On The Hill

NEWS AND INFORMATION FOR PRIMROSE HILL PEOPLE

FEBRUARY 2019 | ONTHEHILL.INFO

SEX, DRUGS AND ROCK 'N' ROLL – AND SLAVERY

James Harris talks about life by the canal

LONDON CLINIC OF HYPNOTHERAPY

An effective way to nurture mental and emotional health



GUEST EDITOR

MATTHEW WRIGHT

Matthew talks about what's needed to sustain a happy community and wonders: what's happened to the bar stools?

See p 24

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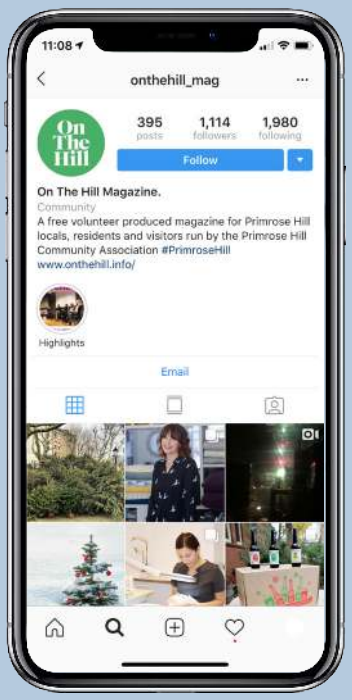
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February 2019

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Sales

020 7043 4433

£949,950 Leasehold



Primrose Hill, NW3

An elegant 2 double bedroom, first floor apartment, situated in a detached period residence on one of Primrose Hills most sought after roads. This property comprises of a grand reception room with a modern open plan kitchen, a generous principal bedroom, a further double bedroom, a family bathroom and a private share of garden. The apartment is ideally positioned to allow easy access for the restaurants, boutiques and open green spaces of Primrose Hill and only 0.2 miles from Chalk Farm Underground Station (Northern Line).

Energy Efficiency Rating - D64

2 1

£1,150,000 Leasehold



Primrose Hill, NW3

An outstanding 3 bedroom apartment set on the entire second floor of an impressive double fronted, detached period residence. This superb apartment offers flexible living space (963 sq ft) featuring a stunning, South West facing reception room, a separate modern kitchen, a generous principal bedroom with en-suite shower room, 2 further double bedrooms and a large family bathroom. Harley Road is centrally located for the abundance of amenities of St Johns Wood & Belsize Park and the green open spaces of Primrose Hill & Regents Park.

Energy Efficiency Rating - E52

3 2

Lettings

020 7043 3333

£830* p/w Unfurnished (£3,597 p/m)



Primrose Hill, NW1

Offering this stylish apartment situated on the first floor of this converted railway warehouse in the heart of Primrose Hill. The property has been finished to a high standard throughout and comprises a very spacious reception/dining room with wooden flooring, a modern fully fitted kitchen with integrated appliances, a master bedroom with en-suite shower room, 2 further double bedrooms and a family bathroom. Further benefits include an allocated gated parking space and excellent storage throughout.

Energy Efficiency Rating - C76

3 2

£1,950* p/w Part Furnished (£8,450 p/m)



Primrose Hill, NW3

A stunning brand newly refurbished 4 double bedroom family house situated moments away from the open space of Primrose Hill Park. The property offers an incredible sized double reception room, a separate dining/reception room, a superb eat in fully fitted family kitchen, 4 large double bedrooms, 4 en-suite bathrooms, a guest cloakroom, a private garden and off street parking for 2 cars. The house is conveniently located within just 0.3 miles from Swiss Cottage (Jubilee Line) Underground station and all of the shops and restaurants along Finchley Road.

Energy Efficiency Rating - E51

4 4

Set fees apply for all tenancies: £180.00 administration fee per tenancy + £48.00 referencing charge per Tenant/Guarantor. For variable charges and deposits explained please visit www.g-h.co.uk

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Special thanks to all our contributors.

This publication is created by the community and for the benefit of Primrose Hill on behalf of your local charity, the Primrose Hill Community Association (PHCA). All proceeds from this publication go directly to fund the charity. We hope you enjoy.

www.phca.cc

Disclaimer: the views in the magazine are not necessarily the views of the PHCA.

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AMELIA'S HAIR: NuYu
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ISSN 20-6175



Welcome to February

Welcome to the latest edition of your community magazine, this time edited by me, Matthew Wright, proud Primrose Hill resident for some 15 years now, journalist and broadcaster for nearly twice that.

I didn't hesitate when offered the opportunity as there are so many thoughts that I want to share, all linked by a common thread: what's needed to sustain a happy community.

We're so blessed on the Hill to live in one of the safest and friendliest neighbourhoods I've encountered. But as you'd expect, much has changed over that time: restaurants come and go, buildings change too and there are subtle changes. Have you noticed how bar stools, once a common sight in local boozers, have all but vanished?

A subtle change indeed, and yet their disappearance has had unintended and upsetting consequences for some residents. Oh, the difficulties of keeping a community happy, balancing the needs and desires of different groups. More on the bar stool issue inside.

Having just witnessed a cyclist plough straight through a mother and children in Primrose Hill park, it strikes me how a firm hand can sometimes be needed to ensure that the rights of different groups are protected. While I do occasionally see police cars, in all my years walking my dog Wiggy over there I've not once seen a copper or park warden lift a finger to stop annoying pedal pests. It won't be long before someone gets hurt.

Striving for a better community isn't just about reining in the bad guys; there are lots of positives too. One night last year I experienced this first hand during an auction for the Primrose Hill Community Centre. The bidding was frantic, but I was still disappointed to lose a wine-tasting package with JC, patron of bistro L'Absinthe. I wasn't glum for long. The winning bidder, a lady called Catherine Ferguson, invited me and wife Amelia to share the experience. What a lady. That's true community spirit!

I'm devastated to learn that the inimitable JC is not going to reopen L'Absinthe, which closed over Christmas for what regulars thought was a refurb. JC first lured me inside for steak frites more than a decade ago. Who could resist this charming man in Breton shirt and beret? He hosted a fantastic wine-tasting for my 50th and has become a firm friend.

Mrs Wright is beside herself. Currently eight months pregnant, Amelia's worried her being 'off the sauce' may have so damaged the diner's takings JC felt there was no point in carrying on! We both wish JC all the best with his next mouth-watering venture and I'm sure many readers will too.

Matthew Wright

PRIMROSE HILL COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION
29 HOPKINSONS PLACE, off FITZROY RD, LONDON NW1 8TN

WEDNESDAY 'OPEN HOUSE' PROGRAMME FEBRUARY 2019

SMALL CHANGE BIG DIFFERENCE — 6 FEB

Groundwork offer an interactive workshop on food hacks and nifty tricks - from recycling teabags to freezing bread - for reducing waste and saving money

THE KINDNESS OFFENSIVE — 13 FEB

Hear from the Camden-based organisation responsible for accomplishing extraordinary things in the name of Kindness

ELIZABETH GARRETT ANDERSON GALLERY — 20 FEB



Telling the story of the first woman to practise as a doctor in Britain the Elizabeth Garrett Anderson Gallery sets her struggle in context of 19th and 20th century social and political history. Transport available or meet 2pm Unison Gallery, 130 Euston Road NW1 2AY

THE BREADWINNER — 27 FEB



Telling the story of the first woman to practise as a doctor in Britain the Elizabeth Garrett Anderson Gallery sets her struggle in context of 19th and 20th century social and political history. Transport available or meet 2pm Unison Gallery, 130 Euston Road NW1 2AY

OPEN HOUSE is funded by 'U3A in London'

All events are free, including afternoon tea, at 2pm at Primrose Hill Community Centre unless other stated.

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On The Street

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AND MORE

Harriet Kelsall Bespoke Jewellery

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Harriet Kelsall Bespoke Jewellery

This month marks one year since Harriet Kelsall Bespoke Jewellery opened its doors in Primrose Hill. For eight years the unit at 69 Regent's Park Road was an empty dilapidated space, but on Saturday 3 February 2018 a unique new retail environment was revealed.

It's been a busy year for the Primrose Hill team, beginning with an official launch party, which was a great success despite heavy snow! Harriet Kelsall Bespoke Jewellery called upon its new neighbours for help: the fizz flowed thanks to Nicolas Wines, cupcakes from Sweet Things were devoured, confetti balloons from Cacao Toys added extra sparkle and fresh flowers from Fitzroys added a touch of spring to a chilly day. It was a wonderful opportunity to meet the team of designers, led by Senior Designer Tom Wilson, and raise a glass to this exciting new addition to Primrose Hill.

2018 not only marked the opening of the company's third location, but Harriet Kelsall Bespoke Jewellery also celebrated its 20th birthday after beginning life at Harriet's kitchen table in 1998. Along the way Harriet married Tim, who is now managing director of the business. The couple have many connections to Primrose Hill, so it seemed natural to them to open a studio in the area; and the decision has proved to be an excellent one, as Harriet explains:

"I have felt part of the Primrose Hill community since I lived in Chalcot Square over 20 years ago, so I always knew everybody would be friendly. But I have been overwhelmed by the way everybody here has embraced us with open arms. We love it when people pop in for a chat or a coffee, even if they aren't looking for any jewellery. We really feel part of the thriving community here already; it has been an amazing first year. Business in the Primrose Hill Studio & Shop has been building even faster than we predicted and the figures are good. Our customers from elsewhere in London have also been visiting, so it is nice to bring people to the area; and of course we are thrilled to have so many new local customers and friends. We've loved supporting the community here too and have been delighted to donate a sterling silver dog tag as a Pup Aid prize, as well as a pendant for the 2018 Summer Fair auction and raffle prizes for local school fundraising."

2019 is already off to a busy start for the Harriet Kelsall Bespoke Jewellery team with lots of beautiful bespoke designs being brought to life in the company's Hertfordshire workshop. Harriet is confident that her business will continue to thrive in Primrose Hill:

"As the chairman of the National Association of Jewellers, I know that retailers are really struggling. Recent research published in the broadsheets said that 14 shops are closing down every single day. You have to have something special to survive this difficult climate. Happily I think we have something special and have even been able to grow in this difficult climate. We have chosen an exceptionally special place to plant seeds for our creativity and bespoke craftsmanship to thrive and prosper, while intertwining with this lovely community."

www.hkjewellery.co.uk

Harriet Kelsall Bespoke Jewellery is holding a Jewellery Appraisal Day at its Primrose Hill Studio & Shop on Thursday 28 February between 10am and 4.30pm. More details can be found at www.hkjewellery.co.uk/london-appraisal-day



An Evening with Harry Enfield & Stephen Mangan

By Maggie Chambers

"Welcome to the Primrose Hill Brexit Means Brexit fundraising evening." And so Stephen Mangan introduced the January evening event to raise money for the Primrose Hill Community Association.

He and Harry Enfield were on stage at Cecil Sharp House in an unstructured, but brilliantly funny evening.

Both actors know Primrose Hill well. Harry Enfield lived here between 1988 and 2001. He lived on Gloucester Avenue near the photographer David Bailey. Bailey's mail used to come through his door so he'd take it round for him, and often wonders if the favour was ever returned. Richard Beer and Helen Fielding were also close neighbours. He called Cecil Sharp House the 'Clodhopping Society' as all he could hear were feet thudding on floorboards. He acknowledges that Primrose Hill has changed and attracts different people these days. In his day, no one had a Bentley up in Hampstead: such cars were a sign you watched telly rather than read books; now everyone has them. He's since moved to Notting Hill (boos from the audience) which he joked was much nicer and full of wealthier people.

Stephen Mangan moved to Primrose Hill in 1992 and still lives here (cheers from the audience). He's lived all over, including Gloucester Avenue, Princess Road and Chalcot Square. He is a true local as his parents met in Camden Stores on Parkway, which is now Masala Zone. They had emigrated from Ireland and frequented the same pub. The Irish went to the Dublin Castle, the Scots to the Edinburgh Castle and the Welsh to the (then named) Pembroke Castle. The name Mangan means 'luxurious growth of hair'. (Harry Enfield acknowledged he'd never be a Mangan.) In County Mayo where his family originated, everyone looks like him. And surprisingly, Mangan has never been asked to play an Irishman.

Harry Enfield is the catchphrase king, and we were treated to him shouting "Loadsamoney". People still go up to him and say, "I suppose you've got loadsamoney now, haven't you?"

After touching on education, where we learned that Harry Enfield went to York University and Stephen Mangan to Cambridge (this was the source of a lot of pokes throughout the evening), the pair compared notes on working styles. Harry Enfield said he wasn't good at being himself and how he felt the need to play someone totally different from his own character, "I'm a w***ker" being his reason. He envied Stephen Mangan's confidence in himself. Mangan replied that he'd gone to boarding school, which taught you how to pretend to be confident. He then went to RADA and studied the Stanislavski method of acting, which trained him to enter into the mindset of his characters.

Stephen Mangan very nearly didn't become an actor. He studied law – at Cambridge, of course – and shortly after he'd finished his degree, his mother became ill. He spent months caring for her until she died. His mother was only 45 when she died and his grandmother 47, so this gave him a strong desire to change direction and go for what he really wanted in life. He auditioned for RADA and got a place.

Brexit, of course, entered the conversation. Harry Enfield told about the time he'd invited Nigel Farage onto his show in ironic mimicry of Ricky Gervais having David Bowie as a guest on *Extras*. Farage was professional, didn't ask for payment and did the take in one go. At that time he wasn't a major political player. But Enfield was mortified when he recently met him again after a comedy evening and Farage came bounding over like a long-lost friend – in front of lots of young, cool comedians.

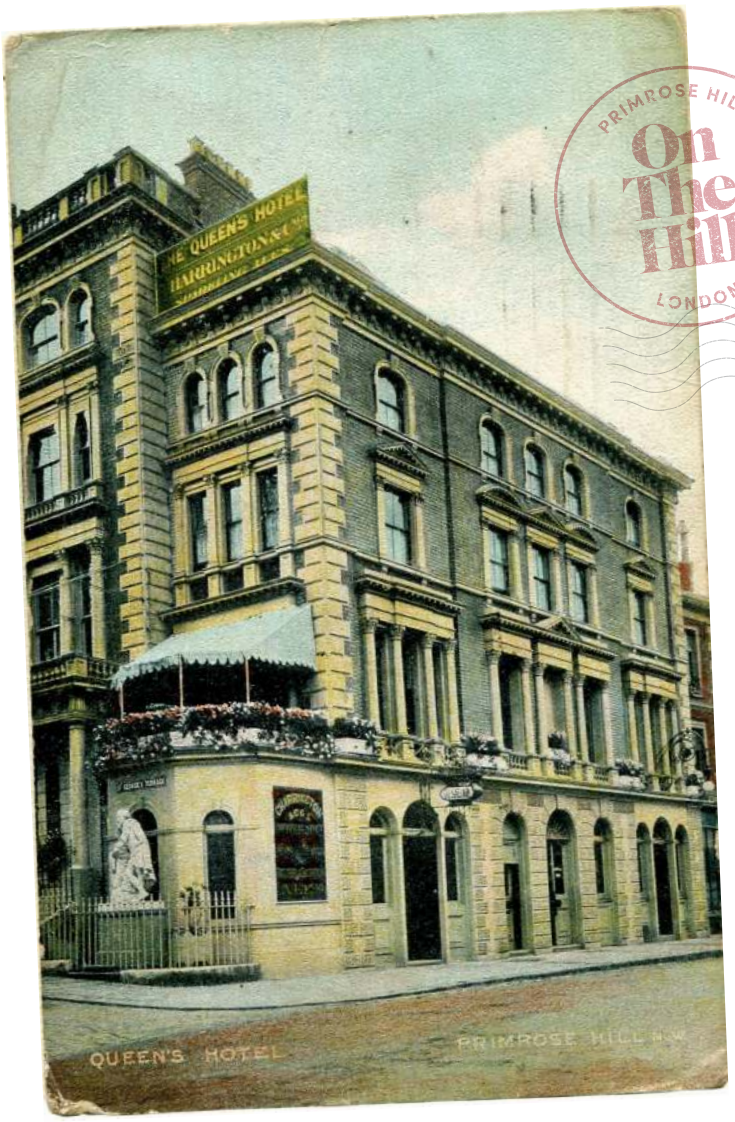
There also touched on religion. Stephen Mangan was brought up as a Catholic and rose through the ranks to become chief altar boy, swinging incense from a silver chain. He's now an atheist, but the pair discussed the prevalence of Christianity within the acting community. Many people think that Mangan is Jewish, and after he'd starred in the TV series *Adrian Mole: The Cappuccino Years*, he was asked by the *Jewish Chronicle* if they could run a feature on him; when he said great, but that he wasn't actually Jewish, they retracted their offer.

Harry Enfield is the catchphrase king, and we were treated to him shouting "Loadsamoney". People still go up to him and say, "I suppose you've got loadsamoney now, haven't you?"

Stephen Mangan revealed that he still gets "Dan!" shouted at him every single day, as a result of the scene in *I'm Alan Partridge* where he plays the kitchen salesman Dan Moody.

When I met the two actors before the event, they were considering how Primrose Hill could be made cooler. The solution was to put Alan Bennett on a plinth and have him available for questions 24 hours a day. My suggestion would be a second plinth with Harry Enfield and Stephen Mangan surrounded by bar stools, so we could go over whenever we needed a good laugh and banter. And to shout "Dan!"

POSTCARDS FROM PRIMROSE HILL



Located on the corner of Regent's Park Road and St George's Terrace is The Queen's public house. Opened in 1854/5, the sign at the top of the building tells us that it was also a hotel. In 1911 it was run by Louis Yarrow, who lived at the property with his wife Eliza and their children Dora and Jack. The barman was 26-year-old William Hallpike. Not much has changed since then on the outside of the building; the only thing missing now is the small white statue of Shakespeare, erected in 1864 to celebrate the tercentenary of his birth. Does anyone know when and why it was removed?

@old_primrosehill_postcards

Camden Community Connectors

- **Age UK Camden's free informal and friendly service for all Camden residents aged 60+.**
- **Our service can support you to find activities in the borough and improve your wellbeing**
- **We'll meet up to discuss your interests & help identify activities, we can also come along with you initially to try it out.**
- **Are you keen to help others find and engage with activities in the borough? Why not join our team of Volunteer Connectors?**

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Or email: communityconnectors@ageukcamden.org.uk
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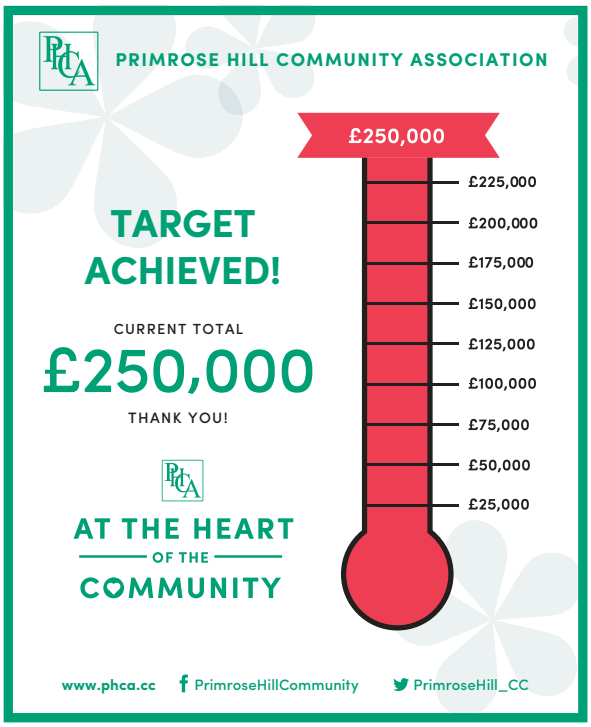
News & Information

from Primrose Hill Community Association

Your regular update from PHCA, publisher of *On The Hill*

TOGETHER WE DID IT!





As you may know, we have been looking to raise £250,000 for the acquisition of a 25-year lease of the Primrose Hill Community Centre, to ensure that the building remains in the community's hands for the foreseeable future.

It gives us great pleasure and pride to announce that we have reached our target, thanks to the amazing Primrose Hill community. By the time this goes to press we will have formally sealed the deal with Camden Council.

This now gives us a terrific platform to plan ahead and build an even better, stronger community together. The trustees will be putting together a new business plan for the next five years, and if anyone would like to help in the planning process, please get in touch with the Community Association office.

We want to thank the fundraising team who did such a splendid job: led by Dick Bird, they were Maureen Betts, Colin St Johnston, Doro Marden, Pam White, Monica Crooks, Beverley Silverstone, Sue Bird and Mick Hudspeth.

More importantly, we must send out a big thank you to every single donor who contributed. You should have already received a letter of thanks, and we will be inviting every one of you to a celebratory event in February, when a wall plaque bearing the names of all donors will be unveiled. This will be on display in the Community Centre for the next 25 years. We do hope you will come and join in.

PHCA Trustees Needed

Are you passionate about making a difference and bringing the local community together? Primrose Hill Community Association is keen to recruit more trustees to expand the range of skills on its current committee.

To find out more, or for an informal chat, please call the office on 020 7586 8327 or email at info@phca.cc

NEWS & VIEWS



St Mary's Church Installs Camden's first Knife Bin

St Mary's church in Primrose Hill has installed the first knife bin in Camden: a response to the huge increase in knife crime amongst young people in London, and the deaths of four local teenagers in the area.

Jason Allen, manager of St Mary's Youth Service says, "The bin gives people a safe way to dispose of knives they shouldn't be carrying. Every knife surrendered to the bin is potentially a life saved. I'm asking every young person in Camden carrying a knife to do the right thing, and use the bin. If it saves just one life, and saves one family from the agony of losing a child, then the bin has done its job."

Marjorie Brown, vicar of St Mary's, adds: "These bins are shown to work, and our community has given us the loud and clear message that they want them."

St Mary's Youth Service supports almost 200 children and teenagers each year, but estimates the local need at almost five times that amount. Its focus is to prevent violence and promote opportunities for youngsters at risk of gang culture, violence and lack of access to education and work. Donations can be made at **www.justgiving.com/smcct**



Jazz at the Library

Middlesex University BA students presented the first ever evening of Jazz at the Primrose Hill Community Library with three different groups performing. There was some discussion about jazz and libraries, and a link between the Dewey Decimal System and Miles Dewey Davis, which the evening's music proceeded to improve upon.

The first group of piano, drums and double bass were joined by two saxes – one alto, one tenor – to play a piece by Gil Evans, and Miles Davis's 'Nardis'. Then the same rhythm section played with an amazing array of five guitars on numbers by Quincy Jones. The finale was an extravaganza ensemble of fifteen musicians playing Cuban-based tunes with four very professional singers.

The Middlesex students were polished, good musicians and performed as though they had been doing it for years, which perhaps they have. Middlesex music staff and technicians made the whole evening work well, but it was all made possible by our very own administrator, Terry, himself a music graduate of Middlesex.

This is the first of what we hope will be many more evenings of Jazz at the Library. We only need more of you jazz-loving locals to swell the audience. Watch the Library newsletter, social media and local poster sites for the announcement of the next Jazz at the Library evening.

Lunch Club Volunteers Needed

The Lunch Club at Oldfield, run by the PHCA, depends on volunteers to provide this valuable service for older people and is looking for people to help out on Mondays and Wednesdays. This takes just over an hour and involves helping to serve lunches, taking money and washing up. Call 020 7586 8327 or email info@phca.cc

Beer Tasting at St Mary's Brewery



The November beer-fest at St Mary's church attracted a good crowd, and attendants got to sample a range of new beers from the brewery in the crypt.

A percentage of the profit from the sale of beer goes towards the outreach work done in the church, such as the youth work which Jason Allen coordinates. Jason gave a brief talk to emphasise how vital this work is to the community. The only life some of the young people know is that of 'kill or be killed'. He emphasised how some of these kids need boundaries, and to be told they're making bad choices. His job is to try and help them make better decisions. Keir Starmer MP joins them occasionally, sometimes late at night, to try to get a handle on why these things are happening.

Have a drink which goes to a good cause!

www.stmarysbrewery.co.uk

Repeat Repeat Exhibition opens at Freelands Foundation



The Freelands Foundation has a dynamic programme of events for 2019, starting with the show *Repeat Repeat*, which has been curated by Creative Director Henry Ward. The show explores the idea of daily practice and repeated routine. It asks questions relating to domesticity, parenting and occupation and how repetitive actions can enable artistic activity to take place. Seven artists are included in the exhibition, which highlights how meaningless or pointless actions can become meaningful or even profound.

Freelands Foundation, 113 Regent's Park Road, NW1 8UR

https://freelandsfoundation.co.uk

'Winter of Love'

Fans of Lanah P have a new seasonal offering, 'Winter of Love'. The song was written in the autumn when Lanah was out late at night feeding the homeless lying in doorways in one of the richest cities in the world. The song can be heard as a love song, or as a euphemism for a lack of empathy towards fellow human beings.

'Winter of Love' is available at **www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZKHvPt_2VVc**

Unwanted Christmas Gifts

Do you have any unwanted Christmas gifts? One too many box of chocolates? The Primrose Hill Community Centre is always in need of prizes, and they are a dab hand at making up hampers, so nothing is too small. Boxes of biscuits, bottles of wine or bath oil will be gratefully received. Please drop donations round to the Community Centre. Thank you!



Primrose Hill says NO to NO_2!

Did you notice the difference in the air during the holidays when there was less traffic on the roads?

Transition Primrose Hill, inspired by the new protest movement Extinction Rebellion, gathered on top of Primrose Hill to mark the fourth day of the year, when people all over the globe were focusing on the element 'Air'.

As *On The Hill* has reported, monitoring carried out by Transition Primrose Hill for two successive years has shown illegal levels of nitrogen dioxide (NO_2) in three-quarters of the twenty sites studied. Levels around our schools and playgrounds are worryingly high. Such high levels are linked with amounts of particulate matter: invisible tiny specks which we breathe into our lungs, hearts and brains.

London was the world's first mega city, so let's push for it to be the first truly sustainable urban area with real priority given to walking and cycling. Think how much healthier and happier we would all be; AND we need to do this to cut carbon emissions within the next twelve years to avoid our own extinction.

Camden Council has a new Air Quality Plan out for consultation until 15 February; visit their website and ask for radical action to clean up our air.

https://consultations.wearecamden.org/supporting-communities/clean-air-action-plan

Letter to the Editor

Dear Editor,

Loved Anna and Pamela Shiffer,
But she adored her husband's sweater,
She wore it so well,
Became Primrose Belle,
With charm and best on the Hilfiger.

Yours faithfully,
Howard Richards



Demis Hassabis Visits UCL Academy

UCL Academy students were recently treated to a visit from Demis Hassabis, one of the world's top 100 most influential people according to *Time* magazine. Demis, the Co-Founder of DeepMind, talked to students about his career path, from chess prodigy through to computer scientist, neuroscientist, video game designer, AI scientist and entrepreneur. The event was a result of the partnership between DeepMind and Chess in Schools and Communities, a charity which encourages chess to promote academic and social skills.

Demis described how an A Level maths teacher taught him *how* to think and approach problems methodically. He also explained how advances in research often came in the 'gaps' between subjects and he applauded the Connected Curriculum and collaborate approach to learning at UCL Academy.

Cover Shoot

Many thanks to GoBoat (**goboat.co.uk**) who lent us a boat for the cover shoot. Thanks also to Consuelo Balduzzi who was the stylist for the cover. Consuelo's client list has previously included George Michael and the Pet Shop Boys. She has recently settled in Primrose Hill and can be contacted at **consubalduzzi@yahoo.co.uk**



PHCA room

Halls for Hire

The Community Library has two large rooms for hire on non-library days, including Sundays. The Community Centre rents out rooms mainly at weekends.

For Library hire call 020 7419 6599 or email events@phcl.org
For Community Centre hire call 020 7586 8327 or email info@phca.cc



Laurence Isaacson

Restaurateur and entrepreneur Laurence Isaacson died in October. He lived in Primrose Hill where he hosted many parties, but he didn't cook much, preferring to go to Lemonia instead, which he described as 'like an extra dining room, it's so handy'. He co-founded the Marylebone private members' club Home House, built up the Chez Gérard restaurant and was co-chairman of L'Escargot in Soho. He was at school with George Harrison and at the LSE with Mick Jagger.



David Holmes

Local illustrator and art director David Holmes has died aged 85. Among many other achievements, David exhibited in three Royal Academy exhibitions, and in 2015 he designed the Royal Mail Christmas stamps. Local residents will know his work from the cover of *Primrose Hill Remembered*. Last year *On The Hill* featured an article about David's book, *A Brush with the Music of Time* about his life as an art student, advertiser, designer and illustrator. He owned a studio in Primrose Hill, where he cultivated a Japanese garden, for over 30 years.





Culinary Medicine UK

As Hippocrates used to say, 'Let food be thy medicine and medicine be thy food'. Local GP Rupy Aujla has founded Culinary Medicine UK, a not-for-profit organisation that aims to teach doctors about nutrition and how to cook. It promotes the importance of food in the maintenance of good health. The UK is officially the most obese country in Western Europe with obesity being linked to hypertension, cancer, type 2 diabetes and heart disease.

www.culinarymedicineuk.org

What's On February

NEW THIS FEBRUARY

TUESDAY 5 FEBRUARY

Film Show at the Library
The Eagle is a silent classic, projected with live piano, starring Rudolph Valentino, directed by Clarence Brown. PHCL. 7.15pm. £8 in cash, including a glass of wine, in advance at PHCL or on the door.

WEDNESDAY 6 FEBRUARY

Open House
TBA. PHCC. 2pm. Free.

WEDNESDAY 13 FEBRUARY

Open House – The Kindness Offensive
Hear from the Camden-based group known for random distribution of goods to members of the public and charities. PHCC. 2pm. Free.

TUESDAY 19 FEBRUARY

Gong Baths
Ancient, powerful healing method for the ultimate chillax. Excellent for anxiety, depression and insomnia. PHCL. 6.50–8pm. £15. Contact Nicole 07798 524836, haveyourmagic@gmail.com

TUESDAY 19 FEBRUARY

Library Author Talk
Anthony Good and Pamela Holmes talk about their gripping new novels. PHCC. 7pm. £2 at the door.

WEDNESDAY 20 FEBRUARY

Open House
TBA. PHCC. 2pm. Free.

THURSDAY 21–FRIDAY 22 FEBRUARY

Circus Glory Children's Workshop
Circus skills and trapeze workshops over two days. PHCC. 10am–3pm. £15 per hour. £28 morning or afternoon. £50 per day. £90 both days.

SATURDAY 23 FEBRUARY

Music Day
Playing Bizet's Symphony in C. Conductor Christopher Braime. PHCA. 12 noon. £25 for the day incl hot lunch. Contact sueandhercello@gmail.com

WEDNESDAY 27 FEBRUARY

Open House – *The Breadwinner*
An Oscar-nominated animation about 11-year-old Parvana growing up under Taliban rule in Afghanistan in 2001. PHCC. 2pm. Free.

THURSDAY 28 FEBRUARY

Jewellery Appraisals
Appraisals by expert valuer and IVR member. Harriet Kelsall Bespoke Jewellery. 10am–4.30pm. Prices available upon request. Contact 0203 886 0757, primrosehill@hkjewellery.co.uk

FOR KIDS

MONDAY

Ready Steady Go ABC
Exploratory play, singing, dance and stories for babies and toddlers 6–18 months, with Aaron. PHCC. 9.45–11am and 11.15am–12.30pm. Contact 020 7586 5862

Rhyme Time
Library Rhyme Time for under 5s. PHCL. 10.30–11.15am. Suggested £2 donation. Contact 020 7419 6599

Circus Glory
Trapeze for ages 3–12. All levels welcome. PHCC. 3–6.30pm. Contact Genevieve 07973 451 603, gmonastresse@googlemail.com

Homework Club
Do your homework in the Library with a qualified teacher. PHCL. 4–6pm. Free. Contact 020 7419 6599

TUESDAY

Hartbeeps Multi-Sensory Sound Journeys
Multi-sensory classes for mums and their little ones. PHCC. 2pm Baby Bells; 3pm Baby Beeps; 4pm Happy House. Classes from £9.50. Contact clarelouise@hartbeeps.com

Monkey Music
Award-winning music classes for babies and toddlers: music, movement, percussion, bubbles and fun. PHCC. 9.30–11.30am. Contact 020 8438 0189 for a free trial class.

Music and Rhyme for under 4s
Drop-in sessions. PHCC. 4.30–5pm. £1. Contact 020 7586 8327

WEDNESDAY

Circus Glory
Trapeze for ages 3–12. All levels welcome. PHCC. 2.30–6.30pm. Contact Genevieve 07973 451 603, gmonastesse@googlemail.com

Primrose Hill Children's Choir
Enjoy fun songs and games, learn to sing well. Ages 4–11. St Mary's church, NW3 3DJ. 4.10–5.10pm. First time free, then £8 per week. Contact Matthew 07817 234 925. www.primrosehillchoirs.com

Homework Club
Do your homework in the Library with a qualified teacher. PHCL. 4–6pm. Free. Contact 020 7419 6599

Chess Club
Learn chess at the Library with a trained instructor. PHCL. 6.30–8.30pm. Free. Contact 020 7419 659

THURSDAY

Mini Mozart
Musical story time. PHCL. 9.30am for young children; 10.15am for babies. Contact hello@minimozart.com

Drop-in for under 4s
Drop in and take part in a variety of activities. PHCC. 11.15am–1pm. £2.50 to include snack and tea and coffee for mums. Contact 020 7586 8327

Music and Rhyme for under 4s
Drop-in sessions. PHCC. 4.30–5pm. £1. Contact 020 7586 8327

Catherine's Ballet
Ballet classes for under 5s. PHCC. 4–5pm. Contact info@chalkfarmschoolofdance.co.uk, www.chalkfarmschoolofdance.co.uk

First Class Learning
English and Maths tuition. PHCL. 3.30–6.30pm. Contact primrosehill@firstclasslearning.co.uk

FRIDAY

Mothers' Mornings
Meet other mothers while your children play. PHCL. 10.30–11.30am. Free. Contact 020 7419 6599

Circus Glory
Trapeze for ages 3–12. All levels welcome. PHCC. 2.30–6.30pm. Contact Genevieve 07973 451 603, gmonastesse@googlemail.com

Pitta Patta
Funky dance classes, ages 4–16. PHCC. 4–7.15pm. Contact Juliet 07971 916 174, Juliet@pittapattadance.co.uk, www.pittapattadance.co.uk

SATURDAY

Rhyme Time
For all ages, with an adult. 1st and 3rd Saturdays of the month. PHCL. 10.30–11.15am. Suggested donation £2.

SUNDAY

Perform
A unique mix of drama, dance and singing classes to bring out every child's true potential. Ages 4–7. PHCC. 10–11.30am and 11.30am–1pm. Try a free class. Contact 020 7255 9120, enquiries@perform.org.uk, www.perform.org.uk

FOR ADULTS

MONDAY

Bridge Club (ACOL)
PHCC. 1.45–3.45pm. £3. Contact Maureen Betts 07919 444 187

Lunch Club
At Jacqueline House, Oldfield Estate, Fitzroy Road. Freshly cooked lunch served at 12.30pm sharp. £5 for 2 courses. More info from PHCA.

Bridge Class
Join us in the Library for a game of bridge. Beginners/intermediate. PHCL. 6.30pm. Contact jojarrold@gmail.com

Chilled Strings
Small amateur string chamber orchestra, guided by professional tutor Kwesi Edman. PHCC. 6.30–8.45pm. £10 for each evening. Contact sueandhercello@gmail.com

Primrose Hill Choir
Love to sing? All styles of music, all welcome. PHCC. 7.30–9.30pm. £7. Contact Matthew 07817 234 925, www.primrosehillchoirs.com

Circus Glory
Trapeze for adults. All levels welcome. PHCC. 1.30–2.45pm. Contact Genevieve 07973 451 603, gmonastresse@googlemail.com

Neighbourhood Information Centre
Drop-in advice centre. PHCL. 2–4pm. Free. Contact 020 3397 3058

Debtors Anonymous
Anonymity preserved. PHCL. 7–8pm. Donations welcome to cover the rent of the space. Contact 07932 878 605

Mary's Living and Giving for Save the Children
Take advantage of 50% off books, movies, records and CDs, and 20% off women's jeans, every Monday, 10am–6pm.

Trauma Release Exercises (TRE)
New drop-in class to release chronic tension patterns and return the nervous system to balance. PHCC. 4–5.30pm. £15 per class, or 5 for £50. Contact Tim Kirkpatrick, www.back2base.co.uk

TUESDAY

ESOL Class
Learn English at the Library. PHCL. 12 noon–1pm. Free. Contact jojarrold@gmail.com

Lunchtime Laban
Workshop for actors, dancers, singers and the rest of us. Explore the where and how of movement with Rudolf Laban's Scales and Efforts. PHCC. 12–1pm. £10. Contact Jenny 07970 536643, jennyfrankel.laban@gmail.com

Aerial Yoga
Exercise your posture, flexibility, and strength with Elena as you are suspended above ground in a yoga hammock! Discover this fast-growing fitness trend in a friendly and supportive environment. PHCC. 1.30–2.30pm. Contact aerialwithelena@gmail.com

Mary's Living and Giving for Save the Children
Take advantage of 20% off men's items every Tuesday, 10am–6pm.

Keep Fit for over 60s
New teacher! PHCC. 3–4pm. Free. Contact 0207 586 832

Morris Dancing Class
Have fun, increase your fitness and improve your dance skills whilst learning Cotswold Morris dances. CSH. 7–9pm. £8, or buy 5 and the 6th is free. Contact www.cecilsharphouse.org/morrisdance, 020 7485 2206

Pilates
PHCL. Dynamic sessions, 9am and 10.15am; gentler session 11.30am–12.30pm. £12 per class, £100 for 10 classes. Contact lizacawthorn@gmail.com

General Yoga
PHCC. 6.30–8pm. Contact Catriona 07958 959816, cat.b1@blueyonder.co.uk

WEDNESDAY

Circus Glory
Trapeze for adults. All levels welcome. PHCC. 1.15–2.15pm. Contact Genevieve 07973 451 603, gmonastesse@googlemail.com

Lunch Club
Jacqueline House, Oldfield Estate, Fitzroy Road. Freshly cooked lunch at 12.30 sharp. £5 for 2 courses. More info from PHCC.

Mary's Living and Giving for Save the Children
Blue Jeans Day: 20% off all blue jeans for women, every Wednesday, 10am–6pm.

Open House
A regular activity (film, talk, performance) followed by tea, cake and chat. PHCC. 2pm. Free. Contact PHCC.

English Folk Dance Club
Fun for dancers of all abilities and none. No partner needed. PHCC. 7.30–10pm. Drop in charge £6. Contact camdenfolkdance@yahoo.com

Chess Club
Learn chess at the Library with a trained instructor. PHCL. 6.30–8.30pm. Free. Contact 020 7419 6599

THURSDAY

Narcotics Anonymous
PHCC. 1.30–3.45pm. Free.

Mother and Baby Pilates
Want to tone your limbs, flatten your tummy and strengthen your pelvic floor? PHCL. 10–11am and 11am–12 noon. Contact pilateswithpaulette@gmail.com, facebook.com/pilateswithpaulette

Gentle Pilates
Gentle but effective pilates class. PHCL. 12.30–1.30pm. £10 per session. Contact annie@mactherapy.org

Primrose Hill Yoga
Strengthen, stretch, relax and re-energise. PHCC. 5.30–6.30pm. £11 drop-in, £50 series of 5, student and unemployed discount available. Contact carolineshawyoga@gmail.com

Yoga for Seniors
PHCC. 7–8pm. Free. Contact 020 7586 8327

Kriya Yoga
Yoga class. PHCL. 6.45–8.15pm. For price contact kriyayogauk@btconnect.com

English Country Dancing
Explore England's social folk dance heritage (country, ceilidh and barn dancing) in this friendly and inclusive class. CSH. 7.30–9.30pm. £8, or buy 5 and the 6th is free. Contact www.cecilsharphouse.org/englishcountrydancing, 020 7485 2206

Life-drawing
Beginners to professionals, just drop in! PHCC. 7–9.20pm. £10 or £6 concession. Contact 020 7586 8327, phlifedrawing@gmail.com, www.meetup.com/Primrose-Hill-Life-Drawing-London, Instagram: @lifedrawingph

FRIDAY

Pilates
Stretching and strengthening the whole body to improve balance, muscle-strength, flexibility and posture. PHCC. 8–9am. £15 drop in, £120 for ten sessions. Contact Natalie 07709 543 581, natalienicollfitness@gmail.com

Aerial Pilates with Pieta
Get stronger and more flexible through moving with the support of an aerial sling. PHCC. 10–11am. Class sizes are limited so please book: 07726 721 791, www.circusbodies.com

Mothers' Mornings
Meet other mothers while your children play. PHCL. 10.30–11.30am. Free. Contact 020 7419 6599

Circus Glory
Trapeze for adults. All levels welcome. PHCC. 1.30–2.45pm. Contact Genevieve 07973 451 603, gmonastesse@googlemail.com

SATURDAY

Councillors' Surgery
First Saturday of the month. PHCL. 11am–12pm.

Primrose Hill Market
St Paul's School playground, Elsworthy Road, NW3. 10am–3pm. Contact www.primrosehillmarket.com

SUNDAY

Perform
A unique mix of drama, dance and singing classes to bring out every child's true potential. Ages 4–7. PHCC. 10–11.30am and 11.30am–1pm. Try a free class. Contact 020 7255 9120, enquiries@perform.org.uk, www.perform.org.uk

Hopkinson's Bar
Meet for a drink with your neighbours. All welcome. PHCC. 12–2pm. Contact 020 7586 8327

CONTACT DETAILS

PHCC
Primrose Hill Community Centre
29 Hopkinsons Place (off Fitzroy Road)
NW1 8TN
Contact: info@phca.cc
www.phca.cc
020 7586 8327

PHCL
Primrose Hill Community Library
Sharpleshall Street,
NW1 8YN
Contact: events@phcl.org,
www.phcl.org
020 7419 6599

CSH
Cecil Sharp House
2 Regent's Park Road,
NW1 7AY
Contact: info@efdss.org,
www.cecilsharphouse.org
020 7485 2206

Please submit entries for our February issue by Friday 8 March onthehillwhatson@phca.cc

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London Clinic of Hypnotherapy

By Kelly Curran

Just a short walk up a cobblestone lane bordering Primrose Hill and Belsize Park can be found the cosy and private London Clinic of Hypnotherapy. Its founder is Lydia Johnson, a trained specialist in the dynamics of hypnotherapy. Lydia believes that hypnotherapy is one of the most efficient and effective ways to nurture one's mental and emotional health.

Lydia first experienced hypnotherapy as a young adult. Like many, she was feeling some impediments to her overall happiness. A friend recommended that she visit a hypnotherapist, who helped her to think, feel and ultimately behave differently.

She has since spent years studying and learning to apply the considerable benefits of hypnotherapy to individuals who want to change nearly any behaviour. These range from an acute fear of flying (which she estimates can be addressed in just one session) to quitting smoking, and helping teens to eat more healthily and feel more confident in themselves.

The concept is curiously simple. It is a straightforward method which allows the client to tap into the subconscious belief systems that subliminally control their conscious behaviours. Much of this is done by identifying and re-transmitting associations.

For example, a person who flies in an aeroplane might actually have deep-rooted control issues and be terrified of the flight because they are not the one flying the plane. Under traditional methods, that type of association and/or subsequent treatment could take weeks, months or years to identify, let alone fully resolve. Hypnotherapy allows your mind to rewire that negative association, perhaps as quickly as it was created.

Most of us have heard about mindfulness, mind over matter, and the power that your thoughts have over your behaviours or overall happiness. Yet millions still struggle to identify how those thought patterns are created, and more importantly how to manage them effectively or actually change them. Why do some people have such positive healthy habits, while others do not? The answer is most likely in what type of neuro-associations people have in their subconscious. Lydia believes that these negative thought patterns and associations can often



be eliminated as easily as they were created, and she has now made it her life's work to help others in this process.

In the year since the clinic opened, Lydia has enjoyed working with a wide range of clients across all ages, classes and backgrounds. She enjoys working with everyone, but especially teenagers who are experiencing considerable stress levels. Lydia sees many young adults who are beset with acute nervousness, anxiety and low self-esteem. According to Lydia, these groups are the most rewarding to work with for several reasons.

One benefit is that if damaging thought patterns can be changed early on, as adults they will be saved years of unnecessary regrets. Another benefit is that the young generation is less sceptical about alternative and holistic methods of self-improvement, and so they engage rather more freely and get quicker results.

As the London Clinic of Hypnotherapy enters its second year, Lydia looks forward to expanding her practice and working with new clients and issues. A less limited belief system with an open mind improves the quality of life with hypnotherapy support, she says, and she plans on making this opportunity more available and affordable for all her clients.

'Hypnosis allows your subconscious to relax deeply, therefore allowing you to be open to a less limited belief system and enabling you to re-organise your thoughts, feelings and attitudes to suit your life in the here and now. It is safe and non-invasive. This process has a powerful influence on self-confidence, promoting positivity, confidence boosting and stress relieving.

'Change your thoughts and you change the world around you.'

Lydia gladly gives free 20-minute consultations on whether hypnotherapy could benefit you. More about the clinic is available on her website at **www.londonclinicofhypnotherapy.com**



Cricket Without Boundaries

Primrose Hill cricket enthusiast Giles Watkins travels to Rwanda to spread awareness of HIV/AIDS prevention

So how do I find myself on a Tuesday morning in November, marching across scorched earth under a blazing sun chanting "Abstain, Be Faithful, Condom, Testing" ("ABCT") whilst leading a line, Pied Piper style, of scores of Rwandan schoolchildren from a batting class to a bowling class? I am here with Cricket Without Boundaries (CWB) to raise awareness of HIV/AIDS prevention and the joy of cricket for everyone – girls and boys, disabled and able-bodied, HIV positive and HIV negative. And I'm having the time of my life.

The Cricket Without Boundaries story is a wonderful tale of three cricket-mad university friends who hatched a plan in the pub. Having spent time in Africa after university (with a bat and a ball, of course), Andy Hobbs, Chris Kangis and Ed Williams were struck by the number of kids they encountered who were touched by HIV/AIDS. So they resolved to do something about it using cricket as both a unifier and a catalyst for change.

Focused primarily on sub-Saharan Africa, and run almost entirely by the dedication and enthusiasm of its volunteers, CWB has three main goals:

- **To spread cricket through coaching children and teaching adults how to coach**
- **To link the sport to health and social messages and incorporate these messages into coaching sessions**
- **To bring together and empower local communities through cricket.**

These goals are achieved through project delivery by volunteers and year-round delivery in-country by our ambassadors. The ambassadors are local cricketers trained to keep the CWB flag flying in the community between visits from groups of volunteers from the UK, typically once or twice a year.

So what did we actually do? After an interview and selection process, we met our fellow volunteers for a training weekend. Here we got to know each other, learned a range of cricket training exercises suitable for different group sizes, and how to blend in HIV/AIDS awareness messages at the same time. This was really valuable preparation, in part because of learning the different cricketing drills, but more importantly understanding how to communicate the health messages. After all, it takes a while for most people to get comfortable with demonstrating how to put a condom on the handle of a cricket bat to a crowd of strangers!

"It takes a while for most people to get comfortable with demonstrating how to put a condom on the handle of a cricket bat to a crowd of strangers!"

On arrival in Rwanda a few weeks later, we travelled to Musanze, a drive of two and a half hours from the capital, Kigali. Here we met our local ambassadors and ran a coaching session for fifteen local teachers from the schools we would visit. For the following four days we visited two to three schools per day (primary and secondary), working with school teachers and local CWB ambassadors to enthuse several hundred kids at a time with both the joys of cricket and the potentially life-changing importance of the "ABCT" message. On our final day in Musanze we ran a tournament for the schools, then it was back to Kigali to repeat the programme. We calculated that we coached about 8,000 children in 35 locations, and trained a further 40 teachers to carry the messages forward.

The volunteers on my trip were truly a diverse group. As you might expect, we had some cricketers on the trip – one full-time coach and a women's player from the Hampshire-based Southern Vipers. There was a retired sales director who still umpires





regularly, and a couple of volunteers working with the UK-focused cricket charity Chance to Shine, one of whom makes canal maps as a day job! There was a finance director, a social worker and myself, a leadership consultant.

Fundraising is primarily on a project-by-project basis. Volunteers need to pay their own expenses for the trip and raise at least £1,000 each to continue the work in the country they are visiting. This pays for the ambassadors on the ground, local transport, accommodation plus basic cricket equipment to be distributed to each school visited and thousands of tennis balls! Each volunteer had a different approach to fundraising. I did a sponsored cycle ride; others hosted dinner parties, ran car boot sales or gave up alcohol for six months.

Although it's sometimes difficult to measure the impact of a charity, there are certainly many positive signs of what CWB has achieved. In Rwanda we found many of the youngsters we met knew the ABCT chant, had a good understanding of HIV/AIDS and were comfortable discussing it. We coached orphans and the disabled, truly spreading the CWB philosophy. The current captain of the Rwandan men's team (and CWB ambassador) was a schoolboy who attended a coaching class on the first CWB trip to Kigali in 2007. And the Rwandan women's team, almost exclusively introduced to cricket through CWB over the years, are developing at a pace in a society where women might not typically be encouraged to play cricket.

And would I do it again? Yes – with a couple of caveats: I'd get a bit fitter before the trip, and I'd abstain from quite so much of the excellent Rwandan beer, called Mutzig!

www.cricketwithoutboundaries.com

JOB OPPORTUNITY

Primrose Hill Community Library
Part-time Administrator

An exciting opportunity for a dynamic Administrator to work alongside our volunteers and ensure the smooth running of the library.

Must be a good communicator, friendly, flexible and outgoing, good with computers and social media.

Please apply to Mick Hudspeth for an application pack by ringing **0207 586 8327**, or by emailing **info@phca.cc**

Details

- 20 hrs per week over five days.
- This post will require occasional evening or weekend working.
- Six-month initial contract.
- **£25,000 (inc LW)** pro rata based on a 40-hour week.
- Your place of work will be: Primrose Hill Community Library, Sharpleshall Street, London, NW1 8YN.

PRIMROSE HILL ENTREPRENEURS

Local entrepreneur Petar Savic talks to some of the start-ups and small businesses running from Primrose Hill. This month he meets Emilie Raaberg from The Better Home Company.



WHY DID YOU START A BUSINESS IN TRADES?

We wanted to reinvent the industry. People often perceive using tradesmen and tradeswomen as a total nightmare. And it shouldn't be that way. The Better Home Company aims to shake things up so that people can expect an excellent service every single time. We give a level of customer service that is not currently present in the industry.

WHAT DID YOU DO BEFORE THE BETTER HOME COMPANY?

I worked as a data and technology consultant in marketing technologies at a large media agency called Mindshare.

WHY DID YOU DECIDE TO LAUNCH A START-UP?

I loved my previous job, but have always been fascinated by entrepreneurship. There is something very powerful (as well as scary) about having control over your own destiny! However, when the opportunity came to be part of the founding team of the Better Home Company, I couldn't resist. I truly believe in what our company stands for: shaking up the industry and providing an excellent customer service that is currently not present in the field.

WHAT HAVE THE CHALLENGES BEEN?

Getting everything ready in time for the launch. It's been fun, but a big challenge to make sure we had everything on the list and in the right order. There are a lot of things to take care of, from branding, to advertising, vans, IT systems, etc. Luckily our team consists of people who are specialists in each of these areas and we work super-well together, so everyone has been amazing at getting it all ready in time. We also have a team of 100 tradesmen and women to look after!

HOW DID YOU GET FUNDED?

All five directors pitched in to get the firm off the ground. The nature of the business is very generative, but we will see what the future brings.

WHY DO YOU LIKE ABOUT BEING AN ENTREPRENEUR?

What I really love is the fact that when you get an idea, you need to take it from start to finish. There is no bureaucracy or rigid system as in large corporations. In the latter situation, ideas and new initiatives can often get lost and dropped because they need to go through approval stages in other departments, resulting in a loss of momentum. In a start-up, that doesn't happen. You own the task or idea and you can just go for it. That's exciting.

WHAT ARE YOU CURRENTLY WORKING ON?

Our team is busy every day helping our customers. It is part of people's lifestyle to use different services such as Deliveroo, Uber, etc. We want to be part of people's lifestyle. They call us to repair, maintain or improve anything in their homes. That's why we provide all types of home services.

ANY ADVICE FOR OTHER PEOPLE LOOKING TO WORK WITH START-UPS?

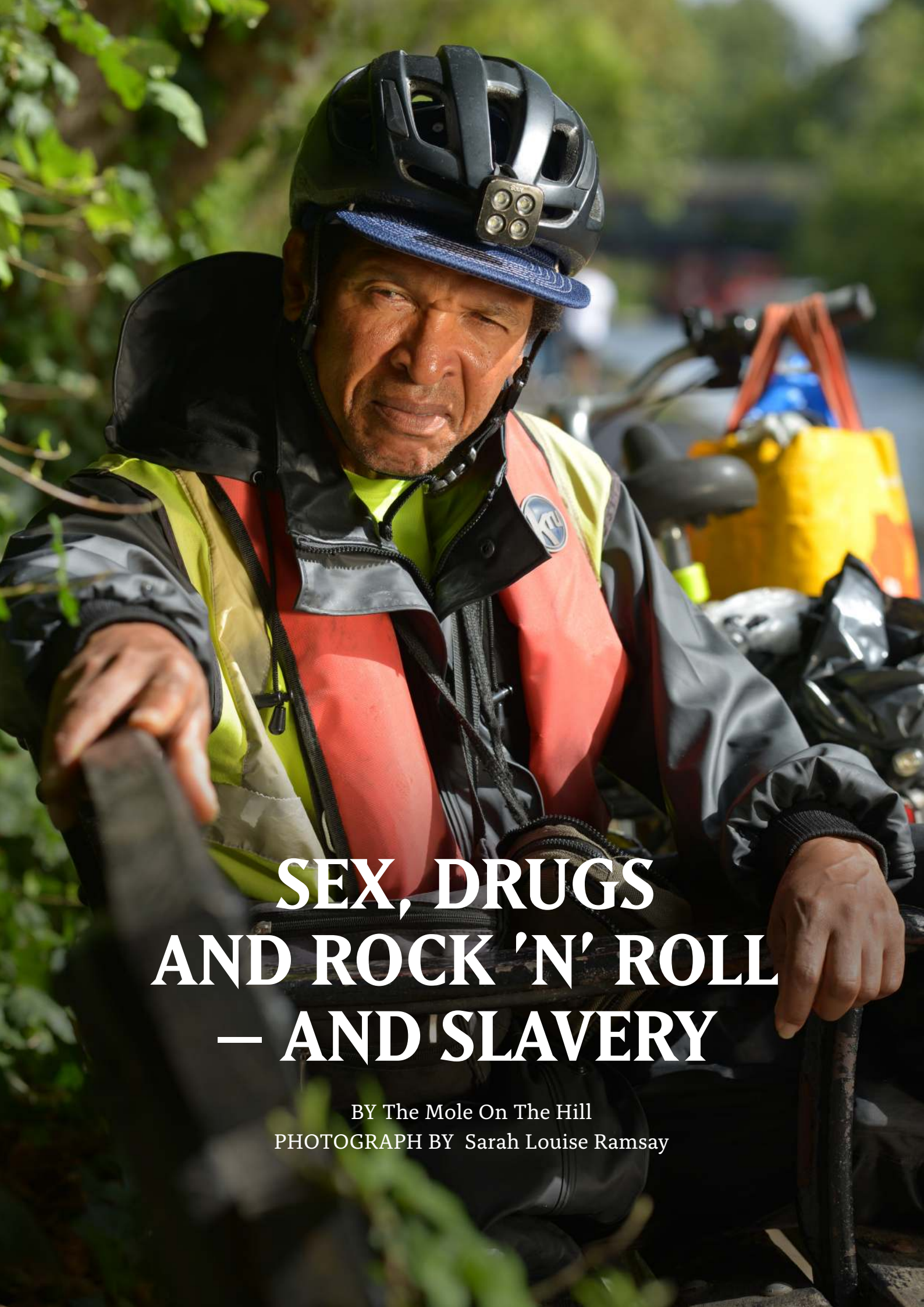
Be realistic, but also optimistic. Assess your current situation, and if you have all the means to get started, then just do it! Believe in yourself and your product. Our company motto, which aligns with our core values, is: Work hard and be nice to people! That's what we live by every day.

WHAT DO YOU LOVE ABOUT PRIMROSE HILL?

The community, for sure! It's such a beautiful area, with people always being friendly and chatty when you meet them in the park or on the high street. It's like a little oasis in the busy city of London.

WHERE CAN READERS FIND OUT MORE ABOUT YOUR SERVICES?

Our Instagram is constantly updated with our latest projects: **@the_better_home_company**. For more info, check out our website: **www.betterhomecompany.com**



SEX, DRUGS AND ROCK 'N' ROLL — AND SLAVERY

BY The Mole On The Hill
PHOTOGRAPH BY Sarah Louise Ramsay

That canal. All that wildlife. Not so good for our cousins, the hedgehogs, who are going to be bulldozed out for a lorry park. Lovely. Peaceful. Not so peaceful when the navvies were digging the canal and the horses were pulling their loads. Poverty and exploitation. Something the guy who keeps the towpath litter-free knows plenty about.

James Harris starts his working day at 5am, pushing his trolley from the tunnel in Islington to the tunnel in Lisson Grove.

"My job is to clear the bins and sweep litter. Every day. Four and a half miles each way. That means I walk about 10 miles a day. Camden Market these days has changed. You used to have young guys sitting there: 'You wanna buy this?', selling weed. They used to hide the weed by the bins. Then it would go missing and they'd come up to you: 'Did you find my weed?' It could be quite threatening. But nowadays you don't have that kind of thing."

Today the towpath seems completely litter-free; not how it used to be. Now you have garish graffiti that is a lot harder to shift than litter.

"It's the first time in my life I've held down a job for fourteen years. Everybody is happy: 'Hi, James.' And I have no idea who they are. I used to squat in the 1980s, and sometimes you could be there for one or two years. They've blocked all that now. You can't squat in a house anymore, so now they're squatting on the canal. The government has to build a lot of houses, because from here all the way down to Limehouse there are squatters."

James Harris was born in what was then British Guyana in 1968.

"My mum was half-native Guyanan and half-Spanish or Portuguese. My father was half-black and half-Scottish. I didn't see much of my dad. And my mum had some kind of trouble so I was adopted by the Baileys. These people were well-off and they always had some kind of missionaries living there. The house was very elegant, right on the edge of the river. The old lady died and I was left with the old man. Then he died and my mother came back when I was nine and I moved with my mum back to Linden McKenzie."

I see you lot coming out of Primrose Hill Books with the Man Booker longlist. Well, enjoy your read. But have a think. During the 1930s Guyana was Booker Guyana. Why was that? Sugar. That's what. Bookers owned all the sugar plantations in Guyana.

John Berger went some way to explain this in his acceptance speech of the Booker Prize for *G*:

"I intend to share the prize with those West Indians in and from the Caribbean who are fighting to put an end to their exploitation. The London-based Black Panther movement has arisen out of the bones of what Bookers and other companies have created in the Caribbean; because, through their Black People's Information Centre, they have links with the struggle in Guyana, the seat of Booker McConnell's wealth."

There is however one glimpse of light in the Booker slavery story: Jock Campbell. Jock went to British Guyana for the first time to take charge of the family Booker estates, in 1934. Later he would say that by acquiring estates through foreclosure, his ancestors became *de facto* slave-owners. Campbell himself abhorred slavery, and it was in fact the urge to make good the misdeeds of his own family that was the catalyst for his own reformist ideals.

As the son of the estate owner, Jock had enormous influence in spite of his youth and soon embarked on a mission of reform, and this became his life work. On 5 May 1971, in the House of Lords, Jock – now Baron Campbell of Eskan – dissociated himself from his ancestors, arguing that 'maximising profits cannot and should not be the sole purpose, or even the primary purpose, of business'.

Eighteen-year-old James Harris was not much interested in politics. He was into music and girls. He earned a living clearing jungle for the bauxite factory.

"A few of us would camp out there clearing the jungle. You'd think it would be dangerous and there were plenty of snakes – they were the worst – but they kept away from people and we always had a fire. But I also loved music. I played in bands and I met this girl. She came to visit her family. I loved her and we got married in 1979 and came over and lived in Harrow Road."

James's real preoccupation was music and busking.

"In 1987 I was busking in Oxford Circus. Those days, in a couple of hours you could make £130. Then the Underground police charged you. You'd go to court and they'd fine you £10. You'd pay, then you'd go back to busking. Part of the cost of the job. Then one day a guy came round and said, 'You've got a really good voice.' He put me in touch with the drummer of Simple Minds, a guy called Cecil Raynor. We recorded two or three really good songs. Then this guy made a film called *Sammy and Rosie Get Laid*. They needed a busker, and I auditioned. They made the film under the flyover at Notting Hill Gate."

In around 2002, the whole music system changed. Instead of busking and getting a £10 fine, they made it legal.

"Apart from the busking there was doing a demo. You could print 500 records and take them around to different record shops, ten here and ten there. It used to be £6 for a record. Now it's 65p on iTunes. I went on *X Factor* twice. But you never get to the stage when you get on TV. I think that's a scam. I think they already know who the winners are before they even start. At the moment I've got three tracks on iTunes."

Then in 2002 something happened that changed James's life.

"Music and drugs went together. Cocaine is not cheap. All my friends and top musicians were making a hell of a lot of money and we were all taking the stuff. Then, I don't know how, but I fell from a very tall building on Notting Hill Gate. I woke up six weeks later in Hammersmith Hospital. It was something to do with girls and cocaine. To be honest, I've no idea what happened. I don't see the girls any more. Nowadays I don't touch cocaine because of the stuff they put in it. They must have put something in it that day. Why would you want to jump out of a bloody tall building? I survived."

James now has strong view on drugs.

"I used to have a sharps bag and it would fill up in two weeks. Now there are not that many needles. Now the users can trade in the needles and get new ones. Believe me, there are trucks coming in here from Calais and they are full of drugs. So what do you expect?"

That's James Harris, proud Guyanian, musician and keeper of the canal.



Bar Stools

WORDS BY Matthew Wright
PHOTOGRAPH BY Sarah Louise Ramsay

It started off with a simple question. All I said was, "Where's Leonard*?"

I'd walked into one of our area's many wonderful pubs – I don't want to name names, it's not my intention to cast aspersions – and was greeted by a few familiar local faces, but not my neighbour Leonard.

Len's been paying good money for ale in Primrose Hill pubs since not long after I was born. He's a lovely old chap who's very much enjoying the autumn of his years. Or was.

The other drinkers explained how my neighbour no longer felt comfortable coming to this particular pub as a change of management had coincided with the removal of the boozer's bar stools.

Leonard's the kind of guy who likes to sit quietly on his own, to get out of his flat for a few hours a day. He wouldn't be happy sat at one of the pub's many fine tables. Why? I think he'd feel terribly exposed.

The bar stool, I've come to realise, is a special place that allows the occupant to sit alone without being seen to be sat alone; bar stools allow folk like Len to go out, sup a few pints and go home again without drawing stares or, worse, unkindly comments.

I was starting to understand Leonard's problem when another drinker told me that this was not the first time my neighbour had been confronted with vanishing bar stools: it had happened a couple of years back at another of his haunts. Months have now gone by since I last saw Len in a local pub. I'm told that when he's not been stuck in on his own in his flat, he's been in hospital. Miserable.

But of course there are two sides to every story, often more! Pubs close at the rate of 29 a week, and let's be under no illusion: pubs in Primrose Hill occupy some of the most expensive square footage in the country. Breweries will want results, and landlords will be under pressure to do decent trade.

All the pubs around here serve food, much of it of excellent quality. Takings for grub can be critical in keeping a licensee ticking in the black. Few public houses these days trade on ales, wines and spirits alone, although if there was such a one nearby I'm sure Leonard would be very happy there.

As I said in my editor's letter, in this issue I wanted to explore what's needed to sustain a harmonious community. I also wrote of the difficulties in catering to the needs of a diverse population.

Don't get me wrong. I can see why certain landlords have rid themselves of bar stools. I don't blame them for having a vision for their pub; for wanting to grow a business, their business, in a certain way; for wanting to chuck out the old, perhaps, to make way for the new.

They have staff to pay and area managers breathing down their necks, always demanding more from their pub – such is the way of things.

But I would urge them and their area managers to take a step back and see the bigger picture. Those championing the licensed trade, even demanding government actions to prevent more from disappearing, always talk up the importance of the pub's role within the community. Well, Primrose Hill boozers, let's see a little more of that, please.

Whether you want more 'yummy mummies' buying lunch or are chasing a crowd of young hip hop heads, try and find room, just a little, for some of those customers whose decades of loyalty are part of the reason that you have a pub to run in the first place.



*Leonard is not his real name.

All the world's a stage

By Colin St Johnston



Nine-year-old Emily is the younger daughter of Mick Hudspeth, the manager of Primrose Hill Community Centre. Emily is a keen swimmer, but also has a good voice and joined the Finchley Children's Music Group. It was a bit of a surprise to learn that the Music Group had been asked to sing in Britten's War Requiem, which juxtaposes the poetry of Wilfred Owen with the ritual the Latin Requiem Mass.

It turned out that this was no ordinary performance of the Requiem, but the very first time it was to be a full stage production over six nights at the London Coliseum before over 2,000 people each evening with a full orchestra, an adult choir of 80 and three distinguished soloists.

A local who went to the Requiem but didn't recognise Emily said that there were a few occasions when selected Finchley participants had to act out roles, and one who was conspicuously confident and had stage presence was a little girl with her hair divided into two bunches falling on her neck.

Unfortunately, Emily has not been available for interviews, but her parents, Lisa and Mick, have given the following account of her reactions to performing to a huge public as part of a large cast.

"Emily was very excited to have been invited to take part, as it was selected participants only, and even more excited when she learned that she had to miss lots of school and swimming practice to be able to attend all the rehearsals.

"When asked how she felt following the first performance, she simply replied that it was scary but exciting! She did say at a later date that it got easier the more shows they did. She must have got quite a taste for it as she was devastated when the production came to an end.

"Emily was very excited to have been invited to take part, as it was selected participants only, and even more excited when she learned that she had to miss lots of school and swimming practice to be able to attend all the rehearsals."

"We quizzed her about the people she worked with at the ENO. She said, 'Daniel (Kramer, the director) was nice, very thorough and particular about things. To hurry us up he would always say "quick-sticks" to us. There was lots of repetition to get it right. The soloists we didn't see much, but when we did they were nice to talk to. We also had our own stage mum and dad who helped us a lot.'

"It was, of course, quite an experience for the parents too, watching their little nine-year-old performing so confidently at such a venue and in such an extraordinary production."

There is a documentary about the ENO which includes the War Requiem on BBC4 on 10 February 2019.

HS2 Update

by Martin Sheppard

If you go anywhere near Euston, you won't be able to miss HS2's road closures, trenches and demolitions, though the 60,000 bodies it is sacrilegiously digging up in St James's Gardens are screened from sight. These are all, however, merely preliminary works, authorised under an Enabling Act to prepare for the HS2's two main contracts in Camden. HS2 itself is designing the HS2 station, to the west of the existing Euston Station. Further north, in the Primrose Hill area, HS2 has let out the final design of its works to contractors (SBS in our area) on a 'Design and Build' basis.

Astonishingly, after years of preparation, millions of pages of detail and innumerable meetings with HS2's so-called 'Engagement Team' (whose principal aim is to keep HS2's plans hidden from scrutiny), the scope and details of its main plans for Camden are still uncertain.

One clear cause of uncertainty and delay is that the cost of the contractors' plans, here and elsewhere, exceed HS2's spiralling budget. No final plans for the Camden Cutting and Primrose Hill sector are expected till June (if then). It seems clear, however, that the Heath Robinson 'Birdcage' plan for Park Village East is going to be replaced by a portal nearer Euston and a large cavern between Mornington Bridge and Parkway. This will be less damaging to Park Village East and to Primrose Hill. The final alignment of the tunnels near Primrose Hill has yet to be decided.

The good news is that HS2 is so grossly above budget and behind schedule that it may yet be cancelled. No good reason has ever been put forward for this damaging vanity project, the largest and whitest of white elephants. HS2's attempts to reduce its runaway costs of construction can only be made by reductions in speed, capacity and specification, all of which undermine its already laughably feeble business case even further. A number of Cabinet ministers have now indicated their willingness to cancel the project, but the unremitting focus on Brexit means that any decision is unlikely until after 29 March.

The bad news locally is that HS2 has closed Gloucester Gate for five months to allow the diversion of a 42-inch water main. HS2 typically failed to engage on this project with the community in Primrose Hill, news of the proposed closure only coming out in December. It has also refused to postpone the closure, to allow time for explanation. Given that HS2's main plans for area are still unfinalised, and that the water main diversion was decided upon when the Birdcage design was envisaged, it is difficult to see how the need for this closure can be justified. The Gloucester Avenue Association, on behalf of Primrose Hill as a whole, has been pressing HS2 for urgent answers. HS2's determination to dig at all costs, without due notice and even where the work may be completely unnecessary, is typical of its approach to 'engagement' and of its complete disdain for local communities in Camden.





Centric Close Update from the Primrose Hill Conservation Area Advisory Committee

People may have seen the new blocks going up with some speed at the former Centric Close industrial units site in Oval Road.

There is planning permission (see details below) for 76 residential units and commercial floor space providing a mix of 1-, 2- and 3-bed apartments. The development is car-free and includes landscaped courtyards and community amenity space. The permission, given to Fairview New Homes, allows for the employment floor space to be specifically designated for small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs), with 20% to be offered at affordable rents of 50% of market rent. The housing includes 35% affordable housing.

Fairview held two public exhibitions, distributing letters and leaflets to nearby houses and flats, consulted our councillors and the Primrose Hill Conservation Area Advisory Committee (PHCAA), as well as local bodies such as Darwin Court and other residents associations.

The PHCAA, during a process of pre-application presentation, meetings and site visit, raised concerns which were mostly addressed in the final plan. These concerns covered the need for no reduction in the provision of affordable housing or employment space, the loss of sunlight and daylight in existing habitable rooms in the Conservation Area, especially in the houses in Oval Road, the overlooking of these same houses from a proposed four-storey block on the site, possible dangers in the design of a dark narrow walkway on the north of the site, potential light pollution from winter gardens on the residential blocks on the railway side of the site, control of the rooftop plant and a legal agreement on maintenance of the site landscaping.

At an early stage the community succeeded in getting all the blocks reduced by one floor, thus ensuring that the whole complex is considerably lower than the ten-storey Lock House next door to the site.

The potential problems regarding the overlooking of Oval Road houses and the loss of their daylight and sunlight were not properly addressed in the final plans. This caused Oval Road residents to mount a protest campaign which sadly came in late, and did not succeed.

There is a Construction Management Plan attached to the planning permission, to govern the impact of the work. However, this does not address the final nature of the scheme; so although we generally welcomed the scheme, it was felt that we did not manage to make enough impact on the problematical aspects described above. Sadly, only time will tell if the Committee's concerns were right.

Camden Council Planning reference: 2016/6891/P

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Valentine Flower Cupcake

1. Preheat the oven to 160°C and line a cupcake tin with 12 cases.

2. To make the cakes, cream together the butter and sugar and add the eggs. In a separate bowl mix together the baking powder and both flours. In another bowl mix together the vanilla extract and milk. Gradually add the dry mix to the batter and combine. Add the milk.

3. Fill each cupcake case half full with the mixture and press a dark chocolate piece on top. Place in the oven for 25 minutes. Once baked, leave on a cooling rack for 40 minutes.

4. For the icing, cream together the butter, vanilla extract, milk and some of the icing sugar. Beat for 3 minutes then add the rest of the icing sugar. Cut off the end of the piping bag, and put the tip in the hole. Smear some red food colouring down one side of the bag and then put in the icing.

5. Holding the icing bag in one hand and a cupcake in the other, place the tip on the side of the cupcake and squeeze moving the tip up and down until you have a circle of petals. Place some sprinkles in the inside of the circles.

6. And ... enjoy!

PHOTOGRAPH BY Sarah Louise Ramsay
RECIPE BY Caia Collis

Ingredients

Cupcakes

- 130 g butter
- 230 g caster sugar
- 2 tsp vanilla extract
- 125 g self-raising flour
- 125 g plain flour
- 2 large eggs
- 1 tsp baking powder
- 120 ml semi-skimmed milk
- 12 chunks of dark chocolate

Icing

- 500 g icing sugar
- 60 ml milk
- 150 g butter
- 1 tsp vanilla extract
- Red food colouring
- Chocolate sprinkles
- 120 style piping tip
- Plastic piping bag

Here is one of the poems read out on the top of Primrose Hill on 4 January in honour of AIR.

Because we cannot see it, or **Do we care for our air?**
By Liz Goodfellow

Because we cannot see it, is it there?
Because we cannot see it, do we care?
When we step into the car,
of course, not going far,
And think how much we save in time and fare!

Because we cannot smell it, do we mind?
Because we cannot smell it, are we kind
to those nearby who're walking
or to kids at play or talking?
We'll be careful, take it slow – and not be fined!

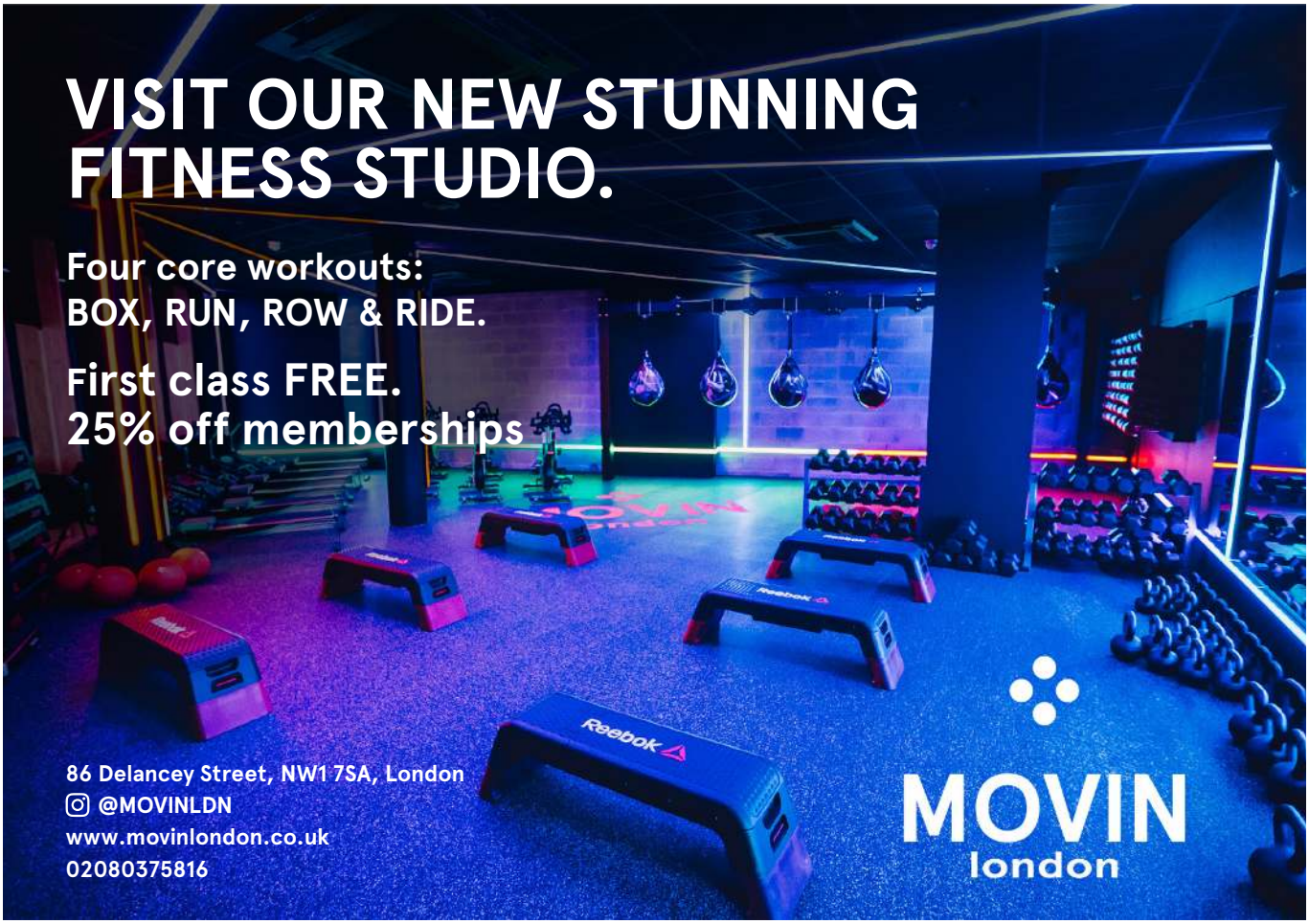
They say it's full of dirt, might make us ill,
Affect our lungs – but not here up on the Hill!
And if it causes stress
we'll just call the NHS,
They'll sort it double quick with just a pill.

But maybe there **is** something in the air,
Perhaps it would be wise to be aware:
though not easily detected,
we could just be affected,
So, maybe, we **should** take a bit more care – of our air.

Primrose Hill LAUGHS



"The beauty of Valentine's cards being anonymous is that no-one can tell you're a dog"



Hello, Primrose Hill!

Thank you to everyone involved in the Village Disco at the Primrose Hill Community Centre. The event raised £1013 and a fun night was had by all.

PHOTOGRAPHS BY Petar Savic












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