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The latest news from the local area, from a victory parade to a new home for bees

BY ALICE CAIRNS

Break a sweat Victoria has a new fitness destination. Karve studios is a favourite of A-listers and fitness influencers, offering resistance-based pilates workouts with state-of-the-art equipment. Each class lasts 50 minutes and includes a whole body workout to the beat of an exhilarating playlist, followed by a relaxing session of stretching and mindfulness. When you're done with your workout you can visit the Karve cafe, which serves up ceremonial-grade matcha, coffee and healthy snacks. 123 Buckingham Palace Road



The bee's knees

St Ermin's Hotel is rehoming some of its bee population to an "out-apiary" in Somerset. Recent research has suggested that a spike in the number of urban bee hives is causing damage to the ecological balance of London's other flora and fauna. While a portion of the hotel's bees will now have a new home on an organic farm in Taunton, two hives and the "Bee and Bee" hotel for solitary bees will remain on the St Ermin's Bee Terrace, where they can be viewed by guests through full-length windows. 2 Caxton Street



New faces

The Corinthia has a new general manager Charlotte Weatherall is the first woman to take on the role at the Whitehall hotel and one of only a handful of female general managers at five-star hotels in the capital. Charlotte's ethos includes a commitment to philanthropy, advocating for the LGBTQ+ community

and campaigning for a more inclusive future for the hospitality industry. She's a leading force behind the Corinthia's charitable partnership with Spread a Smile, which brings joy and laughter to seriously ill children and their families during hospital stays. The Corinthia's previous general manager, Thomas Kochs, has left the role to rejoin Claridge's. Whitehall Place



BLOOMING LOVELY

Discover the expanded community garden at King's Scholars' Passage

BY ALICE CAIRNS





Have you visited King's Scholars' Passage? Once a bare and uninviting alleyway, it has been transformed into a quirky urban garden thanks to a community initiative started by local residents.

Before the pandemic, King's Scholars' Passage was a rather uninspiring urban environment with a reputation for antisocial behaviour – some of which was being attributed to residents at The Passage charity, which houses those experiencing homelessness.

In 2021, local residents Sarah MacDonald Eggers, Leslie Macleod-Miller and Bridget Jacob came up with a plan for a community gardening project that would fill the allev with plants, inviting residents from The Passage charity to join in with their efforts.

The project was an exercise in community building, easing local tensions and creating a beautiful and eclectic green space in the process. So successful were the team's efforts that the King's Scholars' Passage garden was recently recognised as "outstanding" at this year's London in Bloom.

"The garden is quirky, imperfect and random in every way imaginable," says Sarah. "However, through the commitment of our volunteers and the clients and staff of The Passage, the generosity of corporate donors, the resilience of our plants and the encouragement of our neighbourhood, it has thrived."

"It feels very grounded in the local community," says Oliver Barden, Head of Placemaking at London Heritage Quarter. "This isn't a contrived project - it's something that many people have spent years working on, all for the good of the local area."

Now London Heritage Quarter has collaborated with the group to deliver more than 120 metres of sustainable and Continued overleaf...







COMMUNITY

biodiverse planting along the passage's black railings, using specially designed planters containing more than 340 new plants. This has allowed the planting to extend all the way down the passage, creating one long avenue of greenery.

"What's lovely is that the garden has evolved organically, over time, based on which plants the gardeners could get their hands on. It's a real mix of species – trailing plants, flowers, trees. It feels eclectic," says Oliver. "We hope the new plants and planters will enhance the work of the community and extend it further.

"Overall the aim is to rejuvenate the passage and allow it to feel more welcoming. It's a back alley, but it's actually quite an important pedestrian connection if you're going from Pimlico towards Victoria Street."

The garden will continue to be maintained by the local gardening group, which meets every Wednesday rain or shine for upkeep and planting. The group has also received support from corporate volunteers, providing a great way for businesses with offices in Victoria to give back to the local community.

"It's great when local businesses come down to help," says Oliver. "It enables the community group to have extra resources and is always a lovely experience for the people involved. It's good for everyone to spend time in nature."

With its extended footprint, the local gardeners will need more support than ever to keep King's Scholars' Passage clean and green. If you are interested in volunteering, email kspgardenproject@gmail.com and follow @kspcommunitygarden on Instagram to keep up to date.











Nestled in the heart of Westminster lies a hidden gem - Mary Sumner House, a Grade-II listed venue home to the international charity, Mothers' Union.

Celebrating its centenary year on Monday, 21 July 2025, Mary Sumner House offers 8 meeting rooms and a Conference Hall. ideal for small conferences, senior management meetings, board meetings, AGMs, away days, workshops, training sessions, and interviews.



Rooms vary in size from 6 in a boardroom layout up to 120 in a theatre-style layout, with flexible catering options available.

Booking a meeting room at Mary Sumner House helps support the Mothers' Union's work of empowering women and transforming their lives.

For more information, or to book a room, either call or visit our website at:







Sing your heart out

Bam Karaoke has launched house

party Fridays, inspired by the wild

spirit of 17th-century icon Nell Gwyn.

Expect live bands and DJs, a genrespanning playlist and an atmosphere

of vintage glamour. If you're looking

for more family-friendly fun, Bam also

offers junior open-mic nights every

second Sunday, with younger guests

encouraged to come along and belt

out their favourite songs in a fun and

supportive setting.

74 Victoria Street



Confessional comedy

Described as Fleabag meets The Vicar of Dibley, Sit or Kneel is a one-woman comedy show about Margot, a 20-something vicar in a rural parish. Margot's life begins to unravel as she develops feelings for a member of her congregation, with potentially disastrous consequences. Writer and actor Mimi Nation-Dixon tells Margot's story with wit, warmth and lashings of dark humour. The Other Palace, 12 Palace Street

Fill your diary with local events, from abstract art to live music at sunset

BY ALICE CAIRNS

Sunset serenade

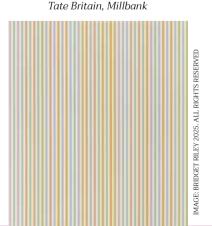
Don't miss Nova Sundowner Sessions, running every Thursday from 5pm to 8pm until September 25. This is your chance to enjoy live music and DI sets in the heart of Victoria, providing musical accompaniment while you grab a drink or do vour shopping. The events are free, but for the best seats in the house, book al fresco dining at, one of Nova's restaurants.

Culture clash

Imelda Staunton plays opposite her daughter, Bessie Carter, in the latest instalment of the National Theatre Live series. *Mrs Warren's Profession* explores the tensions between a mother and daughter – one a staunch traditionalist, the other a new woman with "scandalous" ambitions to become a lawyer. You can enjoy this George Bernard Shaw classic, filmed live in the West End, from the comfort of a Curzon cinema seat with a cocktail and popcorn. *58 Victoria Street*

In abstract

Don't miss an exhibition of British artist
Bridget Riley's abstract work. Using
simple colours and shapes, she evokes
movement, light and space inspired
by the ever-changing landscapes of
Cornwall. This exhibition spans Riley's
career, from some of her earliest abstract
work to her most recent paintings,
which take inspiration from the French
impressionists.



Royal adventures.

Take a peek into the king's private art collection with this exhibition at The King's Gallery. Ever since his visit to Italy in 1985, King Charles III has been inviting artists along on his tours and travels to document his experiences. More than 40 artists have taken on this role over the years, visiting some 95 countries during 69 royal tours. Until September 28 you can explore this exhibition of some of the highlights, including works inspired by the king's travels to far-flung destinations such as Japan, Brazil. India and Kenva. Buckingham Palace

An evening with Piers

Piers Morgan is coming to Central Hall to discuss his new book, Woke Is Dead, on October 23. The journalist and broadcaster will share his perspectives on hot topics such as free speech and the future of our "post-woke" society. Whether you agree or disagree, it's bound to be an evening you won't forget. Storey's Gate

Nova Place





Spotlight on Scandinavian

Say hello to ScandiKitchen! This Scandinavian cafe offers everything from homemade porridge to cinnamon buns, Nordic smoked salmon sandwiches and Swedish meatballs. If you're looking for an afternoon pick-me-up, the bestselling dream cake is just the thing – a meltingly light and fluffy sponge complete with a caramelised coconut topping.

Craving caviar

Get ready for an evening of caviar at Raffles London at The OWO. On September 29, guests will be served up a delicious menu that will showcase Sturia caviar as a star ingredient, pairing it with blinis, creme fraiche and wild capers. Other dishes will include pan-fried sole, flaky mushroom tartlet and chocolate ice cream with lemon, capers and sea lettuce – all served with carefully selected wines. The dinner is priced at £300 per person. 57 Whitehall

There are plenty of treats to try in the local area, from plant-based cookies to homemade pasta

BY ALICE CAIRNS

GOOD TASTE



Salad days

The Salad Project has opened in Nova Place. It's the perfect spot to pick up a healthy lunch, with fresh salads and nourishing protein bowls made on site. Each dish can be customised to your preference, with meat and veggie options, tasty dressings and seasonal specials. Don't miss the Big Deal, which comes with marmite croutons and a cucumber-chilli pickle.

85 Buckingham Palace Road





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Taste of China

Shan Shui Social has arrived in Victoria. The restaurant is designed to look like a 1920s

Shanghai townhouse, with art deco details and

a basement speakeasy. The menu will take you

on a journey through regional Chinese cuisine,

from Shanghainese kaofu to Sichuan crispy

chicken and Cantonese noodles.

14 Buckingham Palace Road

Perfect pasta

Emilia's has arrived in Victoria, serving up hand-crafted pasta made with natural ingredients. Every dish is cooked from scratch and inspired by traditional Italian recipes, with each pasta shape matched to its sauce based on its size, shape and texture. From a bolognese slow-cooked for four hours to a selection of homemade pestos, pair your pasta with a cocktail (limoncello spritz, anyone?) and finish with a decadent amaretto tiramisu. 56 Victoria Street

Sweet tooth

The After School Cookie Club has opened its doors in the Victoria Arcade. It serves up freshly baked cookies with a twist: the entire menu is plant-based and gluten free. Choose from flavours such as strawberry marshmallow, peanut choc-caramel and s'mores, as well as a revolving seasonal special. You can also enjoy scoops of cookie dough, ice cream sandwiches or even a cookie shake - a thick ice cream milkshake topped with crumbled cookie pieces. Unit 1b, Victoria Street





EMILIA'S CRAFTED PASTA

Fresh, soul-warming pasta; just like Nonna's! At Emilia's we love soul-warming comfort food. Everything we do revolves around the essence of Italian cuisine - freshness and simplicity. We believe Italian pasta should be served in a casual way with the generosity and warm welcome of previous generations. Just as Nonna would have done it. All our pasta is made fresh every morning in each of our restaurants in full view of passers-by and served from our fully open kitchen. Emilia's Victoria is now open for cosy dining and private events. www.emiliaspasta.com

56 Victoria Street, SW1E 6QW Tel. 0203 9492777 Nearest stations: Victoria, St. James's park and Westminster.

THE IVY VICTORIA

The Ivy Victoria offers relaxed yet elegant all-day dining in the heart of London, just moments from Victoria Station. Ideal for tourists, commuters, and locals, it serves a refined menu of modern British favourites, Asian-inspired dishes, and vibrant vegan and vegetarian options - all in a stylish, welcoming setting. 02039712404

The Ivy Victoria, 66 Victoria Street, London SW1E 6SQ, UK ivycollection.com/restaurants/the-ivy-victoria/



Long standing neighbourhood favourite, Iris & June is known for its awesome coffee, deliciously wholesome and filling salads, sandwiches, frittatas and tarts. With the cabinet always stocked full of homemade cakes, slices, freshly baked muffins, scones and pastries there's always something to tempt your taste buds.

Open 7.30am - 4.30pm weekdays. 1 Howick Place, SW1P 1WG www.irisandjune.com @irisandjune





Tucked away in the heart of Westminster and overlooking the historic Vincent Square, The Vincent Rooms is a trio of elegant eating areas where some of the UK's best chefs and hospitality professionals began their careers, including Jamie Oliver, Ainsley Harriott, Anthony Worrall Thompson and Andy Wong.

Come start the day with handmade pastries and freshly brewed tea or coffee in our cosy Cafe. Enjoy a relaxed lunch in our art deco-inspired Brasserie, or savour a fine dining experience at the Escoffier, where our award-winning hospitality and culinary students deliver exceptional service and cuisine.

The Vincent Rooms 76 Vincent Square London, SW1P 2PD 0207 8028 391 https://www.thevincentrooms.co.uk/



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RUBENS HOTEL

Make this festive season unforgettable at The Rubens at the Palace. Celebrate with a traditional Thanksgiving feast, a magical Winter Wonderland Afternoon Tea, or a decadent six-course Christmas Day lunch. Enjoy festive delights at the Leopard Room with seasonal pâtisserie and mulled wine. For an elegant evening, join us for a spectacular New Year's Eve dinner. Whether it's a romantic meal or a family celebration, our private dining options offer something special for every occasion. Celebrate in style and enquire now with our Meetings and Events team for 2025/26 bookings.

To book, contact us at dining@rubenshotel.com Festivities run 17 Nov - 31 Dec 2025.



LONDON'S ICONIC VEGAN RESTAURANT LAUNCHES FEAST FOR TWO

Mildreds has recently launched the 'Taste of Mildreds' at £25 per person - an affordable tasting menu of perfectly curated range of dishes. Each dish complements the next, creating a vibrant journey of flavours. Your meal arrives in three stages: snacking dips and bread, followed by small sharing plates, including Biber Patatas Bravas (spicy triplecooked potatoes), Arancini Rosso (smoked mushroom risotto balls) and finally a delicious main centred around long-time favourite Kiri Hodi – Sri Lankan coconut curry with sweet potato. Diners can also add a dessert for £5, completing this flavourful journey

Mildreds is open for breakfast, lunch and dinner. Hours: Monday – Friday, 8am – 11pm, and weekends

Heading to the theatre? Enjoy 2 courses for £24 or 3 for £32, weekdays 3-7pm.





THE JONES FAMILY KITCHEN

The award-winning Jones Family Kitchen is one of London's leading steakhouses, serving grass fed dry-aged steak from Yorkshire alongside that from its own farm in Devon. The large menu doesn't just cater to the steak lover however, with fish arriving daily from Cornwall and the South Coast from small day boats. Situated in lovely Eccleston Yards, with a large and peaceful outdoor terrace. Jones Family Kitchen also offers a pre-theatre set menu till 6pm.

The Jones Family Kitchen Restaurant & Bar 7-8 Eccleston Yards London SW1W 9AZ 020 3929 6000 www.jonesfamilykitchen.co.uk

MAISON GIGI EVENT CATERING

Every great event deserves a great spread—allow us to make it deliciously perfect! Whether it's a special event, team breakfast, lunch buffet or a canapé reception, we're here to help organise the perfect event for you. Available for both pick-up and delivery in the Victoria area. To place an order, email us at bonjour@maisongigi.co.uk.

Open Monday to Friday 7am to 5pm 143 Victoria Street, London, SW1E 5NH bonjour@maisongigi.co.uk







COMMON BREADS

Discover Common Breads - a Lebanese bakery on Buckingham Palace Road open for breakfast, lunch and everything in between.

Alongside signature made-to-order bakes - manouche flatbreads and filled ka'ak breads - the bakery serves vibrant Middle Eastern salads, savoury snacks and sweet treats. Pop in for breakfast and order the Smoked Salmon & Capers Salsa Ka'ak, get a Za'atar & Cheese Manouche to go for lunch, or stop by for coffee and a Chocolate & Tahini Brownie in the afternoon.

This autumn, enjoy a 10% discount in-store before Friday 31 October; simply quote VICTORIA MAGAZINE at the till before ordering.

110 Buckingham Palace Road, London SW1W 9SA commonbreads.com Instagram @commonbreads



EXPERIENCE A ROYAL AFTERNOON TEA WITH FIONA CAIRNS AT THE ORCHARD ROOM

This season, our signature InfiniTEA experience is elevated through a special collaboration with acclaimed cake designer Fiona Cairns, celebrated for her exquisite, hand-crafted creations and her long-standing connection to the Royal Family. Set against the refined backdrop of the Orchard Room and served on Royal Warrant holder Wedgwood's Wild Strawberry fine bone china, this regal afternoon tea includes an intricately designed pâtisserie infused with Fiona's signature style and seasonal flair. Fit for royalty, available for a limited time only.

Book Now - www.theorchardroom.com The Orchard Room | Conrad London St. James 22-28 Broadway, London SW1H 0BH 0203 301 8080

Nearest stations: St James's Park, Victoria and Westminster





BROWNS BRASSERIE & BAR

Browns Brasserie & Bar offers the best of seasonal British brasserie classics with menus celebrating fresh, quality ingredients, from comforting favourites to lighter dishes. Fresh fish is delivered daily, ensuring our seafood dishes are always exceptional.

Start your day with a leisurely brunch, choosing from a selection of delicious dishes alongside fresh juices and coffees, or for pre-show dining, our specially crafted theatre menu provides perfect two or three course options, served with efficiency so you won't miss a curtain call. Whether you're meeting friends, enjoying a family gathering, or celebrating a special occasion, Browns Victoria is the ideal

2 Cardinal Walk, Greater, London SW1E 5JE 020 7821 1450 https://www.browns-restaurants.co.uk



We have relocated to street-level and been renovated into a bright modern space with outdoor seating overlooking Westminster Abbey at Central Hall Westminster. Your morning starts with us, a barista coffee, and a Hoxton Bakehouse pastry. Our menu offers a satisfying selection with hot lunch mains including freshly made tarts, quiches and sausage rolls, alongside seasonal super salads, enjoyed alone or paired with any main. Grab-and-go artisan sandwiches, boxed salads and smoothies are crafted by our award-winning chefs freshly made on-site with local, seasonal produce.

Open: Monday-Friday 9am-4pm Saturday-Sunday 10am-4pm Follow @wesleyscafeldn Central Hall Westminster, Storey's Gate, London SW1H 9NH 020 7654 3822 https://www.c-h-w.com/wesleys-cafe/





FOOD & DRINK

Mezzogiorno

This autumn, acclaimed chef Francesco Mazzei will launch a restaurant at the Corinthia. One of Italy's most renowned chefs, he mastered the art of Italian cakes and gelato in his uncle's gelateria aged nine and took on his first chef role at the age of 14. In the decades since, he has worked across Europe, the United States and the Middle East in five-star hotels and Michelin-starred restaurants and is known for championing cuisine from the Calabria region in south-west Italy where he was born ('nduja, the soft and spicy sausage, is a key ingredient of his cooking). Mezzogiorno will be located within the five-star Whitehall Place hotel in what was previously The Northall and is due to open in mid November after an extensive renovation.

From Michelin-starred dining to renowned chefs with a profile to match, we round up some of the best local restaurants when a slice of pizza just won't cut it

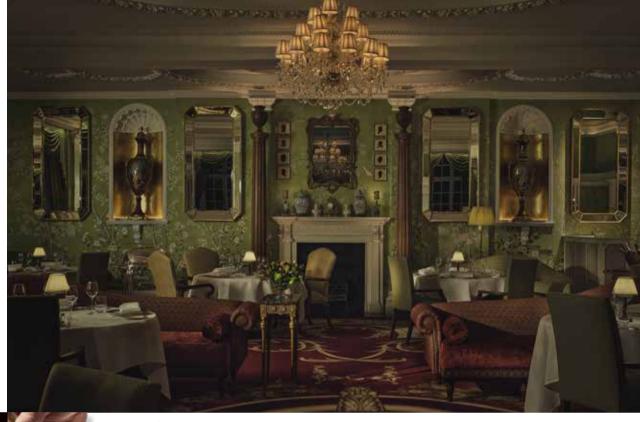
BY IONATHAN WHILEY

WINE AND DINE



Locatelli

One of the world's most respected Italian chefs, Giorgio Locatelli, has opened a restaurant at the National Gallery. Locatelli is operated in partnership with Searcys, one of Britain's longest established hospitality groups. It's the next chapter for the veteran chef after the closure of his Michelinstarred restaurant Locanda Locatelli in Marylebone last year. The National Gallery restaurant, on the Sainsbury wing's mezzanine level, seats 80 diners and has a menu of seasonal classics and Locatelli's signatures – think pasta dishes such as braised veal tortelloni with parmesan sauce and mains including pot roast chicken with olives and polenta. On the ground floor is Bar Giorgio, an espresso bar serving sweet and savoury pastries.



The Dining Room

Awarded a Michelin star in 2016 – an accolade it holds to this day – The Goring's restaurant is a den of decadence, with a menu that features the finest lobster, caviar and champagne. Since its grand opening in 1910, The Dining Room, with its crisp white tablecloths, has become known for a seasonal menu that combines contemporary fine dining with a touch of theatrical flair (think tableside beef wellington and rum baba). Head chef Graham Squire serves up classics such as the ever-popular eggs drumkilbo (hardboiled eggs with lobster and prawns – the Queen Mother's favourite), native lobster omelette and dry-aged Aylesbury duck. Fresh from a refurbishment and new design – only the second in its history – the Beeston Place address remains a sleek spot to dress up and celebrate in style.

Cornus

Located on a rooftop in Eccleston Yards (27 Eccleston Place), Cornus received a Michelin star less than a year after opening. It's the second restaurant from David O'Connor and Joe Mercer Nairne (of acclaimed Chelsea restaurant Medlar), with chef Gary Foulkes serving a regularly changing menu. The simply-decorated restaurant showcases a bounty of British seasonal produce, with an emphasis on seafood from the southwest coast. The Michelin Guide praises its "wonderful fusion of setting and cooking", adding: "The likes of sweet Devon crab and beautiful Newlyn cod are made all the more delicious by the kitchen's restrained approach and consummate technical skill.



GE: IAN WALTON

Admiralty Arch

Two of the world's leading chefs, Clare Smyth and Daniel Boulud, have been announced as official "chef partners" at Waldorf Astoria London Admiralty Arch. The chefs, who together hold seven Michelin stars, will each oversee one of the hotel's signature restaurants when it opens next year. Waldorf Astoria was announced as the operator in 2017, with the Grade I-listed building undergoing a transformation into a 100-bedroom luxury hotel that stands at the other end of the Mall to Buckingham Palace. Smyth is the first and only female chef to be awarded three Michelin stars for her restaurant, Core by Clare Smyth, in Notting Hill. Veteran French chef Boulud has a string of restaurants across the world, including his Michelin-star flagship in New York.



A WONG

Chef Andrew Wong's two-Michelin-star restaurant on Wilton Road celebrates the best of China's provinces, with exceptional dim sum

of China tasting menu with 30 dishes and 100 ingredients. Bool far in advance in south-west coastal Indian cuisine, this Michelin-star restaurant is located within the Taj 51 Buckingham Gate hotel. Head chef Sriram Aylur focuses on the Malahar coast: a

on the Malabar coast; a seafood tasting menu is available alongside a contemporary à la carte menu and TOZI

on Gillingham Street, this ever-reliable Italian is run by head chef Maurilio Molteni. Inspired by the osterias of Venice, cicchetti is at the hear of a menu that also includes slow-cooked lamb shoulder and pasta dishes such as the much-loved buffalo ricotta ravioli with black truffle. Actor Bill Nighy is said





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CHOPSTIX NOODLE BAR

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Chopstix Noodle Bar
Victoria Place Shopping Centre,
115 Buckingham Palace Rd, London SW1W 9SJ
Opening times: 11am – 10pm
www.chopstixnoodles.co.uk/stores/london-victoria







Bear necessities

Jellycat's most popular teddy bear, Bartholomew Bear, is now available in pouch form, £30, and is ideal for storing all your stationery.

Scribbler, 125 Victoria Street

What a hoot

The Purple Owl backpack stationery set, £16, includes a pen, rubbers, stickers and notebook – in other words, everything you need for school.

Claire's, Victoria Place,
115 Buckingham Palace Road



To celebrate Lush's
30th birthday this year, new
body sprays, £32, have launched.
They include viral scent Super Milk
and the bestselling Karma, which has
been around since Lush began in 1995.
Victoria Place,
115 Buckingham Palace Road

On the pulse

Restore inner balance with a pulse-point aromatherapy blend from Neal's Yard. The Women's Balance, £15, from the Remedies to Roll range, is said to ease stress and support wellbeing. Unit 47, Victoria Station





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0207 821 1020

http://www.moretonplace.co.uk/









THE BIG SPARK

A fundraising event at the Natural History Museum aims to unite the spark in one million young minds

BY SELMA DAY

Mayfair residents Avnish and Anita Goyal are hosting — through the Goyal Foundation — a fundraising event on November 19 to raise money for the foundation's Inner Spark initiative. The foundation's aim is to make a big and lasting difference for disadvantaged communities in the UK and overseas by providing financial and human resources. The Inner Spark programme provides free personal development workshops that help young people "ignite their spark".

The Big Spark event, which will take place at the Natural History Museum, will be an evening of "purpose, power and possibility". It will bring together 160 high-net-worth individuals, purposeled businesses and change makers – all united by a shared commitment to young

people's futures. The evening will include fine dining, inspiring stories, vibrant entertainment and meaningful networking.

The foundation's Inner Spark workshops are designed to help attendees develop self-awareness, purpose, accountability, resilience and kindness – the core mindset skills that young people need to navigate life's challenges, seize opportunities and shape their futures.

Together, these skills boost academic achievement, increase career readiness and support wellbeing, in addition to building students' confidence, character and clarity about their future – thereby helping them to

thrive now and into adulthood.

Since the launch of Inner Spark in 2021, the scheme has helped 206,530 students, with 86 per cent giving their workshop a top rating; 79 per cent saying it had increased their confidence and self-belief; and 83 per cent adding it had given them a more positive outlook about opportunities and future plans. The goal is to ignite one million minds by 2030.

The goal is to ignite the level of engagement

and enthusiasm from students. Inner Spark workshops are something truly special."

TESTIMONIALS

The Inner Spark workshop made me feel lik I had a voice. For the first time, I believed in myself."

"We've had lots of talks and workshops in school but the Inner Spark workshop was one of the best. You could just tell he was so passionate and genuinely cared – absolutely spot on!" Table packages start from £10,000 and include a threecourse dinner, drinks and entertainment. Half table packages are also available at £5,000, while the Platinum package costs £15,000.

If you can't attend, you can still be part of the impact by donating an auction item or making a direct contribution. Every pound raised funds the delivery of Inner Spark workshops, and all core event and charity costs are covered by the Goyal Foundation.

For more information, contact Roxy.potts@hgf.org.uk or call 07388 815 335 Visit wkf.ms/41JyADj COMMUNITY NEIGHBOURHOOD FORUM







A SQUARE DEAL

As Dolphin Square celebrates a new look, we discover some of the exciting developments coming to the area

BY ALICE CAIRNS

Dolphin Square has a colourful history. Built in 1937, the riverside flats have attracted a veritable who's who of famous residents: former prime minister Harold Wilson, groundbreaking lesbian writer Radclyffe Hall, Princess Anne, actors Peter Finch and Ben Lyon and many more.

The address has also seen its share of scandal, housing not one but two prominent figures from the Profumo affair – Christine Keeler and Mandy Rice-Davies – and serving as a hotbed for espionage during World War Two and the Cold War.

A major restoration project at Dolphin Square is now under

way, with phase one recently completed. The square now boasts 3.5 acres of landscaped gardens, a luxury spa and indoor swimming pool, a co-working space and a cafe and wine bar for residents.

In phases two and three, which are due to be completed by 2028, all 6,000 of the square's windows will



be meticulously refurbished and its historic architectural features will be lovingly restored.

To celebrate the completion of phase one, artist Squidinki has created 10 unique artworks for the foyer, inspired by the history of the building and the lives of some of its more eccentric residents.

Erdal Kacar, managing director of Dolphin Square, said: "Dolphin Square has always been more than just a place to live. It's a vibrant community where people come together. This project is about preserving this sense of community while creating a space where both residents and locals feel proud to belong."

SOME MORE DEVELOPMENTS TO LOOK OUT FOR.

8 EATON LANE

This beautiful Grade II-listed building with views over Grosvenor Gardens is being transformed into 42 luxury residences, complete with a poogym and private cinema room. There will also be seven units for retail and leisure, so keep your eyes peeled.

I VICTORIA STREET

Plans are under way to create a sustainable building at 1 Victoria Street using low-carbor construction techniques. The space will be used for offices, with retail on the ground floor. In keeping with the theme of sustainability, there will also be extensive new cycle parking and terraces for urban greening.

PORTLAND HOUSE

This 29-storey brutalist tower is being refurbished and will soon boast a double-height lobby, new floor-to-ceiling windows throughout and a roof garden.

As the Victoria Neighbourhood Plan heads to referendum, what happens next?

BY GLENN MURPHY

As vice-chair of the Victoria Neighbourhood Forum and chair of the planning sub-committee. I am delighted to share that the Victoria Neighbourhood Plan has successfully passed independent examination – a major milestone for the Victoria business and residential community. Consultations with local businesses and residents have taken place over the last three years to get to this stage. Whether they contributed ideas, responded to consultations or supported the plan's development, everyone deserves a big thank you.

The neighbourhood plan sets out a community-led vision for how Victoria should grow and change over the coming years. It includes policies on important local issues such as housing, green spaces, the local economy, transport and heritage. Once adopted, the plan will help shape planning decisions and ensure that development reflects the priorities of those who live and work here.

The plan now moves into its final stage: two public referendums, one for residents and one for businesses. This is your opportunity to decide whether the neighbourhood plan should be formally adopted by the local authority and become part of the statutory planning framework for Victoria. Westminster City Council will be contacting you soon to ensure you register.

When will the referendum take place?

The referendum is expected to be held in early November at polling stations and by proxy voting, but full details will be confirmed shortly by the council. Every registered voter and business rate payer (one vote per business) within the Victoria Neighbourhood Area will be eligible to vote.

What are you voting on?

You will be asked a straightforward question along the lines of: do you want Westminster City Council to use the neighbourhood plan for Victoria to help it decide planning applications in the neighbourhood area? A majority "yes" vote (more than 50%) from both businesses and residents is needed for the plan to be adopted.

Why is this important?

Neighbourhood plans carry real legal weight. Once adopted, the policies within the plan must be considered by the council when making planning decisions. This gives our community a stronger voice in how our neighbourhood evolves – whether it's influencing new development, protecting local character or prioritising improvements that matter most to residents and workers. It will also increase the amount of neighbourhood community infrastructure levy raised from developments in the local area - which is to be spent in the area - from 15% to 25% on local projects.

How can I find out more?

Ahead of the referendum, an information leaflet will be delivered to local households and businesses. The full plan, supporting documents and details about the referendum will be available on the council's website and on the Victoria Neighbourhood Forum's website, yourvictoria.co.uk.

This is an important moment for Victoria. Your vote will help decide how we shape the future of our neighbourhood. Let's make it count!

29

It is not often that a stable gets to celebrate its bicentenary. Then again, the Royal Mews - the international standard bearer in that rarefied metric of pomp and pageantry – has never been anything remotely equating to your usual equine home.

As the royal household department that provides road transport for the monarch and his family, the Royal Mews now happily welcomes hundreds of thousands of visitors every year to peep behind the blinkers.

The mews moved to Buckingham Palace in 1825, relocated by then monarch George IV from the Charing Cross site it had occupied since King Richard II was on the throne. (That site is now home to the National Gallery – also celebrating its bicentenary this year.)

Mews, also known as hawk houses, derives from the French verb "muer" (to moult). Royal hunting hawks and falcons were kept aside when shedding feathers because

they couldn't be used on the gauntlet. When the Charing Cross mews' purpose changed to housing horses, the name had already stuck, and has done for more than 600 years.

King George IV, a noted bon viveur who also appreciated architecture, commissioned celebrated architect John Nash to design the new mews at Buckingham Palace - his most celebrated stately pile. The resulting construction, suitably elegant and vast, was designed to cater for 100 horses and has since housed the trustiest steeds in the Household



HISTORY

to the Royal Mews

BY CORRIE BOND-FRENCH

Happy 200th birthday



Cavalry: the most recognisable coaches in the world and now, the pristine fleet of royal cars.

The star carriage is the gold state coach. Built in 1762 and weighing in at nearly four tonnes, it is reportedly about as comfortable to ride in as a hip bath strapped to a tractor. Queen Victoria loathed it, noting that "it was like being seasick on land" in her diary. It requires eight of the calmest and strongest horses

to draw it and has been used at every coronation since George IV's in 1821. For Queen Elizabeth II's coronation in 1953, mews staff strapped hot water bottles to the seat to help counter the discomfort and inclement weather. Yet its gilded beauty is held in high, sentimental esteem – few will forget the clever hologram of the young, newly crowned queen deployed in the procession for the platinum jubilee.

The diamond jubilee state coach is far more comfortable, even if it is weighted down with items from important events in British history: a musket ball from the Battle of Waterloo here, a piece of a Battle of Britain spitfire there. Thankfully for its passengers, though, the modern construct of suspension has been factored in.

Ouirkier modes of transport alongside the Daimlers include the royal sleigh and Queen Victoria's donkey

barouche, but all transportation is looked after by a community of coachmen, mechanics, grooms, farriers, stable hands and their families, many of whom live within the mews in what is part military barracks and part fairytale. It is intergenerational, with new staff often following in their families' footsteps. Queen Victoria set up a mews school for staff children and today there's a nursery, a riding arena and an inimitable atmosphere. Elizabeth II once referred to it as "a small village which belongs to Buckingham Palace".

The squawks of hawks may have been replaced with the hum of engines, but the clattering of hooves - such music to the late queen's ears - is another matter entirely. The mews is still home to more than 70 horses, many of whom Elizabeth II named

individually by character.

The training of a carriage horse is a delicate ballet. It takes about two years before a horse is deemed fit for full ceremonial duty. They learn to ignore screaming crowds, bagpipes, motorbikes and the disquieting rattle of a coach the size of a bungalow. They practise with fake parades, fake bands, even fake flags. Essentially, they are the equine understudies to monarchy's grandest performances, assisted in their efforts by the entire mews community. In the entertainment industry they

say never work with children or animals,

"The gold state coach

is reportedly about as

comfortable to ride in as a

hip bath strapped to

a tractor

but this doesn't and couldn't apply to state occasions. Stories abound about impromptu carriage repairs with duct tape, horses who relieve themselves inappropriately and in volume, and other mishaps.

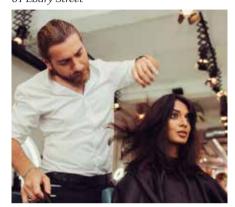
Horses, like people, have personalities. Some are more skittish, some more regal and dependable, relied upon for their calming presence. One such Windsor grey, Tyrone, reputedly a firm favourite of Elizabeth II, has recently retired, finally hanging up his harness after pulling royal carriages for more than 20 years. He has joined his father and sister, also former mews stablemates, in well-earned pasture.

The show must go on; hence the Royal Mews reaches its bicentenary with quiet continuity. The same brass buckles are polished. The same leather reins are coiled just so. The horses, the coaches, the people; they are the gears in one of the oldest machines still running. To understand the Royal Mews is to understand the subtle mechanics of monarchy and the splendour of ceremony. There are few machines as well-oiled as this.

30 31

Adem

Relax on the new crystal-infused heated mats while having your hair washed as part of a mind, body and soul nourishing experience at Adem. Before that, your hair will be analysed using SalonLab 2.0 technology to measure the breakage to natural bonds inside the hair, as well as the impact of newly created bonds from using hair-care products. Enjoy a cup of homemade signature tea with chilli, lemon and honey while you're there. 61 Ebury Street



A round-up of the best fitness classes and beauty treatments to try now

> BY SOPHIA CHARALAMBOUS

Sentiré Pilates Pilates just got an exciting upgrade with this new fitness studio that offers a truly boutique approach. There is a maximum of four people per 45-minute class, ensuring that clients enjoy a detail-

focused and personal

experience. There are

also private sessions to improve your body and mind long term.

23 Eccleston Place

Any one of these latest nail art designs from Townhouse's Ocean Alchemy collection will keep the summer lasting into the final days of September. Pearls, chrome and delicate florals alcounts delicate florals elevate the humble manicure into eye-catching reminders of the beauty of the ocean. 129 Victoria Street Thérapie Victoria The next step on from the polynucleotide happened over this year is polynucleotides hair. Using injectables, this treatment, from £245, is designed to promote hair growth, improve density and strengthen follicles. Typically derived from salmon or trout, the proteins bond with your water molecules for cellular repair of the scalp, helping hair to grow from the root. 147 Victoria Street

Townhouse

Any one of these latest

Tine Hagelquist

A much-welcomed addition to the area, think of Tine Hagelquist's facials as a workout for the face. Luxurious creams and oils are applied before Tine performs her signature 90-minute facial, which involves lymphatic drainage, Tine's memorable facial massage, gua sha or cupping and LED, all tailored to individual skin needs. It actually changes the shape of the face. 101 Ebury Street and



Barry's Bootcamp

BEST IN BEAUT

Award-winning protein brand Hermosa is collaborating with chef Miller Prada, who won a Michelin star during his time at Humo in Mayfair, to create the limited-edition Miller Prada shake. Made with vanilla Hermosa protein, almond milk and guanabana on saffron foam with a spirulina swirl, this is the one to get your goodness in after training. It is available from mid-September for one month. 16 Eccleston Place



Why Victoria?

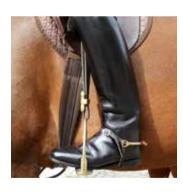
Both my grandfather and my dad were cobblers. At one time my dad, Roy Rogers, ran 11 cobblers' shops across London. I took on the business close to Victoria Station and was there for 21 years before setting up a pick-up and drop-off service covering the area but based in Westminster, where I've been for around four years. I love this area and my customers.

How did it feel to receive a royal warrant?

My customers include many well-known faces and I'm honoured to hold a royal warrant as cobbler, dry cleaner and leather restorer to

Royal warrant holder Jackie Rogers of JR's Shoe Repairs is a third-generation cobbler who worked from a shop on Victoria Street for 21 years before setting up a mobile service in the area

BY SUE BRADLEY



King Charles III. I've been repairing livery boots for the past 18 years and oversee the dry cleaning of uniforms.

I would say that more people are getting their shoes fixed because they're more conscious of the need to be sustainable, and when people pay hundreds of pounds for shoes they want them to last. I think King

Charles has done a lot to promote sustainability and a culture of repairing items rather than throwing them away.

What's a typical day like?

My working days are very varied. I'm asked to fix protective rubber soles to leather shoes a lot: these soles are wafer-thin but provide more grip than leather, which can get slippery when it's wet. I repair a lot of designer handbags that have become scuffed and enjoy mixing dyes to achieve a precise match.

Favourite place... ... for a cocktail?

I love going to Chez Antoinette [22 Palmer Street] to eat and for cocktails. The sharing platter of meats, cheese, pickles and bread is always a winner and they cook

everything from fresh. It's just a nice vibe there.

... for a celebratory dinner?

I've had a really good meal at Noble Palace [Brewer's Green] in St James's Park, a fine-dining Chinese restaurant with a great choice of delicious dishes.

... to have fun?

If we're out celebrating then I like the Flight Club in Victoria [6 Sir Simon Milton Square]. You climb

a helter-skelter staircase to get there. The bar is a showstopper and there are 18 areas for playing darts. Your photo comes up when it's your turn to play. It's a great place to go and have fun with friends.

jrsshoerepairs.com 43 Horseferry Road



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