

# THE Kensington MAGAZINE

July/August 2020  
FREE  
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We are Stronger Together:  
How Kensington Businesses & Residents beat Lockdown

# THE Kensington MAGAZINE

Welcome Back! We are delighted to bring to you our July/August edition, which has been prepared in collaboration with the Kensington Business Forum as a joint celebration of businesses who diversified or helped the community in any way during lockdown. It is also very much a 'Residents-led' edition, with articles from a variety of perspectives of lockdown, and we celebrate those who worked tirelessly for others, sometimes even putting their own health in danger. We would like to thank the Mayor of Kensington & Chelsea, Cllr. Gerard Hargreaves for his Foreword. Profits from this edition are being donated to NHS Charities Together as a thank you to all the kindness offered by the Kensington Community. We return in September and in the meantime wish all our readers a safe and happy Summer, Lucy

**Front cover; Francesco of Locanda Otteomezzo offering groceries and food to local residents during lockdown (Photograph by kind courtesy of Sandra French/Gallery 19)**

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#KensingtonMag



Lucy Elliott, Editor  
(Hair by Lockdown)

Read by 34,500 residents and businesses each month. The magazine is also available at WholeFoods, Sainsbury's Local, Boots, RBKC Library, Marks & Spencers, St Mary Abbots, St George's Church, St Philips Church, The Royal Garden Hotel, The Milestone Hotel, Peter Jones in Sloane Square and many other smaller outlets in W8.

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# Foreword

By The Mayor of the Royal Borough of Kensington & Chelsea, Cllr. Gerard Hargreaves



It is a great honour to have been appointed as the Mayor of Kensington and Chelsea for 2020/21. I am a great supporter of Kensington Magazine and it gives me real pleasure to write the Foreword to this edition.

My Mayoral term begins at a difficult time for us all. Nonetheless, I am determined to engage with local residents, volunteers, and businesses and show my gratitude for all that you have been doing to help the borough's communities through the Coronavirus pandemic.

Kensington and Chelsea is a wonderful place to live, work and learn. In recent months we have seen businesses diversifying to help meet the changing needs of the public, volunteers and charities working tirelessly to support vulnerable people, and individuals going the extra mile to help their local communities.

As we gradually emerge from lockdown I do hope, however, that the lessons we have learnt in kindness, solidarity, and community spirit stay with us. Let's



Mayor of RBKC, Cllr. Gerard Hargreaves  
(Image: kind permission RBKC)

continue to look after each other, and resolve to support our local communities, businesses and highstreets wherever we can.

Both myself and the Deputy Mayor, Councillor Sof McVeigh, are very keen to support the local recovery. Please let us know of any ways we might be able to help support local volunteers, charities and businesses, whether that be through sending a video message of support or paying a visit. So, please do get in touch and let us know of anything that we can do to build awareness and interest in your organisation or business:

Councillor Gerard Hargreaves  
The Worshipful the Mayor of the Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea  
Email: [Mayor@RBKC.gov.uk](mailto:Mayor@RBKC.gov.uk)  
Website: [www.rbkc.gov.uk/your-mayor](http://www.rbkc.gov.uk/your-mayor)

# A Community in Solidarity

By Guest Writer Tom Frost: Local Business Owner and Chair of the Kensington Business Forum

Dear Neighbours,

This year has held much uncertainty for so many of us and we have all found ourselves navigating uncharted waters.

In the darkest of moments, we had glimmers of light; from our essential retailers rallying to ensure we could buy our staple foods, to our local operators entirely changing their offering within a matter of days, and to the huge number of you who volunteered to help those around you – a big “Thank You” from all of us.

In the face of this pandemic, we came together as a community, as we have done before and will continue to do so with any future crises. As our Thursday evenings became lighter and lighter, the cheers and claps for our key workers became louder and louder; a sense of pride and a time of happiness for all.

Now, more than ever, our local businesses have an increased duty to support us, as equally we have a duty to protect them, which we can do by continuing to support local and shop locally. We are extremely fortunate that we have so many great local operators and amenities right on our doorstep, so we should completely embrace them.

We now have an opportunity ahead of us, to create the silver lining to this cloud. The Kensington Business Forum (KBF) are working on a number



KENSINGTON  
BUSINESS FORUM

of short, medium and long-term measures with RBKC council, local councillors, local businesses and residents to secure the future of Kensington High Street.

Our aim is for a greener, more sustainable Kensington High Street, a High Street that supports our current needs and demands as well as those of our future generations whilst retaining the charm and character that we know and love as Kensington W8. Our High Street has been around for approximately 150 years and we want to ensure it remains here for future generations to come.

We would like to thank everyone who supported the ‘Open Retailers of Kensington’, created by the Kensington Business Forum to support our local essential retailers, and to all of you who have recently followed our Instagram (WeLoveW8), LinkedIn and NextDoor accounts. We are thrilled to be a part of this special edition of The Kensington Magazine which is a big “Thank you” to our local businesses and our community. We are excited about what the future holds for Kensington High Street.

[www.kensingtonbusinessforum.co.uk](http://www.kensingtonbusinessforum.co.uk)

# THANK YOU

TO W8 RESIDENTS AND BUSINESSES  
FOR YOUR SUPPORT



NOW LET'S GET THIS CINEMA BUILT!

 **LODHA**

# Kensington Residents set up a Mutual Aid Organisation to support each other during Covid-19 ... and Beyond

By Guest Writer: Marina Lussich, Volunteer Mutual Aid Area 3

If the lockdown in March took everyone by surprise, it was nothing compared to the truly unprecedented way people stood up and reached out to offer help. Here in Kensington the quick local response has supported residents, enhanced community spirit and led to some very unexpected friendships.

In the week prior to lockdown, local Kensington residents took to newly set up mutual aid Whatsapp groups, offering their help to neighbours. These groups were split into local wards, led by volunteers who coordinated efforts, focussing on helping neighbours on an (extremely) local basis. With just a few generous donations and fuelled by a lot of community spirit, 'Area 3' covering Pembridge, Holland and Campden wards sprang into action. Our group printed and distributed leaflets to 11,000 residences just before lockdown, set up an Open Collective account to manage financing, established a way for residents to make contact through voicemail, email or website, and documented processes and procedures to manage requests for its 200 strong volunteer cohort, all in less than a week. The first request for help came in on March 21, and the phone hasn't stopped ringing since.

The focus of the group has been to provide immediate assistance to residents who have been isolating, whether due to age, pre-existing conditions or exposure to Covid-19. So far, Area 3 has coordinated 250 unique requests for help. The total number of requests are much higher, as our model allows for volunteers to continue to help residents once the initial request for help is made, whether a weekly shop,

or a regular chat on the phone. Local coordinators focus on matching residents with volunteers who live closest to them - ideally on the same street. Residents and volunteers alike have been touched by the connections this service has fostered. We love to hear these stories such as an Italian volunteer and resident who now look forward to weekly lessons over the phone to practice English. Or a volunteer who updated us that the resident she had matched with is "the most wonderful woman, full of interesting stories. We clicked straight away and are new best friends!"

Area 3 is now looking forward. For volunteers, the ability to be proactive has turned an uncertain time into a real positive. The initiative has been such a success at connecting neighbours that volunteers indicated on a recent survey they'd like to continue. Throughout this period, Area 3 has engaged on a weekly basis with other RBKC mutual aid area groups, the RBKC Council, the K&C Volunteer Centre and Age UK amongst others and will continue to engage with these groups to establish the best way we can best serve the RBKC community. And of course, if you're a resident who would like a regular chat or some help with shopping, or a volunteer who would like to help, we'd love to hear from you. Leave us a message on 020 8144 2774 or [kcmutualaidzone3@gmail.com](mailto:kcmutualaidzone3@gmail.com) or visit our website [www.kcmutualaid3.co.uk](http://www.kcmutualaid3.co.uk).

***Editor's Note: The five volunteers for Area 3 were: Julie Jacobson, Marina Lussich, Louise Murray, Jodie Terry and Erika Wakid.***

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# Kensington in Lockdown

By Guest Writer: Virginia Campos Goldsmith (8)

## ***Animals Loving Lockdown***

Have you ever wondered why animals seem so happy in lockdown? Well, it's because dogs and cats are getting more attention as well as other pets. For instance, dogs are getting walked more because people get bored being home all the time and take them with them when they go on walks. With cats, some people are now even taking them to parks! Ducks are getting fed more and getting more attention because of all the people in Kensington Gardens. Before lockdown, last year everyone went away to summer holidays or their country houses, so there weren't as many people in the park, but now everyone is getting bored in lockdown in London and going to the parks or spending time with animals.

## ***Working from Home***

Everyone started out working from home after the lockdown started. Schools shut down because they were very public. Shops closed. Everyone brought laptops home or took them out of their cupboards. A few people had to do Macbook updates, which I know is very very hard. Children had to start going to school online. Grown-ups started working from home. But then, later on in lockdown, some places did begin to open again and some people could go to work again, especially if they lived alone or had a job where they couldn't work from home. Or if their house was really busy. Although some people with busy houses couldn't and still had to work from home. School online can be stressful for children with lots of siblings and working parents, or they have a little sibling that needs to be looked after. Some people liked school online because the lessons were shorter and it isn't so strict. They can also mess

around with the fonts and colours. Some mums let their daughters have google accounts (mine won't). Some people miss their friends because they can't see them in person, but later on in lockdown it is possible with social distancing. But it is not the same.

## ***The Exercising Moment!***

Some people are working out less but most people are working out more. Some people (like my mom) do a lot of yoga and take walks. Other people ride their bicycles or go on their treadmills or lifts weights or try new sports like roller skating, skateboarding, or mattress surfing (with a mattress on the steps). Helmets and pads are required for those last ones, and no children under 3 years old. Mostly though, people are riding their bicycles or jogging. The joggers look very tired and often move very slowly (like 1 cm a minute!)

## ***Picnics in the Park***

After the first part of lockdown ended, people were allowed to go to the park for a picnic. Everyone now goes on picnics! You must bring all sorts of things: frisbees, cards, blankets, drinks, sausage rolls, hot dogs (very important!), strawberries (also very important), and cupcakes (very very important). People either go in their social bubbles or practice social distancing. Some people just go with their families.

## ***Top Tips for Lockdown***

1. Too much screen time is not allowed.
2. Never use the word "bored" in your vocabulary. Cross it out in your dictionary if you can.
3. No shouting.
4. Learn to do something new (like mattress surfing!)

*Editor's Note: Virginia is the daughter of our regular writer, Sarah Goldsmith*



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# Kensington in the Time of Spanish Flu; Spreading the News

By Nick Campailla

Whilst awaiting the outcome of innumerable projections and attempts to develop a vaccination in the midst of our present pandemic, we can at least state that it is the first to be played out in the full glare of mass communications and social media, enabling news to travel faster than the virus itself – and, of course, with that facility comes gossip, fake news, fear and panic as well. When Spanish flu erupted towards the end of The First World War the incipient BBC radio service was four years away, so the primary source of information was newspapers, posters, leaflets and official public meetings. Thus, apart from direct one-to-one contact, the only real option for secondary dissemination was chattering on candlestick telephones across faltering telephone exchanges.

There was no blanket ‘lockdown’ and pubs and other social gathering places were not subject to widespread closure as they have been today. If the advertising sections in the papers are a true indication, retail life went on much as before.

The first wave of Spanish flu in London from June 1918 was relatively mild and not reported with any great degree of alarm (Punch Magazine opined that “Spain has rendered itself unpleasantly conspicuous by developing and exporting a new form of influenza.”) Of the two local Kensington papers, The Kensington Post and West London Star (access to the other local paper, The Kensington News and West London Times, has not been possible with the library shut) made its first mention of the flu almost as an aside: Giving evidence at an inquest at Lambeth on Monday, Dr Jewsbury, the pathologist, said as a

preventative of the present epidemic he advised taking about a teaspoonful of cinnamon oil and quinine every day. Then, as now, dietary and other advice abounded: the News of the World included eating plenty of porridge as a means of combatting the epidemic, although we would draw the line at allowing smoking in factories to help prevent infection.

When the second and most deadly wave spread across Britain in October 1918, the St. Marylebone Infirmary (renamed St. Charles’ Hospital in 1930) in Exmoor Street, North Kensington, was at the forefront of medical care. Swamped with cases and overspill from other hospitals, the dedication and bravery of its staff and patients was recorded years later by medical superintendent Basil Hood.

Given that the pandemic was not mentioned in Parliament until late October 1918, it may seem less surprising that there was scant coverage in the local press. Perhaps after four years of war and privation, the press and a weary public were not ready to divert their full attention to a new form of heartbreak and misery and wanted to play it down. However, with the War over and a third wave (less severe than the second, but more deadly than the first) running from January to June 1919 reportage remained measured and minimal.

In the Kensington Post there is a notable absence of readers’ letters either pointing the finger of blame or telling the authorities how things should be done but then Kensington, with its different class structure and living standards, fared much better than poorer, crowded boroughs like



Women working for the Red Cross make masks during the pandemic flu in 1918.  
([www.history.com](http://www.history.com): Bettmann Archive/Getty Images)

Southwark. Letters came in from around the country condemning government slowness and complacency but one wonders, even without 21st century means of communication, whether the British public was then quite so inclined to tear relentlessly into its governing classes.

One day, hindsight may give us the opportunity to analyse the upside and downside of perceived underreaction or overreaction in both pandemics, locally and nationally.

Some questions and thoughts remain: what was the economic impact of the pandemic in Kensington and how many local Kensington businesses were permanently affected? From there, one can speculate on what might have happened if the Spanish flu pandemic had been subjected to a 2020-style 'lockdown', that on top of the expense of war.

So many businesses and residents in Kensington helped others during the time of lockdown. As both the Mayor and Tom Frost, in their articles mention, kindness was at its best. From businesses diversifying to offering groceries and take-aways, to individuals volunteering with food boxes, walking dogs for those isolating, to donating ipads for elderly members of a church to join services via Zoom, nursery and schools opening for vulnerable children and those of care workers, council staff running essential services, councillors volunteering with local charities; to the individuals running foodbanks for those seriously impacted by lockdown and who fell through a Government financial safety net. We have received heartwarming stories, but here we have picked two, which we feel exemplify the 'Kensington Spirit of Lockdown' best:

"This whole Covid -19 thing is a complete nightmare... I feel so sorry for all those living in close proximity, for many of whom work and even school may will have been an escape during the working day. I live in a 3rd floor flat without even a balcony, tantalisingly close to my summer delight of Holland Park - I've been self-isolating since mid-March. St Philips Church has been v. supportive - church people shopping for me, plus fortnightly food boxes from St Barnabas via 'Food for the Frontline' (originally for NHS workers, but then extended to include others in the community, including the elderly) - all so very kind."

"Thackeray Street has a small beating heart with Ottoemzzo, Montparnasse takeaway and now Grato around corner in Kensington Square has joined them with an Italian pop

up deli with lots of goodies to takeaway. Franklin Wines are offering deliveries and there is the ever present corner shop. They are good alternates to queuing for Whole Foods (currently around the corner to Dishoom), M&S is usually really good early morning only a few in front of you and Waitrose has reasonable queue."

## Business News

Happy Hearts Nursery in Kensington has re-opened. After closing its doors in March, staff at Happy Hearts Nursery located just off Kensington High Street were delighted to be able to re-open on 1st June. The nursery's owner and principal, Dr Nahal Jafroudi, is deeply passionate about education, and her academic work and research has been an ongoing endeavour to promote the wellbeing of children. "We've followed Government guidance closely and we've put in place all the necessary measures and safeguards to make sure that the children can learn and be cared for in safety," said Dr Jafroudi. To find out more and to enquire about a place for your child visit. [www.happyhearts.uk](http://www.happyhearts.uk)

[A new retail and leisure complex on Kensington High Street](#) (former Odeon site) has been given the go ahead by planners at Kensington and Chelsea council. The development will breathe new life back into the site – originally developed as a cinema for the first time in the 1920s – with a six-screen cinema, shops, office space and 106 new homes. The Council's planning committee reviewed plans after the application was amended to boost residential living space from 63 to 106 homes, including 35 affordable homes.

# Kensington News II

CLr Johnny Thalassites, lead member for planning, said: "This cinema was part of the fabric of our high street for decades. The return of the silver screen is long-awaited by people in Kensington and I can't wait to see how it develops now plans are approved. Projects like this will keep Kensington and Chelsea on the map as a go-to destination, for tourists and locals alike, as we look forward to life returning to normal in the future."

Nearly 150 businesses and sole traders in Kensington and Chelsea are getting back on their feet after benefitting from a £500,000 [Business Interruption Fund](#). As non-essential shops reopened in and hospitality looking set to open in July, the Council has written to all business owners to help them prepare to welcome customers again. Kensington and Chelsea Council created the Fund to help those who had "fallen through the cracks" after finding they were ineligible for other financial support through Government schemes. Grants were opened up to businesses across all sectors, to cover essential costs if their operation had been significantly impacted by the Coronavirus pandemic. Now those businesses have put in measures to keep customers and staff safe and are ready to return. CLr Catherine Faulks, Lead Member for Economy, Employment and Innovation and the Council, said "We're so lucky to have such a vast range of businesses in our borough and they are vital to keeping our local economy alive. It's really exciting that we are able to welcome back so many of them and it's a testament to the entrepreneurial spirit here to see how they have adapted."

We are delighted that [Trailfinders](#), one of our very long standing clients, has achieved huge accolade during the covid-19 pandemic. It is the only travel organisation of any size which protects all their clients' money held in a Trust Account (approved by ATOL); they also hold a separate 'War' chest of cash, meaning that they were able to repatriate clients who were stuck abroad; they have also refunded in excess of £115M to clients for cancelled plans. Proving that your holiday money and plans, are safe with Trailfinders.

## General News

Do you listen to audiobooks? If not, you might like to bring into your life a new literary experience. For local author, [Tom Stacey](#) has narrated no less than 14 of his long-short stories already published over the past few decades in Britain and America, each taking between one hour and two to hear them through. Please click on the link to hear the first of the long-short stories, which you can hear either on your laptop or with earphones on your mobile. <https://tomstaceyauthor.com/2020/06/09/the-tether-of-the-flesh/>. Tom is releasing the story podcasts at the rate of one per week. On Fridays a new, further story will be available. To listen to future stories, please use link: <https://tomstacey.com/about/> which give you the current latest story or any previously released story.

## Charities/Societies/Residents Association's News

Do you have a photo that always makes you smile? One that by just looking at it brings back fond memories. Would you mind sharing it and telling us the story behind

## Kensington News III

it? The winner will receive a Fortnum + Mason hamper. As part of the [Kensington + Chelsea's Give Where You Live campaign](#) raising awareness and funds to help more residents in need, they have launched a new competition #MemoriesinKandC. Using your phone or camera, take a picture of your favourite photo, which captures the spirit of our community, and tell them the story behind it. For more information, please visit [www.thekandcfoundation.com](http://www.thekandcfoundation.com). Closing date 30th June, so don't delay!

How have your visits to [Holland Park](#) helped you during Covid-19?

Green spaces and nature offer solace during difficult times, and the past few months have certainly been challenging. The Friends of Holland Park plan to keep a record of how you feel our very special park has helped. Tell them in words or pictures and The Friends will print a selection in their newsletter. For information on how to submit your material, please follow the guidelines on our website: [www.thefriendsofhollandpark.org](http://www.thefriendsofhollandpark.org) or contact Mrs Rhoddy Wood for a copy of the guidelines at [Rhoddy.Wood@virgin.net](mailto:Rhoddy.Wood@virgin.net) or call 020 7602 0304.

When social distancing measures were enforced in the UK, [Octavia](#) had a creative solution to the suspension of its face-to-face befriending service: a telephone service. The newly launched programme quickly began offering companionship to older and isolated members of the community via a weekly phone call from a volunteer. Rob, a London based recruitment consultant from Ireland, was matched with Anne, a retired airhostess also originally from Ireland. After bonding

over a shared love of travelling and tales from 'the old country', Rob says he has found 'another granny' while Anne says their 'delightful' conversations are helping her feel less alone. To become a befriender, visit Octavia's website [https://www.octaviafoundation.org.uk/volunteer/apply\\_now](https://www.octaviafoundation.org.uk/volunteer/apply_now)



Rainbows of all shapes and sizes appeared over W8 (Image, with thanks to Sandra Frech)

During the pandemic volunteers from [Chelsea & Westminster Hospital NHS Foundation Trust](#) supported the Trust with delivering food parcels, supporting patients on wards and more. Their contribution has been invaluable and, with existing volunteers, they support a wide array of activities across both hospital sites - e.g. more than 6,000 hours of volunteering during the crisis response; working across 9 wards at both sites, contributing more than 730 hours; 40 flight crew from various airlines volunteered in staff wellness hubs

# Kensington News IV

across both sites. In addition, the Trust piloted volunteers with full support, training and PPE to befriend patients on the lower risk COVID-19 wards.

St Philips Church are looking for sponsors to donate to their Lights Appeal. Out of 60 LED lights, 12 remain for sponsorship, either in your own name, or in memory of someone. Says Rev Pippa Turner "Investing in our Church building to make it safe for all who will now enter, as well as making it more beautiful, environmentally friendly and practical, has meant taking a financial risk but we trust well worth it to enable us to both continue and expand our endeavours to be to an open, welcome and active church in the heart of our community. [www.specr.org](http://www.specr.org)

P3's Rugby Portobello Trust (RPT) is proud to announce its volunteers have been honoured with the Queen's Award for Voluntary Service (QAVS). The award, which aims to recognise the outstanding work by volunteer groups to benefit their local communities, is the equivalent of an MBE. P3 CEO Mark Simms stated: "I am absolutely delighted that our volunteers are being recognised with this collective MBE. This is a prestigious award and a huge tribute. Our volunteers are the heart and soul of RPT and undertake so many essential roles. Their loyalty and dedication has taken us through the best of times and some of the most difficult times in recent history in RBKC. Without them we simply would not be able to do what we do." [www.rugbyportobello.org](http://www.rugbyportobello.org)



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# The Social Hierarchy of Gardens

By Benedict Bull

I have been enjoying my friend Charon's pictures of her wild strawberries this week. One's own garden is a treat. But I have been unable to get to my raised bed these weeks and am nervous about my rhubarb and the neighbourhood vandals and foxes. Indeed, I am almost frightened to go and look now! I have become slightly locked out in lock down.

I am ashamed to admit this, but it is because I do not feel comfortable in it anymore. I am sure that I am not the only RBKC gardener to have felt excluded. In my case, after my plot was vandalised, I was insulted thereabouts when trying to get to the bottom of what happened.

My experience of vandalism on my plot was sadly ramified and reinforced by well-intentioned but unempathetic leaders in my community garden management team who do not extend a warm welcome and threatened me with removal from the eligibility criteria at the time of the incident. It felt like a no-no to those who grow the wrong vegetables and to those who are beyond the clique of acquaintances.

In fact it is clear that even community gardens are a reflection of the larger patterns of social organisation, and gardens are inherently hierarchical places and foster structures of social organisation - as my extensive studies of architectural lay out of Mughal gardens and renaissance, and aristocratic European gardens in particular bear witness. Typological analysis also reveals groupings of gardens within a larger

social framework of usage. The answer for us as a family is to go there again soon, me and my son, tidy up again and do not give up and be patient, like gardening itself.

However, at a deeper social level, gardens subtly reinforce exclusive social patterns, even in modern gardens there is a lack of equality that is at one level reinforced by education and finances. This pertains at the level of private gardens in the cost of plants and their type and availability, and it is also evident in the extent, nature and density of public gardens within the city.

I help give grants to gardens for different communities in the London area, indeed we have a zoom meeting this week, and it has taken me to parts of London I do not otherwise know and I have got a good picture now of lots of different parts. The more affluent boroughs such as RBKC have many more richly planted gardens than the poorer boroughs, and the nature of microclimate around garden squares is different to that around tower blocks where the wind whistles terribly, and plants struggle to establish.

Social inclusion is a process and the allocation and distribution of horticultural resources can be usefully reconsidered to update our maps and promote greater equality in terms of the creation of a wider network of oases within our London. My experience is that sharing knowledge and funds does not impoverish one part but allows another part to flourish, even in a pandemic.

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# Book Review: A Short History of London: The Creation of a World Capital Simon Jenkins (Penguin Viking)

By Guest Reviewer: Sam Dunkley, Treasurer, Hillgate Village RA

Simon Jenkins' 18th book combines an excellent summary of 2000 years of history with a rallying cry to preserve what is left of our ravaged skyline. Claire Tomalin called him "a blessing to the nation" and this book is certainly a blessing to anyone interested in conservation.

The introduction quotes the extraordinary range of civic bodies Jenkins has served on, and sets out the major theme of his later chapters: "I shudder to think what generations to come will say of our handling of London's skyline, just as we shudder at what our parents and grandparents did after the Second World War."

With the extraordinary number of towers (over 20 storeys) built or in progress across London, this critique could not be more timely. Jenkins is a stern critic of Sadiq Khan, but is even handed in criticising the Mayors of London: "Johnson performed a personal U-turn on tall buildings. Having accused Livingstone... of creating "Dubai on Thames", he became high-rise's most ardent advocate. The independent forum New London Architecture (NLA) reported the number of tall buildings passing through the planning system as doubling under his regime. He also commissioned vanity projects worthy of Blair at his most extravagant".

His first half provides a fascinating summary from Roman times to the 19th century, with some references - such as the Black Death and the "Great Stink" - now having fresh resonance. The flavour of the later chapters is also evident in his recent article "Twenty years on, what has having a mayor done for London?" (<https://www.theguardian.com/>



[commentisfree/2020/may/07/twenty-years-on-mayor-london-livingstone-johnson-skyline](https://commentisfree/2020/may/07/twenty-years-on-mayor-london-livingstone-johnson-skyline)) and they include eye-catching chapter headings such as "Going for Broke - 1997-2008", and "Constructs of Vanity - 2008 to the present."

A strong theme is the cynical exploitation of supposed public realm improvements, now often mixed with "affordable housing" arguments. The most notorious example was Centre Point, where Harry Hyams blackmailed Westminster with the creation of a supposedly necessary traffic roundabout. Kensington suffered similarly in the 1960s when "Jack Cotton was allowed to erect a dreary tower and slab either side of Notting Hill in return for a marginally wider street." The echoes of this in "housing opportunity areas" in the GLA London Housing Strategy are striking and depressing. Jenkins' concludes:

"The new towers that rose over the metropolis in the first two decades of the new century appeal to their purchasers precisely for the reasons they should not have been allowed. They offered privacy, secrecy, gated security and a lack of nosy neighbours. With their ownership often hidden behind offshore companies, the towers were bank vaults in the sky."

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By joining The Friends of Holland Park you will be part of an organisation that helps protect the historic and natural assets of the park. The park is beautiful, but there are challenges and we work closely with the main stakeholders to overcome these challenges. As a Friend, you will receive a full-colour quarterly newsletter and a discount on purchases from many local businesses.

## Volunteer

You can choose to be more involved and we have several roles for which we need volunteer help:

- Keeping our membership database up-to-date and providing reports for the trustees when action is indicated. This might suit someone with a background in accounting, but this is not essential.
- Posting out event tickets and Holland Park guides, in fulfilment of orders.

Both roles require an ability to manage detail as well as being used to working with computers. All the tasks can be carried out from home, though we hope you will enjoy working with others in the team to play a role in helping our safe green space give enjoyment, not just today but for future generations.



**To join as a Friend**, contact Mrs Rhoddy Wood on Rhoddy.Wood@virgin.net/ 020 7602 0304, or visit our website: [www.thefriendsofhollandpark.org](http://www.thefriendsofhollandpark.org). A year's membership costs less than 4p a day!

**To volunteer**, ring Jennie Kettlewell on 020 7243 0804 or Jennie.Kettlewell@thefriendsofhollandpark.org.



# Coping (eccentrically) in W8!

By Maria Perry with illustration by Charles Yorke

We have always been a nation of eccentrics and no one can deny that 'lockdown' is bringing out the best in us. Spurred to heights of inventiveness by the various shortages, we do things that others would not.

One Sunday morning I saw a beautiful young lady in very fine clothes, kneeling on the dirty pavement sliding the palm of her hand through the low-level letter box of her own shop. "Burgling your own mail?" I asked. "Yes," she replied cheerfully, "I forgot my key." She only lived round the corner. Further up the street a dog walker was wheeling a wicker basket with a litter of puppies inside. It's been done before, but this time they were nestling among baby pillows – with ironed frills.

Another of W8's popular sports has achieved competition status! I refer of course to Queuing. We are World Class at that. The Whole Foods queue is literally streets ahead. It stretches from the front door of the shop to the furthest reaches of Kensington Square. Marks and Spencer's customer gaze on superciliously, as they rarely queue at all. Marks deserve five gold stars for attention to detail. Their staff arrive at 4 a.m. every day to sanitize the floors and there are bottles of gel and paper towels at every check-out. They were also the first to introduce a special Shopping Hour for the Elderly. On the first Monday only one 'Elderly' turned up at 8.30 am. Me! The entire nation was at that point suffering from a lack of loo paper. I bounded out with FOUR rolls. Friends came from as far away as Notting Hill Gate to marvel.



The greatest glory however is the place we all take for granted – Kensington Palace Gardens. It is only when we are practising 'social distancing' that we fully appreciate the extent of its spaciousness. On a sunny day families can picnic, appropriately spaced. The demon scooter driver (the under-fives) commandeer the Broad Walk, as their parents run puffing beside them. True the cafes and restaurants are closed, but the Royal Borough has thoughtfully provided an ice cream van, emblazoned with its insignia. Even the ducks seem to realise something extraordinary is going on. The Gardens close at 7pm and a loud-speaker van circulates at ten to seven, calling "time" to a highly trained audience. They are yearning for the day when the pubs open again.

# GET WELL SPOON



## July/ August

Slaw

Fresh and crunchy slaw with delicious garlicky dressing.

For the slaw

- ½ sweetheart cabbage, finely sliced
- 2 granny smith apples, sliced
- 2 small red onions, finely sliced
- 4 tsp capers
- 1 tbsp lemon juice
- 1 tbsp lime juice
- Olive oil (good glug)
- Salt, pepper to season

For the dressing:

- ½ large pot of full fat Greek yoghurt
- 4 cloves garlic, finely crushed
- ½ cucumber, finely diced
- Handful fresh mint, very finely sliced
- Salt, pepper to season

Mix the ingredients of the slaw together. Separately mix the dressing ingredients, and put aside for 10 mins before mixing together and serving.

This delicious and simple slaw is high in a wonderful anti-viral compound called quercetin which is found in many foods. In this recipe, the red onions, apples, citrus fruit and capers. Capers are particularly abundant in quercetin.

Studies at the Clinical Research Institute of Montreal define quercetin as a 'broad-spectrum anti-viral'. Their computer modelling study has shown that quercetin may block the novel coronavirus from



Top: Victoria Kell - Illustration: Nicola Hildick

entering cells and can challenge the replication of the virus. Quercetin is a natural antihistamine and anti-inflammatory compound, therefore a useful adjunct therapy for those prone to allergies and hay fever. Other sources of quercetin include berries, kale, asparagus, lettuce, tomatoes, buckwheat, fennel, dill, oregano, chilli pepper, red wine and black and green tea.

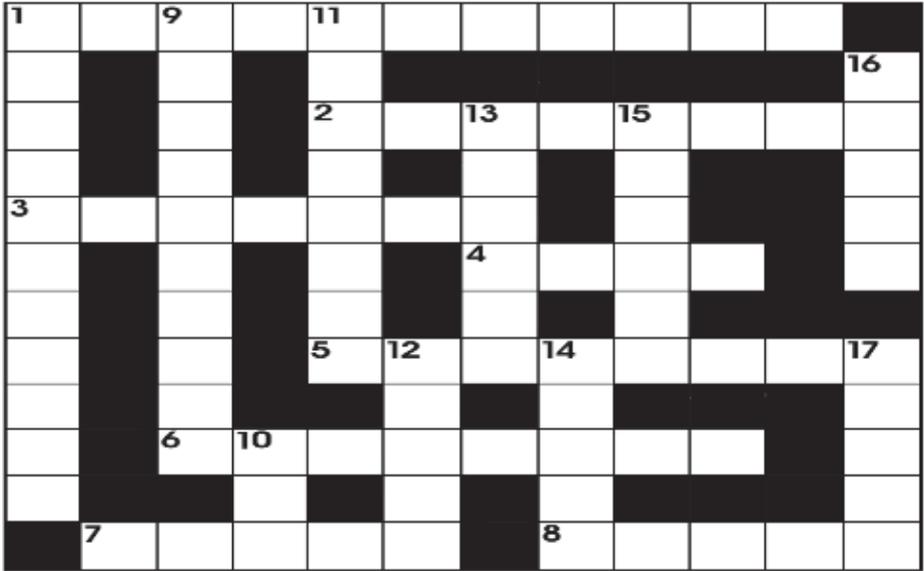
The cabbage, cucumber and yoghurt provide fibre and probiotics that support gut health, and the mint and garlic are anti-microbial. All of which help to support the immune system.

"Knife, Fork, Get Well Spoon" is available at Wholefoods in Kensington or at [www.Waterstones.com](http://www.Waterstones.com)

# The Kensington Crossword

By Dave Saunders

Pit your wits against our Kensington-centric crossword. (Answers on page 25)



## Across

- 1) Country which has its embassy located at 38 Hyde Park Gate, SW7 (11)
- 2) Estate agents located at 6 Holland Street, W8 (8)
- 3) Jimi \_\_\_\_\_, guitarist, singer and songwriter who died in Kensington in 1970 (7)
- 4) The \_\_\_\_\_, raw food restaurant at 240-242 Kensington High Street, which closed in 2019 (4)
- 5) \_\_\_\_\_ Square, residential mews off Addison Road, W8 (8)
- 6) \_\_\_\_\_ College, public University at 23 Kensington Square, W8 which left the University of London in January 2019 (8)
- 7) Junior \_\_\_\_\_, hairdressing salon at 55 Kensington Church St, W8 (5)
- 8) \_\_\_\_\_ and Curtis, mens' clothing store at 171 Kensington High Street, W8 (5)

## Down

- 1) \_\_\_\_\_ House, commercial building in W8 which has its main entrance at 2 Derry Street (11)
- 9) Pamela \_\_\_\_\_ and son, antiques shop at 108 Kensington Church Street, W8 (10)
- 10) Adam and \_\_\_\_\_ Mews, residential mews that adjoins Eden Close, W14 (3)
- 11) \_\_\_\_\_ Square, garden square in Kensington W8, built between 1811 and 1820 (8)
- 12) \_\_\_\_\_ Mews, row of former stables situated to the north of McLeod's Mews, SW7 (5)
- 13) \_\_\_\_\_ Gardens, thoroughfare between Earls Court Road and Marloes Road (6)
- 14) Down to \_\_\_\_\_, vegetarian/vegan restaurant at 240-242 Kensington High St, which became The Hive (5)
- 15) Hotel \_\_\_\_\_, 2-star hotel located at 198 Cromwell Road, SW5 (6)
- 16) \_\_\_\_\_ Villas, residential street between Stafford Terrace and Phillimore Place, W8 (5)
- 17) Estate agents located at 135 Hammersmith Road, West Kensington W14 (5)

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# Local Food Bank Charity: Dad's House

By Guest Writer: Victoria Borwick

During the lockdown many of us had to stay at home, but whenever there is a crisis in RBKC that community spirit comes to the fore! In addition to the front line services you may have heard about, one of the smaller, local charities supporting residents is Dads House. Founded by William McGranaghan, known locally as Billy.

Billy founded DadsHouse in 2008, after he sadly found himself to be an unexpected single dad so had to learn the hard way. He has used that experience to help Dads be Dads! He has been helping families and the vulnerable for many years – legal advice, parenting classes, support for all the daily questions, breakfast clubs, and just being the one that people can turn to – they trust Billy because they know he lived their problems too. Billy works with everyone, everyone is welcome and no one is rejected.

Over the course of the Covid crisis, Billy set up a large foodbank in Elephant and Castle with a great volunteer team and locally here in Kensington and Chelsea he opened it up to all families. Taking referrals from the Borough, or recognised other charities and support services, he scrounged a vacant shop in Earls Court; the Council provided shelving and fridges and Billy persuaded the major supermarkets to donate food and supplies.

This crisis was different – it was not the employed, many of whom still got a salary with the furlough schemes, it was the self-employed and people who have never needed to seek help before who were suddenly without means of support. There are also those in absolute poverty, those that have fallen through the cracks



of the support systems, isolated and unable to access or go out for food, and for that Billy set up a food delivery system. Support has come from the Kensington and Chelsea Foundation; Sainsbury's, Marks and Spencer's, Waitrose, Fareshare and the Sikhs have also provided ready meals. Every family group or resident is contacted so that DadsHouse can meet their dietary needs and Billy also signposts help to other service providers if that is helpful.

Billy and his small team work seven days a week to make sure that people have food and the help they need. Truly Billy is one of Kensington's unsung heroes. Let's hope that once this pandemic is over Billy will find a landlord who will give him a longer tenancy so he can continue to offer that lifeline of support that helps people in crisis. "Yes" says Billy – you CAN ask for help.

If you would like to help please see [www.dadshouse.org.uk](http://www.dadshouse.org.uk)

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# W8 & South Ken Cultural Quarters: What's On, On-Line

## **SCULPTURE CHALLENGE FROM DORA HOUSE**

To 30 June online

The RSS has brought together some wonderful activities and videos to inspire and develop your artistic talents at home. Clay modelling, table top paper sculptures and experimental drawing to get your creative juices flowing! <https://sculptors.org.uk/learning-resources/downloads>.  
The Royal Society of Sculptures  
[www.sculptors.org.uk](http://www.sculptors.org.uk)

## **DO IT (AROUND THE WORLD)**

Til 30 June Online Free

Do It is an ever-expanding set of creative instructions by leading artists – to create and make at home. Originally started in 1993 with Serpentine Artistic, Director Hans Ulrich Obrist and artists Bertrand Lavier and Christian Boltanski. <https://artsandculture.google.com/project/do-it>  
[www.serpentinegalleries.org.uk](http://www.serpentinegalleries.org.uk)

## **GOETHE ON DEMAND**

Free until 30 June Online

Browse and enjoy a superb selection of films by cinematic greats Angela Schanelec, Christoph Schlingensiefel, Roland Klick and many more [https://www.goethe.de/ins/gb/en/kul/ser/vim.html?wt\\_sc=uk\\_goetheondemand](https://www.goethe.de/ins/gb/en/kul/ser/vim.html?wt_sc=uk_goetheondemand). [www.goethe.de](http://www.goethe.de)

## **WILDLIFE GARDEN EXPLORER WORKSHOP**

2 July 11:30am-1:15pm £3.40 Child  
(Booking advised)

This fun outdoor activity uses role-play to encourage curiosity, observation and enjoyment of the natural world. An enthusiastic science educator, children will learn how to explore using some exciting

filed study tools. For ages 4-8. Venue:  
Natural History Museum [www.nhm.ac.uk](http://www.nhm.ac.uk)

## **ROYAL ALBERT HOME: NICOLA BENEDETTI**

4 July 7:30pm Online Free

Violinist Nicola Benedetti will share stories and music straight from her home during lockdown as part of the Royal Albert Home sessions. Nicola is among the most sought-after violinists of her generation. <https://www.royalalberthall.com/tickets/events/2020/royal-albert-home-nicola-benedetti>. [www.royalalberthall.com](http://www.royalalberthall.com)

## **ROYAL ALBERT HOME: NASHVILLE MEETS LONDON**

18 July 7:30pm Online Free

A selection of some of the most exciting names in country music will deliver exclusive home sets as part of a Nashville Meets London takeover of the Royal Albert Home series. <https://www.royalalberthall.com/tickets/events/2020/royal-albert-home-nashville-meets-london>.  
[www.royalalberthall.com](http://www.royalalberthall.com)

## **LEARN FRENCH ONLINE**

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Institut francais. [www.institut-francais.org.uk](http://www.institut-francais.org.uk)

# W8 & South Ken Cultural Quarter: What's On, On-Line

## LITERARY HAUNTS & JAUNTS IN THE PARK

Explore the parks through the works of some famous writers – J M Barrie's ultimate fancy, Peter Pan, walk in the steps of Virginia Woolf through Kensington Gardens, or visit Speaker's Corner, George Orwell's ardent haunt in Hyde Park. <https://www.royalparks.org.uk/whats-on/blog/adventures-in-the-royal-parks-literary-haunts-and-jaunts>. Royal Parks. [www.royalparks.org.uk](http://www.royalparks.org.uk)

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## DESIGN DISPATCHES

Online Free

Join the Design Museum's Director, Tim Marlow, in conversation with a fantastic selection of brilliant designers and architects such as Morag Myerscough, Bella Freud, Anya Hindmarch and David

Adjaye and Stella McCartney. <https://designmuseum.org/digital-design-calendar/designdispatches>. [www.designmuseum.org](http://www.designmuseum.org)

## TIME TO LISTEN

Online

Told by storytellers from all genres of art, from all over the world, Time To Listen presents a collection of stories using the extraordinary current situation as a backdrop. <https://www.goethe.de/en/kul/lit/dos/zzh.html>. [www.goethe.de](http://www.goethe.de)

## SHOOT A ROCKET INTO THE AIR

Online

Hands-on with science at home using items from around the house. Over the next few weeks, the Science Museum is sharing a few simple video tutorials you can use to investigate the science you encounter every day. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=z5PbABzvhxU&feature=youtu.be&utm>. [www.science.org.uk](http://www.science.org.uk)

## THE V&A COLLECTIONS

Online

From ancient Chinese ceramics to Alexander McQueen evening dresses, take an incredible journey through 5000 years of human creativity with the V&A's online collections. <https://www.vam.ac.uk/collections?type=featured>. [www.vamac.uk](http://www.vamac.uk)

By the time this edition is out, both Josephine Clavel Gallery and Thackeray Gallery will be open.

Please also check out:

[www.designmuseum.org](http://www.designmuseum.org);  
[www.japanhouselondon.uk](http://www.japanhouselondon.uk);  
[www.hrp.org.uk](http://www.hrp.org.uk) (for Kensington Palace) to find out when they are re-opening

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Like most start-ups, TF made losses in the early years. Even then, when a supplier went bust with our client's money, we provided a refund out of our own pocket.

We did this not out of obligation, but because it was the right thing to do.

We have **refunded in excess of £115 million** of cancelled travel plans as a consequence of Covid-19. TF is now **processing all refunds within 14 days of cancellation, even when an airline or travel supplier has not yet refunded us, or even gone into administration.**

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Mike Gooley, Trailfinders Founder and Chairman, says "We have never regarded money paid to us for future travel as ours to spend on our general running expenses. I enshrined this into a formal Trust Account in 1993 and built up sufficient cash reserves to cover our travellers where they are not otherwise protected.

When I put this promise in place from our start up in 1970, I could never possibly have envisaged the global shutdown of travel we are presently experiencing. However, the sheer scale of the crash cannot absolve us from discharging our warranty.

Alas, TF are almost alone in this as the industry relies on using these pipeline monies as a matter of course, rather than capitalising sufficiently to be able to ride any downturn in their particular market.

The TF guarantee is as right in 2020 as it was in 1970, and is something we continue to hold true to. It feels more important now than ever."



Trailfinders guarantees to make good of any money paid to Trailfinders in the event of a financial collapse of an airline, tour operator or any other transport provider. This pledge has been honoured since the foundation of Trailfinders over 49 years ago. No client has suffered financial loss or ever been left wanting.



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