

CHISWICK LOCALS



KEEP IT LOCAL!

Welcome to the Spring issue of Chiswick Locals. As usual, we are showcasing a wide array of businesses, some with excellent seasonal offers.

The Green Room at W6 Garden Centre is dedicated to houseplants – and now's the perfect time to visit. Readers can claim a 15% discount (over £10) on any purchase at The Green Room if they mention our feature on pages 4/5. Also, throughout March, The Cove Spa has 25% savings on its popular CACI facial and body treatments (page 24), a proven method of reducing fine lines and wrinkles.

Finally, we were sad to hear of the sudden death of Rachid Kader, owner of Gautier on the High Road. Rachid was a charming man and we would like to send our condolences to his family and colleague, Nancy.

Neil

Neil McKelvie, Editor

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Ana Ortiz



THE SOUND OF MUSIC

Ana is patient, extremely talented and fun. A wonderful inspirational teacher.’ – Amrita Agrawal (Guitar)

In 2005 Ana Ortiz took a month off from her flourishing career as a singer-songwriter and music teacher in Buenos Aires to visit a cousin in London. ‘One night, we went for dinner at Ciro’s in Knightsbridge, I was persuaded to get up and play and, afterwards, offered regular gigs. I stayed another three months, life took over and I’m still here in Grove Park!’

The birth of her son prompted Ana to change focus. ‘I couldn’t travel to play concerts and record sessions any longer, so I put an advert offering music classes in my local Post Office and at Chiswick library, received a few enquiries and everything has grown from there.’

Since then, Ana has personally recruited a group of talented

music tutors who travel around West London to visit students in their own homes to teach classes – Ana herself covers electric and classical guitar, piano, keyboards and voice. ‘If you want to play the balalaika, I’ll find someone to come and teach you,’ she smiles.

‘Most importantly, my colleagues share my energy and passion for unlocking talent: our philosophy is to give people the tools and confidence to find their own voice through music. We judge our success by their progress.’

Ana and her team teach every age and ability – no previous experience is needed – and all musical styles from classical and opera to rock and pop. ‘We make sure the lessons are exciting and fun and I like to

record them – it’s so important to listen back to the sound. Of course, we also tailor our approach to help those taking auditions or grade exams in boards such as Abrsm, Trinity and Rockscool.’

Every year Ana gathers her students together to stage a concert. ‘We are building a family of musicians and it’s lovely for them to play together. Music means the world to me and I want everyone to feel that same joy.’

Instruments include:

- * Piano & Keyboards
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- * Music Theory

Ana Ortiz Music

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Paul Holt



EXPLORING THE HOUSEPLANT JUNGLE...

*Paul Holt has created an exciting indoor oasis called
The Green Room at the W6 Garden Centre in Ravenscourt Park*

In January 2019, Paul Holt, the Creative Director of W6 (and N1) Garden Centre, was killing time before meeting Louise Alhadeff, the Manager, at the Ravenscourt Park site.

‘I was looking at the old railway arch right next to the W6 Café and wondering what we could do with it,’ he recalls. ‘We had tried selling furniture, and that hadn’t worked; Leo, the Café Manager, had looked at using it, and that hadn’t worked either.

‘Then I noticed a single cheese plant abandoned in the back corner. It had been there all winter with no heating and virtually no light, and yet was still alive. I thought, if it can survive, why don’t we take out the doors, re-model the interior and convert the whole arch into a space in which to

display and sell high quality houseplants. Fortunately, Louise agreed with me!’

A year on from that flash of inspiration, the original brick railway arch has been impeccably restored and The Green Room – as it was christened – is flourishing with a floor-to-ceiling indoor jungle of houseplants and stylish pots, containers and accessories. It has proved hugely popular with the Garden Centre’s customers. ‘Having plants around simply lifts the spirits,’ smiles Paul. ‘They are so important in an urban setting; even if you only have a balcony, they provide a fundamental connection with nature.’

Having studied Horticulture and worked as a Nursery Manager, Paul was introduced to Beryl Henderson, who had recently opened the

N1 Garden Centre, through a fortuitous mutual acquaintance. 'Beryl needed a temporary Garden Centre Manager and, by pure chance, I'd moved to London with no job.' That was 20 years ago and today, as the business's Creative Director, Paul travels throughout Europe, sourcing plants and accessories.

'Of late, there has been such a surge of interest in houseplants,' he says. 'They offer so much: whether tall, small, trailing, climbing or hanging, they make perfect natural decoration for any home or office. We sell a wide cross-section – from the well-known to the more exotic – to suit every lifestyle. For example, if you travel for work, you don't want a houseplant that demands constant attention; also, since we opened The Green Room at W6, we've found that Insta collectors – they tend to be the younger generation – love our more unusual specimens.'

The friendly Garden Centre team are always on-hand to give expert advice on caring for the houseplants and Paul ensures that the range of accessories is constantly refreshed. 'I always try to reflect current colour trends and because so many people pop into the W6 Café regularly, I need to keep it interesting.'

And finally, which houseplant would Paul recommend? 'It's so hard to choose, but I love *Jatropha Podagrica*, commonly called The Gout Plant. It's a succulent with a swollen stem, hence the name, small rhubarb-like leaves and neon orange and yellow flowers that come out as a stalk. It's a real curiosity and a fantastic talking point – I've had one since I was 16 years-old!'

SPECIAL OFFER FOR READERS:
W6 Garden Centre is offering a 15% discount on all The Green Room plants and products when you mention this article (over £10). A fantastic range of outdoor plants is also ready for Spring planting (a local delivery and ordering service is available).

W6 Garden Centre and Café

17 Ravenscourt Avenue, W6 0SL

020 8563 7112

info@w6gc.co.uk

www.w6gardencentre.co.uk

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Kristina, Celeste and Capucine

SOLVING THE MATHS PUZZLE

Mathnasium provides children with individually tailored teaching that you can count on

Emmanuelle Tsoulies was curious when she noticed that Mathnasium had opened on the High Road. It struck a chord with the Grove Park resident because SAT tests were looming for Celeste and Capucine, her 10 year-old non-identical twins.

‘According to their teachers, one of the girls was doing OK in class but lacked confidence in exams and the other was getting behind,’ recalls Emanuelle. ‘We popped in

and talked to the Mathnasium team and they explained how their method worked and how it could provide extra support. We thought, why not try it for a month or so and see how it goes?’

The answer was, very well. ‘The teaching was individual and reassuring and the girls enjoyed it – in particular, they were super-excited by the reward system! They both scored an impressive 107 in their SATs and they

still go three times a week. Mathnasium has now become part of our family routine. I’d happily recommended it to other parents.’

Devised by Larry Martinek, an experienced US teacher, Mathnasium has been transforming how children aged 5-16 learn maths for over a decade (there are nearly 1000 centres worldwide). ‘All new students take a customised assessment and that enables us to determine their level of knowledge and devise a personal learning plan,’ explains Kristina Peno, the Manager of the Chiswick centre. ‘Children learn at their own pace, the lessons are one-to-one and they are flexible for the parents – you don’t have to pre-book. We can help with homework and we specialise in preparation for 11+, scholarship and GCSE exams.

‘Of course, all our tutors are maths experts but, most importantly, they are patient, make the learning process fun and create a friendly, positive environment. Also, they are always on hand to check progress and ensure that information is understood and retained.’

Should a little extra encouragement be needed Mathnasium has a reward for achievement policy, with incentives ranging from slime and toys to an iPhone. ‘Of course, getting a phone takes hard work and outstanding results,’ smiles Kristina.’

Mathnasium of Chiswick

261 Chiswick High Road,
W4 4PU / 020 7993 2234
chiswick@mathnasium.co.uk
www.mathnasium.co.uk/chiswick



Josu Badiola



COATS OF MANY COLOURS

Authentic period paints, contemporary colours and a bespoke home consultancy service... you'll be spoilt for choice at Craig & Rose

'When it comes to painting the downstairs loo, I've noticed that customers love to go a little crazy,' smiles Josu Badiola, the charming Manager of Craig & Rose's High Road showroom. 'The house might otherwise be refined, with tasteful neutral shades, but in the loo imaginations run riot with bold colours and striking effects. That's fun for us too.'

Originally from the Basque Country and a long-time W4 resident, Josu is an experienced interior designer and showroom manager. 'We opened in Chiswick in April 2018. This was Craig & Rose's first retail store and we've had a lovely welcome.' The company was founded in 1829 by James Craig and Hugh Rose and became

renowned for manufacturing superior paints. Today, it combines that heritage with the latest industry technology to offer a dazzling variety of options for the modern home.

'Our premium vintage collection is the 1829,' explains Josu. 'It has 110 period colours, all sourced from the archives, which mix smoothly and give superb coverage. Complementing the 1829 are the Tintable and Artisan Effects ranges: the former is a new concept featuring 485 strong, contemporary colours; the latter is an exciting collection of decorative paints and finishes, such as metallic and spray effects, glitter glazes and marbling. We also have a book – we call it the Atlas – with 5000 colours which we can

mix in store and customers are welcome to bring in a colour sample and we'll scan it to achieve the best match.'

Josu and his friendly team are always happy to sit down over a coffee, answer questions and give advice. 'We do emphasise the importance of sanding down walls, sealing them with an undercoat and checking the colours *in situ*,' he says.

'In addition, we provide a bespoke home consultancy service. Our in-house expert is Sara Faulkner and she visits clients at home and works with them to devise colour schemes that suit the lighting, furniture and accessories.

'We're proud of the quality of our products; it's very difficult to leave Craig & Rose without the exact colour you want.'

Craig & Rose Showroom
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www.craigandrose.com



CHISWICK'S NUMBER ONE PROPERTY TEAM

With 413 years combined residence locally and 235 years property industry experience, no one knows and serves Chiswick better...

According to James Matthews, co-founder of Whitman & Co estate agency, there's no secret to the company's consistent success in the local market: 'Our aim has always been to build a close-knit team that focuses solely on Chiswick and, most importantly, knows the area street-by-street. It's a simple philosophy, but it has stood us in good stead.'

Taken together, Whitman & Co's 13-person staff has clocked up 413 years of living in the area – it helps that six of them are West London born and bred – and over 235 years experience in the property industry. 'It was only recently that we sat down to do the maths,' smiles Sales Director, Chris Chalmers. 'I must admit, we were surprised by the totals.'

No one better epitomises the 'keep it local' philosophy than Chris himself, who joined the

company in 2002. 'My great-grandparents bought our family home in Prebend Gardens in 1926; my grandmother moved in when she was eight years-old, my mother was born there and so was I.'

James and co-founder Russell Savage met at long-gone estate agency Tyser Greenwood and bought Whitman & Co in 1995 (the company was founded in the 1920s by Colonel Whitman, who was also a coal merchant). Today, together with Chris and Jeremy Day, the newest team member and a Grove Park resident for 29 years, they lead sales, letting and commercial departments from the same office on Turnham Green Terrace.

The Whitman & Co approach clearly still delivers impressive results. According to the latest verified *Rightmove* statistics, the company

is the Chiswick market leader for sales – a position that it has held for over three years – and, since last August, it has also been number one in lettings.

‘With valuations, we are always realistic,’ says Russell. ‘Over the years, I’ve seen countless examples of properties being valued astronomically to secure an instruction. If that’s the case, we pass. We quote figures that we’re convinced we can achieve and that pays dividends in the long run. Also, we’re transparent; we don’t put clients under pressure, we flag up issues and we try to solve them without fuss. If you’re straightforward, people will come back to you.’

Since he started off in the lettings department, Chris has seen the same clients return time and again. ‘What’s fascinating is that you catch up with them at different stages of the property-buying cycle – from rentals to buying a first home and then moving into a family house. Over the last 18 years, I’ve been a part of their lives. That also epitomises what we’re about; customers know that they’ll see a familiar face and receive a friendly service.’

As a successful business, Whitman & Co has always believed in investing in the community, increasing its involvement year on year. ‘We’re always delighted to help if we can,’ says Chris. ‘Currently, we sponsor Chiswick Cricket Club and Chiswick Rugby Club juniors, support the Bedford Park Festival, school fetes and street parties, choirs and charities and, last year, we were delighted to assist Abundance London with the hugely successful Turnham Green piazza project.’

‘The Whitman’s way is all about building relationships – that’s why people often pop into the office for a chat and advice about the market. No matter how busy we are, we keep it personal. Longevity is at the core of our business.’

Whitman & Co

5-7 Turnham Green Terrace, W4 1RG
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Steve Winter



HOME FROM HOME

Chiswick Nursing Centre offers compassionate care and excellent facilities in a friendly environment

Chatting to Steve Winter, Director of Chiswick Nursing Centre, I hadn't expected the conversation to turn to Bollywood Wheelchair dancing. 'Along with the likes of music, art and film nights, it's been a popular addition to our activity programme,' he smiles.

The Centre, which is tucked away next to Ravenscourt Park, specialises in long-term residential and short-term respite care, 24-hour dementia and palliative nursing and post-operative rehab and convalescence. The building has five nursing floors (they are called suites), all with a comfortable communal lounge, dining room and space in which to socialise or sit quietly.

Elderly people no longer able to live independently are in the majority. 'We aim to create a safe, stimulating home with a real family atmosphere,' says Steve. 'Our hotel-quality rooms are en-suite, linen and towels are provided and permanent residents are welcome to bring their own furniture and possessions; we have a lovely garden with hens, a hairdressing salon, sensory room, physio gym and we organise trips to coffee shops, the park and the pub.'

The first step for any prospective new arrival (or their family) is to look around. 'If they are happy, we then assess the level of nursing input required,' explains Steve. 'Everyone has a personal care plan: as well as

clinical needs, that covers the time they like to get up, if they prefer a cooked or continental breakfast (chefs prepare a choice of fresh meals on site every day), a bath or shower and which group or individual activities they might enjoy.'

All the nurses are qualified to UK standards and the Centre has its own experienced in-house physio and occupational health team, who assist with rehabilitation from strokes and knee and hip replacements, and excellent links with external therapists and consultants.

'We treat people as individuals,' says Steve. 'If you enjoy a glass of wine at lunch, why not have one? Those little touches make such a difference. As far as possible, our residents live in the way that they always have.'

Chiswick Nursing Centre
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Louisa Chapman-Andrews

COOKING WITH CONFIDENCE

*Unleash your culinary creativity
and nourish your loved ones*

Louisa Chapman-Andrews founded Cook Folk in 2018 with the aim of teaching her students how to cook without relying on recipes. 'I encourage everyone to use ingredients imaginatively – and there's no such thing as making a mistake!'

Louisa, who ran a catering business, worked for grocer Melrose and Morgan and co-wrote *Good Food For Your Table: A Grocer's Guide*, specialises in one-to-one classes for students in their own homes. 'These lessons often start with a Kitchen Edit,' she explains. 'I can advise about making the best use of space, streamlining cupboards and equipment and preparing fridge and freezer staples. I then follow a bespoke teaching plan tailored to specific dietary and taste preferences. During the sessions there's no need to take notes: I provide a follow-up on the tips and techniques, so the student is free to cook and, afterwards, enjoy eating the results.'

'I also host group cookery workshops (for up to five people) in my own kitchen. Each one showcases fresh seasonal ingredients in recipes that can be adapted for any occasion. It's lovely to help people – whatever their previous culinary experience – to discover the joy of preparing delicious, healthy meals for family and friends.'

Cook Folk

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Paul and Deepak

SOUND ADVICE

‘Old-fashioned customer service with no salesmanship. Deepak is a knowledgeable guy with integrity and pride in his work.’ – George Curtis, a patient

Hearing aid audiologist Deepak Jagota moved his business in December – and he didn’t travel far. But, while Hearing Well may have only gone five doors down the High Road, there is no comparison in terms of quality and size between the premises.

‘My regulars have come in for appointments and been taken aback – in a positive way! I’ve been able to brand the clinic, I now have a comfortable reception area (Deepak’s charming father, Paul, is in charge of meeting and greeting), four times more space in the testing room and a second room in which I can expand my practice. I’ve been very fortunate.’

Deepak offers a comprehensive range of audiology services, from conducting hearing tests and prescribing hearing aids to micro-suction earwax removal and tinnitus advice.

Personal care is at the heart of his approach. ‘I allocate as much time as is necessary to each patient. It’s not a conveyor belt. If someone is a little nervous and needs longer to chat, that’s a pleasure.

‘Equally important, I provide a thorough aftercare package, including a six-monthly “F1 pitstop” to check everything is working well.’

Deepak consistently invests in state-of-the-art testing

equipment and, as an independent audiologist, he can choose the most suitable solutions from all the leading manufacturers.

‘If a particular device doesn’t prove quite suitable, I can easily recommend an excellent alternative. That flexibility also applies to the cost and cosmetic appearance of the hearing aid.’

In recent years, Deepak has volunteered regularly on audiology charity missions. In 2019, he returned to Armenia, where thousands of people have been treated successfully, for a third visit. ‘It’s always a wonderful experience. I love what I do. Life is too short to put up with a problem that reduces the joy of connecting with others.’

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40 Chiswick High Road,
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www.hearingwell.co.uk



Ashley Clements (right)

THE LOWDOWN ON LETTINGS

'First-class service all the way. If you're looking for an honest, professional lettings agent, then I can highly recommend Horton and Garton.' – R.Patel, landlord

Ashley Clements is Horton and Garton's Lettings Branch Manager for Chiswick and Hammersmith. Working closely with co-Directors, John Horton and Paul Cooney, last year Ashley and his team once again expanded the company's market share: in W4 and W6 combined they agreed 106 lets, 10% more than the nearest competitor.

'At Horton and Garton our philosophy is always to focus on the basics. As lettings specialists, we represent the landlord, so it's essential to make a good first impression; that means turning up on time for appointments, being polite and friendly and knowing exactly what you are talking about. It sounds very simple, but those basics go a long way and make the whole process much easier.

'Equally important is what happens after a rental agreement has been signed and the tenant has moved in. Our high level of service remains the same, we're pro-active and we're always there as an immediate point of contact for both the landlord and tenant.

That commitment is one reason we take our fees on a monthly basis, not upfront for the entire period of the tenancy. It's a statement from us to say that we want to build an ongoing relationship – we're not going to disappear once the tenant is in place.

'For landlords, there are three key concerns with any tenancy; the rental value, the calibre of the tenant and ensuring no void periods. All these elements are linked to setting an accurate, realistic rate for all parties.



We always research what similar properties are achieving in the same road, within the same development and within a radius of a quarter of mile. However, there's no substitute for local knowledge and our lettings team has many years' experience in West London – I myself have worked in the area since 2006.

'We also offer a comprehensive property management service. As the buffer between landlord and tenant, speed of response is vital. Tenants must feel confident that they will be looked after if, for example, there's a maintenance problem that needs fixing. Most disputes arise when issues aren't being addressed. Every six months we carry out a full property inspection, take photographs and produce a written report and, if we see a repair that needs doing, we make the landlord aware.

'In lettings, an increasingly important part of our role is to take care of tenancy regulations, such as gas safety and smoke alarm checks, energy performance certificates and local authority licensing.

The legislation is moving fast – the next major change will be mandatory electrical safety

reports – and we keep our landlords up-to-date about any action that needs to be taken.

'Thanks to word-of-mouth recommendations, we have a growing number of new landlords in W4 and we're fortunate to be working with some excellent properties. In terms of the market, there is now a shortage of rental stock and, since last summer, values have returned to their 2015 peak.

'So, whether you are buying, selling, letting or renting, pop in and talk to us at our Chiswick office in Gable House on Turnham Green Terrace or at our new Hammersmith office on the corner of Studland Street and King Street. We will offer the best advice on the market in your road and neighbourhood as well as guidance on how to achieve best price.'

– Ashley Clements, MARLA MNAEA, Lettings Branch Manager

Horton and Garton

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Christopher Barrow

MAXIMUM SECURITY

Providing the peace of mind that comes with knowing your most valuable possessions are safe

Metropolitan Safe Deposits opened in Chiswick last year. At full capacity, its two basement vaults contain 8000 safe deposit boxes in 12 sizes: the smallest, which is perfect for storing keepsakes, rings or watches, costs £95 p.a. Here Christopher Barrow, the Chief Executive, explains the core principles that underpin this world-class security facility.

‘An effective military defence strategy demands multiple levels to resist rapid penetration; similarly, in the IT industry layered security prevents hackers from accessing data. The same philosophy applies to our safe deposit vaults; we combine tried and tested physical protection with the most sophisticated overlapping alarm and surveillance technology.

‘We know who, when and where at all times. External and internal 24/7 CCTV covers the whole premises – except for private viewing cubicles in the vaults – and that is also monitored by our Knightsbridge and St John’s Wood offices. The vaults were pre-fabricated by the industry’s leading manufacturer the Swedish company Robur Safe; the building is equipped with three integrated alarm systems and seismic and stress detectors; and the “secure area” beyond reception is entered via two bullet-resistant airlock doors with magnetic and electronic locks.

‘Client access is controlled by computer-verified ID and biometric fingerprint procedures and each safe deposit box (up to three people are registered to each) is opened with two unique keys. In addition, we have our own bespoke security feature: each box is individually alarmed and we are alerted if more than a given number are open at any one time.

‘Of course, physical, technical and operational procedures must be supported by professional staff. Our insurers recently commissioned a rigorous external review of both our security network and team training, making no recommendations for improvement.

‘To the best of my knowledge, our type of vault has never been breached. Layered security mitigates the threat from a single point of weakness; if one system fails, a back-up is in place. At a time when High Street banks are exiting the safe custody market, we provide a secure, convenient service for our customers.’



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Brenan, César and Steve

PASSING ON THE KNOWLEDGE

'I really enjoyed building my computer and the engineers were very friendly.' – César Ortiz

In 1976 Steve Jobs and Steve Wozniak hand-built the Apple-1 in the Jobs family garage, and computing history was made. While King Street may not exactly be California and the result might not be as revolutionary, if you know a young tech-wizard then Steve Bonnici and Brenan Santos from Chiswick Computers offer personal tuition in building computers. The student can take their machine home and, of course, you never know where those skills might lead.

'A few years ago some parents mentioned that their kids wanted to build their own PCs from scratch,' explains Steve. 'We were delighted to help, and we've been doing it ever since. We clear a bench in the workshop, explain the

process and we're around to supervise and answer questions. The build takes two hours and we tailor it to the child's needs, so it's often a desktop gaming PC.

'Afterwards, we load Windows, update the software, test the computer and then it's ready to take away. The kids really enjoy spending time with us. They learn so much more when they do it themselves, problem-solving as they go, and we've had some lovely feedback from parents.'

Steve has been running Chiswick Computers (the company has *Which?* *Trusted Trader* status) since 2003, establishing an excellent reputation for expertise and customer

service. His technicians are *the* local experts when it comes to diagnosing and repairing faults with Windows-based PCs and Apple iMac, MacBook, iPad and iPhones.

Steve handles the company's IT support, looking after businesses, home-based one-person bands and families 'I build a relationship with each customer,' he says. 'If I understand what they do and how they do it, then I can design our support to their requirements.'

Chiswick Computers also offers remote monitoring to corporate clients, remote preventative maintenance for domestic users and over-the-counter advice at the shop. 'If we can fix a problem on the spot, we will,' says Steve. 'We have a no-fix, no-fee guarantee and we explain everything in plain English!'

Chiswick Computers
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Matt Goslett

THE PROPERTY DETECTIVE

Are you upsizing, downsizing or putting a foot on the property ladder? Whatever the brief, experienced property consultant Matt Goslett can make your domestic dreams come true.

Matt specialises in West London – he was born and lives in the area – and he covers the full spectrum of residential searches. ‘I am independent and I represent the purchaser,’ he explains. ‘While an agent can only show what’s on their books, I cover the entire market for opportunities.’ Matt takes a detailed brief from each client. ‘No two are ever the same, so I drill down beyond budget and number of bedrooms; for example, does the client wish to be near a school? An open space or shops? Good local transport links? And if their budget is unrealistic, I say so.’

Armed with this information, Matt searches for properties matching the brief. ‘I see as many appropriate places as it takes for as long as it takes. I then present the most promising prospects and arrange viewings. I’ll also conduct negotiations to try to get the best value and, if required, can put clients in touch with a solicitor or contractors. My approach is personal. I take great pleasure in finding my clients their ideal homes.’

Matt Goslett

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Anna Kozowska

THE PERFECT FIT

How many times have you put on a favourite item of clothing and found that it doesn’t fit as snugly as it once did? If that sounds familiar, you don’t have to consign the piece to recycling or return it to the wardrobe.

Mike Moran, owner of the award-winning Top Hat dry cleaners, offers a professional alteration and repair service. ‘I’ve invested in the latest sewing machines and hemmers and Anna, our experienced in-shop tailoress, has the expertise to deal with most issues. Whether it’s taking up, taking in, letting out, re-lining, patching or stitching, she is happy to advise and will recommend the best options.’

Mike and his team follow the same approach with dry and wet cleaning. ‘We combine our depth of knowledge with new technology to deliver the best finish; for example, we use a microscope linked to a phone or computer to check if a stain is deeply ingrained or on top of the fibres. And, when we’re not sure about a material, we cut off a few fibres and burn them; we can tell what it is by the colour of the flame. Between us, we have 150 years’ industry experience – and that pays dividends.’

Top Hat Chiswick

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www.tophatchiswick.co.uk

Advertorial | #ChiswickLocals | @tophatw4



Aaron Barriscale

LEARNING THROUGH PLAY

‘My daughters LOVE every class and never want to leave.’ – A. Moore, a happy parent

A graduate in drama and musical theatre, Aaron Barriscale has been running Gymboree Play & Music at Chiswick Town Hall since July. Aaron had been teaching classes for a year when the previous franchisee asked if he would like to take over. ‘I loved it here, I’m passionate about working with children and I knew the business. It was the perfect opportunity and it’s been very fulfilling.’

Gymboree Play & Music operates in over 40 countries. It was founded by Joan Barnes, who wanted to be able to play with her children in a safe environment. ‘The key elements of the philosophy are that parents stay and get involved and that children best learn skills when they’re having fun,’ explains Aaron.

‘We’re lucky to have a wonderful space in the former Council Chamber and we offer a wide range of classes – play and learn, art, music, messy play and sensory baby lab – all for newborns to five year-olds (Monday to Friday 9am-5pm and Saturday mornings). Conceived by experts in early childhood development, each session encourages children to be curious and we have the flexibility to adapt what we do according to age – the youngest baby we’ve had was three weeks old.

‘Most importantly, our play and learn set up changes fortnightly. The purpose-built equipment, such as slides, climbers and boxes, incorporates a huge number of different configurations.

Hence, classes aren’t repetitive and we’re able to challenge the children. It’s the same with music: we switch themes, allowing us to explore everything from Caribbean music to Disney!’

Gymboree Play & Music Chiswick works on a Bronze, Silver and Gold membership basis with Gold allowing children to attend unlimited classes (for drop-in sessions on Saturdays no monthly membership is required).

‘As well as learning through play, this is the ideal way for children to build creativity and confidence,’ says Aaron. ‘It is also invaluable for parents as they get to know one another. Coming to us is like joining an extended family.’

Gymboree Play & Music Chiswick
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Stefano Marinaz



A PASSION FOR PLANTS

Stefano Marinaz creates beautiful, practical gardens that make people happy

Stefano Marinaz found his vocation early on. ‘The seeds for my future were planted 75 years ago in Trieste in Italy, when my grandfather opened a nursery. My love for plants dates from when I was a kid – I used to “help” in the garden and glasshouses.’

Today, Stefano’s enthusiasm is undimmed. ‘I’m lucky to do something I love; designing and building gardens is my passion.’ He studied Landscape Architecture, including a stint at the Royal Botanic Gardens (his company is now a Kew Patron), and founded his business in 2012. Since then, he has completed projects of all shapes and sizes, ranging from London gardens to the recreation of historic landscapes and, locally,

he has helped Abundance London with its Devonshire Road planting initiative.

Stefano and his team oversee the design and construction of a garden from beginning to end. ‘The starting point is the site visit,’ he explains. ‘It gives us the chance to discuss the client’s vision – for example, do they want a play area or a serene space in which to relax? – and preferred plants and colour palette.’

Armed with this information, a design is created according to budget, including features such as furniture, lighting, sculpture and fencing. ‘The choice of plants is at the heart of the process and, of course, we expect the design to evolve – it’s a collaboration’ says Stefano. ‘When the plans are

approved, we arrange any hard or soft landscaping with our regular contractors and we do the planting, ensuring that the shrubs, plants and trees have the best start.’

That attention to detail doesn’t end there; Stefano’s expert in-house maintenance crew will care for the garden on an on-going basis and he has now also started supplying beautiful indoor plants and cut flowers in vases. ‘Since we design gardens that extend from the house, we thought why not bring the garden’s colour and scents back inside.’

Whether you want a tranquil green haven or a functional modern space for outdoor entertaining, Stefano will take your dream from drawing board to reality.

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John and Ricky

THE PROFESSIONALS

Reliant LDN has the expertise and experience to solve your plumbing and heating issues

After he left school John Kearney's first job was working on a major property renovation in Strand on the Green. 'I was 17 and living near Oxford,' he recalls. 'I had to get up at 5am to get to Chiswick on time. I really liked the area's village atmosphere. I always thought, if I end up moving to London, it's where I'd like to be.'

John has now been living in Grove Park for nearly a decade and last year, with co-director Ricky Axten, he launched Reliant LDN, a plumbing, gas boiler, heating and air-conditioning company. Both John and Ricky have worked in the industry for over 16 years, they are fully qualified and they take great pride in combining high quality workmanship with courteous, reliable customer

service (Reliant LDN currently scores a 9.94 out of 10 rating on *Checkatrade*).

'Chiswick is the perfect place for us to base our business and client satisfaction is the key to our approach,' explains John. 'We offer a comprehensive range of services for both residential and commercial premises and, with our experience, we're able to diagnose and fix a huge range of plumbing-related problems – from a simple leaking tap or faulty radiator valve to a full boiler replacement – as well completely re-fit a bathroom.'

'In addition, we specialise in devising and installing cost-efficient, eco-friendly solutions for domestic heating and hot water systems, in particular those that haven't

been serviced or upgraded for many years. Also, thanks to our professional accreditation and in-house training with leading manufacturers, we can always offer our customers the best guarantees when installing the UK's top brands.

'Most importantly, we always give straightforward advice and we don't have a call out fee. Rather, we charge by the hour and we're happy to offer a quotation on a per job basis before any work commences.'

Services include:

- * Full plumbing and heating service
- * Gas and Boiler servicing, certification and installation
- * Air conditioning
- * Renewable heating (solar, heat pump and ground source systems)
- * Ventilation
- * Luxury bathroom refurbishments
- * 12-year boiler installation guarantees

Reliant LDN

020 8582 4492 / 07789 001092

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www.reliantldn.co.uk

Instagram: reliant_ldn



Marble Nouveau (glazed porcelain) by Roca

1.2 x 1.2 and 2.4 x 1.2 metre sizes and they have been flying out of the door.'

Last year Peter agreed to represent Roca, the prestigious Barcelona-based manufacturer. 'They approached us, which was very flattering. We supply the collection in exquisite colours and all sizes. Also, our customers are always welcome to visit Roca's Chelsea gallery, which was designed by Dame Zaha Hadid, to view the tiles in a display environment.'

Whatever the nature and scope of the tiling project – whether it is interior or exterior, decorative or practical – Peter and his Showroom Manager, Manuela Profetto, will advise on products and costs and provide a friendly, informed service that helps customers come to the best decision.

INSPIRATIONAL TILE SOLUTIONS

With ranges from the world's leading manufacturers and it's own Hugo Ceramicas brand, Intceram delivers the ultimate tile style

Since opening a dedicated showroom on the High Road in 2017, Intceram has built an excellent local reputation for its eclectic, high quality product range.

Co-owner Peter Hughes has forged close links with factories worldwide to ensure the company offers stylish tiles in effects, sizes and materials (polished, stone, cement, concrete, marble, wood, porcelain) to suit all tastes.

Should there be a gap in the portfolio, Peter has an extra string to his bow in the shape of Intceram's own popular Hugo Ceramicas brand. 'We design the tiles ourselves – it's a really enjoyable process – using our detailed knowledge of the market,' he explains.

'Fashions come and go but, looking ahead, I think the current demand for large-format porcelain floor tiles will continue to grow. We have



Manuela Profetto

Intceram

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Vicki Rhodes



BE HAPPY IN YOUR SKIN

The Cove Spa is now offering excellent savings on rejuvenating CACI anti-ageing facial treatments

As its many regular clients know and appreciate, The Cove Spa is a High Road haven from the stresses of daily life. 'Our philosophy is simple: we create a relaxing space in which to provide proven health, beauty and wellbeing treatments as well as holistic therapies that achieve real results,' explains Vicki Rhodes, Cove's Head of Operations.

The formula works: the Cove group has won Spa of the Year twice at the London Hair & Beauty Awards and Most Commended Spa at the British Beauty Awards. 'In particular, we specialise in anti-ageing facials, such as the CACI non-surgical facelift,' adds Vicki. 'Electrical impulses stimulate and tone the skin, so boosting elasticity and reducing fine lines and wrinkles. It's a painless, effective process and,

throughout March, we're offering Chiswick locals 25% off face and body treatments using CACI technology.'

Every new client is given a complimentary initial consultation to devise a safe, bespoke approach tailored to their specific needs. Then, using industry-leading technology, the Cove team will recommend the most suitable solution, be it for a quick fix or an optimum, long-lasting result.

'As well as CACI, we use deep penetrating Environ facials, 3D HIFU ultrasound facials and Intraceutical oxygen facials that hydrate and heal the skin,' says Vicki. 'Also, we offer 3DLipo treatments which target and combat cellulite and 3D TrilogyIce, the latest innovation in laser hair removal. And, for pure

indulgence, clients can choose from a range of pampering spa packages, including our signature Spa Ritual which comprises an hour massage, an hour facial and a foot reflex massage.'

With friendly, professional staff who are trained in all the specialist techniques and flexible opening times (seven days a week, Wed-Fri until 8pm), The Cove Spa is the perfect place to refresh and revitalise the mind, body and spirit.

Treatments include:

- * Eyelash extensions
- * Hair removal (laser, electrolysis, threading and waxing)
- * Aromatherapy Associates essential oils skincare
- * Dermal fillers
- * Chin and lip enhancement
- * Skin tag and mole removal
- * Spray tanning
- * Universal Contour Wrap
- inch loss
- * Massages, Manicures and Pedicures

The Cove Spa

300-302 Chiswick High Road,
W4 1NP
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Chiswick@thecovespa.co.uk
www.thecovespa.co.uk



Jason Wilkinson



THE RENOVATION EXPERTS

Whitehall Construction has the experience to take any project from design to completion

Stephen Brooks recently completed a major re-building project on his house. He chose to use Jason Wilkinson of West London company Whitehall Construction as the contractor. Here Stephen recalls the experience of working with Jason.

‘The job was a significant one – it took five months in all. We wanted to extend the kitchen-dining room out into the garden, completely re-model the upper floor and, along the way, renovate the bathrooms and kitchen and anything else that came up.

‘Our architect organised a tender process with five builders and I then met three

of them, one of whom was Jason. The architect knew and vouched for him and that carried weight. I also contacted some of his previous clients, who were happy, and, on a personal level, I liked Jason. He was easy-going, asked sensible questions and was clearly knowledgeable about the type of work we needed.

‘Jason was on site throughout the process and was always straightforward. As we got close to completion and after we moved in, he was particularly impressive in quickly responding to and solving snagging problems. Also, on his own initiative, he installed a hot water circuit

that meant we had instant hot water at every tap and didn’t have to draw it through the house. I hadn’t expected that in a small property.

‘The Whitehall team was lovely and they even helped out with a few favours, such as putting up a TV bracket. The job came in on time and I was very pleased with the results.’



Whitehall Construction
07971 418857
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CAN WE HELP YOU TO PROMOTE YOUR BUSINESS?

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LUXURY VINYL STYLE

The Carpetstore is the only West London stockist of the Invictus range of wood, parquet and stone-effect vinyl flooring

As in most industries, fashions come and go in carpets and flooring. Few people are more aware of the latest trends – and better able to respond to changing demand – than brothers Clay and Joe Miller, who have been running The Carpetstore for 25 years.

When they add a new brand to their portfolio, as they have recently done with Invictus luxury vinyl flooring, it's a decision based on market knowledge. 'We've noticed that customers are increasingly favouring vinyl tiles over wood and concrete flooring,' explains Clay. 'They are going to be the next big thing – and the quality

of Invictus' wood, parquet and stone-look ranges is really outstanding.

'They are waterproof, so are suitable for kitchens and bathrooms, they have an ultra-strong top layer (Scratchmaster) that makes them extremely hard-wearing in domestic and commercial settings, they are warm and silent underfoot and, best of all, they come in a fantastic array of striking designs.'

The Carpetstore already offers a huge choice of classic and contemporary carpets for all budgets as well as made-to-measure bespoke rugs and stair runners. Last year, Clay and Joe also began stocking Sedna eco-friendly carpets.

'The yarn is spun from abandoned fishing nets,' explains Clay. 'According to the manufacturer, nets comprise one-tenth of marine litter and trap tens of thousands of creatures every year. The carpets are soft and durable and come in two qualities: a twist pile for stairs and living rooms and a Saxony, which is a luxurious deep pile for bedrooms.'

All carpets, rugs and runners sold by The Carpetstore are moth-free – a chemical is put on the yarn while it is being spun, hence it is built in – and Clay and Joe use their own experienced fitters, who also lay hardboard, ply and latex sub-floors and trim doors.

If you are investing in new carpet or flooring, whether for the home, office or a communal property, you'll receive excellent personal service and practical advice.



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I ♥ hg W4



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