

CHISWICK LOCALS

WINTER



TURNHAM GREEN | GROVE PARK | BEDFORD PARK | STRAND ON THE GREEN



Carrie Reichardt

Photograph: Alastair Hilton

HOME IS WHERE THE ART IS

Carrie Reichardt, internationally renowned mosaic artist and co-author of Mad in Chiswick, lives in her own unique public artwork. You certainly can't miss it...

I'd be surprised if there's a more gloriously distinctive property in Chiswick. Friends always fondly refer to it as the 'crazy mosaic place' – and that pretty much says it all.

Both the front and back of the otherwise ordinary house are adorned by intricate, multi-coloured mosaic designs. Oh, and to maximise the visual impact, there's a mosaic vehicle parked outside and a self-styled 'English Hedonists' blue plaque that proudly proclaims: *The Treatment Rooms 2012 – Now: Lots of people lived here and partied hard.*

The person who lives in – and has painstakingly created – this remarkable

three-story piece of public art is Carrie Reichardt, acclaimed ceramicist and mosaicist and one half of the *Mad in Chiswick* brand with her partner, Bob Osborne. Carrie began 'mosaic-ing' the building 20 years ago. Since then the venture has taken on a life of its own. In fact, for the last few years the house has been obscured by scaffolding as she has put the final touches to the work.

'I actually had to put a call out for friends to come and help me,' Carrie explains. 'Artists from the UK, Chile, France, Germany and Spain all descended on me for a week.' And that's not necessarily going to be the end of it: 'I must admit, now I don't need the

scaffolding at the front, I've just asked if it can go up at the back,' she smiles. 'There's one section that still needs to be done.'

Carrie was born and bred in Chiswick, studied Fine Art, became a sculptor and then, when her children were born, began to focus on mosaic. In the past she has produced artworks for local schools (Southfields, Strand and William Hogarth), created a ceramic mural called *The Tree of Life* in the Acton Gardens development and, this summer, she has been running workshops at Gunnersbury Park for young people in trouble with the police.

Carrie's craft skills have been widely recognised. In 2013 she was awarded the prestigious Winston Churchill Travelling Fellowship which allowed her to journey to Chile and Mexico to work with and learn from community artists. Also, she has just been invited to be Artist in Residence for the Shakespeare Birthplace Trust. 'That's very exciting. I'll have access to all the archives and sites and, in return, I'm going to make six pieces of art, one to go in each of the houses that the Bard is supposed to have lived in.'

Recently, Carrie has been immersed in the *Mad in Chiswick* project, which she has co-curated with Bob Osborne. The pair collected wonderfully nostalgic vintage postcards of scenes and streets in bygone Chiswick and they then 'played with them' in their own distinctively subversive, irreverent style.

'We've just published a limited edition *Mad in Chiswick* book featuring a collection of the cards and it's on sale at Foster Books and Waterstones,' says Carrie. 'We also have an exhibition at the Hogarth Health Club – you don't have to be a member to get in – until the end of December. It has our original collage postcards and the prints we made from them.'

So, would Carrie ever contemplate selling her extraordinary house? 'I have thought about it,' she confesses. 'But, to be perfectly honest, I don't know whether I've increased or reduced the market value!'

For more information about Carrie's work visit www.carriereichardt.com

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www.keepthingslocal.com



Father Kevin Morris

WE NEED TO TALK ABOUT KEVIN

This year Father Kevin Morris is celebrating 21 years of dedicated service at St Michael and All Angels, Bedford Park

This Christmas Day it won't necessarily come as a surprise to the congregation of St Michael and All Angels in Bedford Park to see their vicar taking the lead role in a mini-pantomime. For Father Kevin Morris, it's become something of a festive tradition.

'Of course, I love the old-fashioned way in which the Church still tells the Christmas story through nativity tales and carol services,' says Fr Kevin. 'But, on Christmas Day itself, we do things slightly differently. It's a big family occasion for us and we always put on a little panto; all the children – and adults – really enjoy getting involved. It's wonderful to hear everyone laughing. And yes, I usually play the Dame; there are some embarrassing photographs out there...'

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Originally from Maesteg in South Wales, Fr Kevin read music before training for the priesthood. He was ordained in Cardiff in 1988 and, three years later, moved to London to become curate of St Alban's, Holborn.

Fr Kevin's attitude encapsulates what he describes as his 'rather medieval approach' to church buildings. 'Back then, the church was the centre of everything, not just a place of worship,' he explains. 'There was little divide between the sacred and the secular. That's why today I'm so keen that our facilities are used by a wide cross-section of local people and why the annual Bedford Park Festival is so important. It's about putting the church at the heart of the community – and that doesn't just happen by itself.'

After he became Vicar of St Michael and All Angels in 1996, the Parish Hall was the first project that Fr Kevin undertook. 'There were actually very few places to meet around here, so the congregation and I started to think about how we could provide a suitable building. Five years later, after much hard work, the Hall was completed. Mind you, I'll write a book about it one day. The project was predicated on Lottery funding, which didn't materialise. It was all touch-and-go up to the last minute.'

Three years ago Fr Kevin also became Vicar of St. Peter's Acton Green in Southfields Road. 'St Peter's was failing financially and in numbers,' he says. 'Although it isn't much to look at from the outside, inside it's amazing – a huge basilica-like church. So, we have a great building and there's a real community around it. The question for us is, how can they best be of use to one another? We're making encouraging progress.'

For Fr Kevin striking a balance between serious acts of worship and hosting secular activities is fundamental to how St Michael's can play a positive role in the community. 'I think that we're very good at making that transition,' he says. 'If I've done anything, I'd like to think that I've given people the confidence to take their faith, both intellectually and emotionally, as a serious business – and that it involves every single aspect of life.'



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KEEP IT LOCAL!

Welcome to Chiswick Locals. We would like to say thank you to all the readers and businesses who got in touch with us after our last issue – all the positive comments were very encouraging!

This Winter edition features two of Chiswick's most notable locals: Father Kevin Morris, the vicar of St Michael & All Angels, who has been serving his Bedford Park congregation for over 20 years, and mosaic artist and co-author of *Mad in Chiswick*, Carrie Reichardt, whose remarkable house could well be the most instantly recognisable in the area.

Even though it's not yet December, I'm afraid that the C word does sneak surreptitiously into a few articles, not least in the shape of the tempting Christmas hampers that will soon be on offer at The Italians and the special festive Gift Sets available at Fuller's Brewery Shop.

With Christmas in mind, I would like to draw your attention to Dr Raffaella Gabassi's Smiling World charity. Raffaella, who owns White Dental and Cosmetic Rooms, has been working in Sierra Leone to protect the dental health of children and their families. She is currently raising funds to build a Dental School; if you can support her, it would be much appreciated.

Neil

Neil McKelvie, Editor

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Photograph: Alastair Hilton



Richard Fuller

CHISWICK'S BEST-KEPT SECRET?

Fuller's Brewery Shop is a treasure trove of excellent ales, vintage brews, stylish merchandise and exclusive seasonal gifts

I was browsing for birthday gifts in Fuller's Brewery Shop when a dozen or so excited American ale aficionados arrived, fresh from the tasting session in the Hock Cellar that always completes the popular tour.

Clearly eager to snap up mementos, they made a beeline for the Fuller's pub signs – full-size real ones, not reproductions – stacked along the back wall. Judging from the subsequent enthusiastic conversations, several pieces of Chiswick brewing history were about to head for a new life on the other side of the Atlantic.

Richard Fuller, Corporate Affairs Director and the sixth generation of his family to work at the brewery, smiles: 'Whenever we remove old signs, we like to sell them in the Shop. And it's

true, they're always in huge demand, especially with visitors from the USA. I suppose they make a fantastic talking point in British-style pubs over there.'

The Brewery Shop is located on the Fuller's riverside site, just a few steps towards the Thames from The Mawson Arms. 'I think many people, even those who live in Chiswick, still don't know it's here,' says Richard. 'That's something we'd really love to change!'

'The Shop is the perfect showcase for our beers. It stocks the full range – some are also available in cask – as well as our famous Vintage Ales, the limited edition Brewer's Reserve collection and an excellent selection of wines, spirits, Champagne and Cornish Orchard ciders.

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We also have a superb choice of branded Fuller's merchandise – polo shirts, umbrellas, retro wall signs and glassware – as well as some special seasonal offers, such as Gift Packs, London Porter Smoked Salmon and Fuller's own delicious Christmas puddings.'

A recent, much anticipated arrival at the Shop is Fuller's 2017 Vintage Ale. 'Every year our Head Brewer, Georgina Young, chooses the best hops and malt and produces a bottle-conditioned Vintage Ale,' explains Richard.

'They have fantastic keeping properties. Earlier this year we put on a tasting of all the Vintage Ales going back to the first one from 1997. They are still drinking really well and there's a wonderful evolution of flavours.

'If you take my advice, don't just buy one bottle; rather, buy a case and drink a Vintage Ale every year or so and then you'll see just how the taste has changed.'

And which, I wonder, is Richard's own preferred Fuller's beer? 'The thing is, there's one for all occasions,' he replies 'So, it's very

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hard for me to choose a particular favourite; on a hot day, you can't beat a nice cold Frontier, London Pride is always good, and I particularly like ESB in the evening.'

The Brewery Shop has extended opening hours during the week (until 8pm Monday to Friday and 3pm on Saturdays) and parking is not a problem. 'We'd love everyone to come and have a look around,' says Richard.

'Our staff are passionate about beer and you'll receive friendly, knowledgeable service. And you could always combine your visit with joining the brewery tour; you'll learn more about Fuller's history in Chiswick and how our beers are brewed and, of course, then be able to take some samples home with you!'

Fuller's Brewery

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A portrait of James Matthews, a middle-aged man with light brown hair, smiling. He is wearing a dark suit, a white shirt, and a patterned tie. The background is a blurred green hedge.

James Matthews

THE HOME FRONT

Rightmove ranks Whitman & Co as W4's leading estate agent. James Matthews reveals the secrets of success

Talking to James Matthews, co-owner of Whitman & Co, it struck me just how Chiswick has changed. When James started at Tyser Greenwood (in itself, a name from the past) in 1987, it was one of only five estate agents in W4. And there were no phone or wi-fi enabled coffee shops on the High Road either!

James stayed with Tyser Greenwood until 1995, when it was swallowed up by Abbey National. At that point, he and Russell Savage bought Whitman & Co, a well-known Chiswick name. 'The company was set up in the 1920s by a Colonel Whitman. He was also the local coal merchant – in those days you couldn't make a living purely as an estate agent.'

Today, James, Russell and their colleagues Chris and Andrew lead successful sales, letting and commercial departments that all co-exist seamlessly under one roof. The ethos has remained the same: to focus solely on Chiswick and to employ people who know the area. 'We have staff who were born and bred here and whose parents and grandparents still live here,' says James.

Whitman & Co is renowned for its considered approach and realistic valuations. 'We never over-value and, because we've got such a good turnover, we can identify a price point more clearly than anyone else,' explains James. Clearly, the formula is working. According to Rightmove, over the last three years Whitman & Co has

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been Chiswick's most successful estate agent and, in 2017, the team has sold twice as many properties as their nearest competitor.

Looking into his crystal ball, James predicts that over the next 18 months the Chiswick market may see a deviation of 5% above and below current values. 'The key to selling will be to maximise presentation. Buyers now have more choice and are under less time pressure than when prices were marching ahead.'

As James confirms, one thing is certain – and not surprising: people who live in W4 prefer to stay in W4. 'Over 50% of our buyers are either upsizing or downsizing within the Chiswick postcode.'

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A photograph of Dr Raffaella Gabassi, a woman with long dark hair, wearing a black short-sleeved top and dark trousers. She is standing indoors, leaning against a white pillar, with her hands on her hips. In the background, there is a potted plant and a window with a decorative hanging lamp.

Photograph: Alastair Hilton

THE GENTLE TOUCH

For Dr Raffaella Gabassi and her friendly, welcoming team, the patient always comes first

'On occasion we've had clients standing on the High Road too nervous to come through the door. I've had to nip out, take them gently by the hand and bring them in for a chat – and we've done nothing more than that. You can always make a new appointment.'

It's clear that for Dr Raffaella Gabassi, owner of White Dental and Cosmetic Rooms, dentistry is as much about human empathy as professional expertise. 'To some degree, everyone is wary about seeing the dentist,' she adds. 'So, we always take time to put patients at ease. We treat them as individuals; they are our family.'

Having qualified at the Royal London College, Raffaella acquired her Chiswick practice in 2009 and, after a re-fit –

evident in the comfy, stylish waiting area – relaunched it as White Dental and Cosmetic Rooms. She is particularly proud that her team now offers a comprehensive range of dentistry and facial aesthetic treatments under one roof.

'We have multi-disciplinary specialists providing family dentistry (general, corrective and cosmetic) as well as an experienced oral surgeon,' explains Raffaella. 'With the aesthetic treatments, such as anti-wrinkle and dermal fillers, mesotherapy and peels, we work on a completely natural basis to achieve the best youthful look.'

As befits such a supportive practice, White Rooms offers free check-ups for children under eight (if their parents are registered) and low charges
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for eight to 18 year-olds. 'When treatment is needed, we listen carefully to the patients' requirements and set out all the possible options,' says Raffaella. 'Then they can make an informed decision.'

The emergency service is equally enlightened. 'We do our utmost to deal with cases on the day – that's why our lights are often on during the evening,' confirms Raffaella. 'And, if it's outside hours, we contact the patient within 24 hours.'

'I must say, however, that we like to think our patients are so well cared for – we have extended opening hours on Wednesdays and Thursdays and Saturday appointments – that they never need too much emergency work!'

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Peter Hughes

THE TILE STYLE EXPERTS

Recently opened tile showroom Hugo Ceramicas stocks an exquisite range of inspirational international designs to suit all decorative and practical tastes

When someone casually reveals in conversation that they 'fell into tiles by complete accident' you really have to ask – how? The person in question is Peter Hughes, joint owner of Hugo Ceramicas (Intceram Ltd), the stylish new ceramic and porcelain tile showroom on the High Road.

'I studied photography at college and then messed about playing in bands,' Peter smiles. 'Friends used to say that I'd never get a proper job. So, I just walked into a tile firm and got one! I stayed six years, enjoyed it and then, in 1992, started my own tile wholesale company.'

That has gone from strength to strength and, this year, Peter and his business partner Darryl Shaw (who runs the Leeds office, showroom and warehouse) took the bold decision to open a retail outlet in Chiswick.

'I've been living in W4 since 2000 and working from home,' he explains. 'I had my eye on these premises for some time and when they became available, we decided to go for it. The keys were handed over in June and we spent the whole summer prepping the space and installing the displays which were specially imported from Turkey.'

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The display units came from Turkey because Hugo Ceramicas is the exclusive UK agent for Yurtbay Seramik, the highly respected Turkish tile manufacturer. 'They're a family-owned operation and we've been representing them for six years,' says Peter. 'We've found that the Yurtbay range is perfectly suited to the tastes of the British market. In fact, only last month they won the prestigious Architects and Design award for Best Design in a Ceramic Tile – that was a real feather in their cap.'

'The Yurtbay factory has also just begun producing large-format porcelain tiles. That reflects a definite trend in the industry. In fact, on the first day we were open in Chiswick four customers ordered the new 60 x 120cm tiles – that was amazing.'

'In terms of style, the current fashion seems to be for an industrial cement-look with rectified clean edges. That's very popular in restaurants and hotels. People see it, like it and then want to transfer it to their own homes.'

The Hugo Ceramicas portfolio covers a huge array of exciting effects – polished, stone, wood and many more – in porcelain and ceramic tiles. As well as Yurtbay, Peter also has long-standing relationships with leading factories in Spain and Egypt and he has just signed a contract with a major Brazilian manufacturer. And if he feels there is something missing in the product list, Peter commissions designs to order which are then marketed under the Hugo Ceramicas brand.

All the bestselling tiles are kept in stock in the Leeds warehouse (there is a rapid two to three day delivery time) and the Chiswick showroom is managed by knowledgeable staff who are always on hand to provide expert advice, including recommendations for tried and trusted local craftsman to fit the tiles.

Although only open since September, Hugo Ceramicas is already building a reputation for quality, choice and customer service. Whatever tile you're looking for – decorative or practical, on trend or classically elegant – you're sure to be inspired.



Hugo Ceramicas

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Matt Goslett

THE HOUSE HUNTER

Whether you are upsizing, downsizing or putting a first foot on the housing ladder, Matt Goslett can be your property detective

‘Recently, an artist asked me to find him a Studio. For the last 15 years he’d been using the upstairs reception of his house as a workspace; originally, he’d promised his wife that it would only ever be a temporary arrangement. I searched the market, saw plenty of options and, eventually, discovered an old 1500 sq ft recording studio in Acton. He loved it – and bought it. And now his wife has got her room back.’

Independent Property Consultant Matt Goslett is recalling one of his more unusual commissions. Most of his work, however, focuses on residential homes. ‘I only represent the purchaser, whereas an estate agent acts for the vendor,’ he explains.

‘And where an agent can only ever show what they have on their books, I cover the entire market.’

Matt takes a very detailed brief from each new client. ‘No two are ever the same and I need to have a clear idea of exactly what is required. That’s why I drill down beyond the fundamentals of budget, location and number of rooms; for example, do they need to be near a school or good transport links? Or an open space or shops? Do they want a garden, a garage or a parking space?’

‘Of course, if someone is unrealistic about what their budget can achieve, I have to be honest and say so.’

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Armed with this information, Matt then scours the market for properties that match the search criteria. ‘I will go and see as many places as it takes for as long as it takes. Then I present the most promising prospects and arrange viewings. I also conduct all the price negotiations, can put clients in touch with a solicitor or mortgage broker and, if minor cosmetic work is needed, I know reputable contractors.’

Matt, a born and bred West Londoner, has worked in the property sector for over 10 years. ‘I provide my clients with a completely bespoke, capital-wide service,’ he says. ‘And I always take great pride and pleasure in finding them their dream homes.’

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Photograph: Alastair Hilton

Dorota Zelazny

THE SHAPE OF THINGS TO COME

When intense exercise and strict dieting isn’t shifting fat or banishing cellulite, the HYPOXI method can help reclaim your body shape

There used to be a TV advert for Remington Shavers in which the US entrepreneur Victor Kiam declared, ‘I liked the shaver so much, I bought the company.’ You could say that Dorota Zelazny followed his example, albeit on a less grand scale, when she discovered the HYPOXI body-shaping programme.

‘I had a treatment and it was amazing,’ Dorota recalls. ‘I was so inspired that I started investigating how to become a HYPOXI partner. I took as much overtime as I could to save enough to invest in their machines (the company provides the training and servicing) and then find suitable premises.’

That was two years ago and Dorota has since attracted a loyal following to her Studio. So, how does it work? Here’s the science bit: put simply,

it’s easier to eliminate fat and cellulite in parts of the body with strong blood flow. HYPOXI pinpoints and banishes stubborn fat (usually around the stomach, hip, buttocks and thighs) by boosting circulation through gentle exercise on a bike or treadmill and alternating high and low pressure therapy that accelerates the transport of fatty acids via the blood to be burned in muscles.

All this happens in a pressure chamber machine (another, the HYPOXI Dermology, banishes cellulite by giving a lymphatic massage that works on the principle of cupping) and Dorota, who is as friendly as she is knowledgeable, is always on hand to monitor what’s happening.

‘I’ve found that HYPOXI also delivers health benefits other than weight loss,’ she

adds. ‘It helps with fluid retention, lipoedema, fibromyalgia and I’ve had excellent results with ladies who are going through the menopause.’

A treatment lasts 30 minutes and is suitable for all fitness levels. Some commitment is required; Dorota recommends three sessions a week for at least a month (she is currently offering a free, no obligation trial worth up to £80). And the results? ‘The average weight loss is a dress size in 4-6 weeks,’ she says. With New Year coming, HYPOXI could be your perfect health and fitness resolution.

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Mark Tremlett

AND SO TO BED...

Enjoy a sound night's sleep with Naturalmat's eco-friendly mattresses and stylish bed furniture

Before Mark Tremlett opened the Naturalmat showroom in Paddenswick Road, he thought long and hard about the store experience. 'Choosing a bed in a huge, brightly lit showroom with people staring at you is intimidating,' he says. 'The temptation is to jump on a bed, then jump straight off again. That's no way to make such a major purchase.

'Our designer came up with the concept of sleep pods. We have different mattresses

in six pods in a Sleepzone at the back of the store; the area is carpeted and has screens, soft lighting, a soothing soundtrack, even its own special aroma. Customers can relax, have privacy and make an informed decision. The Sleepzone is a first for our industry.'

Mark and co-owner Peter Tindall have piloted Naturalmat through four incarnations. The company was founded to make top quality mattresses for boats.

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'Our signature "natural and organic" approach came from the fact that we needed breathable, self-ventilating materials to combat the perennial conditions of damp and condensation on yachts,' he explains. The birth of Mark's first child inspired him create an entirely natural baby mattress and a meeting with ex-Dragon Simon Woodroffe heralded a move into eco-mattresses for hotels.

'From there, it was a clear progression to the High Street,' recalls Mark. 'We have three key sustainable materials in all our mattresses: coconut fibre (coir), latex and lambswool. By mixing them in different thicknesses and changing where we put the layers, we're able to significantly change the softness, firmness and tension.'

Naturalmat's beds, headboards, toppers and bases share the same impeccable credentials. 'We only use FSC (Forest Stewardship Council) approved timber and organic glues for our beds,' says Mark. 'And we ensure there's spring and ventilation by upholstering bases in coconut fibre and lambswool.'

Whatever the sector, Naturalmat's core principals have remained the same: using natural materials and handmade products to deliver a good night's rest. Whether you like soft and springy or reassuringly firm, you're sure to find the perfect mattress.

Naturalmat
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Photograph: Annabel Moeller

Nahid de Belgeonne

YOGA FOR LIFE

'Nahid has transformed my yoga practice. I always feel blissful after a class with her.' – Gemma Arterton, Actress

'Some classes are now so fast, they seem more like cardio work-outs,' reflects Nahid de Belgeonne. 'Yoga should be about quietening the mind and opening up the body.'

'My approach, which is based on the latest anatomical and movement thinking, is to use a slow pace that enables students to process instructions easily and to fully connect with their breath.'

Nahid has been teaching since 2010 and, complementing her one-to-one sessions, she takes two regular classes (Alignment-based Yoga Flow and Restorative Yoga) on Monday evenings in the wonderfully light, airy room over the Hampshire Hog on King Street, Hammersmith.

'I have 12 people in each class, so everyone receives hands-on attention. Also, I always encourage the use of props and never force students' bodies into unnatural poses, so both classes (the first is 50% off for new clients) are suitable for complete yoga beginners as well as the more experienced.'

Cultivating strength, flexibility and awareness, Alignment-based Yoga is perfect for those seeking a moment of stillness away from the stresses and strains of modern life. Restorative yoga is designed to release tension in muscles and joints in supported poses, so it's ideal for anyone who sits hunched over a computer or sports players with tight muscles.

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In the New Year (16 January) Nahid, who has lived in W6 for 18 years, will also be teaching two special workshops. 'In the first, Yoga for Beginners, I'll introduce all the core poses and in the other, Restorative Yoga for Better Sleep, the poses and breathing techniques that can improve sleep,' she says.

Also, for those wishing to take their practice deeper, in September Nahid will be leading a group to Spain where the daily routine will include five hours of yoga.

'I would love anyone who, hitherto, might have thought yoga was not for them to come along,' adds Nahid. 'Equally, if you've been to yoga before, I can offer a different method that will help you feel more at ease in your breath and body. My teaching is about yoga for life – it's yoga for longevity.'

Nahid de Belgeonne
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Paola



Photographs: Annabel Moeller

FESTIVE FEASTING – ITALIAN-STYLE

The Italians will be offering luxurious Christmas hampers to suit all budgets and tastes from the end of November – and you can also put together your own personal selection of fine foods and wine

In Italy, the festive season traditionally begins on 8 December, the Feast Day of the Immaculate Conception. A public holiday, this is when families put up their Christmas decorations and Nativity crib scenes (*presepi*) appear in churches, shop windows and piazzas all over the country.

Inevitably, according to Massimo Lopez, Manager of the Italians deli and café on the High Road, once the countdown to Christmas has been triggered thoughts – and tastebuds – turn to culinary indulgence. ‘Sitting down at the table to eat and drink with friends and family is a hugely important part of our celebrations,’ he says. ‘And, I’ve

got to admit, it does seem to carry on for a very long time!’

According to custom, Italians eat lightly on Christmas Eve (*La Vigilia*) in anticipation of the extravagant feasting to come. That usually means no meat; rather, it’s fish, vegetables and simple pasta. The main Christmas dinner itself varies from region to region but, as a rule, it’s mostly meat in northern Italy and seafood in the south; one thing’s certain, it’s always a major blow-out, and nowhere more so than in Massimo’s native Calabria.

‘If you can cope with multiple dishes, that’s the place to go,’ he smiles. ‘Our Christmas

Day meal often runs to 13 courses, including stockfish stew, spaghetti with breadcrumbs and anchovies, meatballs, *‘nduja* (spicy pork salami), baked pasta, *zeppole* (a pastry made of a deep-fried dough ball), sausage with broccoli, *lampasciumi* (wild onions) plus the leftovers from Christmas Eve.’

One British tradition that Massimo has enthusiastically adopted is the Christmas hamper. ‘At home, we just tend to give each other *panettone* (the Milanese sweet bread loaf made with raisins and candied fruits) and prosecco,’ he explains.

‘From the end of November, we’ll be offering pre-prepared Christmas hampers packed with tempting fine foods and wines. We’ll have four or five different sizes, all of which will be out on display in the store, and an extensive array – almost 20 in all – of proseccos and sparkling wines for all tastes and budgets.’

Each hamper will include Italian classics, such as *panettone*, *pandoro* (a sweet cake from Verona), *torrone* (nougat), *zampone* and *cotechino* (two types of sausage). ‘Of course, if they prefer,

customers can have a good look around, take their pick from everything we have – cheese, ham, olive oils, vinegars, bread, pasta – and put together their own personal hamper,’ says Massimo. ‘Also, if someone is in a rush, they can simply leave their wish list with us and we’ll collect everything for them to pick up at a later date. We will also be delivering all hampers free of charge to any address with a Chiswick postcode.’

Massimo himself is particularly looking forward to another special seasonal treat that will be on offer throughout December. ‘Pastry Chef Signora Paola and her team will be making small panettone fresh every day on-site,’ he says with obvious relish. ‘I promise you, they’re absolutely delicious – just perfect to enjoy with a coffee or hot chocolate on a cold winter morning.’

The Italians

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Brad Cahoon

MR. FIXIT!

Need help with those annoying little jobs around the home? Local handyman Brad Cahoon is the man to call

It goes without saying that, as a general handyman, you can never be sure what you're going to be tackling next.

When you cover as many bases as Brad Cahoon, that's certainly the case: 'A lady once asked me in to put up a "few pictures" after her house had been completely redecorated. I ended up rehanging 170 in all. It took a week – I've never seen so many in my life.'

Canadian-born Brad – he comes from 'the middle of nowhere, on the prairie, about 100 miles south of the city of Calgary' – arrived in London in 1986 while taking part in a student work abroad scheme. He met a Hammersmith girl called Susan, they subsequently got married, and he has lived in Brackenbury Village ever since – without losing his accent!

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Practical skills clearly run deep in the Cahoon genes. 'I come from a family of carpenters and farmers. So, I was wielding a hammer when I was six years old. We don't consider it DIY back home, it's about being self-sufficient. You just learn what you need to and then get on with it.'

Prior to starting his handyman business three years ago, Brad worked as an IT consultant. 'I'm much happier now – I'll turn my hand to anything and I enjoy the variety,' he says.

'I've just partnered up with a professional painter and, between us, we now handle the full interior and exterior painting and decoration of houses – there seems to be a real demand for that service at the moment.'

Other recent commissions have included laying a parquet floor, glazing, re-pointing, clearing roof gutters, putting up garden fencing, replacing pipes, changing light fixtures, hanging doors and assembling particularly annoying items of flat-pack furniture.

Brad works all around West London – most customers come from word of mouth recommendation – and he can call on excellent contacts if he needs extra labour or specialist assistance. 'No job is too small and, if I can't do it, I always say so and try to recommend someone who I know and trust. I'm Canadian, I can't lie!'

Bradley Cahoon
07715 408202
bradleycahoon@me.com



CAN YOU HELP MAKE A REAL DIFFERENCE?

Dr Raffaella Gabassi is raising funds to build a Dental School in Sierra Leone

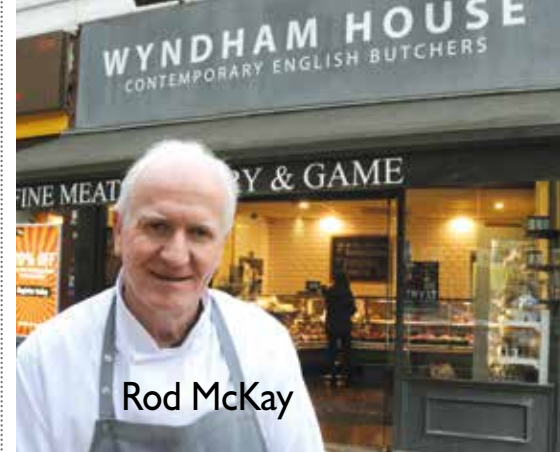
'People were dying simply because they had an infected tooth. I couldn't accept that, so I decided to do something about it.' In 2012 Dr Raffaella Gabassi, owner of the White Dental and Cosmetic Rooms, founded her charity, the Smiling World Foundation, with the aim of protecting the dental health of children and their families in Sierra Leone.

'I chose Sierra Leone because there were only two dentists to treat seven million people,' she explains. 'I go out at least once a year and travel with my team to the most remote, impoverished areas. Often, we carry out 500-600 extractions in a day.'

Raffaella's current objective is to set up a Dental School. 'We've made great progress. I've found premises and I've got a curriculum; now I need to raise £100,000 for the equipment.'

On her last trip in July, she was followed by a TV crew and the documentary will be aired soon. 'That will be so useful for the charity; people will finally be able to see and understand the work that we are doing out there!'

To make a donation to the charity, visit www.smilingworld.org



Rod McKay

PRIME CUTS

Wyndham House butchers is now open for festive orders!

In the manic week before Christmas, spare a thought for Rod McKay, the manager of Wyndham House butchers. Rod and his team will be working ferociously long hours to ensure that festive orders are fulfilled: 'I'm used to it,' he says. 'But, I must admit, I'm really glad when it's all over!'

This Christmas the High Road butchers will, as usual, be offering a comprehensive choice of top quality turkey, chicken, geese, duck, lamb, game and pigs in blankets. And, as you would expect from a business that has been built on exacting standards, all the meat and poultry is free range.

'The Aberdeen Angus beef, whether côte de boeuf, standing ribs or sirloin, is aged for 28-35 days,' explains Rod. 'Ninety percent of our sausages are made on site and we have an excellent variety of stuffings, gravies, stocks and condiments as well as superb English cheeses and biscuits.'

'Also, if you would like any advice about prepping the meat – we can always do that for you – or how to cook to get the best flavours, don't hesitate to ask. We're delighted to help.'

Wyndham House
229d Chiswick High Road, W4 2DW
020 8994 1414

www.wyndham-house.com

Advertorial



Adam and Potsie

THE CUTTING EDGE

Whatever the style, colour or cut, Adam and Potsie provide first-class professional hair care with a delightful personal touch

The first thing that strikes you about Adam and Potsie's bright hairdressing salon in Ravenscourt Park is a picture gallery of hundreds of beaming faces. 'Our business is all about making people feel positive, so it seemed an excellent idea,' explains Adam.

'We've been putting up photos of happy customers since February and now there must be almost 500 on the wall. We've found that the gallery helps to make new clients feel at home and it's become an attraction in itself.'

Adam and Potsie are familiar, well respected faces on the local hairdressing scene. For 15 years they ran the Essensuals/Toni&Guy salon in Hammersmith, building a

20-strong team and attracting a loyal following. When that venture came to an end, and after a spell at Toni&Guy in Chiswick, Adam decided it was time to launch their own salon. 'We had lots of clients in Chiswick and Hammersmith, so this location is perfect.'

Unsurprisingly, with so much experience, the couple has a clearly defined business philosophy. While they offer all the technical skills of a major salon – Potsie is a superb colour technician and Adam is the master of cutting and blow-drying – what matters most is what Potsie calls 'a genuinely friendly service.'

'In some salons, it can seem like you're on a relentless conveyor belt,' she says. 'That's

not us. We take time to chat and get to know our customers; we listen to what they want, we like to introduce them to one another and we provide tea, coffee, wine or Prosecco. It's like joining a family.'

'We like people to come to us, relax and be confident that they'll be completely satisfied with the results,' adds Adam. 'We can bring every style and colour to life and handle everything from cuts and re-styles to wedding and party hair. We deliver consistently high quality – and leave clients with a smile on their faces.'

Adam & Potsie Hairdressing
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Gordon Lindsay

LET IT BE *Gordon Lindsay's lettings service ensures landlords maximise rental return and minimise tenancy problems*

'Our ultimate aim is to ensure that the rental process runs as smoothly as possible,' says Gordon Lindsay. 'That's why tenants always have my mobile number; if the washing machine breaks down on a Sunday, they can call me. If we're available to fix problems, then the landlord doesn't have to get involved.'

Gordon has been running his family lettings and property management business since 2008. Not only do he and his team know the local rental market like the back of their hand, they take care to build relationships with landlords and tenants. 'Experience has taught us that it's the best way to avoid issues,' he explains. 'It's also why we always choose the most suitable tenant – not necessarily the first to show interest – for the landlord. Of course, we check references and carry out credit

checks, but we also discuss it thoroughly; clearly, since we'll be dealing with the tenant afterwards, that's in our best interests too.'

Having advised a landlord about what can be done practically to maximise rental value and agreed a realistic price point – 'it's a completely false economy to inflate value and then have somewhere sitting empty' – Gordon markets properties through all the usual portals, such as Zoopla and Rightmove.

Unlike many agents he does not take the full fee upfront on day one of a new tenancy. 'That could leave the landlord without income for a period of time,' he says. 'Instead, we prefer to take a percentage every month; also, we offer reduced fees for landlords with more than three properties.'

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As part of the property management process Gordon's team carries out six-monthly inspections, organises safety checks, collects the rental income, sorts out routine maintenance jobs such as electrics and plumbing and, at the end of the contract, liaises with the tenant to ensure they are aware of their deposit obligations.

As for the state of the Chiswick lettings market, Gordon says that it has followed sales in being about 10% down. 'There are still lots of tenants out there, but now they've got much more choice.'

Gordon Lindsay Associates
Gable House, 18-24 Turnham
Green Terrace, W4 1QP
020 8400 2726
info@gordonlindsayassociates.com
www.gordonlindsayassociates.com



Rachid, Nancy and Ratiba

VIVE LA FRANCE!

Gautier is bringing elegance, functionality and French flair to the High Road

For the last year Chiswick has been home to a proud outpost of the very best in French design and manufacturing. Owned by Rachid Kader, Gautier has proved a hit with W4 residents, won over by its contemporary, eco-friendly furniture and chic accessories.

The High Road branch of Gautier (there is only one other in London) is Rachid's first venture into the retail world. 'I'm actually an architect by profession. I approached Gautier to become a franchisee simply because I love their products,' he says. 'I often use the furniture in my work and I've found that clients share my enthusiasm for its problem-solving practicality and high quality.'

Founded in 1960 by Patrice and Annick Gautier, the company is still family-owned and based in the Vendée. With the baby boom in full swing, initially they specialised in making children's furniture, becoming famous for novelty car and cabin beds. Subsequently, the business expanded, producing furniture and accessories for every room (except the kitchen) and today's global business was born.

'The Gautier brand isn't that well-known in the UK, so I knew we could offer something really distinctive,' explains Rachid. 'All our stock is designed, sourced and made in France. The use of colours and materials is so original, the craftsmanship is superb and, in particular, the

Advertorial

furniture provides imaginative solutions when living space is at an absolute premium.'

Customers can also consult Gautier's expert in-house interior design team. 'My colleagues, Ratiba and Nancy, are very experienced and they're happy to arrange home visits,' says Rachid. 'They'll take measurements, look at the existing colours, furniture, flooring and lighting and then work with the client to devise a creative, efficient design that meets the budget.'

Until 3 December Gautier will have showroom discounts on selected items. So, if you're doing some Christmas gift shopping for yourself, friends or family, now is the perfect chance to acquire some classic French style.

Gautier
140 Chiswick High Road,
W4 1PU
020 3581 5110
chiswick@gautier-shops.com
www.gautier.co.uk



Photograph: Annabel Moeller

NEW FACES

Ben Francis and Sandra Saxinger have recently joined the enthusiastic team at London Auctions

'When I joined Sotheby's, it was my first time in an auction house and I didn't understand what was going on. But I loved the buzz, the fact that it was all so theatrical.' Clearly, after that initial confusion, Ben Francis learned fast: nine years later he left as Deputy Director, moved to Christie's and then set up his own consultancy, working with sale rooms nationwide.

That was how Ben met Sameer Mahomed, owner of London Auctions. 'Sameer asked me to look at the business. We hit it off and I was delighted to accept his offer to become General Manager. We found that we shared an exciting vision for a new type of auction house, one that appeals to a younger clientele used to a smart retail environment in which they can browse at leisure.'

At London Auctions, a key component of the all-round experience is the stylish L'Art Café, managed by Sandra Saxinger. You could say Sandra was born into the job. 'My family lived above a bakery in Frankfurt,' she admits. 'So, I can blame that for my love of sweet treats!'

Sandra has sourced all the tempting cakes and savouries on offer: 'They are handmade locally, freshly delivered every day and have no gelatine or artificial colours.' L'Art Café can also be booked for private parties and traditional English afternoon teas.

Whilst London Auctions will continue to be a general auction house, Ben envisages that they will hold more specialist sales – luxury goods, jewellery, handbags, watches,

Advertorial

20th century design – that suit the W4 market. 'We're also really keen to become a focal point for the community,' he adds. 'We'd love local people to hold events here; we've already had positive chats with the Artists at Home group and some of the music labels at the Power House.'

'I'd like to invite everyone to come and meet me and our friendly, knowledgeable valuers, enjoy a coffee and cake with Sandra in the L'Art Café and just have a wonder around Chiswick's boutique auction house.'

London Auctions
30-34 Chiswick High Road,
W4 1TE
020 8400 5225
w4@londonauctions.co
www.londonauctions.co



Giovanni and Gabbi

BUON APPETITO!

La Toscana is serving classic Italian cuisine with a modern twist

If expertise and experience count, then La Toscana will be a welcome addition to Chiswick's dining scene. Gabbi, the Head Chef, has cooked in restaurants in Tuscany and London for 30 years and Giovanni, the Manager, used to run Heathrow's Diplomatic Suite, where his regulars were kings, queens and heads of state. 'I'd actually retired,' he admits. 'But after two weeks, I couldn't stand it. Now I'm really enjoying working in Chiswick.'

The pair joined forces at La Toscana six months ago. 'Our culinary philosophy is simple,' explains Gabbi. 'We want to create authentic, vibrant flavours. We import the finest ingredients from Italy, we make our own fresh pasta and we specialise in delicious fish dishes.' Giovanni has introduced stylish little touches such as linen table cloths and napkins and the duo has put together a tempting wine list with an excellent choice of house whites and reds.

With daily specials, great value set lunch offers and a wonderfully warm ambience, La Toscana is the perfect party location. Oh, and do try the *tiramisu*. 'It's the best in town,' smiles Giovanni. 'It's my secret Tuscan recipe. I've taught Gabbi – but he's sworn to silence!'

La Toscana
26 Chiswick High Road, W4 1TE
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Roger Wheatland



THE HEART OF THE HOME

Whether your taste is classic or cutting-edge, Osborne Interiors can design the perfect kitchen for your budget and lifestyle

I've asked Roger Wheatland of Osborne Interiors to describe his most challenging brief. After a few moments thought, he smiles: 'Well, a few years ago, I was asked to design a kitchen that looked like a snake. The concept was that the units curled and twisted about all over the place. That was certainly different!'

From his showroom in Fauconberg Road in Grove Park, Roger has been creating and installing kitchens in Chiswick for 23 years, earning an excellent reputation for professionalism and a friendly, down-to-earth approach.

Osborne Interiors specialises in renowned brands – such as Next 125, Schueller, 1909 and Prentice – but also supplies kitchens to suit all price points

from a vast range of other manufacturers. 'Most clients have a definite idea of their preferred style, whether it's Shaker, hand-painted or cool, contemporary minimalist,' explains Roger. 'And often they'll have building work in progress, so then we're happy to work with their architect's plans.'

'We can take a basic kitchen model and tailor it to specific spatial, stylistic and budget requirements; or, alternatively, we can design a bespoke kitchen from scratch.'

'We use the latest CAD (Computer Aided Design) techniques to produce scale drawings and photo-realistic, multi-perspective images which show exactly what the finished kitchen will look like.'

Roger himself project manages the installation process and always uses the same experienced fitters. 'They've been with me five years and I can honestly say they're the best I've worked with. Some clients have even said that they missed them when they'd finished!'

'We're happy to handle small building works; we can remove stud walls, install ceilings, fit underfloor heating systems, lay floors and relocate utilities. We will also carry out complete redecoration.'

The modern kitchen needs to be the perfect mix of style and function, with enough flexible space for cooking, eating family meals and hosting dinner parties. At Osborne Interiors you'll find a host of inspirational ideas and receive personal service from a dedicated team that really takes pride in looking after clients.

Osborne Interiors
20 Fauconberg Road, W4 3JY
020 8742 2236
contact@osborne-interiors.co.uk
www.osborne-interiors.co.uk

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Steve Bonnici

THE APPLE ACES

The experienced, knowledgeable team at Chiswick Computers specialises in the repair of iMacs and MacBooks

It's probably safe to say that Broccoli and Stilton isn't Steve Bonnici's favourite soup.

One of the most common emergencies handled by his company, Chiswick Computers, is accidental 'liquid spillage' over the keyboard. 'Wine, cat urine, baby vomit, we've had it all,' he says with feeling. 'But Broccoli and Stilton soup – that was revolting.'

Chiswick Computers proudly tackles problems with every make and model and, over the last five years, that has increasingly meant Apple

products. 'It's surprising, but in that time Apple repairs have grown from 10% to 50% of our business,' says Steve.

Recurring problems include broken screens, dying batteries and, with older models, a failing hard drive. 'All computers suck in dust and that builds into layers,' explains Steve. 'Then, the heat can't escape and the machine becomes hot and unstable. One of our regular jobs is stripping down and cleaning out desktops and laptops. In addition, we fix phone screens and replace batteries – we're seeing lots of iPhone 5s,

Advertorial

they've been out for a while and the batteries are going.'

So, why the rise in customers with Apple issues? 'Mass production doesn't help. Also, Apple is what we call a "swap-out" company,' says Steve. 'When you return a faulty computer to the Apple Store you might be given a previously repaired part. But, if your hard drive fails and it is "swapped out", they won't do anything about your data. That's why their clients come to us; we recover the data, the client gets the hard drive "swapped out" by Apple and then we restore the data.'

Apple repairs undertaken by Chiswick Computers are done in-house. 'We'll open up your computer, trace the fault and resolve it, and we'll do it quicker and more competitively,' confirms Steve. 'Our experience is our best asset. There's little that we haven't seen and done and we have two specialist Apple technicians – one out on the road and the other in our workshop carrying out motherboard repairs.'

For Steve's sake, just be careful having soup in close proximity to your computer!

Services include:

* Hardware, Desktop and Laptop repairs * Virus Removal * Online Security * SPAM removal * Software installation * Networking (cabled and wireless).

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Jason Briggs



Richard Hourican

THE PARTY LINE

As a specialist Party Wall surveyor, Richard Hourican will protect your interests during building works

Are you planning a building project – perhaps an extension, loft conversion or basement – that is on or adjacent to your property's boundary line? Or has a 'Party Wall' notice dropped on the doormat informing you of a neighbour's impending works?

In either scenario, it's likely that you will need a surveyor with the experience and expertise to negotiate the legal minefield of the Party Wall Act (1996). Richard Hourican's Chiswick-based chartered building consultancy provides exactly that professional service, and does so in a straightforward manner.

'I've often found that surveyors speak their own language,' Richard recalls. 'That's why we explain the Party Wall process to clients in detail – and we always do it in layman's terms.'

While undertaking structural modifications, the chances of encroaching onto a neighbour's property are significant. 'With loft conversions, problems are caused by raising the Party Wall (the physical divide between premises) or inserting steel beams and, with basements, it's new foundations,' says Richard.

'As surveyors, we protect our client's best interests. We will check all the drawings, serve legal notices and draw up a Party Wall Award; this is a binding agreement between home owners that sets out their duties and obligations and serves as reference in the event of a dispute.

'Alternatively, we can also prepare a "Schedule of Condition Survey" prior to any work starting. In those instances, we survey the Adveritorial

properties as they stand and then, if damage is caused, there is clear proof of previously existing conditions.'

Perhaps surprisingly, the same surveyor can be engaged by the 'Building Owner' and the 'Adjoining Neighbour' with the benefit of avoiding confusions, speeding up proceedings and cutting costs. 'According to the law, we work for the Party Wall Act,' explains Richard. 'That means we are obliged to be impartial, hence we can be appointed by – and then advise – both parties involved in any project. In those cases, we are called the 'Agreed Surveyor.'

'It's essential to understand all the implications of building plans,' he adds. 'If you don't, it could cost thousands. Our job is to ensure everything is done correctly – and that it doesn't!'

Hourican & Associates Ltd
Building 3, Chiswick Park,
W4 5YA

020 8849 8390

07769869799

info@houricanassociates.com

www.houricanassociates.com



Clay Miller

MAGIC CARPETS

Are you investing in a new carpet or flooring? The expert team at the Carpetstore will help you make the best decision

According to Clay Miller – and he should know – West London is a hotspot for carpet moths. ‘Five years ago, one in 50 customers said it was a problem,’ recalls the co-owner of the Carpetstore. ‘Now, it’s one in three. Curiously, carpet reps tell us that it’s not an issue elsewhere. But it’s why we always ask suppliers, is it moth-proof? If it isn’t, we don’t touch it. All our carpets are moth-treated.’

Clay has been in the business since schooldays, when he used to join his carpet fitter uncle on jobs, and he and his brother Joe have been running the Carpetstore for 25 years.

They stock a huge selection of carpets and stair runners in wool, natural and man-made fibres (all come in

a fantastic choice of colours and classic and modern designs) as well as an extensive range of remnants and vinyl, tile and laminate flooring.

‘Natural carpets, such as seagrass, sisal, coir and jute, are really popular at the moment,’ says Clay. ‘Also, there’s a growing demand for made-to-measure handmade rugs. People used to have carpets in their living rooms, now stone and wood floors are fashionable. But they can be cold, hence the interest in designer rugs. We deal with manufacturers that can produce any rug in any size; we’re currently stocking 20 different designs and can always get more.’

Personal service is the hallmark of the Carpetstore. Advertorial

‘We have four teams of fitters, all of whom have been with us at least 10 years,’ explains Clay. ‘We provide free estimates and planning advice, we’ll take up and remove existing carpets, lay hardboard, ply and latex sub-floors and cut and trim doors. We also handle bespoke fitting for staircases and supply carpets for offices, shops and communal properties.’

Whether you know a twist pile from a loop pile, an Axminster from a Saxony, at the Carpetstore you’ll get friendly guidance and a superb choice for every budget and taste.

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W6 0LJ
020 8741 5263
info@92dental.co.uk
www.92dental.co.uk

DECORATOR - Georgie Knight



Ozmas Decorating
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07772 636 000
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BOOKSELLER - Stephen Foster



In 1882 a portfolio of chromolithographs was produced by the developers of Bedford Park to show what a lovely place it was to live. The strap lines they used were: ‘The Healthiest Place in the World to Live, Annual Death Rate Less than 6 per thousand,’ and ‘The estate is built on gravelly soil and has the most approved sanitary arrangements.’ This view is from the platform of Turnham Green station showing The Tabard pub and St Michael and All Angels church. It is for sale for £375 at Foster Books on the High Road.

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