

THORNTON HEATH

Youth Chronicle

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“SOMETIMES YOU JUST GOTTA ROLL WITH WHAT LIFE BRINGS YOU”

In sweltering heat Hannah Cowey, 15, stands outside her home selling cakes she has baked to raise money and awareness about the little known cancer Sarcoma which her older sister is battling.

What started as a small lump on 20-year-old Maddie Cowey's shoulder and was initially thought to be a cyst was shown up on an ultra scan to be the rare cancer ASPS (Alveolar Soft-Part Sarcoma) which affects the soft tissues and occurs mainly in young adults, usually females.

Soft tissue Sarcoma amounts for just 1.3 per cent of all UK cancer cases a year.

The tumour was removed on Maddie's shoulder in 2016 when she was just 18 and then another tumour on her shoulder blade a year later leaving her with two large scars which she has embraced and now wears with pride.

ASPS is a progressive cancer which is difficult to diagnose and can migrate into other parts of the body, and has spread to Maddie's lungs.

The Warwick University student who has spent the last year in Italy studying as part of a degree in Classics, has written a blog in which she shares her experiences with Sarcoma, along with her passions for life, food, travel and more.

In her last blog www.maddiecowey.wixsite.com/blog she writes a powerfully

honest account about living with cancer: “Sure, cancer can be a death sentence, and it is shit, but it is possible to live with it and live through it and more importantly, live HAPPILY through it.

“And I believe this to be true of other chronic diseases, and anyone living with a long-term, possibly life-threatening disease.

“Personally I don't know what's going to happen with my cancer, all I know is that this week is one year since I had my second operation which was my last form of treatment, and that my next scan is in August.

“So until August I won't know what's going to happen next. But I like to think that whatever happens, like so many people in the cancer community I will be able to continue to 'live' with cancer. Sometimes you just gotta roll with what life brings you. And sometimes you have to accept death. And live with that. “

Meanwhile sister Hannah and her Thornton Heath family, mum Jane, dad Colin, and brother William manned a



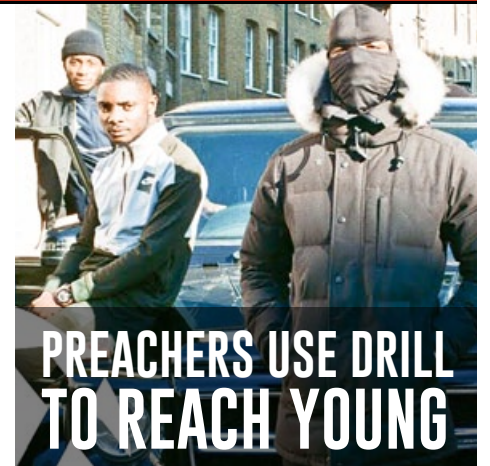
stall outside their home in Parchmore Road, over the weekend as part of Sarcoma Awareness Week.

They are determined that others shouldn't go through the same ordeal and want other families to be more aware of how to spot the early signs of the disease.

Dad Colin, a gardener, said that even if one parent listens then it had been worth while.

At the moment the disease is not spreading further and Maddie is enjoying a holiday with her boyfriend on the Amalfi Coast before returning to England to complete her final university year. The Youth Chronicle wishes Maddie well.

For more info about Sarcoma
www.sarcoma.org.uk



These are the Hope Dealers who are using controversial drill music to preach gospel and have caused outrage by singing in a Croydon church wearing balaclavas.

Here two members of the group Bread and Means speak to Chronicle Youth reporter Aisha Jade about how the SPACNation church and God has impacted on their lives.

Means said: “I got inspired to start making music when my lifestyle changed. We wanted to listen to the same music that we are used to but a lot of the stuff out there was contradicting so being the alternative was the only solution.

“Church and God has impacted our lives drastically. It's what we live by, faith. We live by it everyday. And now that we have found something greater than us it's like a vision. It keeps us going and keeps us in line. Because we have been impacted we are able to impact on others.”

TURN TO PAGE 2 ➡

PALACE MAGIC LEADS LIONS ROAR AT WORLD CUP

Winger Joseph Hungbo, at just 18 is following in the footsteps of footballing legends who have risen through the Palace Academy including England manager Gareth Southgate.

Joseph, from Croydon, who signed his first professional contract with the Premier League side this month will no doubt be eyeing a future place in the England team which is chasing World Cup glory under the leadership of Southgate, who was the youngest captain to lead Palace to promotion.

Hungbo who has come through the Oasis Academy in Shirley where other Palace prospect Aaron Wan-Bissaka, 20, from New Addington was schooled, is one of the Eagles academy's brightest stars and had attracted interest from both Liverpool and Chelsea.

Wan-Bissaka broke thorough into the first team last season and has already been described as a 'promising talent' who is likely to remain part of manager Roy Hodgson's first-team plans.

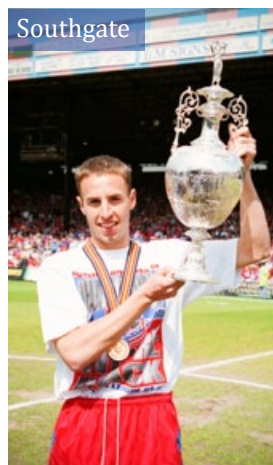
Just like Wilfried Zaha, they all grew up in Croydon, and their discoveries demonstrate how the Academy structure is great for spotting and harnessing emerging talent.



Palace for Life Foundation provides football and education programme for all ages including over-16s at Croydon's Harris Academy in partnership with Volenti Academy, established by one of Southgate's contemporaries Bobby Bowry.

Through the varied and holistic work the Foundation carries out they are giving local youngsters opportunities to one day fulfil a dream just like Southgate did. Just last season alone eight young players came through the Foundation programmes - signing for CPFC's Academy teams.

Bobby who played at Palace for four seasons said: “Gareth was part of the youth team when I joined Palace. He was a fantastic role model with a great attitude, desire and dedication. He was very professional and driven; a great



player and very team oriented.

“We had a great group of players around us. There was something special. It doesn't surprise me that we've got Gareth Southgate as manager of England, Chris Coleman managing Wales and Richard Shaw at the CPFC Academy.”

About today's

Academy stars, he said: “We have two boys from the Volenti Academy who have gone to America on full scholarship and two boys who have got onto the Players Academy at St George's Park. I am proud because we're dealing with a different type of kid, a street kid, and we're giving them a different point of view.

“The Foundation let us use the CPFC name to help us get into the community. I love what I do working with young players and giving them a chance like I had. I went from having nothing to being where I am now and that's because of the opportunities I was given.”

WIN TICKETS TO PALACE FRIENDLY

We have 10 pairs of tickets, each worth £15 to give away for Palace's pre-season friendly at Selhurst Park against Toulouse on August 4.

To win a pair of tickets tell the Chronicle distributor outside Tesco at 11am on Saturday (14) which Palace player grew up in Thornton Heath? Only one pair per person.

Under U12s already go for free and U18s at a reduced rate of £10.

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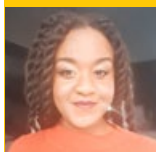
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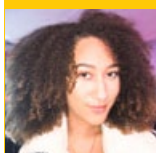
world" - Robin Williams.



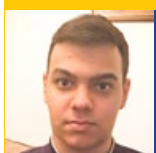
ourselves by reaching out to other souls" -Rumi



in London, New York, Toronto and Montego Bay



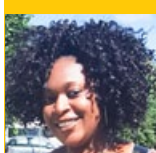
bearing an untold story inside you" – Angelou



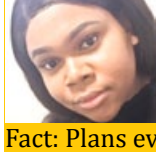
art is making others happy."



pleasure - especially Hamilton!



Fact: I like reading novels and watching true crime documentaries



Fact: Plans every detail of her life and her future and writes everything down in her diary.

TEENAGERS EXPERIENCE REAL LIFE TRAUMAS

Local school children as young as 14 with aspirations to one day become a surgeon are being given the opportunity to experience real life traumas including taking part in a foot transplant.

Norbury Manor Business and Enterprise College has been selected as one of the first venues in the UK to host the award-winning Operating Theatre Live which is led by science teacher Samuel Piri.

Along with an expert team of clinicians, they are offering 14 to 19-year-old's with an interest in a future career in medicine, health care or dentistry the chance to dissect real specimens like the brain, eyes, lungs and the heart.

All the organs are from pigs, which have an almost identical anatomy to humans, and all are waste products of the meat industry. It is essentially the opportunity to touch, feel and see organs which makes such a difference to learning.

National events manager for Operation Theatre Live Luke Jones, said: "As an assistant headteacher I know that digital reality is very effective but it can't provide the hands-on sensory experience of holding a heart or exploring something as amazing as the thoracic cavity which



connects the tongue to the trachea, lungs, heart and liver."

The tour arrives at Norbury Manor Business College on July 21, from 9am to 5pm with an option to stay through the evening for the Trauma Room. At the emergency medicine workshop from 5pm to 8pm students will experience performing a foot transplant using a semi synthetic human cadaver but the organs inside are all real specimens.

Students have a go at surgical techniques such as intubation, endoscopy and transplant, getting to grips with the equipment and infection control and learning along the way about diseases that affect different organs.

Tickets cost £60 and £139 for access to the trauma room. To book: www.operatingtheatrelive.co.uk/publicevent

TURN FROM PAGE 1 ► Hope Dealers, describe themselves as ambassadors and pioneers for Gospel Drill and recently featured on a BBC 1xtra.

However, drill music has been blamed by police, politicians and the media as fuelling a surge in violent crime.

Jermaine Goupall, 15, was stabbed to death in August last year in Georgia Road. His murderers outlined the killing in a violent YouTube video.

His father Stanley described the music as having "a demonic mindset". Drill originated in Chicago, helping to make the city one of America's most violent with 650 murders last year.

Hope Dealers belong to the SPACNation church movement which is led in London by senior pastor Tobi Adegboyega, cousin of Hollywood actor John Boyega.

SPACNation is partners with Connect 25, based in South Norwood and services are held at Stanley Halls.

Bread said: "What inspired me to start making music was SpacNation (their church) I realised that me and other young members needed something to listen to.

"Church has changed my life significantly as I am now a pastor. I think that says it all. "

FUNDRAISING CAMPAIGN TO SECURE THE FUTURE OF THE CHRONICLE

We started The Chronicle because of a passion for Thornton Heath and its community, writes Editor

There's always been a lot going on and we wanted to make sure you knew about it all. (The good and the bad!)

In September 2016 we launched a printed newspaper and now print 5,000 copies a month. The Chronicle has become a much-loved local news source. This month we have printed a 16-page edition with a 20,000 copies handing over the newspaper's editorial content to local young people to produce a youth edition and we are keen to continue to encourage young people and the wider community to be creative - and write for The Chronicle.

We've been influential in supporting Thornton Heath locals, through campaigns for their businesses and organisations. Thornton Heath is changing, so it's all the more important we hold those who make the decisions about our local area to account.

News is our bread and butter, but it's not the only thing we do. We cover the arts, culture, sports, and provide insightful features in to our communities activities.

And now we are asking for your help. We need to raise £10,000 for a budget for staffing costs. Up until now, we've just about scraped by, managing to cover news articles ourselves alongside full-time jobs.

Our support from ad revenue is minimal and the small grants we receive only covers the monthly costs of printing. As for the actual writing, sub-editing, and laying out of the paper, we've always relied on an amazing but small team of volunteers. To make sure we continue to give Thornton Heath it's only truly local paper, we need be able to reimburse these volunteers for some of their time.

We are asking you to help, by making a contribution. If everyone who read this edition of the Chronicle gave 50 pence we would meet our target.

<https://www.gofundme.com/thornton-heath-chronicle-campaign>

PlayMakers project, jointly funded by the Premier League and the Professional Footballers Association, creates a connection between local young people, who generally have limited social networks, and CPFC supporters in powerful and/or influential positions across London's business, media, public and voluntary sectors.

Our PlayMakers opportunity has really captured the imagination and every week members of the CPFC community have been getting in contact to ask how they can get involved. That sums up Palace really; a great community club!

London is often cited as a magnet for global talent, and Croydon is a hot-bed for success with individuals like grime artist Stormzy, supermodel Kate Moss, comedian Michael Dapah AKA Big Shaq, CPFC's head coach Roy Hodgson, former Great British Bake Off star Sue Perkins, and singer Adele, all having links to the local area.

Andrea Perry, PlayMaker and Editor at The Thornton Heath Chronicle, believed it would be a really special opportunity to give some of the talented young people across Thornton Heath a chance to gain hands-on experience of

publishing a community newspaper. Over the last five months we have had workshops and training to support our group of young journalists to develop their writing, interviewing and reporting skills.

We have also been lucky enough to be able to call on some other local talented professionals such as Emmanuelle Waeckerle and Khalil Goddard to host photography and creative writing workshops for the group.

Our young journalists have benefited from the real life experience; one which they would not ordinarily have had.

They have conducted interviews with key figures, had great networking opportunities across the industry and the wider community, and most importantly they have had the chance to receive one-to-one support from an experienced and established journalist in Andrea Perry.

It has been my honour and absolute pleasure to facilitate this project in my capacity as editor of this Youth Edition. On behalf of the Youth Editorial team, The Chronicle and the Palace for Life Foundation, I would like to thank everyone who has supported this project.

SINGER, 19, TOURS THE WORLD WHILE JUGGLING HER A-LEVELS

EXCLUSIVE BY AMBER THORNTON

ALRIE, has already achieved so much at just the age of 19, and is touring with one of the hottest sounds of electro-house music: SG Lewis.

Her journey started after she went to a music college in Tooting called BIMM for a year and made some great contacts in the industry. Being from Croydon, it's warming to see another young person from the local area on their path to success.

ALRIE has travelled around the world to places like America and Brazil for her tours and will continue to do so this summer around Asia and Australia. It's not all singing, as she gets to explore when the band have a free day with no shows. She said: "I often think to myself 'How am I so lucky?'"

However, according to ALRIE the life of a singer is not as glamorous as people may think.

She said: "I wouldn't say that I'm properly in the singer life just yet, but

based on what I do I think it's very rewarding. I'm doing what I love and getting paid for it. But everyone only sees the highlights and they're like 'Oh my gosh, you're travelling around the world, doing all these shows!' but it's a lot of work. When I went on tour last year, I was travelling every single day. I got really ill what with all the different time zones.

"Like I said it's very tiring, but I definitely can't complain. I would do this every day of my life."

To ALRIE, touring with a celebrity is nothing more than just "hanging out with musicians and performing," she says. "Sam [SG Lewis] and everyone are really down-to-earth, so it just feels like I'm hanging out with musicians, and performing. It really doesn't really feel like a 'celeb' thing.

However she adds seeing celebrities she has adored since childhood, such as Jessie J and Justin Timberlake, is understandably "really exciting".

Being only 19, ALRIE was still in Sixth

Form to do A-Levels despite her music career. Trying to juggle the two had proven to be a great test of strength. She said: "It was crazy, I had my biology textbooks out on the tour bus trying to revise," she continues, "I missed a month of school, but caught up really well. I wouldn't recommend it as it's risky and stressful, but I couldn't pass up this great opportunity."

Within the next year ALRIE hopes to release some of her own music, now that the exam period is over.

She hopes to write loads of music and define her brand, and establish her sound, having enough supporters to release her own music.

She added: "I feel like I'm not in a rush to release my own music. Sometimes I forget I'm so young and have all the time in the world to figure this out and I don't want to do it wrong.

"So, I'm going to take my time and hope I'm soon in a position to show my music to the world!?"

@alriebahmusic



24-HOUR PARK ART EVENT

A park is being transformed in to a 24 hour open arts venue which will see artists come together in performance, sound art and sculpture.

The 24 hour parky people event takes place in Trumble Gardens on Brigstock Road from 6pm on Friday 20 and finishes at 6pm on Saturday 21 and is part of THAW (Thornton Heath Arts Week).

Artists featured include: Phil Mill, Roshni Bhagotra, Op.X, Katrin Haunch, PINS and Marianne Hyatt.

Activities include a bat hunt, song writing session plus plans to paint the children's equipment and neglected benches.

All attendees of the park are invited to get involved, they can paint something, they can sing, recite poetry, play an instrument and have some fun.

THAW includes poetry from Young People Insight, spoken word by Well Versed along with a series of art exhibitions, as well as the announcement of The Thornton Heath in Bloom winners and film nights.

LOOK OUT FOR THE FLASH MOB

This was the practice run for a Flash Mob which will be assembling somewhere in Thornton Heath on Saturday July 14 at 11am to kick start Arts Week.



Dancer Kimberly Warren of Urban Steppers will be leading the adhoc performance.

To find out where follow the @thorntonheathartweek on Twitter or Facebook. THAW runs from July 14- 21.

AT HOME WITH WILFRIED ZAHA

In a candid interview Palace superstar Wilfried Zaha, has spoken about how his time at Manchester Utd reduced him to tears and that he is happy with his decision to turn his back on England and play for the Ivory Coast because he was so desperate to play international football.

In an interview with presenter Tia Sackey at his home, the Palace winger talked about tough times growing up in Thornton Heath where his family - five brothers and three sisters - moved from the Ivory Coast when he was just four-years-old in to a three bedroom house.

From a close family who enjoyed each others' company, Zaha is most grateful for his father's support and says that he owes it all to him. Although his parents were strict, the young Wilf had no interest in parties or a 'bad man' lifestyle and had tunnel vision when it came to football.

Scouted by Palace from a Sunday league team, he remembers his first match "like it was yesterday." "I did one or two tricks and got decent reviews after the game, even though I only played five minutes".

Years later this raw talent took him to Manchester United only for this exciting move to become a very difficult time for him.

"It was a period while I was by myself

and I just had to deal with so much craziness. My job was to play football..I moved away from my family in London...to play football but if I was not playing football what exactly was I doing up here...It could have really broken me. I used to get up, go training knowing that I was not going to be picked".

Zaha credits his faith in God and his belief in his talent for getting him through this period of his life, made him mentally stronger and knowing what he wanted and so returning to Palace "felt like coming back home".

God and his dad play important roles in Zaha's life and most Fridays he goes to pray with his dad before a game and then the day after the game they meet to speak about what he could have done better.

On his lack of selection for England, he said that in the beginning he had rejected Ivory Coast because: "I came here when I was four, all I know is England. I live here, all my friends are here. I've done everything here so best play for England.

"I played one game for England against Sweden for five minutes and the next game 20 minutes against Scotland.

"I was then never picked again. Imagine four years of football life but no international football. It got to the point where it was ridiculous and I thought



what I am waiting for? I wanted to play international football...Ivory Coast approached me again and maybe it was God telling me that I need to play for a country I turned down before but still want me...no brainer". The decision for Zaha was further confirmed by the huge reception he got on arrival at the airport in Ivory Coast to play in a World Cup Qualifier and he realised how valued he was by the country he had left at only four.

As for the future, Zaha is shrewdly planning ahead and has started his own clothing range, Long Live and has become a father for the first time. This local superstar still keeps his feet on the ground with his message that "I'm just trying to work on myself overall as a person and as a footballer."

To see the interview in full: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FkF2DnWITis>

LOCAL ARTIST HIRED TO DO PORTRAIT OF LORD SUGAR

Thornton Heath artist Bareface was commissioned to create a pop art portrait of Lord Alan Sugar which was presented to him by Apprentice winner Sarah Lynn at a celebration of their co-owned confectionary business Sweets in the City.

Bareface had been selected by Croydon Council to produce a mural as part of the regeneration of the High Street, but over a year later the much awaited CR7 mural still hasn't materialised.

Now there are new owners of the flank wall on Gisland Road and they are not amenable to it being used so new



sites are being sought. The council is also advertising for artists for a public commission to complete the design for the side elevation wall on the Sakthy Ghanapathy Hindu Temple, in Brigstock Road.

The Temple mural hit a series of issues

WHAT MAKES GOOD ACKEE AND SALTFISH?

BY AISHA JADE

Jamaica, like other Caribbean islands, is a fusion of different cultures.

This is heavily reflected in the food as many of Jamaica's signatures dishes are combinations of food from different countries that have a connection to Jamaica in some way.

For example, ackee and saltfish, Jamaica's national dish, when ackee is in season that is.

Saltfish is said to have come from European invaders who used to dry and salt the fish to preserve it. On the other hand, ackee comes from West Africa, a place where most of the slaves who were taken to Jamaica originated from. I remember my classmate from Ghana being confused as to why we, Jamaicans, ate fish with fruit, each to their own I suppose!

Some people would frown upon this meal as they would see it as a poor man's dish due to it being very affordable, but I see this as a bonus.

My late Grandmother Mazzie passed down her recipe to my mother Dee, who cooked this for me growing up and still cooks it now.

I get to enjoy a taste of Jamaica from the comfort of my own home and you can too with this recipe.



Serves 4 | Ingredients:

- 1 packet of saltfish
- 1 tin ackee
- 1 large onion
- 1 red pepper
- 1/2 scotch bonnet pepper
- 2 large garlic cloves
- 2 large lemons
- 2 ripe plantains
- 2 sweet potatoes
- 4 – 6 oz plain flour
- 10 tspn Olive oil

Rinse 1 pack of saltfish and place into a large bowl filled with cold water half to three quarters full. Slice the lemons and place them into the bowl of saltfish and water. Leave this to soak overnight.

The next morning, rinse off the saltfish. Use a fork to then flake it into small chunks. Get the 2 large plantains and cut off the ends then cut in half, leave the skin on.

Additionally, peel the sweet potatoes and cut each one into 4 pieces. Place plantain and potato into large pot of cold water and bring to boil.

Next, get the plain flour and gradually keep adding water until it turns into a doughy paste. Knead the dough and roll it into car wheel shapes to make about 8 dumplings. Add this to the boiled water with the sweet potato and plantain.

Chop the onion, garlic and red pepper and sauté for 4 mins. After this add the saltfish and cook for a further 5 mins. Drain and add the tinned ackee and cook for a further 10 mins. Drain all the plantain, sweet potato and dumplings, and voila, dinner is ready!



CARIBBEAN CUISINE

The Caribbean: a region with over 7000 islands but only 28 inhabited territories. Jamaica is often used synonymously due to their culture having worldwide influences, but there is so much more to this mysterious place, writes Aisha Jade.

With a rich and unique history that involves colonialism and slavery, Caribbean culture is and has been multicultural for hundreds of years.

European, African, Indian and Chinese are amongst some of the ethnic groups and cultures that reside in the islands. And although there are crossovers between cultures no two islands are the same. Each one offers its own unique language, music, dance and cuisine that reflects its diversity.

The ABC islands: Aruba, Bonaire and Curacao pronounced cure-a-so are territories of the Netherlands.

The official languages are Dutch and Papiamentu, the latter being a Creole language heavily influenced by Portuguese but also Spanish, Dutch and West African dialects. These three islands have a combined estimated population of nearly 300,000 and share a well-known local dish of Cabrito Stoba: a hearty goat stew.

Haiti and the Dominican Republic (DR)

are two countries that share the Island of Hispanola.

Haitians speak French and were the ones to lead a successful rebellion against the colonial rule which resulted in the founding of the country.

The population is estimated at just over 11,000,000 and one of the national dishes is Griot, a sweet and savoury fried pork meal.

On the other hand, the DR are Spanish speaking with an estimated population of nearly 11,000,000. A national dish is sancocho: a soup containing different meats, vegetables, cassava and plantain.

But, the cuisine differs depending on what part of the island you are located. For example, those close to the sea: diet will consist of mostly sea food. Furthermore, they have the highest population of Japanese citizens in the Caribbean, so in areas such as Constanza the food will have some Japanese influences.

YAH-SO GOOD

Caribbean cuisine is becoming increasingly popular, seeing a boom in new restaurants opening but how do you know your callaloo from your cassava and your ackee from your saltfish?



Here Aisha Jade who writes a food blog called: Di Carpean Foodie (www.dicarpeanfoodie.com) helps you navigate a Caribbean menu. She has reviewed Yah-So, a Jamaican inspired restaurant in Thornton Heath and found exquisite exterior and interior designs as well great food.

To drink I had a mango madness mocktail (non-alcoholic cocktail). Extremely rich in colour and exotically mixed, it gave a sharp kick of multiple fruity flavours that could be tasted simultaneously. I mean I love anything to do with mangoes, who doesn't?

Furthermore, a glance at the food menu had me intrigued. I liked that they put their own spin on traditional European foods.

For example, the bruschetta of ackee, sun blushed plum tomato and avocado. Bruschetta being from Italy, and ackee being native to West Africa but heavily consumed in Jamaica, this dish was unusual but did not fail to deliver.



As a calamari lover, my face lit up with pure glee when I saw that they served it! Crispy on the outside and soft inside it was made well but could have been hotter in temperature.

Nevertheless, the dipping sauce made the calamari even more tasty. Those who eat calamari often know that the sauce is very important, if it's not right it could ruin the dish completely.

An exciting "Ital but vital salad" had me curious when I saw the ingredients. Who would have thought that pumpkin, beetroot and pine nuts could make such a powerful mix?

It was tangy from the beetroot, slightly sweet from the pumpkin and a roasted flavour was given off from the pine nuts.

A unique taste which I was super impressed by! Although it's a vegan dish I would still suggest it for non-vegans.

Finally, dessert. A chocolate brownie with rum sauce beautifully embellished with cream and a physalis fruit. The brownie was soft and good-tasting, but the rum sauce, for me, was too strong.

Nevertheless, the cream was a nice addition to the meal and went well with the brownie, it also helped balance out the rum sauce!

Ultimately, I was highly impressed by most of the dishes that I had to taste at Yah-So. I believe it will do very well and I will visit soon to give an updated review! Stay tuned!

THE EMOTIONS OF DEALING WITH GRIEF AS A TEENAGER CAN BE

Angel O'Dwyer explains how difficult dealing with grief is as a teenager.

When I found out that my 18-year-old sister was killed in a bike crash while she was on holiday in Zante I was completely at a loss. There are no words that could describe the emotion and pain.

I was 15 and stopped caring about things that used to matter to me before. School was the worst. I was very angry all the time and got into pointless fights which resulted in me being excluded.

My school provided me with a mentor and I had to attend a programme called Reaching Higher.

My mentor was great but the general support on offer to me wasn't enough. I needed more help outside of the 9am to 3pm school hours. My mentor referred me to the Palace for Life Foundation which focused on personal development and employability skills.

To begin with I didn't really want to be there. I felt I was forced to be there to make up for the time I would have been spending in sixth form.

The project manager at the time, Susan Patterson-Smith, and head of community development, Soye Briggs, told me they saw potential in me and motivated me to follow my dreams.



They showed they cared by calling me to ensure I was turning up and contributing. They made me feel confident and helped me improve my sense of worth and self-esteem. They made me feel like I was somebody with purpose again. This changed my perspective on life and made me feel like I could do anything I put my mind to.

Now I give back to the community by using my experiences to inspire and raise awareness of the challenges young people face.

I am currently a coach on many community based programmes with the Foundation. I was also in Moscow before the World Cup coaching Team England at the Street Child World Cup. I worked as a coach and mentor with young players who have experienced homelessness, rehabilitation or social exclusion. However, not every young

person is given the opportunity to be pulled out of the hole they are sinking in to nor are they made aware of the support available to them when they are in a similar position and grieving.

Schools can only do so much and in many cases, parents and guardians are not an obvious form of support to turn to because they too are going through their own ordeal.

I didn't want to talk to my mum about the hurt I was feeling because although I had lost my sister, she had lost her child. Young people are our future and more needs to be done by society as a whole to support them when they need it, even if they feel like they don't.

While there is a lot of support available in the immediate aftermath of a traumatic situation, the long-term emotional effects are often forgotten and victims, friends and families are often left to deal with the fear, trauma, loss and grief without any support.

If you are affected by any of the issues mentioned in this article and would like support, the CDI (Croydon Drop In) is a charitable organisation that exists to support young people aged 11 to 25 years old.

www.croydondropin.org.uk/

@Croydon_Drop_Int

with fear of the unknown everyday. "We believe as a Croydon Community we must stand together to support and strengthen these families as well as the generations to come.

"With the help of other professionals who can provide the necessary support needed for our young people who are at risk of youth violence."

Register for the free event at: www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/croydon-youth-summit-2018-registration-46016082341

www.cbmeforum.org
info@bmeforum.org
020 8684 3719



LIGHT AT THE END OF THE TUNNEL

A course is giving disadvantaged Croydon residents and ex offenders a second chance at a career on the railways.



The five week railway engineering programme run jointly by Palace for Life Foundation and City and Guilds, is delivered at Selhurst Park and gives participants an understanding of the railway: running of track and physical maintenance, and also covers health and safety elements.

Successful participants are accredited with an NVQ Level 2 Railway Engineering Operative Knowledge and Industry Common Induction (ICI) qualification for London Underground and Network Rail.

James Harrison-Sears, Community Development Officer, said that not many institutions employ individuals with a criminal background and this gives them an opportunity to have a "second chance at a better life."

Shefron Tulloch, 31, described the challenges he faced prior to enrolling on the programme: "I came out of prison and there was no hope, I was always stuck at home. If you have a criminal conviction on your record it is hard to get a job. I used to apply but I never believed I was going to succeed.

"This programme showed me there is light at the end of the tunnel so I want to try my hardest to pass."

Guiding participants through the course with four decades of experience Bob Honey, CAT1 Safety Trainer, said: "Nine out of 10 participants from the last cohort were in employment within one week" of qualifying, and all 10 were offered interviews."

MP CALLS FOR ACTION

MP for Croydon North, Steve Reed, is a passionate advocate for taking action in order to reduce knife crime.

He draws on his experience as former leader of Lambeth council to tackle knife crime in creating "the biggest Community Youth Trust in the country" resulting in a dramatic decrease in youth violence.

Now the MP wants a similar framework in Croydon. He placed the success of the scheme down to "putting the community in the lead, giving them a sense they could not only own the problem but find the solutions to it too."

He said: "Young people can feel very marginalised and distrustful of established authoritative figures, but there are organisations in the community that have a credibility and an ability to reach them."

To try and combat this he explained: "We are trying to set up a Community Youth Trust for Croydon North that will bring together all of the big community organisations in the area. Hopefully, in this way, we can create a stronger community voice that can advocate for solutions and take power for itself."

PUT DOWN THE KNIVES AND SAVE LIVES



A youth summit is being held to combat youth violence and give support to empower young people to transform their lives.

The event is organised by the BME Forum, Croydon Council and 20 young people along with community supporters, on Saturday July 21 from 12-5pm at the Brit School.

BACKBENCHERS TRY TO DELAY JUSTICE FOR SENI

Sitting side by side in the front row of the public viewing gallery in the Houses of Common, Ajibola and Conrad Lewis watched intently as MP Steve Reed gave evidence in support of a bill which after eight years would bring some justice for the death of their son Seni, writes Sabirina Mohammed.

However, what should have been third reading turned in to a five hour pantomime as conservative MPs Philip Davies and Sir Christopher Chope spoke for hours in an attempt to block Seni's Law and Gini Martin's upskirting bill which were both delayed until July 6.

Olaseni Lewis, 23, died four days after being restrained three separate times at a mental health unit in Shirley, first at the hands of members of staff and then by a total of 11 police officers, in December 2010.

Advocated by Seni's parents, Ajibola and Conrad, a new law entitled the Mental Health (Use of Force) Bill was constructed, with the help of a number of prominent mental health charities led by MP Steve Reed.



Jubilant Steve Reed with Seni's parents

Very recently, I was privileged enough to witness the bill's successful passing of the report stage in parliamentary proceedings but not the crucial third reading, where the bill was unfortunately blocked and therefore delayed until July 6, by two Conservative MPs.

If the bill had passed the critical third reading there would have only been one more phase to pass, before for the bill could become official statutory law. Opposition to this bill used an old trick in House of Commons tradition that can allow a member of Parliament to talk out a bill, which Phillip Davies MP (main opposition) took a hold of, speaking for a total of two and a half hours, consistently. In support of the bill, Conrad Lewis had

FIRST SPOKEN WORD FESTIVAL FOR CULTURALLY RICH CROYDON

BY SABIRINA MOHAMED

A spoken word collective are set to launch Croydon's first major poetry festival in September.

In an area both heavily tipped to top the London Borough of Culture 2020 list and on the back of a pending multi-million-pound cultural regeneration of Fairfield Halls set for completion in 2019, it feels like the right time for Croydon to host its first poetry festival.

The Living In Poetry (LIP) festival, at Stanley Halls in South Norwood will see Well-Versed Ink, alongside a number of talented community poets, come together to perform over two-days. This is a major step, not only for spoken word but for the arts in general in the borough.

Well Versed Ink are formed of three poets, Darrell Randon, Justine Agbowu and Natalie Twum-Barima. The trio moved from staging open mic nights at a small performance space on Brigstock Road to presenting 'South London's Potent Poetry Night' every last Wednesday of the month, to growing audiences at Box Park.



Formed in 2014 after a performance at Thornton Heath Arts Week, Well Versed Ink are committed to educating and championing the local community through the arts, acknowledging that it was through a community-organised event they were ultimately created and given a platform to share their amazing poetry.

Darren, of Well-Versed Ink is a huge supporter of the poetic talent Thornton Heath has to offer and marks this as inspiration why the group want to showcase creative young people in the area, such as on the line-up of their new LIP festival.

He said: "I think there is a huge creative



community in Thornton Heath, and even though we get a bad rap this emerging talent is slowly but surely changing the perception, such as in the arrival of Box Park.

"There have been so many poets that have been discovered here over the years. They have always been here and been talented, but they just needed that break or platform to shine for the community to see the value in the arts."

Spoken word, in essence, is poetry created to be performed. It is arguably poetry reinvented for a modern audience, providing a kind of social commentary on everyday topics in society ranging from relationships to

more 'controversial' subjects including politics or mental health.

It has recently seen a huge surge in popularity, primarily from poets who share their poetry through various videos online where some have even racked up millions of views on YouTube.

Darren believes this insurgence of spoken word into a mainstream narrative has been "a long time coming."

He added: "We've been going for four years now, whereas some artists have been going for over 20 years which is absolutely fantastic.

"Recently, the number of open mic nights (for spoken word) have exploded as well as artists the likes of Sugar J and Laurie Ogden appearing in national adverts. This is showing how more people are willing to share their thoughts and feelings and see the benefits of sharing their poetry in safe spaces."

Well Versed Ink will be hosting the Living In Poetry Festival over the weekend of September 1- 2 at Stanley Halls in South Norwood

PROS AND CONS OF SOCIAL MEDIA

Social media has become a modern-day currency, consisting of likes and followers. The more you have the higher your status is but its addictive nature has led to concerns over the impact it is having on young people.

In the UK, 85 per cent of us own a smartphone and many users are children. Frequent use of social media can become addictive. Psychologists explain this as being a result of conditioning, as any received notification creates an expectation and sense of belonging. A recent report found social media use is linked to increased rates of anxiety, depression and poor sleep. Instagram and Snapchat were identified as the most harmful to the mental health of young people. There have also been recent calls to ban mobile phones during school time and a parliamentary select committee is looking at the impact of social media and screen use on young people's health. Here three of the Chronicle team weigh up the pros and cons.

Ellie Barnett, 13 says chances are if you have a social media account and its public, you are more than likely to have received some form of hate. One example of this is

when my friend got a ton of hate for posting a picture of her and me together under the caption being "Together On Saturday!" With hearts at the end. This resulted in people presuming we were together and led to homophobic comments. Later that month she deleted her account because of the amount of hate she was receiving. This is just one of the few examples of how something so simple can create hate and lead to mental health disorders such as social anxiety, depression and suicidal thoughts. Despite the downside of social media there can be many pros, says Ellie such as finding new friendships and hobbies. Ellie's top E-Safety tips to keep safe include keep your account private; if you attend school with uniform make sure you never have the name of your school included in your photos, to avoid creeps, try to avoid taking selfies or photos of yourself or friends wearing revealing clothes and try to follow people who you know.

CATHERINE MOMOH, 22, says: "I loved reading as a child and used to spend hours on end reading novels. Even now, I still love reading and my love for books is the reason



I'm studying for a Master's degree in English Literature. "However, I began to realise that instead of spending hours reading, I was beginning to spend hours scrolling through social media.

"The strangest thing was that I wasn't talking to anyone or posting much. I was just spending hours looking at other peoples' lives and comparing them to mine.

"So, I shut it all down. I closed my Instagram, Twitter and Facebook.

As a so-called millennial, it's apparently meant to be like having your heart ripped out.

"Instead, I discovered I had so much free time to read, to do my work, to actually enjoy being with people.

"I also learnt how trivial things on social media are. Friends would tell me about events kicking off and causing a huge scandal online. Meanwhile, it had no effect on my life whatsoever.

"Leaving social media was also a quick way to learn who my real friends are. I realised that if people really cared about me they'd pick up the phone and call. Maybe in the future I'll return, I haven't decided yet."

AMBER THORNTON, 16, says: "I have felt my attention span diminishing when trying to do something like read a book. In previous years, I could read a whole 300-page book in about two to three days, however this now seems impossible.

"Currently, I struggle to read more than one to two chapters in a day, as I find myself reaching for my phone.

"My sleep patterns are also affected. When I aim for an early night it never seems to come to fruition if I have my phone next to me. The usual 11pm bedtime extends to around 2-3am.

"Despite this, I don't think the positives of social media should be ignored. Many people's careers are only in existence because of social media. YouTube vlogger, Zoella, has been able to move into a £1 million home because of her channel and toy-tester, Tiana Wilson has a net worth of £3.2million at just 9.

"Therefore, social media can transform lives if used properly. As long as we regulate our own usage, it should not burden our lives too much."



THORNTON HEATH FEATURES IN NATIONAL TV AD

A national advertising campaign for fast food chain McDonald's features Thornton Heath.

Has anyone else noticed on the TV adverts that when the new parents, or father and daughter sit down to eat their McDonalds, they are actually in the London Road restaurant?

An eagle eyed Chronicle reader also saw the cameras filming the adverts at the branch.

The new campaign highlights how the

fast food chain is making customers' lives easier with new table service and mobile ordering.

The campaign features three adverts – Hands Full, Grownup and It Must Be.

Hands Full sees two new parents struggle with everyday tasks such as taking a pram down stairs and juggling shopping, before finally getting some respite with table service at McDonalds. Grownup, meanwhile, centres around a father and daughter day out which ends in them

getting a McDonald's using new in-store touchscreens to make their order.

The final TV ad, It Must Be, follows two teenagers who connect through the McDonald's app.

A McDonalds spokesperson said: "Our Thornton Heath restaurant and team were perfect for our recent ad filming. The team were extremely enthusiastic and represent exactly what we look for in our people – helpful, enthusiastic and keen to get involved."

THE SELF TAUGHT DANCER TAKING AFROBEAT TO NEW HEIGHTS

BY AISHA JADE

Akay, real name Akana Gerry, is a self-taught dance instructor who has been dancing for 12 years and has inspired tens of thousands to dance.

The Thornton Heath local has appeared in music videos for well respected Afro beat stars Eugy and Mr Eazi and has a huge Instagram following of 70,000 and counting.

Akay specialises in what she calls afro-fusion which is afro beats combined with street dance.

The 22-year-old teaches this through online dance tutorials and has her own dance classes.

She said: "I am half Nigerian and half Jamaican. Dance is a massive part of both cultures. I also have family members who are dancers so it's something that I have been exposed to

from a young age.

"The fact that I do something that I love and have a passion for keeps me very motivated. I can help people learn dance and I find that extremely rewarding.

"Being creative and learning new things is also a must when dancing. I look at other dancers such as Sophia Official and Benny Tantu for inspiration.

"They are also afrobeat dancers and are very talented. When it comes to celebrities, Chris Brown and Ciara are my favourites. They move so effortlessly you can tell that they are naturals.

"What I find most challenging about being a dancer is bookings. I do this by myself as I don't have a manager so sometimes bookings can be a bit overwhelming but it's something that I deal with.

"Moreover, one of the most important things to me and a reason why I dance is to be a good role model for the youth and to my community. A lot of young people come to my classes. I aim to inspire them by helping them to reach their dance goals. It's something extra for them to do besides school/college. I also make sure that my dancing is appropriate.

"In the future I will have my own dance studio where I will teach people different dance styles such as dancehall, salsa, and afro fusion. I aim to help people to unleash their inner dance powers and become the best that they can be! My advice to anyone looking to learn dance would be to find your own style and be comfortable with it!"

@a.kay_xx



SHINING A LIGHT ON EXPLOITATION OF GIRLS

Sherica Spence turned around her life after suffering years of sexual abuse and now her powerful story has been turned in to a short film, writes Shantol Byfield.

The 31-year-old believes that by sharing her experiences it will shine a light on the untold abuse suffered by girls at the hands of gangs and ultimately change someone's life.

Sherica was just six year's old when she was first sexually abused and gang raped at 15. She faced many emotional traumas later on in her life because of these experiences.

As a teenager she ran away from home, misused drugs and alcohol and engaged in promiscuous relationships.

In an interview with Sherica she said that 'sexual trauma affects people differently', in her case it was turning to what she knew best, sex.



As you can imagine this is not the ideal life any young woman would like to live, and Sherica was able to break the cycle and set up a foundation called the Skye Alexandra House in the summer of June 2013, where she could encourage and support girls and women who have been through a similar situation to get help.

The charity based in South Norwood is a semi independent living service for vulnerable young women aged 16 to 18.

It provides in-house and out-house services in life skills including, training guidance, 1 to 1 mentoring, counselling and family support. Sherica has been

PROJECT AIMS TO STOP HATE CRIME BEFORE IT HAPPENS

Imagine walking to pray and having racist abuse hurled at you or feeling fearful of being the victim of sexual harassment because of the route you take home, or going to school and being routinely abused because of your sexuality.

For many residents of Croydon this is a daily reality. Lots of people think hate crime is about race but it's also about gender, sexuality, disability and religion.

It can include: verbal abuse, intimidation, threats, harassment, assault and bullying, as well as damage to property.

Croydon Voluntary Action is running a campaign to tackle hate crime in the local area, something which has steadily risen since the Brexit vote.

The two-year project led by community builder Priya Loomba is funded by the Mayor's Office for Policing and Crime as part of the race hate reduction strategy.

Working with the council and police; the project has two objectives to:

- identify what is happening in the community and create an environment where people feel able to understand what hate crime is and report it.

- and where something has already taken place to look at the environment where it happened and make it a safer

very successful and has inspired many young girls and women with her story.

Now she has turned that in to a moving short film called 'REPOST', which follows the life of a young artist named Sasha who has fallen into the wrong company and becomes sexually exploited.

This short film will be first screened at Thornton Heath Arts Week on Monday July 16 at 7pm Scratchley Hall, Brigstock Road. Proceeds will be going to Skye Alexandra House.

Sherica said: "I'm trying to show young women that 'yes' things happens in your life but do not allow it to define who you are as a person. Use it as a seed to grow stronger as a person and fight harder."

The evening will include an interview with Sherica followed by an open discussion on the wider aspects of gender-based violence and the role of community in stopping it.

www.skyealexandrahouse.co.uk
repost-thaw.eventbrite.co.uk

CVA is also working with older people on a project around intimidation and tackling homophobia during school time.

Lenses of Croydon is leading on a project which aims to tackle sexually related hate crime by identifying unsafe places where either an incident has or could happen. Local women have been encouraged to take photographs of public spaces which feel intimidating. Once these hotspots have been identified CVA along with the community, can feedback options to the council to make these spaces safer.

This might be through improved lighting, CCTV, more police patrols or street art.

Throughout the project CVA will be highlighting what it finds and feeding back to key agencies holding them to account and coming up with solutions to stop the race hate happening.

Priya said : "The project is about how we can work with the community to grow peoples awareness. When race hat is not challenged it can escalate. It's about getting people to report and trust.

"The reasons why people don't report are two fold they don't necessarily know what hate crime is and they don't have faith action will be taken."

@CroydonVA

www.report-it.org.uk
Crimestoppers 0800 555 111

POLICE MOVE BACK IN TO CLOSED STATION

A month after The Chronicle reported that police were paying rent on an empty building in Thornton Heath they left five years ago - they have suddenly decided to move back in.



The police station which opened in 2010, was once home to the Safer Neighbourhood Teams covering Thornton Heath and surrounding areas. Though it never offered a front counter service for the public, it provided facilities for over 30 officers that worked as part of the Safer Neighbourhood Teams.

In 2013 in a bid to cut costs the police moved to Gipsy Hill police station in Lambeth. However, the cash strapped Met carried on paying out rent for the empty building on the corner of Parchmore Road.

According to the managing agents the lease for a year's commercial rent is £60,000 so times that by five and the cash strapped Met has potentially been paying as much as £300,000 for an unused building.

The Chronicle understands that police in Lambeth want the space back at Gipsy Hill so are kicking out the Croydon teams.

The SNT teams set to move back in cover: Thornton Heath, South Norwood, Bensham Manor and Upper Norwood.

The good news for residents in Thornton Heath is that having a police presence at the heart of Thornton Heath is likely to mean the amount of anti social behaviour in and around the High Street and Woodville Road will be severely curtailed. Tesco are understood to be 'really pleased' about the news given the amount of begging and general anti social behaviour around the store along with high levels of shoplifting.

However it may take some time to move back in as the Met took out all the phone lines, furniture and the internal swipes no longer work. The Met lease on the building expires in June 2020.

Catherine Momah
writes about 70
years of Windrush.

WINDRUSH

Can you conceive a time when churches denied migrants membership and you would be discriminated from getting a job because of the colour of your skin?

This year marks 70 years since the Empire Windrush arrived at Tilbury Docks, Essex with 492 immigrants from the Caribbean on board. With Britain on the brink of collapse after the Second World War, the government passed the British Nationality Act 1948. This declared that those living in the Commonwealth were British citizens and had the right to enter and settle in the UK.

However, Britain proved to be a difficult place to live in. Businesses were often unwilling to hire black people, even if they were qualified for the job.

All of the people I interviewed at the office of ASKI, a local charity on

“THIS POLICEMAN WITH A STICK OF ROCK PERSUADED ME TO COME OFF THE BOAT”

Brigstock Road, arrived in Britain in the 1950s and 1960s. They came from various islands in the Caribbean, including

Barbados, Jamaica and Guyana. For many, arriving in Britain was a big shock.

Shockingly, many churches denied the new migrants membership explains Millie Reid: “Because of that rejection that’s how a lot of black churches came up.”

Millie mentions often getting into fights with racist pupils in school before becoming a born-again Christian as a teenager.

In April this year it was discovered that thousands of the Windrush generation had been wrongly deemed illegal immigrants. As a result, some have been detained, deported and denied NHS services.

Worse still, their landing cards – the only proof many had of legally arriving in the UK by boat – were destroyed in

2010.

As a result of the scandal, Home Secretary Amber Rudd resigned and was replaced by Sajid Javid.

Despite the controversy, those I interviewed at ASKI were firm in saying they did not want the scandal to overshadow celebrations and the impact they made shaping this country, particularly the NHS.

ASKI is running a project called “All About Me” which includes a short film to be played on a loop at Croydon Museum in Central Library as part of Black History month in October.

There will also be a photographic exhibition showing members of the Windrush generation representing their countries of origin, “to show the islands have very different traditions”, says Joseph Jeffers, CEO of the charity.

When asked if they considered Britain their home, I receive a mixed response but Elsie Henderson, was resolute: ‘I consider here my home. I left Barbados when I was 19.’

RADIATE WINDRUSH

With the smell of BBQ, the sounds of reggae music and the sun shining brightly, you’d be forgiven for thinking you really were in the Caribbean.

Instead it was the Radiate Windrush Festival which saw people of all ages and races enjoy live music and performances.

There were also stalls selling food clothes, jewellery and natural hair products.

The aim of the festival was to celebrate the Windrush and Black British identity.

I spoke with Paula Perry, selling black British history textbooks she had helped to write.



She said: “Not enough people know about black British history. They don’t realise we’ve done so much. For example, in the 1950s we had our own bus boycott in Bristol.”

Coco Davillé had a stall selling handmade jewellery who had “family who were caught up in the Windrush wave.”

New Beacon Books, the UK’s first black publisher, also had a stand and were selling books by various black British writers and poets, such as Akala and Benjamin Zephaniah.

Of course, food played a huge role in the festival. There were several stands selling jerk chicken, patties, curry goat and dumpling.

Being at the festival it was clear it was not about the ongoing Windrush scandal; instead it was about celebrating black culture and spreading positive vibes.

directors, people running businesses at the top? Or do we see ourselves as only footballers and rappers? “

Since 1990, one in four – just under 25 per cent – of retired England international footballers have been black or from an ethnic minority background (BAME). But of those ex-players who have subsequently gone into a management job, that drops to just one in seven.

Brighton’s Chris Hughton is the only BAME manager in the Premier League Mann added: “More encouragement is needed amongst the community. Professional figures succeeding in these respected careers need to be made visible.

“A lot is behind the scenes. I have been to meetings where people in the room were of colour and helped make important decisions.

“People were unaware of them until The Black List. Now, the youth can see these people and decide that they themselves can also go into this industry because people that look like them are.

“It also presents an opportunity for football to reflect back and question why we lack so much black and minority ethnic key figures and how we can change it.”

MUSICAL CELEBRATES STORY OF MIXED HERITAGE

A brand new musical which follows the story of a young girl who is of mixed heritage and feels none of the history books reflect her is looking for cast and production participants.

Fern Meets Dido follows the imaginary character Fern who while on a school trip to Kenwood House in north London, goes back in time and meets the real life but little known historic figure Dido Elizabeth Belle.

Dido was born in about 1761, and was the daughter of Maria, an enslaved African woman and a British naval officer Sir John Lindsay who met in the West Indies where he was stationed. He subsequently took his young daughter back to England and asked his extended family to raise her at Kenwood House.

Dido and Fern were born in very different times but realise they have much in common. For the first time Fern sees that there were people in history just like her.

Staged by Sing a Book, a Community Interest Company, which believes passionately that people learn best when they are enjoying themselves, the musical is looking for young people aged between 13 and 16 to take part in the production, performing or behind the scenes. If you are keen and are a bit older or younger please apply anyway. Sing a Book is offering a two-week boot camp at The Shoestring Theatre in Oakley Road, SE25.

There, experienced DBS cleared coaches will provide coaching in the performing

arts including acting, singing and dancing.

The bootcamp will run for two weeks in August from 20 to 24 and 27 to 31 between 10 am and 4 pm.

This will prepare those involved to perform in Fern Meets Dido - The Musical which will be staged at the theatre on November 4 and 5.

There will be a charge of £2 per day but if that’s a problem, talk to organisers. To get involved auditions and registration for the boot camp will take place on Saturday July 14 from 10 m to 1 pm at the Shoestring Theatre.

For further info: 07719 131 934

Email: singabook.124@gmail.com

Facebook: Fernmeetsdido Instagram: Fern Meets Dido

FERN MEETS DIDO

The Musical

Separated by centuries - United by their heritage



THE STORY OF A YOUNG IMMIGRANT CALLED SHANTOL

My name is Shantol Byfield, I’m 18 years old and I live in Thornton Heath. I am an immigrant who came to the UK from Jamaica in 2014.

I came to this country to live with my mother because we have been living apart since I was one year and six months old.

My sister was able to migrate too. This may not be new to you because the number of Jamaican-born nationals living in the UK in 2013 was estimated to be 152,000.

Everyone also seems to have a different ‘theory’ of why Jamaicans migrate, but let me generalise and make it easy for you to understand. Life is just better, simpler and safer. Education is so easily accessible and everyone wants to learn, right?

Leaving Jamaica was a very hard decision to make, considering the fact that I had to leave my grandmother who

has been there since my mother left. My grandmother also has only one leg and needs extra help. Her leg got amputated when I was 12-year’s-old which was the same year that my dad moved away. At the age of 12 this was a lot to take in and I found it hard to adjust to this new lifestyle. I thought that moving to the UK to live with my mother and her family would be a good thing for me and I would fit in fine. However, that was not the case. I felt unwelcome and isolated.

Life was just so different here. I was so used to my Jamaican norms, saying ‘hi’ to everyone, taking care of the less fortunate, being respectful to everyone, being bold and able to stick up for myself, being independent but at the same time also able to follow the rules. Secondary school was very difficult, it was hard to make friends as everyone seemed so unkind. I received unpleasant looks, I’ve been called names and

mocked. I started to think it was a ‘new girl thing’ but they only treated me like that. Things did change later on when I started



to get upset and ‘acting up’. That’s exactly what they wanted, I get angry and fight back, then get kicked out. This happens over and over again and of course it is to the minority groups like the Caribbean. Makes sense doesn’t it?

My life has not been the best but I’ve learnt to accept the situation I’m in

compassionate, I consider her my mum. I feel very blessed to have her as my caseworker.”

This is only one of the many refugees grateful for help. Young Roots helps to improve the life chances of 11 to 25 year old refugees and asylum seekers in Croydon.

Michele Kirschstein, is service manager at Young Roots when asked if her work was challenging? she replied: “Yes, it can be challenging in some ways, working with young people who are vulnerable may get emotional.”

What keeps her going? She replies: “Positive feedback you receive from the young people, they just want to be like a teenager and not have that label” “ She lastly highlighted the fact that mainly the young refugees come to Young Roots to ‘socialise with people in a similar situation’, and also to ‘access one to one case work support’.

This clearly suggests that all these refugees want is to feel accepted and cared for, which is exactly what the team over at Young Roots offer.

They are indeed a trusted community for refugees and asylum seekers to be a part of and feel welcomed in the UK.

@weareyoungroots
www.youngroots.org.uk

THE CHARITY GIVING YOUNG REFUGEES A LIFELINE

BY SHANTOL BYFIELD

Refugees all around the world have to pack up all they have and leave their homes because they fear for their lives.

This is not a choice. Meet Isak, he is 19 and a refugee who fled Ethiopia. He first came to the UK in 2015, aged 16, as an unaccompanied minor and was granted refugee status.

However Isak found himself homeless when his accommodation and financial support ended at 18.

Afterwards he was supported by the Refugees at Home charity which offers spare rooms to refugees who are in need of extra help. Over nine months he stayed in various houses until Young Roots stepped in to support Isak with accessing long-term accommodation.

Croydon based charity Young Roots set up in 2004, has also helped him to access independent accommodation, and enabled him to attend English classes, socialise and enrol at Croydon College studying ESOL.

Funders include Mayor of London, Big Lottery, Children in Need and the Paul Hamlyn Trust.

Croydon attracts many refugees



who have fled from zones of conflict, persecution and poverty to seek asylum in the UK. This is because it is the home of Lunar House - the national Visa and Immigration Service, where their claims are processed.

Isak is so grateful for the help he has received and thanks everyone who has helped him.

He said: “Everyone at Young Roots was helping me with everything including scheduling my medical appointments, taking me there, enrolling me in college, taking me to the job centre..

“So they were very vital in all aspects of my life for all these years. If I hadn’t come to Roz Doe (Rise Up Youth Case Worker) I would not be in college, I would not have housing.

“Roz is always with me, she’s very

“DO WE SEE OURSELVES AS LEADERS OR ONLY FOOTBALLERS AND RAPPERS?”

EXCLUSIVE BY AISHA JADE

Leon Mann is a figure best known for his in-depth interviews and campaigns against racism within the sports industry.

He is the co-founder of The Black List, an annual event celebrating the off-pitch achievements of black role models within the football industry.

For the 2018 edition, Palace for Life’s own, Susan Patterson-Smith, Deputy Director of Community Development, (pictured) was featured for her work in helping young people get into employment.

Mann continues to raise awareness of the racial prejudices that prohibit ethnic minorities from attaining senior positions within the industry: an uncomfortable topic that many tend to ignore.

Furthermore, he explains: “In the 80’s and 90’s racism was overt. You would see horrific scenes of bananas being thrown on the pitch and racial abuse being chanted at black players.

“Whilst this is no longer the case, we presently face other challenges such as the lack of representation at all areas of football outside of playing.



“It is widely sighted that one in three players come from a minority background and it has been like this for 10 to 20 years.

“However, when it comes to the chairmans and chief executives you could probably count them on one hand.

“This is the result of a long history of racism that started with slavery. It may sound bizarre as slavery existed in the 1800’s and before but history sets a tone for the present.

“If you were taught and subconsciously believe that black people are unintelligent, you are not going to want to see those people in charge of your football team.

“Campaigns such as Kick It Out, started the conversation about the levels of



racial abuse.

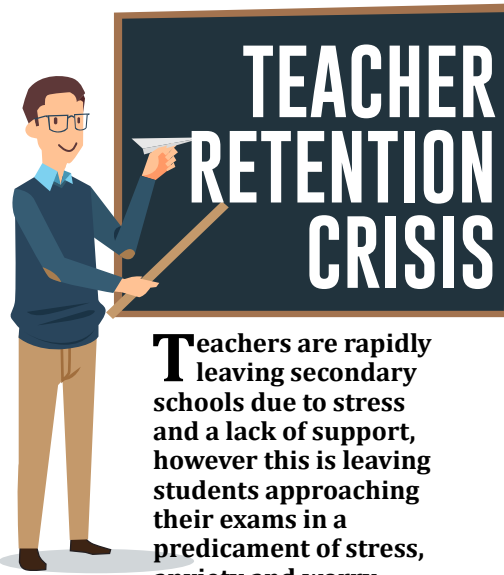
“As a result, the governing bodies came under a pressure to act against these injustices.

“Self-policing is also a factor. You need people within groups to tell their colleagues that what they are doing is unacceptable.

“The first challenges that I faced were within myself. The self-doubt and disbelief that I couldn’t be a sports journalist due to those who were not looking like me.

“This is one of the reasons why I co-founded Football’s Black List - to reconstruct the way in which many black people, particularly the youth see themselves.

“Do we see ourselves as being leaders,



With the level of teachers leaving their jobs at secondary schools on the increase each year, should students be worried?

According to the National Foundation for Educational Research around 10 to 11 per cent of qualified teachers leave each year. In 2011, the leaving rate was 9.6 per cent and this had increased to 10.6 per cent in 2015.

This increase is of concern, as teachers

are meant to be guiding young people. With a lack of committed teachers, are education standards falling, asks Amber Thornton?

There must be a root cause stimulating the influx of leavers and as I had found out there is more than one.

From the daily stress of dealing with hormonal teens on the school's battlefield - the playground - to the large amount of marking constantly needing to be done, there is a lot of pressure put upon teachers.

"I end up feeling unappreciated by not only senior management but also students," a teacher from my school tells me, "There is an immense amount of pressure put on us to achieve results." Perhaps the government need to create ways to offer better support for teachers, as well as students. With exam season on the horizon, students are concerned about how well we will perform as a result of teacher retention declining.

I, myself have had five different teachers over the year for one subject, four being since the start of the school year in September 2017. This has obviously had a negative impact on us students, resulting in us having to learn a majority of the syllabus independently.

In addition, many classes have been cancelled due to the lack of teacher. "I am rather disappointed," states a member of the class, Samia Farooqui. "We are struggling to keep up with the different teaching styles and our teachers barely know our names. How can they push us to the best of our abilities when they don't know what our abilities are?" This lack of faith in teachers is having detrimental effects on students.

As a result, stress and anxiety levels have increased dramatically, and a majority of students feel they have no one to talk to. A-level student Mary Ademaj tells me: "I feel like there's nowhere I can go when I'm feeling serious anxiety about my exams, or things in general. I feel like I'm dealing with this alone."

Clearly it is a problem many young people are facing in today's education system.

Sometimes it is a case of there being support, but it is not well communicated to students.

Therefore, there should be more discussion, more widely advertised support and stress management techniques around this topic to ensure the mental wellbeing of all students.

FREE SWIMMING

Young people aged 16 and under can keep cool and get active this summer, with FREE swimming sessions.

All you have to do is complete an application form online to be eligible for a free swim at Croydon's five leisure centres from July 21.

Eight-year-olds and younger are entitled to free swimming but must be accompanied by an adult, who must register them.

To register: www.better.org.uk/freeswimcroydon, or through the self-service machines.

Customers will then have to collect their card from within the centres. The free swimming sessions deal will end on Sunday 2 September.



Partial to penning a poem? Enjoy scripting short stories? A fan of flashfiction?

Palace for Life Foundation are looking for young people who would like the opportunity to harness their love for writing and literature into a lifelong and valuable skill by supporting them to produce work that they can be proud of.

With the active support of an experienced and published writer you will be given the opportunity to make contributions towards an anthology which will be published in December 2018.

Working with author, Head Teacher and The Foundation PlayMaker, Khalil Goddard, the Palace for Life Foundation will be delivering free creative writing workshops to participants over the summer holidays.

During this time you will be given a platform to highlight issues that are important to and experienced by you through a literary medium of your choice.

You will then be invited to submit contributions for the anthology which will celebrate the diversity and talent of young creative voices in South London. This project will provide an opportunity for the next generation to experiment and realise their talents.

Are you:

-aged 16 to 24,
-live or attend school in Croydon, and
-would like the opportunity to develop, learn and/or showcase your creative writing skills,

Please email: zaynabosman@palaceforlife.org with a short bio about yourself and why you are interested in this opportunity by Monday July 23 2018.

EXAMS ARE THEY WORTH ALL THE STRESS?

BY AMBER THORNTON

Nowadays, there's a lot of pressure on young people to do well. From adolescence, it is ingrained into us that we must succeed in school to have a good life.

A lot of the pressure to do well in exams can stem from the demanding voice of parents, or university entrance grades. Yet, are exams an accurate way of depicting student excellence?

Having just completed my A-levels, I am in a state of relief. Although only lasting around two weeks, the exam period was a very stressful time.

After clearing out all of my revision materials from my chaotic bedroom floor, I couldn't help but notice how large the pile of papers and books were as they engulfed the room.

The amount of information that needed to be learned did not correspond with what was actually on the paper; only approximately 15 per cent of it was necessary.

This made me question whether exams were really testing our intellect as they lead us to believe, or just our ability to memorise lots of information.

It seems absurd that the wording of a single question in a paper could drastically affect my chances of getting into the university I want, possibly hindering my chances of achieving the attractive successful life I strive for.

Whilst in an exam, I realised: 'What I



write next will determine what I do for the next three years', and this was a daunting thought.

This poses the question as to why the experience is so stressful? Changes to GCSE's and A-Levels have been called upon to make exams harder, due to criticism of being too easy in previous years.

A-Levels have now gone 'linear', meaning all exams are taken at the end of the second year making the exam period more intense.

"I ended up feeling very overwhelmed," a friend, Estelle Thomas told me, "to remember everything we've learnt over the course of two years was too much for my brain to handle."

Stress felt by myself and my peers was evident from the atmosphere of the school library, as well as social media sites like Twitter. Students across the UK were all in the same boat and we could collectively feel the heavy importance of our exams.

Many students had even confessed to having emotional breakdowns the night before their exam, in absolute distress.

LOOK OUT FOR STOLEN HOODIES

Distinctive hoodies specially designed to commemorate the 85th anniversary of the 26th Croydon Scout Group have been stolen from a car.



The scout leader's vehicle was broken in to using a remote device - the car had been locked and alarmed - near Warwick Road on June 28. Some of the hoodies pictured were taken along with his bike rack.

The hoodies are emblazoned on the back and have been personalised with a distinctive badge that was designed by

one of the group members.

One has been found in Bridport Road but two others, in navy blue with CHRIS and another in dark grey with MOR written on the arms are still missing. The scouts are asking residents to be vigilant as the items may have been discarded in nearby gardens as the thieves fled.

Contact via [@scouts26croydon](https://twitter.com/scouts26croydon)

HOUSING CRISIS AFFECTS MENTAL HEALTH

In the 80s owning your first car and buying your first house seemed like a rite of passage.

Skip three generations; young drivers are put off learning to drive by the cost and soaring property prices means owning your own house is less attainable than it ever has been.

As mainstream politics continues to be dominated by Brexit it seems local politicians, perhaps now more than ever, have a responsibility in pushing young people's issues to the forefront, writes Sabirina Mohamed.

In an interview with local MP Steve Reed, Sabirina asked him about the link between mental health and housing and he accepted that "mental health goes up as people struggle to make ends meet."

The independent thinktank the Resolution Foundation revealed recently that one in three Millennials will never own their own home, half will be renting into their 40s and third perhaps even into their pension years..

The Labour MP criticised the current government for not replacing every home they have sold.

He said: "We need to build more



affordable homes everywhere to drive down prices. We're building flats just to keep them empty. That's insanity!"

While homelessness is on the rise thousands of properties are lying empty in the capital many sold to overseas investors.

The Local Government Association found more than 60,000 council houses have been sold under the Government's Right to Buy scheme over the past six years.

But because of the reduced rate of the property, Town Halls have only been able to build or buy just 14,000 homes to replace them.

So instead councils are being incentivised under a licence granted to them by the coalition government in the 2011 Localism Act, to set up property development firms of their own or to

YOUNG PEOPLE ARE THE FUTURE IN THE BATTLE AGAINST CRIMES AGAINST THE ENVIRONMENT

Plastic, we use it daily from our Oyster cards to the packaging on our meal deals at lunch time. The problem is, most of it is used once and then disposed of, writes Aisha Jade.



By the year 2025 all the UK's main supermarkets aim to have eliminated the single use of unneeded plastics.

The government already imposed the five pence bag charge back in 2015, on retailers, which reduced the number of bags used by 80 per cent.

Not only does litter bring down the value of an area, but seeing it everywhere is also an eyesore and last year it cost £1billion to clear up. Croydon is one of the worst places in the country for flytipping.

Cllr Collins, is so determined to crack down on flytipping that he has taken a sabbatical from his own job to concentrate on the issue and often goes out with enforcement officers confronting offenders.

He continues: "Plastic packaging is a large proportion of what people tend to litter. Companies should consider environmentally friendly materials when making their products."

His campaign Don't Mess with Croydon emphasises the importance of maintaining a clean environment and demonstrates the consequences of not doing so, by punishing those who do not comply with the rules.

sign partnership agreements with private developers that get around the normal spending rules and put them in charge of the process.

However, controversially, not all the 1,000 homes being built in Croydon by its Brick by Brick enterprise are classified as affordable. Some being constructed mainly in the north of the borough on pockets of land the council already owns, are set to be rented or sold to private individuals. This is why Steve Reed objected to the the Labour run council building one of its controversial Brick by Brick schemes on green space between existing homes on the Auckland Rise and Sylvan Road estate in Upper Norwood.

He questions the strategy, particularly the effects it will have on the next generation.

"I don't want the council to build the same type of housing (private) in one estate. Some of the flats should be council housing so the kids have some hope of getting these flats one day. As things stand they wouldn't be able to afford it, so they're losing something and they're not going to gain."

"We should be maintaining the supply of social and council housing so that it can be readily available for the people that need it."

THOUSANDS TO ATTEND PRIDEFEST

The third Croydon PrideFest is expected to bring more than 7,000 people together for a day of celebration and inclusivity.



The free event on **Saturday July 14**, will start with a parade along North End from 11.30am, along to Wandale Park where there will be live music and entertainment. The dance tent is open until 10pm.

Confirmed acts include Asifa Lahore, star of Channel 4's 'Muslim Drag Queens', and singer songwriter Christopher Haul. Other acts will be announced on the Croydon PrideFest website in the coming week.

To find out more about the event, visit www.croydonpride.org.uk.



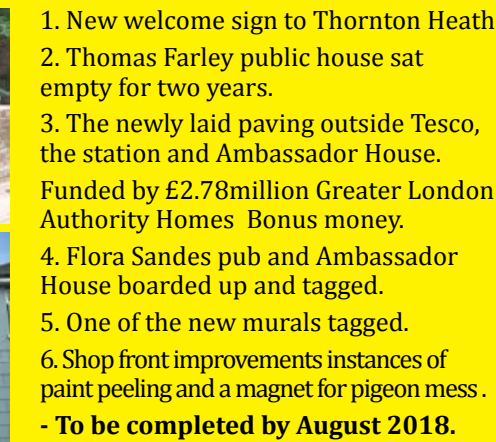
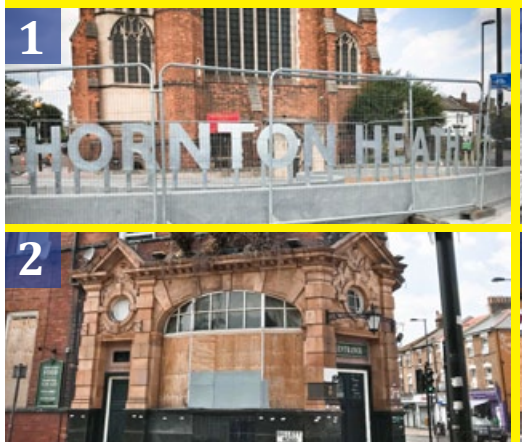
*Meanwhile in Thornton Heath, white stencilled designs have been sprayed on the pavement around signposts and lampposts to stop flytipping.

The innovative designs created by print designer Samantha Warren, use paint that can also be seen at night and feature local cultural references like the temples, the clock tower, musical talent and the legendary white squirrel from Grangewood Park.

The project is funded by the People's Health Trust as part of Thornton Heath Community Action Team's Street Action Project.

Cllr Collins, pictured spraying one of the designs said: "Thornton Heath has rallied together to try and tackle the problem with a novel and eye-catching solution."

CROYDON COUNCIL REGENERATING THORNTON HEATH



1. New welcome sign to Thornton Heath.
2. Thomas Farley public house sat empty for two years.
3. The newly laid paving outside Tesco, the station and Ambassador House.
4. Flora Sandes pub and Ambassador House boarded up and tagged.
5. One of the new murals tagged.
6. Shop front improvements instances of paint peeling and a magnet for pigeon mess.

- To be completed by August 2018.

BUILDING A YOUTH LEGACY

Building work has officially begun on Croydon's Legacy Youth Zone.

OnSide Youth Zones were set up in 2008 to improve young people's futures by building affordable and inspiring places for young people to go, with positive things to do, staffed by people who care, open seven days a week.

They offer in their buildings which cost £6.5million to build, 20 activities each night ranging from football, climbing and curling to nail art, DJ-ing, drama and employability training and entry is just 50p.

The aim of Youth Zones is to raise the aspirations, enhance prospects and improve health and wellbeing for young people, by providing affordable access to a wide range of programmes, services and activities.

In Croydon, the Legacy Youth Zone will be on Whitehorse Road and if all goes to plan, will open in about a year's time, early summer 2019.

Legacy Youth Zone is a partnership between Croydon Council, private business, local community and most importantly young people.

Clubs are split into two age groups of juniors and seniors, covering the age range eight to 19, or 25 for young people with a disability. Legacy will also work in partnership with other youth providers who can use this state-of-the-art facility to run sessions.

Rasahrn Odarteey has been involved with Onside Young Peoples Development group for a year now says it has been very interesting meeting new people and seeing different Youth Zones around the



country and doing new things. She said: "I want us young people to have a place where we do not have to waste so much money to use facilities and that is what Youth Zones are doing, it is coming very soon and when it arrives there will be no need to waste time when you can bring in 50p and get to use the facilities straight away." Other young people are welcome to join the group which meets on Tuesdays 5.30pm to 7pm. Louise Bell said: "When I went to the group, I gained new opportunities which are life changing, as it helped me feel more confident by doing public speaking and interacting with others that I did not think I would talk to. "It helped me with my life path as when I am older I want to open my own business in film and theses skills we use such as team work, communications and debates will help me with that career.



"For example when we were debating over the hoardings earlier this year. We debated whether we should have graphics or graffiti?" "Also we debated with the police which is a fairly important topic that I feel youth need to keep on the agenda." Kadian Foster added: "We need a place where young kids and teenagers can go, have fun and connect and what better way than a Youth Zone." Some of the activities the development group have got involved in include: white water rafting, paint balling, ground braking, other Youth Zone launches, ice skating, the Lord Mayor's Show, and they also got to watch CPFC v Chelsea and meet Palace star Wilfred Zaha. Angel Chizea said: "OnSide give young people loads of opportunities to take part in things, the motto is giving young people something to do, some where to go, and someone to talk."

www.legacyyouthzone.org



“WHEN YOU’RE YOUNG AND GETTING INVOLVED WITH DANGEROUS GROUPS..... YOU FEEL LIKE A BIG MAN”

Used by a gang as a County Lines drug dealer Precieux Noka got involved in trafficking drugs to rural towns and cities. Having delivered cocaine and heroin to areas including Bournemouth, Ashford and Kent for the gang, Precieux was threatened at knife point by a rival gang.



He was just 16, when he was kicked out of sixth form and targeted by an older gang member. Now aged 18 having transformed his life through boxing, Precieux said: "I was always going missing from home or school and worrying about my mum and when I look back, I didn't like the direction my life was going in. When you're young and getting involved with dangerous groups, it makes you feel like a big man, but that's not the way to do it" In an attempt to take himself away from this situation, Precieux joined Croydon Amateur Boxing Club, where he met Adam Ballard, founder of Gloves not Gunz, a community organisation that aims to tackle youth crime and violence. Meeting weekly in Norbury Park, the group gives young people a free fitness class, followed by a mentoring session on important issues such as gangs, weapons awareness and healthy relationships. Children across London are being exploited and trafficked to sell drugs in rural towns and cities, something known as County Lines – and the scale of it happening in Croydon is reportedly "massive". Gangs look to target young people in order to do this as it is believed the rate of children being arrested and convicted for drug selling is lower than adults. In Norfolk officers have set up an operation

that has seen 640 arrests in 18 months with officers identifying 35 County Lines of criminality in the process. Gloves not Gunz is supported by Palace for Life Foundation, with investment from the Premier League and Professional Footballers' Association. Director of Community Development Soye Briggs explained: "We have been working with Gloves not Gunz since 2017, supporting their fantastic boxing initiative that runs in one of the most deprived areas of Croydon. This kind of provision is absolutely vital in showing young people they have alternative choices." Precieux was incredibly grateful for the group's support when he started. "When I came to the gym after getting in trouble, Adam and Ben [Eckett, who also runs the sessions] didn't judge me, they met me with open arms. They understood my situation because they came from the same background." Precieux wanted to give back to his community and volunteer with the group to help other young people in the same situation. However, at first Precieux would often struggle to turn up on time and was disorganised, which affected his preparation for the sessions. The Foundation and Gloves not Gunz staff worked with Precieux to help him understand the importance of being a role model and setting good examples for young people and he soon adopted a more professional approach; turning up before the session with everything he needed. Five years after attending his first community football session, Precieux completed his boxing activator qualification in February this year, and noticing the improvements he had made in his commitment, mentality and confidence, Gloves not Gunz rewarded him with a job as the organisation's first Youth Mentor.



The tasty new pizza restaurant Fireaway is serving up a competition prize to support artistic kidpreneur Jasmine E Redman. The 11-year-old has produced a children's colouring sheet (pictured with Fireaway owner Mario Aleppo) for the new eatery on Brigstock Road. This will form part of colouring in competition which Jasmine will be doing at Grangewood Park's Picnic in the Park (see opposite for details). Prizes will include a colouring book, t-shirt and pizza vouchers. Jasmine who is the business owner of Adventureville 'Colour your way to Calm' will be selling her books, bags and t-shirts at the event.

TACKLING GROOMING

A pilot is offering alternatives to young people to stop them being groomed and lured in to a gang lifestyle. Palace for Life Foundation have recently launched OFFSET, a new 10-week programme aiming to help young people build positive relationships and deter them from taking the wrong path in life. It's an opportunity to get active, make new friends and learn new skills.

The new Premier League Kicks scheme was founded in response to the issue of young people being groomed for criminality and or involvement in anti-social behaviour in the borough raised by the Croydon Youth Offending Service. Cliff Hilderly, Gangs Operational Manager for the Croydon Youth Offending Service, said: "In our work in trying to support young people to exit a gang lifestyle we became aware that these young people were being groomed from an early age and that there was a need for a specialist project to address this." The Foundation's Dulaine Smith from the Gangs Team was able to help bring the programme to life.

There are a range of different activities within the programme to help engage young people, from cooking courses, to sports and self-defence classes, workshops on life skills, and a fun trip away at the end of the programme. The Foundation's Community Development Officer, John Patrick, said: "We have partnered with Acorns to Oaks to keep young people out of trouble and help build their resilience whilst also teaching them valuable life skills. "OFFSET is for girls and boys aged 10plus, who want to make new friends and learn new skills, with the added bonus of a fun trip at the end!" **Sessions run every Wednesday 6.30pm-8.30pm at the Peppermint Children's Centre, Franklin Way, Valley Park, Croydon, CR0 4YD.** **For more information please contact John Patrick on johnpatrick@palaceforlife.org or 07808322956**

UNLIMTED EXCERCISE FOR ALL AT NO COST

As part of a campaign to encourage people to become active, Croydon Council has unveiled a series of new outdoor gyms offering free unlimited opportunities to exercise, writes Dinesh Sanassee.

Five will open in Croydon, as part of a council investment of £370,000. One outdoor gym has already opened in New Addington with others to be rolled out in Purley Way playing fields, Upper Norwood Recreation Ground, King George's Field in Selhurst, and Grangewood Park in Thornton Heath. Outdoor gyms are being introduced by the council to make sure that people get the minimum amount of physical activity recommended, which according to official guidelines is 150 minutes a week. The funding has partly come from the mental health charity, the Matt Palmer Trust, created by a group of friends.

Matt killed himself after suffering years of anxiety and other mental health issues which he didn't talk to people about, so his friends, "wanted to do something in his memory."

Matt was "fun loving" and a "big sportsmen," so something sports related was a good option for the Trust, explains volunteer Jessica Bulman.

The Trust approached local councils about projects they could be a part of and the outdoor gyms planned by Croydon Council seemed like a good fit, she added.

The Trust which donated £100,000 towards the Croydon gyms, hopes people will use the facilities as a starting



point to improve their fitness, both physically and mentally. The annual Croydon health report of 2017 shows that obesity amongst adults in the area is a problem with two in three adults in Croydon either overweight or obese while one in 10 of four to five year old's in Croydon are obese. These figures get worse when looking at 10-11 year olds where one in four are obese. Croydon's Director of Public Health Rachel Flowers, said that she wanted to "promote health through the organised efforts of society," and believed that "an essential part is that it includes working to reduce inequalities in health and society as a whole."

The council have outlined several reasons why using outdoor gyms will be beneficial. Saving on gym memberships is one reason, which is a key issue for local residents, especially young people who find gyms expensive.

The price for a junior membership, for anyone below the age of 16, at the local leisure centre in Thornton Heath is from £19 a month. For 16-18 years of age, the price of membership goes up to a price from £23.75 before a sharp rise in price for adults from £47.50 a month.



These prices do include however the opportunity to use other Better company gyms in Croydon. ***The outdoor gym, in Grangewood Park will be officially opened at the annual fun day - Picnic in the Park - on Sunday July 15: 1- 5pm; by Croydon's Mayor Bernadette Khan. The event will include: the annual Bake Off competition, dog show, music from local jazz singer Mitra Djalilli, drummer Mark Huggett and guitarist Marcus Cliffe with his wife Lucinda, also a vocal artist. The Crystal Palace Choir will also perform. Other activities, include a bouncy castle, juggler, face painter, plus yoga demonstration, bug hunts, arts, crafts and plenty of stalls to peruse plus lots of cake! The gym will be unveiled at 1.30pm and there will be demonstrations by a qualified personal trainer and if you sign up to Croydon's Just Be' campaign you will receive a goodie bag. Three local doctors from the Parchmore Medical centre will also be giving health advice throughout the afternoon.**

POWER OF FOOTBALL IN THE COMMUNITY

BY SABIRINA MOHAMED

The Premier League wants to get more young girls actively engaged in football.

This includes a commitment to reaching out to a wider range of young girls across the UK to get involved in sport, alongside empowering them with the confidence to truly succeed in their own lives.



Undoubtedly one of, if not the most popular sporting institution and league tables in the world, home to the likes of Manchester City, Liverpool and Crystal Palace FC - the Premier League showcases the finest British footballing talent to a massive and ever-growing audience, across a number of diverse multi-media platforms. Although the Premier League's staple service and revenue – generator is in football entertainment, efforts targeted at enabling successful positive changes in local and international communities are of major importance, says its Head of Community, Nick Perchard. Perchard is a firm believer in this message as well as boosting girls' mindset's into believing they can genuinely get into football from a much younger age. Research suggests girls are more likely to drop competitive sport than boys once they



reach their teens because of peer pressure and the perception of sport as 'too masculine'. Other explanations include greater encouragement for boys in competitive school sports and issues around body confidence. Asked about how the Premier League aims to integrate more girls into football, Perchard swiftly responds: "We can ultimately give girls a first positive experience into physical activity, then hopefully they'll develop a love of

whatever sport they find interesting whether that be in netball, football or another sport." Movement in this arena has already been witnessed in the Premier League's Primary School Stars' campaign, which aims to engage more young girls and boys into football early on at school but encompasses, says Perchard: 'targeted provision after school which is really aimed at engaging girls that otherwise wouldn't take part in mixed sports sessions.' Perchard mentions that female empowerment in particular is an area the Premier League sees 'as a huge part of the work they are doing' at present and looking towards the future and onwards. However, Perchard acknowledges more work needs to be done in terms of setting targets, as a means to reach the Premier League's ultimate goal of a 'more diverse workforce that accurately represents the local community including women, ethnic minorities and the disabled.' He adds: "We want to make sure the Premier League is giving every young person an opportunity and working towards increasing the diversity in our workforce especially at senior management and elite coaching level."

HELPING JOBSEEKERS IN CROYDON

London Learning Consortium, London Youth and Croydon Works joined together last month to celebrate the work of their local staff and jobseekers by hosting Croydon Employability Day.



Coordinated by the ERSAs (Employment Related Services Association), hundreds of employment support centres and employers threw open their doors to raise awareness about what they do to help people into work. Staff used the day to showcase the successes of employment support in Croydon and the tremendous efforts made by the jobseekers they support. ERSAs CEO Kirsty McHugh and Councillor Manju Shahul-Hameed from Croydon Council, visited the Croydon event which promoted employability opportunities for jobseekers in the borough. Employability Day is a crucial day of recognition for the employment support sector and underlines the critical work of providers.



FREE ACTIVITIES

Young people in Croydon can access a fantastic array of free activities when school is out, with parks sessions, pop-ups and projects happening throughout the summer.

From DJ masterclasses to drama productions; seven-a-side football sessions to enterprise and employability workshops; music and art projects to confidence-building and counselling, there is a huge range of opportunities for young residents aged eight up to 18 or up to 25 with additional needs.

Projects and workshops will be taking place in centres across Croydon throughout July and August, with multi-sports and laser tag sessions held in parks. The activities on offer have been developed in consultation with young people in Croydon. Creating positive opportunities is at the heart of Croydon's Choose Your Future campaign, which is about supporting and encouraging young people.

Also during the summer, young people will be able to access a range of support and advice services in pop-up locations and during the sports sessions in parks, backed by organisations including Palace for Life Foundation, Croydon Drop In, the sexual health team, Onside and Music Klub.

For more info email: youngcroydon@croydon.gov.uk.

PREMIER LEAGUE KICKS HELPS YOUNG PEOPLE TO FIND THE RIGHT PATH

Young people in Croydon are turning their lives around thanks to Premier League Kicks, which uses the power of football and sport to engage 11 to 24-year-olds in some of the most high-need areas of the UK.

In south London, Palace for Life Foundation's PL Kicks programme aims to create safer, stronger and more respectful communities by developing young people's potential.

Current activities include girls and boys football, multi-sports, BMX, boxing, cheerleading and youth clubs, with almost 1000 young people taking part each year.

The Foundation's PL Kicks projects work closely with the local authority, Metropolitan Police, Youth Offending Team and local community organisations to establish safe,



supportive and educational activities as well as exit routes for young people.

There is also an annual football tournament contested by every Premier League team in the country, the PL Kicks Cup, which this year took place in Manchester.

Flavio Oliveira, 20, from Croydon, who attends PL Kicks Community League sessions at Selhurst Sports Arena explained: "I attend Kicks because it's



somewhere I like to socialise; a lot of my friends attend too.

"It's also part of my Choose Your Future programme which is helping south London quite a lot to get teens off the streets.

"Choose Your Future is a campaign going on across London to get young people, to stop knife crime, and to give them guidance down the right path. I got into the programme through Kicks

when Croydon Council attended one of our sessions. A lot of people have been attending Kicks because of it too."

Flavio also sees the potential of Kicks to support him into a positive path by allowing him to turn a passion into a way of earning a living.

"One of the challenges I face, as I like football a lot, is finding the right links and sources to get me into a higher level of football. I am trying to get to at least semi-pro or if possible pro.

"I am the type of person who plays football a lot so I know I have got the ability but it's about finding the right people to take me to the right places, show me the right teams, agents, and possibly the financial side of it too".

For full details on current PL Kicks sessions, please see event listings on the opposite page.

CROYDON'S HEALTHY EAGLES ARE TAKING FLIGHT

More than 130 overweight children in Croydon have taken part in an intensive programme that uses the power of Crystal Palace FC to help them lead a healthier life.

Palace for Life Foundation launched Healthy Eagles in January with the aim of working with young people and their families on health education and to provide opportunities to exercise in a safe environment.

Weekly sessions are run across the borough and to date, Healthy Eagles has reached over 400 families, health care professionals and community workers in Croydon.

Health and Wellbeing Manager at the Foundation Beth Towle said: "Healthy Eagles is great for family engagement and parents are reporting an 83 per cent increase in their confidence to maintain a healthy lifestyle in the future.

"Children are now attending other community sessions, cooking as a family, trying new foods, making friends and concentrating better in school as a result of being on the programme which is fantastic.

"Three quarters of the children we have worked with have been over the age of 12, which is really encouraging as we



know that almost 38 per cent of children in their final year of primary school in Croydon are overweight or obese."

Earlier this year, children at Thornton Heath Leisure Centre were surprised by Palace player Jason Puncheon and Palace Ladies players Ellie Stenning and Ciara Sherwood who joined their Healthy Eagles session.

There was also a smoothie contest with 200 schoolchildren entering with recipes designed for their favourite player.

A smoothie dedicated to Eagles defender Patrick van Aanholt won combining banana, kiwi, spinach, carrot and lime.

For more information on Healthy Eagles, contact bethanytowle@palaceforlife.org

PIONEERING PROGRAMME TACKLING MENTAL HEALTH

Local schoolchildren who took part in a pioneering programme to lower their chances of developing mental health issues have been rewarded with a trip to Selhurst Park.

The youngsters, aged between seven and 11, all completed Palace for Life Foundation's Team Mates programme, which offers children extra support to develop their emotional resilience and self-confidence.

Among the 10 schools to take part were Kensington Avenue Primary School and Monks Orchard Primary School in Croydon.

Team Mates runs across 24 weeks of the school term and helps children to think critically about their behaviour, allowing them to challenge themselves and the way they think. To celebrate their hard work and commitment on the course, children were invited to Selhurst Park for a workshop and a tour of the stadium.

One of the pupils from Kensington Avenue said: "I've learnt loads from Team Mates, I try to think about what I've learnt when I find things difficult and not lose my cool. The stadium tour was awesome, I've sat in the same



dressroom as loads of famous footballers!"

Now in its second season, the Premier League-backed early mental health intervention is flourishing, having helped nearly 80 children, with a waiting list of schools wanting to join.

Healthy Lifestyles Officer at Palace for Life Foundation Chase Hill said: "At least one in 10 children aged between five and 16 suffers from a mental illness; that works out at three children in every classroom and highlights how vital this support is.

"It is extremely rewarding to see the progress children have made through Team Mates and we were delighted to show them around Selhurst Park.

"We are now working closely with those who are taking the step up to senior school this summer and supporting them through what can be a very challenging time."

20% OFF SOCCER SCHOOLS THIS SUMMER

Readers of the Thornton Heath Chronicle can save 20 per cent when booking Soccer Schools for the summer holidays with Palace for Life Foundation.

The Soccer Schools will run from 9am-4pm at Selhurst Sports Arena from Monday July 23 for five to 12-year-old boys and girls of all abilities.

Palace's Soccer Schools have been running for 25 years and have been designed by coaches at Palace for Life Foundation and Crystal Palace FC to give young players chance to develop their football in the school holidays.

Players who attend Palace for Life Foundation Soccer Schools will have the chance to progress to Elite Development Centres, where they will be able to join the Elite Player Pathway which leads into the Crystal Palace Academy

for players who show the potential to progress.

Palace for Life Foundation Sports Development Manager Rob Perrett said: "Our Soccer Schools will help youngsters work on every aspect of their game to ensure they become the best player they can be.

"We hope that the skills they gain will not just help them as a footballer, but will teach them transferable skills like compassion and fair play. Most importantly, we want the courses to be enjoyable and for players to leave with new friends, as well as new football skills."

To book, simply visit www.palaceforlifecourses.org and enter the code 'Chronicle' to get 20% off.





TO FIND OUT HOW YOU CAN SUPPORT PALACE FOR LIFE FOUNDATION'S WORK IN SOUTH LONDON VISIT

WWW.PALACEFORLIFE.ORG

FUNDRAISING@PALACEFORLIFE.ORG

020 8768 6047

SUMMER ACTIVITIES FOR UNDER 18S



WHAT?	WHEN?	WHERE?	WHO?	COST?
Multisport	Every Monday (except 27 August), from 30 July, 10am-3pm	Canterbury Road Recreation Ground	5-18	Free – No Booking Required
Multisport	Every Tuesday from 31 July, 1-5pm	Norbury Recreation Ground/ South Norwood Recreation Ground/Grange Park/Shrublands	8+	Free – No Booking Required
Multisport	Every Wednesday from 1 August, 10am-3pm	Canterbury Road Recreation Centre	5-18	Free – No Booking Required
Multisport	Wednesday 15 and Wednesday 22 August, 1-5pm	Wandle Park/Wilford Road Recreation Ground	8+	Free – No Booking Required
Multisport	Every Thursday from 2 August, 1-5pm	Timebridge Centre	5-18	Free – No Booking Required
Multisport	Thursday 2 and Thursday 9 August, 1-5pm	Thornton Heath Recreation Ground / Walton Green	8+	Free – No Booking Required
Multisport	Every Friday from 3 August, 10am-3pm	Timebridge Centre	5-18	Free – No Booking Required
Premier League Kicks Advance (football)	Every Monday, 6-7.30pm	Archbishop Lanfranc Academy	14+ (advanced level)	Free – No Booking Required
Multisport, youth club, crime prevention workshops	Every Wednesday, 6.30-8.30pm	Peppermint Children's Centre	10+	Free – No Booking Required
Premier League Kicks Boxing	Every Tuesday, 5-6.30pm	Sting ABC, Surrey Street	10+	Free – No Booking Required
Premier League Kicks Community League Tournament night	Every Thursday, 6-8pm	Selhurst Sports Arena	15+	Free – No Booking Required
BMX	Every Thursday, 3.30-4.30pm	Croydon BMX Track, Norbury Park	10+	Free – No Booking Required
Premier League Kicks multisports and youth club	Every Friday, 6-8pm	South Norwood Recreational Ground	10+	Free – No Booking Required
Premier League Kicks football	Every Friday, 5.30-7.30pm	Sutton Life Centre	8+	Free – No Booking Required
Autistic Football	Mondays during school term time only, 5-6pm	Heavers Farm School	8-11	£30 per term*
Autistic Football	Mondays during school term time only, 6-7pm	Heavers Farm School	12-14	£30 per term*
Down's Syndrome Football	Wednesdays during school term time only, 6-7pm	Monks Hill Sports Centre	8-25	£5 per week*
Soccer Schools	Every week day from Monday 23 July – 31 August, 9am-4pm	Selhurst Sports Arena	5-12	From £15.75 per day*
Girls Football	Every Saturday until 28 July, 9.30-10.30am	Heavers Farm School	5-11	£3 per session*

***TO BOOK OR FOR MORE INFORMATION, CONTACT**
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PAM HAS HER SIGHTS SET ON A CAREER IN COACHING

Football playing mum and role model Pam McRoberts has her sights set on breaking another ceiling - becoming the first woman to coach a professional men's football team.



Inspirational Pam grew up in nearby Peckham and spent her childhood playing football on the streets of south London. She was the only girl amongst the boys and it wasn't until she was 16 that she started playing for a ladies team. She said: "I started playing when I

was seven, but my mum worked so she couldn't take me to training. By the time I turned 16 it got easier, I could take myself and I joined a team."

Pam admits she initially found it quite intimidating as she had never played on a proper pitch with a referee and linesman. Quickly, she realised her potential and spent four seasons at Millwall, before moving to play for Charlton where she had her first child Shay, who is now aged six.

She took four years away from the game after having Shay but the sports mad 31-year-old, who has played at international level for Northern Ireland, was not done with her footballing career and joined Palace Ladies in 2015 on the right wing. She believes having her son has made her a better player and she now understands the game more than when

she was 18 because of that experience and maturity.

Football is now officially the biggest female team sport in England with 'so many more opportunities for girls then when I started playing', says Pam. The Women's Super League has seen professional contracts for players making a career in football a paid reality.

Crystal Palace finished third in the Southern section of the third tier in 2017-18, improving on a fifth place in the previous season and applied to join the new-look second tier of women's football in the level below the WSL but were disappointed not to get a licence.

However, this has not dented Pam or her teammates ambition to 'win the league' and as many other trophies along the way. She gives 100 per cent despite all her other commitments including a full time job with the Palace

for Life Foundation.

She said: "Palace is a good club and set up and we get great support from the club's massive fanbase. This is one of the reasons why I love Palace."

Shay is rightly 'proud' of his footballing mum's achievements and his friends think it is 'cool' that his mum plays football.

Now she is a role model for other aspiring young footballers coaching in schools having gained her Level 2 FA coaching award. If she ever hangs up her football boots Pam has ambitions to become a manager or coach for a professional team.

Women have now come so far in the beautiful game, with professional contracts, women running the line at Premier League games and refereeing matches, so it is now only a matter of time before a female coaches a men's team and says Pam: 'I'd like it to be me!'

MENTORING PLAYERS THE PALACE WAY

EXCLUSIVE BY DINESH SANASSEE

When a young player from the academy makes his debut, the story of how they got there is usually forgotten.

Richard Shaw, Crystal Palace U23 coach, is the man behind bringing through these young players. Not only does he want to improve them as players but he also places equal importance on improving them as people. He believes in working to "complete the picture," by working on players physicality, mentality and maturity.

Speaking of Aaron Wan-Bissaka in particular, who made his breakthrough into the Crystal Palace first team this season, Shaw displayed a huge sense of "pride" as he has been working with Wan-Bissaka since he was 17. Shaw described how it wasn't always easy and they had to be "strong and firm" with him.

When approached by first team coaches about the ability of the 20-year-old to play at right-back, Shaw describes how they knew he could but they had never really played him there.

So next game against Charlton away, he played at right-back, explains Shaw. He remembers it well and describes how Wan-Bissaka was at fault for one of the goals they had conceded and says how "it would have been easy to say he



couldn't do it," but instead they played him there for the rest of the season. Shaw makes the point of "putting individual development in front of results."

When speaking of the criticisms of the under 23 league, Shaw spoke of his own personal experience of reserve team football. He said that it had "prepared him for what the real life was going to be like in terms of being a football player."

But he believes that now, "youngsters have a lot given to them without really working for it."

He doesn't only see this as a problem in football but something that is present in society in as well.

He explained that the under 23 league is not real football, referencing the possession based and the non tackling aspects of the game. The positives he sees in it are the building of the technical skills. However, he believes

going out on loan is the best way for players to experience the "real world" and that players come back telling him how the experience is a "real eye opener."

The Crystal Palace under 23 side won the Professional Development League this year and Shaw says they did it in "the right way."

Rather than fielding a team of 23-year-old's every week, they used the league to develop the younger players.

Shaw, at an end of season meeting, told the players to enjoy their holiday but to make sure that they work hard over the summer.

He explained how he would know if the players hadn't done the work over the summer and knows how important it is for them to be fully focused when they come back.

He said: "They have one session to impress with the first team and if you are not very good in that session, the manager won't have you back up again."

Shaw has found great satisfaction in working with younger players and helping them develop.

Richard Shaw is a great example of someone doing work which you may not be directly aware of but is someone who is pivotal to a club like Crystal Palace, bringing through the younger players.



Richard Shaw, 49, started playing for Crystal Palace in 1986, making 207 appearances for the club. He left in 1995 to join Coventry City where he made 307 appearances before ending his playing career at Millwall. Since January 2013, Richard has been at Palace working with the U23's development side.



Aaron Wan Bissaka, 20, has been at Crystal Palace for nine years joining the academy when he was 11. Like crowd favourite Wilfred Zaha, he is also from Croydon. He made his impressive debut in February against Tottenham and was given the Player of the Month award for Crystal Palace in March.

HODGSON GRATEFUL FOR 'ELECTRIC' PALACE

Crystal Palace are now looking forward to another year in the Premier League, which is something that may not have been expected seven games into last season with no goals and sitting bottom of the Premier League, writes Dinesh Sanassee.

Roy Hodgson took over as manager and patience coupled with a back to basics approach helped the team find its form ending the season in a respectable 14th place. Now the focus is very much on the 2018/19 season which kicks off in August and the improvements which can be made to ensure Premier League status.

Changes are not only expected on the



pitch but also stadium expansion plans have been approved by Croydon Council.

Hodgson whose contract has been renewed until 2020 told The Chronicle the expansion will, "make the stadium look so much nicer" and give people in Croydon a stadium to be proud of.

Hodgson also spoke about the importance of, "improving the sightlines for some of the fans," making sure that they can have the best view of the game. Selhurst Park is regarded as having one of the best atmospheres in the Premier League.

The manager is grateful for the support of the fans, which he describes as "special" and the atmosphere they create as "electric." Being from Croydon, Hodgson knows what Crystal Palace means to local people.

On the field, Palace will be looking to consolidate their position in the Premier League. Youth talent like Wan-Bissaka certainly gives fans a reason to be optimistic. Established stars like Wilfred Zaha

finished the season strongly, picking up the Premier League Player of the Month award for April - the first Crystal Palace player to win the award in over a decade.

One player that will certainly be missed as his loan spell comes to an end is Ruben Loftus-Cheek who is in the England World Cup squad. Four players who have already left because their contracts ran out: defender Damien Delaney, midfielder Yohan Cabaye winger Lee Chung-Yong, and goalie Diego Cavalieri.

Palace have also announced their first signing of the summer goalkeeper Vicente Guaita. The Eagles are looking to further reinforce their squad to ensure that an injury crisis does not strike the club again as it did this season, with depth in the squad crucial to surviving in the Premier League.