

LOOK INSIDE!

The 6th Surbiton Food Festival programme is in this issue, with 35 events in 16 hectic days, from truffle workshops to cake bakes, poetry readings to vegan suppers, sardine trawls to Icelandic cheese tastings, in venues across the town. Many are free, all are quirky and fun. **pp 5-8**



Market reaches 100

The 100th farmers' market in Maple Road, on Saturday April 21, will be celebrated with an anniversary raffle for the children's charity Momentum, drawn at noon. A £1 ticket could win you lunch for two, with wine, at The French Table; a £65 silk scarf from Shoes at

Last; a £100 Specsavers voucher; lunch at No 97; a photoshoot at Rock and Rose Photography; a place on a beekeeping course; a cake from Matthew James estate agents; tea at the Holiday Inn; a meal at Harts Boatyard; or tea at Wags n Tales.

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Hold tight! Bus review mooted

Surbiton's bus network needs a rethink to best serve demand in 2018, says Lib Dem leader Cllr Liz Green as her party squares up to the Tories in next month's local elections.

She wants a review of the K1, K2, K3, K4 and K5 routes, many of which haven't been altered in 30 years.

"All we ever seem to do is tinker," she told a meeting in Glenmore House when the topic was raised. "When routes were put in, people's habits were different. There have been major developments since, and people's shopping habits have changed."

She wants Transport for London to look afresh. "I want to make more of the existing routes; I live on the K2, which is brilliant, but is it fair the K4 is half-hourly, and not on Sundays?"

She added that no single bus linked

Tolworth and Kingston hospitals.

The Conservatives also seek improvements. Cllr Phil Doyle said: "Routes should be kept under review to ensure everyone is served by the excellent bus service in London."

His colleague Cllr Chris Hayes backs efforts by Sunray estate residents to revamp the K1 service – largely unaltered since June 1987.



Emily Sole:
the talent
show winner



Emily strums to success in talent show

Remember the name. Ukelele strummer Emily Sole may be destined for greatness after judges unanimously named her winner of 2018's Tolworth's Got Talent.

The 10-year-old from Tolworth Park Road delivered the stand-out performance of the night, accompanying herself singing Grace VanderWaal's powerful identity anthem I Don't Know My Name.

The annual Tolworth School event, staged in front of a packed house in the hall of Tolworth Girls', left Emily breathlessly telling compere Michelle Gibbs: "It's been an amazing experience."

Asked if she wanted to single anyone out for special thanks, she named her sister Mimi, to a big 'Awwww' in the hall.

Second place went to singer Jacob Lidsey who, though quiet as a mouse when he's in class, bloomed into a confident performer on stage with a pitch-perfect rendition of Harry Styles' solo debut song Sign of the Times.

In third, The Orphans, a Year 3 duo of Imogen Sherjan and Evannah John, singing It's The Hard Knock Life from Annie in an energetic performance which included daredevil chair leaps.

It's digital!



Student Saskia explains to MP Ed Davey the hidden strength in his own tendons. Below, the 'phiz lab' is declared open



As official duties go, this one gave Surbiton MP Ed Davey more pleasure than most; opening the 'phiz lab' in St Andrew's & St Mark's primary, Maple Road, where he is a governor. The junior school is one of the few in the UK with a dedicated science teaching room.

Funded by the Ogden Trust, it encourages hands-on experiments... literally. Saskia, 9, showed the MP how his tendons were connected, while laughter greeted the raspberry sounds he made by blowing down a straw in 'science busking'.

Teacher Matt Gates said the lab was good news at a time the UK needs scientists. It helped girls see the subject isn't just for boys, and it appealed to non-literary students. "Science relates to everything," he said. "Your mum may not wear a white lab coat... but she still uses science every day!"

Saskia's enthusiasm underlined how stimulating the zone can be. "I really enjoy science, so it's definitely something I'd think about," she said, asked if it might be her career choice.

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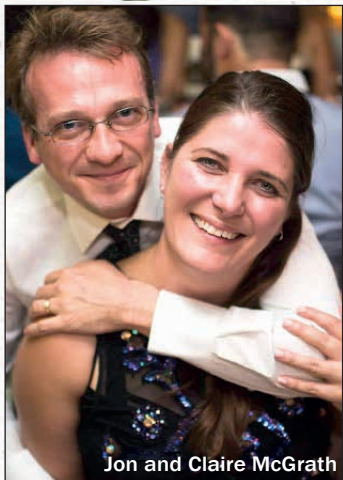


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Jon and Claire McGrath

Community focus is key

Meet Jon and Claire McGrath, Surbiton's newest estate agents, who have launched the Winkworth branch at 26 Brighton Road with firm beliefs about the duty their role carries. "Estate agents have a responsibility to give back to the community," said Claire. "Surbiton is community-orientated, and I like to be involved."

For a decade, Claire, an Australian, was part of a large agency in Brisbane, with 1,000 properties under management, and 60 sales staff. Jon, who is English, also worked in sales Down Under.

When the pound dipped after Brexit, the time was right to move to London. But why Surbiton? "I had a few different options, but I love the village feel here, and it's right on the river," she said, adding how important the town's train connections are too.

She and Jon currently live in Epsom, because of their children's schools, but their affection for Surbiton runs deep.

"Everyone here's really nice, and everyone seems to get involved. There's always something quirky going on," said Claire.

With 56 agents in the wider area, competition is intense, but Claire says there's enough work to go round. "In this climate, some agents will leave the marketplace," she said. "Those who don't get involved in the community will find life harder. Winkworth is perceived as a good brand; people associate us with the higher end. But it's all about building trust with the client." www.winkworth.co.uk/estate-agents/surbiton



History in the making



Linda Davies hands the reins to Paul Lang

After keeping members of Surbiton & District Historical Society in order for 22 years, Linda Davies has passed the baton to Paul Lang. The transition, at last month's agm, prompted tributes to Linda's long service as "the anchor of the society".

She joined in 1970, after being invited to a meeting by a colleague at the Milk Marketing Board.

Initially a Thames Ditton resident, she moved to West Molesey. Though leaving her post for health reasons, she is determined to remain an active member of the society.

Paul Lang, nominated by a shoal of members, was unanimously voted in as chairman. Linda formally pinned the chairman's badge on her successor's woolly jumper.

Paul, instrumental in setting up the website www.surbitonhistoricalsociety.wordpress.com, is a published author whose latest book, out this month, is a history of Ham & Petersham.

A speaker and enthusiastic local guide, he is also publicity officer for the Kingston Archaeological Society, serves on the committee of the Classic Cinema Club, Ealing, and has appeared on TV with Michael Portillo in Great British Railways Journeys.

For 30 years he worked as librarian at St Bernard's Hospital, Southall.

In the early 1980s he lived with his wife in Claremont Gardens, Surbiton, before the family moved to Chessington and then Ewell. The couple have twin daughters, Tasmin and Araminta.

"It's a great honour to have been made chairman of the Surbiton & District Historical Society," he said.

Vigo leads shoe drive

Hollyfield Year 7 pupil Vigo McDonagh, left, seems destined for a career in PR. He and sixth-former Paul Ainscough launched a shoe recycling initiative to help children in Laos, promoting the project and helping local dad Steve Blevins present it to fellow students at assembly.

Already Hollyfield pupils, parents and staff have donated 105 pairs of used trainers and football boots to a country where few children have access to organised sport.

The scheme began at Shrewsbury House School in 2016, with 900

pairs delivered via DHL to South East Asian playing fields – where rough, stony ground often leads to injuries.

"I'm very grateful to Vigo, Paul and the Hollyfield community for supporting this scheme so generously," said Steve. "These shoes make an incredible difference to the lives of young girls and boys in Laos."

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See things differently.

Cold out, hot in

Last month's icy spell deterred many from venturing far, but led to an unexpected bonanza for restaurants. There wasn't a spare seat in East India, the town's oldest curry house, in Brighton Road, on the chilliest night.

Sitting on a train

The chances of a seat to Waterloo rose on March 13; South Western Railway's new coach roll-out was completed. There are 11,000 more seats now than in December 2017. "Hopefully passengers will notice the difference," said SWR chief Andy Mellors.

Peter's last serve

Peter Light, for eight years a coach at Surbiton Racket & Fitness Club, has died suddenly at 59. Director Roy Staniland called him "a highly respected coach and likeable guy". The funeral took place in Thames Ditton.



Shop turns pink

With jazzy pink fascia and more elbow room, Princess Alice Hospice's charity shop has moved from Claremont Road to opposite Sainsbury's in Victoria Road. It has plush fitting rooms and an urban shabby chic look inside. Stock includes a fine selection of wedding hats. The charity says the move was 'cost neutral', and is confident it will increase its profits in the long-term.

Pantry's new app

Pickled Pantry, St Mark's Hill, is devising a new menu under Brasserie Blanc-trained chef Jessica as owner George Setchell steps away from day-to-day operations to focus on accountancy. Via a new app, customers can order by phone, then collect.

Awards unveiled

Surbiton enterprises (start-ups to eateries, sole traders to charities) may enter Kingston's 2018 business awards, with an October dinner on Raven's Ait. www.kingstonawards.co.uk

SAS history talk

Gavin Mortimer talks on the history of Britain's special forces at Shrewsbury House School on Thursday May 3 at 7pm. He is the author of the book *The Men Who Made The SAS*.

Two top homes

Hamilton nursing home, Langley Avenue, for people with dementia and Alzheimer's, and Surbiton care home Park Road, are in London's top 20, based on reviews sent to care home comparison site www.carehome.co.uk

Social has wings

Newcomers are welcome to Surbiton Bird Watching Society's social at the library annexe in Ewell Road at 8pm on May 15, with quizzes, buffet and raffle. Details: www.surbitonbirds.org

Suzanne's on foot

Suzanne Marley's red Fiesta is getting a rest in Avenue Elmers as she bids to walk 1,000 miles in 2018 to raise money (via JustGiving) for Surbiton charity the Fircroft Trust, where she volunteers. Full story in next issue.

Orphan talk topic

On May 1, Surbiton historical society hears Dr Christopher French talk on the Twickenham police orphanage. 7.30pm, Ewell Road library annexe.

Locked the car?

Double-check you've locked your car. A spate of thefts in Surbiton and Long Ditton suggests thieves routinely check doors in the small hours, ransacking gloveboxes for cash and valuables.

Hearty support

Surbiton lacks a 24-hour automated defibrillator. However, Phil Harris is running the London Marathon to raise £2,000 for the life-saving equipment. www.aeddonate.org.uk/projects/aed-for-central-surbiton

Marina inferno



Picture: Cathy Dickerson

"I was a bit shaken, to be honest; shocked and reeling," said Elaine Kimber of the fire which engulfed the workshop at Thames Ditton marina, where her narrow boat is moored. "It was like an inferno, I've never seen anything like it."

She had to leave her floating home and move in with her sister in Ellerton Road until power was restored. "With the thick snow and ice it was freezing cold and I had no electricity, but they worked round the clock and got power back in 36 hours."

Firefighters reached the Portsmouth Road marina blaze at 9.10am on March 1, with the fire under control by 1pm.

The workshop housed boat equipment, paint and tools. A marina resident also lost his motorbike in the blaze. Residents believe an electrical fault may have been to blame.



Stepping into a magazine

A five-bedroom Ditton Road Victorian semi, transformed – inside and out – into an interior design classic with dramatic lighting, contemporary redecorating and elegant tiling, is on the market at £1.25m. It's like stepping into the pages of a glossy lifestyle magazine; the owners spent a tidy sum on local designer Amanda Russell's complete reimagining, but have preserved original features such as open fireplaces. It's on sale via Seymours (020 8390 3333).

SURBITON LIFE by David Cox



High-viz 'kit clash' blamed as nursery nurse mistakes workman for an escaping child

The big pick-up

It wasn't so much a case of rolling up sleeves as pulling on hats, scarves, extra layers and gloves as residents of Tolworth's Sunray estate staged a community litter pick on one of the coldest days of March's icy snap.

Co-ordinator Simon Green hopes it will be the template for other neighbourhoods to adopt roads and open spaces on regular clean-ups, as well as promptly reporting fly-tipping and antisocial behaviour.

"It was our first event; an opportunity to promote the Keep Britain Tidy campaign," said Simon. The gathering at the Barnsbury Crescent green saw community rangers, Tolworth scouts and local Ahmadiyya

Muslim youths join residents to give the area some TLC.

Wheelbarrows, litter pickers and bags were provided, with 20 helpers – spanning all generations – joining forces in the springclean.



● The Bosco Lounge in St Mark's Hill has turned brunch into an even more luxuriously languid affair. From 9am-4pm, Saturday and Sunday, an hour-and-a-half's bottomless brunch loungeabout now includes endless Prosecco or Grey Goose bloody Marys. As well as full English, meals include avocado on granary toast with free-range poached egg (pictured), chorizo hash and eggs Benedict.

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Surbiton mother made local church history



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Pat McCarthy, who has died at 85, made history by being the first woman to address the congregation from the pulpit at Our Lady Immaculate, Tolworth.

She and husband John, who celebrated 60 years of marriage last year, lived 45 years at 149 Beresford Avenue, Tolworth, raising Helen, Richard, Michael and Paul, who had special needs and died at the age of 21 in 1986.

Pat, pictured, had joined the Union of Catholic Mothers, becoming president of the local branch, and was able to address the church in the mid-1960s thanks to a loosening of strict rules following the Second Vatican Council.

Aptly, Pat's funeral mass was held on Women's World Day of Prayer on March 2; with relatives and friends



braving the snow swirling round St Raphael's, Portsmouth Road.

She died on January 23, eight years after being diagnosed with blood cancer, and – as daughter Helen put it in her tribute – “having clung to life with every bit of strength she had”.

Born in London on June 3 1932, the second of seven girls raised by Anna and Jack Sheehan, Pat spent her early years in Ireland before returning to England in 1942.

“She never did things by half measure,” said Helen. “Everything she did, she made a success.”

She met “the dashing John McCarthy”, who survives her, in 1947 in Cheam. They married in June 1957. For the last 14 years, the couple have lived near the river in Grove Road.

Pat sang with Surbiton Oratorio under director John Wilkinson (it evolved into the Kingston Choral Society), and joined the Raeburn Singers. She was also an enthusiastic Italian speaker.

A mainstay of family life was Sunday lunches, “after which my parents would play piano and cello duets,” said Helen.

The mass (aided by a thoughtfully designed large-print order of service) was conducted by Fr Michael Lovell of St Raphael's, and Fr Frank O'Connor, Pat's cousin from Limerick, who spoke of her “deep, profound faith”.

Tim Harrison
● Anna Patricia McCarthy, born June 3 1932, died January 23 2018

NOTABLE SURBITONIANS Pat McCarthy



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2018

SURBITON Food Festival

surbitonfoodfestival.org



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GREETINGS!

We are delighted to welcome you back to The Surbiton Food Festival, now in its sixth year. Since The Community Brain and a fabulous group of volunteers and local businesses, established the festival in 2013, our beloved community celebration has rapidly developed into an event that brings the town to life each year with over 50 businesses and 10,000 members of the public getting involved last year.

While food provides the basis for our festivities, SFF is about so much more. It is a showcase of the fabulous talent found in our community; it is a celebration of laughter and love; and it is a setting for socialising and companionship. Whether a longstanding Surbiton citizen or a brief passerby, friends, food and fun are to be had wherever you look over our festival fortnight.

Beyond the showpiece occasions you'll discover all sorts of other treats and delights. Perhaps we can tempt you into learning all about how to locate and forage for seasonal ingredients, before using

them in your own homemade pizza? How about giving your under 5s the chance to perform their own musical number about food? Or perhaps you'd like to do none of the work, and would prefer to just sit back and listen to some of our community's characters dropping in on our special charity fundraiser broadcast?

Please do make the best of all our offerings - and if you're interested in helping our dedicated group of volunteers, please get in touch!

Have a great festival! From everyone at the Surbiton Food Festival team.

THE SEETHING FRESHWATER SARDINE FESTIVAL
Sunday 6th May



THE SURBITON VILLAGE FÊTE AND DRY HOPPED BEER FESTIVAL
Saturday 12th and Sunday 13th May

SEETHING COMMUNITY SPORTS DAY, PICNIC AND FUN DOG SHOW
Saturday 19th May



MAIN EVENTS



THE SEETHING FRESHWATER SARDINE FESTIVAL

Sunday 6th
May 1pm – 6pm

FREE

**Claremont Gardens,
The Crescent, KT6 4BN**

In 2005 freshwater sardines were finally reintroduced to the Thames. Surbiton's frustrated fishermen celebrated once again: the annual Great Haul returned to the town's shores, witnessed by its inhabitants who flock to see their trawling heroes deliver this mighty catch. Surbiton Food Festival annually celebrates this noble tradition and its abundant offerings with the Freshwater Sardine Procession and BBQ that immediately follow the trawl. Arts and crafts, live music, and a well-stocked bar further combine to deliver the greatest fishing celebration in southwest London. We hear SFF's volunteer co-ordinator might be getting married this day.... **Dress to impress**



THE SURBITON VILLAGE FÊTE AND DRY HOPPED BEER FESTIVAL

Saturday 12th and
Sunday 13th May 12pm – 6pm

FREE

St Andrew's Square, KT6 4EA

A mouth-watering feast of deliciousness! Stalls spring up, offering anything from cakes to cheese, while demonstrators will offer lessons in wine, Indian cuisine and vegan treats as musicians from far and not-so-far keep you entertained. Lubrication is lended by your loving local: The Lamb and The Black Lion are once again delivering the only Dry Hopped Beer Festival in London, with all ales sourced from CAMRA-recognised local suppliers.

Our beloved Maple Road Women's Institute will be back running the demonstration tent packed full of children's craft activities and competitions, food and drink demonstrations and of course an opportunity for you to stock up on their famous homemade preserves.



SEETHING COMMUNITY SPORTS DAY, PICNIC AND FUN DOG SHOW



Saturday 19th May 12pm – 4pm

**Victoria Recreation Ground,
Balaclava Road, KT6 5JL**

Legends are born. Heroes are discovered. Hearts are broken and eggs are dropped. It can only be the return of the Seething Community Sports Day, its inclusive and joyous appearance masking the fierce competitiveness that drives its athletes. Which guild will reign supreme? Which pair will take the least graceful tumble in the Three Legged Race? Which of Surbiton's red blooded males will look the most glamorous in the Drag Race?

It would of course be terribly rude to only offer such competitive opportunities to humans, so bring your four-legged friend along and enter them into our Fun Dog Show. You never know, they could be the one to grab the gong for the highly coveted Top Dog award.



EATING AND DRINKING



AN EVENING OF POETRY, MUSIC AND FOOD WITH GABRIEL MORENO

8th May, 7.30pm – 10pm

£15

Museum of Futures - 117 Brighton Road, KT6 5NJ

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CALIFORNIAN WINE DINNER

£85

9th May, 7pm – 10.30pm

The French Table - 85 Maple Road, KT6 4AW

The French Table are excited to announce that Doug Shafer of Shafer Vineyards, Napa Valley will be showcasing four of his beautiful wines and sharing tales of his life as a family winemaker.

The wine will be accompanied by a 4-course seasonal menu cooked by Chef Patron Eric Guignard - and a glass of sparkling wine will welcome you to this exclusive evening.

Limited availability. Tables will be large sharing tables. The event takes place on the first floor, accessible by staircase only.

Booking: zoe@thefrenchtable.co.uk

ICELANDIC CHEESE AND SKYR WITH EIRNÝ SIGURÐARDÓTTIR

£67

11th May, 7.30pm – 10pm

Museum of Futures - 117 Brighton Road, KT6 5NJ

A unique opportunity in the UK! Eat amazing cheeses that you can't buy here, meet Eirny, cheese and dairy expert, Reykjavik deli owner and dedicated curd nerd. The evening includes Eirny's fascinating workshop and meal consisting of a selection of Icelandic cheeses, sourdough bread and artisanal crispbread, a selection of Icelandic cured meats and salads ... and a real Icelandic Skyr dessert. **More information at** <http://icelandtraveller.co.uk/surbiton-food-festival-2018/>

Booking: <https://www.jumblebee.co.uk/icelandicsupperclub>

SURBO VEGAN DINNER

£20

14th May, 7.30pm - 10.30pm

Museum of Futures - 117 Brighton Road, KT6 5NJ

An American Diner pop up experience. Join us for an evening of Americana where we will be serving classic Diner dishes: All Vegan and cruelty-free.

Booking: lucy.a.mac@outlook.com

NO 97 CHEF'S TABLE

£50

14th May, 8pm – 11pm

No 97 Gin Bar - 97 Maple Road, KT6 4AW

Join us for an immersive, memorable dining experience in a private, setting overlooking the restaurant's open plan kitchen and bar. The focused intensity of the kitchen creates a fantastic atmosphere, as dishes are created and presented in front of you. There are only 10 tickets available so get in quick!

Booking: 020 3411 9797 or hello@no-97.co.uk



GIN TASTING MASTERCLASS

£35

15th May, 7pm – 8.30pm

No 97 Gin Bar - 97 Maple Road, KT6 4AW

As dedicated gin drinkers, No 97 have set up their Gin Den so fellow gin-ophiles can come down and enjoy exceptional gins in a relaxed but luxurious bar. Gin Masterclass is perfect for a bit of posh fun. One and a half hours of expert tuition (on gin, botanicals & tonics). Taste five different gins. Enjoy two superb gin & tonics.

Booking: 020 3411 9797 or hello@no-97.co.uk

CHEESE AND WINE TASTING EVENING

£35

16th May, 7pm – 10pm

French Table - 85 Maple Road, KT6 4AW

Learn the stories behind the cheese and wine makers. Enjoy a welcome glass of fizz on arrival and then sit back and enjoy 5 delectable cheeses paired with 5 carefully chosen wines, all accompanied by detailed tasting notes delivered by The French Table's Sarah Guignard.

Limited availability. Tables will be large sharing tables. The event takes place on the first floor, accessible by staircase only.

Booking: zoe@thefrenchtable.co.uk



PICKLED PANTRY SUPPER CLUB

£13

18th May, 7pm - 11pm

The Museum of Futures - 117 Brighton Road, KT6 5NJ

Supper @ The Museum is a simple menu of a single 'Dish Of The Day', along with a selection of starters and desserts. This event operates a Bring Your Own booze policy. The price stated is for the main course, starters and desserts are extra.

Booking: 020 8399 4694 or info@pickledpantry.co.uk

SURBITON FARMERS MARKET

FREE

19th May, 9am - 1pm

Maple Road

Whether you're shopping for gourmet game, homemade preserves or delectable cakes and patisserie, Surbiton's award-winning market is all about fantastic food, a great atmosphere and a true sense of community. Every month some 26 stalls offer the very finest fare, brought to you directly by farmers and artisans who are truly passionate about what they do – and all against the village backdrop of leafy Maple Road with its chic eateries and shops.

Booking not required

SUNDAY CARVERY

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**Holiday Inn Kingston South -
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*Save 20% from your meal and enjoy unlimited Bloody Marys and Whisky Sours when you present this brochure or quote 'SFF2018', terms and conditions apply.

Booking recommended: 020 8786 6520

CHILDREN AND FAMILIES



'WILD FOOD' SATURDAY SESSION FOR YOUNGSTERS

DONATION ONLY

5th May, 9.30am – 11am

A Lesson in Nature - Hill Park Roses, KT6 5HN

An opportunity for children of all ages to come with parents and learn how to cook a mid-morning snack on an open fire at A Lesson in Nature's outdoor classroom! Drop in anytime!

No booking required

KINGSTON'S EDIBLE FOREST GARDEN OPEN DAY

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for AVM

5th May, 12pm – 6pm

Knollmead Allotments - Tolworth, KT5 9QP

Kingston's edible forest garden has been developing as a sustainable orchard since 1992. This open day is in aid of African Vision Malawi (AVM). A magical day in the orchard for all the family with lots of fragrant apple blossom (hopefully), storytelling from Surrey Storytellers, orchard tours, pond dipping, bamboo straw making, plant sales, music and sunshine, and a chance to meet Jade, the friendly Indian Runner duck.

Dogs on leads welcome. Bring a picnic and musical instruments. Please wear stout footwear. To request plants use the contact form on www.kpr2016.wordpress.com

No booking required

PINT SIZED POP STARS

£7

11th May, 11am – 11.45am and 1pm – 1.45pm

The Lamb - 73 Brighton Road, KT6 5NF

Join Liam at The Lamb Surbiton to enjoy a special food festival themed guitar and singing group music session for parents/carers and children aged 0-5.

Booking: pint-sizedpopstars@hotmail.com or 07517428670

CHILDREN'S PIZZA MAKING WORKSHOP

£5

12th May, 10.30am – 11.30am

Da Lucio Restaurant - 101 Maple Road, KT6 4AW

Learn some fun and interesting facts about pizza and make your own to take home. Suitable for 4 – 10 year olds

Booking: 020 8399 5113

POTTERY AND CRAFT IN THE TARTE

£5 per item

18th May, 10am – 12.15pm

Tarte in The Park - Victoria Rec, KT6 5JL

Michele from The Pottery and Craft Studio will be doing her monthly pottery painting session at The French Tarte in the Park. For further information text 07961960274

No booking required



DISCUSSIONS, COMPETITIONS, DEMONSTRATIONS AND WORKSHOPS

'WILD FOOD' SATURDAY SESSION £20

5th May, 11.30am – 1.30pm and 2pm – 4pm

A Lesson in Nature - Hill Park Roses, KT6 5HN

A special 'Wild Food' Saturday Session at A Lesson in Nature's outdoor kitchen classroom in Long Ditton. Come along and learn how we can locate, forage and use seasonal delights like Wild Garlic to spice up a gorgeous pizza, fired in our clay oven! Price includes lunch of your own freshly prepared pizza!

Booking: Alessoninnature@gmail.com



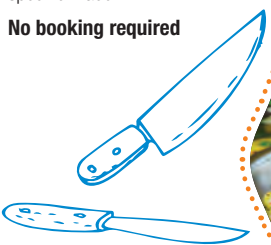
SPENCE BLADES - KNIFE SHARPENING £1 per inch

7th May, 10am – 12pm

Museum of Futures - 117 Brighton Road, KT6 5NJ

Will Spence is a local knife maker who is here to sharpen your blades! Will also makes custom kitchen knives and will have some for sale. Email Will at spenceblades@gmail.com if you would like something specific made.

No booking required



MAPLE VILLAGE WI FREE DEMONSTRATION AND CRAFT TENT

12th & 13th May, 12pm – 6pm

St Andrew's Square

Join the MVWI Tent for a packed programme of activities. They will be hosting local foodie experts offering an array of demos and tastings, including wine, foraging, honey, Indian cuisine and vegan treats! There'll be free crafts and competitions for kids - and a chance to stock up on their famous homemade preserves!

No booking required

BAKING WITH ELYSE - CHOCOLATE TRUFFLE WORKSHOP £45

16th May, 7pm – 9.45pm

Lallapolosa Baking Company -

26 Bloomfield Road, KT1 2SE

Learn three delicious confections. First up, create a rich Chocolate Truffle, enrobing a versatile chocolate ganache in dark chocolate and a dusting of cocoa powder. Next, caramels, make the perfect Chocolate Caramel with an oozing centre, enrobed in milk chocolate. Finally, Lallapolosa's divine White Chocolate Pistachio Truffles. Each student will take home their treats in a beautiful gift box, leaving just one question... who will be the lucky recipient?

Booking: www.lallapolosabaking.co.uk



BUTCHERY AND BLUES £15

16th May, 6.30pm – 10.30pm

The Lamb - 73 Brighton Road, KT6 5NF

Come and spend the evening with Joe Corbin, the Blues Butcher. Learn how to portion a chicken in a hands on workshop. Chicken provided by local prizewinning butcher CD Jennings and Sons. Learn some new skills and take your prepared meat home with you. Joe will then dazzle you with his incredible blues set!

Booking: billetto.co.uk/e/271615

FUN DOG SHOW £2 entry fee

19th May, 12pm – 4pm

Seething Community Sports Day @ Victoria Rec

Bringing you the Fun Dog Show for the third successive year, festival sponsors Voo Veterinary Practice for another round of paws and prizes. Participants may enter as many classes as they like from the below:

- Best Small Dog
- Best Puppy (up to 1 year)
- Best Veteran (over 10 years)
- Dog The Judge Would Most Like To Take Home
- Best Junior Handler (16 and under)
- Dog That Most Looks Like It's Owner
- Waggiest Tail
- Top Dog (Best In Show)

£2 entry fee. All fees will be donated to Guide Dogs.

No booking required



HAVING FUN AND GETTING ARTY!

POTTERY PAINTING £6 per item

7th May, 2pm – 4.30pm

Museum of Futures - 117 Brighton Road, KT6 5NJ

The Pottery and Craft Studio will be holding a food-themed pottery painting session on Bank Holiday Monday. Children, adults or whole families can create some beautiful and unique painted pottery which will then be glazed and fired. Booking is advised (but not essential).

Booking: michelelland27@gmail.com

POP ART, MINIMALISM AND THE RISE OF CONSUMERISM £5

10th May, 7.30pm – 9.30pm

Museum of Futures - 117 Brighton Road, KT6 5NJ

Talk by Colin Pink, art historian and poet.

We will examine the rise of Pop Art and Minimalism as a reaction to the dominance of Abstract Expressionism and the rise of mass consumer culture including Claes Oldenburg's replica food sculptures. Home-made cake and biscuits during the mid-talk break!

No booking required



24 HOUR PODCAST PEOPLE FREE

12th May, 4pm – 13th May, 4pm

St Andrew's Square

Creative Brain Media are pitching up at the Village Fete as part of a 24-hour marathon live broadcast. From the makers of Broadway to Brazil and the US100 podcasts, Jarek Zaba, Chris Kelly and Brent "Producer BD" Davies are losing sleep and sanity to raise money for Creative Youth. Games and challenges, guests from across the community, and an abundant feast of inane natter. Follow [@24hour_podcast](https://twitter.com/24hour_podcast) on Twitter to access the broadcast or sponsor slots of up to an hour.

No booking required

FOODIE QUIZ

15th May, 8.30pm – 11pm

The Black Lion -

58 Brighton Road, KT6 5PL

A special food festival edition of this much loved local quiz – points mean prizes so engage your brain, stomach and liver and try and make sure you are not the Wurst...

No Booking required



SEETHING WRITERS GO TO THE SWEETSHOP AND BUY.... FREE

17th May, 7pm – 9pm

The Museum of Futures -

117 Brighton Road, KT6 5NJ

Come to an evening of food nostalgia, sampling the whole range of gourmet treats from flying saucers to cheesy wotsits, firemen's bootlaces to sweet cigarettes. Let's wake up our latent childhood memories and write about them. Treats supplied but do bring some to share if you like. Suitable for all ages. For more information look at the Seething Writers Facebook page.

No Booking required

SUPER CUMBIA Y LA LIGA DE LA ALEGRIA FREE donations welcome

20th May, 8pm – 11pm

The Lamb - 73 Brighton Road, KT6 5NF

Join The Lamb for one final party as we bid the Festival farewell. A tropical night of Latin American Music and Food.

No Booking required



Our Festival would not be possible without the help of our sponsors - Thank you to:

TARTE IN THE PARK

The French Tarte began as a little table outside The French Table restaurant on the third Saturday of every month – to coincide with Surbiton Farmers Market. With regular visitors every month and a growing demand, Eric & Sarah bought the shop next door to their restaurant and breathed life into The French Tarte. True to form, the place oozes petite Parisienne charm, with its marble-topped tables and fine-weather alfresco seating. A second site can be found at 45, High Street Teddington - and now their third – Tarte in the Park – has found a cosy little spot in the old pavilion, Victoria Recreation Ground.

The French Tarte is delighted to be a sponsor of the brilliant Surbiton Food Festival.



VOO VETS



Voo Vets Group is delighted to sponsor The Surbiton Food Festival, for the 4th year running. During the Seething Freshwater Sardine Festival, there will be organised tours and demonstrations, offering a view into the life of the 24hr hospital and emergency care team. On the Community Sports Day there will be a fun dog show, where paws win prizes. During the festival, there will be a pop-up pet shop, the team will offer free mini-health checks, answer questions and provide expert advice, for healthy, happy pets. Please check Voo Vets Surbiton Facebook Page for more details of events, activities and competitions.



HOLIDAY INN KINGSTON SOUTH

Holiday Inn Kingston South is proud to sponsor this year's Surbiton Food Festival. Outstanding service and great food is always at the heart of what we do, from an intimate meal in the restaurant, to a celebration in the Kingston Suite for up to 220 you'll always find a warm welcome awaiting you.



AEGON SURBITON TROPHY

The Aegon Surbiton Trophy tennis tournament takes place between 2-10 June at the Surbiton Racket and Fitness Club in Berrylands. It brings all the excitement and atmosphere of Wimbledon right here to Surbiton. Watch as a relaxed, family-friendly local club hosts one of the most important warm-up tournaments for Wimbledon. Enjoy strawberries and cream or a glass of champagne while some of the world's best male and female tennis players compete just a few feet in front of you.

Ground passes for the opening weekend are FREE. Other tickets are between £9 - £12 for advance booking. An adult Centre Court Reserved purchase on Friday – Sunday will have an option to include one child ticket to be purchased half price. Discounts are available for Surbiton Racket and Fitness Club members. Corporate and hospitality packages available for local companies.

Book your tickets now at www.ita.org.uk/surbitontrophy



DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

May 5th 'WILD FOOD' SATURDAY SESSION FOR YOUNGSTERS 9.30am – 11am 'WILD FOOD' SATURDAY SESSION 11.30am – 1.30pm & 2pm – 4pm KINGSTON'S EDIBLE FOREST GARDEN OPEN DAY 12pm – 6pm	May 7th SPENCE BLADES KNIFE SHARPENING 10am – 12pm POTTERY PAINTING 2pm – 4.30pm	May 11th PINT SIZED POP STARS 11am – 11.45am and 1pm – 1.45pm ICELANDIC CHEESE AND SKYR WITH EIRNÝ SIGURÐARDÓTTIR 7.30pm – 10pm	May 13th SUNDAY CARVERY 12pm – 5pm 24 HOUR PODCAST PEOPLE Until 4pm SURBITON VILLAGE FETE 12pm – 6pm MAPLE VILLAGE WI DEMONSTRATION AND CRAFT TENT 12pm – 6pm	May 16th CHEESE AND WINE TASTING EVENING 7pm – 10pm BAKING WITH ELYSE - CHOCOLATE TRUFFLE WORKSHOP 7pm – 9.45pm BUTCHERY AND BLUES 6.30pm – 10.30pm	May 19th SURBITON FARMERS MARKET 9am – 1pm SEETHING COMMUNITY SPORTS DAY, PICNIC AND FUN DOG SHOW 12pm – 4pm FUN DOG SHOW 12pm – 4pm
May 6th SUNDAY CARVERY 12pm – 5pm SEETHING FRESHWATER SARDINE FESTIVAL 1pm – 6pm	May 8th AN EVENING OF POETRY, MUSIC AND FOOD WITH GABRIEL MORENO 7.30pm – 10pm May 9th CALIFORNIAN WINE DINNER 7pm – 10.30pm	May 12th CHILDREN'S PIZZA MAKING WORKSHOP 10.30am – 11.30am 24 HOUR PODCAST PEOPLE From 4pm SURBITON VILLAGE FETE 12pm – 6pm MAPLE VILLAGE WI DEMONSTRATION AND CRAFT TENT 12pm – 6pm	May 14th SURBO VEGAN DINNER 7.30pm – 10.30pm NO 97'S CHEF'S TABLE 8pm – 11pm May 15th GIN TASTING MASTERCLASS 7pm - 8.30pm FOODIE QUIZ 8.30pm – 11pm	May 17th SEETHING WRITERS GO TO THE SWEETSHOP AND BUY.... 7pm – 9pm May 18th POTTERY AND CRAFT IN THE TARTE 10am – 12.15pm PICKLED PANTRY SUPPER CLUB 7pm – 11pm	May 20th SUNDAY CARVERY 12pm – 5pm SUPER CUMBIA Y LA LIGA DE LA ALEGRIA 8pm – 11pm

KEY: MAIN EVENTS EATING AND DRINKING DISCUSSIONS, COMPETITIONS, DEMONSTRATIONS AND WORKSHOPS CHILDREN AND FAMILIES HAVING FUN AND GETTING ARTY!

Thanks for your support

COMMUNITY MATTERS

The Community Brain is dedicated to fostering creativity, innovative thinking, and playfulness in order to bring people together and ensure Surbiton remains an exciting and pleasant place to live. We strongly believe that by tapping into the huge source of talent that is our local area we can put a smile on our town's face in a positive, sustainable, and collaborative way. Talent can come in any form – technical, academic, practical, or artistic, your skill set will find a home. For more information and details of upcoming events, including the Surbiton Food Festival and much more, see www.seethingwells.org and visit the 'coming up' section.



THE MUSEUM OF FUTURES

Do you have an idea that you want to try out? Does your new business or enterprise need some space in which to work creatively? Do you have culinary ambitions but not the kitchen to make it a reality? Do you have a show or a band but no rehearsal venue? We may be able to help. In 2016, The Community Brain transformed a vacant premises at 117 Brighton Road to create The Museum of Futures - since then hundreds of recently established or brand new businesses, artists, musicians, and members of the community, have used the space to follow their ideas and ambitions.



THE COMMUNITY KITCHEN

One key feature of the Museum of Futures is the Community Kitchen, a direct consequence of the Surbiton Food Festival. The storming success of the Festival made it abundantly clear that Surbiton was rich in creative culinary talent to the extent that we saw in it many new potential businesses – so we decided to provide an industry standard kitchen and facilities for them to test their ideas and hone their recipes. The Community Kitchen also serves as a space for cookery workshops and demonstrations, and can also be used for event catering.

If you have an idea or project that would benefit from either space, get in touch through the Museum of Futures Facebook page or www.museumoffutures.org.



SHEDx

SHEDx encompasses a range of activities to activate and engage the local community of Tolworth to take ownership of their unused and green spaces to help define and improve the future for their town. Helping to engage and energise; the project will enable the community to shape the future of Tolworth. For more information visit www.thecommunitybrain.org/shedx



THANK YOU

We would like to give a huge thank you to everyone who has worked so hard to help us produce the Surbiton Food Festival. In particular we are incredibly grateful for the support provided by

Seething Volunteers, Berrylands Companion, Chessington Chat, Good Life, Karen, Gen, Gemma, Liz and Adam and The Lamb, Mark and The Black Lion, Gavin, Robin, Tina, Brent, Yell, John Carrington, MVWI, Kelly Woods, Ian and KBH, all of our musicians, demonstrators and traders.



At your service...

They're open... just as the tennis season gets properly under way. Restored, resurfaced and ready for play, the new-look courts at Alexandra rec are smooth and inviting... a major step up from their former pitted, crumbling state.

Overseen and managed by Surbiton Racket & Fitness Club, and backed by the Lawn Tennis Association, the four courts usher in a mini revolution in the way public tennis is delivered in the Royal borough.

For an annual fee of £50 (which covers an entire household), or by paying £6 an hour on a pay-and-play basis, courts are booked online, with entry gained via a door code.

The first serves whizzed over the nets at the Alexandra Drive courts two weeks ago.

A linked coaching programme will encourage newcomers, the aim being to broaden the appeal of tennis in Surbiton. Courts can be booked up to a fortnight in advance.

The community parks tennis programme is family-focused, with Surbiton Racket & Fitness Club also taking responsibility for major court improvements at Beverley Park and Kingston Road, New Malden.

Vacant court slots can be booked online (www.parktennisinkingston.co.uk) with the door entry code sent as confirmation.



● Tolworth's Edible Forest Garden is fundraising for Surbiton charity African Vision Malawi, helping orphans and vulnerable adults.

An open day on Saturday May 5 from noon-6pm coinciding with fragrant apple blossom time, will have storytelling and music, orchard tours, pond-dipping, bamboo straw making, plant sales, and a chance to meet Jade, the friendly Indian Runner duck. Details: www.kpr2016.wordpress.com

Before that, day-long training workshops are being staged at the garden (aka Kingston Permaculture Reserve) at the Knollmead allotment site, Tolworth, with tips on fruit growing and permaculture. The first is on Sunday April 15, covering grafting, pruning, thinning and storage of fruit and vegetables.

Plants for sale include heritage apple trees, gooseberries, grape vines, figs, blackberries, herbs and raspberries. The garden dates from 1992; a productive oasis for people and wildlife.

Create your own Space to Grow but remember, be practical too, advises Janice Cripps

Low maintenance requires planning

This year's Chelsea Flower Show (May 22-26) launches a category called Space to Grow, focusing on maximising space in typical town gardens, with plenty of ideas to take home. If you plan a visit and have visions of creating your own show garden, I take my hat off to you, but think about maintenance issues!

In the world of garden design, much time has been spent on 'the low maintenance garden'. It tops the list of time-poor clients, or ones who confess total ignorance of anything to do with horticulture. But are we talking low-maintenance or zero-maintenance? Unless the garden is plant-free, it will need regular and dedicated attention.

By choosing the right plants, it is possible to reduce time spent working in the garden. But every plant has different characteristics and needs, and jobs need to be done at a specific time of the year; there's no getting away from it.

Low-maintenance gardens need to be carefully planned from the start. Here are some things to think about.

- Use quality, long-lasting materials, particularly paving or fencing. Porcelain paving is increasingly popular.
- Buy fewer plant varieties of plants, but get to know them better. Get a head start by selecting those with the RHS award of garden merit, which means they are 'good doers' and won't need special care or attention.
- Reduce or replace your lawn.
- Install good-quality garden edging such as Everedge, which means less time strimming borders.
- Put in an efficient, automatic irrigation system – it can be more cost-effective than watering by hand.
- Plant more shrubs which offer year-round structure with a minimal maintenance regime.
- Cover bare soil with perennials which don't need staking. Weeds are opportunist; they quickly invade bare tracts of earth and can be a nightmare to get rid of.
- In mid-spring, lay a 2-4cm layer of mulch over bare soil to condition it, add nutrients, suppress weeds and conserve moisture, letting plants thrive. I use fine black manure; more attractive than wood chip or bark mulch.

For more about Chelsea's Space to Grow gardens visit www.tinyurl.com/y92vfh94

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

Staging drama workshops

Looking to develop improvisation and stage confidence? Drama workshops run at the cornerHOUSE, Douglas Road, on Wed May 9, 16, 23, and 30, from 7.30-10pm. Aimed at over 18s, they are for all abilities. Each workshop costs £3. For more details email thechartistic.team@gmail.com

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SURBITON & DISTRICT HISTORICAL SOCIETY

First Tuesday of each month at 7.30pm

ALL WELCOME!

Tuesday May 1:
Dr Christopher French talks on The Metropolitan & City Police Orphanage in Twickenham before 1914.



Come to Surbiton Library Annexe by the war memorial in Ewell Road

www.surbitonhistoricalsociety.wordpress.com



ACCESS

YOUR FUTURE CAREER

* I worried that I was too mature to return to education and that I wouldn't be able to keep up with the level of work. However, from the start, the tutors were welcoming and reassuring. I can honestly say that I absolutely loved the entire experience; inspired by the depth of knowledge that the tutors displayed. My advice to anyone thinking of retraining and studying an Access course is: go for it. Take advantage of the support on offer; tap into the knowledge and experience of your tutors and enjoy every moment."

Alisha Margetts – Access to Midwifery now at the University of Surrey

Open Event, Friday 22 June 2018, 11 am - 2pm

kingston-college.ac.uk



Brrrrrrr...



The snowfall caught everyone on the hop, though Good Life volunteer David Cornell dressed like an Arctic explorer to ensure the papers got through. He's in the woolly hat, not the trilby, worn by a Ditton Road snowman.

Rowan Moorcroft, 2, right, of Kings Drive, went tobogganing with his grandparents on the Alexandra Park hill. In Jennings Close, an overstocked resident gave our deliverer two pints of milk and a dozen eggs! Surbiton's wintry landscape, top, was snapped from Anglers Reach in Grove Road.



A deal for the brides

Surbiton brides who choose the Antoinette near the Assembly Rooms for their reception can claim a £2,018 deal during 2018.

Available for limited dates, the offer – usually £3,500 – includes a sparkling drinks reception, a three-course meal for 70 guests (more by arrangement) and a room for the couple.

"It's the best deal we've ever offered, and it marks the fact that the hotel has hosted 2,000 weddings," a



spokesman told The Good Life.

The hotel can seat 200 guests for a meal, with 300 evening guests. www.antoinettehotel.com

● Replacing Victoria News, closed after 123 years as a newsagent, is Usmash, a mobile phone and laptop repair shop. The new arrival in Victoria Road still does lottery sales and Oyster top-ups. Victoria News threw in the towel in the face of newspaper sales from Waitrose, M&S Simply Food, Sainsbury's, Sainsbury's Local and McColl's (formerly Martin's). The last straw was when Poundland and Starbucks began selling papers too.

A boost to the guides

A tent, a camera, skipping ropes and aprons will be bought with a £790 donation to the 1st Ditton Guides.

Garth Glentworth, Judy Wilson and Barry Fairbank from the Long Ditton Village Hall donations committee presented the cheque to the guide group, which meets at Long Ditton St Mary's Junior School in Sugden Road.

Co-guide leader Fay Tiplady said: "Currently our termly subscriptions, paid by parents, fund our activities and materials."

"This additional funding is supporting the girlguiding programme – giving girls activities to empower them to be their best and face the challenges of growing up today. A huge thanks from Long Ditton rainbows, brownies, guides and rangers!"

To find out more about the opportunities available to youngsters who join the 1st Long Ditton Guides, phone Fay on 07486 696 167 or email her at faytiplady1@gmail.com



Mind the gaps

Congratulations on an excellent Good Life (issue 39).

Re gaps in Victoria Road/Brighton Road, I am amazed our planners have overseen building additional units in Surbiton (Surbiton Plaza, four units unoccupied for months, and Indigo Square) when it's clear homes are needed, not retail which end up empty or as charity shops.

We've reached saturation point for nail bars, hairdressers, pizza outlets and estate agents.

Despite Surbiton's population density and spending power, money is not spent in local shops and they are closing as a result.

There is no prospect of a transformation, given the vicinity of Kingston, the effect of the

internet and the travails of many high-street chains. It's time planners woke up to the fact that there's no point adding more empty retail units to Surbiton's landscape.

Philip Harris

● The main reason for the queue to the roundabout at Tolworth (New slip road for A3? issue 39) is the slow traffic light change. Surely the council will change the timings before embarking on any new slip road at the Ace of Spades roundabout at Hook?

It would be very easy to just keep the slow timings on the lights to justify building a new slip road.

On the day the congestion charge was introduced to London, all traffic light timings were changed and traffic flowed a lot more easily.

The smaller area and roundabout at the Ace of Spades is already very busy. The roads that feed into it

cannot take any more traffic either. It only keeps moving because the roads aren't hindered by traffic lights.

Nicola Green

● Driving along Portsmouth Road I found myself behind cyclists, four abreast, with one or two alpha males outside, organising the rest of the flock.

I mentioned this on Facebook, and some of the vitriol was quite shocking. It transpired that 98% of comments were against cyclists.

Some became so uptight about the behaviour of big cycle groups that I deleted the post.

An online poll asking who was in favour of more cycle lanes found 52% were against, yet this is a cornerstone of the London Mayor's transport policy, and we have been pretty much brainwashed in recent years to think it is a good idea.

We have to question whether cycling is up at all (Cycling up by a fifth, issue 39). If all you do is count bicycles on new cycle lanes then it will seem like numbers are up.

Clearly if there is a dedicated lane 4m wide for bikes, you'll cycle in it instead of along Maple Road or the bus lane in Penrhyn Road.

Cycle clubs are unlikely to use it as they want to go fast, and ride in a group.

It seems we are pawns in a local government system based on sound bites, not logic or reality!

What use is a multi-million pound cycle lane that helps you cycle safely along the straight, but abandons you at every junction?

David Pengilly

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Long Ditton Cricket Club, Stokes Field, Betts Way, Long Ditton KT6 5HT

Stepping Stones Pre-School

Stepping Stones Pre-School is a not-for-profit Pre-school and we have been in operation for 18 years. On Saturday 28th April we are holding an Open day for families to come along and visit us, to meet our staff and view our location. All members of your family are welcome. For more information on Stepping Stones Pre-School, please take a look at: Facebook page: <http://www.facebook.com/steppingstonesurbiton> and our website: <http://steppingstonesurbiton.org.uk>. Please call 07884-438769 for further information, or please send an email to info@steppingstonesurbiton.org.uk.



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Putting the 'naughty' in aeronautical

Pic: David Jacobson

It began with Lily Cove. "I was a young reporter on the Keighley News when I first heard about her story," said Sharon Wright, pictured.

It was a mystery from history; the 21-year-old balloonist had perished in 1906, plunging to her death in front of thousands at a gala after coming adrift from her parachute during a daredevil jump.

Lily's tragic death – never satisfactorily explained – periodically popped back into Sharon's mind. The Cleaveland Road playwright's Friller, a stage ghost story performed in Haworth, Yorkshire (the site of Lily's demise), proved, a century on, that the public could still be gripped by the exploits of the pioneering corsetted skydivers.

If theatregoers lapped up tales of women afflicted by 'balloon fever', as the press dubbed it, surely readers would too. Sharon did her research, and the result is **Balloonomania Belles** (Pen & Sword, £19.99, and available at Regency Books, Victoria Road).

Daredevil ascents (and descents) are described from an era 100 years before the aeroplane when reckless passion eclipsed health and safety, and when, as well as becoming celebrities and attracting vast crowds, female balloonists achieved an early liberation far beyond the norm of the day... and notoriety to match.

"Lady aeronauts found a freedom in the sky that they didn't have on the ground," said Sharon, whose illustrated book draws on archives including Farnborough's aviation history collection.

Her tale extends to the salacious stories woven around airborne dames, and their rumoured exploits, out of sight in lofty wicker baskets. The volume is also being published in the United States.

In writing a history of women balloonists, did Sharon ever secretly wish she could emulate their fearless resolve? "No!" she said firmly. A lively, well-written example of 'feelgood non-fiction', this story of life in a remarkable age is highly recommended. **Tim Harrison**

Ruth's song show

Surbiton singer Ruth Fogg is staging her first solo show in May, with a selection of numbers from musicals. The show, at the cornerHOUSE studio in Douglas Road, is on Saturday May 26 at 7.45pm.

Pianist Simon Hancock accompanies as Ruth soars through songs from Hamilton, Les Miserables and Dear Evan Hansen (voted the best musical at the 2017 Tony awards).

Her show is called **Miscast: Parts I'll Never Get To Play**, and tickets (£6) are available from www.ticketsource.co.uk/miscastshowcase



Pic: Jon Constant



Ready, steady, go! Bea Gibson, 3, of Pine Gardens prepares to slide

● A much-loved playground has had a makeover. New swings, a slide, climbing frame, sand pit, cable way, trampette and rodeo board have had toddlers to teens joyously celebrating the fun of the outdoors at the opening of the new multi-play facilities at Alexandra rec.

Breda Kingston, visiting from Bath, said her two-year-old granddaughter Grace Kennedy loved the playground in Alexandra Drive. "The work has really lifted it so much," she said.

The new facilities also cater for disabled children, with touch and feel areas and sensory equipment, plus play equipment for older children. The work is part of a £500,000 revamp of borough playgrounds.

Cllr Chris Hayes said: "It was much-loved and well-used before, but it was a bit outdated. We wanted to make sure we got really good equipment and drew a wider group of families here, making it more accessible to older children too."

Break a leg! Drama at play festival

They say the show must go on, but one of the eight plays in the cornerHOUSE oneACTS festival nearly had to be pulled after a cycling accident left the lead actor with a broken leg. The comedy, ironically entitled **Bomb Proof**, was destined for the chop with only three weeks to curtain-up, after Toby Dale, son of Carry On star Jim, was advised by doctors that participating was too risky.

"Toby wanted to continue, but after an operation this week, and with the likelihood of a second operation to come, we decided after much discussion and heavy hearts that we couldn't go on," said director Paul Hughes.

The play has now been recast and a new director has taken up the challenge. Ian Hey's play will be performed in the week-long new playwriting showcase which runs from April 23-28, at 7.45pm at the arts centre in Douglas Road. Visit www.ticketsource.co.uk/thecornerhouseevents

When tarts are baking

Surbiton's Hinchley Manor Operatic Society puts on The Bakewell Bake-Off at the Hampton Hill Theatre, with contestants vying to make the best Bakewell tart. The audience does the judging. It runs April 24-28 (020 8942 6867, or visit www.hmos.org.uk). "No item of baking paraphernalia is safe from a double entendre, from squirry cream to large buns and, naturally, soggy bottoms as far as the eye can see," said the society's Lisa Guerriero.



Raph's beasts

News of the death of the last male white rhino adds poignancy to this eye-catching image by artist Raph Thomas who, after a recent show at Bentalls is taking part in the Reading Contemporary Art Fair on April 21 and 22. Prints start at £35, originals at £400.

Raph, 26, lives near the iron bridge at the top of Surbiton Hill ("I've been in Surbiton a year; it's a great place, although I'm regularly woken by the trains!"). He went to Esher College and studied art at Kingston.

Some of his technicolour animal series are painted on vintage blueprints and old maps.

Aptly a fan of The Antelope pub, Raph paints in a cordoned-off section of his studio flat.

www.raphthomasart.co.uk

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Gothic fun time

Indulge your Gothic fantasies as St Mark's church hall becomes Northanger Abbey.

Mrs Bennet's regency dance class marks the 200th anniversary of Jane Austen's novel with a ball on Saturday May 19. Mrs B (dance tutor Libby Curzon) explained: "There will be live music from Green Ginger, an elegant dinner and suitably Gothic entertainment."

Dance classes (all abilities welcome, patient instruction given, soft-soled shoes the only requirement) over the next month will focus on steps for the event, but in 'plain clothes'.

Class regular Jocelyn Enfield, said the ball itself would be costumed. "We enjoy making them, to turn ourselves into Miss Catherine Morland from Northanger Abbey," she said. "Gentlemen can impress as Mr Tilney!" Costumes can also be hired. Classes are £5 a night. www.mrsbennet.com

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Fortress mentality holds key to success!

Keeping Kingsmeadow a fortress is key to success on three fronts – Europe, league and FA Cup, says Chelsea's left-sided defender Claire Rafferty.

Speaking exclusively to The Good Life after the club's historic 3-1 UEFA Women's Champions League quarter-final victory against Montpellier, she said the squad was together and focused, despite relentless match scheduling, and that great things are within reach this season.

"It's all about momentum as the games come thick and fast," said the 29-year-old, who studies futures as a Deutsche Bank investment analyst when she isn't on the pitch. While you don't need a mathematical mind to calculate the daunting odds of Chelsea Ladies pulling off a treble, she has faith in her team-mates.

"Home form is vital; you could feel the buzz tonight," said Claire after the Kingsmeadow win in front of a record crowd of 3,050.

"We never had that feeling at Staines [the former Chelsea Ladies ground], and keeping this place a fortress is so important."

The 5-1 aggregate win over Montpellier means the Blues next face an old enemy,



Emma Hayes' targets? Delivering three trophies and two healthy children

Wolfsburg, in the semi-finals. That double-header at the end of April means new dates will have to be found for league matches at home to Birmingham and away to Bristol.

That underlines manager Emma Hayes' point, made forcefully at a press conference at the Blues' Cobham training ground. "We have games every 3.8 days; we absolutely have to sort out the scheduling issue after this season," she insisted, saying that the burden of playing the Continental Cup [the women's League Cup] was something European rivals were spared.

Hayes' target is to deliver silverware at Chelsea... as well as two healthy babies in June, when the twins she is expecting are due.

There was a heart-in-mouth moment as she stumbled when leaving the pitch after the Montpellier home



Swamped by press after the Montpellier win, Fran Kirby says standards are rising

game, but she quickly recovered. She knows she will have to pace herself if the Blues make it to the Champions League final at the end of May in Kiev... days before her due date.

Striker Fran Kirby, describing the club's European progress as "pretty incredible", admitted the long run of games had taken their toll on her legs, but added that "the standard [of football] in the league is always rising."

Tim Harrison
www.chelseafc.com/teams/chelsea-ladies



As the biggest event in Surbiton Hockey Club's history looms – staging the women's Eurohockey Club Cup in May – the U14 girls are competing in a parallel event from May 19-20.

A two-day competition sees group matches played at Kingston Grammar School's Ditton Field ground in Thames Ditton, with the finals being held at Sugden Road, Surbiton.

Taking part: Hertogenbosch

Hockey excitement

and AH&BC from Holland, UHC Hamburg and Mannheimer of Germany, Cork Harlequins from Ireland, and Surbiton.

Surbiton club captain Mark Waller said: "We're looking forward to high-level games of hockey at both levels."

Ladies captain Sarah Haycroft added: "It's fantastic for our U14s to experience top European hockey." www.surbitonhc.com



G'day... you're welcome

After a visit from an Aussie bowler, Surbiton Bowling Club has paired up with Sturt Bowling Club in Adelaide, South Australia.

The clubs plan to swap ideas on running a lawn bowls club, from recruiting and fundraising to green maintenance.

A reciprocal deal means visitors are given VIP treatment at both Adelaide and Surbiton.

Sturt is the third oldest bowling club in South Australia, founded in 1903 and still at its original Unley home. Surbiton is younger, founded in 1921, and is based in Alexandra Rec.

Surbiton is offering a taster day to give newcomers a chance to try lawn bowling on Saturday April 28 from noon. All you need is flat-soled shoes. Visit www.surbitonbowlingclub.uk



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