

Paddington People

Winter 2008

Church Street edition



Max Haimendorf stands on the site of the forthcoming King Solomon Academy on Penfold Street.

New foundations

The Church Street area will soon have the brand new King Solomon Academy, set on Penfold Street and catering for children aged three to 18.

The primary school opened in September in temporary premises on the site, with the first intake of reception-age children under the headship of Venessa Willms.

The secondary school will open its doors in September 2009 with Max Haimendorf as head. An enthusiastic Max says: 'Starting a school from scratch is a great opportunity as well as an enormous challenge.'

One plan to make this school stand out is to cap the enrolment at 660 pupils, making it a relatively small school.

Other plans include a longer school day, a daily hour of maths, English and physical activity. Students will also learn to play an instrument.

'Our goal is to ensure that each student has the academic qualifications to be able to go to university, if that is their choice,' says Max. 'I want this school to be a place that can truly transform people's lives. Some may say we are trying to achieve the unachievable, but I am determined that this is exactly what we will do.'

The Academy is sponsored by education charity ARK Schools. For further information on the secondary school, call 020 7395 2080 or email m.haimendorf@kingsolomonacademy.org. For the primary school, call 020 7258 0893 or email cheryl.francis@kingsolomonacademy.org

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PHILIP WOLMOUTH

View from Church Street

Earlier this year, a very dear friend of mine died and at his funeral I was introduced to Marco Torquati (Neighbourhood Manager) and Rachel Chapman (Deputy Neighbourhood Manager) of Church Street Neighbourhood Management.



I had been thinking of volunteering for some time, so I asked if they would have anything for me to do at the

Neighbourhood Centre. I'm glad to say the answer was 'yes'.

Since I started volunteering on Wednesdays, I have met some of the nicest, most professional, helpful, and interesting people and I was astonished to learn how much they do for this community.

I have met people that operate just about any kind of service for the community that you can think of and they do it very well. If they don't operate a particular service, they are happy to direct you to someone who does.

I find that I now look forward to my Wednesdays. I know that my very good friend would approve. Hopefully, Church Street Neighbourhood Management would think the same!

Sue

Local Resident and Volunteer



Rosie Saunders, local resident and poet.

Our local poet

Rosie Saunders has lived on the 14th floor of Kennet House since 1960, when the block was first opened. She loves words and has been writing poetry for many years.

She decided to write this one about Church Street Market because no one else had tackled the subject. 'I'm the last person living here from the original tenants of the block,' Rosie says. 'Of course, I've seen a lot of changes in the area, but I still love living here – it's so lively.' She'll be 91 next March and has had a more than eventful life.

'My parents came to London in 1912 from Poland and I was brought up in the East End. I followed my father into the garment trade when I left school at 14,' Rosie says. 'We were bombed out during the Second World War and that was when I first moved to Westminster, in 1940.'

'After a spell in Maida Vale, we lived in Manchester Street for 13 years before moving to Kennet House.' Now, as well as writing poetry, she's learning French and attending a computer class at the library. 'It's never too late to learn something new!' says Rosie.

Church Street

*Of all the city's market places,
None have so many different faces.*

*Stalls with fruit, veg,
fish and meat,*

*In our special multicultural
Church Street.*

*Shops with groceries, newsagents,
pharmacies, too;*

*Opticians, clinic, dentist,
even a loo.*

*Bakeries, cafés, library,
clothes and shoes,*

*Furniture, antiques, carpet,
materials to choose.*

*Curtains, betting shop,
flowers and plants,*

*Toiletries, increase
everything one wants.*

*Neighbourhood Watch
and One Stop ease.*

*Drop in centre
for lunch and teas.*

*Traders serving
with courtesy to please,*

*So bring trolley,
whatever the weather.*

*Indeed a pleasure
to shop at leisure,*

*In Church Street,
what a treasure.*



At the market.

PHILIP WOLMUTH



PHOTO COURTESY OF THE WESTMINSTER PCT

Westminster at risk residents are eligible for free flu jabs.

Flu-free with free flu jabs

Free flu jabs for those most at risk are available at local GP's surgeries and over 25 pharmacies across Westminster until 31st January.

Michael Scott, Westminster PCT Chief Executive, says, 'Flu can be very dangerous for those suffering from serious medical conditions... It only takes one minute for the free jab and the protection lasts all year.'

'First check with your GP, practice nurse or pharmacist if you are in an at-risk group and if so arrange a vaccination as soon as possible.'

'If you suffer from conditions such as asthma, diabetes, or heart disease flu can cause serious illness and in extreme cases can be life-threatening so please act now to make your winter flu-free.'

The flu jab is free if you are 65 or over, live in a residential or nursing home, or you are a carer.

It's also free if you suffer from a chronic heart or chest complaint (including asthma), serious kidney or liver disease, diabetes, lowered immunity due to disease or treatment (such as steroid medication or cancer treatment), multiple sclerosis or other chronic neurological disease, stroke/TIA (transient ischaemic attack).

Below are some local pharmacies offering free flu jabs for those most at risk:

- Browns Chemist, 195 Shirland Road, W9 020 7286 0377
- Collins Chemist, 113-115 Church Street, NW8 020 7723 9600
- Colonnades Pharmacy, 30 Porchester Road, W2 020 7727 5713
- Prince Chemist, 486 Harrow Road, W9 020 8969 8959

For Arabic speakers

جرعات حقن مجانية ضد الأنفلونزا

إذا كان عمرك 65 عاماً أو أكثر، وكنت تعيش في منزل سكني أو دار للمسنين، أو كنت مسؤولاً عن تقديم الرعاية، فمن حَقِّكَ تلقي جرعة حقن مجانية ضد الأنفلونزا، والتي تتوفر لدى عيادات الأطباء العموميين في منطقتك وفيما يزيد عن 25 صيدلية تنتشر في أرجاء "ويستمينستر" وذلك حتى يوم 31 يناير/كانون الثاني. كما تُقدِّم جرعات حقن الأنفلونزا مجاناً أيضاً إذا كنت تعاني من مشكلة مزمنة في القلب أو الصدر، أو الربو، أو مرض خطير في الكلى أو الكبد، أو السكر، أو ضعف المناعة بسبب أحد الأمراض أو أنواع العلاج (مثل أدوية الستيرويد أو علاج السرطان)، أو تصلب الشرايين أو غيره من الأمراض العصبية المزمنة، أو سكتة دماغية أو جلطة في المخ (TIA). للتعرف على التفاصيل، اتصل بالطبيب العام الذي تتبعه.

أقلع عن التدخين

يمكنك الاتصال برقم 0800 328 8537 لإيجاد أقرب صيدلي مُدرَّب أو أقرب عيادة طبيب عام وذلك لإيجاد استشاريين يمكنهم مساعدتك من أجل الإقلاع عن التدخين. كما يتولى استشاريون متخصصون تنظيم جلسات جماعية للمساعدة في مستشفى St. Mary's Hospital، W2، وذلك للأشخاص الذين يريدون مشاركة خبراتهم مع الآخرين، والتعرف على كيفية متابعة الحياة دون تدخين. تستغرق الجلسات 1.5 ساعة على مدار ستة أسابيع. وسوف تتنقذ الجلسة التالية لمدى 6 أسابيع بدءاً من 9 ديسمبر/كانون الأول وحتى 3 فبراير/شباط.

Free stop smoking help is here

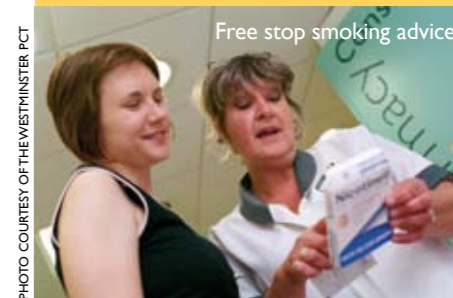
It's the time of year when people make resolutions, one of which is often to stop smoking.

Westminster Community Health Services are helping residents and employees in the Westminster area by providing a free NHS stop smoking service.

By calling 0800 328 8537, you can find your nearest trained pharmacist or GP practice advisor, who will support you throughout the quitting process.

The programme includes helping you prepare for a quit date, information and advice to choose a medication to help with quitting, such as nicotine replacement products (patches, gum), Champix or Zyban. There is also follow-up to support you to remain smoke-free.

PHOTO COURTESY OF THE WESTMINSTER PCT



Free stop smoking advice.

Specialist advisors also run group support sessions at the Chest and Allergy Unit in the Mint Wing of St. Mary's Hospital, Praed Street, W2. Sessions last 90 minutes, for six weeks at a time. Group sessions are recommended for people who want to share their experiences with others and learn how to cope without smoking.

To register, call 0800 328 8537. Dates for the next 6-week session are 9th December-3rd February.

Paddington People

Welcome to Paddington People magazine.

This Church Street edition brings you news from Church Street Neighbourhood Management, as well as other organisations across North Westminster.

Paddington People magazine is produced four times a year by Paddington Development Trust (PDT). Deadlines for the notice board are 1 Feb (Spring issue), 1 May (Summer issue), 1 August (Autumn issue) and 1 November (Winter issue). Ideas for articles, recipes and businesses to feature are welcomed. Contact the editor, Toula Vasilopoulos, at the Stowe Centre, 258 Harrow Road, London W2, tel: 020 7266 8255, email: toula@pdt.org.uk

Paddington Development Trust www.pdt.org.uk



Church Street Neighbourhood Management gives local

people a say in how services are run. It works with partners such as Westminster City Council, the police, the health authority, and community groups, to make Church Street a better place to live. For more details contact Cecilia Faduola at the Church Street Neighbourhood Centre, 88 Church Street, London NW8, telephone 020 7641 6633, www.churchstreetneighbourhoodmanagement.org

Thinking of running your own business?

Do you....

- Have the drive to turn ideas into income?
- Recognise that enterprise skills are 'life' skills, not just business skills?
- Want more personal control and recognition in your life?
- Want to benefit from more support to enter or re-enter the world of work, move up the career ladder or start a business of your own?

Often, all that is required is a little guidance and a lot more belief. Enterprise is for everyone and the Enterprise Centre can help you to develop the skills and confidence to turn your ideas into reality.



Cristina Codina (left), local Alexander Technique teacher, meets with Aparna, the Enterprise Coordinator. If you want to learn more about the Alexander Technique, you can reach Cristina on 07734 219 669.

PHILIP WOLMOUTH

Business coaching and support at the Enterprise Centre

She wanted to use her new qualifications in the best possible way, but she needed information about how to take the first step and someone to guide her into self-employment.

An article in the local newsletter alerted her to the Enterprise Centre based at 59 Elgin Avenue, W9. The Enterprise Centre supports and coaches local entrepreneurs through the initial stages of starting up as well helping businesses to grow. It also provides grants or loans to test trade, do some marketing and for start-up capital expenses.

Sarah approached the Centre and made an appointment with the Enterprise Coordinator. The setting was informal and easy. The initial one-to-one session was about introducing her idea and working out whether there was a chance that it could work as a business. The Enterprise Coordinator explained what the Centre could do and what support they could provide.

Sarah attended various sessions, leading to her developing a business plan with a marketing plan and cash flow projections. She applied for a grant on the basis of the business plan to enable her

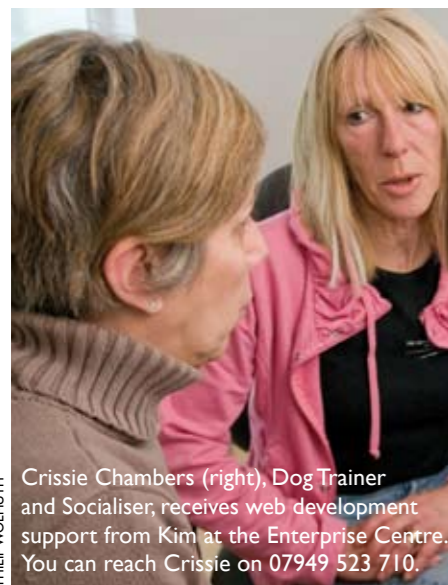
to put together some promotional material. She also participated in the networking events organised by the Centre, where she met other people in a similar position as her and also met some people who wanted to buy her service.

The Enterprise Centre enabled Sarah to understand her rights as far as her Benefits were concerned and equipped her with information to take to her Benefits Adviser. She was also supported through the process of setting up as self-employed with HMRC.

Sarah is now running her business successfully from home and is looking to get her own premises to work out of. She has an average of 10-14 clients a week which enables her to move away from benefits and still have a few luxuries for herself and her children.

Although she has to work very hard, she is able to spend time with her children and do the work that she loves.

If you would like more information or to discuss your business idea, please contact Aparna Zaveri, Enterprise Coordinator on 020 7266 0636 or aparna@pdt.org.uk



Crissie Chambers (right), Dog Trainer and Socialiser, receives web development support from Kim at the Enterprise Centre. You can reach Crissie on 07949 523 710.

Case Study

Sarah used to wonder how she might start earning a better income. Her children started school and were away from home until 3.15pm everyday. She wanted to get back into work but wanted to be home when they returned from school. Then there was the issue of holidays and half-terms when childcare would be a problem if she was working full-time.



PHOTOS COURTESY OF THE PADDINGTON DEVELOPMENT TRUST

Just some of the wares and services on offer at the Community Bazaar.

Community bazaar launched

The successful launch of a new Community Bazaar took place on 6th November at St. Peter's Church Hall at 59 Elgin Avenue, W9.

The thriving new bazaar offers an impressive array of sights, tastes and textures, not to mention free tea or coffee to warm up on a cold winter's day.

The wares at the launch ranged from hand-crafted jewellery to hand-made blankets and scarves to therapeutic chair massage. This child-friendly social event was organised by a panel of local parents and provided a venue for local residents to test out the market for their goods and services in a relaxed environment.

Local residents interested in selling their wares at the next Community Bazaar will surely find that the £3 fee to hire a stall is more than reasonable.

Upcoming dates for the Community Bazaar are Thursday 4th December, 5th February, 5th March and 2nd April at St. Peter's Church Hall.

Don't miss out on your chance to buy some unique Christmas gifts or unwind with an inexpensive and totally relaxing chair massage; or just stop in for a cup of tea and a chat.

Qualified to work?

A pilot project for highly skilled and qualified people from overseas has been launched from the Neighbourhood Enterprise Centre.

It offers employment and career guidance for qualified individuals who find it challenging to compete for jobs.

Advice, information and support are available for people from ethnic minorities who are entitled to work in the UK.

For more information or to register for the service please contact Hana on 020 7266 0636 or 07775 663 551 or hanaalzubaidy@gmail.com

What's cooking?

WINTER WARMER ONE POT MEAL (Serves 4-6)

Ingredients

- 1 tbsp olive oil
- 2 cloves of garlic, sliced
- 1 medium onion, chopped
- 2-3 celery stalks, sliced
- 4 medium potatoes, quartered
- 3 carrots, chopped
- 1-2 cans of red kidney beans
- 2 parsnips
- ½ cabbage, chopped
- 4 tbsp tomato puree
- 1 crumbled stock cube

Method

- Heat oil and gently cook onion, garlic and celery until softened.
- Add chunky carrots, potatoes and crumbled stock cube, then cover with just enough water.
- Bring to boil, then simmer for 10 minutes.
- Add parsnips, cabbage, beans and tomato puree and cook for further 10-15 minutes, or until tender.

Preparation time: 10 minutes

Cooking time: 25 minutes



PHOTO COURTESY OF WESTMINSTER PRIMARY CARE TRUST

Recipe by Rita Žemaitis
Specialist Health Promotion/Children's Centre Dietitian, Westminster PCT

Fighting addiction

Robert suffered violence regularly at the hands of his father throughout his childhood. His damaging family life meant that he soon developed serious mental health issues, including paranoia, depression and anxiety.

He started taking drugs at the age of 12, and by 18 was using crack cocaine and heroin on a daily basis.

Robert moved to London in his 20s and soon found himself homeless on the streets. His drug use worsened to the point where he was stealing to fund his habit, resulting in three prison sentences.

Seven years ago, Robert first came to Westminster Drug Project Harrow Rd, W2. He came to the drop-in service regularly, but despite periods of progress with his drug use, would often relapse, binge and vanish, not reappearing at the service until weeks later. This pattern continued for years.



Robert is now 34. He's been working with one of our treatment practitioners for the last eight months and is making fantastic progress, having completed residential rehab, taken a university course in journalism and is working as a Tai-Chi instructor. He hopes one day to open his own school and enjoy a life free of addiction.



The Drug Interventions Programme works in partnership with the police to identify and support individuals who are experiencing drug issues.

WDP is here to help

Westminster Drug Project (WDP) provides help and support for people who are concerned about drug use, whether it relates to themselves, a family member, friend or colleague.

Their goal is to achieve a society 'which is well informed about drug issues and where individuals with drug related problems receive the care and support they need without fear of discrimination or stigmatisation.'

At the drop-in service that they run out of 474 Harrow Road, W2, WDP offers free and confidential counselling, information, needle exchange, complementary therapies (such as acupuncture) and health advice.

This service is often the first point of contact for drug users. If it's appropriate, the WDP can then help them move into residential rehabilitation, or other means to realise their potential such as education and employment.

The Drug Interventions Programme (DIP) team is also based at the Harrow Road premises. This team works in partnership with the police to identify and support individuals who are experiencing drug issues and are linked to the Criminal Justice System (Police, Courts, and Prison Service, etc).

WDP's team engage with drug users from the point of arrest through to court and prison, working to break the links between habitual drug use and crime.

WDP's work not only helps the individuals they see, but also their families, their peers, the members of their community and society as a whole. For every £1 spent on drug treatment services, £9.50 is saved on public spending related to crime and health.

To raise awareness about the good work that they do, the WDP hosted a tea party in September, with more than 60 guests attending, including local MPs, Councillors, Police, service users and partner agencies.

For more information about Westminster Drug Project, please call 020 7266 6200 or drop in to 474 Harrow Road, W2.



The WDP held a Tea Party in the Autumn to highlight the good work that they do.

COURSES AND TRAINING



JAN & FEB START COURSES

We have a range of part-time day and evening courses starting in January and February. For full details, visit our website at www.cwc.ac.uk, call 020 7723 8826 or drop in to InfoPoint at Paddington Basin Campus, North Wharf Rd, W2 any weekday from 10am-4.30pm (and some Tue evenings during term times from 5-7pm).

SKILLS & EMPLOYABILITY TRAINING AT CITY OF WESTMINSTER COLLEGE

PERSONAL BEST For: 16 yrs or over and resident in one of the 33 London Boroughs. How long: 10-12 week programme, 12 hours a week (Tue, Wed and Thu). What's included: Team and Interpersonal Skills, Conflict Resolution, Equality and Diversity, Customer Service, Basic Fire and Public Safety Awareness, Work Experience, work towards a nationally-recognised qualification: a Certificate in Personal Best. The main aim of this course is to enable students to gain employment. In addition it gives you the opportunity to volunteer in London 2012. Please contact Lyndon Sly on 020 7258 2919 or lyndon.sly@cw.ac.uk

EMPLOYABILITY SKILLS For: 18 years or over, resident in Camden, Kensington & Chelsea, Islington and Westminster and in receipt of Job Seeker's Allowance, Income Support, Incapacity Benefit or a Lone Parent. How long: 12-15 weeks, 20 hours per week. What's included: Courses focus on finding work, communication, numbers, computing skills, job applications, interview techniques and job search skills. Starts: Runs throughout the year and you are referred by your local Job Centre Plus office. Please contact Theresa Kahn on 020 7258 7224 or theresa.kahn@cw.ac.uk

PRINCE'S TRUST TEAM PROGRAMME

This exciting new personal development programme for unemployed young people aged 16-25 years, offers a range of skills and training including Computing, Job Search and Work Placements, plus tasters in areas including Sport & Leisure, Media & Arts, Administration and Retail. Next course starts 9th Feb and runs for 12 weeks including 2 weeks work experience, 1 week residential community project, job advice and a nationally-recognised qualification. For more details visit www.cwc.ac.uk or contact Sheromie Brewster on 020 7258 2975 or sheromie.brewster@cw.ac.uk

REAL ACTION AT THE LEARNING STORE



COURSES AND TRAINING: SPEAK ENGLISH! Learn English—fast—at daily Callan Method classes, and study for Cambridge PET certificate. **READ AND WRITE**

BETTER! Fast Track Reading and Spelling. **BECOME A CITIZEN** Master 'Life in the United Kingdom' for the test on Real Action's NEW course. The Learning Store, 3 Mozart Street, W10. 020 8960 2065.

WESTMINSTER ADULT EDUCATION SERVICE (WAES)

ENROLLING NOW! WAES has a rolling programme of courses and qualifications with start dates throughout the year. You may qualify for free tuition on some of our full level 2 and 3 qualifications. Call to find out if you meet the eligibility criteria. We have a wide range of part-time day and evening courses in the following areas: 3D Art & Design, Business, Community Development, Complementary Health, Computing, Cookery, Counselling and Personal Development, Early Years, Childcare, English and Maths, English for Speakers of Other Languages, Fashion, Fitness, Yoga and Dance, Graphic Design, Hair and Make-up, Health and Social Care, History and Culture, Languages, Music, Photography, Teacher Training, Video and Film and Visual Art. For more information, please call 020 7297 7297, email info@waes.ac.uk or pop in to one of our sites at Amberley Road, Ebury Bridge or Frith St. www.waes.ac.uk

FREE COURSES FOR BUSINESSES Training your staff can benefit your business in many ways and can help boost competitiveness, productivity and staff motivation. Westminster Business Solutions (WBS) offers free training programmes through Train to Gain, a major national government flagship programme designed to help employers equip staff with the skills they need in order for their businesses to prosper. Training is delivered at your place of business and is tailored to meet your business demands. This allows your employees to be trained and assessed in their working environment and during the work day which will encourage completion and motivate your employees. WBS offers courses in a wide range of disciplines including: Customer Service, Health and Social Care, IT, Management, Retail and many more. Call 020 7641 7437 to speak to a Business Advisor.

JOBS & EMPLOYMENT ADVICE

BRITISH GAS TRAINEESHIPS

Come to the Greenside Community Centre on Thu 29th Jan 4pm to find out how to apply for British Gas Traineeships in Central

Heating system maintenance and installation and in Electrical maintenance. For more information call Sheba on 020 7641 5421.

ENTERPRISE CENTRE



FREE one-to-one support and advice about starting up your own business, low cost spaces and desks for hire, and start-up loans and grants to promising businesses. St. Peter's House, 59 Elgin Ave, W9. For

details contact Aparna on 020 7266 0636 or aparna@pdt.org.uk

NOVA NEW

Get the help you need to gain skills and secure sustainable work in one place! NOVA is a friendly community organisation that aims to help people help themselves. You are very welcome to come along and develop your skills and abilities...and see what you can do! Pre-employment training and advice at NOVA. You will see a friendly advisor and be able to discuss your needs and ambitions. There is help with creating CVs, completing application forms, cover letters, interview advice and techniques, job search with advice and guidance for education and courses. We have a range of courses: computer, numeracy, literacy and ESOL classes year round. Opening hours: 9:15am-5.30pm Mon-Fri. Registration: Mon, Wed and Fri 10am-12noon. NOVA New Opportunities, Canalside House, 383 Ladbroke Grove, W10, 020 8960 2488, reception@novanew.org.uk www.novanew.org.uk

VOLUNTEERING

HOME-START WESTMINSTER

Have you got some time to spare? Have you got parenting experience? If so, you could have exactly the skills needed to make a difference to a local family. Home-Start's carefully trained volunteers give free informal, friendly and confidential support to any parent with at least one child under five. By visiting a family in their own home and offering friendship, practical help and emotional support, Home-Start volunteers represent a lifeline for many families who are finding it hard to cope. You can also gain NVQ level 1 or level 2 credits from the Open College Network for your work. The next course will start in January. For more information call Home-Start Westminster on 020 7724 1345.

OPEN AGE

This local charity which organises leisure, learning and fitness groups for over 50s welcomes enquiries from people who would like to know more. Volunteering opportunities include helping in our lively local office, escorting groups travelling by

public transport, helping at weekly social groups or sharing computer skills. If you are caring and reliable and would like to spend a few hours a week helping older people in your local community, call 020 8964 1900.

VOLUNTEER CENTRE WESTMINSTER



The Volunteer Centre Westminster offers a brokerage service for individuals interested in volunteering and organisations wishing to recruit volunteers. Our friendly team of

staff and volunteers are on-hand Mon-Thu 10am-4pm to help you find opportunities in line with your interests. We have 450 organisations offering 1,200 opportunities, so there is something for everyone no matter where you live in London. You do not need an appointment and there's only a simple registration form to complete. Drop in to our Centre in Paddington at 53-55 Praed Street. Remember, volunteering is open to everyone, whether you've got a job or you're unemployed, whatever your capabilities, whether you're young or old or from any ethnic background. It can be a great way of developing your skills or meeting new people. For more information, visit www.volunteer.co.uk or contact David J. Hollamby, Volunteer Coordinator on 020 7402 8076 ext 24 or E-david.hollamby@volunteercentrewestminster.org.uk

EVENTS

COMMUNITY BAZAAR

The thriving new bazaar offers an impressive array of sights, tastes and textures, not to mention free tea or coffee to warm up on a cold winter's day. Upcoming dates: Thu 4th Dec, 5th Feb, 5th Mar and 2nd Apr. St. Peter's Church Hall, 59 Elgin Ave, W9. To hire a stall to sell your goods at the market (£3 for the day) or for more details, call 020 7266 0636.

LONDON PRINT STUDIO

Gallery Exhibition: Committed to Print, until 31st Jan. The exhibition reveals some of the exciting new horizons in digital print technology currently being explored by contemporary artists including Richard Hamilton and Paul Sanammeer. **Drop-in Family Art Workshop**, Sat 6th Dec 2.30-4.30pm. Come and make a decoration – screen print, glitter and more! All welcome. £1 each. 425 Harrow Rd, W10, open Tue-Sat 10.30am-6pm (Closed 20th Dec-5th Jan), 020 8969 3247, www.londonprintstudio.org.uk Entrance to the gallery is FREE.

MULTIMEDIA AND FASHION EVENT

Presented by People with Learning Disabilities. Wed 3rd Dec 6-8pm. Westbourne Studios, 242 Acklam Road, W10. For more information call 020 7361 3905.

POSITIVELY PHYSICAL 50+ CHRISTMAS PARTY

Sat 13th Dec, 2.30pm at the Stowe Centre, 258 Harrow Road, W2. Call 020 8964 1900 for details.

QUEEN'S PARK LIBRARY

Getting Published A noted publisher will be coming to Queen's Park Library alongside a debut author to talk about the process of getting your first book published. Contact the library for more details in Dec or Jan; **Kung Fu Demonstration** Sat 17th Jan 1-2.30pm, Karim Daoud and his team will be demonstrating Kung Fu in the library. There will also be a chance to get involved and try it out yourself; **The one and only Miss Ida Barr** will be strutting her stuff at Queen's Park Library in January. Call for details. 666 Harrow Rd, W10, 020 7641 4579.

ST. JUDE'S OVER 50S CLUB

Christmas Bazaar Sat 6th Dec 2-4.30pm, Corner of Ilbert St and Fourth Ave, W10. Entrance 30p. Attractions include: home made cakes, home made preserves, bric-a-brac, haberdashery, nearly-new clothes, hand-knitted goods, tombola, toiletries and gifts, toys, books and records, raffles, tea and biscuits.

WESTMINSTER CENTRE FOR INDEPENDENT LIVING

On 3rd Dec, Westminster Centre for Independent Living is celebrating the **International Day of Disabled People** by launching their new café and the Centre for Independent Living status. Please call 020 7243 9720 if you wish to be invited.

SPORTS, HEALTH & WELLBEING

ACADEMY SPORT



Academy Sport boasts a Sports Hall (badminton, basketball, netball and 5-a-side football), Dance Studio (with ballet bar), outdoor 3G pitches and outdoor netball and tennis courts. We offer a varied programme for the whole family, including fitness for adults and sports coaching courses for children and adults. Academy Sport, 255 Harrow Road, W2 (entrance on Torquay Street). For more information call 020 7121 0642 or view the website www.westminsteracademy.biz/academysport

BEETHOVEN CENTRE

Annual Membership costs £6 for adults and £3 for children and entitles you to reduced rates on some classes and on hall/meeting room hire. Third Ave W10. For info call 020 8969 5881. **MON:** 10-11am Drop in for **Yoga** with Marcia, certified Sivananda Yoga Teacher; £1.50 members/£3 non-members, free crèche (limited spaces).

7-8.30pm **Chinese Kung Fu** Self-defense mixed classes for all ages, members £15 per month/non-members £20 per month. Call Sifu Norman Morrison on 07751 768 391. **TUE:** 10-11am **Aerotone** (Aerobics and Body Conditioning) for Women Only, £1.50 members/£2.50 non-members, free crèche (limited spaces). 11.15am-12.15pm **Yoga** with Marcia. (Certified Sivananda Yoga Teacher), drop-in class, beginners and intermediates welcome, £3 members/£5 non-members. **Crèche bookings** available at £5 per child. 2.30-3.30pm **Yoga** class for over 50s: Free to Open Age and Beethoven Centre members. 6-7.30pm **Tai Chi** Classes for all ages, £2.50 members/£3.50 non-members. 7.30-8.30pm **Capoeira** class (mixed ages), £2.50 members/ £4.50 non-members. **THU:** 1.30-3pm **Tai Chi** class for all ages, £1 members/£2n non-members. 7.30-8.30pm **Capoeira** (advanced) is a martial art with African origins that merges music, drumming, dance and tradition. £2.50 members/£4.50 non-members. **FRI:** 10-11am **Step classes for women**, £1.50 members/£2.50 non-members. Free crèche (limited spaces). 10am-12.30pm **Low cost Complementary Therapies** (small meeting room) Affordable Massage treatments, £5 members/£ 7 non-members. Phone Shereen on 07773 763 981 for further details or to book. 11am-12pm **Legs, Bums and Tums** exercise for Women £1.50 members/£2.50 non-members. Free crèche (limited spaces). 1-2pm **Movement and Relaxation Yoga for Women Only**, £1 members. 7-8.30pm **Choi Kwangdo** £5/class, open to children and women only.

BREASTFEEDING SUPPORT

Tue 1.30-3.30pm, Lisson Grove Health Centre, NW6; Thu 12.30-2.30pm, Baby Café at Micky Star Children's Centre, St. Michael St, W2; Mon 10.30-11.30am, Queen's Park Children's Centre, 88 Bravington Road, W9, 020 7641 5838; Wed 1.30-3.30pm, St. Mary's Hospital, Parent Craft Centre, Praed Street, W2, 020 7886 1402 (Answer phone); Fri 10.30am-12pm, The Medical Centre, 7E Woodfield Road, W9, 020 7266 8600 (Medical Centre), 020 7266 8724 (Call Elaine for details); Fri 10.30am-12pm, Westbourne Children's Centre, Senior Street, W2, 020 7641 4308. You can also call our breastfeeding helpline on 07771 840 488.

KYU-YO-BU-SHIN

New for 2009 Seated Acu-Pressure message by appointment only. Increase your circulation and feel good. Bookings will commence 9th Jan. Single session £7 or a block of 4 at £20. **Mixed yogalates**, Sun 4-5pm at Academy Sport Dance Studio, Torquay Street, W2. **Yogalates**, Fri 7.15-8.15pm. **Mentoring and Discussion Groups** are ongoing. **Walking Group** meets Mon 9.15am outside Edward Wilson School, Senior St, W2. For details call Mary 07890301235 or 020 7266 3473.

LEARN TO DANCE BALLROOM & LATIN AMERICAN CLASSES



You will learn to move like your favourite celebrity from Strictly Come Dancing, Dance Teacher - **Hanna Haarala, star of Strictly Come Dancing series 3.** 10-week course from Jan-

Apr, Beginners 7-8pm; Intermediates 8-9pm. Payment options are £12/lesson or £50 in advance for 5 lessons or £80 in advance for ten lessons. Next class starts Thu 15th Jan at St. Paul's Church Centre, 5 Rossmore Rd, NW1. For details or to book call 07834 361 199 or email learntodance@live.com

WESTMINSTER MIND

Flexicare is a befriending service that provides companionship and practical support to clients experiencing mental distress. Referrals are made by key workers of community mental health teams located in the borough. Please contact us to discuss or answer any questions you may have about the scheme. As well as our general service, we also support people with diverse languages and backgrounds from particular ethnic groups. We would like to hear from you if you would like to be a Flexicare befriender. We provide training, support and supervision. 4 Sutherland Ave, W9. For more details, contact us on 020 7286 9465 or Flexicare@westminstermind.org.uk

YOGA CLASS

Enjoy relaxing, energizing, refreshing Yoga. Mon 12.30-1.30pm, Greenside Community Centre, NW8, 020 7245 2861; Wed 1-2pm, St. Paul's Church Centre, Rossmore Road, NW1. 020 7724 8517.

OLDER PEOPLE

LISSON GREEN OVER 50'S LUNCHEON CLUB

Tue 12.30-5pm, Greenside Community Centre, Lisson Green Estate, Lilestone Street, London NW8. £5 annual membership. Cost per session is £2 and includes food. For details, call Dolly Cuthbert on 020 7724 1847.

OPEN AGE

50+? HELP US TO CHOOSE RIGHT! New activities for over 50s' will be introduced at all Westminster Leisure and Sports Centres, including: Jubilee, Seymour, Porchester, Moberly and Queen Mother Sports Centres. Let us know what you want; anything is possible: evenings, weekends, from Yoga to Table Tennis! Call Open Age on 020 8964 1900 or Radka on 07944 335 646 with your suggestions. **NOW 7 DAYS OF ACTIVITY!** Open Age offers access to over 160 low cost activities held in community venues across this and

a number of neighbouring boroughs for just £7 a year! **NEW!** Low cost weekend activities on offer at Academy Sport, Torquay St, W2. **SATURDAY:** Keep Fit – get Strong, Stretch & Relax, Tai-Chi **SUNDAY:** Enjoy Ballroom & Latin Dance! **NEW** activities for over 50s' are coming to all Westminster Leisure and Sports Centres. **KEEPING FIT & HEALTHY** Weekday classes for all levels from frail to frisky across North Westminster! Including: Self Defence, Chair Exercise, Line Dance, Jazz Dance & Tap, Tai Chi, Table Tennis, Salsa, Women's only Exercise to Music, Walking Groups and many more! **COMPUTERS FOR ALL** Open Age is working with local Libraries to offer 6 week beginner courses, drop in to yours to book for 'Seniors on Line' or call 7641 1300 **CREATIVE & CULTURAL GROUPS** Wonderful opportunity to share enjoyment and develop your talents in 'Art for All', 'Singing for All', and 'All our Histories' **SOCIALISING PLUS!** All groups are friendly and welcoming with staff or tutors on hand. A weekly programme of invited speakers keeps everyone up to date on local amenities and leisure opportunities. **TRIPS OUT-with Freedom Pass!** Members of Open Age visit a variety of places each Thursday in and around London. Ask for a copy of current 'North Westminster Activity Programme' to be sent you from Open Age: 020 8964 1900 or pop into main office: 1 Thorpe Close, W10 (under Westway off Ladbroke Grove).

POSITIVELY PHYSICAL

Offers **FREE** physical activities, exercises and social clubs to Queen's Park, Westbourne and Harrow Road residents aged 50+. **Walking to Fitness**, Mon 9.15-10.15am, meets at Edward Wilson Primary School, Senior Street, W2. **Line Dancing**, Mon 11am-12pm, the Stowe Centre, 258 Harrow Rd, W2. **Salsa Aerobics**, Mon 2.30-3.30pm, Paddington Arts, 32 Woodfield Rd, W9. **Exercise to Music** (women only class), Tue 12.30-1.30pm, WECH Community Centre, Chantry Cl, Elgin Estate, W9. **Chair Exercise**, Tue 2-3pm, the Stowe Centre, 258 Harrow Rd, W2. **Yoga**, Tue 2.30-3.30pm, the Beethoven Centre, Third Ave, W10. **Salsa Dance** Wed 2-3pm, the Stowe Centre, 258 Harrow Rd, W2. **Pilates**, Thu 12-1pm, Moberly Sport Centre, Kilburn Ln, W10. **Self Defence Class**, 2.30-3.30pm, Moberly Sport Centre, Kilburn Ln, W10. **Water Splash**, Fri 12-1pm, Jubilee Sports Centre, Caird St, W10. **Yogalates** (a mixture of yoga and Pilates), Fri 7.15-8.15pm, Warwick Community Centre, 300 Harrow Rd, W2. You can also take part in **50+ Beginners Swimming and Table Tennis**, but book now because these are on a first come, first served basis. For more information, call Simone on 020 8964 1900.

SENIORS ONLINE (SO)



New course starting w/c 12th Jan. Even if you've never used a computer before you'll benefit from the friendly training and advice offered by Seniors Online. The course offers six **FREE** weekly

two-hour computer sessions for Westminster residents aged 65 and over at the following libraries: Queens Park Fri 10am-12pm; Maida Vale Thu 10am-12pm; Church Street Wed 10am-12pm, and Paddington Thu 10am-12pm. Please contact Senior Passport on 020 7641 1444 or ask at your local library.

WESTMINSTER ADVOCACY SERVICE FOR SENIOR RESIDENTS (WASSR)

We can help you if you are over 60 and you are having difficulties in trying to resolve a problem with housing, health or social care services; feel your views and interests are being ignored; may wish to complain about denial of service or poor service. An advocate can help you to: ask questions or raise concerns with housing, health or social care services; inform you of your rights and options; negotiate for your needs to be taken into account; help you with making a difficult decision. WASSR works with people over 60 from all of Westminster's diverse communities. For details call 020 7439 3131.

SPACE FOR HIRE

BEETHOVEN CENTRE

Third Ave, W10. The Main Hall (capacity 150) is available for private hire starting at £10 per hour and equipment such as a PA, TV, sound system, TV for video & DVD, multimedia projector and screen are also available at a reasonable hire charge. Two meeting rooms are available starting at £7.50 per hour for Beethoven Centre Members. Also, the Queen's Park Crèche is available for groups to book, to provide an on site crèche facility alongside any events, training or activities taking place in the centre. Call the crèche for more information 020 8960 2479. The centre is also great for children parties, as Queen's Park Crèche has many toys, games and resources available to hire for a small additional fee and the Beethoven Centre can provide details of children entertainers etc on request. For more information or to book call 020 8969 5881.

ELECTRIC BARGE

The Electric Barge offers you something different for any events you may be planning. From our mooring in Little Venice see another side of London as we travel along the Grand Union and Regent's Canals. Licensed to carry up to 60 people and equipped with all

the facilities you would expect, the Electric Barge is fully accessible for everyone. To book the Electric Barge please call 020 7266 8247 or email info@beauchampodge.co.uk. If you would like to find out more about the boat please visit our website at www.beauchampodge.co.uk. The Electric Barge is run by local charity Beauchamp Lodge Settlement, operators of the Floating Classroom.

ENTERPRISE CENTRE

St. Peter's House, 59 Elgin Ave, W9. Low cost spaces, desks and meeting rooms are available to rent on a flexible basis for local entrepreneurs, social enterprises or community organisations. For rates and availability contact Aparna on 020 7266 0636 or aparna@pdt.org.uk

LOW COST OFFICE SPACE



Need to find office or outreach space? A new scheme is offering approximately 6 desk spaces at low-cost., targeted at the voluntary sector. The space

is in the Paddington Green area. Two low cost outreach and meeting rooms are also available for use. Applications can be made by any charitable organisation although the space will be offered initially to organisations able to offer one or more of the following services in the Paddington Green area: Services for young people, families, older people, or for people from the Arab community; and Services that help to reduce social isolation or can impact positively upon community cohesion. How are applications assessed? This low cost office space is provided by a local registered social landlord looking to attract additional services into the area. Decisions about which organisations will be invited to use the office space will be made by local residents, and this local provider. To apply, please contact James Murray on jmurray@vawcvs.org or 020 7266 0828.

STOWE CENTRE

Located next to lovely Westbourne Green, this centre has a number of spaces available for hire on weekdays until 6.30pm and on weekends from 2.30-11pm. These reasonably priced spaces include a main hall (with or without kitchen hire) with a capacity of 200, a dance/drama studio and meeting rooms. Bookings include use of tables and chairs. 258 Harrow Rd, W2. For more information or to book, please contact Judith on 020 7266 8220.

WESTMINSTER ACADEMY, THE NAIM DANGOOR CENTRE

Academy Com, the community branch of the Academy (259-265 Harrow Rd, W2) encourages local community groups and businesses to make the most of the award-winning building with a wide variety of spaces

available to hire, all at competitive affordable rates. Full technical support and in house catering available. The building has already been used for charity events, supplementary schools, community concerts, fun days and learning activities. For more info, call 020 7121 0650.

GENERAL

MOSAIC COMMUNITY TRUST



Community cohesion through increasing respect and understanding between faiths. Interfaith Family Learning Group Mon, 10am-12pm at Quintin

Kynaston School, Marlborough Hill, NW; and Thu, 9.30-11.30am at St. Paul's Community Centre, St. Paul's Church, 5 Rossmore Rd, NW1. For details contact Betty Musprat on 01923 465 685 or bettymus30@ntlworld.com. For advice and support on setting up interfaith activities, contact Lena Choudary-Salter on 020 7289 1170 or lena@mosaiccommunitytrust.org.uk

COUNCILLOR'S SURGERY

Drop in to speak to Mehruz Ahmed, Conservative Councillor to Church Street ward on the first 3 Thursdays of month, 5.30-6.30pm at the Church Street One Stop, NW8.

FAMILY SERVICES TEAM

Based at Rainbow Family Centre, and part of the Westminster Society for People with Learning Disabilities, the Team offers support advice and information to parents and carers of children with disabilities and adults with learning disabilities across the borough of Westminster. Parents and carers can refer themselves to the Family Services Team. 11 Bravington Rd, W9. For more information contact 020 8968 2690 or cfloye@wspld.org

BEETHOVEN CENTRE

DROP IN ON MONDAYS: 1-4pm **Welfare Benefits Advice and Benefit Entitlement Checks with Arabic and Bengali Translation;** 2-4pm **Housing and Advice Drop-in** Housing workers (from a2dominion Housing, City West, Octavia Housing and Care, PCHA, Soho Housing Association and Stadium) and Housing Options Service are available to deal with your housing issues, including providing information and advice on overcrowding, transfer/allocation options, affordable home ownership options and all general housing enquiries. Local agencies are available to support residents on a number of issues: community safety and crime prevention, advice for the over 50's and benefits entitlement. All welcome and refreshments are available; 2-4pm **Queens Park Job Shop** Providing training opportunities, assistance finding work, writing a CV and employment

options. 2-4pm **Queen's Park Councillors Surgery** An opportunity to seek advice or make a complaint about issues affecting Queen's Park residents. 1-4pm **Food Co-op** Providing local people with access to affordable and good quality fruit and vegetables. Promoting healthy eating. Third Ave, W10. 020 8969 5881.

HANDYMAN SERVICE

Westminster Council's Home Improvement Agency is about to pilot a 'handyman' service, offering **free home repairs for those residents who qualify**. The council's roving handyman, who will cover mainly the **Harrow Road and Queens Park wards**, will carry out a wide variety of tasks, including minor plumbing jobs such as leaking taps, replace broken windows or door furniture, re-affix loose carpets, and replace light bulbs, plugs and fuses. In fact most items will be considered except internal or external decoration, gardening, any work to a gas appliance or supply or repairs to household appliances. **To qualify** you just need to be over 60 and/or disabled and live in private sector accommodation and not have access to other landlord handyman schemes. The service will not be available to CityWest Homes tenants. Although labour is free, homeowners will need to cover the cost of the materials, although some small items may also be covered. If you are interested in finding out more about the service of the handyman please contact the Council's Home Improvement Agency on 020 7641 8959.

BAYSWATER FAMILIES CENTRE

General housing and benefits advice on Mon, Wed & Fri 12-3pm. Drop in or ring for appointment. **Family law solicitor** on Thu 10.30am-1pm, by appointment. **Adult Education English beginners course** Tue and Thu mornings. **Intermediate course** Tue and Thu afternoons. Drop in or telephone for more information. **Computer classes** Mon 12.30-2.30pm; Wed 9.30-11.30am/12.30-2pm. **Pre-employment classes** on Fri 10am-2pm. Some places available. All classes **free**,

PADDINGTON LIBRARY

Paddington Library Reader's group meets on the 3rd Fri of the month at 6.30pm. Everyone is welcome. Advance booking not necessary. Paddington Library runs **free Silversurfers sessions** for beginners on Tue 2-4pm. For information on either activity, call 020 7641 1300 or visit the library in person.

PARENTS AND CARERS

Do you have children aged 3-18? **Parents and Carers** are invited to an introductory session on Parenting from 10am-12pm on Mon 15th Dec at the Greenside Community Centre, Lilestone Street, NW8. This is a great chance to tell us what support you'd like to see for parents in your local area as well as have a taste of a popular parent programme. To reserve a place call Angela on 07813 793 424.

FAMILY INFORMATION SERVICE



Patrick Green, FIS Outreach Worker

Information: on childminders, childcare, starting a career in childcare, out of school hours clubs, going back to work or training, financial assistance. FIS helpline is open Mon-Fri 9am-5pm, with answer phone service at all other times. **Drop-ins:** Tue, 10am-12pm, Harrow Road One Stop, 317 Harrow Rd, W9; Fri, Dec 5, Jan 2, Feb 6, 1-3pm, Portman Early Childhood Centre, 12-14 Salisbury St NW8; Mon, Dec 8 & 22, Jan 5 & 19, Feb 2 & 16, 1-3pm, Rainbow Family Centre, 11 Bravington Rd, W9; Wed, Dec 10 & 24, Jan 7 & 21, Feb 4 & 18, 10am-12pm, Marylebone Jobcentre, 26-46 Lisson Gr, NW1; Thu Dec 18, Jan 15, Feb 12, 1.30-3.30pm, at Maida Vale Children's Centre, Kilburn Park Rd, NW6. There's also a drop-in for teenage parents, every other Wed 1-3pm at the Millennium Centre, Amberley Estate, 11 Clearwell Dr, W9. Parents can also drop-in to see Patrick anytime at Queen's Park Children's Centre, 88 Bravington Rd, W9. Call Patrick on 07793 269 082 or via the FIS helpline 020 7641 7929, email fis@westminster.gov.uk or visit www.westminster.gov.uk/childrensinfo

UNDER FIVES EVENTS

CHRISTMAS PARTIES

Church Street & Paddington Green: Dec 3, 1.30-3pm, Portman Early Childhood Centre, 12-18 Salisbury St, NW8, call June on 020 7641 5409. **Micky Star:** Dec 16, 11am-1pm, Micky Star Children's Centre, 58-61 St. Michael's St, W2, call Matthew on 020 7641 5409.

UNDER FIVES DROP-IN & PLAY

BEETHOVEN CENTRE

Thu 10am-12pm, £1 donation. 173 Third Ave, W10, 020 8969 5881, www.dominionhg.co.uk/beethoven

THE CHURCH OF OUR LADY

Tue-Thu 9.15-11.30am. 54 Lodge Rd, NW8, 020 7286 6387 (or call Central Team Outreach on 020 7641 5409).

EVERY CHILD MATTERS BUILDING, ESSENDINE PRIMARY SCHOOL

Mon-Fri 9.30-11.30am. Also a Toy Library on Wed 9.30am-11.30am (both term-time only). Essendine Rd, W9, 020 7641 5804.

GREENSIDE COMMUNITY CENTRE

Mon, Wed and Fri 10am-12pm. Term-time only. 24 Lilestone St, NW8, 020 7245 2861, www.vitalregeneration.org/greenside

MAIDA CENTRE

Mon 9.15-10am & 10.05-10.55am, **Mini Mozart** music group for under 3s, £6/

session or £20/4 sessions. Some free tickets may be available for families that qualify, call 020 7724 2391. **Childminder Drop-in** Fri 10am-12pm, call Pauline on 020 7641 4515 / 07738 036 287. **Dad & me fathers group**, one Sat a month, 10am-12pm, call 020 7641 5838. 221 Lanark Road, W9.

MAIDA VALE CHILDREN'S CENTRE

Tue 10-11.45am, drop-in for childminders (1st and 3rd week in the month) and childcarers (2nd and 4th week in the month). Kilburn Park Rd, NW6, 020 7328 9268.

MARY PATERSON NURSERY

Mon-Wed and Fri 9.15-11.15am/1-3pm. Term-time only. 13 Riverton Close, W9, 020 7641 5804.



MEANWHILE GARDENS PLAYHUT

Mon, Tue, Thu, Fri, 2-5pm. Indoor and outdoor play, with trikes and ride-ons. Tiny Green Fingers

Grow and Eat activities on Mon and Fri. Elkstone Rd, W10, 020 8960 7894.

MICKY STAR NEIGHBOURHOOD NURSERY

Thu 9.30-11.30am. Childminder drop-in, term-time only. 58-61 St. Michael's St, NW8, 020 7641 5409.

NEWPIN

Mon and Thu 1-3pm. Term-time only. Luton St, NW8, 020 7641 5409.

PADDINGTON RECREATION GROUND

Thu 11am-12pm. Tea and chat in the café at Paddington Rec., Randolph Ave, W9, 020 7328 9268.

PORTMAN EARLY CHILDHOOD CENTRE

Mon, Tue, Thu, Fri, 9.30am-12pm/1-3.30pm (finishes 3pm on Mon). 12-18 Salisbury St, NW8, 020 7641 5409.

QUEEN'S PARK CHILDREN'S CENTRE

Mon, Tue, Thu, Fri 9.30-11.30am, & Mon-Thu 1-3pm. Wed 10am-12pm, for childminders. 88 Bravington Rd, W9, 020 7641 5838.

VESTRY PRE-SCHOOL

Mon & Wed 1-3pm. Term-time only. St. Mark's Church, Abercorn Place, NW8, 020 7624 2705.

WESTBOURNE CHILDREN'S CENTRE



Mon-Wed, 10am-12pm, Mon toy library, Tue drop-in, Wed for childminders. Edward Wilson School, Senior St, W2, 020 7641 4312

WILBERFORCE PRIMARY SCHOOL

Sat-Sun 10am-3pm. Playground open for under fives accompanied by an adult. Enter from Beethoven St, W10, 020 7641 5865.

UNDER FIVES LIBRARY DROP-INS

CHURCH STREET LIBRARY

Thu 10.30am-12pm. Just for Dads storytime, last Sat of the month, 11am-12pm. Term-time only. Temporary location at 97-99 Church Street, NW8, 020 7641 1300.

KILBURN LIBRARY

Tue 11-11.30am. 12-22 Kilburn High Rd, NW6, 020 7974 6524.

MAIDA VALE LIBRARY

Tue & Fri 10.15-11.30am. Sutherland Ave, W9, 020 7641 1300.

PADDINGTON CHILDREN'S LIBRARY

10.30-11.45am. Clifford Hall, Porchester Rd, W2, 020 7641 4403/78.

QUEEN'S PARK LIBRARY

Wed and Fri 10.30-11.30am. Christmas Party on Dec 17, 10.30-11.30am, £2.50. 666 Harrow Rd, W10, 020 7641 1300.

UNDER FIVES HEALTH & WELLBEING

BAYSWATER FAMILIES CENTRE

Play sessions for families in temporary accommodation or unsuitable housing. Mon-Thu 2.30-4pm. 14-18 Newton Rd, W2, 020 7221 3290.

BEETHOVEN CENTRE

Creative Dance Class for 3-5 yr-olds. £24/term (12 weeks), members £12 (£6 annual membership). Tue 4-4.45pm. Call 07957 384 591 or email createdance@hotmail.co.uk 173 Third Ave, W10.

THE HUB, REGENT'S PARK

Parent and Pram Session, gentle exercise around Regent's Park. Tue 11am-12pm. £3/class (10% off for Westminster and Camden residents). Meet at The Hub, Regent's Park, NW1, 020 7935 2458, www.royalparks.org.uk/hub

KIDS HOME LEARNING

Home Learning Sensory Group, for children who have sensory impairments and limited mobility, and who are receiving Home Learning or are on the waiting list. Tue 11am-12pm. Portman Children's Centre, 12-18 Salisbury St, NW8. Call 020 7641 4151, www.kids-online.org.uk

LISSON GROVE HEALTH CENTRE

Under 5s Clinic and Drop-In, Mon 2-3pm & Tue 1.30-3.30pm (Tue includes a breastfeeding clinic, call Oma on 07771 840 488). Gateforth St, NW8, 020 7563 6100.

MAIDA VALE CHILDREN'S CENTRE

Expecting parents & new-borns drop-in, Thu 10am-12pm. **Parent & baby group**, Fri 2-3.30pm, then **Health Visitors Drop-in** from 3.30-4.30pm. Begins Jan 9. Kilburn Park Rd, NW6, 020 7328 9268.

MICKY STAR NEIGHBOURHOOD NURSERY

Under 5s Clinic and Drop-In, Wed 9.30-11.30am (term-time only). **Breastfeeding**

Drop-in & Baby Café, Thu 12.30-2.30pm (term-time only, call Oma on 07771 840 488). 58-61 St. Michael's St, NW8, 020 7641 5409.

QUEEN'S PARK HEALTH CENTRE
Baby & Under 5s Clinic, Tue 9.30-11.30am & Thu 1.30-3.30pm. **Maternity drop-in**, Tue 10.30am-12.30pm, call Glenda on 020 8206 5091. Dart St, W10, 020 8968 8899.

STOWE CENTRE



Ballet for boys and girls, £4/session, Mon 4-4.45pm (for 3-5 yrs) & 4.45-5.30pm (for 6-11 yrs). Term-time only. 258 Harrow Rd, W2, call Sandie 07957 327 322.

WESTBOURNE CHILDREN'S CENTRE
Baby & Under 5s Clinic, Thu 10-11.30am. **Breastfeeding Drop-in**, Fri 10.30am-12pm. Edward Wilson School, Senior St, W2, 020 7641 4312.

WOODFIELD MEDICAL CENTRE
Baby & Under 5s Clinic, Tue 2-3.30pm, call 020 7266 8721. **Breastfeeding drop-in**, Fri 10.30am-12pm, call Elaine on 020 7266 8724. **First-time mums post-natal group**, Mon 2-3.30pm, call Alison on 020 7266 8730. **Baby massage**, Thu 2-3pm, call Fiona on 020 7266 8729. 7e Woodfield Road, W9.

ACTIVITIES FOR CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE AGED 5-19

AFRICAN WOMEN GROUP
Elnor Saturday Supplementary School: for 6-16 yr-olds, about 45 students studying Arabic and French and getting homework support. 10am-2pm at WECH, 416 Harrow Rd, W9, 020 7289 0900, manahil@btinternet.com www.africanwg.org

AMBERLEY YOUTH PROJECT
Under 14s: workshops on animation, computer games programming, short film production and much more!! Also outdoor sports inc football, rounders & cricket; indoor activities inc table tennis, pool, table football, cooking, baking, arts and crafts; and drama and dance workshops, computers, girls' sessions, movie nights. Amberley Estate, 11 Clearwell Dr, W9, 020 7286 1014.

ANGLO EGYPTIAN SOCIETY
Saturday Supplementary Schools at:
The Egyptian School London: for 6-16 yrs (to GCSEs), until Easter, term-time and holidays. 9am-3.15pm. Aechland Burghley School, Burghley Rd, NW5. **WECH**: for 6-12 yrs, until July, Chantry Close off Elgin Avenue, W9. Contact 020 7266 8259, info@angloegyptian.co.uk, www.angloegyptian.co.uk

AVENUES YOUTH CLUB
Tue: Girls' Night for 11-21 yr-olds. Homework support, cooking, arts and crafts / fashion design, 5-8pm. **Wed**: Junior Group

for 11-14 yr-olds, 4-6pm. Media and Radio Workshop 1-3pm. Alpha Femmes (girls group), radio, dance, music production, media workshop, football, swimming, and air track trampoline for the juniors, 6.40-9.10pm. **Thu**: Junior Group for 11-14 yr-olds, 4-6pm. For 13-21 yr-olds: radio and multi-media training, music production, Alpha Femmes, cooking, and music room, 6.40-9.10pm. **Fri**: Junior Group for 11-14 yr-olds, 4-6pm. For 13-21 yr-olds: radio and multi-media training, 6.40-9.10pm. **Sat**: cooking, radio, 12-3pm. **Christmas holidays**: project-based activities and the Edutain Sports Project. 3-7 Third Ave, W10, 020 8969 9552, www.avenues.org.uk

BAYSWATER FAMILIES CENTRE
Play sessions: for families in temporary accommodation or unsuitable housing, drop in Mon-Thu 2.30-4pm. **Homework club**: for 8-11 yr-olds living in overcrowded accommodation, Thu 4-6pm (term-time only). **After-School club**: for 5-11 yr-olds, Tue-Wed 4-6pm. 14-18 Newton Rd, W2, 020 7221 3290.

BEETHOVEN CENTRE



Capoeira Class: for adults and children. £2.50 children, £4.50 non-members. Tue 7.30-8.30pm. Also **Children's Capoeira**, for 5-12 yrs, £2/session, £1 members, Sat 10.30-11.30am. **Choi Kwangdo**: for women and children. £5/class. Fri 7-8.30pm. **Creative Dance Class**: for 6-8 yrs. £24/term (12 weeks), members £12. Tue 4.45-5.45pm. Call 07957 384 591 or email creativedance@hotmail.co.uk for more details. **Chinese Kung Fu**: for under 12s, £2/class, £1 members, Mon 6.30-7.30pm and Thu 6.15-7.15pm. Call 07751 768 391 or visit www.shaolinqianshu.com **Silent Step Street Dance**: for 5-11 yrs. £2/class, £1 members. Thu 4.30-6pm, and Sat 12-2pm, call Adrian on 07932 982 802. 173 Third Ave, W10, 020 8969 5881, www.dominionhg.co.uk/beethoven

BRUNEL YOUTH PROJECT
11-19 yr-olds: pool, internet access, homework support, discussions, board games, and various other activities. Mon-Thu, 6.15-9.15pm. Buckshead House, Brunel Estate, W2. Contact Sue Yarde, 020 7792 0155, sue_brunel@hotmail.co.uk

CONNEXIONS @ STOWE
Information and advice on education, work and training, health, housing and more: drop-in Mon-Fri 10.30am-4.30pm. **Sexual Health Clinic**: free pregnancy testing, contraception and STI testing, Thu 3-6pm. **Ante-Natal Clinic**: make an appointment to see a midwife and a Connexions advisor, or just drop in. Mon 12.30-5pm, call Eleanor 020 7641 4024 for more details. All for 13-19 yrs (or up to 25 for people with a disability or learning difficulty). The Stowe Centre, 258 Harrow Road, W2, 020 7266 8230.

DREAMARTS

Acting, singing, dancing: every Sun, for over 8s. £1/day, £3 non-members. The Cockpit Theatre, Gateforth St, NW8. Contact Becki Lunn on 020 7266 8262 / 07951 921 247 or becki@dreamarts.org.uk, www.dreamarts.org.uk

FISHERTON STREET YOUTH PROJECT
Under 15s: various youth club activities every Tue 6-9pm and Sat 2-5pm. Fisherton St Community Centre Hall, Fisherton Street Estate, NW8, 020 7724 3164 or 020 7723 8308.

FOURTH FEATHERS YOUTH CLUB
Mon: Girls' Night 5.30-8pm. **Tue**: Homework Club 3.30-5.15pm. Fisherton Street Youth Project for under 15s, 6-9pm (020 7724 3164). **Wed and Thu**: Homework Club 3.30-5.15pm. Club open 6-9pm. Also the Hot Spots Outreach Project every Wed, 7-9pm, until March 2009, with Levi and Neil on the streets engaging and sign-posting young people to positive activities in the Bryanston & Dorset and Church St wards. Funded By Councillor Keen. And Connexions, on the last Wed of each month, help with CVs, letter writing, interview skills, telephone manner, jobs training, careers info and specialist referral. Ask for Danielle. **Fri**: club open 7-10pm. **Sat**: Saturday Club 3-6pm. Fisherton Street Youth Project for under 15s, 2-5pm (020 7724 3164). Activities include arts and crafts, playground activities, pool, table tennis, DJ'ing, ICT, cooking, basketball, dance, gym, drama, job club and others, call for details. **Skate Park** now open. 12 Rossmore Rd, NW1, 020 7723 8308.

GREENSIDE COMMUNITY CENTRE
Girl Guides: Rainbows (5-7 yr-olds) and Brownies (7-10 yr-olds), Tue 5-7.30pm, term-time only. Call Mary Nightingale on 020 7828 0259 or Ann Penman on 01252 546 628. **Karate**: for children, Wed 6-7pm. **After-School Clubs**: during term-time, call for details. **Firststep.com**: free ICT classes for young people, call 020 7641 4157 or visit www.learnatfirststep.com **British Gas traineeships**: come to the Greenside on Jan 29, 4pm, to find out how to apply for British Gas Traineeships in 'Central Heating system maintenance and installation' and in 'Electrical maintenance'. For more info call Sheba on 020 7641 5421. 24 Lilestone St, NW8, 020 7245 2861, www.vitalregeneration.org/greenside

KYU-YO-BU-SHIN



KYBS Running Club and Football: ongoing training every Sun, 9am-12.30pm. 11-17 yr-old boys & girls training for the trials in Paddington Rec, Feb 2009, leading

to running in the Mini London Marathon, Apr 2009. Football straight after @ Academy Sports. For the juniors, 8-10 yr-olds, there is running and football every Sun. Both groups meet at Edward Wilson Primary School,

Bourne Terrace, W2. **Karate**: for beginners and intermediates, Mon 5-7pm, for ages 5+. Warwick Community Centre, 300 Harrow Rd, W2. **Mentoring and Discussion Group**: ongoing at Edward Wilson Primary School, Bourne Terrace, W2. **Mixed Yagalates Class**: for ages 16+, Sun 4-5pm, Westminster Academy, 259-265 Harrow Rd, W2. Call Mary 07890 301 235.

LONDON PRINT STUDIO



Drop-in Family Art Workshop: come and make a decoration, screen print, glitter and more, £1 each, Dec 6, 2.30-4.30pm. **Free Graphic Art &**

Design Workshops: for aspiring artists aged 16-24. Create posters, comic books, learn about print runs, use state-of-the-art equipment, work with professionals. Call for details, no workshops in January. 425 Harrow Rd, W10, 020 8969 3247, info@londonprintstudio.org.uk, www.londonprintstudio.org.uk

MAIDA VALE LIBRARY

Homework Club: for 7-13 yr-olds. Tue 3.45-5.30pm during term-time. Sutherland Ave, W9, 020 7641 1300.

MARYLEBONE BANGLADESH SOCIETY

Youth Club for Boys: Tue-Thu, 5.30-8.30pm, includes pool, Playstation 3, Wii, DVDs, futsal, basic gym (rowing machine, running machine, free weights). **Youth Club for Girls**: Sat 2-5pm, same activities as above. **Homework Club**: and help with CV writing, Tue 5.30-8.30pm. 2 Boscobel St, NW8, 020 7724 7427.

PADDINGTON ARTS

Performing arts and media workshops: for young people aged 6-26. Includes singing, dance, drama, steel pans, video and ballet. All workshops included within the cost of membership (£16 per year, £8 if you join late in the year). Also projects for young people with learning disabilities. **Milkshake Discos**: last Fri of every month, for 8-12 yr-olds. **Planet X**: a unique sensory installation space with exciting areas to stimulate the senses of young disabled people, aged 3-16. Takes place Sat Jan 31, Feb 28, March 28, 12-4pm. £1 on the door. Call Shaun 020 8964 5060. **Christmas Show**: Dec 11. **Teen Talk**: talking about young people and faith, Dec 17. 32 Woodfield Rd, W9, 020 7286 2722, info@paddingtonarts.org.uk, www.paddingtonarts.org.uk

PADDINGTON CHILDREN'S LIBRARY

Homework Club: for 6-13 yr-olds. Mon and Fri 3.45-5.15pm (term-time, parents need to register their children). Clifford Hall, Porchester Rd, W2, 020 7641 4403/4478.

QUEEN'S PARK LIBRARY

Homework Club: for 7-13 yr-olds. Mon and Wed 3.45-5.30pm, term-time only. **Manga Club**: for 10-18 yr-olds, alternate Thu, 5-6pm. **Gaming Group**: for teenagers, with board games and Warhammer, alternate Thu, 5-6pm. **Chatterbooks**: book club for 8-13 yr-olds, alternate Tue, 5-6pm. **Arts Club**: 8+ yrs, alternate Tue, 5-6pm. **Kung Fu demonstration**: give it a go with Karim Daoud and his team, Jan 17, 1-2.30pm. 666 Harrow Rd, W10, 020 7641 1300.

REAL ACTION

Butterfly Saturday Reading School: for 5-12 yr-olds, Sat mornings, term-time only. The Learning Store, 3 Mozart St, W10. Contact Katie Ivens on 020 8960 2065, realaction@btconnect.com, www.realaction.org.uk

SAMBA STREET SOCCER

Street Soccer: open-door policy for 5-15 yr-olds, coaching futsal and futebol de salao, Mon, Tue, Thu, Fri at Westminster Academy, 259-265 Harrow Rd, W2. Contact Andrew Amers-Morrison, 07591 855 532, sambastreetssocceruk05@yahoo.co.uk, www.sambastreetssoccer.org

ST. LUKE'S CHURCH



3rd Paddington Scout Group: for 6-7, 8-10 and 11-14 yr-olds, Thu 6-9pm. Games, sports and training, as well as weekend activities. All faiths welcome.

St. Luke's Church Centre, Fernhead Rd, W9. Contact Diana New on 020 7912 0640 or newdds@aol.com

STOWE YOUTH CLUB

Free activities for 13-19 yr-olds. **Mon**: Club Night, also for young people from the Rainbow Project. Union Dance, gym (all gym sessions for over 16s only), football, recording studio, art and fashion, multi-media and music production, IT room, chill out room, 6.30-9.15pm. **Tue**: boxing (£1/session), dance, fashion and design, media design, IT room, cooking (healthy eating programme), music studio, 6.30-9.15pm. **Wed**: Muslim youth group and homework support, 5-8.30pm. **Thu**: sexual health clinic, 3-6pm, see Connexions entry above. Then same as Tue. **Fri**: movie night, cooking, IT, music studio, multi-media, gym and multi-sports, 7-10pm. 258 Harrow Rd, W2, 020 7266 8220/1. **Sat**: Rainbow Family Centre project for young disabled people, 10am-1.30pm. Call 020 8968 2693/4 for details. **Ballet**: 6-11 yr-old boys and girls. £4/session. Mon 4.45-5.30pm (term-time only, begins Jan 12, last session of the previous term on Dec 15). Call Sandie 07957 327 322.

VITAL REGENERATION



Studio +: music production and events management courses. 14-19 yr-olds who are NEET or at risk of being NEET (not in employment,

education or training) can sign up for free courses on how to produce music and manage events. Use industry-standard equipment and put on live music events. Courses also include embedded Skills for Life and lead to qualifications, work experience and employment. Queen's Park New Media Centre, Beethoven Centre, 173 Third Ave, W10. Contact Katy Haigh on 020 7245 2267, kchaigh@cwh.org.uk, www.vitalregeneration.org/studio **Vital Apprenticeships**: advice service for 16-24 yr-olds who are socially housed in Westminster. Advisors provide information, advice and guidance on apprenticeships, training courses and job opportunities. Sessions are by appointment at the Beethoven, Greenside Community and Stowe Centres. To book an appointment, contact Daniel Williams on 020 8964 3256 or dwilliams@cwh.org.uk **Vital Vocations (Re-evolve)**: young people aged 16-25 get to be in charge of designing and creating a job information service for other young people who want to find out how to get into careers they are passionate about. To volunteer contact Fiona Black on 020 8962 0721 or fblack@cwh.org.uk For further information on any of these projects, visit www.vitalregeneration.org

WECH YOUTH CLUB

For 13-19 yr-olds: table tennis, snooker, pool, cooking, workshops, football, PS3, trips and DJ mixing, Tue 6-8.30pm. **For 8-12 yr-olds**: karate, cooking, table tennis, snooker and trips, Fri 5.30-7.30pm. WECH Community Centre, Chantry Close off Elgin Avenue, W9. Contact Gina on 020 7266 3347, gina@wech.org.uk

WESTMINSTER SPORTS UNIT

Promotes and delivers a range of sports and physical activity programmes. Call 020 7641 5891, sport@westminster.gov.uk, www.westminster.gov.uk/sport

YAA ASANTEWAA

Ebony Steelband Trust: classes for ages 16-25, every Tue and Thu, 6.30-8.30pm, free of charge, and classes for under 15s every Fri, 6-7.30pm, £2 per session. Includes performances at exclusive events and competitions. 1 Chippenham Mews, W9. Contact Daniel on 020 7792 1418, services@ebony.org.uk, www.ebony.org.uk

Pirates Ahoy!

Over 80 under-fives and their parents enjoyed a pirate-themed party in October to celebrate the Family Learning Festival and Bookstart Day.

The event, held at the St. Paul's Church Centre in Church Street ward was organised by Home-Start Westminster, family charity Newpin, Westminster Adult Education Family Learning Project and Bookstart.

Rachel Barrett, the Bookstart Coordinator for Westminster, ran three Bookstart sessions of stories and rhymes and one of the Home-Start volunteers provided face painting. Westminster Adult Education Family Learning Project team helped children and parents transform everyday items into pirate hats, ships and pirate treasure.



A representative from the Library Service was on hand to let the adults know about the services available at their local library. Parents also had the chance to sign up with the Westminster Adult Education Service so that they will receive information about training and education available in the borough.

To make sure the fun didn't stop at the end of the party, all the children went home with party packs that included stickers, bookmarks, a pirate story and some of the Bookstart rhymes and songs.

For more information on Bookstart, visit www.bookstart.org.uk



Avenues Youth Club members model fashions from the 70s, 80s and 90s.

A passion for fashion

On Sunday 26th October, the community was invited to the prestigious Paddington Hilton Hotel for a showcase of inspired fashion designs by members of the local Avenues Youth Club.

This fantastic event, called 'The Influence of Black Music on Fashion', included poetry, dance and a battle of the DJs, as well as a musical and fashion journey into the past, decade by decade, going back to the 1960s.

Youth club members dressed and performed in styles reminiscent of artists ranging from the Supremes to Mary J. Blige to the divas and dancehall kings of today's music culture.

Established in 1979, the Avenues Youth Club's objective is to support young people to develop their self esteem, enhance their employment opportunities, challenge their attitudes, and of course, to offer opportunities for enjoyment.

With the deaths of over 26 teenagers in London this year, young people are in the spot light. The Avenues is a place where young people can channel and develop their talents, whilst being offered support in other areas such as cooking, life skills, sports, IT, radio and more.

The 'Influence of Black Music on Fashion' event was a perfect opportunity for young people to showcase the enormous talent and commitment shown by the Avenues members.

Avenues Senior Youth Worker Carol Bent says, 'As long as the young people wishing to attend [the youth club] are age appropriate, no one that comes here is turned away, they are all welcome. We are here to encourage them all to channel their energy into something positive.'

Opening hours for the club are Monday 1-4pm, Tuesday 5-8pm, Wednesday-Friday 4-9.20pm and Saturday 12-3pm. There is a programme for ages 11-14 and 14 and over, as well as girls-only activities.

For more information, call the Avenues Youth Club on 020 8969 9552 or visit www.avenues.org.uk



PHILIP WOLMUTH



Stylised view of the art deco façade of Alfies Antique Market on Church Street.

PHOTO COURTESY OF ALFIES ANTIQUE MARKET

Local hidden treasure

It's hard to imagine what the eastern end of Church Street was like before Alfies Antique Market opened in 1976, but the man behind Alfies, Bennie Gray, remembers it well.

'The place was semi-derelict,' Bennie recalls. 'Half the shops were boarded up and there was a terrible problem with vandalism.' Now, Alfies (formerly Jordan's department store) has a strikingly executed Egyptian-style art deco façade, a rooftop café and around 100 antique dealers trading there. And the adjacent part of Church Street has some 20 shops selling 20th century antiques. Many of these shops started life in Alfies, which is the largest antique arcade in the country.

The Market is a treasure trove where you can buy a huge range of antique and retro goods from the 20th century, including vintage fashion and accessories, modernist furniture, costume jewellery and decorative arts.

Bennie, who was born just around the corner from Church Street, on Cosway Street, is justifiably proud of the impact Alfies has had on Church Street. 'I'm unashamedly happy to say that the regeneration of this area is in large measure down to the success of Alfies.

'When I first had the idea, plenty of people said I was mad and that it was doomed to failure – which is just the sort of incentive that makes me go ahead with a plan.'

As well as Alfies, Bennie owns Grays Antique Market in Mayfair and he is the driving force and owner of the Custard Factory, Birmingham's arts and media quarter based on the 10-acre site that was once the Bird's Custard factory.

Bennie's appetite for a challenge is clear and he's been involved in many projects over the years, usually involving the re-use of ageing and dilapidated buildings in which he has an uncanny ability to spot regeneration potential. The other key ingredient is his passionate belief that small businesses and business start-ups are the lifeblood of a successful economy, both locally and nationally.

Finally, where does the name Alfies come from? 'That was my father, a brilliant jazz musician, but sadly, not a great antique dealer.'

Alfies Antique Market
13-25 Church Street
London NW8 8DT
020 7723 6066
www.alfiesantiques.com

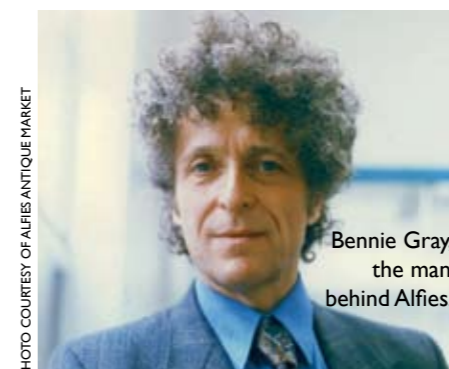


PHOTO COURTESY OF ALFIES ANTIQUE MARKET

Bennie Gray, the man behind Alfies.

It's my business

L'Ora di Café

L'Ora di Café, on Lisson Grove, is a new addition to the area – and it's likely to be a welcome one. Serving Italian food, it offers a range of paninis, pastas and salads, as well as an all-day breakfast. And the good news is that there's not a dish on the menu that costs more than £4.99.

But low prices definitely don't mean low quality – the food is prepared on site using fresh ingredients. And there's nothing cheap about the venue. Featuring contemporary lighting, marble floors and plush furnishings plus a soothing (and not too loud) jazz soundtrack, this is a place to come and relax.



Staff at L'Ora di Café.

PHILIP WOLMUTH

Manager Bashir Sabbagh came to London from Syria 10 years ago. 'My uncle owns this property, including the flats above,' explains Bashir 'and he asked me to run this restaurant after he'd finished a complete refurbishment of the property.

'I did some research in the area and I don't think there's another café quite like this. Much of our business comes from people who work in the area and they're looking for a place with a bit of style and reasonable prices. That's exactly what we're offering. It's hard work – but I enjoy that!'

L'Ora di Café
43 Lisson Grove, NW1



Local residents helped the Neighbourhood Management Team prepare a document marking 200 problems to be repaired by the Council. Due to the project's success, similar projects are being unrolled across the borough.



PHILIP WOLMUTH

Dotted with improvements

The success of the Neighbourhood Management Team's Red Dot Exercise has not only meant physical improvements to the Church Street neighbourhood, but future improvements to other parts of Westminister, where the same model will be unrolled.

The Neighbourhood Management Team organised 'walkabouts' and questionnaires for residents to feed into this exercise, aimed at identifying highway and pavement issues in the Church Street neighbourhood.

A series of maps were drawn up with red dots marking 200 identified problems. An accompanying booklet gave detailed information on each problem. Wherever possible, a photo was taken to evidence the problem.

The Neighbourhood Team was pleased when Martin Low, the Council's Director of Transportation, promised to sort out all of the issues identified in the Red Dot Exercise. It was quite a promise and has been a great opportunity.

To date, over 70 repairs have been made and solutions are being planned for the remaining 130, including a much needed zebra crossing on Penfold Street, near Boscobel Street. The Red Dot Exercise is a clear example of how Neighbourhood Management involvement has ensured

that the Council is responding well to the needs of the local people.

Anne Murphy of Ashbridge Street comments on one of the improvements: 'I was unable to access my garage on weekends because of the single yellow line restriction. I have been battling with the council for several years regarding this problem. I was having to pay for the garages which I could not get access to. I raised my concerns at the residents meeting held by the Neighbourhood Management team.

'Life has been so much better for me and other residents since the double yellow line was introduced. Cars and vans no longer block our garages.'

Sheba Begum, who spearheaded the project, says, 'Residents and I spent a lot of time putting the Red Dot Exercise document together. I was a bit worried that it would be another document which gathers dust on the shelf...I am really pleased by the level of commitment from both the council and residents.

'This project has, and will continue to make an impact on the people who live and work in the area. It's great news to hear that the council will be rolling out this project to other parts of the city'.

For more information about the Red Dot Exercise, contact Sheba Begum on 020 7641 5421 or sbegum2@westminster.gov.uk

In brief

Christmas lights are on!

On Wednesday 26th November, outside the Church Street Neighbourhood Centre, there was a full celebration with steel pan music, dancing, carol singing, mulled wine and minced pies. The lights were turned on by Bennie Gray, owner of Alfies Antique Market (see page 15 for article on Alfies Antique Market).

Real Apprenticeships

British Gas is holding an open day at the Greenside Community Centre on Thursday 29th January 3-5.30pm. This is a chance to learn about the career paths available with British Gas, meet some engineers and find out how to apply for an apprenticeship position. Don't miss this opportunity! Successful candidates will be working as British Gas Engineers by June. For more details contact Sheba Begum at the Neighbourhood Management Team on 020 7641 5421.

Silver lining at Broadley Gardens

Broadley Gardens is closed due to major subsidence problems. There will be an exciting redevelopment of the gardens, further to a series of consultation events in September where the Westminster Parks Department found out what local people want in the re-built park. The next stage is for landscape architects to come up with some designs for residents to look at and comment on. It is hoped that the park will be re-open in time for next year's summer holidays. For further information ring Julie Mallett at the Neighbourhood Management Team on 020 7641 6633 or Rebecca Cloke of Westminster Council's Parks Department on 020 7641 3433.