SECURITY chiefs gathering in Kensington next week will be warned that the royal borough and the rest of the city is now at risk from terrorist drone attacks. Delegates at the Security and Counter Terror Expo at Olympia will hear that it is “only a matter of time before terrorists arm drones” to launch attacks, including use of chemical weapons, at targets with large crowds, such as Chelsea FC’s Stamford Bridge ground, the Notting Hill Carnival, Heathrow Airport and Olympia itself.

One security expert is warning that drones could be used to “inflict the highest level of terrorism”.

BY GEOFF BAKER
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THE two lead challengers in the battle to be Mayor of London have both called on the city’s one million Muslims to do more in the fight against Islamist extremism.

Tory candidate Zac Goldsmith is warning of a further rise in hate crimes that could “shatter” the peace of the city unless more work is done to separate the views of ordinary Muslims from extremists.

And Labour candidate Sadiq Khan is calling on mainstream Muslims to “speak out more loudly” against the threat of the “poisonous ideology” of radicalised Islamists.

As the latest figures from the Met have revealed that the number of all racist and religious hate crimes is now running at the
Schoolchildren to get a helping hand

THIS month will see the start of an innovative new scheme aimed at supporting vulnerable schoolchildren as they move from primary to secondary education.

The initiative, which is called Stepping Stones, is a schools-based programme which will involve older children as well as adults mentoring younger pupils as they begin life at secondary school.

Funded by the mayor, Stepping Stones will see Gladesmore Community School in Tottenham and youth-focused social action group Gangs Unite working with three secondary schools and their main feeder primary schools.

Gladesmore is an outstanding school with considerable experience of partnership working with schools across London, and Gangs Unite has a track record of working with disadvantaged and disadvantaged young people in both school-based and out of school settings.

Mayor of London Boris Johnson said: “Some pupils find the transition from primary to secondary school difficult, which can lead to a dip in attainment and also result in them experiencing ongoing education or behavioural problems. This can result in poor outcomes later on, affecting not just their confidence and self-esteem, but how well they do at GCSEs and their ability to get a job or into higher education.

“Stepping Stones is going to make a huge, positive difference to young Londoners at a critical period in their lives and I hope it will act as a template for other programmes for other children across the capital.”

Stepping Stones is expected to benefit up to 200 London schoolchildren and will involve the training of year nine and 10 pupils, who will subsequently act as peer-mentors to younger children as they move from primary (year six) to secondary school (year seven).

A range of activities includes peer-to-peer and adult mentoring, summer activities, academic tutoring and skills and confidence building workshops.

Ray Lewis, senior advisor mentoring, said: “With this programme our aim is to set up structures that will support youngsters at what can be a very tricky time. One of the key elements of the programme is the peer to peer mentoring, giving older children a degree of valuable responsibility, which will benefit them, but also create role models for the younger ones.”

Commenting on the partnership between Gangs Unite and Gladesmore Community School, headteacher Tony Hartney said: “We are delighted to be working together to design and implement the Stepping Stones programme.

“We have found that adjusting to secondary school can be challenging for many pupils who don’t have the skills to successfully cope with this crucial change. As a result, some young people encounter problems with learning and adopting an attitude that supports learning.

“Stepping Stones will utilise the immense power of peer mentoring, together with taught sessions designed to inspire pupils, with the aim of steering vulnerable pupils to have a positive engagement in their learning. We look forward to seeing a transformational impact on children’s life chances.”

The Stepping Stones programme begins this month and is due to finish at the end of the summer term in 2017. Outcomes and learnings from the programme will be used in the development of a toolkit, which will be made available to primary and secondary schools in the capital, aimed at showing how to effectively support the transition from primary to secondary for vulnerable pupils.

The mayor supports a number of initiatives aimed at raising standards in teaching and attainment. This includes securing sites for 16 new schools, establishing the £24 million London Schools Excellence Fund, which has stimulated new partnerships and helped improve teachers’ subject knowledge and expertise; setting up a schools unit to help groups wanting to set up free schools; the Gold Club scheme, which has celebrated over 240 exceptional schools in London with pupils from all backgrounds achieving academic success; and creating the London School Atlas, an interactive online map providing a uniquely detailed and comprehensive picture of London schools, current patterns of attendance and potential future demand for school places.
Mr Khan has promised a wide-reaching programme to combat Islamist radicalisation across the city.

“"I will push the Government to work with the internet providers to take down the extremist websites that are poisoning young minds. Twitter has made a good start by taking down thousands of Daesh twitter accounts – but we need action across the board,”” he said. “Mr Goldsmith has had to consider police protection for his family, said that he sees a continued rise in things like Daesh twitter accounts – but we need action across the board.”

Mr Goldsmith has warned of the threat of a surge of Islamophobia. "Mr Goldsmith has warned of the threat of a surge of Islamophobia. The reason that religion is gaining such a bad press is because a number of people have been totally distorted and perverted one of the great religions,” he told Chirton Today. “We need to do more to create a clear separation between those people who are distorting Islam and the overwhelming majority of Muslims for whom the distortion is just not a reflection of reality at all. I think that distinction needs to be made much clearer than it is.”

He added: “If we don’t create that distinction you are going to see a continued rise in things like Islamophobia, and that is the last thing we want in a diverse city like London. We are also broadly speaking a very harmonious city. But you can’t take it for granted, that could be shattered very easily.”

London authorities and faith leaders are concerned about the rise in hate crimes against Muslims in recent years following the increase in attacks around the world by ISIS terrorists. In 2013 the Met recorded 557 Islamophobic hate crimes, but by last year the number of incidents had rocketed to around 900 annually. New statistics from the police reveal that London is becoming increasingly intolerant of different faiths and ethnicities. In February police recorded 1,034 incidents of racist and religious hate crimes across the city, a rise of 11.5 per cent on the same month last year.

Sadiq Khan, who has had death threats from Islamist extremists because of his stand against radicalisation and who has had to consider police protection for his family, said that he wants ordinary Muslims to join his fight against those attempting to poison minds by spreading hatred.

“As a British Muslim, I will always support and encourage the majority of mainstream British Muslims to speak out and challenge the extremists,” said Mr Khan. “This is so, so important – we need mainstream British Muslim voices to speak out loudly and clearly. Not because they are more responsible for extremism than anyone else, but because they can be most effective at challenging the poisonous ideology.”

Like Mr Goldsmith, he agreed that the “number one priority” for the new mayor is to make London safe from terrorists.

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Spaces will be of benefit to all

Westway Trust chief executive Angela McConville shares what the team at the Trust have been hearing during a local consultation

I MENTIONED a few weeks ago that the team at Westway Trust would shortly be undertaking a comprehensive programme of door-to-door consultation in the area around the Westway.

This concerns the project which has had the working name of ‘Portobello Village’ and involves the part of the Westway Trust estate which sits either side of Portobello Road. That work is now well under way and we’ve delivered information about the scheme to over 1,500 homes, knocked on over 600 doors and spoken to over 100 people.

The response has been overwhelmingly positive. Almost universally, people have shown their passionate support for the vintage market and are glad to hear that we’re listening to their calls from traders and local retailers to support their livelihoods. People support the proposals to create better facilities for the traders and their customers, as well as to increase the viability of the shops to help maintain the existing culture of creative entrepreneurship. Residents have also been interested to hear about how we think the development can support the local economy and enterprise through representations and spaces for start-up businesses.

People are keen for us to open them up and show them a friendlier, more welcoming space that people will want to spend more time in.

The greatest interest has been saved for the significant new arts, cultural and community spaces we’re proposing. Fully sound-proofed and flexible, there is real enthusiasm for us to make these spaces both multi-cultural and multi-purpose. One resident said they would love to see an area where people of all ages and backgrounds could come together to celebrate, some have talked about wanting to see a counter to the declining performance spaces in London, others have talked about the need for providing ‘maker spaces’ for creative people. Above all, people want spaces such as these to thrive, and contribute to the local economic vitality of the area, which being of great benefit to those who live and work locally and I’m confident that the development promised by us will cater to all those needs.

There are some people who remain sceptical but even they agree with us on many of the principles of the proposals. Residents are keen to see affordable housing on the site and we are evaluating the viability of that as we speak.

We’ve been able to dispel some myths about the project too. We’ve reassured people that there will be no great homogenous shopping centre here, that the new spaces will be specifically designed to be attractive to small independent traders, that the vintage market won’t be moved or reduced in size, and that we won’t be inviting supermarkets or high street chains in. Westway Trust is a charity that was formed for the benefit of the residents of the Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea and therefore we’ve made clearer than ever that our focus is on north Kensington. Any work we do will be an investment in the community to support our charitable aims.

Finally, inevitably as we’ve gone door-to-door people have raised all manner of other issues with us from noise, to drug dealing outside their homes, to pollution from the Westway. We take our role in the wider community very seriously and we’ve made a record of everything that people have spoken to us about. While there are limits to what we can do directly about some of these issues I will be raising them in meetings with the relevant authorities.

The opportunity to speak to so many of our neighbours in such a short space of time has been incredibly insightful for the team and it will improve all our work, not just the Portobello scheme, so we plan to make it a more regular occurrence. If we haven’t managed to speak to you recently and you have something you’d like to raise, please don’t wait, we’d love to hear from you.

Praise for work to help children

The Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea’s children’s services are amongst the very best in the country, according to Ofsted, which inspected the department in January.

In the report, published on March 29, inspectors looked at all areas of the service, giving four out of five the highest possible grade, which is ‘outstanding’.

The inspectors said: “Services for children and young people in Kensington and Chelsea are outstanding because they are resourced, planned and delivered by an exceptional workforce.”

The report also praises the ‘unfailing management of positive Ofsted assessment of their work’

We’ve had some spirit-lifting news this week. The Ofsted inspectors have said that the borough and Chelsea’s children’s services are the very best in the country following their rigorous inspection of the department in January.

Now I mention Ofsted to my friends they tend, not unreasonably, to associate with all things to do with slovenliness. This is hardly surprising given the attention paid by politicians, parents and the media to reports about how individual schools are performing.

But Ofsted also shines a light on services that are not always as visible as schools but equally important, in fact often vital, to how many children are being safely looked after.

As the inspector said: “This report recognises the incredible hard work and commitment that provides the best outcomes to children and young people in often very challenging conditions.

“We want the best opportunities for all children in the borough and while this report clearly demonstrates we are doing a lot of things very well, we believe there is always room for improvement and will therefore be looking very hard to make sure our children get the very best start in life.”

New exercise courses begin

A SERIES of new low-cost exercise courses including yoga, swimming and dance start this week to encourage residents to get active.

For residents who want to improve their swimming, weekly Swimsanity sessions will start at Kensal Home Leisure Centre on Tuesday, April 5, from 6.30pm to 7.30pm. The £2.10, will provide a high intensity workout with an emphasis on stroke techniques – designed to help people improve their swimming ability.

Weekly Mind & Body Yoga classes will start at North Kensington Court Health and Wellbeing Centre from 9.45am to 11.15am, April 6. The sessions, which cost £1.50, run from 9.30am to 10.30am and focus on stretching and breathing.

For those that enjoy music, a weekly healthy walking and Move & Glow will run at the Venture Centre, from 10am to 11am, April 12.

The classes cost £2 and run from 6pm to 7pm, with participants dancing in the dark waving glow sticks to shake out anxieties.

The courses are open to all residents aged over 18 years.
Chilling warning against terror drones

BY GEOFF BAKER
geof@londonweeklynews.co.uk

Experts say that new drones can carry payloads in excess of 7kg. If armed, and so turned into an improvised explosive device, drones could cause significant damage; the security conference will be warned by Steve Maton, of the Information Systems Security Association UK, who says that drones of all types – Unmanned Aerial Vehicles (UAVs), Unmanned Ground Vehicles (UGVs) and even underwater Unmanned Marine Vehicles (UMVs) – are now available to ISIS terrorists.

"ISIS have the capability to bypass ground level protection. Some drones come with a gun. Fleeing crowds could be directed to additional danger, such as planted ground explosives. This shows ways of using new technology to perform old and familiar terrorist herding tactics."

Mr Maton warned that offices – such as Kensington and Chelsea Town Hall – are also at risk of attack by terror drones, as are planes at Heathrow Airport and Olympia itself.

"UAVs have the capability to bypass ground level protection. Such drones could be used to attack humanitarian organisations and UN workers. They could be directed to targets in the vicinity."

Mr Maton claims that security organisations are not aware of the drones’ capability and are not preparing for the threat of a drone attack on the capital.

"Security organisations are aware of the drones’ capability and are preparing for the threat of a drone attack on the capital. But Mr Maton claims that security services are preparing for the threat of a drone attack on the capital."

"Power stations could be infiltrated as a UAV can hover over ground defences and be directed to vulnerable machinery. What effect would an explosion cause to a full plane fuel tank? Imagine a solar windtunnel, air space, be this military or domestic. An aircraft wouldn’t have the capability to react to one or even numerous drones that move quickly into its landing flightpath. They may initially not even see such small objects."

Even Thames-side buildings – such as the House of Commons – are not secure against drones that can now travel underwater, cautions Mr Maton.

"UAVs can be equipped with cameras, which can be used to target areas below the water’s surface and are harder to visually detect. Any drone can be used as a weapon that can be purchased and assembled cheaply with no suspicion; through widespread domestic or professional sites. It is light-weight, easy to transport and relatively easy to hide and deploy. Some drones come with simulation software allowing for self-learning; so preventing the need to involve external trainers. With recent advances, multi-roto UAVs are now straightforward to fly and can be flown at significant distances so preventing the controller having to be directly at the scene."

But Mr Maton claims that security services are preparing for the threat of a drone attack on the capital.
Car fines a golden blunder

THE owner of a fleet of gold super cars has been landed with hundreds of pounds in parking fines.

A gold Lamborghini Aventador, Rolls Royce, Mercedes G63 6x6 and Bentley Flying Spur caused a stir even in the swanky Knightsbridge area they were parked in, with dozens of people stopping to take photos of the ostentatious-looking vehicles on their mobile phones.

The vehicles had two separate penalty notices for Tuesday and Wednesday slipped under its wiper blade, while the Mercedes and Bentley each had one.

The fines of £80 each, which can be reduced to £40 if they are paid within 14 days, mean that the owner, who is reportedly from Saudi Arabia, owes the Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea as much as £320.

The vehicles could even be removed and fines increased if the charges go unpaid.

The vehicles were parked in Cadogan Place, outside the Jumeriah Carlton Tower Hotel, in Knightsbridge – just yards away from an NFC car park.

Costing £50 for 24 hours, the car park housed non-gold Bentleys, Audis and a Ferrari last Wednesday.

City Hall turns focus on childcare as families feel pressure of life in capital

BY LYN REPORTER

THERE are more than a million families with children living in London – but it is feared many don’t have the support they need to thrive and make the most of the opportunities the capital has to offer them.

A range of support is available to disadvantaged families to help them make ends meet, including:

Healthy Start food vouchers
- 15 hours a week funded nursery places for two year olds from disadvantaged families
- 15 hours a week of free childcare in term time for three and four year olds
- Free school meals
- Local Assistance Fund to help with unexpected or one-off expenditures
But many families who are entitled to this support do not take it up.

Family life has changed dramatically over the last 30 years, and London’s families face new challenges and opportunities.

City Hall’s social policy team say they want to develop their understanding of the challenges facing families in London today, and how families in need can best be supported.

Now, the Institute for Public Policy Research, a progressive think tank, and the Greater London Authority have launched a joint project on the future of childcare in the capital.

They are asking: if you’re a parent or grandparent, what is your experience of childcare in London? Is there enough affordable, good quality childcare in your area? What do you think prevents families from accessing the support that is available?

One respondent to the survey, Ella Rees, said: “We are lucky, and ‘disadvantaged’ is a relative term, but when it comes to the work, childcare and housing balance our family is at enough of a disadvantage to make us want to leave London.”

“My husband works for the police, and I work for a theatre – both things London claims to want to have. So the problems are:

1 – by the ridiculous housing market (we rent at £1,000 per month with no hope of saving or getting a mortgage);
2 – by not having local grandparents to give us free childcare;
3 – inflexible childcare – we have to stick to and pay for the same nursery days for my two year old regardless of my husband’s changing shift pattern and availability to look after her himself, which could save us money. As it is half my salary is taken up paying for two days’ nursery and we scramble to cover the other day. We need thanks to my flexible employer.

Flexible employers are key to making childcare work, and should be applauded. I feel very fortunate to have had maternity leave/pays and now flexible working. We wouldn’t be in London at all by now if it weren’t for that.

As it is, we would struggle less if the nursery would at least let us vary the days. We’d happily give months of notice. Further subsidy from a younger age would help, or at least nurseries run by not-for-profit organisations to reduce the daily cost.

“The other problem is the lack of local schools, or nurseries close to schools – we also have a five year old who did not get into any of our nearby schools, so the logistics of dropping them both off and then getting to work are totally inefficient and are alone enough of a reason to make us leave London if we could find jobs elsewhere.

“We’re actively seeking employment elsewhere in the UK, so we can escape this mess of overpriced housing and inadequate school places that has been allowed to develop.”

To share your views on this initiative, you can visit the dedicated website talklondon.london.gov.uk

Landlord’s gas safety offence

LONDON landlord Duran Akbulut has been handed an eight-week suspended prison sentence for gas safety failings.

Westminster Magistrates’ Court heard how Akbulut failed to have a gas boiler checked for safety by a suitably qualified engineer and to obtain the necessary safety certificate from the Gas Safe Register.

The boiler was in a property that was being let out to a tenant who raised concerns about a carbon monoxide leak and the National Grid switched off the gas supply. The tenant made a complaint to the Health and Safety Executive.

Abulut, of Kingshill Avenue, Kenton, north west London, pleaded guilty to breaching Regulation 46(1) of the Gas Safety (Installation and Use) Regulations 1998 and was given an eight-week prison sentence, suspended for 12 months, was ordered to pay £400 costs and £100 compensation.

HSE inspector, Neil Fry said: “It is the duty of landlords to ensure gas safety checks are carried out to protect tenants from the fatal risk of carbon monoxide poisoning.”

Craft week’s second year

LAST year the first London Craft Week launched, with 70 events, 20,000 visitors and a wide cast including the Prince of Wales, Grayson Perry and 350 makers.

From May 3 to 7 the second edition will showcase the exceptional craftsmanship from around the world through a journey of discovery programme of 129 events across the city, featuring hidden workshops and unknown makers alongside celebrated masters, famous studio galleries, shops and luxury brands.

The aim is to experience the magic of the city and see what real quality means, meet some of the world’s most creative makers and artists and even have a try.

Craft Week chairman Guy Saltewr said: “London has long had a fashion week and a design festival. Now it’s our turn. London Craft Week, a celebration of the magical combination of imagination, individuality, passion and skill found in the best-made things.”

Tube death court ruling

THE family of Jean Charles de Menezes have lost a human rights challenge over the decision not to charge any individual police officer over his death.

Relatives of the Brazilian took their case to the European Court of Human Rights last year – almost a decade after he was mistaken for a suicide bomber and shot dead by police marksmen on a Tube train at Stockwell Underground station in south London on July 22, 2005 – a fortnight after the July 7 terror attacks.

Last Wednesday the Strasbourg court’s Grand Chamber found that UK authorities had not failed in their obligations to conduct an effective investigation into the incident.
Queen salutes gold scholar Jennifer

UNIVERSITY of West London student Jennifer Santer has received the Gold Service Scholarship award 2016.

The prestigious accolade was presented to Jennifer by The Queen, a patron of the award, at a ceremony held at Clarence House last month.

The Gold Service Scholarship is an annual competition for young, front-of-house professionals. Jennifer competed against seven other national finalists in a challenge that consisted of planning, preparing and serving a three-course lunch to a table of four industry experts.

Jennifer will receive a year of mentoring from Diego Masciaga at The Waterside Inn and Salvano Giraldo, Director of Le Gavroche. She will also work with the Royal Household, visit the Mandarin Oriental Hotel Group in Europe, attend the Mondrian Hotel School in the Netherlands and visit the vineyards of Champagne.

She said: “It has been a very exciting start to 2016. Meeting the Queen was a unique experience. I am very happy and proud to be this year’s Gold Scholar and am very much looking forward to this year and all the mentoring and experiences to come.”

Jennifer is the restaurant manager at the Fenchurch Restaurant at London’s Sky Garden. She has completed a foundation degree hospitality management course at the London College of Hospitality and Tourism.

Course leader Ariane Lengyel said: “Jennifer was an excellent student who always showed dedication to her studies at UWL. I am sure she will continue to shine as a star in the exciting world of hospitality.”

Businesses issue growth manifesto to the next mayor

LONDON’S firms want the capital’s next mayor to keep a relentless focus on business growth and ensure the city remains an attractive hub for new investment, creativity, skills and tourism.

That’s the message delivered by the CBI’s London Manifesto aimed at mayoral candidates.

A London Prosperity Agenda sets out the UK’s largest business group’s priorities for the new mayor on housing and transport infrastructure, the planning system, digital and technology skills, trade, tourism and financial services.

Key action points include:

■ A new housing strategy within 100 days of taking office, which commits to building 50,000 homes a year
■ Press the Government to deliver the Airports Commission’s recommendation to build a new runway in the South East, and deliver Transport for London’s business plan, including Crossrail 2
■ Continue to implement the existing 2050 London Infrastructure Plan, and give a stronger voice to businesses on the London Enterprise Partnership
■ Develop London’s ‘Knowledge Edge Quarter’, and support London’s Digital Talent Taskforce to help address future digital skills needs
■ Provide certainty and consistency in UK tax policy to attract financial firms, and call for the Chancellor of the Exchequer to end the Bank Corporation Tax Surcharge by the end of the Parliament, once the Budget is balanced.

Lucy Haynes, CBI London director, said: “London’s star has continued to rise over the past few years. From setting a new standard for hosting the Olympic Games to the emergence of Tech City, the capital has shown the world it is still competitive in the global race, the next mayor has a unique opportunity to plan ahead, and position the city at the head of the pack.

The CBI co-hosted a business hustings with the Institute of Directors, London Chamber of Commerce and Industry, the Federation of Small Businesses and London First for the four main mayoral candidates – Zac Goldsmith MP (Conservative), Sadiq Khan MP (Labour), Caroline Pidgeon MBE (Liberal Democrat) and Dee Searle representing Siân Berry (Green) – at Canada Square last month.

The event was a prime opportunity to brief the mayoral hopefuls on what London’s business community hopes and expects of them.

The City is the world’s most international financial centre, and London makes up over half of all the UK’s services exports. But the gap is narrowing between the capital’s unique position, Hong Kong and Singapore.

Businesses want the next mayor to act as an advocate to ensure the conditions are right for London to continue to be a global financial and professional services hub.

ACTION CALL: Lucy Haynes, CBI London director

the best place to grow, do business and thrive.

“But in an increasingly competitive global race, the next mayor must take some tough decisions from day one for London to continue to grow and prosper, and to keep the city a magnet for investment and skills.”

“From building the 50,000 homes a year the capital needs to house its talented workers, and a new runway that will boost our exports to high growth markets, to making the city a global beacon for digital and technological skills, London’s next leader has a unique opportunity to plan ahead, and position the city at the head of the pack.”

“Businesses want the next mayor to act as an advocate to ensure the conditions are right for London to continue to be a global financial and professional services hub.”

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Camden has a good chortle

ONE of the biggest nights in the comedy calendar was enjoyed by a smattering of celebrities and fans last week when the annual Chortle Awards were held at the Jongleurs club in Camden.

One of the UK’s most influential comedy critic and review sites, Chortle.co.uk hosts the annual get together where the biggest names in comedy and stand-up let their hair down for the evening and celebrate the very best of the nation’s mirth making prowess.

Clive Anderson was this year’s master of ceremonies and he was joined by I'm a Celebrity Get Me Out of Here winner Vicki Pattison, former S Club 7 singer Hannah Spearritt, comedian Omid Djalili and broadcaster Vanessa Felz, who presented the coveted accolades.

The big winners on the night included Peter Kay, who claimed the TV award for Car Share, Radio Four’s Just a Minute, which scooped the Radio Award and Joseph Morpurgo, who won a hat-trick with the Comedian’s Comedian, Best Newcomer and Breakthrough Act gongs.

Pippa Evans picked up the award for best music and variety and then went on to gather another accolade with her co-stars when the improvised musical Showstoppers won the best character, improv, or sketch act category.

The glittering event finished with a bang when veteran entertainers Vic Reeves and Bob Mortimer were given the award for outstanding contribution to comedy.

If you would like to see a full list of nominees and winners, you can visit the website chortle.co.uk

Firm fined after two die in crane collapse

A CRANE hire company has been fined heavily for failings that led to the death of two men as a crane collapsed in London.

Southwark Crown Court heard that crane operator Jonathan Cloke, 37, died after falling from the crane as it collapsed. It fell onto Michael Alexa, 23, a member of the public, who was also killed.

The court heard how sections of the tower crane, which was on a housing development in Thessaly Road, Battersea, separated when 24 bolts failed due to metal fatigue.

The bolts were a significant safety feature on the crane’s slew ring, which connected the mast, or tower, to the slew turret. This allows the arms of the crane jib to rotate through 360 degrees. When the bolts failed the slew turret and jib separated from the mast and fell to the ground.

The Health and Safety Executive investigation into the incident, in September 2006, found that Falcon Crane Hire Ltd did not investigate a similar incident which happened nine weeks before, when the bolts failed on the same crane and had to be replaced.

HSE found that the company had an inadequate system to manage the inspection and maintenance of their fleet of cranes.

Their process to investigate the underlying cause of the components’ failings was also considered to be inadequate. It told the court the particular bolts were a safety-critical part of the crane. The court also heard the bolts failing previously was an exceptional and significant occurrence, which should have been recognised by Falcon Crane Hire.

Lilliana Alexa, Mr Alexa’s mother, said on behalf of her family: “Michael was a lovely son, a wonderful big brother and a devoted father. His son had to grow up without the love and support of Michael, who adored him. He was denied that opportunity because his life was taken away and with his, ours too.”

“The memories of that day will never leave our family. We heard the crash and felt the ground shake. I found Michael and it’s an image that haunts my nightmares.

“If only we had stopped to chat or parked the car somewhere else he would still be alive. We know we are not to blame but it does not stop us all feeling guilt.

“Our beloved son, brother, father and friend who was so full of life has gone.

“The whole crane industry must learn from our tragedy and the devastation it has caused. We do not want another family to endure the same pain of losing their child.”

Mike Wilcock, HSE head of operations, said: “Jonathan and Michael’s deaths were tragic, needless and entirely avoidable. These two men need not have died had Falcon Crane Hire taken the right, decisive action when the bolts failed the first time.

“The company fell far short of its health and safety obligation.”

Falcon Crane Hire Ltd were fined £750,000 and ordered to pay costs of £100,000 for breaching Sections 2 and 3 of the Health and Safety at Work Act.
Multi-cultural champions

BY GEOFF BAKER
goff@londonweeklynews.co.uk

YOUNG and poor west London footballers who could only kick about in the back streets a year ago are proudly celebrating becoming league champions this week – winning a major title with three games in hand.

The under-16s boys team of Kensington-based TUFF FC, the movement formed to protect young people at risk of joining gangs by turning them to football instead, has won the London FA Saturday Youth League.

A year ago the players did not even have a team, let alone kit or a pitch to play on. But after they turned for help to The Unity of Faiths Foundation’s founders Dr Shamender Talwar and Ms Anna Prior, they were found a training ground in Southall and given the chance to practise three times a week, and join the league.

And now they are the champions of London – and next month they will travel to Belgium to meet EU leaders and play a key Football For Unity match against a local side from Molenbeek.

European leaders are organising the game as a high-profile demonstration of what football can achieve in turning vulnerable young people away from crime.

The under-16s side is made up of players from north Kensington, Southall, Camden, Hayes and Hanwell.

“The under-16s and everybody at TUFF FC is overjoyed that they are the champions,” said Dr Talwar, whose foundation now runs several boys’ teams and girls’ teams throughout west London.

“What an outcome? We took these kids from the clutches of poverty and the risk of gang culture and turned them around.

“They have become hugely-talented footballers and proud citizens of Britain – and they have gone on to become not only champions of London but champions of unity.

“I and Anna are enormously proud of them. These kids have never experienced anything like this before; they are overwhelmed.”

Dr Talwar added: “A few of them were in tears after the final game – which they won 5-1 – because they couldn’t believe they’d done it, against all the odds.

“This is a real-life David and Goliath story because some people thought these kids would have no chance in a league that is no Mickey Mouse one.

“But they battled the whole season, they put in incredible efforts week in, week out. “They played 25 games and won with three games in hand. It’s a fantastic success, it’s a victory for multi-cultural London.”

Next month the Under-16s and other TUFF FC teams will go to Molenbeek with London MEP Syed Kamall, who will also be introducing the team and organisers to EU leaders with the aim of establishing similar football schemes in other countries across Europe.

Police investigate moped collision

POLICE are appealing for witnesses to a hit-and-run incident in west London in which an elderly man was badly hurt.

Detectives say the collision happened at around 4.50pm on Wednesday, March 30 on the Uxbridge Road near the junction with Devonport Road.

The 88-year-old man was crossing the road when he was struck by a cream coloured Piaggio moped.

The force of the impact threw the pensioner across the road, police say. They said the bike’s rider fell off his machine but then remounted the vehicle and made off towards Loftus Road prior to the arrival of the emergency services.

The elderly man suffered serious head injuries in the collision and was taken by ambulance to a central London hospital.

He was in a critical condition. Next of kin have been informed.

A 16-year-old teenager was arrested on March 31 on suspicion of failing to stop after an accident and was being held in custody at a west London police station.

A moped was recovered within one mile of the scene of the collision. Officers from the Met’s Serious Collision Investigation Unit are appealing for any witnesses to the collision, or anyone who has information that may assist police, to get in touch.

Anyone with information should contact detectives at the Serious Collision Investigation Unit at Alperton Traffic Garage on 0208 991 9555 or phone CrimeStoppers on 0800 555 111 if you do not want to give your name.

“I cycled 100 miles to help raise £26,000 for the local children’s hospice”

Kirsty Hayward, East Ham, Receptionist at London City Airport.

Through expansion, London City Airport will be able to provide more support to our communities. Find out more at icymeansbusiness.com
**LONDON WIDE**

**Remember stars who were our neighbours**

**BY LWN REPORTER**

editorial@londonweeklynews.co.uk

**COMEDIAN** Tommy Cooper, food writer Elizabeth David and playwright Samuel Beckett are among those whose achievements and time spent living in London will be celebrated with English Heritage blue plaques in this the scheme’s 150th year, English Heritage have revealed.

The 150th anniversary of the London blue plaque scheme will also be marked with a weekend of special walking tours on May 7 and 8, a series of talks, a new book and a blue plaques app.

Professor Ronald Hutton, Chair of the English Heritage Blue Plaques Panel, said: “Since 1854, these modest but distinctive blue roundels have reminded us of the people and places that made history.

“Today we will celebrate stars of the silver screen and stage, a much loved comedian, sporting legends and one of the greatest writers of modern times. It’s a roll-call that underlines the vast range of talent who have thrived in London.”

Blue plaques will be unveiled in 2016 to, among others,

- **Samuel Beckett** (1906-1989): The Irish Nobel Prize-winning playwright and author lived in London for three years in the early 1930s during which time he was seeking literary work, and attending psychoanalysis at the Tavistock Clinic. “He took the house in Chelsea where Beckett was staying in 1934 when his first full-length work, a collection of interlinked short stories called *More Pricks than Kicks*, was published.”

- **Tommy Cooper** (1921-1984): Famous for his comedy act as a hapless and incompe- tent magician, the fez-wearing Cooper with his catchphrase “Just like that...” was a much loved household name. “I’m glad to be in the show,” he said at the Royal Variety Performance in 1964. “I couldn’t afford to be in the audience.” The new plaque will be installed at his former home in Chiswick, where he lived with his wife and two children from 1955 until his death in 1984.

- **Laurie Cunningham** (1956-1989): One of the first black footballers to play for the England team and the first to appear for England in a competitive international match (against Wales in 1979). Cunningham was a pioneer of black achievement in football. The North Londoner also played for West Bromwich Albion and was the first British player to transfer to Real Madrid.

- **Elizabeth David** (1913-1992): The finest English cookery writer of the 20th century, Elizabeth David was instrumental in introducing post-war England to Mediterranean food. She is the first cookery writer to be commemorated with a blue plaque.

- **Margot Fonteyn** (1919-1991): The greatest dancer of her generation, Margot Fonteyn combined a musicality, purity of line, and an acting ability to sensational effect. Her performances awakened a love of dance in thousands of people around the world. Her plaque will be installed outside her former flat in Covent Garden where she lived during some of her career-defining roles as a prima ballerina of Sadler’s Wells Ballet, including *Cinderella* (1948) and *Sylvia* (1952).

- **Ava Gardner** (1922-1990): One of the iconic movie stars of the 20th century and often called the most beautiful woman in the world. Gardner appeared in over 60 films. In 1950 she married the then-unknown Frank Sinatra; they divorced in 1957 and remarried in 1981.

- **Freddie Mercury** (1946-1991): Chairman of the Rolling Stones, a pioneering frontman of the legendary rock band, Queen. Freddie Mercury was an extremely gifted performer, composer and producer. In the mid-1980s he began a solo career in tandem with Queen and worked with some of the biggest names in the music industry, from David Bowie to Michael Jackson. Born Farrokh Bulsara on the island of Zanzibar in 1946, Mercury’s plaque will adorn the house in Feltham where he moved with his family in 1964.

- **Bobby Moore** (1941-1993): Professional footballer Bobby Moore was captain of the team that took England to victory in 1966, and he still lived when he wore the England shirt for the first time in 1962.

- **Margot Fonteyn is to feature in a blue plaque at her former flat in Covent Garden. Freddie Mercury, Tommy Cooper and Ava Gardner – pictured below – will also be remembered.**

On the weekend of May 7 and 8 this year, English Heritage will celebrate the scheme’s 150th anniversary with a Blue Plaques weekend of special tours. Participants can stroll from Charing Cross to Covent Garden in the steps of some of our greatest personalities; take in the oldest surviving plaque and hear about some of the outstanding historical personalities of Piccadilly; explore Hampstead and its intriguing mix of past residents; or discover the plaque to the most illustrious inhabitants of Belgravia, including the founder of the blue plaques scheme, William Ewart, and a host of other celebrated figures from the past.

**Grants will survive cuts to budgets**

VITAL cash for dozens of important community projects and services will continue until 2021 after the future of London Councils’ Grants programme was confirmed for a further four years.

Despite the difficult financial situation facing local government, the programme will continue to commission services to combat homelessness, tackle sexual and domestic violence, and to address poverty through employment across London.

Borough leaders agreed to fund the grants programme after the end of the current four-year funding cycle in March 2017.

Cllr Paul Mc-done, chair of London Councils’ grants committee, said: “I am pleased leaders have confirmed that London Councils will continue to commission projects to address some of the most complex and difficult challenges faced by vulnerable people across the capital.

“Many Londoners face hardship that leads to homelessness, the scourge of domestic violence in the home or long-term unemployment, especially those from minority communities. The third-sector organisations we commission to address these issues, working alongside local councils, can turn lives around for the better.

“We look forward to seeing the continued positive results this third sector-led programme delivers.

Following a consultation, leaders also agreed to work closely with the City of London’s charity (the City Bridge Trust) on a further funding priority – capacity-building in the voluntary sector – with a view to that organisation taking over the support process alongside similar existing projects it supports. A report will be presented to committee in July.

**Student chefs up for the cup**

**STUDENTS** Izzy Kalyane Araujo and Alexandra Achilleos represented Hammersmith and Fulham College in the North London Cup Chefs Competition at Hackney Community College. Five colleges took part in the competition on March 18: Hackney College, Waltham Forest College, College of North West London, Hertford Regional College and Hammersmith and Fulham College.

The Hammersmith and Fulham team came second. Principal Janet Gardner presented the students with Westfield Vouchers.

For the past six weeks both students have been working together nearly every day to master the menu and techniques required to produce the three-course menu and bread in the three-and-a-half hour time slot. They work together so they were able to communicate without talking and to know how each other was feeling, what they were thinking and how on track they were with each dish.

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Mark, my word! Writer scoops top food award

BY LWN REPORTER
editorial@londonweeklynews.co.uk

LONDON Weekly News star columnist Mark Hix has won the top prize in the London Food Awards – with his Hix Mayfair voted the No 1 hotel restaurant in the world’s No 1 city.

Hix Mayfair at Brown’s Hotel in Albemarle Street, where Mark is Director of Food and Lee Kebble is executive chef, beat nine of the capital’s largest multi-nationals. The ceremony brought together suppliers, servers and specialists, recognising their hard work and commitment in providing their customers with the best products and service.

London food producers are now being urged to compete with the best in another one of the country’s top food awards competitions.

Organisers say the Quality Food Awards 2016 will be dish ing up another chance for success across the board, from the smallest artisan producer to the largest multi-nationals.

The awards are considered by many to be the ultimate endorsement of food products and, because each product is put through a rigorously fair judging process by a team of over 200 food experts, consumers and entrants know that each winning accreditation is credible and deserved.

“Now in its 37th year, these prestigious awards are perfect for small and large producers alike,” said Helen Lyons, of organisers Metropolis Business Media. “We are inviting entries for the Quality Food Awards, the Good Choice! Awards – recognising excellence in the healthy option and free-from sector – and the Quality Drink Awards, celebrating the very best in wines, beer, cider, whiskies and spirits. What sets us apart is the impartiality and rigour of the judging process, which sits at the heart of everything we do.”

The awards cover 85 categories, including chilled and frozen products, seasonal goods, drinks, and confectionary. The opening date for entries is June 24 and judging begins on August 1.

The winners will be announced at ceremonies at London’s Grosvenor House on November 10.

Best Indian Establishment: Overall winner, Madhus, celebrate their success. Inset right: Mark Hix

Awards roll of honour

There were 26 sought-after accolades awarded on the evening and the winners were as follows:

- Dairy Food Provider of the Year CWE Daies (Newham).
- Fresh Produce Provider of the Year Link Class London (Wandsworth).
- Meat Supplier of the Year Tom Hixon (City of London).
- Frozen Food Provider of the Year Fine Frozen Foods (Hounslow).
- Ambient Food Supplier of the Year Woods Foodservice (Ealing).
- Seafood Supplier of the Year Unique Seafood (Greenwich).
- Bakery of the Year The London Bread & Cake Company (Enfield).
- Best Chilled Food Supplier Kaspas (Lambeth).
- Best Street Food Anna Mae (City of London).
- Best World Cuisine Maroush (Westminster).
- Hotel Restaurant the Year Hix Mayfair (Browns Hotel, Kensington and Chelsea).
- Caterer of the Year The London Kitchen (Lambeth).
- Fine Dining Restaurant of the Year Bank Restaurant & Bar (Westminster).
- Traditional British Restaurant of the Year The Mayfair Chippy (Westminster).
- Best Mexican Establishment Desperados (Islington).
- Best Seafood Establishment Fish Works (Marylebone).
- Best Mediterranean Establishment Jose Pizarro (Southwark).
- Best Vegetarian Establishment Riverside Vegetaria (Kingston Upon Thames).

Locatelli. The overall winner of the Best Italian Establishment is Il Guscio

- Best Indian Establishment, North went to努努Jenni's Finest Indian Cuisine.
- Best Indian Establishment, East went to Lahore Kebab House.
- Best Indian Establishment, South went to Khana.
- Best Indian Establishment, West went to Madhus.
- Best Indian Establishment, Central went to The Painted Heron.

The overall winner of the Best Indian Establishment is Madhus

- Gastro Pub of the Year, North went to The Green Dragon.
- Gastro Pub of the Year, East went to The Eagle.
- Gastro Pub of the Year, West went to Pheasant Inn.
- Gastro Pub of the Year, Central went to The Albion.

The overall winner of the Gastro Pub of the Year is The Green Dragon

- Cafe/Bistro of the Year, North went to Bonito Cafe.
- Cafe/Bistro of the Year, East went to Poco.
- Cafe/Bistro of the Year, South went to Grind Coffee Bar.

The overall winner of the Cafe/Bistro of the Year is Bonito Cafe
LONDON WIDE

University hails its benefactors

THE University of West London hosted its annual donors and scholars lunch last month.

The event, on March 18, brought together scholarship recipients and alumni, friends and guests who generously give in aid of scholarships.

Last year alone, 110 donors generously donated over £120,000 in aid of scholarships that have in turn helped more than 100 students: from postgraduates to those in junior academies. The vice-chancellor, Professor Peter John, thanked the donors for their continued support and for making a real difference to student lives as they work towards realising their education and career goals.

The lunch was prepared and served by students of the London College of Hospitality and Tourism.

Katerina Kostrevc, recipient of the Mona Blackman Scholarship, gave a performance on violin of the 1st Movement from Cesar Franck’s Violin Sonata in A Major – accompanied by Natasa Sarcevic on piano.

Claudia Duduman, recipient of the Alistair Telfer Award, and in her first year of studying for a B.A. (Hons) degree in International Hotel Management at the London College of Hospitality and Tourism, gave a speech.

TALL ORDER: In its recent survey charting more than 600,000 buildings across the country, data company GeoPhy found the Shard, pictured, to be the most expensive skyscraper in the UK. The firm used algorithms to value property that take into account data sets relating to location, reliability and proximity to public transport, the local environment, nearby shops and the condition of the building. Take a look at London’s most expensive towers and their values: 1 The Shard – £1.49bn; 2 HSBC Tower – £990m, pictured left; 3 Citigroup Tower – £971m; 4 One Canada Square – £955m; 5 Walkie Talkie – £897m; 6 Leadenhall Building – £843m; 7 Citypoint – £777m; 8 1 Churchill Place – £700m; 9 The Gherkin – £619m; 10 Heron Tower – £554m; 11 Broadgate Tower – £476m; 12 Willis Building – £475m; 13 25 Churchill Place – £381m; 14 Tower 42 – £379m; 15 Euston Tower – £288m

Student wins accolade as a young hotelier

TALENTED University of West London student Gerald Murati was part of the winning team at the 2016 Young Hoteliers Summit competition.

This is the third consecutive year that students from the London College of Hospitality and Tourism have enjoyed success at the summit’s student competition. Two UWL students, Gerald and Perpetua Kirschstein, took part in this year’s competition.

The summit is an annual event that brings together young talent from over 40 hospitality schools around the world, and took place at the Ecole Hôtelière de Lausanne in Switzerland, from 14-16 March 2016. The event includes workshops and inspiring talks from industry leaders, as well as the student challenge competition.

Students were divided into teams and were set the challenge to suggest how to reduce the time for a graduate to become a hotel General Manager in a Four Seasons hotel in just nine years, as the average time taken is currently 17 years.

UWL student Gerald Murati was able to draw upon his studies and his experience working at the Ritz Hotel to win the competition with his team.

Dr Charalampos Gouspsapoglou, Associate Professor in Hospitality and Food Studies, said: “This was once again an exciting experience. Both the students and the College have the valuable opportunity to create links and network with colleagues and top industry professionals. We look forward to participating in next year’s Young Hoteliers Summit.”

Council roles

FOLLOWING the resignation of councillors Victoria Borwick and Joanna Gardiner, the official notice of election for the election of two councillors for the Abingdon ward of the Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea has been published.

Nomination packs for prospective candidates are available from the Elections Office by calling 020 7361 3444 or from Kensington Town Hall, Hornton Street, London W8 7NX.

Completed nominations must be returned to the Returning Officer at Kensington Town Hall by 4pm on Thursday, April 7.

If the election is contested the poll will take place on Thursday, May 5 between 7am and 10pm.

New store

A NEW Timberland footwear store has opened at 158 Oxford Street, the brand’s sixth London store.

The 90-square metre space on one of London’s most iconic and busiest shopping streets will stock footwear with a selection of accessories across menswear, womenswear and kidswear.

The company says the new opening is a key move in connecting with a wider audience and younger consumer in the brand’s quest to become the largest and most sustainable lifestyle brand on earth.

Court clears death crash lorry driver

BY LYN REPORTER

editorial@londonweeklynews.co.uk

A LORRY driver accused of causing death by careless driving has walked free from court.

Vincent Doyle failed to spot student Janina Gehlau, 26, in the cycle lane as he manoeuvred his Foden truck to turn left at busy Ludgate Circus in central London, jurors at the Old Bailey were told last Thursday.

The court heard that he should have been aware the German postgraduate was catching up as he waited for 23 seconds at the red light, having overtaken her some 200 metres before the junction. It was argued that if his mirrors had been correctly positioned, he would have been able to see her for three to five seconds before his wheels clipped hers, sending her under the vehicle.

Doyle, 45, denied the charge of causing Mrs Gehlau’s death by careless driving on the morning of October 17, 2014, and the jury deliberated for less than an hour before clearing him.

After the verdict was returned, Mrs Gehlau’s family, who sat in court with a German translator, appeared downcast and her husband, Marcel, shook uncontrollably and wept before being led downcastle and her husband, Marcel, shook uncontrollably and wept before being led down.

Judge Gerald Gordon told the court: “I would like it to be made absolutely clear to the family that the verdict of the jury does not imply any form of criticism of Mrs Gehlau.”

He added that it may be that the differing rules of the road from Germany were “a factor”.

In a statement Mrs Gehlau’s mother, Andrea Tasic, said: “We are devastated by the verdict and do not feel that we have got justice for Janina. We would like to thank the emergency services who tried so hard to save her and everyone who has supported us since her death.

“My only hope is that this makes people think twice before cycling in London. Too many families are losing loved ones in these circumstances and action needs to be taken to improve safety before there are any more tragedies.”

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Shikara

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Shikara is located in the quirky part of Bute Street, South Kensington.

A small but intimate fine dining restaurant that boasts authentic flavours and spices.

We use only fresh herbs and ingredients to give you our signature flavour that truly represents the best of Indian cuisine.

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**ROYAL LONDON**

Relax over tea with the Queen (but no selfies)

**BY GEOFF BAKER**

geoj@londonweeklynews.co.uk

**THE Queen is to host the first of her summer garden parties at Buckingham Palace on May 10 – and doubtless many guests are already feverishly preparing for the event.**

Having entertained an estimated two million people at her parties, Her Majesty is relaxation personified at such events but they can be a daunting prospect for many of the up to 8,000 guests who attend each one and who may be uncertain of the do’s and don’ts.

As with any swish function, the first rule is don’t be late. Garden parties take place from 4pm to 6pm, but the Palace gates will be open from 3pm in order for everyone to get settled in time.

“The Queen and The Duke of Edinburgh, accompanied by other members of the Royal Family, enter the garden at 4pm, when the National Anthem is played and everyone leaves the garden, when the National Anthem is played to mark the event,” advises Buckingham Palace.

After the playing of the National Anthem, The Queen and The Duke of Edinburgh, together with other members of the Royal Family, circulate among the guests through ‘lanes’ which are peculiar to Royal garden parties. Each takes a different route and random presentations are made so of speaking to Her Majesty and members of her family. The Queen and other members of the Royal Family eventually arrive at the Royal tea tent, where they may further relax.

“There are tents for other guests. Tea and other refreshments are served from long buffet tables. The quantities served are enormous. At a typical garden party, there are 27,000 cups of tea, 20,000 sandwiches and 20,000 slices of cake are consumed. All serving staff are involved in the serving.”

“At about 6pm, The Queen and other members of the Royal Family will finally leave the garden, when the National Anthem is played to mark the end of the event.”

But what to do if one is randomly chosen to be presented to Her Majesty? The big new rule is No Selfies. Although it states on the invitation that cameras are not permitted at garden parties, in recent years an impudent trend has appeared on front pages across the country and guests like to record their privileged visit on their smartphones. This is very much frowned upon and will identify you as a bad egg.

“Although anyone who is presented to the Queen will be briefly in advance on the etiquette of a gentleman usher preceding Her Majesty, it is good to know what to expect and for advice we turned to an expert royalist blog who goes by the name of Royal Protocol.

Mr Protocol, a student from Northern Ireland who states that he has attended many royal events of recent years, advises: “Once you have been presented, you are faced with the question of what to say. The Queen is always addressed as ‘Your Majesty’ on the first count and thereafter as ‘Ma’am’,” according to Buckingham Palace.

“You are presented to the royal personage lead the conversation, not to try to change the subject, and ask only the politest of questions. ‘Is Your Majesty enjoying the performance?’ is acceptable, but ‘How’s Philip and Charles?’ is most definitely, absolutely out of the question.”

“Regrettably, The Queen is fine, though if you want to be certain of being polite I would recommend at least once saying ‘Her Majesty’. It is also quite rude to refer to Prince Charles, or even Prince Anne; instead, you should opt for ‘The Prince of Wales, The Duke of Edinburgh, and The Princess Royal. ‘His Royal Highness’ or ‘Her Royal Highness’ may also be used, though be sure to qualify whom exactly you are referring to. When you are in conversation with a member of the royal family, be yourself but remember that His Royal Highness is not going to appreciate your company if it is too loud, tongue-tied, rude, or bumptious.”

The dress code for royal garden parties is uniforms, morning dress or lounge suits for men. Most men prefer ‘morning dress’ for women – basically any outfit suitable for a wedding, preferably with a hat.

Ladies are also advised that stiletto heels are probably not the best of ideas as you will be standing for some while on the palace lawns and will not want to sink into them, so flats, wedges or shoes with thicker heel are advised.

And don’t even think of trying to pocket the cutlery. Although most guests are above such rude- ness, in recent years there has been at least one occasion when irreplaceable crockery and cutlery has been stolen from The Queen with eight pieces of silver cutlery from King George III’s reign, eight sideplates and cups marked ‘EIR’, and pieces from Queen Victoria’s time being taken by somebody clearly eager to impress guests in their own home with the vulgarity of their ingratitude and bad manners.

For those keen to record their special day with some souvenir, silver EIR spoons are available at £30 each from the Buckingham Palace shop, where the new edition of The Queen’s 90th birthday commemorative cup and saucer can also be bought for £55.

President might be happy to be taken for a ride

IS Whitchurch hoping to saddle up President Obama in a bid to recreate one of the most iconic images of the UK’s special relationship with America when the world’s most powerful man visits The Queen at Windsor Castle later this week.

On what is expected to be his last trip to Britain before the end on his term in office, President Obama is to have a private lunch with Her Majesty at Windsor and the visit could provide the President with the opportunity to cement the impression that he made just before the Queen at the start of June last year.

As the recent and excellent ITV film Our Queen At 90 revealed that Her Majesty still rides side by side with the couple, IS Whitchurch is hoping to recreate the special relationship that a short trot together.

Clearly, Downing Street would have to be super-sensitive about encouraging anyone such side-by-side ride, as the Prime Minister’s aides want to avoid any row with Brexiteers over the Queen being drawn into an appearance of ‘taking sides’ in the referendum of which she is constitutionally set above. On the other hand, it could be too good a seemingly-innocent opportunity to waste.

When Her Majesty rode out with President Reagan in 1982, she rode her beloved Burmese, while the President and former cowboy movie star was lent an eight-year-old stallion called Centennial, a gift to The Queen from the Canadian Mounted Police, in which he rode high in a British saddle unlike those preferred in the States.

At a reception later, The Queen joked about the President having to learn about riding in a non-American way.

“I greatly enjoyed our ride together this morning, and I was much impressed by the way in which you cope so professionally with a strange horse and a saddle that must have seemed even stranger,” she said to much laughter at a state banquet.

Her Majesty also bolstered the UK-US relationship when she added: “Our close relationship has grown not just based on history, kinship, and language, strong and binding though these are. It is based on the same values and the same beliefs, evolved over many years in these islands since Magna Carta and vividly stated by the Founding Fathers of the United States.

“This has meant that over the whole range of human activity, the people of the United States and the people of Britain are drawing on each other’s experience and enriching each other’s lives. Of course, we do not always think and act alike, but through the years our common heritage, based on the principles of common law, has prevailed over our diversity. And our toleration has moderated our arguments and misunderstandings.

“Above all, our commitment to a common cause has led us to continue to stand together today in the defence of freedom.”

President Reagan responded: “As we ride over these magnificent grounds this morning, I thought again about how our people share, as you have mentioned, a common past. We are bound by so much more than just language.

“It’s been said that the greatest glory of a free-born people is to transmit that freedom to their children. That is a responsibility our people share. Together, and eager for peace, we face an unstable world where violence and terrorism, aggression and tyranny constantly encroach on human rights.

“Yet, together, committed to the preservation of freedom and our way of life, we must strengthen a weakening front line, and restore the world’s faith in peace and the rule of law. We in the free world share an abiding faith in our people and in the future of mankind. The challenge of freedom is to reject an unacceptable future, and restore the faith in peace and freedom and to triumph over them.”

As it could be effortlessly argued by both the White House and Downing Street, the US, and the UK, the US and Europe, or the US and United Europe now once again face “the threats to peace and freedom” with the war against Islamist extremism, an equestrian question that says “we ride together” could be of greater help than any amount of joint press conferences at No 10.
When Macca went down a storm at the Maracana

CAPTAIN FANTASTIC: Paul McCartney in concert

The sugar, flour milk and eggs factor

Is National Lottery show’s number up?

Factor mastermind Simon Cowell may have to eat his words

O F F I C I A LLY a slump in the ratings, TV chiefs are asking if there is any point in the BBC continuing to pay for the rights to screen the National Lottery.

Although both the BBC and the Lottery bizarrely refuse to say how much public money is shelled out for the right to screen Britain’s most disappointment-making TV show, it is believed to be costing the corporation around £2 million.

However, as the BBC is now having to find all manner of savings, questions are growing over whether the Lottery is worth it anymore.

When the Lottery was first launched it drew an audience of 19 million, which was to be expected as we all tuned in to ruefully discover that although it could be you, it wasn’t. The audience then settled down to be around 6.2 million in 1997.

But two decades on, the audience has fallen by considerably less than what it used to be when the chances of winning hugely excited the nation.

Whether the drop in the figures has anything to do with the recent and controversial change in the Lottery rules which have made it far harder to win the top prize has not been researched, but these days many feel that they have more chance of becoming the King of Siam than they do of landing the jackpot.

Now, with the Lottery attracting just 3.9 million viewers, the cost-conscious BBC is having to ask if the show should go on, whether its current contract should not be renewed and the Lottery should be offered to ITV or Sky.
YOU think you’re so amusing?

Then read on, as the BBC has launched a hunt for the hilarity kings of tomorrow, which could be the big step for those hoping to make themselves into multi-millionaires by forging successful careers in the funny business.

Judges of the BBC Radio New Comedy Award are searching to find the comedy stars of the future, who will follow in the lucrative footsteps of the likes of previous winner Peter Kay, who has recently appeared on the Sunday Times Rich List to be worth £25 million.

The competition, which first started in 1995, has kick-started the careers of many top UK comics, with other past winners and finalists including Alan Carr, Josie Long, Lee Mack, Sarah Millican and Russell Howard.

For the first time the competition will be hosted by Radio 4, which will broadcast the live final with the heats running on Radio 4 Extra.

Sioned Wiliam, Commissioning Editor for Comedy, BBC Radio 4 said: “It feels right that the competition will now be hosted by Radio 4 which is the home of radio comedy. We have a long tradition of supporting new comedy talent and it’s very exciting to be searching for a brand new comedy star.”

Whoever wins will take home £1,000 and a 15-minute script commission from BBC Radio Comedy. All finalists will be mentored by the in-house comedy department across the year and receive advice, guidance and the chance to appear in slots across the BBC.

Entrants need to submit a no-more-than-five-minute comedy routine and complete the application form at www.bbc.co.uk/newcomedyaward before the closing date of Tuesday, April 19. The best 60 entries will be selected for six regional heats in June, recording in London’s Up The Creek. The semifinals and finals will be recorded at the Edinburgh Fringe Festival, with the final being broadcast live on BBC Radio 4 on Sunday, August 14.

The judging panel will consist of an editor from BBC Comedy; Steve Bennett, editor of Chortle; plus a different stand-up comedian at each heat. At the final, an expert panel of judges made up of top names from the world of comedy will decide the winner, live on BBC Radio 4.

Recent winners include 2012’s Lucy Beaumont, who has a second series of To Hull And Back starting on Radio 4 later this year; and 2013’s Steve Bugeja, who has supported Russell Kane on his tour and contributed material to a number of BBC TV and radio comedy shows. In 2014 the title was taken by Lost Voice Guy, who is currently writing a radio pilot for in-house development, and in 2015 it was won by Yuriko Kotani, who is now working closely with the BBC Radio Comedy department.

The London heats will be at Up The Creek on June 7 and 8. But the competition will be stiff as making it in comedy is one of the toughest acts in showbusiness. As the old gag goes, what do 99 per cent of all aspiring comics say during their gig?

“You want fries with that?”

TIPPED FOR THE TOP: Up and coming actress Olivia Lovibond’s ‘beauty is stunning’ say admirers

“Hooten And The Lady is going to springboard Olivia into the big time,” said an insider. “Not only is she a first class actress, she has a mesmerising look that makes her stand out as the classic English beauty. Those in the know are widely tipping Olivia to follow Keira Knightley, Kate Beckinsale and Rachel Weisz all the way to the top in Hollywood. Her beauty is stunning and we have not seen the like of it since Jean Shrimpton was turning the heads of the world in the Sixties. In fact it has already been suggested that somebody should make a film of Shrimpton’s amazing story just to cast Olivia in the role, because she is the spitting image of the supermodel. Olivia is very much the one to watch of the year. In a very little while everybody is going to be talking about her.”

The in-crowd will be out at Glastonbury on polling day

We do hope that Adele’s people may have warned her that if Britain votes to leave Europe she may get blamed for it – or thanked, depending on your view.

Coldplay and Muse may get it in the neck – or receive a bouquet of flowers – too.

For the great brains behind the Government-backed Stay In campaign have just realised that they have not factor in a possibly-key event when hitting on the date for the UK’s decision of the millennium – Glastonbury.

Although most people will be going to the polling stations on Thursday June 23, 177,000 voters will probably note – as that is the day when most of those with Glasto tickets will be travelling to the festival.

Due to the annual pressure of wanting to get to Worthy Farm good time to pitch a tent in a good spot, most will not be wanting to waste time going off to vote before they leave home for the festival where this year Adele, Muse and Coldplay are headlining.

They could of course vote at the festival ground, were it not for the slight drawback that there will be no voting booths at the festival ground.

And as most Glasto-goers tend to be liberal thinkers, political analysts predict that the majority of the festival crowd would vote in.

But if the vote is as close as everyone is expecting, the loss of the Glasto In vote could tilt the balance so that we go Out instead. Oo-er.
LONDON Weekly News star columnist Mark Hix has won the top prize in the inaugural Food Awards London – with his Hix Mayfair voted the No 1 hotel restaurant in the world’s No 1 city.

Hix Mayfair at Brown’s Hotel in Albemarle Street, where Mark is Director of Food and Lee Keeble is executive chef, beat nine of the capital’s other finest restaurants nominated for the award.

In making the award to the famed restaurant which is noted both for its outstanding menu of great British classics and its featured works of art by Tracey Emin, Bridget Riley and Rankin, the judges praised it for providing only “the very best”.

Hix Mayfair, renowned for seasonally-sourced dishes including poached fillet of St Mary’s Bay sea bass with Isle of Barra cockles and sea kale and Yorkshire Dales wild rabbit, Treatly Farm chorizo and hedgerow garlic pie, is a favourite haunt of top stars including supermodel David Gandy, designer Paul Smith and Downton Abbey’s Lord Grantham, actor Hugh Bonneville.

In awarding Hix Mayfair the top prize, the judges said: “This award recognises the hotel that has a proven track record of striving to ensure the very best level of food and service provided at their restaurant. Attention to detail, commitment and structured approach to future developments to improve the overall guest experience is also key”.

WINNING RECIPE: Mark Hix has been recognised at the Food Awards London. Right: ingredients for Mark’s cod and fennel fish pie

MARK’S RECIPE OF THE WEEK

Fish pie is an honest, down-to-earth food packed with flavours. It makes perfect comfort food if you are sitting in front of the television after a hard day and also works equally well as a dinner party main course.

You can make this dish the day before and keep it in the fridge overnight. The basic recipe can be varied endlessly, according to what sustainable fish are available and what you like, but it is always good to include some smoked fish.

Ingredients (serves four to six)

- 500ml fish stock (or a good-quality fish stock cube dissolved in 500ml hot water)
- 2tbsp dry vermouth
- 1 fennel bulb, cored and finely diced
- 200g un-dyed smoked cod fillet, skinned, any residual bones removed and fillets cut into rough 3cm chunks
- 200g un-dyed smoked cod fillet, skinned, any residual bones removed and fillets cut into rough 3cm chunks
- 2tbsp chopped mixed green herbs, such as parsley, dill and chervil
- 60g butter
- 1.5-2kg floury potatoes, cooked and mashed with a little milk
- 20g fresh white breadcrumbs
- 30g grated cheddar or Parmesan

For the sauce

- 30g butter
- 50g flour
- 175ml double cream
- 1 tsp Dijon mustard
- Salt and freshly ground white pepper

Method

In a large saucepan, bring the fish stock and vermouth to the boil, add the fennel, turn down the heat and cook gently for eight minutes.

Add the cod and smoked cod and poach for two minutes. Drain in a colander over a bowl, reserving the cooking liquid, and leave to cool.

To make the sauce: melt the butter in a heavy-based pan over a low heat, then stir in the flour and cook gently for a minute. Gradually add the reserved fish poaching liquid, stirring well until it has all been added and the mixture is smooth. Bring to the boil and simmer gently for 30 minutes.

Add the cream and continue to simmer for 10 minutes or so until the sauce has a thick consistency. Stir in the mustard. Season if necessary, then leave to cool for about 15 minutes or so.

Perfect comfort food: Cod and fennel pie (Jason Lowe)

GENTLY fold into the sauce the cooked fish with the fennel and the herbs. Spoon into a large pie dish or several individual ones, filling to 3cm from the top. Leave to set for about 30 minutes, so that the potato will sit on the sauce.

Meanwhile, preheat the oven to 180C/gas mark 4 and mix the butter into the mashed potato. Season with a little salt and freshly ground white pepper and add a little milk so that it is just soft enough to pipe with a piping bag or spread with a spatula on to the fish. Bake for 30 minutes, or a little less for smaller ones. Scatter on the breadcrumbs and cheese, and bake for 10-15 minutes until golden on top.
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Bad Girls the Musical
The Union Theatre ***

This was my first visit to the Union Theatre and it would be my last as they are moving the venue across the road over the next two weeks to what I hope, will be better premises.

In its current state, the place has a seedy, dingy quality and is absolutely freezing, so any improvement would be very welcome.

My visit also marked my first ever viewing of the musical version of *Bad Girls*, which is based on the infamous ITV drama series from the 1990s.

Set in a fictional women’s prison, the show plays to our curiosities about a world most of us won’t ever experience – well hopefully. In a comedic but very bitty book, we are invited to experience a snapshot of life behind bars with many of the typical characters we are led to believe exist within these antiquated, archaic institutions.

Favourite roles from the original TV show are all there, including top dog and merdy murderess Shell Dockley (Sinead Long), gangster’s moll Yvonne Atkins (Christine Holman) and Mr Nasty prison warden Jim Fenner (Gareth Davies).

The story attempts to lump together a number of episodes of the original series with some nice musical numbers interwoven – along with an added hunch to lighten this otherwise harrowing and very dark morality fable.

This does mean however, that the show lacks a sense of flow, particularly for the first 20 minutes when, if you aren’t familiar with the characters, the plot is confusing and somewhat bland. The pace does pick up however, and once the wheels are in motion, the tale gallops along with vigour and variety. This is in a large part down to Christine Holman, who brings a burnished Burr with every sweeping entrance. She is well matched by Sinead Long’s hard faced con Dockley, and complemented by an accomplished comedy performance from Francine Rowan.

Tasked with the job of keeping the falcon in line is fresh faced young guard Justin, played by newcomer Perry Meadowcroft, who is impressive while shamming the cougar’s advances in *All Banged Up*.

The show stealer without any doubt however, is Jayne Ashley, one half of the Julies, whose act two heart breaker *Sorry*, depicting a phone call home, is momentous.

Will Keith’s direction and Jo Shane’s choreography are essentially on point, and make the most of the postage stamp sized stage area, but there are a few static and clunky scenes which feel a little under-rehearsed.

I also found the era we were transported to a little confused, as the costumes suggested the late 90s but some of the props indicated the piece to be more contemporary.

Jailhouse dramas are always fascinating and this show gives a good account of the public perception of prison.

I can only hope someone is already penning *Orange is the New Black the Musical.*

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**Brothers in arms happy to be in No Man’s Land**

**IANT McKellen and Patrick Stewart are to reunite on stage this year in Harold Pinter’s masterpiece, *No Man’s Land*, which will embark on a UK tour, opening in Sheffield from August 3, followed by dates in Newcastle, Brighton and Cardiff. The production will then head into London’s West End where it will play a limited 14-week engagement at the Wyndham’s Theatre from September 8 with opening night for press on 20 September. *No Man’s Land* was first performed at the iconic Wyndham’s Theatre in 1975, with Ralph Richardson and John Gielgud, following its premiere at the National Theatre. Directed by Sean Mathias, this production of *No Man’s Land* received highly acclaimed reviews at the Cort Theatre in New York whilst in repertory alongside *Waiting for Godot*, also starring stage and screen friends, McKellen and Stewart and directed by Mathias.

The production of *Waiting for Godot* had transferred from London where it celebrated a sell-out run at the Theatre Royal Haymarket, the last time these masters of British theatre shared a West End stage.

One summer’s evening, two ageing writers, Hirst and Spooner, meet in a Hampstead pub and continue their drinking into the night at Hirst’s stately house nearby. As the pair become increasingly inebriated, and their stories increasingly unbelievable, the lively conversation soon turns into a revealing power game, further complicated by the return home of two sinister younger men.

Stewart (Hirst) says: “I saw the original production of *No Man’s Land* three times in one week at Wyndham’s Theatre and would have seen it more if I could have afforded the tickets. I made a promise to myself that one day I would play Spooner or Hirst but to be doing it back at Wyndham’s with Ian was a fantasy I never entertained.”

McKellen (Spooner) says: “Playing Spooner to Patrick’s Hirst on Broadway was a constant joy, which is why I am delighted to be back with him in the West End.”

Further casting has yet to be announced for *No Man’s Land*, which will have set and costume design by Stephen Brimson-Leew and lighting design by Peter Kaczorowski. The multi award-winning McKellen has had a 55-year career on stage and on screen. For the Royal Shakespeare Company he has played Romeo, Macbeth, Iago and King Lear and at the National Theatre, in productions of *Coriolanus, Richard III, Uncle Vanya* and *The Seagull*. He gained his first Oscar nomination for *Gods and Monsters* and his second for *Gandalf* in the *Lord of the Rings* trilogy. He is Magneto to Stewart’s Xavier in the X-Men movies, Richard III and most recently Mr Holmes. Multi award-winning Stewart has numerous notable stage credits to his name, including *Anthony and Cleopatra, The Tempest, Macbeth, The Merchant of Venice, The Master Builder* and his acclaimed solo adaptation of *A Christmas Carol*. Known world-wide as Captain Jean Luc Picard in Star Trek: The Next Generation and Professor X in the X-Men franchise, his additional film and TV credits include the 2009 TV movie adaptation of *Hamlet* alongside David Tennant, Ahab in *Moby Dick*, Ricky Gervais’ * Extras*, the new US comedy series, soon to be seen on UK TV, *Blunt Talk*, the soon to be released thriller *Green Room* as well as *Wilde Wedding* with Glenn Close and John Malkovich. British film and theatre director, writer and actor Mathias has been a long-time collaborator with McKellen.

This *No Man’s Land* is produced by Stuart Thompson, Flying Freehold Productions and Playful Productions.**
Comedian will stand up for his roots, no doubt

THE award-winning stand-up comedian Dane Baptiste will return to one of his favourite venues later this month when he brings his new show to the Soho Theatre.

The south London funny man made his debut at the venue in the heart of London’s entertainment district and is looking forward to performing his second solo stand-up show, which is entitled Reasonable Doubts, writes Nicky Sweetland.

Since bursting onto the scene in 2014, Baptiste has become one of the most talked about comics around. He was nominated for Best Newcomer at the Edinburgh Comedy Awards, the first black Briton to have been nominated, and has performed acclaimed routines on Live at the Apollo as well as making numerous appearances on comedy panel shows including Safeword and Celebrity Squares.

He told me about his new show and about what he hopes it will tell people about both his background and his rise to success.

Baptiste said: “The first show was about me introducing myself to the industry and kind of letting the comedy world as a whole know who I am. With the second show, the idea is to kind of prove, now that I’ve shown that I’m a comic, to now talk about things that matter to me so that I can deal with social commentary within my comedy as well.”

The show is called Reasonable Doubts because it’s my second show and therefore it’s like releasing that difficult second album and dealing with those personal doubts.”

Baptiste is from Hither Green and worked in sales before making his foray into the world of entertainment. Alongside the UK tour, he has been working hard on a new sitcom, which has just been commissioned by BBC Three and is called Sunny D. It’s written by and stars Baptiste, who plays himself desperate to leave the home he shares with his parents and twin sister Kadean.

He has enjoyed a meteoric rise to fame, but is very aware of where his roots lie and is keen to portray to fans the different elements of being part of the celebrity showbusiness world.

“It’s very different to being an idealistic creative and wanting to change the world because there’s a lot more stakeholders involved in it. Basically I’m just being aware that it’s very easy to compromise yourself and I’m just letting my audience know that I could be going stratospheric in a few years, which I do look forward to, but I’m well aware, I could very much lose myself. The idea of the show is to make people aware that before I became a bonafide entertainer, I at least at some point had a soul.”

Baptiste will perform his Reasonable Doubts show at the Soho Theatre from May 3 to 7.

If you would like any more details you can visit the website sohotheatre.com

Picture this for drama

A BRAND new musical which offers to prove the notion that a picture tells a thousand words is set to make its world premiere at the St James Theatre this summer.

Exposure The Musical – Life Through A Lens runs for a limited season from July 16 until August 27 and with its unique partnership with Getty Images, the production is able to feature iconic and compelling imagery from one of the world’s most remarkable collections.

Matthew Butson, vice president, Getty Images Archive says: “Imagery is the universal language of our time and Getty Images believes that pictures have the power to move the world.

“We are thrilled to partner with Exposure and we are extremely excited at the prospect of our imagery being used – both creatively and innovatively – within a theatrical setting.”

The show follows a young photographer Jimmy Tucker as he faces the biggest and most exciting challenge of his life when a stranger commissions him to find and shoot the seven deadly sins alive and kicking in modern London.

But in a break-neck race through the night, a series of extraordinary encounters involving girlfriends, family history and the intoxicating cult of celebrity begin to reveal that there’s a whole lot more at stake than just money.

The promoters say: “Wearing a breathtaking, contemporary score around a dazzlingly witty portrait of the price of fame, Exposure is an electrifying and brilliantly original new musical that will capture your heart… and just maybe your soul.”

The show is written by Mike Dyer – book, lyrics and music – who has extensive experience in the music industry both as a performer and writer but is best known for playing Casey Hogan in EastEnders.

As a writer he has worked with star names including Diana Ross, Huey Lewis and Eric Clapton. He played the narrator in the multi-award winning musical Blood Brothers, with further stage work including Jesus Christ Superstar (Plato/Caiaphas) and Notre Dame de Paris (Frollo/Quasimodo).

Exposure The Musical – Life Through A Lens runs at the St James Theatre from July 16 until August 27. For more details you can visit the website exposurethemusical.com

MOVING ON: Dane Baptiste has become one of the most talked about comics around
Is it a nerd? Is it insane? No, it’s a toxic superhero

FULL casting has been announced for the European premiere of The Toxic Avenger at the Southwark Playhouse. The exciting new musical will boast a stellar cast of West End stars for the production, which was dubbed a “Rock and roll romp” during its Broadway run.

Mark Anderson stars as Toxie, The Toxic Avenger. He has most recently wowed audiences at the Prince of Wales Theatre as Elder Thomas in the original West End cast of The Book of Mormon for two years from 2013 to 2015. Other credits include Legally Blonde and Love Me Tender.

Anderson is joined by Hannah Grover as Sarah, Lizzi Hill as Ma Ferd, Marc Pickering as White Dude and Ashley Samuels as Black Dude.

The citizens of Tromaville are crying out for a hero – enter Melvin Ferd the Third, an aspiring earth scientist determined to clean up the toxic waste problem. But when a corrupt mayor and her government goons try to stop this heroic feat, Melvin is tossed into a vat of toxic waste and transformed into The Toxic Avenger, New Jersey’s first superhero!

Toxie is a seven-foot mutant freak with superhuman strength and a supersized heart to match. He’s out to save New Jersey, end global warming, woo the prettiest (blind – strength and a supersized heart to match. He’s out to save New Jersey, end global warming, woo the prettiest (blind –

The European premiere of this monster of a rock ’n’ roll musical comedy from the Tony Award-winning creative team behind Memphis, Joe DiPietro and David Bryan, is based on Lloyd Kaufman’s 1984 cult classic film from Troma Entertainment. It debuted off-Broadway on April 6, 2009, and won the Outer Critics Circle Award for Outstanding New Off-Broadway Musical. This production is presented by arrangement with Josef Weinberger Limited on behalf of Music Theatre International of New York.

Writer Joe DiPietro says: “The Toxic Avenger is a modern, musical superhero and the world leader in the fight against pollution, corruption and evil politicians. So how brilliant that he’s finally going where he’s needed most: London.”

The Toxic Avenger will open at the Southwark Playhouse on April 22. For more details, you can visit the theatre’s website southwarkplayhouse.co.uk

Show Boat steams into the West End

CASTING has been officially announced for the West End transfer of Show Boat. The classic musical proved to be huge success during its run at Sheffield’s Crucible Theatre and will transfer to the New London Theatre on April 9.

The show will star Malcolm Sinclair (Captain Andy Hawks) and Chris Peluso (Gaylord Ravenal), who will join original Sheffield cast members Gina Beck (Magnolia Hawks), Lucy Briers (Parthy Ann Hawks), Rebecca Trehearn (Julia La Verne), Emmanuel Kojin (Joe), Sandra Marvin (Queenie), Alex Young (Ellie May Chipley) and Danny Collins (Frank Schultz) in Daniel Evans’ five-star production.

Based on the novel Show Boat by Edna Ferber, the show is considered to be one of the most romantic musicals of all time. Set against the backdrop of America’s Deep South at the turn of the 20th century, Show Boat tells a powerful story of freedom, loyalty and above all, love.

Peluso (Ravenal) has recently been seen at the Prince Edward Theatre playing Chris in Miss Saigon when he made his West End debut. Previously his Broadway credits include Beautiful – The Carole King Musical, Assassins, Elton John’s Lestat and Mamma Mia! Beck’s theatre credits include the role of Glinda in Wicked, both in the West End and on tour in the US, Christine in The Phantom of the Opera at Her Majesty’s Theatre and Cosette in Les Misérables at the Queen’s Theatre.

Spanning 40 pivotal years in American history, this epic musical follows the lives and loves of three generations aboard the Cotton Blossom show boat as it plies the Mississippi River – and features the timeless songs ‘Ol Man River, Make Believe and Can’t Help Lovin’ Dat Man with music by Jerome Kern and book and lyrics by Oscar Hammerstein II.

Show Boat will run at the New London Theatre from April 9. If you would like more details you can visit the website showboatmusical.co.uk
**Talk of the town**

**Sunset Boulevard *****

If the opening night performance is anything to go by, West End history will be made over the next five weeks with the truly remarkable revival of Sir Andrew Lloyd Webber’s *Sunset Boulevard*, writer Nicky Sweetland.

The cast is led by the sensuous Glen Close, who won a Tony award as the fading movie star Norma Desmond when she played the role on Broadway. But there is nothing faded about this real-life Hollywood icon, who is thoroughly captivating from start to finish and puts on a performance not to be missed.

The show is based on the classic 1950s Billy Wilder film and sees struggling writer Joe Gillis happen across the movie star’s Sunset Boulevard mansion in a bid to escape the debt consequences. A complicated relationship is born between the star desperate for approval and the writer who is enjoying the trappings of wealth but there are some unnerving consequences.

Michael Xavier is utterly absorbing as the tormented writer alongside the beautiful Siobhan Dillon as Betty Schaefer, whose vocals are simply gorgeous. Their duet, *Too Much in Love to Care*, is one of my all-time favourites and is a real work of art. As the former director-turned-butler Max Von Mayerling, Fred Johanson impresses with a grand, earthy resonance, but it’s Close who quite rightly inspires the biggest audience response with a momentous master class in stage craft.

The English National Opera’s semi-staged production enjoys a full orchestra which means the sumptuous score, which is in my opinion Lloyd Webber’s greatest work, allows this exquisite cast to soar and inspires a feeling of utter joy to permeate throughout the auditorium.

Forget the theatrical event of the year, this is the theatrical event of the century.

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1. The Council of the London Borough of Hammersmith and Fulham hereby gives notice that in order to facilitate the removal of a tower crane from the above named road, it intends to make an Order which would prohibit vehicular traffic in a section of the above named road.

2. Whist works are in progress, or whilst the authorised traffic signs are displayed, no person shall cause any vehicle to proceed, stop, wait, load or unload in a section of Beavoir Lane between its junctions with King Street and Nos. 23 - 31, Beavoir Lane.

3. An alternative route for traffic in article 2 would be in place via St Peter’s Avenue and King Street.

4. Exemptions would be provided in the Order to permit reasonable access to premises, so far as it is practical without interference with the execution of the said work and for vehicles, any vehicle being used in connection with police, fire or ambulance purposes and anything done with the permission of the police or a constable in uniform.

5. The Order would come into operation on the 29th April 2016 and would be valid for a maximum period of 18 months or until works are completed, whichever is the sooner.

6. Works would be expected to commence on Friday 29th April 2016 and last for 1 day. A back up date has been scheduled for Friday, 6th May 2016. The dates specified are for guidance and informative purposes only and works may extend outside these dates.

Dated this 16th day of March 2016
Nicholas Ruxton-Boyle
Chief Transport Planner
Transport and Highways

London Borough of Hammersmith and Fulham
Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984
Section 14(1)
(Beavoir Lane)

LEYTONSTONE ROAD TRAFFIC REGULATION ACT 1984
SECTION 14(1)
(BRACKENBURY ROAD)

TEMPORARY PROHIBITION OF TRAFFIC

1. The Council of the London Borough of Hammersmith and Fulham gives notice that in order to facilitate utility works to be carried out in the above named roads, it intends to make an Order which would prohibit vehicular traffic in a section of the above named roads.

2. Whist works are in progress, or whilst the authorised traffic signs are displayed, no person shall cause any vehicle to proceed, stop, wait, load or unload in Brackenbury Road.

3. An alternative route for traffic in article 2 would be in place via Pinner Road, Iffley Road and Aldensley Road.

4. Exemptions would be provided in the Order to permit reasonable access to premises, so far as it is practical without interference with the execution of the said work and for vehicles, any vehicle being used in connection with police, fire or ambulance purposes and anything done with the permission of the police or a constable in uniform.

5. The Order would come into operation on the 29th April 2016 and would be valid for a maximum period of 18 months or until works are completed, whichever is the sooner.

6. Works would be expected to commence on Tuesday 3rd May 2016 and last for 2 days. The dates specified are for guidance and informative purposes only and works may extend outside these dates.

Dated this 30th day of March 2016
Nicholas Ruxton-Boyle
Chief Transport Planner
Transport and Highways

LONDON BOROUGH OF
HAMMERSMITH AND FULHAM

ROAD TRAFFIC REGULATION ACT 1984
SECTION 14(1)
(BEAVOIR LANE)

TEMPORARY PROHIBITION OF TRAFFIC

1. The Council of the London Borough of Hammersmith and Fulham hereby gives notice that in order to facilitate the removal of a tower crane from the above named road, it intends to make an Order which would prohibit vehicular traffic in a section of the above named road.

2. Whist works are in progress, or whilst the authorised traffic signs are displayed, no person shall cause any vehicle to proceed, stop, wait, load or unload in a section of Beavoir Lane between its junctions with King Street and Nos. 23 - 31, Beavoir Lane.

3. An alternative route for traffic in article 2 would be in place via St Peter’s Avenue and King Street.

4. Exemptions would be provided in the Order to permit reasonable access to premises, so far as it is practical without interference with the execution of the said work and for vehicles, any vehicle being used in connection with police, fire or ambulance purposes and anything done with the permission of the police or a constable in uniform.

5. The Order would come into operation on the 29th April 2016 and would be valid for a maximum period of 18 months or until works are completed, whichever is the sooner.

6. Works would be expected to commence on Friday 29th April 2016 and last for 1 day. A back up date has been scheduled for Friday, 6th May 2016. The dates specified are for guidance and informative purposes only and works may extend outside these dates.

Dated this 16th day of March 2016
Nicholas Ruxton-Boyle
Chief Transport Planner
Transport and Highways
**PUBLIC NOTICES**

**LONDON BOROUGH OF HAMMERSMITH AND FULHAM**

**ROAD TRAFFIC REGULATION ACT 1984 SECTION 14(1)**

**ARGON MEWS**

**TEMPORARY PROHIBITION OF TRAFFIC**

1. The Council of the London Borough of Hammersmith and Fulham hereby gives notice that in order to facilitate utility installation works to be carried out in the above named road, it intends to make an Order effect of which would prohibit vehicular traffic in the above named road.

2. Whilst works are in progress, or whilst the authorised traffic signs are displayed, no person shall cause any vehicle to proceed, stop, wait, load or unload in Argon Meys.

3. An alternative route for traffic in article 2 would not be required.

4. Exemptions would be provided in the Order to permit reasonable access to premises, so far as it is practical without interference with the execution of the said work and for works vehicles, any vehicle being used in connection with police, fire or ambulance purposes and anything done with the permission or at the direction of a police constable in uniform.

5. The Order would come into operation on the 25th April 2016 and would be valid for a maximum period of 18 months or until works are completed, whichever is the sooner.

6. Works would be expected to commence on Tuesday 25th April 2016 and last for 3 days. The dates specified are for guidance and informative purposes only and works may extend outside these dates.

Dated this 29th day of March 2016.

Nicholas Ruxton-Boyle
Chief Transport Planner
Transport and Highways

**BEAUFORT MEWS**

**TEMPORARY PROHIBITION OF TRAFFIC**

1. The Council of the London Borough of Hammersmith and Fulham hereby gives notice that in order to facilitate utility inspection works to be carried out in a section of the above named road, it intends to make an Order the effect of which prohibits vehicular traffic in a section of the above named road.

2. Whilst works are in progress, or whilst the authorised traffic signs are displayed, no person shall cause any vehicle to proceed, stop, wait, load or unload in Beaufort Mews.

3. An alternative route for traffic in article 2 would not be required.

4. Exemptions would be provided in the Order to permit reasonable access to premises, so far as it is practical without interference with the execution of the said work and for works vehicles, any vehicle being used in connection with police, fire or ambulance purposes and anything done with the permission or at the direction of a police constable in uniform.

5. The Order would come into operation on the 25th April 2016 and would be valid for a maximum period of 18 months or until works are completed, whichever is the sooner.

6. Works would be expected to commence on Tuesday 25th April 2016 and last for 2 days. The dates specified are for guidance and informative purposes only and works may extend outside these dates.

Dated this 29th day of March 2016.

Nicholas Ruxton-Boyle
Chief Transport Planner
Transport and Highways

**KING STREET**

**TEMPORARY PROHIBITION OF TRAFFIC**

1. The Council of the London Borough of Hammersmith and Fulham hereby gives notice that in order to facilitate utility installation works to be carried out in the above named road, it intends to make an Order the effect of which would prohibit vehicular traffic in a section of the above named road.

2. Whilst works are in progress, or whilst the authorised traffic signs are displayed, no person shall cause any vehicle to proceed, stop, wait, load or unload in King Street.

3. An alternative route for traffic in article 2 would not be required.

4. Exemptions would be provided in the Order to permit reasonable access to premises, so far as it is practical without interference with the execution of the said work and for works vehicles, any vehicle being used in connection with police, fire or ambulance purposes and anything done with the permission or at the direction of a police constable in uniform.

5. The Order would come into operation on the 24th April 2016 and would be valid for a maximum period of 18 months or until works are completed, whichever is the sooner.

6. Works would be expected to commence on Sunday 24th April 2016 and last for 2 days. The dates specified are for guidance and informative purposes only and works may extend outside these dates.

Dated this 30th day of March 2016.

Nicholas Ruxton-Boyle
Chief Transport Planner
Transport and Highways

**LONDON BOROUGH OF HAMMERSMITH AND FULHAM**

**ROAD TRAFFIC REGULATION ACT 1984 SECTION 14(1)**

**FULHAM PALACE ROAD**

**TEMPORARY PROHIBITION OF TRAFFIC**

1. The Council of the London Borough of Hammersmith and Fulham hereby gives notice that in order to facilitate utility installation works to be carried out in the above named road, it intends to make an Order the effect of which would prohibit vehicular traffic in a section of the above named road.

2. Whilst works are in progress, or whilst the authorised traffic signs are displayed, no person shall cause any vehicle to proceed, stop, wait, load or unload in an area adjacent to Fulham Palace Road.

3. A diversion for pedestrian traffic in article 2 would be provided via the western footpath on Fulham Palace Road.

4. Exemptions would be provided in the Order to permit reasonable access to premises, so far as it is practical without interference with the execution of the said work and for works vehicles, any vehicle being used in connection with police, fire or ambulance purposes and anything done with the permission or at the direction of a police constable in uniform.

5. The Order would come into operation on the 25th April 2016 and would be valid for a maximum period of 18 months or until works are completed, whichever is the sooner.

6. Works would be expected to commence on Monday 25th April 2016 and last for 5 days. The dates specified are for guidance and informative purposes only and works may extend outside these dates.

Dated this 29th day of March 2016.

Nicholas Ruxton-Boyle
Chief Transport Planner
Transport and Highways

**KING STREET**

**TEMPORARY PROHIBITION OF TRAFFIC**

1. The Council of the London Borough of Hammersmith and Fulham hereby gives notice that in order to facilitate utility installation works to be carried out in the above named road, it intends to make an Order the effect of which would prohibit vehicular traffic in a section of the above named road.

2. Whilst works are in progress, or whilst the authorised traffic signs are displayed, no person shall cause any vehicle to proceed, stop, wait, load or unload in King Street.

3. An alternative route for traffic in article 2 would not be required.

4. Exemptions would be provided in the Order to permit reasonable access to premises, so far as it is practical without interference with the execution of the said work and for works vehicles, any vehicle being used in connection with police, fire or ambulance purposes and anything done with the permission or at the direction of a police constable in uniform.

5. The Order would come into operation on the 24th April 2016 and would be valid for a maximum period of 18 months or until works are completed, whichever is the sooner.

6. Works would be expected to commence on Sunday 24th April 2016 and last for 2 days. The dates specified are for guidance and informative purposes only and works may extend outside these dates.

Dated this 30th day of March 2016.

Nicholas Ruxton-Boyle
Chief Transport Planner
Transport and Highways

**LONDON BOROUGH OF HAMMERSMITH AND FULHAM**

**ROAD TRAFFIC REGULATION ACT 1984 SECTION 14(1)**

**BURLINGTON ROAD**

**TEMPORARY PROHIBITION OF TRAFFIC**

1. The Council of the London Borough of Hammersmith and Fulham hereby gives notice that in order to facilitate Thames Water works to be carried out in the above named road, it intends to make an Order the effect of which would prohibit vehicular traffic in a section the above named road.

2. Whilst works are in progress, or whilst the authorised traffic signs are displayed, no person shall cause any vehicle to proceed, stop, wait, load or unload in a section of Burlington Road between its junctions with Fulham Road and Rigault Road.

3. An alternative route for traffic in article 2 would be in place via Rigault Road, Landridge Road and Fulham Road.

4. Exemptions would be provided in the Order to permit reasonable access to premises, so far as it is practical without interference with the execution of the said work and for works vehicles, any vehicle being used in connection with police, fire or ambulance purposes and anything done with the permission or at the direction of a police constable in uniform.

5. The Order would come into operation on the 25th April 2016 and would be valid for a maximum period of 18 months or until works are completed, whichever is the sooner.

6. Works would be expected to commence on Monday 25th April 2016 and last for 5 days. The dates specified are for guidance and informative purposes only and works may extend outside these dates.

Dated this 3rd day of March 2016.

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Closing date 8th April 2016
Replay would have proved Rangers right

LIKE a many other managers throughout the country, and no doubt across Europe, Queens Park Rangers boss Jimmy Floyd Hasselbaink had to curse an official’s mistake that cost his team a perfectly legitimate goal – and a league point – last weekend.

The moment of controversy came in the 71st minute of Friday’s 3-2 home defeat by Middlesbrough, when Seb Polter’s goal was ruled out by the linesman who mistakenly thought the ball had gone out of play before Junior Hoilett crossed it from the byline to the German for an easy tap-in. Unfortunately for the official, the Sky TV cameras were at Loftus Road to highlight his error to an audience of millions.

An aggrieved Hasselbaink said: “I don’t, like to mean about the officials, but the big decisions aren’t going our way at the moment. That is a fact.

“We had a perfectly good goal disallowed tonight.

“Last weekend (at Preston) we had a decision go against us when the referee only showed a yellow card when it should have been a red card.

“The problem before that it was something else.

“You can sympathise with Hasselbaink and all the other managers, whose teams are wronged – their jobs are on the line – but only to a point. I’ll never stop banging on about the need for video replays to decide all the big calls in the game.

“Premier League and Championship clubs cannot embrace this long overdue change from the start of next season. Better to use technology to get some of these decisions right none than to make them. Cricket, tennis and rugby all have benefited from video replay reviews – why doesn’t professional football?

“Yes, the Premier League brought in -line -technology a few years back and it’s been a proven success. But the authorities still haven’t gone far enough in eliminating the inevitable human errors that decide matches.

**Disrupt flow**

The main argument against the introduction of video replay is that it will disrupt the flow of matches. No nonsense. It would make the VRR no longer than referees now spend trying to placate groups of irate players contesting every controversial decision given against them. How would it take for a tennis umpire to review a replay of a decision call, or a fourth umpire of a cricket Test match to check an w/o appeal? If anything, these reviews would be often added to the drama for both the spectators and TV audience.

Bosse at Sky and BT Sport, who pay billions for TV rights, won’t push for the technology in controversial moments to be settled swiftly correctly, or as correct as they possibly can be where cameras are used. That would deny their commentators, studio pundits and viewers the opportunity to debate endless replays of incidents which become major talking points for days afterwards.

But the English game is becoming increasingly quicker and officials need help now more than ever before.

“We are often dismayed by what we see as incompetence on the part of the match officials who have never played the game, as a reasonable level. But you have to feel a degree of sympathy for them, too. Not only do they have to maintain excellent levels of fitness to keep up with a fast-moving game, they are often put on the spot – and subjected to abuse by fans – through the cynical actions of cheating players who feign injury, dive and try every other trick in the book to con them.

“Of course it’s a disappointing result to take away from Hasselbaink. Their first goal came from an individual mistake – it is what it is – but we came back and scored a deserved equaliser through a good goal by (Jamie) Mackie.

“But we didn’t start the second half well. I think if you analyse my time here, we don’t concede goals from corners and tonight we’ve conceded two. That’s disappointing.

“We switched off, which is unlike us from set-pieces. We switched off after the penalty save from Alex (Smorny), and you can’t do that. It’s a disappointment. “But then after that, we kept going. We kept playing away at them.”

**Hasselbaink’s feel his team was robbed**

“In a very difficult season, but we had a fair goal disallowed, but that still didn’t deter us and we got another good goal back. It was a lovely strike from Chem. He added: “Yes, we’ve lost the game tonight, but I can take positives from it. We showed character, we showed spirit – but the result was not with us.

“I think the QPR fans’ reaction at full-time showed they appreciated aspects of our performance.

“Middlesbrough’s staff and players know we gave them a difficult game tonight – and they were fortunate to get the three points.”

After visiting Leeds, where JFH was once a star player, on Tuesday, Hoops will host London rivals Chorlton at Loftus Road on Saturday.

**LOFTUS ROAD RANGERS REVIEW**

With Tony McDonald

**Britton loses cancer battle**

**FORMER CHELSEA midfielder Ian Britton has died, aged 61, following a long battle with prostate cancer.**

Popular Britton made 289 appearances and scored 34 goals during a 10-year spell with Blues between 1972 and 1982. He left Blues in 1982. Following short spells with Dundee United and Arbroath, he spent three years at Blackpool before moving to Division Four under Sykes, who he moved from relegation in the Conference to scoring the winning goal against Leyton Orient in May 1987.

Despite finishing his career in the north-west, where he opened a fitness centre, Britton never lost his love for Chelsea and played for Chelsea Old Boys, alongside former team-mates, on numerous occasions.

**CHELSEA from back page**

Although they have no trophies to play for in their last seven games of the season, Miazga is convinced Chelsea’s future is in good hands.

“Yeah, this club has brilliant players with world-class experience and also young up-and-coming players, like Ruben Loftus-Cheek and Jake Clarke-Salter and a lot of other young talents who have been trained with the first team. The club is in good hands. We just have to continue to work on the pitch and focus ourselves and contribute anyway we can.”

With Miazga is full of the confidence of youth. Hidink, as ever, takes a more pragmatic view of his performance but is still encouraged for Chelsea’s future.

The 69-year-old, who will leave Stamford Bridge again at the end of the season, said of his American debutant: “Miazga had a rather comfortable game, although it is not easy to play against Gudelst. But he did well, he was good in his duels. I think sometimes he could have made more space between himself and Gudelst but he showed he has potential.”

“If he is one for the future, then? Hiddink replied: “Yes, but what is the future? He’s young. He looks a bit older than he is, but he is young. The club have to decide what to do for next year but it good to think that for his future.”

Blues are 1-0 up from the first leg and kick-off is 7.45pm.

They warmed up nicely by coming behind to dispatch Reading 6-2 at the weekend.

A brace of goals from Jack Maddos and Ike Ugbo, and one apiece from Miro Hulm and Luke McCormick, was enough to raise confidence ahead of what will be a very tough match.

*Hidink believes serving up game-time for the youngsters will be a good thing for the incoming Conte.*

“When you have an academy like Chelsea have had for a long time, then as a consequence it is not easy, but you must give the young players a chance to step up. That is what we are doing now.”

**THAT sort of encouragement is just what Under-18s coach Edwards will be imparting on his charges as they face Blackburn Rovers at Stamford Bridge on Friday in the second leg of the FA Youth Cup semi-final.**

Blues are 1-0 up from the first leg and kick-off is 7.45pm.

They warmed up nicely by coming behind to dispatch Reading 6-2 at the weekend.

A brace of goals from Jack Maddos and Ike Ugbo, and one apiece from Miro Hulm and Luke McCormick, was enough to raise confidence ahead of what will be a very tough match.

Paul Lagan
MATT Miazga is ready and fully prepared to be thrown into action again on Saturday as Chelsea head to South Wales to face Swansea City at the Liberty Stadium.

The 20-year-old American, bought in January from MLS side New York Red Bulls, only knew on Saturday, the day of the game against Aston Villa, that he would be playing after minor injuries sidelined John Terry and Gary Cahill.

With Kurt Zouma recovering from his season-ending injury, Miazga will be keen to show his talents and impress the new manager, who is widely expected to be Antonio Conte.

Italian national team chief Conte could even be announced as successor to likeable interim boss Gus Hiddink this week.

Miazga is self-assured and came across ‘The Pond’ with a reputation for saying what is on his mind, but on this occasion he was firmly on message.

Asked if he was ready to make his debut in Blues’ emphatic 4-0 win at Villa Park, he said: “I just control what I can control, which is work hard on the pitch and in training and hopefully give the manager a decision to make,” he said.

“I am focused on myself. If I continue to get chances, I will take them.”

Work hard

“To be fair, I am always ready. Once my name was called upon I had to be ready. I just got to the club, a world-class club with big players, but if my chance comes I am going to be ready and work hard on the training pitch.”

Naturally, he was delighted with his debut performance, albeit against relegation-bound Aston Villa, a side rooted firmly at the bottom of the Premier League and bereft of confidence and points.

“I am very pleased”, he said. “The boys did fantastic. All that matters was the three points.”

“It was told on Saturday morning that I would be playing. There were a few injuries but that’s football. I have to be ready and contribute to the team in any way I can.”

The 6ft 4in centre-back had a tricky start, with Rudy Gestede out-jumping him twice early on, but he gradually got into his stride, ably assisted by skipper and defensive partner Branislav Ivanovic.

“In training I always pair up with different people and so I know my team-mates well now,” he said. “I have been here for two months, so it was an easy transition.”

The move from States-side ‘soccer’ to the rigours of elite European football meant Miazga had to train harder than the rest of his team-mates when he arrived.

“In the beginning I did a lot of double sessions, because I was just coming in – not even from pre-season, but from what was my off-season,” he explained.

“So it was good to go with the national team recently and get some minutes and game fitness under my belt.”

Entering the Villa Park cauldron, where angry home fans continue to step up their protests against the club’s American owner Randy Lerner and his fellow countryman Brad Guzman was the subject of a few humiliating catcalls, was a new experience for Miazga.

“Premier League – but retrieve it inches from the post was met by McCormack, whose side-foot volley dropped perfectly into the path of Dembélé, who drilled the winner from six yards.

“Talking ahead of Tuesday’s visit to Preston and Saturday’s home game against Cardiff, Jokanović added: “The next cup final is against Preston. We will rest our bodies and our minds and be ready for the next game in three days.”

“I am very pleased”, he said. “The boys did fantastic. All that matters was the three points.”

Playing Swansea City will be very different to Villa. With 37 points from 32 games leaving them in 15th place, the Swans are not completely out of the relegation fight just yet.

With seven wins and eight draws, Chelsea are unbeaten in 15 league games since Hiddink took charge – the best run by a top flight side this season – and sit in 10th place, just outside Europe League contention.

Should Miazga find himself partnering Ivanovic again on Saturday, he now knows the differences between MLS and a proper Premier League encounter.

“The pace is much faster in the Premier League,” he admitted. “But as soon as we scored the first goal (at Villa), we took control of the game and it was cruise control. The guys in midfield took over, so all I had to do was spray the ball to the midfielders. My job was just to stay focused on defence.”

A bit nervous

“I was nervous, of course. This is the highest level and leading up to professional games you are always a bit nervous and anxious but once you step on the field, you do the business. I was ready and I was excited.”

“Gestede was very good in the air and I had to be mentally ready, either to step away from him or drop and collect it. It was kind of mind games but he is a good player.”

Miazga wasn’t aware if his Chelsea debut had made news in the USA.

“I haven’t checked my phone yet,” he said afterwards, “but I am sure with a young player like me debuting in the Premier League, there is going to be some people putting it out in the media. But that doesn’t really affect me. The Premier League is huge now in America and the rest of the world.”