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# Man jailed for 'violent rampage' in Brixton

A man has been jailed for life after pleading guilty to murdering his ex-wife and trying to kill his girlfriend.

On July 29 2013 Desmond Brooks, from Brixton, went on a "violent rampage".

Police were called to a residential address in Redlands Way, following reports that a woman had been stabbed.

They found Brooks' then girlfriend Joan Wade, 46, suffering from a number of injuries, including stab wounds.

Their three-year-old son was at the house at the time of the incident.

She managed to tell one of the police officers on the scene that her "baby father" - Brooks - had carried out the assault.

Police were then called to Tilson Gardens, SW2, following reports that two women had been attacked.

Officers discovered Saffron Yeboah-Simpson, then aged 17, with a number of severe cuts to her face,

head and wrists. She told officers Brooks had attacked her.

Police then found the body of Keisha McKenzie inside the hallway. She had very severe stab wounds and her teeth had been smashed.

Brooks had a seven-year-old son with Keisha who witnessed the horrific murder of his mother.

A manhunt was then launched for Brooks. That night he boarded a bus in Streatham, telling the driver: "The first police you see, could you flag them down. It's me they're looking for."

He told officers he had killed his wife and hurt his baby mother. He said: "I couldn't take it anymore both nagging me everyday, disrespecting me in front of others, couldn't take it anymore man."

Brooks is now facing at least 29 years in prison after pleading guilty to murder, attempted murder and assault occasioning grievous bodily harm.



## Distressing bus crime

BY ANNA MCKIE

Two teenage boys were forced to fight, steal and perform a sex act on each other during a "distressing" attack on February 11.

At 7.55pm, two teenage boys boarded a 133 bus in Brixton. A man who had got on the bus at the same time approached the boys, who were sat on the top deck, and told them he had a knife.

According to police, he then forced the pair off the bus in the Elephant and Castle area.

The boys were led to a park in Newington Butts, where they were forced to fight each other and steal

from a nearby shop.

The teenagers were then taken to a stairwell of a block of flats in Walworth where he forced one of the boys to perform a sex act on the other.

The suspect then walked away from the area in an unknown direction.

Police released a CCTV image of a man they would like to speak to following the incident.

A 14-year-old boy appeared at Camberwell Youth Court on March 21 and was remanded to the care of the local authority.

Trainee Detective Constable Amy Beautridge said: "This was a most unusual and distressing crime,

during which the two young victims were terrified by threats made by the suspect, who intimidated he was in possession of a knife.

"He used their fear to control them and force them to effectively do as he said.

"Despite their young age, the victims have been incredibly brave in coming forward and providing information to the police and I would praise them for this."

Anyone with information is asked to contact police on 020 8721 4621, or contact Crimestoppers anonymously on 0800 555 111 or at [www.crimestoppers-uk.org](http://www.crimestoppers-uk.org).

## All change at Brixton Pound



The Brixton Pound has recently launched a new branding and website, as well as making changes to the way customers pay.

Charlie Waterhouse from local design agency This Ain't Rock'n'Roll, who is responsible for the paper notes, created the new logo (left).

He said: "Brixton is London's most dynamic, diverse and dizzying district. The Brixton Pound is living proof that there is a better way."

They have also launched a new website at [www.brixtonpound.org](http://www.brixtonpound.org) with help from Graham Woodruff, who works with the Bristol Pound.

The online B£ account system has been updated. Users and businesses have greater control over their profiles and they have got rid of the PIN needed for the pay-by-text payment system.

Brixton Pound said: "The currency actively strengthens Brixton's independent businesses, builds a more connected community, and celebrates the area's unique character. "We believe in economic justice and building a local economy that is sustainable, creates opportunities for local people, and is distinctly Brixton."

## SHOOTING IN DULWICH

Police have begun a hunt for a gunman after a teenage boy was shot in the stomach in Dulwich.

Police were called to South Croxted Road at 3pm on March 24, after being alerted by ambulance crews.

They found a 17-year-old boy with a gunshot wound to his abdomen.

He was taken to a south London hospital in a critical condition.

It appears he was shot near Seely Drive, and rode off on a moped before being treated by paramedics in South Croxted Road.

Police have said no arrests have been made.

## LONDON'S SLOWEST INTERNET

A Brixton road has been awarded the title of "London's slowest street for broadband."

Cowley Road was discovered to have the worst internet speeds in central London by price comparison site uSwitch.com.

Broadband speeds on Cowley Road average just 1.41 megabits per second (mps), compared with 38.88 mps on London's fastest street for broadband, Westbourne Park Road, W11.

The study found that Cowley Road's average speed is 50 times slower than the fastest street in Britain. Sandy Lane in Cannock, Staffordshire, has an average speed of 72.86 mps.

Siobhan Davies, 32, said: "I tried to load my husband's Facebook profile last week and it took three days. It's ridiculous."

## GANG RAIDS

Six men have been arrested after police carried out raids in Coldharbour Lane, Brixton.

On March 10, police also seized crack cocaine, heroin and cannabis, along with £7,000 cash, as part of the raids.

They were the result of an operation led by the Trident Central Gangs Unit to target gang members involved in drug offences in Brixton.

Police raided a number of different premises, including a car wash on Coldharbour Lane, which were frequented by gang members when supplying drugs.

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## MISSING TEENS

Police are concerned for the welfare of two unconnected teenagers from Brixton.



Alison Mora, 15, is missing from her home in Brixton. She was last seen at around 4pm on Monday, March 2, when she left home without saying where she was going. She is 5ft 3ins and of slim build with shoulder-length black hair.



Police have also appealed for help to find missing 15-year-old Paul Maxwell. He was last seen leaving his home at 6pm on February 13. At the time he was wearing blue Nike track pants, a blue hooded top with grey sleeves, black McKenzie jacket and blue trainers. He is described as black, 5ft 8ins tall and of slim build.

Anyone with information should call the Lambeth Missing Person Unit on 020 8649 2112.

# The dog show must go on

More 'scruffs' than 'Crufts', the Brockwell Dog Show is a well-loved date on Brixton's summer calendar and so many were extremely disappointed to hear that the family-friendly event would not be on.

Although it is a community event, a Lambeth council officer normally leads the show but is not in a position to do so this year.

However, after seeing *Brixton Blog's* article on the subject, two volunteers are now in discussion with MADD (Brockwell's community events programme) to see if they can keep the dog show going, now that Lambeth council's community team are no longer able to support it.

They say if they can get it off the ground they will need the support of local volunteers and businesses to make it happen.

The show normally takes place in July and features categories such as handsomest dog, prettiest bitch, cutest puppy, golden oldie and best dog and owner fancy dress and anyone can register for £1.50.

In March it was discovered by the Brockwell Park Community Partners (BPCP) that there would be no show this year as the Lambeth council officer would not be running it.

BPCP said that they have not had a clear explanation about why circumstances have changed.

Cllr Jane Edbrooke, Cabinet Member for Neighbourhoods, said: "The community are free to run the Brockwell Dog Show as they see fit. Lambeth council in no way opposes this fun event."



CONT FROM FRONT PAGE: services, how can that work?"

She, like others (see our comment on page 9) also criticised the way the council had gone about its consultation. Thomas feels the council has already made its decision and the consultation process is just a formality.

"We're going to consultations and meetings and yet we always get the same answers."

"How much did they expect to get from the public anyway? You've got sports, arts, parks, a huge amount of documents. People will get lost in it, they won't respond to it and in my opinion that's just how the council like it."

Cllr Jane Edbrooke, Cabinet Member for Neighbourhoods, said: "The problem is if you deal with each issue individually you will find that everyone loves parks, everyone loves sports, everyone loves libraries and we wouldn't actually know where the public's priorities are. By putting it all together like this it shows we're having to make choices. The fact is that the overall budget is being reduced by £4 million pounds.

"We are absolutely listening to everyone. These cuts are heartbreaking. If someone has a better idea, I assure you I'm not precious and I will investigate."

"The consultation is open until April 24 and we really want to make sure people get involved and tell us their views and ideas."

*Have your say on the cultural services proposals by completing a questionnaire at [lambeth.gov.uk](http://lambeth.gov.uk) or pick one up from a local library.*



## Sally's marathon swimming effort

An well-known open air swimmer is coming to Brockwell Lido on Saturday March 28 as part of her 50th birthday quest to swim a mile a day for 50 consecutive days in public pools in and around London.

Sally Goble's journey started on March 1 at the Forest Hill pool and has now taken in over 20 other pools including Charlton Lido, Marshall Street Baths and Crystal Palace.

She has been saving the open air lidos until the end of her 50 days when she hopes the water might be over 10°C. She might be in for a surprise at Brockwell.

Sally is also raising money for The Royal Marsden Cancer Charity

Brockwell Swimmers have promised her cake and coffee afterwards at 10am. Other swimmers are welcome to join her in the pool.

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# Council rules out Cressingham refurbishment



Residents from Cressingham Gardens put forward their new proposals for refurbishment at the Cabinet meeting which saw Lambeth council formally rule out anything but demolition

BY ANNA MCKIE

The campaign against the demolition of Cressingham Gardens has taken a blow as Lambeth council has formally ruled out refurbishment as an option for the estate.

However, residents have vowed to fight on and have urged Lambeth to halt the demolition and explore alternative proposals.

At a cabinet meeting, they put forward an extra three options for Cressingham and pointed to the “complete inadequacy” of the council’s consultation process.

Lambeth Green Party Cllr Scott Ainslie, said: “What was clear at [the] Cabinet meeting was that the consultation of residents has been seriously inadequate.

“The Cabinet have endorsed a report based on insufficient information and assessment that overrides what the residents of Cressingham Gardens are asking for. The council must listen to what residents are saying.”

They say their proposals would be cheaper than current council options.

They have been awarded £20,000 by the Government’s Urban Community Energy Fund to put together a business case that could open up millions of pounds in energy efficiency funding for the alternative scheme.

Residents say their proposals can provide more truly affordable homes at council rent levels without the need for demolition of the estate.

They favoured “option one” of the five that were originally offered to them, which would mean refurbishment.

The demolition news, which came in a letter from Cabinet Member for Housing Cllr Matthew Bennett, was

met with accusations from residents and supporters that the consultation has been a “sham from the start” and that the council “was never seriously considering refurbishment”.

Cllr Bennett, said: “We’re ruling out unaffordable options and instead will consult on a significant regeneration of the estate to bring all homes up to Lambeth Housing Standard and provide much needed new homes for council rent to address the housing crisis that too many Lambeth families are falling victim to.

“After two years of conversation with residents it is time to move forward with viable options.

“We are committed to providing 1,000 new homes for council rent in the borough, to help tackle our enormous waiting list and the rising number of homeless families in temporary accommodation. We need to consider all the land available to us in order to achieve this.

“We will make every effort to limit the disruption residents experience while regeneration work is going on.”

Cressingham Gardens residents have now launched a “fighting fund” to stop the demolition of their homes.

They are looking to raise £10,000 through a Gofundme campaign.

The money raised will go towards legal fees to challenge the council’s proposals and towards materials for banners and leaflets.

The Gofundme page says: “Many of the estate’s residents are old and infirm. Many have lived there for 40 years. They don’t want to see their community torn apart.”

*If you would like to donate to the fund visit <http://www.gofundme.com/savecressingham>*

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www.francesplowden.org

## Brixton photographer's unique exhibit

Brixton-based Irish photographer Gavin Freeborn is opening a new exhibition at Chelsea College of Arts.

From April 22 to 25 he will be hosting The Freeborn Exchange.

Inspired by artists who barter, he has exchanged his photographic portraits for other skills, objects and hospitality in over 20 countries

since November 2011.

At his unique pop-up portrait studio, visitors will have the opportunity to meet him, propose a Freeborn Exchange and have their portrait made.

Freeborn said: “There’s creativity in the air of Brixton. It’s an international landmark and institution for the arts. Calling this community home, in between periods of travel, gave me the foundation to build this show at Chelsea College of Arts.

That creative air inspires me to keep documenting and making Freeborn Exchanges with wonderful and diverse people. Whether I’m socialising at Brixton Village, Effra Social Club, taking in a show at Photofusion or many of the other fantastic local gems, every day is a gift.

Brixton Blog and Brixton Bugle readers are all very welcome to pop across the river to enjoy this showcase of images from around the world. I hope to see you there and if I’m lucky I may get to make your portrait too!”



Dan Hernandez, Effra Social Club  
© Gavin Freeborn

## RUSHCROFT FLATS READY

The first tenants are set to move into the flats once occupied by squatters on Rushcroft Road. In July 2013 there were violent clashes between protesters and bailiffs forcibly removing squatters from the six blocks of Victorian flats. After a thorough refurbishment, 22 flats with two bedrooms have been made available at council rent levels. Cllr Matthew Bennett, Lambeth's Cabinet Member for Housing, said: "I'm delighted that on Monday tenants will be handed the keys to some of the first new council homes in Brixton in a generation. These are lifetime council homes at proper social rents, being made available to local families in housing need."

## VICTORIA LINE CLOSURE

There will be no Victoria Line from Brixton on Saturday March 28 and Sunday March 29 due to TfL's planned engineering works. On Saturday the line will be closed from Brixton to Victoria and on Sunday from Brixton to Warren Street. Services will resume Monday morning March 30.

# Arches shops say they are 'in limbo'



BY ANNA MCKIE

Traders threatened by the refurbishment of the railway arches say they are living in limbo while they wait to find out if they will be able to stay in their shops.

In February, businesses under the railway line in the triangle between Brixton Station Road, Atlantic Road

and Pope's Road were told they were being kicked out by Network Rail to make way for refurbishment.

Tenants were told they would have to vacate their premises before the end of the year and were offered no assurances they would be able to return to the units where many have worked for decades.

Then in March the affected tenants

received a letter informing them that Network Rail will not be serving eviction notices until September, with no one being asked to vacate before March 2016.

Network Rail says "existing tenants will be given the opportunity to return after the improvements".

However, tenants say Network Rail's comments and decision to

push back the eviction date has offered them no comfort.

"Although it is a small weight off our shoulders knowing we have a little more time to prepare," Jose Cordoso from A & C Continental Deli said, "everything is pretty much the same as before."

"Network Rail have obviously realised their original time frame was unrealistic and have made a practical decision to push it back. This is not about making concessions to us."

He added that reading the rest of the letter showed that the position of the threatened businesses remains unchanged.

"It all means nothing if at the end we are still told we will have to pay rents three times what we're paying now."

Lorne Mash from Mash & Sons agreed that nothing had progressed for the local shopkeepers.

"You read their letters and they present it as if everything is rosy but it is meaningless. No date was set in stone before and no date is set in stone now, we're still in limbo."

"We won't give up the fight but it is exhausting, we're constantly looking over our shoulders in fear for when it is written down in black and white and we have to leave and can't return."

The petition calling for a stop to the evictions has now reached over 20,000. Sign it at [change.org](http://change.org)

# Grosvenor site plans

Developers have reactivated plans to turn the top floors of the Grosvenor Arms on Sidney Street into flats.

Proposals by Golfrate, the building's owners, to convert the pub's top floor into flats were rejected by Lambeth council in August last year.

According to the application, the upper parts of the building would be extended to form four residential flats while retaining the public house at the bottom level.

The closing date for comments was March 19. Some 59 comments were registered by the public and were overwhelming against the proposals.

In its objection to the development Brixton Society said: "Accommodation above public houses was traditionally for the publican and his/her family and/or pub staff. Such residents would be keeping the same hours as the pub and, much more to the point, have a very strong interest in keeping the pub open and successful."

"Such considerations do not apply to people without connection to the pub business buying or renting accommodation above the premises. Complaints from such residents to the inevitable noise from a pub can quickly lead to licensing restrictions which make the pub unviable."

"Public houses are not only businesses providing local employment, they are important community assets where people meet and socialise. As more and more pubs and similar facilities close, we are in danger of turning our neighbourhoods into glorified hotels where people live with no connection to their neighbours."

Not long after the original application was

submitted the Grosvenor indeed closed.

At the time Brixton Buzz reported that "with a large luxury apartment block opposite set to welcome its well-heeled residents, and proposals to convert the upper floors into residential flats, the landlord decided to leave before the complaints came in."

One person who objected to the new proposals said: "The Grosvenor was a great amenity putting on a wide range of events attracting people from all over London and operating as a popular local pub. It is sadly missed and I would like to see it reopen as a pub again."

Although the application says the bottom of the building will remain A4 (pub or restaurant), the ground floor of the pub has been gutted, with the bar and other fittings taken out, meaning the future for what was once a popular local remains uncertain.

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These courses are run in conjunction with Lambeth Adult Learning Services

## BETTER PAY?

Former Labour Minister Tessa Jowell has called for the minimum wage in London to be raised by £1 per hour.

Jowell, who is stepping down from her Dulwich and West Norwood seat at the general election next month, is manoeuvring to become the Labour candidate for London Mayor at the 2016 mayoral ballot. The selection campaign is expected to start after the General Election.

The MP said the pay rise would be worth £8.9 million to the 4,500 workers in Lambeth who currently receive the minimum wage.

Other Labour candidates to stand in the London poll are David Lammy and Christian Walmer.

# Tributes made to advice centre stalwart Terri

A much-loved Lambeth character who helped to found the Brixton Advice Centre has died.

Terri Gibbon, an advisor at the Brixton Advice Centre for 30 years, passed away at her care home in Surrey aged 78. She had been suffering from Alzheimer's disease.

Ms Gibbon was a community activist who helped start the Advice Centre in the 1970s, where she worked until her retirement about 10 years ago.

She was a familiar figure in Brixton where she had helped thousands of local people with housing, debt and family issues.

Her son Aaron, speaking at her funeral, said, "It was impossible to go anywhere in Brixton, or most of the parishes in Jamaica, without mum being approached by someone she had helped".

Fred Taggart, Secretary of the

Advice Centre, paid tribute by saying she was on the side of the oppressed until the very end.

He said: "All who used the Brixton Advice Centre remember her with great affection and respect. She was the rock on which so much of our work is built and without her commitment and experience I do not think the centre would have survived the upheavals of the 1980s.

"She was brave and patient, a mentor to younger colleagues, a fighter for ordinary people dealing with bureaucracies, and an inspiring woman.

"Even when very ill Terri regarded Brixton as her home and would say, 'Take me back to Brixton, I have work to do at the Advice Centre'."

Professor Hartley Dean, who was Director of the Brixton Advice Centre from 1973 until 1985, said: "BAC was an important part of



Brixton Advice Centre, which Terri was an integral part of for many years

my life and Terri was an important part of BAC for most of the 12 years that I worked there. I remember

her for her utter dependability and sheer humanity."

## Dancers strike gold



Lambeth schools are revelling in their success at the London Youth Games at the Olympic Park.

Dunraven School, Leigham Court Road, Streatham, (pictured above) celebrated winning gold at the Key Stage 3 dance competition at the Copper Box Arena on March 13.

Earlier in the week, St Martin in the Field school won bronze in the female under 13 rugby contact competition at Barn Elms Sports Centre, Wandsworth on March 11. This was followed by another bronze the following day by the Elm Green School at the under-15 male volleyball

finals at UEL Sportsdock in East London.

Caroline Kenworthy, Team Manager at Dunraven School, said: "I am really, really, really proud of them. I didn't know what to expect. They have done an amazing job. They dance a lot at school. Since the end of January, we have thrown it all together and rehearsed our socks off.

"I think it's important for young students to recognise development and achievement in a subject where it is sometimes subjective. Events like this really can help their confidence."

## Herne Hill hustings

Voters will get the chance to quiz parliamentary hopefuls ahead of the general elections at a neighbourhood hustings.

Candidates for the Dulwich and West Norwood seat, which covers much of south-east Brixton, will take part in the hustings at St Paul's Church Hall, Herne Hill, at 7pm on April 16.

The event will be co-hosted by the Herne Hill Forum and *Brixton Blog*.

Hopefuls will be quizzed on a range of topics centred on housing and transport. Confirmed candidates are Rathy Alagaratnam from UKIP, Lib Dem James Barber, Labour's Helen Hayes, Conservative Resham Kotecha, Steve Nally of TUSC and Rashid Nix from the Green Party.

The Dulwich and West Norwood constituency is held by former Labour minister Tessa Jowell, who is not standing for re-election.

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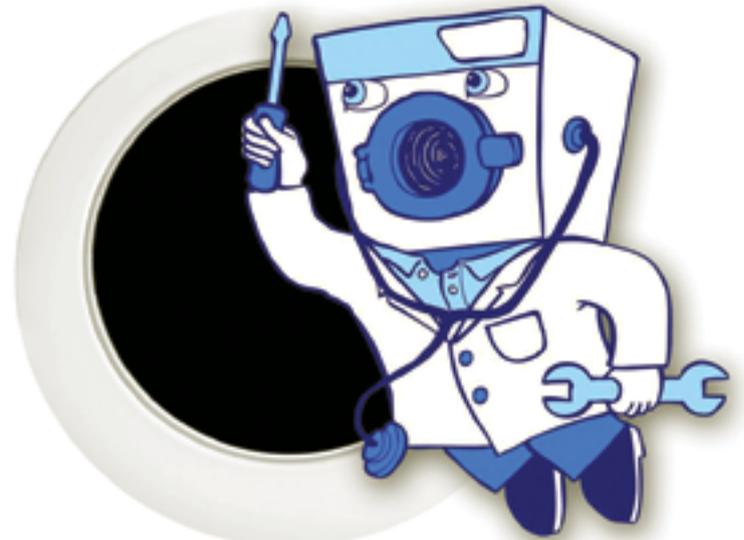
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## COMMENT

The temperature of the Lido waters is almost at ten degrees, cherry blossom is everywhere and we've had several extremely sunny walks in Brockwell Park of late. It is, finally, the Brixton spring. Our listings on page 18, Alison's Brockwell Park gardening column (p.22) and the arts pages (p.12-13) are full of the blossoming of culture and nature that's happening in Brixton right now.

It's not all smelling of cherry blossom in Brixton though, or indeed in London. Earlier in March, we attended the Day for Housing at the Karibou centre which united housing activists across London for a day of discussion. The stories of evictions as estates are regenerated across the city were hard to hear – in Brixton, Guinness Estate resident and long-term Brixtonite Betty Mahari had fighting talk: "Now it (Brixton) is nice and trendy, me and my family are not good enough...we're staying".

For many people, the experience of Brixton's gentrification has not been a pretty one as we have seen too with the campaign against Network Rail's planned evictions for Atlantic Road, Brixton Station Road and in Herne Hill. Network Rail has announced a stay of execution, with notices of eviction now delayed until September. The danger of the postponement is that the campaign loses its momentum – we mustn't let that happen. If you have already signed the petition, make sure you write to the council and Network Rail, as well as attending the benefit event at the Cambria on April 10. If you haven't signed the petition, then head over to [change.org](http://change.org) to join the 20,000 who have.

You may have noticed last month that we have re-started our Brixton People's series, celebrating our local Brixton heroes. If there's anyone you think we should be interviewing, then email your suggestion to [info@brixtonblog.com](mailto:info@brixtonblog.com)



# Brixton illustrated

THE ARCHES, BY KAYLENE ALDER

This month's suggestion for Brixton Illustrated comes from @MazHem who said "You should draw somewhere in the arches. V. topical and they tend to look awesome." Next month, Brixton Illustrated goes green! Tweet your suggestion of your favourite green bit of Brixton to @kpictures for next month's Bugle and win a free print.



## Recent Culture 2020 consultation is unproductive

**Arts Co-Editor Ruth Waters attended a consultation meeting between council and local residents concerning how Lambeth's parks, libraries and leisure facilities should be maintained under the proposed cuts, but was distinctly unimpressed.**

I am not an experienced attendant of consultation meetings, I'm not going to lie. But I was shocked at the transparency of box-ticking at the recent Culture 2020 consultation, where local residents were 'consulted' on Lambeth council's proposals as to how they should run our parks, libraries and leisure facilities with a reduced budget.

Over 100 local residents gathered at Myatt's Field North Community Centre - all of them concerned about how the cuts are being managed, and many of them particularly worried about how they will affect the provision of services in Vassall Ward, where Minet Library and Myatt's Field Park are under threat, and in the case of the former, in danger of being sold off.

My day job is in arts marketing, and this crowd would equate to what we call 'an engaged audience segment' - we know they're interested, now we need to listen to what about. However, the councillors and officers didn't seem to see it that way.

I love being asked for my opinion and am usually keen to give it. But, presented with an

uber neutral (yet very friendly) council officer and a blank flipchart, our opinions, including my own, felt like they were pointlessly floating out into the ether. In my discussion group certainly, our ideas as to how the council could change their proposal (avoiding selling off Minet Library) were lacking in strategic research and overwrought with political scepticism.

Would opening a coffee shop at the library make a significant amount of money to justify its presence? Would putting pay-as-you-go hot desks into the library help to make ends meet? Should a trust of local residents take over and run the Minet Library as a social enterprise? How would this affect the community the library was initially supposed to be serving? I don't know the answers to these questions but if it were my [paid] job to have researched how to best manage the funding cuts, I would have.

The meeting seemed to rely on people having done extensive research into funding options, or to blindly trust our council and their own research. I winced at the end of the meeting when, after residents asked how their ideas would be taken forward, associate director John Kerridge said that 'nothing new had come up today', that the council hadn't already been considering and in fact working on. His remark was infuriating. And not just because he hadn't actually heard all that had happened in the room.

When one resident commented that we didn't have all the facts in front of us, a blunt response was fired back: that all information is available online. Who is going to wade through reams of documents to understand the council's activity and motivation? In no profession other than politics would this be acceptable.

Here are 100 residents, passionate about the cultural assets of their ward, being made to feel like silly schoolchildren who haven't done enough homework. It is the council's responsibility to spell it out to their residents what they are doing and why, not to pay lip service to consultations to fulfill a legal requirement.

This consultation would have been much more productive if the councillors had discussed well-researched ideas for how to bear the funding cuts to our parks, libraries and leisure facilities. To hold a faux idea-gathering ceremony only to reveal before we go home that nothing new has been raised, and it is our job to read the council website, not their job to inform us, certainly left a bitter taste.

**Sign the petition to show your support for Minet Library, and find out more about the council's Cultural Service by 2020 proposals at [brixtonblog.com](http://brixtonblog.com)**

[@brixtonblog](https://twitter.com/brixtonblog)

[info@brixtonblog.com](mailto:info@brixtonblog.com)

t: 020 3730 1312



**BRIXTON PEOPLE**  
 AYESHA CASELY-HAYFORD, ACTRESS

BY BOBBIE LAKHERA

An actress who has appeared on both screen and stage, Ayesha Casely-Hayford originally pursued a legal career. "I decided when I was 16 I was going to be a lawyer," she explained. "A lot of it was because my family was always asking what I was going to do. When I said law, it got lots of nods! I ended up working in a firm in Wimbledon and I was really happy. But, suddenly, I realised that I didn't want to do it for the rest of my life."

Growing up, Ayesha had always been into performing, acting, dancing and playing the piano and clarinet. "It was always on the side, I never thought you could actually have a life as a performer. You know when you don't realise, it's not your world, so I didn't know. After work I was going to dance and acting classes, and was meeting people who only did this. I realised then it could be a job."

Two years ago - at the age of 30 - Ayesha took the plunge. She

quit work and was due to visit family in Australia, but before flying out was invited to audition at a drama school. "I had to prepare a monologue and sing a song. It's hilarious thinking about it now as I didn't know what I was doing! I did Brian Friel's *Translations* as I really loved the play. I thought, what have I got to lose?"

"Sarah Mann, who interviewed me, got me to do the monologue in all different ways and I loved that, it was my first experience of being directed. While away I found out I had been accepted on the course, a diploma in speech and drama.

"With law, it's a very direct route. You get a certain degree, a certain training contract. The reality is in the acting world it's not too dissimilar. If you are treating it like a serious profession you should aim for an accredited drama school. I know that I am not doing this the most traditional way, not the series of steps which you would normally take.

"Perhaps I should have worked it out sooner! I actually felt quite sick at the thought of taking up the course. I had this very secure life and I was throwing myself into this other world. But I knew I had to push myself out there."

Ayesha got an agent about a month into the course, and before graduating had started to get student film jobs and attend further acting workshops. She also started to create her own works with a former tutor, Colin Watkeys. The change in profession came as a surprise for her family, leaving her mother particularly concerned.

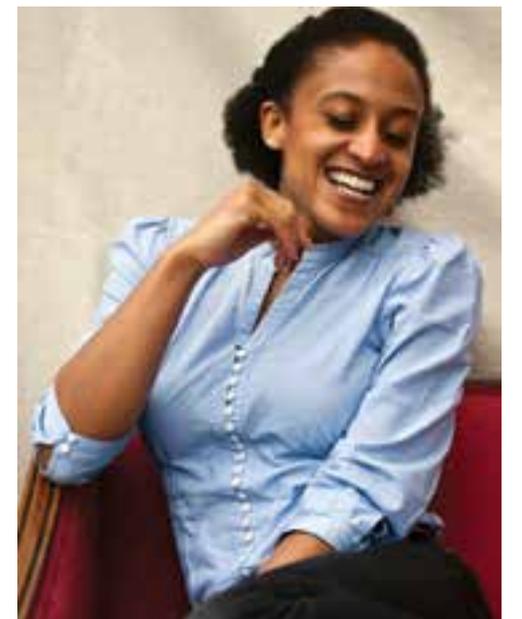
"My mum is amazing now but at first she was upset. She liked saying her daughter was a lawyer! My family find it all

a bit surreal. I think until I get on something like *Holby City* they really don't get what I'm doing!"

Age ain't nothing but a number, as despite being 32 Ayesha regularly plays young roles. "I get cast as under 20s but after being a lawyer, playing a 20-year-old brat is fun! I currently have two ongoing theatre performances. *Adult Child, Dead Child* is a solo performance written by a good friend, Claire Dowey. It's very dark about really serious issues such as child abuse and neglect. The other is called *HIV Voices* - Hugh Wyld is the director and it's the first dance choreography for myself that I have done. We are a collective and perform in different places.

"I have also done a play called *Adam's Eve*. I call it my sex play, it's all about a menage-a-trois. I didn't invite my mum to that! I've mainly been doing quite badass girls, which I love. If I end up making a little place for myself in those roles I'd be glad. It's strange because I really felt I could do what I wanted in law, the colour of my skin wasn't an issue. Now I have come into an industry where my colour is a factor. I get to play a council estate teen but I have also played a junior doctor, so I don't feel like I have been stereotyped. Bizarrely, no one wants to give me a part as a lawyer!"

Already busy with voiceover and stage work, recently Ayesha completed her first feature film, starring in *The Last Kill* written and directed by Anthony Oldman. It is the latest success in her nascent acting career, one which she hopes proves the importance of following your heart. "My mum thinks I have gone full circle with what I wanted to do as a kid. I am just hoping that if you follow your passions, you end up where you should be."



Top: Ayesha Casely-Hayford (taken in Kaff Bar)  
 Right: Casely-Hayford has a winning smile  
 Above: A Time to Speak, HIV Voices  
 Left: As 'Nicola' in short film Cracks



# SWITCH ON TO THE ELECTRIC

BY ANNA MCKIE

When Dominic Madden (below) opened Electric Brixton in 2011, there were plenty of obstacles to overcome: a recession hitting concert ticket sales as well as competition from the nearby Brixton Academy.



Now, four years later, the venue - formerly the iconic Fridge - is thriving with sell-out shows starring Brit Award-winning names and some of the world's biggest DJs.

Madden admits it hasn't been easy. "We've had to be obsessive in what we're doing, listening to what the music industry wants, what the customer wants." In total, it took 18 months and £1 million to get the venue fit for purpose.

"When I bought it in 2010 the building had



deteriorated. Everyone in the area was nervous about what would happen to it next so we had to commit to a comprehensive refurbishment." "What's so great about the building is that its original architecture allows for great acoustics and artists love that."

"Of course we had to ensure that we could hang proper modern sound equipment, lights, the whole production set-up. Everything needed rewiring and re-plumbing. But now it's state-of-the-art - we've even got the sound equipment the Rolling Stones use."

The Palladium Picture House cinema opened in 1913 and later become a live music venue called The Ace before it was turned into the legendary Fridge nightclub.

Madden - who has previously run other south London music venues - is well aware of the building's legacy, which comes with its ups and downs. "Certain venues have a magic about them, this one does. This building is special, it has a heritage."

"In its day, the Fridge was really important - it was up there with clubs like Heaven. It has a cultural significance."

But the reputation wasn't all good, he acknowledges. "We had issues when we began; there were certain problems associated with the venue: namely firearms. In the old days it was kind of 'check your gun in on the way in'."

"But we haven't had an incident in all of Electric Brixton's years - touch wood - which is pretty rare for any venue."

Madden, who looks young for his 40 years and was wearing a coat as he showed me

around a venue that is surprisingly cold when it's not crowded, sees the Electric as part of Brixton's evolution. Its success is reflective of what's happened to the area, he believes.

"Brixton is a vibrant place. It has improved in terms of huge investment in things like beautiful squares, etc, for which Lambeth have to be applauded. There are the obvious issues of places like Foxtons turning up but the fact is areas have to evolve and it is only 10 to 15 minutes from the West End."

"The area hasn't lost its vibe. When I bought the building I was two months into the refurb when there were riots and we had to barricade the outside. Yet I've never felt uncomfortable here. I've felt incredibly safe and it's a great area."

"We have mirrored how Brixton has become more 'fashionable' " he says. "I don't think 'gentrification' is the right word."

Madden puts down some of the Electric's success to the fact that south London was lacking in a smaller, independently-run venue.

"People in the music business used to pooh-pooh south of the river but now



we're giving Koko a run for its money." He says bands and huge DJs love having somewhere new to play: "International acts like Paul Van Dyk play Ministry of Sound year in, year out, big bands like the Stereophonics play the O2 halls, Shepherd's Bush Empire, again and again... here they can do a theatrical based event in an intimate setting. It's my gift to London," he says with a twinkle in his eye.



# ART OUTSIDERS PORTRAITS TRIUMPH



BY RUTH WATERS

**Outsiders in London, a new photography exhibition from Milan Svanderlik - the portrait photographer who presented 100 Faces of London - has opened in the crypt of St Martin-in-the-Fields, Trafalgar Square. The exhibition features outsiders from all over London, and includes the portraits and stories of three Brixton locals: Mr Dennis Rose, Mr Gary Areef Barnes and Julie Louise Fawcett MBE.**

Outsiders in London aims to illustrate how many of us will experience the feeling of being an outsider at some stage in our lives; how some of us are labelled as, or feel ourselves to be, outsiders from the very outset but manage to turn this into an advantage, or just make the best of it. The three stories of Dennis Rose, Gary Areef Barnes and Julie Louise Fawcett give an insight into the specific challenges of being an outsider resident on Stockwell Park Estate over the last few decades.

Dennis Rose (left), despite being only 34, has been in prison three times, but has now turned his life around against the odds. His story is an inspiring glimpse inside the mind of a determined man, but also asks difficult

questions about a prison system which boots out young offenders with just £46 to survive on for six weeks and little chance of a proper job.

Gary Areef Barnes (right) is an outsider, not because he's an ex-convict but a war veteran who returned from the horrors of twenty-first century conflict to an uncaring community, disconnected from his family. Both men benefited enormously from the Stockwell Park Community Centre and specifically the work of Julie Louise Fawcett.

As a white mother-of-four housed on the Stockwell Park Estate amid huge racial tension and soaring crime rates, Julie faced a 'sink or swim' decision with her involvement in her local community. As the MBE may give away, she chose to swim, going on to become an inspiration to many members of the community, and renowned for her work with gangs. All three stories and portraits are just a small part of a great exhibition, but stand as a fitting testament to the determination and achievements of outsiders in Brixton.

**Outsiders in London is open until May 8 at The Gallery in the Crypt, St Martin-in-the-Fields, Trafalgar Square. Entry is free.**



# ARTS DEBT IS A BOOK-BURNING ISSUE



**Something miraculous has been happening in Brixton and you may not even know about it: debts have been turned to ash. Metaphorically at least. Arts Co-Editor Ruth Waters reports.**

Performance artist and social activist Alinah Azadeh has brought her project, Burning the Books, to Brixton. It banishes the stigma and shame of debt through communal creativity and ritual.

The Book of Debts - a large log book into which people are invited to write their story - has been in residence at Brixton's 198 Contemporary Art and Learning since March 12 and will be recited and burnt at St Matthew's Peace Garden, Brixton on the last weekend in March.

Alinah's community project has been able to bring to the fore the huge strain which debt puts on us (whether financial, emotional or otherwise) in eight towns and communities in the UK so far, with Brixton the ninth. I caught up with Alinah to find out more about the



books which have been burnt to date and why she wanted to bring her project to Brixton.

Alinah must feel like she's read it all when it comes to human debt. I ask her what the entries in the various volumes of the Book of Debts have been like: "Because I ask for people to consider debt in all its forms, they put in all kinds of things owed or owing - from the financial to the emotional, social, political, ecological and metaphysical. Sometimes they

are simple one-liners that hide a wider story, like 'My jather - he just owes me a lot.'"

## I AM INTERESTED IN DEBT AS A MENTAL AND EMOTIONAL STATE OF BEING

Sometimes the entries "are poems, commentary or longer pieces of amazing prose - like the tale of a man who cannot shake the shadow of the time he worked on Wall Street as a young man mis-selling dodgy financial products to people who gave him their life savings, just before being closed down by the Feds, or the person who owed 'The last 15

years of my life... to a stranger who donated a bag of their bone marrow to me.'"

Alinah's fascination with modern debt springs from personal experience. In 2011 her and her family's quick descent into debt hit rock bottom as their house was repossessed. Following a toxic mix of missed loan repayments and fluctuations in the property market, she felt thrown to the lions. She wishes she'd known her rights back then, that she should have questioned the "harassment and demands for unreasonable repayment." She also wishes she'd known that debt management charities existed and that "it is possible to negotiate."

As much as her book-burning is a way of helping other people, it also seems to be deeply cathartic for Alinah herself: "I am personally as interested in debt as a mental and emotional state of being. I think we need ways in which we can be honest with ourselves when we are part of the debtor-creditor relationship, most especially when it comes to immeasurable, emotional 'debts' that we carry for years, and practice forgiveness as a pragmatic approach to making society and our relationships work better."

Does she think things are improving for people in debt? With payday loan shops popping up on every high street, the future could seem bleak. But Alinah thinks perceptions, at least, about debt are changing: "When I started it was just me, reading a book of anonymous stories - and now I am accompanied by contributors - people who join from each place [I tour to] - who co-recite with me their own stories. So I think perceptions are changing slowly... but it takes time to shift the consciousness around such a deeply taboo concept."

# MUSIC GET TO KNOW GHOSTPOET

Obaro Ejimiwe has worked as Ghostpoet since 2011 - three albums later, is he thinking of dropping the moniker? Arts Co-Editor Barney Evison interviewed him shortly before the release of his third album *Shedding Skin* and a gig at Electric Brixton on April 9.

When I spoke to Obaro Ejimiwe, aka Ghostpoet, he was really looking forward to playing his gig in Brixton later this month. "It'll be nice to play south London," he told me, "and I can get a bus home, so it's a no-brainer!" Throughout our conversation Obaro drops in similar reminders that fame hasn't gone to his head.

The first Ghostpoet album - 2011's *Peanut Butter Blues & Melancholy Jam*, released on Gilles Peterson's record label - was an instant success, earning Obaro critical acclaim and a Mercury Prize nomination (he was beaten by big hitter PJ Harvey's *Let England Shake*). The track *Finished I Ain't* was also used in the first season of Channel 4's well-watched drama *Top Boy*.

The third Ghostpoet album, *Shedding Skin*, was out earlier this month and saw Obaro take a slightly different musical direction, recording it with a live set-up. He says this record is more "immediate" and intended to be taken as a whole: "I'm not interested in making a batch of singles that you stick together and call an album, I like making pieces of work." It's done well with critics and listeners alike, garnering positive reviews and reaching number 52 in the album charts.

So why is Obaro thinking about dropping the Ghostpoet moniker entirely, as he told me during our interview? "I don't want to put all my eggs in one basket," he said, "I feel like I could do way more." He wants to develop creative partnerships with other artists, citing Nick Cave as a big influence. "I want to make music with other people, but not under my name."

Obaro evidently takes his art seriously, explaining how closely he analysed other bands' albums

**I'M NOT INTERESTED IN MAKING A BATCH OF SINGLES THAT YOU STICK TOGETHER AND CALL AN ALBUM**

to see what made them work well. Despite his obvious passion he remains grounded and is often self-effacing. He currently lives

in Tooting, where he was born and raised, and admits that London will always be a part of him - but adds "it's just a place".

I asked him about his pre-record deal days. In his early '20s he found himself living in Coventry with a mortgage. A degree in media production wasn't much use initially and he worked a variety of minimum wage jobs; call centres during the day and club doorman by night. He spent his spare time making music, which he uploaded to MySpace and shared with friends. The record deal came in 2011, when Obaro was approaching 30.

Even then he was nervous about depending on music to pay the mortgage, and continued working nine-to-five months after the record came out: "It took me a while to accept music as a full-time career... I wasn't this bright-eyed, bushy-tailed character, I'd lived a little." He added that he's worked longer in nine-to-five jobs than he has in music.

Working the nine-to-five is a recurring theme in *Shedding Skin*, given particular focus in the track *Off Peak Dreams* and its accompanying video. Obaro asked filmmaker Liam St Pierre to make a film about the constraints of city living and gave him a budget matching the average monthly salary in the UK - £2,608.

The resulting video follows a day in the life of your average salaried worker - getting up, commuting, working, going to the pub - reminding me of Four Tet's *Smile Around*

The Face, with its bittersweet take on the ups and downs of daily life. Obaro is quick to add that it's the way most people live: "It can be restrictive living on a minimum wage but you can still find enjoyment - it depends how you look at life."

So what can the audience at Electric Brixton expect from the gig later this month? Lots of material from the new album, Obaro tells me, with some older tracks sprinkled in too. "The new record was designed very much with live in mind," he adds. As the final date on the tour, could this be the last time Obaro performs as Ghostpoet for a while? Who knows - but it's definitely worth seizing the opportunity.

**Ghostpoet is playing at Electric Brixton April 9 and his new album *Shedding Skin* is out now.**



# FILM HONEYTRAP BUZZES INTO TOWN



BY SARAH SOLOMON

**Honeytrap, directed by Brixton-based writer and filmmaker Rebecca Johnson, is to be shown in cinemas and made available on DVD this May, with distribution coordinated by Anchor Bay Entertainment. Here at Brixton Bugle we have been keenly following developments on the making of Honeytrap since the initial planning, fundraising and production activity took place back in early 2013.**

Filmed in Brixton and taking inspiration from true events (particularly the 2008 case of Samantha Joseph, dubbed the "honeytrap killer"), *Honeytrap* is a contemporary, urban drama set in south London that tells the story of a teenage girl's experience of gang culture - a girl who sets up the boy in love with her to be killed.

A successful crowdfunding campaign together with Johnson's not-for-profit company Fierce Productions' Training and Mentoring programme (allowing Lambeth's young people to learn about the film-making process during the shooting of Johnson's films including *Honeytrap*) has ensured this is a film with Brixton and its people at its heart, both on and off camera.

The cast of *Honeytrap* consists of emerging acting talent including Jessica Sula (*Skins*)

in the lead role of Layla, Lucien Laviscount (Coronation Street, Waterloo Road), who plays gang leader/rapper Troy, and Ntonga Mwanza (*Babylon, Suspects*) who portrays social outsider Shaun. Breakthrough performances by the cast have resulted in *Honeytrap* being selected for screenings at prominent industry festivals in the last few months.

In October last year *Honeytrap* premiered at the BFI London Film Festival. As part of the festival schedule, the Brixton Ritzy hosted one of the first sold-out screenings of the film - a fitting venue for a film with Brixton at its core. It was also premiered at Leicester Square during the festival. Rebecca was nominated for the Best British Newcomer award, whilst Time Out declared Jessica Sula as the face of the festival.

More recently this homegrown film has begun to have an increasing impact internationally, with screenings having taken place this month at the renowned SXSW (South by Southwest) Interactive Festival in Austin, Texas, which celebrates the best of original music, independent film and emerging technologies. It is clear that Johnson's urban drama has themes that resonate universally.

**Honeytrap is in cinemas from May 8 and is available on DVD from May 25. Check Brixton Blog for more news as to where you can see it.**



## MEETINGS FOR BUSINESSES - HAVE YOUR SAY

There has been an excellent turn out to meetings as more and more businesses want to input to decisions about how the Brixton BID budget should be spent. The Brixton BID is run by local businesses for the benefit of local businesses, and provides a forum for businesses to support each other in Brixton's fast changing environment, giving each business the platform to have their say.

Marketing and Partnerships meeting, Thursday 16th April 11.30am, JP Creative, Piano House  
 Environment meeting, Thursday 2 April 10.30am, The Courtesan, Atlantic Road

If you would like to attend one or all of the listed meetings, please contact the BID office by emailing [admin@brixtonbid.co.uk](mailto:admin@brixtonbid.co.uk)

## FREE HOSPITALITY TRAINING FOR BRIXTON BUSINESSES

In partnership with Brixton BID, Lambeth College are offer FREE training to SMEs for their employees. Our last course for First Aid, Health and Safety and Customer Services was fully booked! To continue with this beneficial partnership we are now offering:

Four day course in Responsible Alcohol Retailing, First Aid, Food Safety & Manual Handling which includes recognised certification.



Course dates - Monday 27 April, Monday 11 & 18 May, and Monday 01 June.

Employees must attend all four sessions to earn the certificate. To secure your places email [admin@Brixtonbid.co.uk](mailto:admin@Brixtonbid.co.uk)



## SAFER LAMBETH BUSINESS PARTNERSHIP

The Safer Lambeth Business Crime Reduction Partnership (BCRP) works for local businesses alongside the Metropolitan Police and Lambeth Council. A membership with the partnership gives your business access to a town-link radio and a secure intelligence sharing intranet system.

Further benefits include access to the exclusion system whereby prolific offenders are banned from all member premises.

We are working with local business to keep their customers and property safe, enabling all that visit Brixton

to enjoy the colourful and vibrant atmosphere. The BCRP helps members to reduce shoplifting, theft, alcohol related disorder, anti-social behaviour, street drinking and begging that effect businesses.

The partnership currently has 23 members across Brixton. For day time shoppers the BCRP radios are used in Sainsbury's, TK Maxx and JD Sports. Members also include iconic bars, pubs and restaurants such as Satay Bar, Market House and Fridge Bar.

The BCRP intranet system provides members with the latest crime news in the area, events running across Lambeth, upcoming protests and faces of prolific offenders that have come to notice. Alerts are also sent out allowing members to be aware of the most pressing information in real-time. BCRP also sends out a fortnightly paper briefing document for businesses without internet access, highlighting latest offenders and excluded individuals.

Through Twitter @SaferLambeth and Facebook-Safer Lambeth BCRP, the latest work, members and advice can be found.

To sign your business up for this service please fill out the application form on [www.saferlambeth.co.uk](http://www.saferlambeth.co.uk) and click the Join tab.

For further information please contact James Barrett at [james.barrett@saferlondon.co.uk](mailto:james.barrett@saferlondon.co.uk) 07795109233



**SAFER LAMBETH**  
BUSINESS PARTNERSHIP





## BRIXTON HILL FLORIST SHOP FRONT PROJECT

During the development stages of the Brixton BID, we partnered with Janet Edwards Florist on Brixton Hill to help obtain planning permission for a new awning for the shop.

The BID funded the planning application and architects' plans which were drawn up by local architect company CarverHaggard, who also helped by liaising with Lambeth Council's planning department.

The planning application was finally accepted and the business

owner commissioned a new sign and awning which can be seen in the image above.

Janet Edwards Florist sells beautiful flowers and gifts for all occasions and also organises workshops for those who want to learn to create their own flower arrangements.

If you are a local business who would like guidance on upgrading your shop front please get in touch with the BID team who can provide advice and contacts.

## HEALTHY EATERS

Healthy Eaters in Brixton is situated on iconic Electric Avenue. The restaurant specializes in great tasting Caribbean food while keeping your favourite dishes as healthy as possible using low fat cooking techniques while maintaining the succulent taste.

Business owner Stafford began the business as a market trader in Brixton for 6 years and gradually expanded the business from one market pitch to two which lead to opening the restaurant takeaway. Healthy Eaters now has a Caribbean street food takeaway in Market Row Brixton

serving wraps and unique Jamaican patties amongst the great 'food on the go' selection.

Stafford will soon be launching a bakery at the Electric Avenue restaurant, where customers will be able to buy fresh hot Caribbean bread, buns, patties and cakes.

You can find Healthy Eaters at 17 Electric Avenue, Brixton, London, SW9 8JP where Stafford and his team will be happy to serve you.

You can also order food for parties and office occasions by calling 0207 274 4521.

[www.healthyeaters.co.uk](http://www.healthyeaters.co.uk)



## BRIXTON WHOLEFOODS

Situated on Atlantic Road, Brixton Wholefoods has been part of the community in Brixton since 1982. With over 30 years of experience Brixton Wholefoods is dedicated to providing foods and products that encourage good health and wellbeing. They carry a broad range of specialist

wholefoods and health foods including many hard to find items such as macca powder, stevia and moringa seeds.

If you want to adopt a healthier lifestyle Brixton Wholefoods is a great place to start. The staff are passionate and happy to assist you and your family on your journey of wellbeing.

[www.brixtonwholefoods.com](http://www.brixtonwholefoods.com)  
59 Atlantic Road Brixton, London SW9 8PU  
Phone: 020 7737 2210



### Work in Brixton extending your IT skills

Porism Limited develops web applications from central Brixton offices. We're looking for a systems administrator to take care of our computer hardware and networks.

The job is ideal for someone who wants to work with a team of top-notch professionals, but avoid the commute into central London.

We'd like someone who is enthusiastic about the industry in general, who keeps on top of new developments and can contribute ideas on new technologies as well as ways of improving existing systems. You'll need skills in Linux and Windows servers. Knowledge of Amazon AWS, server monitoring and database configuration would be an advantage.

See full job details at [porism.com/careers/jobs](http://porism.com/careers/jobs)

Send CV and any enquiries to [jobs@porism.com](mailto:jobs@porism.com)



# RECIPE BY MISS SOUTH JERK PORK DIM SUM BUNS

(SERVES 4)

**FOR THE JERK PORK**

500g pork belly, bones removed  
4 spring onions, chopped  
4 cloves garlic, chopped  
1 Scotch bonnet pepper  
6 sprigs of fresh thyme, leaves removed from stalks  
1 tablespoon ground allspice  
2 teaspoons brown sugar  
1 teaspoon ground ginger  
1/2 teaspoon ground cloves  
1/2 teaspoon sea salt  
1/4 teaspoon coarse ground black pepper  
2 limes, juiced  
2 tablespoons black treacle

1 teaspoon soy sauce  
2 tablespoon guava jelly (optional)

**FOR THE BAOZI**

250ml warm water  
2 teaspoons fast acting yeast  
2 teaspoons sugar  
1 1/2 teaspoons baking powder  
pinch of salt  
450g plain flour

**FOR DIPPING**

3 tablespoons rice wine vinegar  
2 tablespoons light soy sauce  
1-2 teaspoons Bajan or Jamaican hot sauce

While there are very few foods I don't love, I have a particular soft spot for dim sum, the mainly Cantonese delicacy of small stuffed steamed or fried dumplings served as a lunch. The variations on this idea can be endless, but most people have heard of cha siu bao which are a fluffy almost bread-like steamed dumpling filled with slightly sweet barbecue pork.

A favourite of mine at a Sunday dim sum lunch at The Courtesan with its modern take on Chinese cuisine, I wondered if they'd work

with the Caribbean favourite of slightly sweet jerk pork instead. A little experimentation later taught me that the very light white fluffy dough for those buns is difficult for a novice to get right so I went for a simpler lighter chewy baozi style wrapper instead. They were much easier than expected and fantastic with the jerk pork inside.

Start with the pork. The long ingredient list may look intimidating but it's very easy. Ask your butcher for the pork belly in slices with the

ribs removed. Any non halal butcher in Brixton will sell pork belly.

Either using a small hand blender or chopping very finely, simply combine all the ingredients except the guava jelly together to make a thick coarse paste. Spread it well over the pork, taking care not to get it on your hands as the Scotch bonnet will cause quite a tingle. Cover the pork and marinate for at least 2 hours or preferably overnight.

Heat the oven to 140 degrees and put the pork into an ovenproof dish with a lid. Add the guava jelly if you have some from last month's recipe and put the lid on the dish. Roast the pork for 1 hour 30 minutes. It will be soft and tender. Allow to cool slightly, then pull apart gently with two forks and stir the fat and cooking juices together.

While the pork is cooking, start preparing your baozi dough. Using warm, but not hot water, stir the yeast, sugar and baking powder together in a jug with the water until it all foams. Add a pinch of salt to the flour in a large bowl and make a well in the middle of the flour. Add half the yeasted water and start to bring the dough together with your hand. Gradually add the rest of the water, stopping if the dough seems sticky.

The dough will look ragged and messy at this stage but will have come together in one piece. Lightly oil

your work surface and lift the dough out of the bowl. Knead it on the oiled surface until it is smooth and almost glossy. This will take 3-4 minutes. Return the dough to a clean bowl, cover with a tea towel and leave to prove in a warm place for 1 hour.

After the hour is up the dough will have doubled in size and puffed up well. Knock it back and remove from the bowl. Knead it for another 5 minutes on an oiled surface again until it is smooth, springy and elastic. Cut it in half, returning half to the bowl and covering again. Roll the other half out in a long sausage shape.

Cut this sausage of dough into 8 pieces and roll each piece out with a rolling pin or wine bottle until it is about a 2mm thick circle of dough. Put a spoonful of the jerk pork in the centre of the circle and lift it up so it is flat in the palm of your hand. Use

your finger and thumb to pinch the dough directly together, turning the dough anti clockwise away from you as you continue to pinch. You will end up with a small dumpling with a crimped top.

Set each dumpling into an oiled steamer and repeat until all the dough is used. You will probably have some pork leftover. Steam the baozi for 15 minutes on a medium heat until the dough is lighter in colour. I did mine in two batches as I didn't have a big enough steamer.

Serve immediately with the dipping sauce on the side. It is sweet, salty and spicy at once but you can leave the hot sauce out if you like your food milder. These steamed dumplings make an excellent light lunch or starter and could be filled with chicken, tofu or sweet potato if you don't eat pork.



Art  
to be outlawed  
in Brixton Village  
under harsh  
new guidelines  
set by landlord



H'oh you April fool. So anyway, one Saturday in April we will be having a flash frame sale from surplus stock. £10 a pop, they will come in all shapes and sizes. Bargainous... Please monitor our twitter feed for further updates.... @studio73bv

The original art, screen print & picture framing place.

Studio 73, Brixton Village SW9 8PS 020 7274 7773 info@studio73bv.co.uk

## Foodie news

As we all know, Brixton is ever-changing but each month we bring you a round-up of what's happening to keep you in the loop:

The foodie-fication (sorry) of Brixton isn't exactly showing signs of slowing down. We appear to be facing a tidal wave of burger this year. The Jamaican-themed Boom Burger is expanding from west London to Brixton Station Road, while the old Duck Egg site is now Shhh! Burger - awful name, we know. Oh, for the days of the Wimpy.

Before you panic at the thought of no duck eggs for Sunday brunch, a gentle reminder that Duck Egg has moved to Market House for the weekends.

You will need to head up to Tulse Hill if you are sick at the sight of burgers, where a new

bar and vegetarian restaurant simply called Vegbar is opening at number 45. Tacos, black bean sliders, and BBQ chilli beans all look set to be on the menu.

Nearby on Brixton Water Lane, a natural wine bar and grill has just opened. It's called Naughty Piglets and is run by husband and wife team Joe and Margaux. Joe Sharratt used to be head chef at Trinity in Clapham, while Margaux has come from Terroirs and is in charge of the wines.

Look out for reviews of new and old Brixton eateries on brixtonblog.com.

# REVIEW SIMPLE SATISFACTION: PARISSI'S LITTLE SECRET IS OUT

BY LINDSAY FALLER

Thank god for Parissi. Recently opened, it is a pleasing newcomer to Brixton. In truth, I'm a bit apprehensive to write about it because at the moment it is a little secret gem and if anyone reads this, they'll immediately want to go and I shall never get a table ever again. See, it appears that Atlantic Road is proving to be quite a formidable address for decent eats. I like the fact that it still feels like the real Brixton, especially on a Friday night. The beauty of this southern bit of Atlantic Road is that it is undiscovered by gastro-tourists who only stick to the Village or Market Row. Places like Parissi, Kaff Bar, Fujiyama and the like are still accessible to those of us who don't particularly feel like queuing an hour for a cheeseburger.

And who would want one anyway when Parissi serves food that is prepared with simplicity and ingredients of the highest standard? Open early providing coffee, homemade pastries and that holy grail of North African breakfasts, shakshuka (eggs baked in spicy tomato sauce and topped with pecorino cheese and herbs) for Brixton commuters, it is also open late on Fridays and Saturdays for dinner, serving a range of mezze, wine and luscious-sounding cocktails. Its deli counter is full of beautiful handmade cakes and sandwiches for the hours in between. In essence, you could stay there all day quite happily.

My friend and I ate babaganoush, a mixed mezze platter of cured meats and cheeses, as well as bouyardi (baked feta cheese), and Italian fennel sausages. Bread was ordered, essential for sopping up any remaining sauces and oils; and a mellow Pinot Noir and some fine Prosecco arrived too, proving themselves elegant companions for the food. The babaganoush was a legendary mesh of smoked aubergines, fresh tomatoes, garlicky olive oil and velvety tahini. Italian fennel sausages were few but satisfying. Slices of the aniseedy porky wonders were mixed with potatoes and tempered by the mild sweetness of the peppers - tomato sauce providing a vibrant richness.

The mixed mezze platter was beautifully presented with mortadella, prosciutto, aged chevre, emmental, manchego, and creamy blue



cheese, gussied up in the best possible way with slices of gherkin, dark, beautiful grapes, and fresh rocket. Bouyardi is something that everyone needs in life. Aged Greek feta was baked in aluminium foil, with sweet roasted peppers, fresh oregano, olive oil and tomatoes. The result was a warm, creamily herbaceous and salty thing of greatness, the cheese soft, warm and slightly oozy. It was by far our favourite dish of the evening.

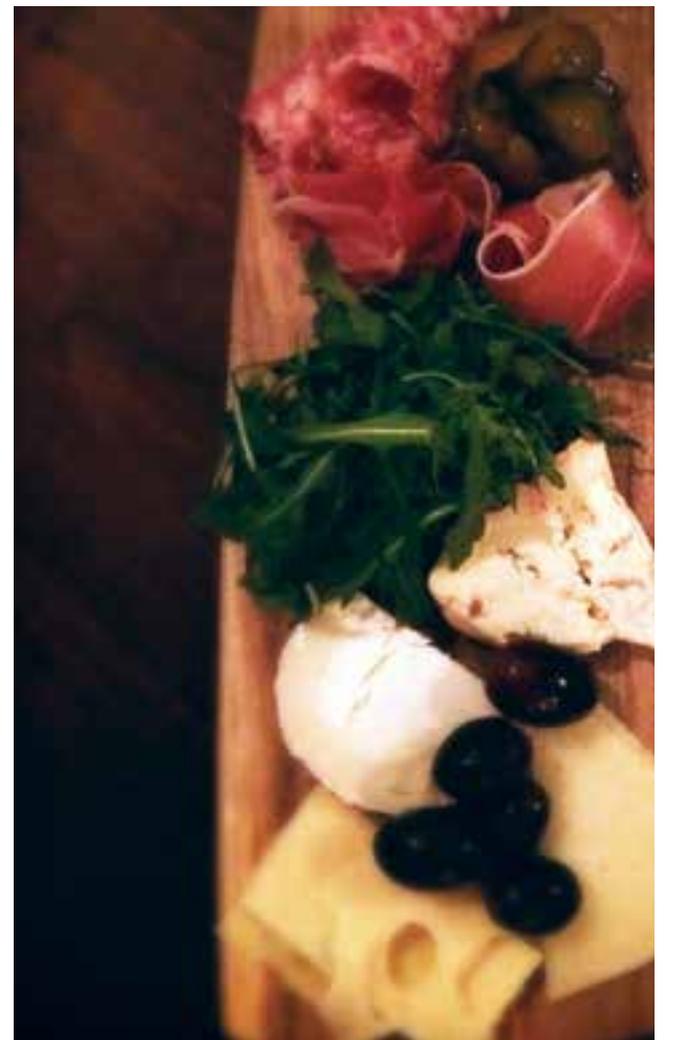
The meal ended with mint tea and homemade

cakes: blueberry tartlet and hazelnut cake. The body of the blueberry tart was cake, but its base was pastry, creating a crumbly but spongy combination; blueberries exploding in the mouth at each bite. Banana, chocolate and hazelnut cake was moist, with the perfect amount of sweetness. Chocolate provided depth, with hazelnuts as a quiet backdrop, providing texture and a hint of flavour.

What I loved most about Parissi was its inherent confidence to allow the quality of its ingredients to do the talking. There is no overcomplicating of dishes; most have only four or five components, and the result is simple yet tasty, nourishing food. In a setting that is intimate, welcoming and instantly charming, I find myself hoping that Parissi remains Brixton's little secret. The reality is, with food this good, I will probably be shouting about it from the rooftops, only to return and join its queue.

Dinner for two, with drinks and service £70.

Lindsay blogs at [blondevsbland.com](http://blondevsbland.com)



# BRIXTON MUSIC NEWS

Arts Co-Editor Barney Evison rounds up the latest music news from our corner of south London.



## ALABAMA 3 DO SOUNDTRACK FOR CRIME CAPER

Local band Alabama 3 - the guys behind the theme song for the Sopranos - have continued their affinity with gangster rock music by appearing on the soundtrack for new British crime film Hackney's Finest, out in cinemas April 3 and available on DVD and On Demand April 13.



## BRIXTON LARA ELIMINATED IN THE VOICE LIVE QUARTER-FINALS

Brixtoner Lara Lee - aka Floetic Lara - has been sent home after reaching the live quarter-finals of The Voice with her coach Sir Tom Jones. Unfortunately her rendition of 'God Put A Smile Upon Your Face' didn't secure her a place in the semi-finals.

## WAR ON DRUGS WOWS CROWD AT THE ACADEMY

The War On Drugs played Brixton Academy last month to critical acclaim across the board. "This is hazy, windswept music for big skies and open roads" said our reviewer Nicholas

on the *Blog*, "its sweeping chords wrap around the Academy with a warm, fuzzy, psychedelic glow." How lovely.

## YOUNG CAUSEWAY PLAY SONGWRITERS & WORDSMITHS

Local folk band Young Causeway are headlining the Songwriters & Wordsmiths night at the Brixton Hootananny on April 8. Songwriters and Wordsmiths is a night celebrating emerging talent that takes place at the Hootananny every second Wednesday of the month.



## NUBIYAN TWIST ALBUM LAUNCHED

12-piece afrobeat outfit Nubiyan Twist launched their new album on Wormfood Records at Brixton Jamm last month - head to the *Blog* for our review and interview with lead singer Nubiya. This is a band to keep your eye on.

## GHOSTPOET ON HOLD?

South London alternative musician Obaro Ejimiwe - aka Ghostpoet - suggested he might be putting the Ghostpoet name on hold after he finishes his current tour. He said he wants to work on more collaborative projects - read our interview with him on page 13. He's performing at Electric Brixton on April 9 promoting his new album Shedding Skin.

## JON HOPKINS FINISHES HIS SELL-OUT TOUR IN BRIXTON

Electronic artist Jon Hopkins is promising an audio-visual special at his final Immunity tour



date at Brixton Academy on April 24. The night is billed as "a true celebration of the album", pairing Hopkins' performance with live re-edits of videos from the tour.

## YOUNGHUSBAND HEADLINING BAD FRIDAY FESTIVAL AT WINDMILL

Psychedelic Londoners Younghusband are headlining the annual Bad Friday festival at the Windmill on Good Friday (April 3). Critics have praised their "blend of fuzzy psychedelia, shoegaze and krautrock" and this gig promises to be good 'un.



Bing Selfish. Suggested donation £5. Please sign the petition to halt the eviction at [change.org](http://change.org).

## SAT 11 @ BRIXTON ACADEMY

Gina Yashere is touring with her comedy show 'Laugh Riot' in Brixton tonight at 8pm with updated and brand new material. Buy tickets at [o2academybrixton.co.uk](http://o2academybrixton.co.uk).

## SUN 12 @ BRIXTON WINDMILL

Explore the brilliant Ashby mill with one of the expert tour guides who help look after the place. You'll learn all about the history of the Ashby family, see original wind-powered machinery and find out how the windmill was used to make stoneground flour. Book at [brixtonwindmill.org](http://brixtonwindmill.org) for a full tour. Tours are on the hour and half hour from 2-4.30pm.

## MON 13 @ RITZY CINEMA

We've only heard great things about the Young Vic's A View From The Bridge and this is your chance to see the sold-out show streamed to the Ritzy screens by National Theatre Live. Book as soon as you can online at [picturehouses.co.uk](http://picturehouses.co.uk). Tonight's performance is at 7.30pm.

## TUES 14 @ LISBOA GRILL

Sometimes it's best to return to old favourites and lately we've been getting a lot of take-out piri piri grilled chicken from Lisboa Grill, formerly The Gallery, on Brixton Hill when we're in need of some downtime from the kitchen. It's just insanely good and really this tip applies to almost any night of the week.

## WEDS 15 @ BRIXTON REC

For a fun - and knacker - sporting option this week, join the Afewee Boxing Club for their adult session from 7pm. We love it, so we'll see you there! If you've got kids, then take them along at 5.30pm tonight too, or 10.30am on Sundays. It costs £5 for adults; first session free.

## FRI 17 @ F.MONDAYS

Local chefs Katayun Sethna and her partner Phil Walther are doing a pop-up restaurant at F.Mondays coffee shop on Brixton Hill Thursday-Sunday evenings. They've called the venture 'All the Quail' and it will be a 20-seat affair using ingredients from Brockwell

## WEDS 1 @ HOME

Come up with some great pranks and let us know about them at @BrixtonBlog on twitter. Don't believe anything we say today... Spaghetti trees in Brockwell Park, anyone?

## THURS 2 @ ELECTRIC BRIXTON

This looks set to be a pretty special night at the Electric Brixton. John Talabot, Roman Flügel, Capulet and Mr Prince will lead you through a night of house-influenced music with 'the full plethora of aesthetics' too.

Doors open at 10pm and tickets are £12.50 in advance.

## FRI 3 @ WINDMILL BRIXTON

A day off! Head up to the Windmill Brixton for the annual Easter Bank Holiday Bad Friday music festival, curated by indie pop zine SoundsXP. The deal is nine bands and BBQ food for £9. Younghusband, a four-piece band in London, are headlining with their krautrock grooves. Doors open at 3pm.

## SAT 4 @ THE PRINCE OF WALES BRIXTON

Celebrate the long weekend at this all-dayer at the POW with house music hero Robert Owens headlining the main club room, alongside Ilija Rudman, Richie Littler, and the Cornershop Disco collective. Tickets are £8 in advance or £10 on the door, from 4pm until 4am.

## MON 6 @ BRIXTON EASTER MONDAY

Fingers crossed that Bank Holiday Monday is a scorcher, in which case if you haven't escaped Brixton for family events, we recommend spending the day flitting between Brixton's pub gardens (Trinity Arms, Prince Regent, Duke of Edinburgh) and the park. If not, then get cosy inside with a Khan's or Negril takeaway.

## TUES 7 @ BROCKWELL AND RUSKIN PARKS

We discovered a new 10k running route last year and it's fast become one of our favourites. Start from Windrush Square, run to Brockwell, run around Brockwell, exit at Herne Hill, run up to Ruskin Park and around it. Enjoy a good view of the city and a great sense of satisfaction.

## WEDS 8 @ UPSTAIRS AT THE RITZY

The folks from Reggae Roast are joining DJ David Katz for a night of original reggae and dub vinyl upstairs at the Ritzy. It's free and from 8pm until midnight.



CRITICS CHOICE:

## EASTER EGG HUNT

SUN 5 @ BROCKWELL PARK

An Easter egg hunt! The good people at Brockwell Park Community Greenhouses have hidden egg tokens in the gardens for kids today from 10am-12pm. Once they've been collected, the egg tokens can be swapped for a flowerpot of chocolate goodies. It's £3 per child; email [education@brockwellgreenhouses.org.uk](mailto:education@brockwellgreenhouses.org.uk) for more information.



CRITICS CHOICE:

## YOGA WORKSHOP

SAT 18 @ YOGAPOINT

Local Brixton yoga teachers Tanya Shoop and Chris Holt are leading a hands-on yoga workshop at the lovely Yogapoint on Dalberg Road today for anyone who regularly experiences pain and discomfort, or feels stuck with their yoga practice. It runs from 2.15pm and you can book by emailing [Tanya@artofposture.co.uk](mailto:Tanya@artofposture.co.uk). Cost is £30.

# APRIL RITZY ROUND-UP



If you're grumbling about losing an hour of sleep to the changing of the clocks, then prepare to be placated. For the dawning of British Summer Time also signals the arrival of blockbuster season on the big screen. Adam Marshall's pick of the highlights from the Ritz's April programme is a blinder - the perfect excuse to hide from that horrible sun thing.

For starters, those Marvel Avengers - they are once again assembling. In **AVENGERS: AGE OF ULTRON**, the unfeasibly large gang of comic book heroes join together to take on ne'er-dowell Ultron - a self-aware human despising artificial intelligence program. Joss Wheddon is in the director's chair, so it'll be a crowd-pleasing combination of hitting, kicking and quipping from the likes of Thor, Iron Man, Captain America and The Hulk... and Hawkeye... and Black Widow... and, well you get the idea. If you prefer your big budget cinema a little less

green screen-y and a tad more Stalin-era Soviet Union-y, then **CHILD 44** may be a better fit. The always exceptional Tom Hardy leads this chilly thriller as a Russian agent trying to solve a grizzly flurry of child murders. Expect grit, unbearable tension and elaborate Eastern European accents.

Taking the plaudits for 'Best film title of the month' - **A PIGEON SAT ON A BRANCH CONTEMPLATING EXISTENCE**. The whimsical Swedish festival and critic pleaser centres around two door-to-door salesmen trying to flog novelty wares. It's a bit odd, utterly original and might just be a belter.

Do you, like me, have an annoying friend who continually tells you how good **BLADE RUNNER** looks on Blu Ray and if you haven't seen it then your years on earth effectively amount to nought? Yes? Then vengeance is within grabbing distance - you can go one better when Ritz screens the restored 30th birthday version of Ridley Scott's dystopian masterpiece.

And if you've got a lust for early Harrison Ford (and, frankly, who among us hasn't?) then Francis Ford Coppola's Vietnam-flick-to-end-all-Vietnam-flicks **APOCALYPSE NOW** offers a double dose. The seminal adaptation of Francis Conrad's novel witnesses Captain Willard's (Martin Sheen) journey down the hellacious Nung river to capture Marlon Brando's insane



Colonel Kurtz. The horror! The horror! Your littluns not quite ready for the smell of napalm in the morning (wimps)? Then **HOME** may be a better option for Easter holiday entertainment. The latest animation from Dreamworks - those creative megaminds that brought us Shrek, How To Train Your Dragon and, er... Megamind- it follows Oh, a member of an alien race called the Boov (stay with me), which has invaded Planet Earth. You can bet that, when Oh befriends a sassy human girl Tip, all manner of hijinks will ensue. The film's predictably impressive visuals will be enough to keep the nippers engrossed, while you work out whether that really is that guy from The Big Bang Theory voicing Oh.

And add to this high-octane car chases (*Fast and Furious 7*), music documentaries (*Kurt Cobain: Montage of Heck*) and Ben Stiller (*White We're Young*), it's all almost worth losing an hour's sleep for.

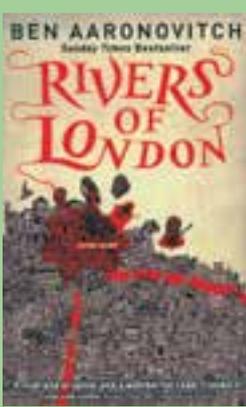
read about them on *Brixton Blog* and urban75, then head to [lambeth.gov.uk/consultations/cultural-services-by-2020](http://lambeth.gov.uk/consultations/cultural-services-by-2020) (phew!) to have your say.

**SUN 26 @ WINDMILL BRIXTON**  
Our second Windmill BBQ tip and this time it's the first of a series of relaxed Sunday sessions featuring five or six punky bands, a 4pm BBQ and what's billed as a 'chilled vibe'. Today, Croydon band The KADT are headlining. Doors at 3pm and tickets cost £5.

**MON 27 @ THE LIDO**  
Come on, it's the end of April, things should be hotting up by now, surely? If you dare, start the week by diving into the chilly waters of the Lido. Guaranteed you will feel brilliant afterwards and you can think in awe of the Brockwell Icicles who have been swimming daily all winter.

**TUES 28 @ BRIXTON REC**  
If the Lido is still too cold for you, take a swim today at our beloved Brixton Rec. Also check out Hatha yoga at 12.15pm and the cycling class at 6.45pm.

**WEDS 29 @ UPSTAIRS AT THE RITZY**  
Tonight you'll find a live music night presenting south London musicians, singers and poets, hosted by local Rami Radi. It's a lovely night dedicated to celebrating local talent. Entry is from 7.30pm and it's free.



## CRITICS CHOICE: BEN AARONOVITCH

WED 8 @ BRIXTON LIBRARY

Every year, Cityread London asks Londoners to read the same book and then curate a month-long programme of book groups, film screenings and other events across the capital. This year's novel is *Rivers of London* by Ben Aaronovitch. Brixton Library will be hosting the author tonight to talk about his urban fantasy/crime fiction. The event is free and runs from 6.30-8pm.

start at 6.45pm from Papa's Park on Pulross Road. Tasks last month included painting walls at Somerleyton and then gardening at Wyck Gardens, with runs and circuits in between.

### WEDS 22 @ CHELSEA COLLEGE OF ARTS

Okay, it's way outside of Brixton but one of our photographers, Gavin Freeborn, is showing his photos at the Chelsea College of Arts from today until April 25. He trades his portraits for hospitality, skills and objects around the world and his work includes lots of Brixtonites.

### THURS 23 @ THE PRINCE OF WALES

The Always Be Comedy night starts at 7pm tonight and features Nick Helm, Mike Wozniak and Gemma Whelan. Tickets are £10-12. James Gill is on hand to MC.

### FRI 24 @ BRIXTON JAMM

The Jamm is hosting the official Jon Hopkins party after his gig at the Academy tonight. He has curated a special line-up for the club to keep you partying well into the night,

including Nathan Fake, Andrew Hung and Vessels. Doors open at 10pm, tickets cost £7.50-12.50. Tickets at [brixtonjamm.org](http://brixtonjamm.org).

### SAT 25 @ LAMBETH COUNCIL

Today is the deadline for responses on what Lambeth council does with our parks, libraries, archives, arts and leisure centres. There are big changes afoot -

### THURS 30 @ BLACK CULTURAL ARCHIVES

'One love' is a signifier of universal love, peace and goodwill. The BCA are hosting 'One Love in the Archives' tonight as part of their monthly Café Club Lates series. Read love letters, find advice from the 'agony aunts' in the BCA's magazine archive and make handcrafted cards. Tickets are £20. You can book online at [bcaheritage.co.uk](http://bcaheritage.co.uk).

Park Community Greenhouses and the market, cooking over an open fire in the courtyard at F.Mondays. Look for more details on [allthequail.co.uk](http://allthequail.co.uk).

### SAT 18 @ 6 SOMERLEYTON

Get sweaty with the Block WorkOut community fitness sessions, open to all abilities. Ladies from 10.30-11.30am and men from 12-2pm. Entry is a nominal donation of £1 a session.

### SUN 19 @ BRIXTON STATION ROAD

Get down to the farmers' market and, while you're there, support some of the local shops under threat of eviction by Network Rail. A&C sell the best fennel sausages, the Moroccan Café is our favourite Brixton lunch option and Brixton Tools is handy if you're in need of DIY supplies.

### MON 20 @ ST MATTHEW'S ESTATE TENANTS' HALL

Yoga classes now take place at St Matthew's Tenants' Hall every Monday at 8.45pm - especially useful if you

can't make classes straight after work. Use the back entrance of the hall and don't forget that if you're a St Matthew's resident, you get a discount. Drop in prices are £10, first class is half price.

### TUES 21 @ GOOD GYM

Join the brilliant people at the Good Gym to carry out some extremely useful local tasks and get your weekly exercise sorted at the same time. Runs



## CRITICS CHOICE: THE ELECTION PROJECT

THURS 16 @ PHOTOFUSION

Pop along to the exhibition launch party of Simon Roberts' *The Election Project* at Photofusion from 6.30pm tonight. Roberts was the official British Election Artist in 2010 and he traversed the UK in a motorhome during the official 24 days of electioneering to capture as many political parties and constituencies on his camera as possible.

Are you aged 16-30? Ever thought about volunteering?

# INTERJUNCTION

Do you want to improve your CV and make a difference to your community?

You can volunteer to support local children, charities, social enterprises, arts projects, events and community groups

connecting youth, building communities

GET IN TOUCH!

Contact Clare on 020 8678 5957 or email [interjunction@kidscity.org.uk](mailto:interjunction@kidscity.org.uk)  
[www.kidscity.org.uk/interjunction](http://www.kidscity.org.uk/interjunction)



# TOM'S MUSIC MISSION IS A BIG HIT WITH SCHOOLS

Features Editor Katrin Magnussen meets the man behind local charity, School Ground Sounds, to find out how he's changing the lives of young, musically talented students.

Tom Scott enthuses about School Ground Sounds (SGS), the charity he founded last year. "For me it has all the best bits of teaching. I'm working with amazing young people, but it's stress-free and combines everything I enjoy doing."

"SGS is a charity that's a little different – it's more down with the kids, I guess", softly-spoken Tom says with a smile. "Some music charities' websites are all about syntax, impact and data, things that are quite inaccessible. SGS is about showcasing students and putting them in the centre."

Tom explains how his interest in music and recording was sparked whilst studying at Bristol University. He launched a YouTube channel entitled Bristol Couch with a friend, where they interviewed and filmed

local up-and-coming artists on a big red sofa. They even got some scoops.

"We were lucky enough to film George Ezra, when he was 18. We got the first two music videos that he ever recorded," he explains.

After graduating in 2012, Tom returned to his old stomping ground of Lambeth to work as a maths teacher at The Elmgreen School, Tulse Hill. "I did a 'teach-first programme' which means that you are in the school first for two years to see if you'll keep going." The fresh maths teacher soon noticed that many students were preoccupied with other things besides numbers and calculations.

"I could see so many students that were not engaged at all – they were just looking out of the window or running around the corridors singing, just wanting to perform. That's when I thought, let's combine the two and get them into the studio," explains Tom. "Elmgreen has the most amazing music department and recording studio, but it was hardly being used. I had my camera

equipment so I recorded them in the studio as they were singing, to let them get a taste of production."

For some students, recording music may provide them with just a boost. Others could use it to establish industry links. "They will share the video on social media, with their friends - and you can see the spring in their step after they have done it." Tom adds "music-making is linked to everything from self-esteem to social development, and it gives these young people a sense of identity."

This forms the backbone of School Ground Sounds. Following a teacher's nomination based on whether they are ready for such a platform, each student is provided with a free three-hour session in the Elmgreen recording studio.

Most sing, but some rap or play instruments. Whilst they perform, Tom films them and the result is a professional video which is then published on both the School Ground Sounds' website and YouTube. "A few thousand people might see the video,

so it's a big lift for them and a boost to their self-esteem. You can imagine their parents and the teachers," he explains with genuine excitement. "What I found from my Bristol Couch days is that just having that video is so powerful."

Tom's excitement is catching. One student, Noemie, created quite a buzz with her video: "She's had lots of people approach her saying they'd like to work with her. Luke Pritchard from the Kooks saw it and commented 'great video, well done!'"

"If we get a few hundred students that would be amazing," says Tom, "and if a few make it in the music industry that would be great! We are never going to be short of students and it won't cost the schools a penny to do it - it's a free service and I will want to keep that way. I really love it."

The charity offers opportunities beyond recording too, and Tom has imminent plans to run free workshops for students wanting to learn music production or who just want to practice.

"I'm also looking for voice coaches, technicians and young writers to help out with the blog," he says. "I am a one-man-band at SGS but I have a lot of great volunteers such as music teacher and voice coaches - so it feels very much like a team effort."

One reason that SGS provides such a vital service is that music education in state schools is often sidelined and not prioritised, says Tom, with secondary schools allocating as little as around £1.50 per child.

He hopes to enable local and London-wide students with the benefits of free professional recordings. He has already been in talks with Camden's Roundhouse as another potential recording base. In Brixton, it will shortly join forces with fellow music charity Raw Materials.

"There are a lot of talented students at the schools we have been working with, and it just makes me think - how many more schools and students out there are just sitting on their talents, not doing anything about it? My mission is to discover it."



# What's new for Future Brixton in Spring 2015....

This month we had the fantastic news that Brixton had won the largest grant made by the Mayor of London's High Street Fund - £869,000. It's also been a challenging time for businesses and their customers in the arches on Atlantic Road. To keep up to date with all things Future Brixton then log onto [www.futurebrixton.org](http://www.futurebrixton.org)

## Brixton granted £869k from the High Street Fund

**Brixton will receive £869,000 from the Mayor's High Street Fund for a range of projects including working with the market traders to develop a strategy for the street markets and undertaking major improvements to the public realm on Electric Avenue.**

Projects include supporting the Brixton £ to provide the world's very first local currency cash machine and wifi on Electric Avenue so that market traders can take card payments. The Impact Hub Brixton will also move to POP Brixton.



## Lambeth College apprentice, Karen Smith, tells us her thoughts on building Pop Brixton

POP Brixton is a temporary project, offering training, workspace, shops and events space in the heart of Brixton. Karen Smith is one of twelve apprentices working to bring the project to life. At just seventeen she is already winning praise for her hard-work and aptitude on-site.

Encouraged by her lecturer at Lambeth College to look into the scheme she thought it looked like a great opportunity so she signed herself up.

Karen told us, "The project sounded like something a bit different and something I might not get the chance to work on again. It's also a multi-trade apprenticeship, which



offers me the opportunity to learn about a variety of trades. I know having a broad skills base will make me more employable, so that was definitely a reason why I wanted to do this particular apprenticeship."

Valentia, Arts and Marketing Director told us, "We are getting excited about opening at POP Brixton, and letting the community enjoy the results of a lot of hard work. The best part of creating Pop is definitely getting to know lots of amazing, talented people and the exchange of skills and passion the project has enabled. With TEDx Brixton (3 October) and RIBA London Architecture Open summer showcase (4-28 June) already pencilled it's definitely starting to feel a bit real"

With all the containers now on site things are really starting to come together and take shape. The current batch of apprentices will be leaving the site once the build is done but a new set of landscape and design apprentices will come on board for the next stage in creating this meanwhile space. Jump onto [www.popbrixton.org](http://www.popbrixton.org) for updates!

## Canterbury Square, a new square for Brixton?



Following publication of the Brixton Public Realm Design Study in 2014, Lambeth engaged Urban Movement to develop public space improvements for Canterbury Square in Brixton. The new public space aims to create a social, attractive and relaxing space for local people, and visitors to Brixton. All feedback is now being gathered and collated from the online questionnaire which closed on 21 March. But keep an eye out for the results from the questionnaire on [www.futurebrixton.org](http://www.futurebrixton.org)

visit [futurebrixton.org](http://futurebrixton.org) • follow @futurebrixton

  
**Lambeth**



# GREEN FINGERS

BY ALISON ALEXANDER, BROCKWELL COMMUNITY GREENHOUSES



When I was a trainee in France there was furore in the gardeners' mess room – scientists were predicting better sparkling wine could soon flow from the chalk downlands of southern England than from the Champagne region itself.

Roll the clock forward some years and we know that climate change is causing growers around the world more serious consequences than injured national pride.

Closer to home, rapid temperature swings, bouts of heavy rain and periods of drought are presenting us with some tough challenges from damaged seedlings to poor harvests.

Determined to find life's upside as we gardeners are, the emerging medium-term warming pattern in the UK is providing us with some horticultural delights in addition to the prospect of good quality homebrew.

Our Walled Garden display this year illustrates the novel food and ornamental plants that gardeners couldn't dream of growing here only 30 years ago.

In the 'Hot!' border you'll see bananas, tree echiums from the Canary Isles, birds of paradise, ornamental chillies, ginger lilies, yam and more.

Within our own site we're turning a greenhouse into a curry house and experimenting as ever with crops like rice, cassabanana, sesame, okra, snake gourd and horned melon.

For more information on London's recent climate shift and the changes that have resulted in the garden, check out our volunteer Chris Smith's March 14 blog entitled 'Hot!'

From April 1 (really), visitors will have more chance than ever to enjoy the Greenhouses and seek inspiration for their own gardens, balconies or tubs as we extend our opening hours.

New times will be Thursday to Sunday 10am-5pm for the public and for volunteering. On other days, the site will be busy with pre-booked school groups and young people's activities.

There's a lot to do in the garden now, if you'd like to come and volunteer do get in touch.

www.brockwellgreenhouses.org.uk  
Email: garden@brockwellgreenhouses.org.uk  
Twitter: @GardenBrockwell



**Ms Bennett, *Brixton Bugle's* anonymous dating columnist, supported us in our crowdfunder last year by buying the opportunity to write one last column. You'll find out why she won't be writing another...**

When I started writing Ms Bennett, I never thought for a second that my life would begin to turn into a Jane Austen novel. Especially given my Tinder escapades. I'm not sure how Elizabeth Bennett I was on those dates...

However, a girl can always redeem herself. I met a man at a wedding. Let's call him The Other Guy. A wedding of a man I was once completely in love with. Who kindly told me I was too good for him. Now I realise I was.

Anyway, you know when you hear, or see a movie, about love at first sight? That moment where everything stops and all you see is that person in front of you. Where your heart goes aflutter. Well I've never quite experienced it, and I'm not sure I even believe in it - a little like runners 'high'. But I think I actually saw it happen. When The Other Guy saw me, his whole face changed, his posture, his voice, I can't quite describe it, and I'm not saying what he felt was love at first sight (my ego isn't that big) but something happened. We spoke that night, he made his enquiries and he left the wedding telling my friends and his, that he was going to marry me.

So fast forward three months and I'm engaged. He asked and I said yes.

Not because he is the love of my life, or he gives me butterflies. Or when I look at him, I fancy him more and can't quite believe my luck.

But I think I could have a happy life with him. I know it doesn't sound romantic but, I could be happy, and I'll take that over crazy love. Any day. God knows it hasn't got me anywhere in the past. And I think after the awful year I had with The Beard playing it safe and smart is a good idea.

Love shouldn't hurt. Relationships should be that hard. You shouldn't try to be a perfect version of yourself unless it's for yourself. And as my mother always says, "there is nothing wrong with marrying a man who loves you more than you love him".

And I know he does. I know he cares. I know that I am enough and more. I'm not second-guessing, insecure or pretending. And that is enough.

Without that pressure to be perfect, without this stupid worry that I'm going to come off as needy or clingy, I can work on being happy. And I look forward to that.



## MOVE MORE WITH FRANKIE HOLAH

Ladies, it's time to take our power back and reclaim our bodies. With summer around the corner, let's make it the season of the Warrior Woman! For too long we've been sold the

wrong message about what female fitness is. The simple truth is, it's about health, strength and dedication. Happiness, confidence and the body you deserve are just the by-products.

When it comes to fitness, there's an athlete in all of us and it's definitely time for her to shine. We need to train her well, feed her well and treat her well. The rest and recovery matters as much as the sweat and reps.

It is so easy to be hyper-critical of bodies with so many Photoshopped and filtered images flying around, which makes it even more important to remember that we're all unique in shape and size. Not only should we celebrate this, but our baseline objective should be to live healthily and not for the next fitness fad or trend.

Throughout my training journey, experience has shown me that I am happiest and healthiest both in mind and body, when my goal is not based on achieving a look, but running a faster time than last week or adding one more pull-up than I thought possible. Nothing beats that feeling of achievement, and when you are making progress and enjoying what you do, the rest just follows...

So, whatever your fitness level and whatever your shape, train to suit what YOU want to achieve, with YOUR health and happiness at the heart and in a way that YOU enjoy.

Train and eat well not because you hate your body but because you LOVE your body!!! Channel that inner Warrior Woman!!!

Follow my fitness journey online @frankieholah and check out YouTube.com/frankieholah for videos and more workouts coming soon

For personal training enquiries you can get in touch on frankie@frankieholah.com - let's build that all year round body!



## Arsenal star backs new football charity

Arsenal star Santi Cazorla has backed a south London charity running a crowdfunding campaign to establish a youth-led football channel on YouTube.

The Spanish international midfielder was announced as a patron of Football Beyond Borders this month. The football charity, which runs educational projects reaching young people in Brixton and some of south London's most deprived areas, has also been endorsed by Sky Sports pundit Guillem Balague.

Volunteers from the charity hope to raise £7,500 to set up FBB TV, an online platform that will help

the charity's young members to film, produce and star in their own videos. The project, which aims to tackle the lack of diversity in the media industry, whilst helping young people to get a foothold in the sector, will target 13 to 25-year-olds from ethnic minority communities.

Football Beyond Borders founder Jasper Kain said: "FBB TV will develop the potential of the next generation of pundits, presenters and producers by bringing together household names in football with budding young talents."

"As an aspiring filmmaker myself I was lucky enough to have access

to key networks and guidance to get a foothold in the profession. FBB TV will provide a more inclusive platform for young people from all backgrounds to learn these valuable skills and develop their talent."

Commenting on Santi Cazorla's decision to become a patron of the charity, Sky Sports pundit Guillem Balague said: "I am delighted that Santi has agreed to join the team. His journey towards football stardom is an inspiration to our young people and a clear example of the merits of hard work and commitment. He is already looking forward to getting involved in the charity's hugely worthwhile projects."

# East Dulwich Sporting Crabs claw back to winning ways

BY DAVID GIBSON

The East Dulwich Sporting Crabs returned to winning form with an away victory over Clapham New Town on March 15. It didn't have to be pretty and at times it wasn't but thanks to some great finishing the Crabs will now look to end the season on a high.

The Crabs looked a lot more confident with the return of Ben Daughtry in the number 10 role. Daughtry provided a link between the midfield and the target man Ian Armstrong and it didn't take long before East Dulwich took the lead. Right winger Stuart Wood executed a perfect lob (or a Wood-chip if you will) over the helpless keeper to put the Crabs on the front foot. Centre

forward and new fans' favourite Armstrong was on point to double the lead before half time with a well-timed hanging header at the back post.

East Dulwich continued with the momentum in the second half and the third goal was inevitable, although it did come from an unlikely source. Mike Garvin calmly controlled the ball within a cluttered box before smashing home a close range volley. The fourth goal came from a more likely 'sauce' as the self-appointed condiment king Chris Taylor threw himself on the end of a cross and side-foot volleyed it into the net. Taylor reeled away cracking out the infamous 'crab' celebration portraying pincers with his hands like a tiny Mancunian crustacean. Fresh from his holiday in Cuba, Fidel



Christro was at the forefront of the Crab revolution after their recent poor run of form. Chris even tried a carbon copy of the effort moments later - it was close but no cigar.

Clapham battled well and even at 4-0 the home side gave it a good go and went on to dominate the last 20 minutes. After a series of well-delivered corners Clapham finally pegged one back as the Crabs failed to clear their lines. Whilst the defensive players looked miffed at the final whistle there was still a sense of relief in the camp as East Dulwich recorded their first win in five games. It is always worth mentioning that no yellow cards were shown although even when taking the role of linesman, Ben Swindells was picking fights with players and officials alike.

**Final score: East Dulwich Sporting Crabs 4, Clapham New Town 1**

David Gibson blogs at [sportingcrabs.wordpress.com](http://sportingcrabs.wordpress.com)



## World Cup winner inspires students

Students at a local school recently got a visit from a sporting legend. Sir Clive Woodward, who coached the England rugby team to win the World Cup in 2003 and served as the British Olympic Association's Director of Sport, visited students at Evelyn Grace Academy in Brixton.

Sir Clive told a packed assembly of students that "everybody in this school can be a champion in their subject - but you're never going to be a champion without the hard work".

The event was part of Evelyn Grace

Academy's Sports Week, during which students will hear from top sportsmen and women. The week will see students get visits from Premier League footballer Brede Hangeland, heavyweight boxer Dillian Whyte and Rugby World Cup winner Natasha Brennan.

Student Laaraf Ali, 14, said: "It was great to hear from someone who has been that successful... He taught me to really listen to what my coaches are telling me and take it on board so I can be a champion."



@Eric\_TheFish

BY PAM - WWW.PAMWILLIAMS.CO.UK

# Dulwich Hamlet denied a win by last gasp equaliser

BY SANDRA BROBBEY

Dulwich Hamlet were denied their first home win of the month after East Thurrock scored a late equaliser in a lively 3-3 draw. A severe dip in form has seen Gavin Rose's team lose four times and draw twice since their last win in the Ryman division.

A Valentine's Day victory over bottom-placed Bury Town was the

last time Dulwich registered a win in the league. A victory over The Rocks would have given the south London side a boost in their push for the play-offs. The Pink and Blues endured a nervy, unsettled start against the visitors at Champion Hill. This was understandable given the number of goals conceded in the past few weeks.

Defensively they have been

wayward in their recent league encounters, shipping 11 goals in their past six games, including three conceded against East Thurrock. Hamlet struggled to take control of the midfield in the early stages of game and a third-minute strike by The Rocks meant the home side were on the back foot almost immediately.

The away team's energetic midfielder Mitchell Gibney caused problems for Hamlet's defence with his pace and movement. However his third-minute strike was cancelled out by an 18th-minute own goal from Ben Wood, an error that gave Hamlet a great chance to force their way back into the game.

Dulwich fell behind again after Gibney grabbed his second goal of the game. But an Ashley Carew penalty put the home team back on level terms. The introduction of Luke Wanadio and Shawn McCowlsky helped to inject some much needed pace into Hamlet's attack as they sought to press the team from Essex and attack them from the flanks.

The game stood at 3-2 after the home side took the lead courtesy of Ashley Carew's 90th-minute penalty, after striker Joe Benjamin

was fouled in the six-yard box. It was the midfielder's second goal and penalty in an eventful encounter that saw players' tempers flare briefly after the final whistle. Carew's late strike was cancelled out by a swift counter attack with Ross Parmenter securing a third goal and a point for East Thurrock.

Match Attendance – 953



Brixton Bugle's  
Man of the Match:

**ETHAN PINNOCK**

Pinnock worked hard to clear several dangerous crosses. He made some crucial interceptions despite having the wind knocked out of him during the first half.

Below left: Dulwich Hamlet in action against East Thurrock. Below: Hamlet celebrate Ashley Carew's second goal with their fans

# Britain's oldest competing athlete launches new Silver Tuesday sessions for the over 45s

A top British triathlete launched new fitness sessions for over 45s in Lambeth this month. Eddie Brocklesby, Britain's oldest competing triathlete and a super-fit 71-year-old retired social worker, paid a visit to Brockwell Park to kick-start Silver Tuesdays.

Older residents of Brixton and

other parts of Lambeth are being encouraged to join the sessions, run by the fitness charity Silverfit. Nordic walking and pilates will be among a range of activities on offer as part of a fitness programme backed by Comic Relief and Lambeth council. The sessions, which will run every

Tuesday from 2pm at Brockwell Park, will also include Walking Football, led by a top coach from Millwall FC.

Commenting on the launch of the session, Eddie (the founder of Silverfit) said: "I only started running in my 50s and since then I've competed in four Ironman races.

"My grandson called me a mad granny for doing them! Keeping active and healthy is so important whether you're young or older. We want to encourage more people to maintain their fitness as they grow older".

Silverfit's exercise drives have proved to be quite popular in other

parts of the Capital. Burgess Park sessions run by the charity have been attended more than 100 people.

Visit [www.silverfit.org.uk](http://www.silverfit.org.uk) or follow @silverfitorg to find out more about Silver Tuesdays.



Eddie Brocklesby with Dr Zoe Williams, formerly Amazon from TV show Gladiators. Picture by Suzanne Hakuba



## QUICK CROSSWORD

Across

- 1. Easy Peasy (5,2,4)
- 9. Lopsidedness (9)
- 10. Heavyweight boxer who stings like a bee (3)
- 11. Loft (5)
- 13. Set of circumstances; hen's bag (onag) (7)
- 14. Land for growing crops (6)
- 15. Pop up (6)
- 18. Royal Mail service (7)
- 20. Hanging clothes dryer (5)
- 21. Words to say at the altar (1,2)
- 22. SE Asian country (9)
- 24. Jack Horner's dessert (4,8)

Down

- 2. Evergreen creeper (3)
- 3. Funny (7)
- 4. Slow to understand; angle more than 90° (6)
- 5. Scottish river (5)
- 6. Australian marsupial (5,4)
- 7. Ice cream-based dessert (6,5)
- 8. Man-shaped biscuit (11)
- 12. Fungal seat for a gnome (9)
- 16. Premeditated (7)
- 17. Require (4)
- 19. Self-evident statement (5)
- 23. Vice (3)