

Bread winner

Inspired by the Great British Bake-Off? Surbiton cookery expert Annie Morris shares her recipes.
● Turn to p5



Ready for a Mexican wave?

March's farmers' market has a Mexican flavour. A food van will be the guest stall, with Margot and Rita dishing up tacos and burritos. Youngsters can look forward to an Easter competition.

The Shooting Star Chase children's hospice is the month's chosen charity. February's was the George Pantziarka Trust, founded by the parents of a Surbiton schoolboy who died of cancer at the age of 17.

To be sent market date reminders and news, register at www.surbitonfarmersmarket.co.uk

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More pedal power

Saddle up! A back-to-the-future pedal-power delivery service – By Bicycle – has been launched in Surbiton.

The idea harks back to a gentler age when boys on bikes with wicker baskets cycled round the area with customer orders from grocers and butchers.



Fiona Quinn

Fiona Quinn, new co-ordinator of the From the Ground Up (FGU) organic fruit and veg service at the YMCA, uses a battery-assisted bike, to make St Mark's Hill less daunting with loads of up to 250kg.

Initially aimed at private customers, the 28-year-old Maple Road resident aims to expand to include courier work and drop-offs for Surbiton businesses.

Bike deliveries work well in the City of London,

where riders are faster than vans through the congested streets.

At the moment, it's just Fiona in the saddle, but others have applied to join. Costs vary depending on weight and frequency, but deliveries of fortnightly FGU produce in KT6 cost £3.95 a time.

Fiona has plans to develop and improve FGU, including creating a more user-friendly website, taking online payments and forgoing a summer break to maintain a year-round seasonal food service.

There are also plans to give more information on food storage and recipes, reduce food waste and introduce midweek collections too.

"I have a passion for sustainable enterprise and, in particular, organic products," said Fiona.

More information at www.ByBicycleDelivery.com

Tim Harrison

Nick Jones tries out the delivery bike



Coffee, served with an Italian accent

A pair of sparky Italians have opened a coffee shop, pledging to serve the finest espresso in town.

Stefano Vitali and Giuseppe D'Omofrio are the baristi in Caffé Amici (it means 'friends') opposite the YMCA in Victoria Road.

A complete refit has created a dozen seats. Open 6am-6pm, there is wi-fi, fresh food and a full takeaway service.

Stefano and Peppe tasted dozens of possible coffees ("One was too bitter, one too acidic") before exclusively importing Moretto coffee from a small family firm in Liguria.

All coffees are served with an accompanying glass of water. Surbitonians will struggle to

resist the hot chocolate, which is cocoa-rich and probably addictive.

It's the boys' first cafe venture. Stefano formerly worked for the BBC, while Peppe was at Carluccio's. Both have yearned for the chance to run their own business, so when Stefano spotted that Mohiden Dardouk's DeliCafe was closing, they pounced.

Rustic wooden tables, evocative 'Dolce Vita' framed pictures, Mediterranean music and top-notch panini are a good combination, and the place is so compact that personal service and chat are pretty much obligatory.

"We're bringing the Italian habit to Surbiton, from coffee to panini," said Peppe.

Meet the leader

More people responded to Kingston Council's survey on the future direction of the borough than to any consultation in living memory. Now the council's leader wants to meet Surbitonians to discuss the findings in detail. He'll even give you a cuppa. Full details on p5

Free parking deal

Following a public clamour to make life easier for customers of smaller businesses in Surbiton, a half hour of free parking is being offered in Ewell Road. Pay and display machines will dispense tickets, but there will be no charge for the first 30 minutes. Members of the area's steering committee have welcomed the move. See p3



Giuseppe (left) and Stefano at Caffé Amici, Victoria Road

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Why Surbiton kept the king waiting...

In 1935, every town and village in the land sent King George V messages of congratulation on his silver jubilee. Er, every town and village except Surbiton.

Three weeks after the rest of the country, the Queen of the Suburbs finally got its act together. A bizarre 80-year-old tale of comb-and-paper protest marches and twisted spoons is finally revealed!

● Turn to p4 for the extraordinary story

3rd Saturday of the Month! **SURBITON Farmers' Market** Maple Road KT6

Dates for 2015
Saturdays 9am-1pm

March 21	April 18	May 16	June 20	July 18	August 15
Sept 19	Oct 17	Nov 21	Dec 19		

surbitonfarmersmarket.co.uk

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Catherine's baking takes the biscuit...

The aroma of baking fills St Matthew's vicarage, where Catherine Hancock, 22-year-old daughter of vicar Helen, creates hand-decorated biscuits.

"It's massive in the States," she said. "Now it's trickling over here, so hopefully I'm catching the wave."

Like many, Catherine, who works part-time at Waitrose, was inspired to put on an apron and warm the oven by The Great British Bake Off.

Last month, Piped With Love made its debut at the farmers' market in Maple Road, with individually wrapped biscuits, and presentation gift boxes (£17).

"The tin boxes of biscuits make great presents, and can be personalised and posted," said former music student Catherine, who was recently given a five-star hygiene rating by inspectors.

She heat-seals biscuits, so they have a shelf life of at least six weeks.

More at www.pipedwithlove.com.



Gardening tips by Janice Cripps



It's all looking up

New homes have smaller and smaller gardens, requiring designers and gardeners to find creative ways to make the most of the outdoor space they have. With wide overflowing borders a thing of the past, there is a shift of focus from space at ground level to the vertical space. Even in a small garden this is often limitless, so why not take advantage?

There are, for example, all sorts of systems with built-in irrigation, where pouches or troughs are fixed to the walls of buildings and planted to stunning effect.

French designer and botanist Patrick Blanc developed this concept and has created incredible living walls all over the world. In Sydney he has designed the world's tallest vertical garden covering a 166m facade of a residential tower block with thousands of native Australian and exotic plants. This is not just a garden but a work of art which feeds the soul by bringing nature to the city, and has a positive effect on the environment. The plants reduce energy consumption with leaves that trap carbon dioxide, emit oxygen and reflect less heat back into the city.

London's largest living wall, at 21m, is The Ruben at the Palace Hotel in Victoria. Apart from brightening up

a dull street corner with its bands of colourful planting, the ecological benefits are enormous. The wall provides a wildlife habitat, keeps the building warmer in winter and cooler in summer, cleans the air, deadens noise and combats flooding.

I have yet to see a living wall in Surbiton, but I'm sure it's just a matter of time as vertical gardening works just as well in small gardens.

A tremendous variety of species of decorative plants can be grown, or indeed herbs, soft fruits and vegetables. Generally the plants requiring sun are planted at the top of the wall while those requiring shade and more moisture are planted at the bottom.

If you don't want to invest in a bespoke living wall system, there are plenty of DIY options to create a similar effect. At its simplest, you can use an existing lattice or trellis to grow climbing plants or vines.

Or make creative use of recycled or upcycled materials, such as wooden pallets or guttering, which can be fixed to the side of a wall and perhaps painted.

There are practical considerations. The structure used to support the plants must be strong enough to bear the weight and have good drainage. Plants on a wall are exposed to greater temperature fluctuations and have to cope with more sun and rain than those in the ground. They are thirstier too, so if you are planning something ambitious, it is wise to incorporate some kind of automatic water system.

The appeal of vertical gardening is that there are options for all budgets. And where outdoor space is at a premium, it's a sure-fire way of creating instant impact and interest.

Janice Cripps is a professional garden designer based in Surbiton. For advice, planting plans, or taking projects from concept to completion, visit www.janicecripps.co.uk



Picture: Scotscape Landscaping

Liquorice? All sorts!

Surbiton has a sweet tooth, says Ewell Road patissier Amir Abrahimi, left, a jewellery maker until he learnt the pastry trade.

At Carmella, the cornucopia of calories (open daily 9am-10pm), the Swiss rolls are popular, as are Iranian sweets made from coconut, pistachio and chocolate, and sold by weight in mixed boxes.

"I know people's tastes, and Surbiton has quite different tastes from, say, north London," said Amir who lives next door. Local favourites are liquorice, sold in huge ropes of vivid colours, and baklava, the sweet honeyed pastry beloved of Mediterranean countries, which unseated Bake-Off contestant Chetna in last year's competition.

Amir used to work on market stalls across the UK. "They were all outside, so it's good having a shop now," he said. "We import dried fruit from Iran; natural dried fruit. We couldn't find it in the UK; these are not sugared."

A quarter kilo is £5.50.



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Bonnet contest

Chocolate, crafts and handmade jewellery are among stalls at the Maple Village WI spring fair, which is being staged at St Mark's church hall in St Mark's Hill on Saturday, March 28, from 10am-2pm. There will be 30 stalls in all, and an Easter bonnet competition for children. The fair will benefit Kingston Bereavement.

Who are you?

Over the Surbiton station Tannoy: 'Ladies, gentlemen... and everyone else. Please stand away from the edge of platform 2 as the approaching train is not scheduled to stop here.'

Jet has jumped

Few knew it was there, but after a decade hidden by the A3, Surbiton's secret Harrier jump jet has 'flown'. Built at Hawker Siddeley, Kingston, in the late 70s, the RAF GR3 served in Operation Corporate: the Falklands campaign. Stationed at the Surbiton air cadet HQ off Queen Mary Close, it was sold by the MoD to a Yorkshire restorer as, exposed to the elements, it was at risk of rotting.

Nursery times

Permission has been granted for the coach house at 1a Howard Road to be turned into a children's day nursery with play area and bike store. Surbiton's neighbourhood committee unanimously approved change of use.

Rosh recognised

Roshan Sivapalan was given an ovation at the Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors' annual bash. The director of Blakes surveyors in Brighton Road was runner-up as Young Surveyor of the Year, a contest recognising industry talent. "I thoroughly enjoyed the ceremony," he said after the dinner at the Marriott, Grosvenor Square.

Burglary reduced

Burglaries in the Long Ditton area have fallen by 16 per cent, year on year. Supt Jerry Westerman was pleased by the success of a recent targeted campaign. "We have run a series of cross-border operations and shared intelligence with our neighbouring forces," he said.

Grant for charity

A grant of £654 will part-fund charity SeeAbility's volunteer programme in Surbiton for the coming year. The money, agreed by the council's neighbourhood committee, will support five young adults with complex disabilities.

Pop-up toy sale

Lightly used, quality second-hand toys, children's clothes and maternity items are on sale at a pop-up market at St Mark's church hall, St Mark's Hill, from 2-4pm on Saturday March 14. Another will be held at the same time, same place on Saturday April 18. Entry £2 (children free), with a two-for-one downloadable offer at www.mum2mummarket.co.uk

Time to register

If you want to vote in the May 7 general election, you have until April 20 to register. It takes five minutes online, and you need your National Insurance number. Kingston elects an MP, Elmbridge also has local elections. See www.kingston.gov.uk or www.elmbridge.gov.uk

Cheers for beers

A beer festival is being held at the 1st Hook scout HQ, Verona Drive, Surbiton, on April 17 and 18. The Hook Beer Festival benefits Surbiton's Star & Garter home. In six years, £25,000 has been raised for charity. The £5 tickets, which include a souvenir glass, are available online (www.hookbeerfest.org.uk) or via The Antelope, Maple Road.

We do give a hoot

Chris Ward is guest speaker at the Surbiton & District Bird Watching Society at 8pm on Tuesday, March 17 in the main hall of Surbiton Library, Ewell Road. His topic is Owls, Owls, Owls.



Ewell Road will soon have free half-hour parking, to help shops and shoppers

A generation of bookworms

A scheme that enrolls children to the library via their primary school is paying dividends. More than half the youngsters from Lovelace primary who were given library membership have borrowed books outside school time. According to Kingston's library service, 261 of the 479 children who received a free card are now regularly borrowing from the local library. The figures build on last summer's reading challenge, which led to an 11 per cent rise in reading, with 4,300

local youngsters pledging to get through six library books in the summer hols... and 62% succeeding. Cllr David Glasspool welcomed news of the success of universal library membership. "Reading is one of life's greatest pleasures and we want all children to discover that joy," he said. The scheme was started by Kingston's library service in 2013 with the aim of giving children who are not already library members the chance to receive a library card through their school.

Shops' joy at free parking

A stop-and-shop parking scheme will make life simpler for motorists to use the Ewell Road shops. The pay-and-display system will allow free parking for the first half hour between the Surbiton Medical Centre and the junction with Browns Road, giving a boost to businesses in the street. The aim is to reduce long-term parking during the day, and make spaces available to shoppers who want to nip in and out. Pay-and-display machines will be operational within the next few weeks after Surbiton's neighbourhood committee gave the project its blessing. However, a decision on a proposed scheme to introduce residents-only parking in Browns Road was deferred for six months to allow the changes in Ewell Road to bed down. Cllr Sushila Abraham, vice-chair of the committee, said she was concerned about the

possible knock-on effect on Browns Road. Cllr John Ayles backed free 30-minute parking, and Cllr Yogan Yoganathan agreed, saying that businesses were struggling and that a free half-hour could only help. "We have to do something; I can see businesses closing and moving away," he said. Jennings the butcher collected a petition in support. Alan Jennings, who addressed the meeting, said customers regularly sighed about the problems with parking – even for a few minutes. The move will also benefit shoppers using the new Sainsbury's local, in what was once the Victoria pub at the corner with South Place. The council has expressed a desire to support shopping parades and independent shops, and has framed its future planning accordingly. Stop-and-shop bays will operate Monday-Saturday, 10am-4pm.



Volunteers are helping to improve diversity by managing woodland near Tolworth Brook

Can you twig it?

Volunteers are starting a new blitz of coppicing hazel trees, general woodland management and – inevitably – litter picking along the Tolworth Brook in Berrylands. The next session is on Saturday, March 21, from 9.30am-1.30pm. All are welcome; meet at the car park off Raeburn Avenue/ Meldone Close. No experience is necessary, it's free to join, tools and gloves are provided, and

light refreshments are provided. Last year's work on the vegetation of Tolworth Brook Wood, organised by the Environment Trust, helped open the tree canopy to allow light to filter through, benefiting plants and butterflies, and improving diversity. A hawthorn hedge is being created, and overgrown areas by the car park, near the site of the former Surbiton Lagoon, are being trimmed.

Tuck in; it's food festival time

Surbiton's food festival is back for a third year. It opens on May 2 and runs to May 17, with books of vouchers to gain discounts at food shops and restaurants. There will be a food fete over two days (May 9 and 10) at St Andrew's Square, with a beer festival and entertainment, followed by the Maple Road farmers' market on the morning of Saturday, May 16, and the community sports day and picnic on the Victoria recreation ground in the afternoon. Many businesses will accept a new local currency, the Kingston pound, which aims to support independent shops.

Overheard in Caffe Amici

Five-year-old Joe was listening to a Bible story. His father read: "The man named Lot was warned to take his wife and flee out of the city, but his wife looked back and was turned to salt." Joe looked perplexed. "What's the matter?" asked his father. Joe replied: "What happened to the flea?"

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Surbiton's children are late to the party

Eighty years ago, Surbiton's schoolchildren packed into a marquee for tea, and later watched a firework display, to mark the silver jubilee of King George V.

But it was a belated party, hastily organised at the last minute on the Alexandra recreation ground on May 24, 1935... nearly three weeks after the monarch's official anniversary.

Last week, a faded telegram in a sterling silver frame which had been sent to Buckingham Palace from the children's party sold on eBay for £800.

The yellowing piece of paper, and the official response sent from the king's private secretary, were framed under glass alongside formal portraits of King George and Queen Mary.

Behind the commemorative object lurks a strange tale of local authority bungling, residents' fury and people power.

King George V celebrated 25 years on the throne in the first week of May 1935.

Kingston – as befitting a town with royal charters – marked the occasion with a great

fanfare. Decorated floats made their way through the market place in a grand parade, and 40,000 people attended a fair on the Fairfield. Many streets organised their own open-air tea parties.

But in neighbouring Surbiton, the local council (then a separate authority from Kingston) decided on an altogether more muted commemoration... and completely misjudged the public mood.

Citing the king's own wishes for the jubilee to be marked by something permanent, the town's councillors decided to build new railings and gates at Surbiton Hospital, at a cost of £250.

They also voted to spend £125 on buying jubilee souvenir spoons for each of Surbiton's 3,687 schoolchildren.

For the day of the jubilee itself, Wednesday, March 6, the town hall, library and fire station – sited in a neat line in Ewell Road – were decorated with flowers and ornamental window boxes.



Party hats were the order of the day at the tea on Alexandra rec, as this faded photo shows

But this wasn't enough for Surbitonians. Angry letters denounced Surbiton Council for being mean-spirited. One said that compared to the efforts made in Kingston, Surbiton's new railings were 'very apathetic'. Albert Cuffley of Beresford Avenue, Tolworth, accused Surbiton's councillors of embarking on 'an exercise to avoid the trouble of arrangements'.

Another said that 'there is, unfortunately, a kind of mentality among councillors that can only express itself in ornamental ironwork and public monuments'.

Several of the jubilee spoons which had been given to schoolchildren were bent out of shape and posted through councillors' letterboxes!

Surbiton Council stood its ground, pointing out that the king had 'expressly

requested' that public funds be spent on permanent memorials not frivolous partying.

The response? A children's protest parade along Ewell Road, with a comb-and-paper band and dustbin lid drums, complaining that if young people wanted to celebrate the silver jubilee, they had to go to Kingston.

Arthur Clarke, a leading light in the Surbiton Conservative Club, called a public meeting on May 14. He said that if the council wasn't going to organise a children's tea, the people would.

House-to-house collections and shop donations raised £300, and a belated event was organised on the Alexandra Road recreation ground on Empire Day, May 24. The aim was 'to give Surbiton's children at least as good a time as those of other towns



The framed telegrams which sold on eBay for £800 and, right, the children's royal greeting

POST OFFICE		Charge	Counter Number
INLAND TELEGRAM		Chargeable Words	
FOR POSTAGE STAMPS		Actual Words	To
Prefix	Handed in	SERVICE INSTRUCTIONS	
For Tariff and Conditions of acceptance, see over			
ADDRESS			
To Their Majesties The King and Queen, Buckingham Palace, London.			
We, the children of Surbiton, Surrey, assembled here joyfully to celebrate the Silver Jubilee of your Majesties, respectfully send you our loyal greetings, praying that God will preserve you both for many years to reign over us with the same unbounded love and wisdom as in the past.			
The Children of Surbiton.			
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and villages throughout England'.

A huge marquee was put up, capable of seating 750 youngsters at a time. Throughout the day, 3,000 children were given tea and cake in four sittings, while the Bisley Boys' Band played.

Community singing and funfair rides were organised, there was a Punch & Judy show, and the day concluded with a firework display.

Early in the day, a boy and girl were selected by Arthur Clarke and asked to compose a telegram to be sent to the king.

It was their wording that was sent to Buckingham Palace. 'We, the children of Surbiton, Surrey, assembled here joyfully to celebrate the Silver Jubilee of your Majesties, respectfully send you our loyal greetings, praying that God will preserve you both for many years to reign over us with the same unbounded love and wisdom as in the past.' The telegram was simply signed 'The Children of Surbiton'.

In double-quick time, the king's private secretary Charles Wigram despatched a reply. It arrived mid-afternoon at Surbiton post office in Victoria Road, was pedalled to the recreation ground by a messenger boy and was read out, to loud cheers. 'The King and Queen warmly thank you for their kind Jubilee greetings.'

In gratitude for his efforts in organising the event, members of the hastily formed co-ordinating sub-committee presented Arthur Clarke with the telegram and reply, plus pictures of the king and queen.

They had them framed in silver – the hallmarks showing it was made in Birmingham by the silversmith Samuel M Levi. It was this framed gift that was sold on eBay.

Despite the wishes of the Children of Surbiton that the king and queen would enjoy a long reign, the king was dead within eight months.

Tim Harrison

We like living here... but do something about potholes!

Council leader Cllr Kevin Davis is on a mission to meet as many Surbitonians as possible following a major survey to discover what people want from the borough.

He has arranged a string of exhibitions and open meetings offering a cuppa and a chat, to share details of the ideas that have emerged, and get more feedback.

Kingston Council's recent All in One survey produced 9,779 replies – a glowing participation rate, and three times higher than any other survey attempted locally. To put that in context, the borough population is 130,000.

Overall, 84% were either very, or fairly, satisfied with life in Kingston borough. Among non-residents who work in the borough, the figure rose to 88%.

In Surbiton, the satisfaction rate was 89%, in Berrylands 87%, in Tolworth 77%.

Asked to identify the biggest single

issue that needed addressing, most said 'parking'.

The next two major issues were improving shopping and restaurants, and improving transport links.

Ninety per cent of survey respondents felt safe in their neighbourhood by day, dropping to 59% at night.

In other findings, 44% backed a 20mph limit on all residential roads in the borough, 95% cited 'parks and open spaces' as the most important resource, and 50% said they were happy with the level of street cleaning.

Asked what most needed addressing, the top five issues were: road maintenance including potholes, traffic congestion, pavement upkeep, affordable housing and street cleaning.

Litter and fly-tipping was judged to be the most serious antisocial behaviour.

The full findings of the survey are at www.kingston.gov.uk/consultations

Exhibitions will be staged from

March 16-21 at Surbiton Library in Ewell Road, Sainsbury's in Victoria Road and at the School Lane youth centre off Red Lion Road, Tolworth. From March 23-28 there will be an exhibition at Tolworth Library in Tolworth Broadway.

You can meet Cllr Davis for a coffee on March 21, 10am-11.30am, at the YMCA in Victoria Road; 1-2.30pm at Surbiton Library; and 3.30-5pm at the School Lane youth centre.

Then on March 28, Cllr Davis will be in the Sunray community centre in Knollmead, Tolworth, for a chat.

Gemma Gallant, Surbiton's active new neighbourhood manager, will also be on hand.

Conscious that roads and pavements topped the 'concern' list for survey respondents, Kingston Council has already allocated an extra £1million for repairs and maintenance.

To address night safety worries, the council is funding extra police patrols.



Ready to listen: Kingston Council leader Cllr Kevin Davis

Ed posts good results



Ed Tompkins sold steaks and poultry... and superintended the pillar box

At his stall by the pillar box at the farmers' market, Ed Tompkins of Boarstall Meats had sold out by midday, and was heading back to his farm in the Aylesbury Vale. "My grandfather and I farm 500 acres," the market newcomer told the Good Life. "We do beef, including Belted Galloways, sheep, free-roaming pigs and poultry. There's been a good reaction from shoppers."

Traffic fears raised by school plan

A proposed extension to Dysart School in Surbiton has raised fears about increased traffic.

The school, which occupies a site between Kingsdowne Road and Ewell Road, wants to build an extension with four classrooms, kitchen, common room and reception for 16 to 18-year-olds with special education needs.

Residents at a neighbourhood meeting said they feared traffic levels would rise significantly.

The St Matthew's vicar, the Rev Helen Hancock, said Kingsdowne Road was chock-a-block mornings and evenings, and described the haste with which the consultation had been handled as 'shameful'.

Staff from nearby St Matthew's primary school also voiced concerns

about the prospect of more traffic.

Cllr Liz Green said insufficient time had been allowed for representations, while Cllr John Ayles said: "I can't understand why all of a sudden this is being rushed through."

Dysart head teacher Leigh Edser said that most pupils would arrive at the school in special buses, so that any extra traffic movements would be limited.

Timothy King, planning officer, conceded that discussions about the proposals gave the impression of a 'rushed job'.

Six trees would have to be felled to make way for the extension.

All the comments will be passed to Kingston Council's development committee, which will have the task of making the final decision.

Recipes for a Good Life by Annie Morris

Butternut squash soup & apple soda bread

Welcome to Annie's kitchen, in the heart of Surbiton. In every Good Life, she shares her favourite recipes. "Here's something warming for the weekend. It's easy, and fills the house with the aroma of freshly baked bread. The bread is lovely eaten warm, or toasted the next day. It also freezes well."

Soup ingredients

- 1 butternut squash
- 2 tbsp olive oil
- 1 onion, chopped
- Butter, to taste
- 600ml/20floz vegetable stock
- salt and freshly ground black pepper
- 1 tsp hot chilli powder (optional)

Preparation

- Peel the butternut squash, cut into slices, discard the pulp and pips and chop the squash into chunks
- Heat the olive oil in a large casserole, add the onion and squash and plenty of butter. Cook until caramelised
- Pour over the stock. Simmer for 20 minutes. Remove from the heat, leave to cool slightly, then blend using a food processor or hand blender to the desired consistency
- If you don't have time to make the soda bread, make cheese on toast and, before grilling, sprinkle the cheese with chilli flakes. Cut into small cubes and garnish the soup. This will make a lovely lunch



Bread ingredients

- 450g self-raising flour
- 1 large egg, beaten
- 1 x 300g tub of buttermilk
- 2 tbsp milk
- 125g cheddar, grated (save some for the top)
- 2-3 small apples, cored and cut small
- 1 tsp salt and freshly ground black pepper

Preparation

- Preheat the oven to 200C/400F/Gas 6.
- Prepare a baking sheet. I use a 'magic' non-stick liner
- Put the flour, apples, cheese, salt and pepper into a bowl, mix well and make a well in the centre
- In another bowl mix the buttermilk, egg and milk
- Tip the mixture into the well and stir with a wooden spoon, incorporating all the flour. It will be quite sticky. The secret of this bread is to handle it as little as possible
- Remove the dough with floured hands and tip directly on to the baking sheet. Shape into a large flat round about 8-9in in diameter
- Slash a criss-cross over the centre of the dough, sprinkle with remaining cheese and place in the oven to bake for 35 minutes, until risen, golden and cooked through. You can tell when it is done as it will sound hollow when the bottom is tapped



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Morris dancers pay tribute to Ben

Enthusiastic Morris dancer and lover of life Ben Izard has died at the age of 59. At his funeral, hanky-waving colleagues performed the Vandals of Hammersmith, one of Ben's favourite dances. They also formed an arch of sticks, under which the coffin was carried.

Sally Wilby, of the British Humanist Association, led the service, telling the 150 mourners that Ben had been a quiet sort of man, only becoming talkative if he'd had a few beers.

An accident as a youngster involving a shard of glass damaged one eye, and put paid to any thoughts of an academic career, so Ben, of Summerfield Lane, Long Ditton, developed practical skills, including carpentry and joinery. He made Morris sticks from coppiced hazel.

At the funeral, on February 5 at Kingston Crematorium, Colin Messer spoke of Ben's Morris dancing, describing the 'transformative' effect he had had on local groups, and pledging to ensure his legacy lived on.

Ben's involvement with Morris Men began in 2008 when he spotted an advert for recruits in the library.

He loved Kingston Morris, and had been elected squire of Spring Grove Morris at the end of 2014... his distinctive 'Noddy Holder' whiskers helping him look the part.

In a colourful and varied life, Ben had briefly flirted with the Hells Angels, played the bugle and even excelled at topiary, once turning a hedge into a whale as a surprise for wife Toni.

Sally Wilby said that Ben had had a smile for everyone, and had been kind, thoughtful and inventive – especially when it came to fancy dress, with a Viking, King Arthur and an Egyptian Pharaoh in his repertoire.

Well-versed in local and national history, Ben was an enthusiastic cook. Pie-making, particularly game and pork pies, was a speciality.

He brewed his own beer, made dark, thick-cut marmalade, and was on a long-term mission to create the perfect pickle.

At his wake, his own piccalilli and pickled onions were enjoyed.

One of Ben's claims to fame came at the 2012 Olympics, where he was a performer in the industrial scene at the opening ceremony.

Diagnosed with lymphoma, he had been about to start treatment... but the cancer proved more widespread than first thought.

Donations in Ben's name will ensure the Woodland Trust maintain Hammond's Copse, near Dorking, in Ben's memory.

Money raised will also fund a tree-planting programme in Hertfordshire. He and Toni loved to wander through English woods.

● Kenneth Leslie 'Ben' Izard was born on February 5 1955, and died on January 18 2015. He is survived by Toni, and daughters Sophie and Helen.

Tim Harrison



Douglas Ambrose, an ingenious Berrylands man

Dapper, dignified and determined, Douglas Ambrose, one of Surbiton's most resourceful residents, has died at the age of 95.

A scientist whose research into gas chromatography evolved into a definitive textbook, he was made an OBE after retiring from a career at the National Physical Laboratory near Bushy Park.

Douglas was a Berrylands resident for 65 years, living in The Crest, where neighbours were treated as extended family.

Born in Essex, Douglas attended Chigwell School, developing a fascination for science. The moment that crystallised his determination to study the subject came in 1931 when, at the age of 12, he visited the Michael Faraday centenary exhibition at the Royal Albert Hall.

His favourite childhood toy was a home chemistry set, and he founded a science club

at school. In 1936 he won a place at University College London, becoming the first in his family to go to university, and graduating in science just before the outbreak of the Second World War.

He had met Barbara at UCL, and the couple married in 1945 after he returned from wartime service in Malta, Egypt, Palestine and Syria.

In 1946 he studied for a PhD in chemistry, later joining the National Physical Laboratory in Teddington where, down the years, radar was developed, the bouncing bomb tested, and computer scientist Alan Turing worked.

The Rev Heather Cadoux, vicar of Tolworth United Reformed Church, told a service of thanksgiving on February 24 that Douglas had been principal scientific officer at the National Physical Laboratory, studying the temperature liquids boiled at different pressures.

In 1976 he was awarded the Calendar Medal by the Institute of Measurement and Control, saying in his acceptance speech: "I take great delight that an institute of physicists and engineers should recognise that a mere chemist can make accurate measurements."

Douglas cycled to Teddington each day from the home where he and Barbara raised a family. Son Richard recalled a 'to do' list on the fridge door ("written in his preferred instrument, a pencil"), and said his father squirreled away useful items in his shed.

Daughter Helen said: "He never bought anything if he could make do and mend." Richard added: "Had he had his way, he'd have made his own coffin from old cardboard boxes in the garage!"

A keen photographer, Douglas used string and a tripod to take family group shots half a century before the word selfie was coined. He was also a bookbinder, keen reader and classical music lover.

He kept busy in retirement, becoming an active committee member of the Kingston Society and getting involved in local planning issues.

The music at his memorial service included part of Bach's Prelude in F minor, Beethoven's Serenade for flute, violin and viola, and a piece from Tippett's Concerto for double string orchestra; one of the few 20th century compositions he liked.

He began each day with a vigorous programme of press-ups and, added Richard, "showed us how to grow old graciously".

A widower since 1995, Douglas was a problem-solver, devising tools and gadgets to enable him to live independently at home... including a rope tied to the taps to pull himself up in the bathtub.

Grandchildren recalled that Douglas's home in The Crest was always full of "creaks, clock chimes and portable radio sounds".

● Douglas Ambrose was born on April 9 1919, and died on February 1 2015. He is survived by two children, Richard and Helen (a third, Mary, died a couple of months before her father), six grandchildren and six great-grandchildren.

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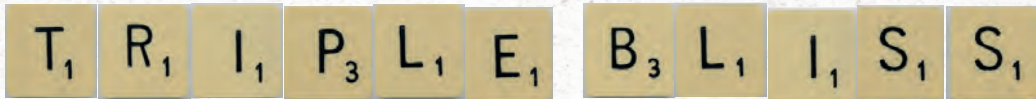
Having a riot at the Assembly Rooms

Along with the clocktower, station and Tolworth Tower, it is one of the town's iconic buildings... but did you know that Surbiton Assembly Rooms was the focus of rioting on four occasions in its colourful century as an entertainment venue?

Good Life editor Tim Harrison has researched the building's surprising past, and presents an illustrated talk to the Surbiton & District Historical Society at 7.30pm on Tuesday, April 7. Entry to Surbiton Library's annexe in Ewell Road is free to members, and £2 to visitors.



Surbiton Assembly Rooms, drawn by Long Ditton artist Martin Alton



Are you limbering up for the 2015 Scrabble tournament? Or do you just enjoy playing socially? Either way, you'll be able to get some practice at Surbiton Library, where Tuesdays are

now official Scrabble days. Informal, relaxed social sessions take place at 1pm in the library in Ewell Road, and all are welcome. In the most recent world championship, staged in

London, Craig Beevers took the title with a 42-score word, talaq, meaning a Muslim form of divorce. Other impressive words included diorite (a type of rock) and ventrous (an archaic form of adventurous).

Hitchhiker's read

The Douglas Adams cult classic The Hitchhiker's Guide to the Galaxy is being read aloud by librarian Chris Dowling at Surbiton Library in Ewell Road, in one-hour chunks at 5pm on Fridays. "It was originally conceived as radio, so it lends itself to being read," said Chris, who admits he "greatly enjoys reading it". Readings began at the end of February, but it's the kind of fiction that you can join any time – so it doesn't matter if you've missed the first couple of weeks. The Hitchhiker's Guide to the Galaxy is comedy science fiction. First broadcast on Radio 4 in 1978, it has also appeared as books, stage shows, computer games, comics and TV series.

Choral Soc performs

The Kingston Choral Society, which draws most of its members from Surbiton and regularly performs at St Andrew's church, is putting on a concert under the banner Songs of the Fleet at the end of the month. Baritone Charles Rice and accompanist William Vann join the regular singers for a feast of British music. Staged at Kingston parish church on March 28 at 7.30pm (with an open rehearsal at 2.30pm), the concert features Charles Villiers Stanford's Songs of the Fleet, Howard Skempton's The Flight of Song, Jonathan Dove's Missa Brevis, Vaughan Williams' Five Mystical Songs and Edward Elgar's Give Unto The Lord. Andrew Griffiths conducts. Tickets are £13 (concs £11), U18s £5 from 020 8977 4801. They can also be bought via the society's website, www.kingstonchoralsociety.org.uk



Our friends, reunited

Friendship comes under the spotlight in two oneACT plays which come to the cornerHOUSE as part of a double bill in March. In one, the tensions between two ageing singers (played, above, by Debra Shepherd and Meta Thomas) surface over their past successes and their future ambitions. Hubris, white lies, and mistaken assumptions lead to comic and poignant moments. In the second show, friends learn they have different ways of dealing with the loss of someone who was close to them. The play shifts seamlessly between comedy and tragedy as the truth

about the death emerges. Musical Interlude is a touching new comedy by Graham Large, whose previous oneACT play The Visit was a big hit at last year's cornerHOUSE oneACTS festival. The other show, Heart Shaped Box, a drama written by Andy Moseley, is a revival of a play which was previously performed to glowing reviews at the Old Fire Station in Oxford in 2010. The oneACTS will be performed as staged readings at the arts centre in Douglas Road on Saturday, March 14 at 7.45pm. Tickets are £3 and can be bought on the night.

Double bill at church concert



Kingston Orpheus Choir performs Sir John Stainer's The Crucifixion at St Andrew's church in Maple Road on Saturday, March 21 at 7.30pm. Also on the bill, William Lloyd Webber's work, The Saviour; a meditation on the death of Christ for tenor, bass, choir and organ. David Condry – the choir's musical director – conducts, with Richard Hills the organist, William Gaunt singing bass and William Balkwill tenor. The choir has been performing for more than 70 years. Tickets are available on the door (£14, £12 concs, £6 students, children free) or in advance (£12/£10/£5) via 020 8336 1311 or by emailing orpheustickets@hotmail.co.uk



Malawi images on the wall

Throughout the month of April, the walls of the cornerHOUSE arts centre at 116 Douglas Road will be filled with images of Malawi. An exhibition celebrates the 10th anniversary of Surbiton charity African Vision Malawi, marking the work it does in Africa via photographs and illustrations by Gaynor Cook and Adam Newton. A gala evening on Tuesday, April 14, from 7pm, will include a film screening, music and talk... and the first drink at the bar is free. A collection for the charity at January's cornerHOUSE panto, Shirley Holmes & the Sound of the Basket Wheels (pictured above by Jon Constant) raised £1,177 to pay for 280 food parcels for orphans and disabled people during what are termed 'the hungry months' in Malawi, as the new harvest grows. For more information about the charity, visit www.africanvision.org.uk

Inktense blocks explained

Surbiton Arts Group has a demonstration by Caroline Tate of the versatile, water-soluble Inktense blocks at 8pm on March 16 at the Surbiton Library annexe, Ewell Road. Then on April 13, Freda Anderson has still life tips. For more on the arts group, call 020 8397 1050.

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Film club members enjoy feast

Members of the cornerHOUSE film club enjoyed a filling, lip-smacking selection last month, as Chocolat and Babette's Feast, the 1987 Best Foreign Language film Oscar winner, were shown on the big screen in the Douglas Road arts centre. A new season of films begins in May, with input from members guiding the choice of monthly screenings. The £10 annual fee also includes membership of an extensive, and ever-growing, DVD library, with scores of films and drama series available to borrow. To join, email info@thecornerhouse.org

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Resolving to be better

I am assuming, O virtuous citizens of Surbiton, that since January 1 you have not touched a drop of alcohol, you have lost 2st, you have been to the gym five times a week, you have cleaned out the rabbit hutch with enthusiastic regularity, and you have made good progress on that novel you always said you'd write.

Am I correct? Have your New Year's resolutions been a roaring success? Of course they haven't.

It is with tedious predictability that I can announce that my alcohol intake has not decreased, my resolution to cut down on salt 'n' vinegar chipsticks has been thrown away with many an empty family-sized packet, and not only did I cancel my gym membership but I subscribed to Netflix on the same day. Hey, if I'm not going to exercise, I may as well not exercise while watching good telly.

So, to make myself feel better about being such a diabolical failure, I decided to ask the people of Surbs how their resolutions had worked out. I had some interesting responses.

'I made a resolution to visit at least two London museums this year. I haven't been yet, but I've pencilled in a couple of dates at the end of November.'



'I promised I'd go for more walks in the country. I haven't been for any yet, but the other day I was walking past St Andrew's Square and I thought it was better than nothing, so I walked around it for a bit and tried to pretend I was in a field.'

'I said I'd go to the YMCA gym three times in January. I ate in the canteen three times. Admittedly a tenuous success.'

'I didn't make any. I can fail perfectly well without them.'

'I've actually done them! I've not drunk

booze since January 1! Well, I have, but only at weekends.'

'I wanted to be kinder to animals, as I don't really like them. A couple of weeks ago I heard a dog crying, and I thought 'Great, I can go and save it', but it turned out to be a guy dragging a wheelie bin.'

'My New Year resolution was to not make a resolution. I realised I'd instantly failed.'

Apparently, we are a town of abysmal failures. But I think we're putting too much pressure on ourselves. Why not make attainable resolutions? Try these on for size:

- Walk past a coffee shop or an estate agent at least once a day;
- Curse South West Trains twice a day;
- Buy a bottle of anti-bacterial kitchen spray from the 99p Store and then realise you could've bought it cheaper in Sainsbury's;
- Aim to drink in at least one pub a week, but get extra points if you drink in 10.

I wish you luck.

Go forth and succeed.

Becky Mayhew

Becky's new book, *This Ridiculous Life*, is available at £6.99 at the Regency Bookshop and on Amazon



Scoot safely urges ex-cop

Injury rates for children going to school on foot or scooter are at their highest for a decade, and a retired Surbiton police officer says it's only a matter of time before there is a fatality.

Steve Ainscough, 57, who once pounded the borough beat, fears that as the distance between a scooting child and accompanying parent grows, the risk of accidents rises.

"It's good to see kids walking to school, but what's a reasonable distance to be ahead of a parent?" he asked.

RoSPA, the accident prevention society, says two children a year die as a result of cars reversing out of drives.

Steve, who lives in The Ridge, believes Berrylands is high risk because of the large number of driveways.

"Accompanying two children to school produces different dynamics as an older child wants to get ahead," he said. "They're trained to stop at the end of a road, but it can be the 'perfect storm' of a harassed parent trying to deal with a younger child while the older one scoots away ahead."

Steve spoke out after several local near misses. In Raeburn Avenue a car recently reversed into a mobility scooter.

"Any car that reverses out between a parent and child on a scooter is a near miss. I've pulled out in those circumstances. Parents are oblivious unless they've experienced a close call."

He hopes safer neighbourhood groups will liaise with community police to reduce risks, and explore the possibility of teaching young children scooter safety.

"In our suburban area, everyone has driveways. A driver is late for work, it's a misty morning, the car's side window hasn't fully defrosted, hedges and walls obstruct the driver's vision.

"I have four kids; I've been there, got the T-shirt. One of my sons was knocked off his bike by a car; his helmet was split, but it saved his life. As a police officer, I made too many door-



knocks to tell parents their children had died. Lives are ruined, and it never goes away."

The scooter craze came from the States, where there has been a 700% rise in accidents. In the UK, 2,000 youngsters a year need hospital treatment for scooter accidents.

Scooters reach 25mph, and are technically covered by the law that governs cycling on pavements.

RoSPA urges children to wear safety clothing and cycle helmets, and adds that some of the recent school-run accident rise is down to distraction from mobile phones.



Adam Lewis and Rob Dunne prepare to pour Lamb's yankee festival

The Lamb pub in Brighton Road celebrated transatlantic-style beers with a five-day festival featuring American Citra hops.

Landlord Adam Lewis said: "Americans have taken flavours and aromas to a new level; to get that kind of flavour in lower-strength beers is a real art."

The festival, run by Rob Dunne and Dan Peart, included Texas Brown, Aurora and Hook Island Red. In a neighbourly gesture, the Lamb also sold Big Smoke Brewery ales from Maple Road, behind the Antelope.

Sarah Palette provided al fresco food, including bananas barbecued with bourbon.

● Poet Morris Thain is on holiday, but returns in the next issue

Model evokes era of Old King Coal

This cute model train wagon evokes a bygone era, and recalls a historic Surbiton company.

Crocker's the coal merchants was originally in Pyne Road, Tolworth, with its office at 80 Red Lion Road, where people used to call in to pay their bills.

As recently as 2003 it was still family-owned, dropping coal sacks to local homes. The last known address for the firm was in Corkran Road.

Walter Crocker set up in Tolworth in 1898, delivering coal that was transported by rail from the Midlands to Surbiton in a fleet of his own-brand goods wagons, each capable of hauling 12 tons of the black stuff.

More recently, Bill Crocker ran the business. Readers with long memories may recall brown liveried Crocker trucks parked in a yard by the railway bridge in Brighton Road, ready to pick up coal

from a goods area at Surbiton station.

Crocker's was one of several 'private owner' goods wagon operators based in Surbiton in the golden age of steam. A rival was Thomas Styles.

The goods wagon pictured, recently sold on eBay, was made by the Wrexham model firm Dapol as part of a limited

edition to mark the 40th anniversary of the Hampton Court Model Railway Society in 2003.

Sharp-eyed collectors will instantly recognise that

it is a seven-plank open freight car.

Sold by a Southampton collector, the model wagon fetched £10.50 in the online auction – a bargain as new versions of the toy freight car cost more than £40 each.

The Hampton Court Model Railway Society is still going strong after 52 years, meeting at Tolworth Recreation Centre on Sunday evenings from 8pm.



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Copy date for issue 22 – Friday, April 17, 2015

