

HAMMERSMITH & FULHAM LOCALS



SUMMER 2021

KEEP IT LOCAL!

How wildlife-friendly is your garden? It's a question that Hammersmith & Fulham Council is addressing in its initiative to promote the best principles of ecology, sustainability and wildlife diversity in the borough.

A key aim is to encourage residents to make simple changes in their own spaces that will help create vital green corridors. The expert team at W6 Garden Centre in Ravenscourt Park is collaborating with the council, so do pop in and chat to them if you need advice about how to make a garden more welcoming to wildlife.

And, if your fitness levels have suffered over lockdown, help is at hand. F45 Training (just off King Street) is currently offering a free body composition analysis plus gym session and a two-week unlimited training trial for only £39.

Neil

Neil McKelvie, Editor



ADDING EXTRA VALUE...



Do you need to upgrade a website, refine a SM strategy or shoot a video? Nicholas Smith provides professional business support that will target new markets.

Nicholas Smith

(Sales and Marketing: Keep Things Local)
07869742822
nick@keepthingslocal.com
<https://keepthingslocal.com>

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*'Great service,
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Joanne R. W6

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LINDEN HOUSE

Photograph: Annabel Moeller



Kea and Eddie

HAMMERSMITH'S BEST KEPT SECRET?

Planning a special occasion? Linden House is a wonderful riverside location

'One of the more memorable events we've hosted was a little girl's birthday party,' smiles Kea Kouvatsis, the Manager of Linden House. 'Naturally, her mother wanted it to be just perfect – flower garlands, a fairy palace, a balloon tent – and then, the day before, she decided to cover the space in pink tulle. It was very stressful, so I said, "why not leave it all to us?" We were up until 5am, but it was worthwhile – it was a lovely day.'

Linden House, a grand Georgian building on the Thames between The Old Ship and The Dove, is the home of London Corinthian Sailing Club and Sons of the Thames Rowers.

'As a result, people often assume we're off limits,' says Kea. 'In fact, the reverse is true: we love to see the community using our facilities, whether for weddings, christenings, parties, bridal showers or business meetings.'

'Whatever the occasion, we ensure that every detail is looked after and with three elegant private rooms – the Ballroom, the Captain's Room and the Commodore's Room – we can create a tailor-made package. The rooms are different sizes and clients can use any or all of them for dining, dancing and mingling. In addition, our fully equipped Boardroom is ideal for out-of-office brainstorming, and team-bonding sessions.'

Linden House has its own in-house chef, sommelier and catering team and offers freshly prepared menu options ranging from multi-course dining and wedding breakfasts to buffets and working lunches. 'Through our contacts, we can also arrange any entertainment, from violinists and jazz bands to DJs,' adds Kea. 'Most excitingly, in September we'll be opening for delicious homemade Afternoon Teas.'

'Linden House makes an atmospheric canvas for any event. We're committed to providing clients with a memorable experience; we always say, you tell us what you want, and we will achieve it.'

Linden House

Upper Mall, W6 9TA
020 8748 1841
events@lindenhouse.london
www.lindenhouse.london

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Scarlett and Louise



GARDENING IN HARMONY WITH NATURE

*Would you like to attract more wildlife to your garden?
W6 Garden Centre has everything you need to create an
environment that nourishes birds, butterflies, hedgehogs, frogs...*

"The sheer pleasure of connecting with nature can never be over-estimated, and that's been very evident during the pandemic," reflects Louise Alhadeff, the Manager of W6 Garden Centre. "Whether large or small, a garden is our piece of the natural world and making it welcoming to wildlife brings such rewards."

"We have the expertise to help create a beautiful, wildlife-friendly habitat. We stock a wide range of top quality seasonal plants, shrubs and trees which will nurture animals year-round, our Urban Garden Services teams can assist in revamping your space and, if you need practical advice, pop down to W6 and discuss your plant selection with one of our knowledgeable staff. You can always stop and enjoy a delicious cake and coffee at our award-winning Café!"

Currently, the Garden Centre is collaborating with Hammersmith & Fulham Council on its major initiative to promote the best principles of ecology, sustainability and wildlife diversity. "It's a fantastic local project and we're delighted to be involved," says Louise.

"There are so many private gardens in the borough. Some residents may think: 'Oh, it's only my little plot, I can't do that much.'" But, when you join up those gardens and add in public green spaces, that's a huge area of land in which we can make a significant positive difference. These green corridors are essential to urban wildlife. To demonstrate what can be achieved, Scarlett, our in-house ecology expert, has used a variety of nectar-rich plants to build a Bee and Butterfly Corner here at W6."

Perhaps one of the most common misconceptions about wildlife-friendly gardening is that it means immediately letting everything run wild. "The thought of ending up with an unkempt jungle does put people off," admits Louise. "But it's not the reality. You can still have a lovely garden – the animals will control pests – and you don't have to transform it in one fell swoop. It's simply a matter of being conscious of nature and introducing step-by-step changes."

"A key addition to make is water, whether that's a pond or an upturned dustbin lid. Like us, nature needs water and you'll suddenly see animal life multiply as birds, insects, butterflies, frogs and newts form a wildlife chain."

"Equally vital is to grow plants and shrubs that attract insect life, for example Hellebores for winter and early spring and Lavender, Salvia, Buddleia and Echinacea for summer. Planting shrubs with berries, such as Rowan, Blackthorn and Hawthorn, will be a valuable food source for birds in autumn and winter."

Other tried and tested tips include keeping some parts of the garden more natural – that might

mean turning a blind eye to the odd weed or leaf litter – adding cover and nesting sites with climbers, providing a bird bath or bug hotel, not blocking the gaps under fences and keeping one patch of lawn longer.

"Most importantly, whenever possible avoid using pesticides and insecticides – we can recommend the best natural alternatives," says Louise. "Personally, I love gardening with wildlife, it brings me such joy. When you engage with nature, it adds a new dimension; you get the fun and the animals get the benefit."

For information about Hammersmith & Fulham Council's campaign to support nature and bio-diversity, visit www.lbhf.gov.uk/environment/climate-and-ecological-emergency

W6 Garden Centre and Café

17 Ravenscourt Avenue,
Ravenscourt Park, W6 0SL
020 8563 7112
info@w6gc.co.uk
www.w6gardencentre.co.uk



Dr Hala Mahfoud

Photograph: Annabel Moeller

MAKE SURE YOU ARE ALL SET FOR SUMMER

'I love coming to Dr Hala's clinic. Not only is she a kind and gentle person, you feel completely at ease as her professionalism, knowledge and expertise are second to none. I always walk out like a new person.' – Mandy Bissell

With hot weather promised and lockdown restrictions finally coming to an end, it's time to get ready to enjoy the summer. Whatever your plans, Dr Hala Mahfoud and her experienced team of therapists will ensure that you look fabulous and feel rejuvenated, energised and fully body confident.

Dr Hala worked as an NHS Consultant before founding her family-run clinic in 2017. Then, as now, her vision was to bridge the gap between aesthetics, beauty and medicine in a safe, relaxed environment. Since opening, she has consistently added exciting new therapies, often pioneering the latest worldwide advances in the UK, and launched her own successful Dr Hala Skincare Collection.

'With holidays back on the horizon, our "summer-ready" facial and body treatments are always very popular,' says Dr Hala.

'We specialise in anti-ageing HydraFacials and Intraceuticals Oxygen Facials. The former combines cleansing, exfoliation and hydration and is perfect for pigmented, dry and acne-affected skin and fine lines. The latter delivers an Intense hydration boost, hence it is often used by clients to combat the severe dehydration effects of travelling by plane, and significantly brightens and softens the skin.'

Dr Hala's Fulham clinic is one of the very few that offers MesoSculpt C71, an injectable fat reduction procedure that works particularly effectively on double chins. 'It is much more powerful than traditional fat injection techniques,' she explains.

'MesoSculpt simultaneously reduces localised fat deposits while inhibiting future fat formation in that same area, hence it both produces noticeable results and maintains them.

'Recently, we have also introduced the Dr Hala Ozone Lift. This is a new approach based on a combination of ozone therapy methods; it is specifically designed to provide an immediate total-body boost, increasing energy, reducing inflammation and pain, refreshing the skin and helping to fight any lingering infections.'

Dr Hala has always invested in state-of-the-art medical technology. One of her first major acquisitions – and it is always in strong demand – was a Femi-Lift laser, which stimulates collagen, the protein responsible for skin strength and elasticity. 'Post-birth, many ladies leak when they exercise, sneeze or cough,' she says.

'The Femi-Lift provides non-surgical relief from stress urinary incontinence, alleviates vaginal dryness and pain during sex and enhances sensation. One session can have dramatic results, while the benefits of a full course of four sessions can last for over two two years.' (Currently, the clinic has an exclusive offer for a Femi-Lift course, get in touch to find out more details).

Warm and welcoming, Dr Hala and her friendly, professional team always treat their patients as individuals. 'We get to know each one and, with the scope of our facilities, we can devise a bespoke approach that fits their needs,' she smiles. 'We're very proud of our work and we want to achieve the best outcome every time.'

Treatments include: * **PRX Peel:** scar management and reducing wrinkles * **FibroBlast:** lift sagging skin and smooth smoking lines * **Lesion removal:** warts, moles, tags and tattoos * **LPG Endermologie:** tighten skin and target fat * **Botox and fillers** * **Herbal and chemical peels** * **HydraFacial:** skin cleansing * **Mesotherapy:** rejuvenate skin and boost hair growth * **Mesosculpt:** eliminate facial fat pockets * **Cellulite and stretch mark reduction:** a non-invasive technique using radio-frequency and ultrasound

Dr Hala Medical Aesthetics
Unit 3-4 Broxholme House,
New Kings Road, Fulham, SW6 4AA
020 7371 8939
info@halahealthandbeauty.co.uk
www.halahealthandbeauty.co.uk

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Nicos (left), Stav (2nd right)



BARBERING AT ITS VERY BEST

Still going strong after 110 years, Alexander Barbers is a Hammersmith institution

Since opening in 1911, Alexander Barbers has been a welcome constant in W6 life. It served the local community and many commuters from the same premises until 2013 and, after a brief period based on Shepherd's Bush Road, the popular barbershop has been back in business on The Broadway since 2015.

Since the mid-1960s, Alexander's has been owned by the Pavlou family. 'That was when my uncle took over,' recalls Nicos Pavlou. 'My father joined him in 1975 and I followed in 1995. In 2013 we were obliged to close because TFL needed our space to build a new Metropolitan Line entrance. We were so upset, as were our

regulars, many of whom had been coming to us since they were kids – the support was very touching.'

Undaunted, Nicos switched to Shepherd's Bush Road where, with great misfortune, history repeated itself. The landlord sold up to a developer, prompting the Alexander team to move back to The Broadway, by chance taking over a shop a few doors from their original home. While Nicos is still involved behind the scenes, the operation is now managed by Stavros (Stav) Christoudoulakis.

'We're proud to provide high quality barbering – every style of cut from classic to contemporary, wet shaves and

beard trims – and at excellent value for money,' says Stav.

'One of the tricks of our trade is making sure that we're on the same wavelength as the customer. For example, often people ask for a Number Cut without knowing how cropped it will be. As experienced barbers, we have to judge how and when to make suggestions so that everyone leaves us completely satisfied.'

Open seven days a week and with late-night opening on Mondays and Thursdays, Stav and his friendly, professional colleagues deliver first-class barbering with a personal touch. As he promises: 'We will make you look good and feel happy!'

Alexander Barbers
30-38 Hammersmith Broadway,
W6 7AB / 020 8741 1801
connect@alexanderbarbers.com
www.alexanderbarbers.com



Justyna Kamecka

SMILE WITH CONFIDENCE

The Dental Beautique team provides excellent dental care in a safe, spa-like environment

To a degree, most people are wary of visiting the dentist, and for some it can even be hard to cross the threshold. It's a familiar scenario for Justyna Kamecka, practice owner and Clinical Director of Dental Beautique, and her team, and they always take the time and trouble to put those patients at ease.

'Anyone who is feeling nervous is most welcome to come along for a complimentary introduction,' she smiles. 'They can look around, meet us and just sit down for a good chat. Also, we've consciously created a luxury spa-like environment here and I think that relaxing atmosphere helps no end.'

It is now two years since Justyna opened her Fulham Road practice with the aim of delivering the very best family care in every dental discipline. True to that original vision, she has constantly developed and expanded the tried and tested treatments available to patients.

'Dr Richard Goulart, a highly experienced orthodontist, has recently joined us,' explains Justyna. 'He uses a wide range of methods and, in particular, we have noticed that many parents

are now bringing their children to see him. Richard can fit traditional metal "train track" braces as well as Invisalign, so he's able to choose the approach best suited to each patient.

'Another member of our practice team, Dr Alberto LiGreci, focuses primarily on cases of gum disease; he uses microbiological and enzymatic tests followed by specialised Perioblast laser microscopy. This proven process (it has a 100% success rate) removes inflammation and promotes healthy gum and bone tissue regeneration.

'Everyone at Dental Beautique is welcoming and professional and we never forget that there's a human being with the teeth! The initial consultations for braces and Invisalign are free and we also have an excellent special offer on home teeth whitening trays. If you would like to find out how we can keep your teeth healthy and smile confident, do call our friendly reception team to book an appointment or just pop in and see us.'



Treatments include:

- * Cosmetic Dentistry * Orthodontics
- * Periodontics * Endodontics * Invisalign
- * Teeth whitening * Dental hygiene

Dental Beautique

849 Fulham Road, SW6 5HJ / 020 3985 7577
info@dentalbeautique.co.uk
www.dentalbeautique.co.uk



Maddy Alemayehu



HOME IS WHERE THE HEART IS

'It hasn't felt like care at all. At least, it's certainly not what I thought care would feel like. I've actually really enjoyed it.'
 – Maggie Jones, a Home Instead client

Being able to live happily and safely at home in later life is a comfort. Inevitably, however, mundane daily tasks become physically more challenging and social contact narrows, which can cause loneliness and profoundly affect mental wellbeing.

As a result, many older people feel obliged to move. But there is an award-winning alternative. 'That's where we come in,' smiles Maddy Alemayehu, Director of Home Instead Hammersmith and Chiswick. 'By providing sensitive, relationship-led care, we help our clients stay where they love and continue to enjoy independent, fulfilling lives.'

A global company, Home Instead has a very successful UK network and, in 2016, it was the first home care operation to win the prestigious

Queen's Award for Enterprise. Maddy, who worked for many years as an Intensive Care nurse, and her dedicated team deliver an extensive choice of bespoke services – including Dementia Care, Home Help, Companionship, Respite Care and 24/7 Live-in Care – in Chiswick, Hammersmith, Fulham and Ealing.

'Family or friends usually get in touch with us,' she explains. 'One of our Care Managers will visit the potential client to discuss their specific needs and talk through what we do. We never forget that everyone is different; we don't dictate, we're there to be a trustworthy, friendly face and assist in any way we can.'

'If all goes well, we then match the client with one of our lovely professional CAREGivers. We hand-pick them for their empathetic

character, values and experience and, of course, they are rigorously vetted and trained. We place huge emphasis on finding points of contact between clients and CAREGivers based on background, personality or interests. For example, a member of our staff is a keen singer and so we placed her with a lady who plays the piano.'

Home Instead offers flexibility across a comprehensive range of care options. The most popular, Home Help, covers all those chores – cleaning, ironing, cooking, laundry, watering plants, changing the bed, running errands – that we take for granted when younger.

'As well as pro-active, practical support, many people like to have a good old chat,' says Maddy. 'That's why we have a Companionship service; the CAREGiver might pop in for a cup of tea or encourage and help clients to be more active and revive their hobbies. One lady had been a tennis player, so we took her to watch her friends playing – she loved it.'

'When we provide Personal Care, whether that's assistance with dressing and bathing or meals and medication, every client is treated with

dignity and respect, and for Dementia Care our CAREGivers receive intensive specialist training to enable them to cope with any situation. When it comes to Live-in Care, the client and their family decide how many hours they require us – we can usually arrange 24/7 coverage.'

While nothing will ever replace human contact, Maddy believes that technology can play a key role in enhancing quality of life. 'We install devices that check people are safe and connect them to their families; in addition, as part of our Social Responsibility commitment, we give our Home Aware monitoring system free to less well-off long-term clients.'

'To us, care at home is personal. Home Instead's standards are exactly what we would expect for our own loved ones. We're passionate about changing the face of ageing.'

Home Instead – Home Care & Live-in Care
 186 Sutton Court Road, W4 3HR
 020 8022 3276
maddy.a@homeinstead.co.uk
www.homeinstead.co.uk/hammersmith-chiswick



Phil Coombes

Photograph: Annabel Moeller



Aggie Tukendorf

Photograph: Annabel Moeller

PROFESSIONALISM WITH PERSONALITY

*'Phil knows the area well and understood my home's selling points...
An intelligent approach and a personal service.'* – Nahid, Ravenscourt Park

'When people ask me where I live, I always reply Hammersmith Bridge,' smiles Phil Coombes, Horton and Garton's newly appointed Sales Manager. 'But if pressed, I have to confess that I'm on the "other side". However, I've worked in W6 and W12 all my estate agency career, so I can safely say I'm a local!'

It has been a remarkable year for Hammersmith's property market. 'When we returned to the office in May 2020, I thought business would be quiet,' says Phil. 'I was wrong! Within a week we had received final bids on family homes – and it hasn't stopped since.'

'The figures are record-breaking. Buyer registrations have rocketed (up 70%), we sold 42.3% of all properties in Brackenbury Village and Ravenscourt Park from July 2020 to July 2021; and we completed on 73 homes in Hammersmith and Shepherd's Bush in 2020 – and, to date, that number is 62 this year.'

The Horton and Garton philosophy is to focus on quality not quantity. 'The key is to secure viewings with the best buyers, not the largest number,' confirms Phil. 'Equally important,

we value accurately from day one and drive the competition from there. For example, recently we sold a home for £170,000 over the asking price; I'm sure that wouldn't have happened if the property had been listed at that much more.'

Phil manages a team of six negotiators, all of whom have lived or worked in the area for many years. 'Our approach is to be transparent, even if that means telling clients what they need to know, but don't necessarily want to hear. We have also been selling successfully off market through our huge database of buyers; one of the benefits of registering with an independent agent is not missing out on those opportunities.'

'Horton and Garton sells the most properties, achieves the best percentage of asking price and makes the process as smooth as possible. Whether you are buying or selling, we look forward to working with you.'

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hortonandgarton.co.uk

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THE PROPERTY MATCH-MAKER

*Aggie Tukendorf, Lettings Manager at Horton and Garton,
specialises in building relationships with landlords and tenants*

Not many people stay in the profession in which they worked as a Saturday job, but that's what has happened to Aggie Tukendorf, the new Lettings Manager at Horton and Garton.

'I started here when I was 16, helping out with general office admin, and I kept coming back during my school and university holidays,' she recalls. 'Then, after graduating and a period travelling, I was offered a position as a Lettings Negotiator. I didn't hesitate – it was a lovely team and environment, just as it is now, so why would I want to leave somewhere like that!'

Aggie is a born and bred local who knows the area like the back of her hand. She has specialised in lettings throughout her career and now leads Hammersmith's most successful lettings team. 'It's fast-paced, no two days are the same and you see some very interesting properties,' she says. 'Currently, the local market is busy with more people returning to London post-lockdown. Encouragingly, rental values have now returned to pre-pandemic levels, with family homes with gardens at a premium, and the demand for one and two-bedroom flats is also coming back.'

Horton and Garton offers a comprehensive lettings service, including Let and Managed for landlords (that includes regular property inspections). 'Of course, we make sure that everything is done correctly in terms of legislation and we carry out all the investigative checks and referencing,' explains Aggie.

'Most importantly, clients are not just figures to us – it's never a case of having to get another deal over the line. We find the highest calibre tenant for each property and at the best price; we value honesty and we get to know our landlords and tenants. Equally, when someone moves in, we don't disappear; we're always there as a point of contact – it's in everyone's interest to have a smooth relationship.'

'If you are thinking of letting or renting a property in Hammersmith or Shepherd's Bush this summer, we would be delighted to help.'

Horton and Garton
172 King Street, W6 0QU
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www.hortonandgarton.co.uk

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Jason Wilkinson

BUILT ON EXCELLENCE

'Jason does what he says he's going to do, he shouts early if he foresees issues and he always has a solution.' – Alison McDowell (a recent client)

Jason Wilkinson of Whitehall Construction has a simple, effective business philosophy. 'I'm hands-on – I like to be on site every day. I think that approach stems from the fact that I started on the ground floor of the trade.

'I've learned how important it is to be available – it's the best way to build a positive relationship with a client and find solutions to issues.' Having left school to become a bricklayer, Jason took his City and Guilds and worked as foreman on projects for Carillion and McAlpine. He co-founded Whitehall Construction six years ago with the aim of specialising in house renovation, loft conversion, kitchen

and side return extensions, basement excavation and bathroom re-design.

'We have the knowledge to take any job from Planning and Design through to Build,' he says. 'We're used to liaising with architects and structural engineers and we have a permanent team of top-quality, reliable craftsmen. If I do need to employ specialist sub-contractors, I only use people I know and trust.'

Jason stresses the importance of good project management. 'It's essential to explain the process clearly – why something will work and why it won't. It's about being open. In my opinion, many builders today have become more like

salesmen. They get work in and then farm it out. So you lose that line of communication and personal contact.'

Jason is equally emphatic in his views about pricing and delivery. 'I give a realistic quote, not a deliberately cheap price to secure a contract. Our fees are fixed from the beginning, so there are no nasty surprises. Also, we deliver what we promise and on time. I'd like to think that over 30 years' experience helps me anticipate problems and come up with practical answers.'

With many satisfied clients in W6 and SW6, Jason is happy for potential clients to view his previous completed projects. 'We're proud of what we do. We don't cut corners and craftsmanship means everything to us.'

Whitehall Construction
07971 418857
jason@whitehall-construction.co.uk
www.whitehall-construction.co.uk



Jocette and Sam

Photograph: Annabel Moeller

BODY TALK

F45 Training is offering a free body composition test and training session

'We want to get people moving,' smiles Jocette Coote, who owns F45 Training Ravenscourt Park with her husband, the ex-Scotland Rugby Union international Andrew Mower. 'Many of us – me included! – have developed bad habits during lockdown. It's time to focus on fitness and respiratory health, so we're offering a free body composition assessment and introductory training session (until 9 September).'

Non-members are welcome to book an appointment with Manager Sam Palmer and, using state-of-the-art machinery, she will analyse relative percentages of body fat and muscle mass (the process takes five minutes). Armed with that information, the F45 team can then devise an individual training regime (including expert nutritional advice) that will achieve specific core fitness goals.

Founded in Australia, F45 Training is a global phenomenon. 'The F stands for functional training and each class lasts 45 minutes,' explains Jocette. 'The weekly schedule is split into three types of class – resistance (weight training), cardio and a hybrid of the two – and they are suitable for all fitness levels.

It's possible to burn up to 900 calories in one cardio class. The evidence suggests that HIIT (High Intensity Interval Training) followed by a rest period results in more calorie burn over time than a full speed 5K run.

'We also organise a regular 45-day intensive Challenge promoting weight loss and body shaping (the next is from 16 August-29 September) during which progress and accountability is monitored by our coaches.'

With pay-as-you-go and flexible membership options and a two-week unlimited training trial for £39, F45 Training delivers an effective full-body workout in a supportive atmosphere – it will help you bounce back from lockdown inertia!



F45 Training Ravenscourt Park
150-152 King Street, W6 0QU
(entrance on Galena Road) 020 8222 8261
ravenscourtpark@f45training.co.uk
www.f45training.co.uk/ravenscourtpark/home



Jack Hart

POWER TO THE PEOPLE

Whether it's a case of installation, repair or servicing, Byron Sanders, Jack Hart and the skilled SES team will deal efficiently and promptly with any electrical issue in the home or at commercial premises

Chatting to Byron Sanders, the Managing Director of SES Electrical Contractors in Chiswick, one topic kept coming up: customer service. 'When I was learning the trade, I saw first-hand how important it is,' he recalls. 'I've known electricians whose workmanship was outstanding but their customer care almost non-existent, and vice versa.

'My philosophy is to deliver the maximum on both counts. That's why we're always happy to go out of our way to help our customers, sometimes even talking through a problem over the phone, such as getting the power back on temporarily. I'd much rather help for free if there's a simple solution. It's common sense: we then have a good chance of securing a future client and they might recommend us or post a comment on *Checkatrade* (it's no coincidence that SES has 1000 positive reviews).'

Byron founded SES in 2010 when he was 23 years old, recruited engineers who shared his pro-active approach and, since then, he has built a successful business based on professional excellence and trustworthy advice. He and his second-in-command, Managing Supervisor Jack Hart, have 35 years combined electrical experience and they both still enjoy going out on jobs.

'With a highly qualified team, we're quick and we try to respond to calls on the same day,' says Byron. 'We carry plenty of stock – many firms don't do that and it often causes delays – and we invest in the best tools, parts and vehicles (SES's striking blue vans are a common sight out and about around W4).'

The core of SES's work comprises electrical installation, repair and testing for domestic

clients. 'However, we're also fully trained to handle all elements of commercial electrics,' explains Byron. 'We are BAFE approved (British Approvals for Fire Excellence) to design, install and service fire alarms and we design and maintain CCTV and security systems, looking after many local businesses such as Le Vacherin and The Source Bulk Foods.'

Inevitably, over the last 18 months, SES has seen a significant increase in WiFi and data enquiries as customers working from home have needed extra access points and reliable connections. Equally, recent government legislation requiring all rental properties to have an electrical installation condition report (EICR) has prompted a high demand from landlords.

'Unfortunately, many companies now offering EICRs don't have the relevant technical experience or knowledge of electrical wiring regulations,' says Byron. 'We've seen many instances of serious defects not being picked up. We carry out a thorough investigation and deliver a detailed photo-report so the landlord is certain to be covered legally and the tenant reassured that everything is safe in their home.

'We want all our customers to feel special. If there's an issue, which is very rare, we deal with it correctly; we dispatch an engineer as quickly as possible to put it right and, in the past, we've sent flowers and gift cards as an apology. I want SES to be known as the John Lewis of electrical contractors!'

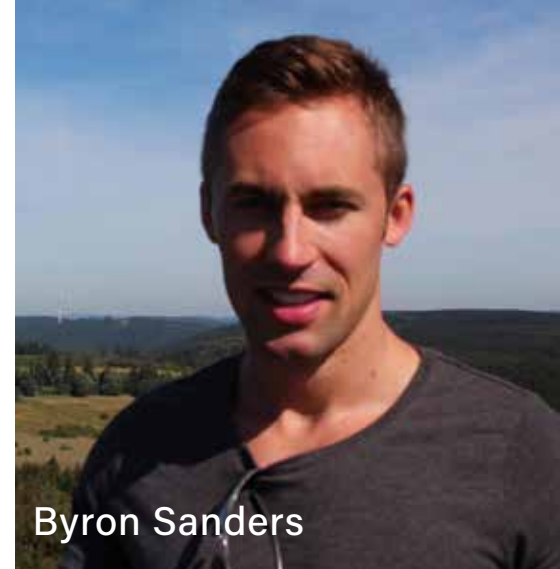
The SES team handles:

- * All domestic, commercial and light industrial electrical projects
- * Audio and Visual systems
- * CCTV and Security
- * Electrical installation and testing
- * Fire Alarms and Life Safety Systems
- * Home Automation (Lutron)
- * Wi-Fi & Data
- * Electrical Installation Condition Reports (EICRs)

SES Electrical Contractors (UK) Ltd


4, Maynard Court, Fletcher Road,
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Enjoy the peace of mind that comes with knowing your treasured possessions are secure

'Convenience is a fundamental element in our service,' says Christopher Barrow, the Chief Executive of Metropolitan Safe Deposits. 'When customers trust us with their valuables, they must have complete confidence that their safe deposit box is accessible. Hence, it's been essential for us to remain open through all the lockdown periods.'

To be able to do so, Christopher and his team invested substantially in re-modelling their Chiswick High Road premises. 'Glass screens were installed in our meeting rooms to separate staff and customers, we put gel pads on doors and provided hospital grade cleaning materials and staff were equipped with full PPE,' he recalls. 'Inevitably, our hours were slightly reduced but, most importantly, clients were reassured that they could use their boxes and in safety.'

At a time when banks have mostly exited the safe deposit sector, Metropolitan Safe Deposits is an independent alternative. 'We have 12 sizes of box in our Chiswick vaults,' explains Christopher. 'Initially, most customers choose one of our three smallest ones; they are ideal for storing precious

keepsakes, such as jewellery and watches, and cost from £95 p.a including £10,000 insurance.'

'Our building combines multi-layered alarm and surveillance networks and proven physical protection, including 24/7 CCTV of the perimeter and interior, seismic and stress detectors and bullet-resistant airlock doors. We have three integrated alarm systems and client access is controlled by computer-verified ID and biometric fingerprint procedures. Each safe deposit box is individually alarmed and we are alerted if more than a given number are open at any one time.'

Opening hours at Metropolitan Safe Deposits are currently 8.30am-7pm (weekdays) and 10am-4pm (Saturdays) and Christopher anticipates that Sunday opening will resume soon now that the government has confirmed the lifting of Covid restrictions.

'In the UK we are still less accustomed to using what Americans call a Bank Box,' he says. 'That's why we encourage people to come and see us; just call, email or pop in to arrange an appointment, and then one of our professional team will explain more about how we operate and the options available.'

Metropolitan Safe Deposits
329 Chiswick High Road, W4 4HS
020 3928 2828
chiswick@metrosafe.co.uk
www.metrosafe.co.uk

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Joe and Clay



CARPETS OF MANY COLOURS

'The fitters were magnificent and the job was done so considerably and to a very high standard. Really thrilled with the result.' – Jude Beckinsale

'It's strange how trends come and go,' reflects Clay Miller, who with his brother Joe co-owns The Carpetstore. 'Recently, the dominant fashion in carpets has been for muted shades, mostly beiges and greys. But, while they are still popular, we've noticed that customers are now asking to see stronger colours.'

With this in mind, the brothers have added the Wild Luxury range to their portfolio (they are the only stockists in West London). 'It's a polyamide (nylon) natural-looking carpet,' says Clay. 'It is soft, easy to clean and suitable for all areas of the home, including those with constant traffic. And best of all, Wild Luxury comes in a fantastic array of colours.'

With over 25 years in the business, Clay and Joe have an excellent track record of anticipating and responding to customer demand. With vinyl tiles now attracting the same level of interest as wood and concrete flooring, they have also introduced Invictus' luxury wood, parquet and stone-look ranges. Indeed, during lockdown, they fitted an Invictus vinyl floor in their own showroom.

'The quality is simply outstanding,' explains Clay. 'Invictus tiles are waterproof and so perfect for kitchens and bathrooms, extremely hard-wearing, warm and silent underfoot and they are available in a wide choice of striking designs.'

Another new arrival has been the Diamond carpet from Fibre (there is also a Herringbone version). 'It's suitable for heavy domestic use, for example on stairs, and the design is very contemporary,' says Clay. Like all The Carpetstore's classic and contemporary carpets, made-to-measure bespoke rugs and stair runners, Diamond is also guaranteed to be moth-free.

Customers are welcome to take away swatches and Clay and Joe use their own expert fitters on every project – they will also lay hardboard, ply and latex sub-floors and trim doors. Whether you want an Axminster or a shagpile, an eco-friendly carpet or vinyl tiles, you'll be spoilt for choice at The Carpetstore.

The Carpetstore

156 Goldhawk Road, W12 8HJ
020 8749 9340
carpetstoresb@aol.com
www.thecarpetstore.info



Gordana Micic

Photograph: Nicholas Smith



Samia Hussen



Dragos Mostenescu

LAUGHTER IS THE BEST MEDICINE

The Groovie Grove Comedy Club is raising post-lockdown spirits

Gordana Micic has quite a story to tell. A scientist, engineer and managing consultant, she has also been a radio show host, one of the UK's leading ballroom dancers, the first British-Serb female comedian and now she's the driving force behind the Groovie Grove Comedy Club.

'It's wonderful to be part of a venture in the heart of the Hammersmith community,' smiles Gordana. 'The Grove has been hosting comedy for many years and it's renowned as one of London's best spaces; now, for the first time, we're putting on a top quality show every night of the week.'

'I'm working with Zeljko Radojevic, the landlord of the Grove Restaurant & Bar, and a group of exceptionally creative hosts and performers – among

them Dave Lynch, Thomas W. Kelly, Dragos Mostenescu, Lucien Jack, Bruce Williams and Vic Melody – who all share a passion for comedy.

'Our aim is to create a fun, friendly and supportive environment and provide an exciting variety of entertainment – stand-up and sketch comedy, musical and character comedy, cabaret and impro – that reflects the super-diversity of W6. That means booking and promoting talent from all backgrounds and walks of life and, as someone who has so often been the token woman on a bill, I'm particularly proud that we have a "Ladies hosting" night on Fridays.'

On Sunday and Monday nights established comedians can try out new material in a relaxed

setting (the evening is always headlined by a well-known act). 'From Tuesday to Thursday we focus on musical, character and sketch comedy, cabaret and special events,' adds Gordana. 'Then, on Fridays and Saturdays, we have our professional shows.'

'It's been such a rough time over the last 18 months and we just want to make everyone laugh. You never know, we may even persuade our neighbour and Strictly champion Bill Bailey to come along and do a set – or dance a Waltz with me!'

Groovie Grove Comedy Club

Grove Bar & Restaurant
83 Hammersmith Grove,
W6 0NQ
07752851125
info@grooviegrovecomedyclub.com
www.grooviegrovecomedyclub.com



Samuele Alberton

Photograph: Doris Heinrich

THE PLUMBING AND HEATING PROFESSIONALS

'I've used Samuele to fix loos, replace a built-in shower and find leaks. The quality of his work is excellent – I'd recommend him to anyone.' – Alex Seaborne, a regular client

'My father and brothers were mechanics, so my earliest memories are of helping them to fix cars and vans,' recalls Samuele Alberton, aka The Italian Plumber. 'I was always just fascinated by how things worked. If a sink needed unblocking, I was there with a plunger; if a radiator wasn't heating up, I was ready to bleed it.'

Born and raised in Treviso, Samuele came to London in 2007, working as a waiter at The Langham Hotel while re-taking his plumbing qualifications to become UK compliant. Over the last decade he and his team have become a familiar sight – the vans are very distinctive – out and about in W6. In that time, he has built a successful business based largely on word-of-mouth recommendation.

Samuele takes pride in his friendly, efficient customer service. 'No job is too big or small for us,' he says. 'Whether it's preventative maintenance or an emergency with a faulty boiler (all major makes and models covered), a burst pipe, a blocked drain or just a persistent leaky tap, we will diagnose and fix the problem with minimum fuss. At this time of year, with summer on the horizon, we are often asked to

install garden taps – and we'll even put up a new bracket to hang your hose on.'

The Italian Plumber currently has a 9.91 rating on *CheckaTrade* (based on 211 reviews), is fully certified by Gas Safe and offers a 12-month warranty on all jobs. 'There's little that we haven't seen over the years and our priority is to save and repair what you have rather than buy something new,' Samuele explains. 'We're here to help and give you peace of mind. We've worked hard to win our reputation – and we work just as hard to keep it.'

Services provided include:

- * General Plumbing * Boiler Installation, repairs and servicing
- * Central Heating installation and servicing
- * Power Flushing
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- * Water Pumps
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- * Technical surveys and system reviews
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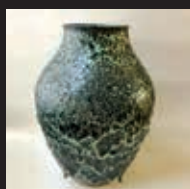
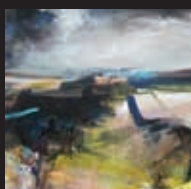
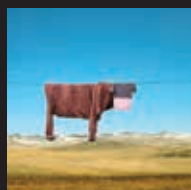
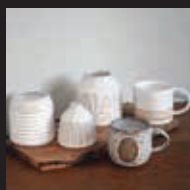
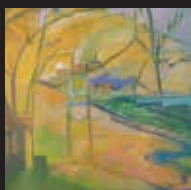
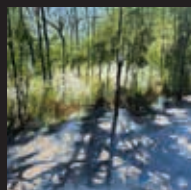
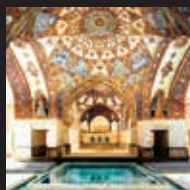
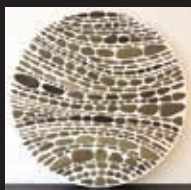
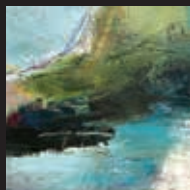
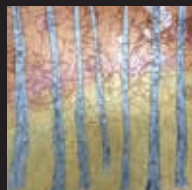
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