."

Marta was having none of it, forming the Not Forgotten Association in August 1920. In its first year the charity entertained some 10,000 men – a number that it aims to maintain annually 100 years later.

Marta also ensured that the charity had royal support, persuading Princess Mary to become its first patron. Princess Anne is the current patron, and the charity continues to enjoy the support of the royal family, who allow them to hold annual gatherings in Buckingham Palace and St James's Palace for thousands of veterans.

Marta was awarded an OBE and continued to perform for the charity right up until her death in 1937. After her funeral, a group of her society friends — at the special request of King George VI — made it their mission to carry on her work and opened their houses for tea and entertainment for the wounded — and with the onset of World War Two, the charity was as much-needed as ever.

Today, the NFA uses the motto "from comradeship to challenge" to describe its services, which vary enormously. There is focus on preventing loneliness and isolation, a problem particularly common among veterans.

There are regular concerts, parties, activity holidays and outings for serving and exservice personnel with any kind of disability – from amputees to those suffering from post-traumatic stress disorder.

Invites to the many varied events ensure that guests can talk with men and women who have gone through similar traumas and are further down the road to recovery. They support all ages, enabling them to meet veterans of a huge range of military campaigns from World War Two onwards,

with centenarians and teenagers alike able to meet and share experiences.

Activities throughout the year cater to all abilities and tastes.

The NFA continues to host concerts at care homes and offer challenge holidays and respite breaks. For isolated veterans it will deliver TVs and gifts.

Public donations keep the charity going, and the activities and support offered prove that the services are not forgotten. After 102 years, the charity is adept at spending its income where it is needed: "We

focus our time and money on delivering impact. We have a lean team, and we have no assets – 84p of every £1 we spend goes directly towards delivering our charitable output," a charity spokesperson explains.

In the past year alone the NFA has sent out 2,566 goody boxes, hosted 2,707 attendees at its summer garden concert tour, distributed 737 jigsaws, 509 TVs, TV licences, tablets and laptops, and treated 1,293 attendees to drive-in shows.

"They entertained us at a time when loneliness could have taken over. My wife and I returned home with a glow of satisfaction. What a difference a day makes!" explained one grateful veteran.

As another veteran put it: "I truly believe that the Not Forgotten Association were the turning point in my turning back from the darkness. They are my guardian angels."

ake a stroll down King's Scholars'
Passage and you might just be surprised by what you find. Once an unprepossessing backstreet with a reputation for antisocial behaviour, it's now a green and pleasant scenic route lined with colourful planters full of trees, shrubs and blooms.

This is the KSP Community Garden, a collaboration between residents of the Cathedral area and homelessness charity The Passage to transform a historic corner of Westminster. The three co-founders – Sarah MacDonald Eggers, Bridget Jacob and Leslie MacLeod-Miller – are long-term residents who were acutely aware that King's Scholars' Passage had a bad reputation. What's worse, they knew that some locals had come to blame The Passage, which backs onto KSP, for some of its rowdiness and antisocial behaviour.

"When we investigated it, we realised that the bad behaviour really was coming from a very small number of people," explains Bridget.
"The sad thing was that it was preventing some residents from recognising the complex and integral role that The Passage plays in London, and the phenomenal job that they do."

So when the trio came up with the idea of transforming King's Scholars' Passage into a community garden, their first port of call was Mick Clarke, CEO of The Passage.

"I asked him what he thought about the idea of planting a garden here, and he loved it," says Sarah. "He told me that The Passage has a gardening club, and that they would be more than happy to help us out."

Sadly, after securing Mick's help in early 2020, the pandemic caused work on the garden to grind

to a halt. For a while, it seemed as though the project was doomed to failure – but as restrictions began to lift, residents who'd been starved of company and community showed a renewed enthusiasm for the garden. Bridget, Sarah and Leslie noticed that many





Green days

of their most regular volunteers came from nearby Montfort House.

"Montfort House is our on-site accommodation, where we house clients with complex needs," explains Kate Holyoake, communications manager at The Passage. "During lockdown, isolation was very difficult for them, so being able to come outside and get stuck into a project like this was so valuable for their wellbeing."

Regular volunteers include Senay and Nazar, two asylum seekers who've been relying on support from The Passage. Nazar tells me that his gardening work

has "reduced my stress, improved my confidence and helped me make friends". Thanks to their heroic efforts and their green fingers, Senay and Nazar have also secured work experience in nearby Belgrave Square.

With the help of volunteers like Senay and Nazar, as well as plenty of local





residents, the community garden has gone from strength to strength. It has received support and funding from local businesses, including nearby CitizenM. Several royal parks have donated plants, and 80 Strand allowed volunteers to fill a van with plants as they prepared to undergo building work. One Pimlico resident, whose hobby is to grow trees from seed, donates any trees that have become too large for his balcony.

"We've tried to be creative, and we've been able to source plants from all kinds of places," says Sarah.

"In general, I think it can be a really positive thing



to take ownership of your own neighbourhood"

"In general, I think it can be a really positive thing to take ownership of your own neighbourhood. Many people perhaps expect the council to do things like this for them, but the truth is that councils have so many pressing projects that this funny little laneway in Westminster is never going to be top priority. So taking the initiative to improve your area yourself can sometimes be a wonderful thing."

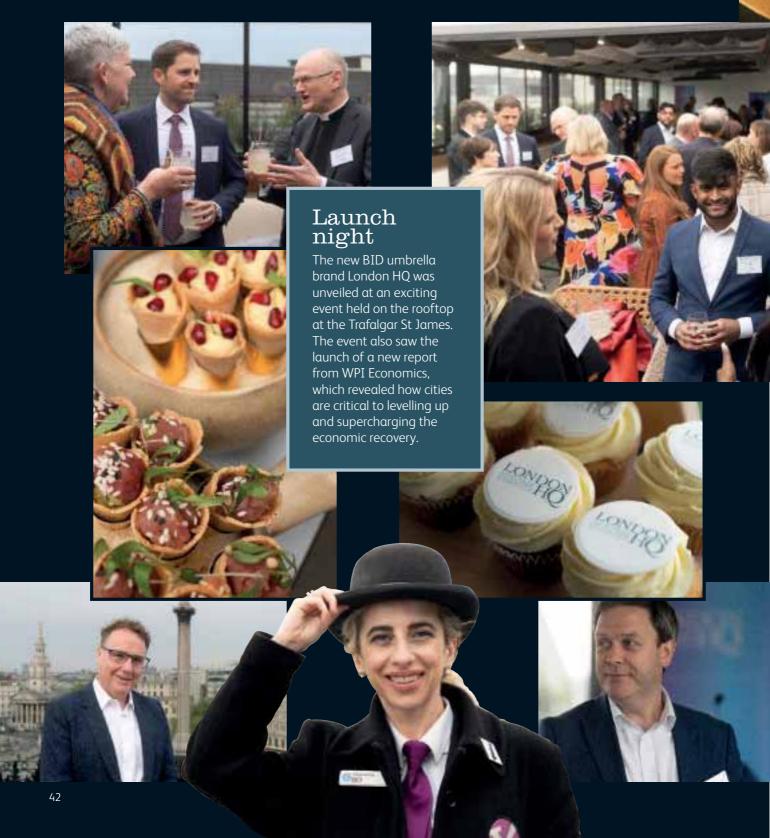
And the project has certainly succeeded in its core aim – to transform King's Scholars' Passage into a route that locals might choose to walk down for a moment of calm in a busy city.

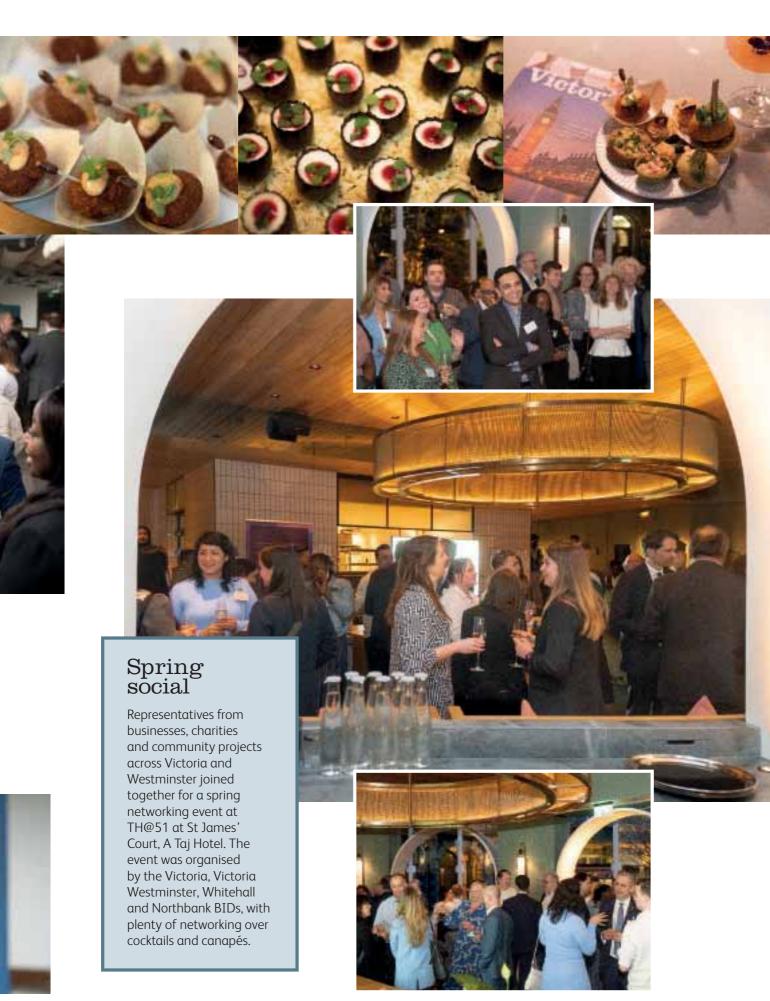
"We have two ladies who support us – one is 70 and the other is in her 90s, a mother and daughter – and they would never have walked down King's Scholars' Passage before, but now they do," says Bridget. "We have people who bring their grandchildren here for some gardening, or stop by for a chat."

"There was that animosity between local residents and The Passage, because there was this view that anyone coming out of The Passage was being disruptive to this area," adds Kate Holyoake. "But now people can see that the people from The Passage are the very people who have made this such a beautiful and vibrant street for everyone. I think that's a great thing for the charity, and for the community."

Get out!

Local people got together for two events in Victoria and Westminster





Hugo

A sunglasses style that people will not forget in a hurry are these clear-acetate shades with yellow mask.

£125, HOUSE OF FRASER, 101 VICTORIA STREET

Bring me sunshine

Because we all need a bit of uplifting yellow in our lives

BY SOPHIA CHARALAMBOUS

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Sorel

The comfy Kinetic Breakthru Tech lace trainers in yellow and chalk have a moulded EVA footbed and breathable upper and midsoles made from 10 per cent Bloom, an algae-biomass-containing material.

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Channel flower power with the flower print jumper in ivory, which can be wrapped around your shoulders and thrown on over a dress when the evenings get cooler. £55, UNIT 48, VICTORIA STATION



Married bliss

Let's be honest, wedding prep never really ends, but we've put together a few of the top beauty must-dos to see you on your way by sophia Charalambous

Scents of occasion

Having a unisex fragrance that both of you can share and enjoy on the wedding day and beyond has to be one of the greatest joys of the day – and Maison Margiela's Springtime in the Park is the perfect scent. It smells like the crisp spring air, with fruits of pear and blackcurrant, followed by lily, jasmine and rose florals and ending with musk. The result is not too sweet, and has a lovely point of difference on men and women's skin.

£99 for 100ml, The Perfume Shop, Victoria Place, 115 Buckingham Palace Road

All's hair in love and war

If there is one hairdresser you have to see before your big day, it's Adem Oygur. Recently



starting his own salon after training with Errol Douglas for many years, Adem can do it all. We would recommend booking in for a consultation before going for the Transformation – a cut and colour lasting three hours for £350. Then you will just have to have your hair styled for the day, for £500. Adem even uses his own line of hair care products made with Turkish

hazelnuts from his family farm, where he grew up. 61 Ebury Street

Get the look

A makeup artist for the wedding is non-negotiable – even men need powder. Stephanie was an assistant to Charlotte Tilbury, working on fashion shows, TV, royal events and award shows before starting her business. She will ask you about your preferences, outfit and hair before assessing what makeup schemes will work. The trial at your home, she suggests, should be three to 13 weeks in advance. Bridal makeup will take around 60 to 75 minutes, and she can even do bridal parties. Trial £180, on the day £220, cestmagnifique.co.uk



Nailing it

Good nails are a must for brides and grooms as they're seen in practically every photograph. You need to get the Top Notch treatment for hands and feet at London Grace, which comprises five elements: shape, cuticle, buff, polish and moisturise. The feet even include a sole softener. Director Lauren Williams suggests the Kathryn shade – a crisp white that'll pop on any skin tone. Hands from *£*30, feet from £38, 147 Ebury Street



Fit and fabulous

For some people, getting fit is a top priority ahead of the wedding day. That's why Gymbox is such a good option for brides and grooms. Sophie Barnacle, personal trainer at Gymbox, often sees couples coming for PT sessions three, six and even 12 months in advance. She says: "It's dependent on the individual and their personal goals. It's crucial for me to understand what a client wants to achieve at any time." Sophie does this through designing a programme of HIIT circuits, strength training, cardiovascular exercises and nutrition coaching.

From £50 per session, 123 Victoria Street



Fit for a queen



The Goring has always been a firm favourite of the royals. We asked CEO Jeremy Goring for his travel tips – and disasters – ahead of the hotel's platinum jubilee celebrations

BY JONATHAN WHILEY

What is your earliest travel memory?

I did not find out that Cornwall is actually part of Britain till I was about seven, so I thought I was always on holiday.

What is your favourite hotel in the world? (The Goring aside)

What a difficult question! You could argue that memories and people are what make a great hotel, and when a hotel feels like it totally belongs where it is. You can't manufacture that.

I would try to work backwards from the worst – most of Dubai? Using this logic, perhaps the Coral Reef Club in Barbados would win. It was the first luxury resort built on the island, in the original coral stone, by the fabulous Budge O'Hara who went over on a boat in 1950. He had only just finished working at the Goring and the hotel was old-world charm on the beach, with all the modern luxuries anybody might ask for. Brilliant.

What is your favourite city and why?

Golly. It used to be London before the government laid waste to our fab, vibrant, cosmopolitan hospitality industry. I hope to be able to say London again, one day in the future.

Where is your hidden gem destination?

I have never been to Orkney. So future me says Orkney! Or the Hebrides.

What is your favourite travel souvenir?

I always buy a fridge magnet and my favourite is the faux marble SPQR [an ancient Roman emblem] I bought with my son Maxy, right outside the Colosseum.



Old Man of Hoy, Orkney



Coral Reef Club, Barbados

Raja Ampat islands

Who is the most interesting person you have met on your travels?

I did a tour of the newly tarted up Crillon, which is off the charts — [it's] probably the most beautiful hotel I've ever seen. A man chatted to me in the bar, he was a lawyer. He proudly showed us his photo album full of him and his clients, which included Bashar al-Assad and Saddam Hussein. Talk about filthy lucre.

What is your most memorable holiday or trip?

A day at the Goring. Something mad always happens, involving either our eccentric guests, or our eccentric team.

Any holiday disasters?

There have been a few. Especially a midnight capsize off Sumatra due to big bags of cement that we were transporting, which were lashed to the deck. Every bag was marked with the Indonesian word for cement, which I can't say here, so at least our near drowning made for a fun story afterwards.

What is your favourite restaurant in Victoria?

A Wong. AW [Andrew Wong], I apologise about my cousin that last time. He will not be allowed out of Cornwall ever again.

What or where is left on your bucket list?

Everywhere. I need to get out more. Probably the Raja Ampat islands.

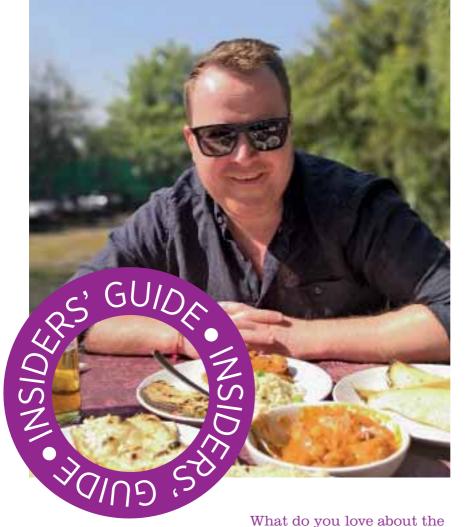
What can we look forward to at the Goring this summer?

My cousin's pony Teddy [@teddytheshetland on Instagram] is coming back to see us as part of our jubilee celebrations.

The Goring, 15 Beeston Place, has a host of

platinum jubilee-themed offerings,
including a special afternoon
tea, Jubilee Fizz and
Coronation Cup cocktails
and the reintroduction
of historic coronation
dishes the hotel
created for the
Queen's coronation

in 1953



Robert Hodges,
director of
operations at
Chestnut Bakery,
on his favourite
local spots
BY ALICE CAIRNS

area?
There is always something

There is always something happening and a new experience to discover.

Why is Elizabeth Street the perfect location for Chestnut Bakery? It's a great mixture of local residents, London day-trippers and international tourists. We celebrate international baking traditions from all over the world so there is always a flavour profile that every customer will love.

Your favourite pub? If I'm out with friends and watching sport, then it has to be Greenwood in Nova.

Your favourite restaurant? I love Indian food, so I always enjoy a visit to the Cinnamon Club. The menu there is excellent.

Your favourite shop? Bayley & Sage [on Ebury Street]. There are always new ingredients to discover, and it's a great source of inspiration when you're not sure what to cook for dinner. Your favourite green space or park in the area? I love Green Park; you can go from the busy West End to feeling like you are in the countryside in no time. I love the wild planting areas they have created.

Tell us about your signature bake...
We change our signature twice-baked croissant every month.
For May we are celebrating the start of the summer season with a strawberry and rosewater cheesecake flavour, finished with freeze-dried strawberry slices and

rose petals. It is delicious.

What's next for Chestnut Bakery?
We just opened our second location on Floral Street, Covent Garden. It has an amazing first-floor seating area with a great view down Floral Street. We are currently looking for a site for our third bakery so watch this space. Also we have six sweet viennoiserie launching towards the end of May. The bakers have been working very hard to create them and they taste amazing.



Above: Green Park. Below: Greenwood







Our doors are open. To those who are always on the go. To those who want the very latest in medical care. To those who still have unanswered questions. Your health shouldn't be put on pause, and we want you to be able to leave your worries at the door.

It's why our state-of-the-art hospital, based in London, is equipped with the latest technology. We want to keep pushing forward, and advance our specialities and care. So we can be there whenever you need us.



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