

We're not eggs-agerating!

It's no eggs-aggeration to say there that there will be a lot of shelling out at July's Maple Road farmers' market.

Simon's Free-Range Eggs stall will be groaning under the weight of pullet eggs; the smaller, more intense eggs from the youngest laying hens.

With 1,750 of the young birds on the farm in Hookwood, Surrey, he's aiming to bring 2,000 eggs to market, selling them for a bargain £3.50... for a tray of 30.

Moat Farm is a big family business, with mum, dad, son, daughter-in-law, two children, one dog and three cats all doing

their bit to keep the show on the road.

"They may only be small to medium, but they're extra tasty," said Simon. "They take Yorkshire puds to the next level!"

Grim dark clouds may have rolled overhead during June's farmers' market, but it remained dry... just.

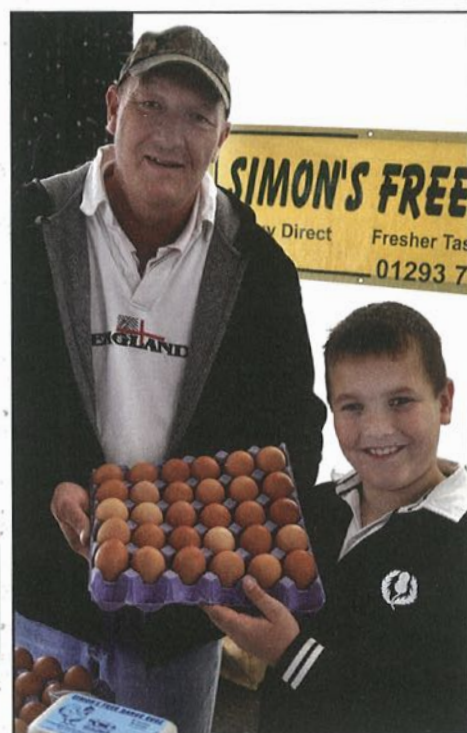
It was another busy event, with musical accompaniment beneath the canopy beside the Antelope pub.

The Lallapalosa brownies and cookies stall had sold out by 11.45am, leaving the creative talents of Adam and Elyse Jones surveying a handful of chocolatey crumbs.

Cats Protection raised £103 on its June stall, which the Maple Road market organisers have doubled to £206.

The next market is on Saturday, July 21, when Sacha's cupcakes returns but Sussexway meat is on holiday. Expect more music, including Tilehouse jazz. The month's designated charities are Animal Rescue and Care, and the Kingston Orchard Project. Gourmet game returns for the market on August 18, with Quack's and Just Desserts taking a summer break.

The August charity is Kingston Association for the Blind.



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Hold the front page - coffee takes over town



David Symons, left, with his new coffee bar team

As three more open, Surbiton is now reckoned to have the highest concentration of coffee shops in the UK.

Incredibly, there are 33 shops and pubs selling morning coffee within half a mile of the station. Even 'trendy' Richmond only boasts 24.

ExCellar and The Press Room opened this month, with K's Bite (opposite the YMCA) tipped to emerge from hibernation shortly.

The Press Room, Surbiton's first speciality coffee house, is at 5 Claremont Road - previously the home of Southern

Brew, and before that Mooka.

It is a bold move by Surbitonian David Symons, until recently general manager of John Lewis' flagship Oxford Street store.

David (45) told The Good Life: "It's my dream; a coffee shop where the atmosphere is great for the customer, and decisions are made by everyone working in the shop."

He had 250 applicants for jobs in The Press Room, which opened on Wednesday. Coffee comes from Has Bean, which sources direct from growers, while hot chocolate involves melting individual bars of Marimba into each drink. Cakes are

supplied by the Paul patisserie.

The 40-seat cafe blends industrial, rustic and Scandinavian looks, and has a fold-open frontage. Inside is a lamp from an old German battleship. The wall space is set aside for local artists to display pictures.

Sixteen different teas are offered, and there will be guest coffees of the week. Barista training evenings are on the agenda at what represents the start of a small, quality chain.

"Competition is fierce," conceded David. "But we're taking the big boys on. We're only opening shops where there are already Costas and Neros!"

● The first 25 people who go into The Press Room, 5 Claremont Road, and mention they've read about the coffee shop in The Good Life get a free coffee. One per person. And if you don't get our paper delivered, you can always pop in and pick up a copy at The Press Room - combining fine coffees with the best local read in town.

● The first 50 people to go to the Corte dei Signori stall at Maple Road farmers' market on July 21 (9am to 1pm) and mention their ad in The Good Life, get a free glass of Sicilian red wine from Dani and Janet Signor's estate. One per person.

Pop-up wine bar

ExCellar formally launches on Saturday, July 21 at the corner of Brighton Road and Victoria Road with a weekend of partying. Owner Simon Baile is planning a pop-up wine bar with tastings on Friday July 20 and Sunday July 22, with a ticketed event at the new off licence/epicerie from 8pm on the Saturday evening.



Restaurant roars

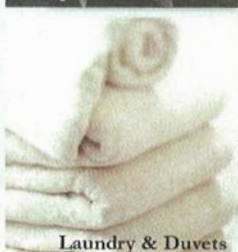
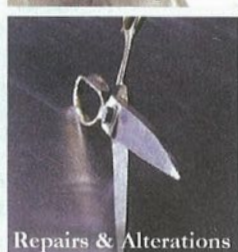
Naturally Chinese, the restaurant at the corner of Brighton Road and Balaclava Road, reopens with a roar at 6.30pm on Monday July 23, with a display of lion dancing. The mayor, Cllr Mary Heathcote, will perform the official opening. There's a free glass of wine for every Good Life reader ordering a set meal. See ad in this paper.

Mitch comes first

Congratulations to Brighton Road salon Hair by Mitch, named best independent retailer at the 2012 South London Business Awards on July 5. Salon owner Michelle (Mitch) Morrice collected the trophy which will sit on the mantelpiece alongside the best new business in the borough prize. Maple Road farmers' market, the French Table, Surbiton YMCA and Yorda Adventures were all shortlisted for awards.

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Up to the first floor



Work continues apace on the site of the new 63-bed Upper Brighton Road/Langley Avenue Royal Star & Garter Home, despite the downpours over the past couple of months, writes Phil Cooper.

In May, the construction team dug out a 9,500 cubic metre basement - the equivalent of four Olympic swimming pools - which will form the underground car park.

Concrete basement walls are being put in place while other parts of the building have reached first-floor level.

By the end of this month, the building work for the new care home for disabled ex-servicemen and women will be more than a quarter of the way through.

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Surbiton loves fish

What's different about Surbiton's farmers' market? People know what they want. So says Kevin Oakman, whose display of Devon crabs and lobsters at Maple Road makes the Pimpernel Fisheries stall one of the most eye-catching every month.

When Kevin left school in Salcombe, the career choice was stark. Farming, fishing or the docks. He picked fish.

He spent time up in Scotland, working 800 crab pots from a 60ft fishing boat. It was there that he learnt to swim. "I had to," he said. "It was 30 years ago... August 25... and we were off the island of Rum when the boat sank!"

Kevin recovered, and returned to Devon where he bought the first boat of his own, Sharon Samantha, and caught lobster and crab on a small scale. Today the 50-year-old works the markets. He takes January off (usually going to look up family in Australia), but otherwise it's full-



on, seven days a week.

"Surbiton people like fish," he said. "We educate them! People ask if we have Dover sole. I say: 'Have you tried Torbay sole? It's exactly the same, but a third of the price.' We have fantastic regulars at Surbiton."

In the course of a four-hour market at Surbiton, Kevin will open 10 dozen oysters for shoppers who buy and eat there and then. Crabs start at around £7, lobsters at around £12, but for a more unusual, meaty texture, fry wrasse.

Despite working with the product every day, Kevin still loves fish for a light evening meal, especially with some hand-picked samphire from the local mudflats, and wild garlic.



Peter Short of Quack's Pickles presents eagle-eyed reader Nikki Cameron of Oaks Way with her prize for identifying that the headless man in issue 2 is in the Waitrose car park.

Quack's is developing its delivery service this summer. Visit www.quackspickles.com for details, or follow the pickle-maker on facebook. Surbiton's favourite products from Quack's are, in order, marmalade, piccalilli and mango chutney.



Celebrating everything Surbiton this September

Surbiton's annual festival celebrates 25 years with events running from Saturday September 22 to Saturday 29.

The RNLI regatta along Queen's Prom on Saturday 22nd features more than 100 boats, while the grand parade and street fair on Saturday 29th sees Victoria Road and the top of St Andrew's Road closed to traffic for marching bands, historic vehicles, Morris

dancing and 100 stalls between 10am and 4pm.

An additional stage in St Andrew's Road will provide some extra space as well as the usual performance stage on the railway station forecourt, allowing for even more live music at the event.

September's issue of The Good Life will carry the full programme of events and a festival map.

Gardening tips by Janice Cripps

Plants that shout 'Buy me!'

Stroll through your local garden centre and you'll see a wealth of glorious plants, healthy and in full bloom. There will usually be one shouting 'Buy me, plant me!' But weeks down the line when that same plant is looking forlorn and flowerless, you will feel utter disappointment and failure.

The gardener's maxim is 'right plant, right place', so read the label to make sure you get the conditions right. In general, this means how much sun and moisture plants like, and if acid or alkaline soil is required.

In Surbiton, we're on London clay, so soil tends to be neutral. If anything we tend towards alkaline, as the London basin has bands of chalk running through it. Hard water areas have alkaline soils.

However, even if basic requirements are met, some plants will not thrive because they are incredibly fussy and need a lot of TLC.

The Royal Horticultural Society at Wisley carries out plant trials to help gardeners make informed choices. For plants of outstanding excellence the society presents an award of garden merit. A cup symbol on the label means the plant is robust, resists pests and diseases and does not require special growing conditions or gardening skill. It also means the plant has a proven track record. As numerous new varieties are bred and introduced each year, only to disappear off the radar, look out for that symbol.

If the choice is too mind-boggling, here are six of the best, tried and tested in my Surbiton garden and giving fabulous colour throughout the summer, year after year.

'Rozanne', a clump-forming geranium with masses of vivid purple-blue blooms, flowers May to October. It looks great planted under roses, and thrives in sun or shade.

Gaura 'Whirling Butterflies' has elegant airy sprays of star-shaped flowers, June-October. Looks great in a traditional or contemporary setting and is very tolerant of drought. Although gaura prefers full sun, it has done well for me in partial shade.

I am a big fan of roses, especially old-fashioned shrub roses, climbers and ramblers. Long Ditton's Hill Park Roses nursery in Woodstock Lane North is one of the few specialist rose growers left, and you can find a huge selection and all the advice you need. Just coming into bloom in my garden is **Rambling Rector**, pictured left. It only flowers once a year but the show is stunning. It has deliciously scented creamy white flowers and clammers everywhere.

Astrantia 'Hadspen Blood' has rich dark-red flowers and papery bracts which thrive in sun or shade, May-October. Hadspen Blood has a merit symbol, but I have 'Gill Richardson' which is just as prolific.

Part of the scabious family, **Knautia Macedonia** has hundreds of maroon pincushion-like flowers on long elegant stems. Although you can support it with pea sticks, I let it scramble and sprawl. It doesn't seem to get out of hand, and if I neglect deadheading it's not a disaster, as the seed heads look very attractive.

For the front of the border in sun or shade, it is hard to beat the violet-blue scented blooms of **Nepeta 'Walkers Low'**, or catnip. If you give it a haircut in June it will keep on flowering to September. If you have a cat, you will be highly amused by the response!



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

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Spotlight on Hinchley Wood

There's a patient queue outside Il Forno, breathing the hot, yeasty air as it wafts out of the bakery door, and a queue next door at Stephen's, where the butchers' banter is matched by the customers' cheeky responses, *writes Tim Harrison.*

There's a timelessness to Hinchley Wood's rich clutch of independent shops; it's like replaying the 1950s, before carrier bags were invented, and when a shopping trip included a good old natter.

Sure, you also bump into people you know in Waitrose and Sainsbury's... but it isn't the same. If supermarkets are high-definition plasma, Hinchley

Wood's shops remain reassuringly black and white. It's how the locals prefer it.

And it's why so many Surbitonians make a weekly trek from KT6 to KT10 to re-enact the near-forgotten pleasure of proper local shopping.

A butcher, a baker (no candlestick maker), but terrific produce at Hinchley Wood Fruiterers, a warm welcome at Georgie's coffee house, and everything under the sun at Cliff and Laurie Elliott's corner hardware store Crossy's.

Hinchley Wood might lack a pub and a fishmonger, but it has pretty much everything else... and a pace of its own.



Meat the butcher

"The best thing I ever did was set up on my own," says Steve Crawley. Fifteen years on, Stephen's Fine Foods feels like it's always been on the parade.

Steve was working for a butcher in Ealing when a pal in Heathside mentioned Hinchley Wood's well-supported independent shops.

Launching a new butcher's in 1997 was brave. In the past decade, 2,000 have vanished in the UK. There used to be 1,400 Dewhurst branches alone in Britain in 1977. Today there isn't one.

But Steve has proved that quality and service can still succeed in a supermarket era.

"I don't compromise on quality for profit," he says simply. "I buy the best available; I don't look around for bargains. I've used the same suppliers for the last 25 years."

Steve is regularly offered consignments

of meat at half the price he pays his trusted suppliers... and turns the offers down.

What has been built up in 15 years between the chirpy band of aproned staff in Hinchley Wood and the customers is a bond of trust. Steve trusts his sources for free-range pork (Plantation Pigs, Guildford), Hereford lamb and Scottish beef, and his customers are prepared to pay the market price for the extra quality.

"People don't say 'I'm going to the butcher,' they say 'I'm going to my butcher,'" says Steve.

Stephen's Fine Foods makes its own quality sausages (don't prick them) and burgers. "We know no rubbish goes into them," adds Steve, 60, who drives in each day from out near Heathrow. "You can probably buy 25 burgers from Iceland for 99p. You're welcome to them!"

People eat with their eyes, argues Steve, and that window display is irresistible.

Stephen's Fine Foods, 29 Station Approach, Hinchley Wood. 020 8398 7678.

Knead the baker?

He's the liveliest bantam in the parade, and his bread is divine. Jack Farruggia arrived in London in 1976, a wide-eyed 21-year-old who had done national service in Naples and wanted to see the world. "I liked London so much, I got stuck here!"

The son of a master stonemason, he is from Caltagirone, a Sicilian baroque town and Unesco world heritage site.

At seven he delivered loaves for the baker (the Italian equivalent of a paper round), at 13 he left school and by 18 ran a bakery. Caltagirone takes bread seriously. Twenty bakeries serve 40,000 people, and pride in the product is evident at Il Forno (the oven).

"I was fascinated by London – the freedom of speech at Speakers' Corner; no other country does that," says Jack, in his 'office', the pavement chairs and tables outside his shop.

"I came to Hinchley Wood 20 years ago, and never looked back; the people here are great and it's a supportive community," he says.

Italians don't compete financially, adds the king of the oven, they simply like to be the best. "Talk to any Italian, and he'll say he is the best. Talk to another, and he's the best!"

Jack's loaves, pizzas and filled rolls pull in customers from a wide area. "Yes, the filling

is good, but the rolls are good too! I've always done a mix of breads to please a lot of people, and I like experimenting with new breads."

Over the years he's learnt to cope with the eccentric hours. He works 2am-9am, six days a week, followed by some prep for the next day.

"I finish at 9am, and maybe go for a walk or a round of golf" he says. "It's not a level life!"

Parallel to baking, Jack has learnt Thai massage. It may seem an odd combination, but both involve flat-of-the-hand strength.

Five years ago, Jack was at death's door with throat cancer. But the Royal Marsden steered him through, and the experience has given him a new perspective on life.

He has the backing of a shopful of assistants ("I've got very good staff; I'm very lucky"), while the business side of things is run by his ex-wife, Nuala.

The couple were together for 28 years and divorced four years ago. Then, after four years with M&S, Nuala came back to the shop. "She runs it beautifully – we're not together, but we're together, if you know what I mean."

Son Michele, 23, and daughter Janina, 20, also work at Il Forno. "When it comes to pizza, my son thinks he's the best in the world," says Jack. "He doesn't compete in football or other sports, but in pizzas and doughnuts."

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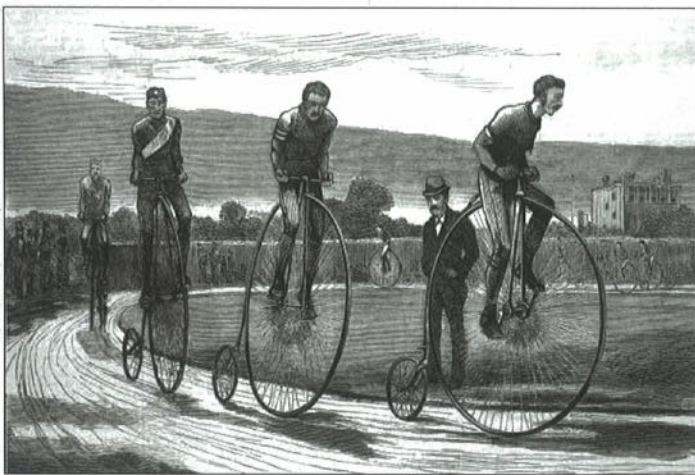


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Champions compete at penny-farthing racetrack



In a few days, Olympic cyclists will thunder through Surbiton, reviving the town's name as a hub of world bicycle racing. Back in April 1879, a penny-farthing racetrack was opened at the junction of Brighton Road and Balaclava Road.

The town was a hotbed of cycling, with the circular quarter-mile cinder track attracting competitors from far and wide, and spawning enthusiasts' clubs such as Surbiton Amateur Cycling Club (motto: The Wheel and Good Fellowship).

World champion pedaller John Keen lived in Surbiton from 1854, began racing in 1869 at the age of 20, and set up a bike factory on Surbiton Hill. He won the first race on the new Surbiton track, 'pronounced by competent judges to be one of the best in England'.

That exhibition race, over 10 miles, was staged on April 7 with Keen going head-to-head against J Dickman of Surbiton, giving his opponent a five-minute start. Keen made up the ground and won by six seconds.

Surbiton of 1879 was awash with cyclists enjoying outings, then having meals and sing-songs in the town pubs – notably the Black Lion. The parade of Brighton Road shops which today includes KFC, The Bed Post and Surbiton Charcoal Grill had yet to be built, so the pub's upstairs windows looked out over the racetrack. Victoria Avenue was still fields, so the track went up to the railway

embankment before curling down what today is Electric Parade.

The start/finish line was on the western straight, and there was a 100-yard sprint track in the middle. There was also a stubby tower from which race starter J Phillips fired his starting pistol, while GP Coleman and P Lane were the track timekeepers.

Harry Andrews was track 'custodian', raking the cinders to keep the surface even.

Racing continued until November 1888, when Archdeacon Charles Burney laid the foundation stone of St Mark's parish hall, opposite Akerman Road, and the track was dug up. The hall was destroyed in September 1944 by a V1 flying bomb, rebuilt after the war, then pulled down again in 2010 to make way for housing.

Keen was a big draw. Six hundred people paid up to 1s 6d (£30 today) on September 13, 1879 to brave a rainstorm and watch five of England's finest penny farthing sports cyclists compete in a 10-mile handicap. The favourites were Keen and the reigning 100-mile cycle champion Walter Phillips, who was given a 25-yard start on his rival.

However, another local rider, David Stanton, won. Phillips was second, Keen (nicknamed Happy Jack) was third, with Keen's brother Alfred just outside the podium places.

Bikes had main wheels of either 52in or 56in, compared to the modern mountain bikes' 26in wheels.

Keen's best time for a flying-start mile was 2 minutes 43 seconds, set at Wolverhampton in 1877. **Tim Harrison**

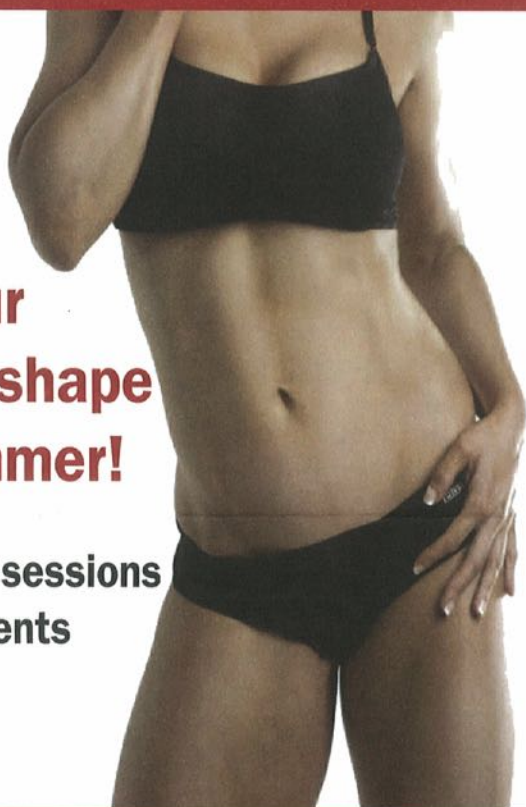


Penny-farthing racing could be hazardous (right), but 'Happy Jack' Keen (above), embraced the risks on Surbiton's cycle recreation ground at Brighton Road/Balaclava Road (shown below in an 1888 map)



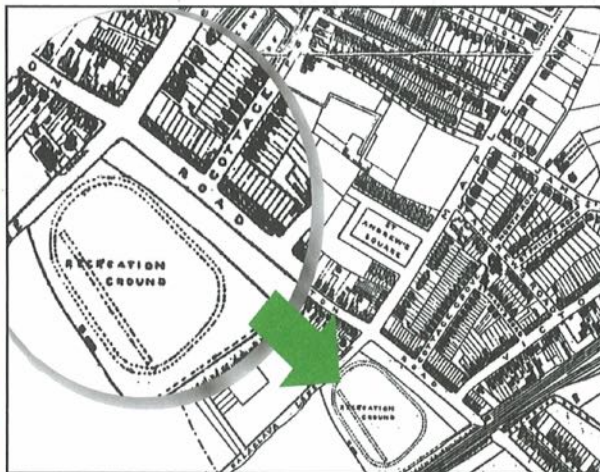
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The Race of Truth

The Olympics are nearly upon us, and in Surbiton we're lucky to have the road cycling time trial and road race pass our doors.

The time trial, along Portsmouth Road, is called the Race of Truth because it is man and machine against the clock; no team tactics, just 44km of suffering.

One Tour de France champion said: 'Cycling is so hard, the suffering is so intense, that it's absolutely cleansing. The pain is so deep and strong that a curtain descends over your brain!'

The pain in your legs as they flood with lactic acid, lungs burning with the effort of driving your body on is what makes these riders the toughest of all sportsmen.

Head down to see these riders as they pass on their incredible aerodynamic bikes and clothing, and look into their faces and that mask of pain as they chase gold.

I will be there on Wednesday, August 1, cheering on these supreme athletes, and using it to inspire me to get out and ride.

When I am suffering, I will use the words of hardman cyclist Jens Voigt. "Shut up, legs!"

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Diners' backdrop

Maple Road and Brighton Road featured in an episode of the excitable cookery show *Come Dine With Me*, when the interiors of Rubicon, Shoes At Last, the Da Lucio restaurant and King & Allen tailors were backdrops to the pre-dinner nosh discussion.

Join the Bunny Club

Hop along to St Andrew's Church in Maple Road to celebrate a landmark birthday! On Wednesday, August 22 Regency Bookshop marks Peter Rabbit's 110th. From 11.45am there will be story-telling and bunny fun at the church. "We felt 110 was a lot of ears under his belt," said Pat Freestone-Bayes. Tickets are free, from the bookshop in Victoria Road.

Will Pooley rule?

Support a campaign to honour a forgotten founder of Surbiton. Bob Phillips of Broomfield Road wants the new hospital in Ewell Road named after 19th century pioneer Thomas Pooley, who moved here from Cornwall in 1830 to seek his fortune. He built roads near the train station which was later named Surbiton. Mr Phillips wants to "redeem historical oversight" and restore Pooley's reputation. Kingston Primary Care Trust is weighing up possible names. Email communications@kpct.nhs.uk

Limbering up

The YMCA's newly refurbished gym is in action, with the first-floor training facility officially opened at the end of June by Tim Witherspoon (twice world heavyweight boxing champion).

Up and away

Football fans didn't rush to Euro 2012, says The Flight Centre in Victoria Road, which reported few June trips to Poland/Ukraine. However Greece, despite its problems, is proving popular. A perky selection of bargain accommodation packages is tempting many to invest in trips to the economically beleaguered country.

Shoe bargains

The Shoes At Last sale in Maple Road features up to 50 per cent off some shoes, cut-price espadrilles and reduced handbags. Among the clothes currently selling well are Ilse Jacobsen dresses, from Denmark.

Join the party

Cheryl Kuit's zumba dance fitness classes run all summer on Wednesday evenings at St Matthew's primary school in Langley Road. Classes are a fiver, and start at 7.30pm. "Ditch the workout, join the party," said Cheryl. "No need to book; just turn up!"

Green prices

The 99p shop that was once Woolies in Victoria Road is a mini garden centre. Organic compost activator, tomato growbags, 15 bamboo canes, a meerkat windmill, paint-your-own gnome and a 3-section mini polytunnel. You've guessed the price.

Refill and save

Do you recoil in horror at the cost of new computer printer cartridges? If you believe it's only ink you need, rather than more plastic parts to clog up landfill sites, check out Elite Homeware opposite Sainsbury's. For £8.99 it refills a Hewlett Packard black cartridge while you wait. Other brands, shapes and sizes. Remember to say The Good Life sent you...

It's back to school

The landmark Victorian schoolhouses which for three decades served as Surbiton nick are once again in educational use.

The London International Study Centre, which already runs a nursery and college near Tolworth Broadway, now aims to expand its range of courses for local and overseas students.

Developers had been circling like sharks, wanting to pull down the old buildings, but residents petitioned to save them.

A team of builders has been restoring the twin schoolhouses, the earliest dating to 1879, when it opened as the 'school for St Matthew's parish', with the headmaster's house alongside. The original vaulted roof has been revealed after ugly suspended ceilings were pulled down.

The biggest task has been undoing the heavy-handed alterations from 1976, when the police moved in and nailed carpet tiles on the parquet floors.

Surprisingly, the electrics and fire alarm system failed inspections and have all had to be replaced.



"We cleared out the old grey police lockers, and found lots of empty whisky bottles on top," laughed principal Grazyna Sutherland. The panic button in the secure interview room has been preserved as a memento of the blue-light years.

Each piece of the original Victorian parquet floor has been lifted, cleaned and relaid. "It's an expensive project, but we owe it to the building," she added.

At a recent jubilee party to reintroduce the community to the old schoolhouse, one guest was a pupil who had attended the school in 1933.

Now the centre offers summer courses,

after-school tuition, adult language learning and English teaching for international students.

More host families are needed in Surbiton, with £154 per week being paid per student – potentially a useful income to anyone with a spare room. "This area is full of well-educated, professional people who would be ideal hosts," said Grazyna. "The students are occupied 9-5 during the week, and on Saturdays, so it really only involves evenings and Sundays."

Many of the college's 70 teachers have retired from top Kingston and Surbiton schools (Tiffin's head of physics is among them), and the independent centre can help with retakes or allow students from nine-19 a chance to study subjects their own schools do not offer.

Adults can also learn Chinese, French, Japanese, Italian, Spanish, German, Arabic and Russian.

Hopelessly, some websites still list the building as being Surbiton police station, and people still knock on the door at night trying to report lost cats and mislaid wallets.

In fact, since August last year, the nick (or police community office as it is now called) has been in Millbank House, at the junction of Ewell Road and Browns Road... but it is only open Monday to Friday, 10am-6pm.

£350,000 revamp has community vision

One of Surbiton's oldest places of worship has reopened after a £350,000 restoration.

The light, bright brickwork that greeted dignitaries when the Oaklands Baptist Church opened in Langley Road in 1874 now gleams again.

A sister church to the Surbiton Baptist Church in Balaclava Road (better known to Good Life readers as Surito Baptt because of its tumbling letters), the Langley Road building is now Surbiton New Life Baptist Church.



Minister Adam Stacey outside the new-look church in Langley Road

Adam Stacey, the informal, tattooed 27-year-old minister, believes the enlarged building can play a new, central role in the area's life.

"The hope is community groups, including the residents' association, will meet here," he said.

A glass door leads into the main church, which has no fixed furniture so is an adaptable space. Behind the back wall, a two-storey extension has meeting rooms - all wheelchair-accessible - and a new kitchen. There is also a disabled loo.

The large concreted space behind the church will ultimately become an eco-garden (once £13,000 can be raised).

The next project is a £150,000 renovation of the Balaclava Road church, already used by 50 under fives in a toddler group and a similar number of vulnerable people who attend a Sunday afternoon drop-in service. The Surbiton Churches Football Club is also based there.

You can hire rooms in the revamped Langley Road church from as little as £8 an hour. Full details at surbitonnewlife.co.uk

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Gordon's tonic

The Gordon Bennett! wine list has been completely revised, working exclusively with the supplier Bibendum. At a tasting last month, everyone agreed that the emphasis on refreshing summer wines was just right. Top tips: the Conde Villar Vinho Verde from Portugal at £4.75 a glass, the French Picpoul de Pinet La Cote Flamenc at £5.30, and the Sicilian Legato Inzolia at £3.90 a glass.



Richard Sealtiel helps customers work down the wine list at Gordon Bennett, Maple Road

Ace treatments

It's not just a pain in the neck, or back, that Ace complementary health centre deals with. There are clinics for mums and babies, pre and post-pregnancy, too. Osteopaths Kathy and Oliver O'Callaghan-Brown set up the centre in 2001, and now run the multi-practitioner clinic from 304 Ewell Road.

The mums and babies clinic offers nutritional management and pregnancy massage for stress relief. There is cranial osteopathy for expectant

mums and little ones, structural (physical) osteopathy for back and other pain during pregnancy, and core stability for regaining strength post-birth.

The pain management clinic treats pain that stems from working at a computer, repetitive strain, poor posture and regular lifting, while the sports injury clinic rehabilitates the injured area and the whole body. Postural issues are addressed and advice given on nutritional strategy.

"Be it injury or ill health, the range of therapies available is such that we should be able, between us all, to get you back to normal life," said Oliver. Call 020 8399 0262.



Limbo down to the New Inn

The summer weather may have been mixed, but Caribbean heat has arrived in Long Ditton.

Limbo down to the New Inn, Rushett Road, to try something different alongside the British pub standards.

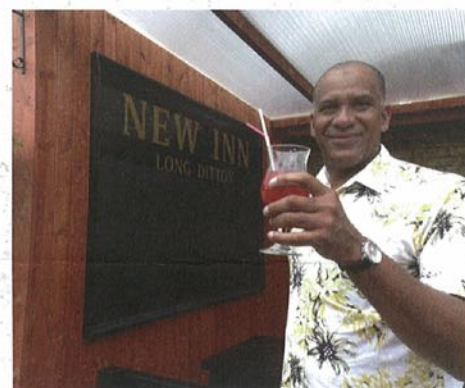
Landlord Paul Hood has handed the pub's kitchen to Buddy, a chef who grew up on the east coast of Barbados and learnt his craft from his mother and grandmother. "They were the best teachers in the world," he said.

Caribbean cooking uses flavours such as mango, ginger, garlic, chilli and lime, then adds coconut milk to counteract the heat.

The new menu is available every lunchtime, with dinner some days too. Every month the menu is tweaked after customer feedback.

"We're taking bookings already, and we also want to do weddings and parties here in the pub's beautiful garden," said the chef, who has worked in the UK for 16 years.

Fusing British and Caribbean styles produces some tasty menu options. Coconut rice and peas is an island mainstay, while Jamaican curried goat and pineapple sweet potato are very popular too. No need to book. Just bowl up and ask for Buddy (pictured).



OSTEOPATHS
Kathy O'Callaghan-Brown
Oliver O'Callaghan-Brown
Sabrina Payandane

CHIROPRACTORS
Neil Reilly
Pernille Larsen
Kyoung Won Kang

SPORTS THERAPY
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Have you heard this one?

Conversation overheard in the Waggon
and Horses on July 2

I haven't seen you for a while, Annie.
Well I lost my Bert last month, so I haven't
been out much.
Oh, I'm sorry. What happened?
Well, he'd just set off to the bottom of
the garden to get some lettuce to make
a salad, when he dropped dead on the
path.
Oh that's terrible, Annie. What did you do?
Well what could I do? I just had to open a
tin of peas.

Pub goes KerPlunk



They love games at the Lamb, Brighton Road, where a giant version of 60s children's favourite KerPlunk raised £1,200 for youth drama charity IYAF, putting the Lamb in the last six of a contest to find the South East's top fundraising pub. The mayor, Cllr Mary Heathcote, had a go, pulling rods from a thicket of interlocking poles while trying not to disturb the balls on top.

"It worked better than expected," said landlord Adam Lewis. "Young and old could play together, with no height or age advantage."

The outsize KerPlunk game will now raise funds for other charities at summer festivals.

What's happening at the arts centre on your doorstep?

Tolworth's a laugh

It may not spring to mind as a comedy hotbed, but Tolworth has hosted many of the UK's top stand-ups.

Mock The Week regular Andy Parsons has performed twice at the cornerHOUSE, Douglas Road, recently, to gauge audience reaction to new material.

Seventy people packed the side room to hear him poke fun at fellow comedians' tax affairs. "The K2 scheme hides your money away, then gives it back to you much later," he said. "There's an easier way; bank at NatWest!"

Also on the bill was Zoe Lyons, who questioned whether anyone would be able to read the writing on striking doctors' protest placards.

Comics who have appeared at the cornerHOUSE include Alan Carr, Omid Djalili, Stephen Merchant, Milton Jones, Bob Mills, Barbara Nice, Sean Hughes and pub landlord Al Murray.

Andy Parsons is a local lad, living a three-minute stroll from the centre. Many other



Andy Parsons at the cornerHOUSE

comics have short journeys. Lee Mack lives in Hampton Court, Jon Richardson and Jarred Christmas live in Surbiton, while Tim Vine – a patron of the centre – has a short trek from Banstead.

Coming up on July 24, Lee Hurst's fringe show, plus previews of Maff Brown's Parade of This sketch show, also on at Edinburgh.

On August 10, Russell Kane previews his tour Posturing Delivery. Tickets £9 from www.outsidetheboxcomedy.co.uk

Have a go, write a one-act play

Sitting by a pool this summer, feeling relaxed and inspired? Why not have a go at playwriting?

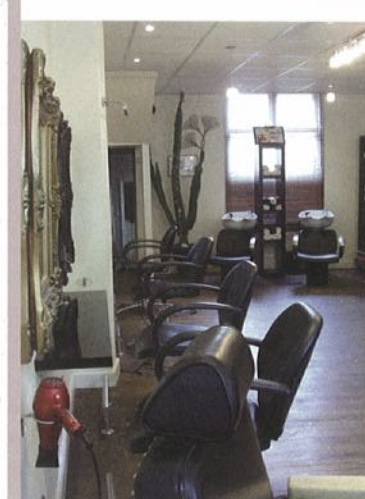
The annual oneACTS festival at the cornerHOUSE is a firm fixture in Surbiton's arts calendar.

Whether chosen by the selection panel or not, everyone gets helpful feedback, and the panel hasn't a clue about the identity of the writers until

the final choice is announced.

The ninth festival of original playwriting is in April 2013, and full guidance is given on the website www.thecornerhouse.org

Plays must be between 15 and 30 minutes in length, and have to be submitted by the last day of October. Email your masterpiece to oneacts2013@thecornerhouse.org



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Dealing the Joker

Auditions take place this weekend (Sunday, July 15) for a new play written by Surbiton actor manager David Gray.

Two years ago David, of Douglas Road, produced a well-received royal double bill, The King & Me and Not In Line, at the cornerHOUSE.

His latest work is a full-length drama called El Comodin (The Joker), which

combines romance, Latin American politics and football. David and co-director Robin Johannsen will be staging the play at the cornerHOUSE in December.

There is a wide range of roles, from older teenagers to sixtysomethings. Simply turn up to auditions at the arts centre at 116 Douglas Road on Sunday, July 15 at 6pm, or email your interest to elcomodin_auditions@hotmail.co.uk. Some of the play is in Spanish, so Spanish speakers are especially welcome.

Art of a certain age

A new art exhibition features 85 pictures by some of the area's most experienced painters.

Artists of a Certain Age runs at the cornerHOUSE arts centre in Douglas Road, until July 28, with subjects ranging from favourite pets, nudes and still lifes to dramatic views.

Among the works is a charcoal and chalk picture of Dame Judi Dench by Carolyn Forsyth, on sale at £55.

The 16 contributors attend weekly classes of U3A, the University of the Third Age.

Tutor Charles Penny said: "Each member is encouraged to develop their own individual style. This variety, tied together by the group's love of life, makes this show rich and entertaining."

It is the first time any U3A art group has held a public show.

Watercolours, acrylic, pastels and collages feature, all mounted and framed. Prices from £20 to £100.

The art class (which meets in Kingston) is currently full. Join the waiting list by calling Dottie Read on 020 8399 4336.



Doreen Fisher's pastel puss is entitled It Really Wasn't Me. Price £30 framed

Fake tans, hair extensions and wide boys – it must be TTOTS

A high-octane version of The Taming of the Shrew previewed at the cornerHOUSE at the end of June. The byMoonlight Theatre production of Shakespeare's outrageous comedy, directed by Tanju Duncan, featured Turan Duncan as Petruchio and Charlotte

Harris as the shrieking shrew. It was, said the director, Taming of the Shrew meets The Only Way Is Essex (TOWIE). Callum Lewin made a superb manservant to Petruchio, while Greg Harradine played the drunken Christopher Sly and provided an original musical soundtrack.

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Dropping off

Surbiton Business Centre (above ExCellar at the corner of Brighton Road and Victoria Road) is following Surbiton Baptist Church (or Surito Baptt) in losing lettering. At present, the name could be altered to I Rub Trees' Subsections, but we'll keep you posted if any more letters fall.



In Margo's shadow

My mother once phoned an oven cleaning company and began: "I'm from Surbiton and I'd like my oven cleaned."

She claims she only announced her location because the company was in Brighton and she didn't want to go through an entire conversation to be told they couldn't travel this far, but it's much more fun to believe she simply wanted them to know that she was from Surbiton.

And what's wrong with that? This is, after all, Queen of the Suburbs, the kingdom of Margo Leadbetter, the mighty Suburbiton. We should want everyone to know we are from Surbiton! Yes, we may have a reputation for being a little pleased with ourselves, but, come on, we've got an art deco mainline station, a thousand pubs, a Waitrose and a Marks & Spencer all in the same high street. That's surely reason enough to be a bit smug.

Sure, we have our little idiosyncrasies. We label random stretches of roads 'villages'; we take M&S carrier bags into the 99p store so we don't have to be seen with theirs; we try to look sophisticated as we sip our soya milk lattes and read The Times in the midst of 332 small children in the coffee shops; and we show off the punnet of marinated ponentine olives we've purchased from the farmers' market while breakfasting on perfectly poached eggs at Gordon Bennett!

There's no doubt Margo's delicate shadow still hovers over our leafy suburb, and if you look closely, you will see that she even walks among us.

I saw a Margo just the other day standing crossly in front of the crisps in the 99p store. Her husband picked up a multipack of Chipsticks asking "What about these?" and Margo replied "They don't even say 'crisps' on them".

Quite aside from failing to recognise a popular brand of crisp when she sees one, it was obvious that she had been



dragged in there entirely against her will. They left empty-handed, and she presumably marched Jerry to M&S where they do real crisps.

I have seen another Margo drag her son past McDonald's hissing "You are not going in there - you can have a fruit bar after your cornet lesson"; and yet another asking the Waitrose rotisserie counter if they do pigeon, and looking very peeved to discover they don't.

My mother (again... sorry Mum) performed a textbook Margoism on Father's Day. While walking past the end of Victoria Road, my father took a deep, appreciative breath and said "Mmm, what's that smell? It smells delicious". My mother looked at him with horror and exclaimed, aghast, "Brian! That's KFC!"

If he had commented favourably on the aroma of the wild boar terrine wafting from the newly opened ExCellar, I'm sure it would have been quite a different story.

Let us be proud of our quirks, of our reputation, of our legacy that Margo bestowed on us; and let us, from now on, begin every sentence with the noble words "I'm from Surbiton..."

Becky Mayhew
Read more of Becky
at beckysaysthings.wordpress.com



Can you beat £6.99 for a trim?

Where are the cheapest haircuts for men in these austere times? Try Tolworth Broadway, where competition is, er, cut-throat.

Smokey Barbers, a unisex salon plus internet cafe at 92 Broadway, charges £8 (seniors £5, Monday-Thursday) and £6 for a shave. Johnny's, round the corner at 412 Ewell Road, also charges £8 for a trim and £8 for a shave (seniors £6, Monday-Friday).

Cut Masters at 86 Broadway, 9am-7pm seven days a week, charges £7 for a haircut, and £7 for a shave (£5 seniors).

But the cheapest chop in town? Kami's barber shop, 48 Broadway. A haircut is £6.99 (seniors £6), a shave £6.

"There's a lot of competition round here," admitted Idriss, an 18-year-old



From left, Yousif, Parwar and Idriss at Kami's... and (top) Good Life editor Tim Harrison after a £6.99 special

barber who combines his work at Kami's with studying for A-levels in business, ICT and biology. "We do well because we're good!"

Idriss' roots are Kurdish, although he is UK born and a former pupil of Tolworth Junior and Hollyfield.

"There's a very friendly community in Tolworth," he said. "Everyone knows each other. Haircuts are very price-sensitive. These days every penny counts."

So, despite the recession, there's never been a better time to be well-groomed, especially if you're a senior citizen.

If you know of cheaper haircuts in the Surbiton area, let The Good Life know. Our contact details are listed below.

Playing Games by Morris Thain

I am trying to get excited by the thought of all that sport
As my credit card reminds me of the tickets I have bought
When did I apply for fencing? Can I bear to watch canoes?
Do I really give a monkey's if the Belgians win or lose?

Table tennis, trampolining, water polo, volleyball...
Seems I asked to watch them too, in some forsaken, far-flung hall
Though I might have liked gymnastics, watching damsels skip and hop,
I've been saddled with the diving... just one jump and then a plop.

I got caught up in the fever of applying for this and that
Now the Greco-Roman wrestling is a thought that leaves me flat
An eternity will pass before the old fat lady sings
And I close my eyes forever on those interlocking rings.



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