

Village Matters



Spring-Summer 2012

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Liz Thomson Head of Lettings

Spring is here at last and despite the struggling economy and the crisis in the Eurozone the demand for property is as strong as ever. An investment in bricks and mortar in Central London continues to be seen as one of the safest you can make. We are delighted to have opened our third office in W10 and would like to thank the local community for the warm welcome we have received there. In this issue we are introducing you to one of our new neighbours as well as the man behind the St Helen's Residents' Association who champion local planning and environmental issues. Read on and enjoy!



Michael Wilson Head of Sales



Dear Diary

Local website, Pavlova Diaries does what it says on the tin. It makes you feel warm and squidgy on the inside while the outer core can be steely – *Save Portobello Market* and *Mothers Against Mugging* are two of their most recent campaigns.

Co-founder Mary-Lu Bakker says, "The website is bristling with things that locals do, from Kensington Day Centre providing pottery lessons for the elderly through to Frances Stadlen's life-enhancing *Pass on a Poem*."

Bakker has applied for a council grant to employ local state school-leavers to help develop the site and sell ads to businesses, turning the digital noticeboard into a thriving commercial concern. David Cameron, take note, this is the Big Society in all its glory!

"The area's changing so fast, Pavlova might one day become an historical snapshot of the area for people to examine," adds Bakker.

Email Mary-Lu or Amanda at pavlova@pavloviadiaries.co.uk

www.pavloviadiaries.co.uk



The pet set

Forget *Sex and the City* – where it's really at is Pets in the City, the fun and furry version of life in the whizzy metropolis.

Launched two-and-a-half years ago, this pet shop caters for everything from grooming, walking, boarding, training and dog-sitting. Leads, collars, blankets and jumpers that are so covetable that you would want to buy a dog of your own so you could buy some of them.

Owner Sarah Marris loves being based in W10, "an eclectic area with yuppies, artists, single folk, young couples and families. People pop in for advice and after talking about their dog they pour all their troubles out. I feel like a therapist."

Visit the website if only to see Dog of the Moment and the likes of 'Regal Beagle' Hamish who never stops sleeping. Alternatively call into the shop at

75 St Helens Gardens, W10 020 8962 0700

www.petsincity.com



CHARITY
BEGINS CHEZ
NOUS – SEE
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What are values doing in the village?

We've had another busy spell in the local property market seeing prices continue to grow as the supply of good properties remains tight. The global economic crisis has resulted in mixed feelings of confidence over the past few months but our experience translates the same message as always – Central London property is a resilient investment. In the past few weeks we've had a bumper crop of sales in the W2 area (as featured in this issue of Village Matters) which further cements our opinion that W2 is an area which continues to draw attention from (continued on page 2) ►

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SOLD Queens Garden, W2 £2,325,000



SOLD Northumberland Place, W2 £2,220,000



SOLD Westbourne Park Road, W2 £2,400,000



SOLD Chepstow Road, W2 £2,100,000

Our Sales Department has achieved some outstanding results for our clients. If you are considering selling your property and would like honest, accurate advice please call or email us to book a FREE valuation.

MOUNTGRANGE HERITAGE

► (continued from front cover) buyers looking for a good balance between space, price and amenity. This 'growth spurt' in the W2 market has produced sales prices in excess of £1,500 per square foot on several occasions. There has been a marked recovery in the rental market with relocation agents looking actively again since the New Year for one and two bedroom apartments; the demand for large family flats and houses is starting to increase as well. All in all we are optimistic about 2012. ●

...values that you'll love



Insulation moth-balled

Here comes a salutary tale from Mountgrange Heritage landlady, Chantal Dunn.

After falling for a farmhouse in Wales, Dunn began to convert it into a family home. This included installing roof insulation made of compressed sheep's wool (called Thermafleece), certified by the British Board of Agreement, as advised by her architect.

"This turned out to be a terrible mistake," says Dunn, recounting how pest experts traced a huge moth infestation to the insulation. "The infestation became so severe it threatened to destroy our clothes, antique rugs, curtains, carpets and soft furnishings." The family also had to leave the house weekly while it was sprayed with insecticide and there were fears of cross-contamination if they stayed in rented property nearby.

"Remedial works to remove and replace the insulation is underway, with replacement and compensation costs estimated at half-a-million pounds," alleges Dunn. With nobody accepting responsibility for the damage their lawyers are a long way from recovering the Dunn's money.



Power to the people

St Helen's Residents' Association, covering the Oxford Gardens and St Quintin's Conservation areas from St Helen's Gardens down to Latimer Road, helps locals with advice on health, policing, social and planning issues.

Set up in 2008, the association looks after 700 households and has 270 registered members. Inevitably, planning tends to dominate the agenda, says Henry Peterson, the man behind the organisation.

"We've joined forces with Kensington and Hammersmith societies to campaign ►



▶ against the proposed tall towers (up to 35-storeys) in the Imperial West mixed-use development south of the Westway and just across our boundary," he explains. "It will have a huge impact on traffic and it's only one of a series of planned developments we're arguing are contrary to the London plan."

Peterson implores locals to write to the London mayor, Boris Johnson, and join the association via henrypeterston@aol.com or www.sthelensasn.aol.com

Charity begins chez nous

This spring's unmissable event is Chez Patrick's charity dinner on 26 March to raise funds for Kids 'n' Cancer, which helps fund care, travel and accommodation for children and their parents.

"The charity pays for treatment, such as proton therapy, that children suffering from cancer can't always get on the NHS. We raised £2,000 at last year's dinner and hope to top that figure," says a very benevolent Patrick Tako of Chez Patrick.

Tako's menu sounds taste bud tantalizing. Patrick's crab and prawn salad, boeuf bourguignon, and fig tart with pistachio ice-cream. A kir on arrival, house wine and coffee is also included for the reasonable sum of £40. Ten pounds goes direct to the charity with Patrick and his staff providing their services for free.

For more information contact Chez Patrick, 7 Stratford Road, W8 020 7937 6388 www.chez-patrick.co.uk



I've got designs on you

A reassuring fixture in Stratford Road for over 20 years, Kensington Design's shop and website have just had a big makeover.

"We have the finest library of reference books for fabrics, so you no longer have to go all the way to Chelsea Harbour," explains Sonita Kember, who along with her hard-working staff, offers a full service providing curtains, blinds, valances and headboards. It's okay if you only want something simple, like a cushion" she points out.

The best recommendation for any company is repeat business and Kember says people come back all the time. "We follow them to their new homes when they move."

Tips for 2012? Kimber thinks we want to cheer ourselves up with a splash of colour, textures – patterns are creeping back too.

For a free consultation contact Kensington Design, 12 Stratford Road, W8 020 7938 2000

www.kensingtondesign.com



LET St Helen's Garden, W2 £800 per week



LET Kensington Court, W8 £800 per week

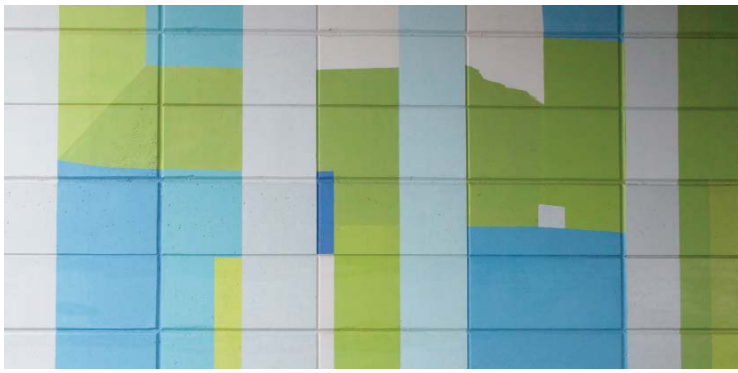


LET Pembridge Crescent, W11 £1,100 per week



LET Ink Building, W10 £475 per week

Our Lettings Department has had the most successful ever start to the year and are looking to continue this run into the summer. So if you are considering renting your property please call, email us or pop into one of our offices to book a FREE valuation.



Spot the wall competition

The Royal Borough Environment Project (RBEP formerly known as the North Kensington Environment Project) works in partnership with the local community to clean up and improve neglected sites in the Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea. One of their recent projects was to rejuvenate this wall somewhere in the Borough. The first person to tell us where it is will win a yummy hamper from St Helen's Foodstore. win@mountgrangeheritage.co.uk

Picture perfect

With several local businesses sadly closing due to the economic downturn, it's a pleasure to see a well-established firm on the same site for 40 years. Frame Set and Match has been a fixture on Notting Hill Gate, with many loyal customers returning time after time to get their pictures framed and mended.



"We'll do any job from replacing a broken piece of glass or putting a new hanging system on the back of a frame, through to something upper-scale, such as providing a 12-carat gold frame costing over £1,000," explains co-owner Arlene Blakeman. She points out that the six staff in the Notting Hill branch try to make anyone who comes into the shop feel special, something that bigger chains aren't able to do.

For those worried about price, Frame Set and Match can offer less expensive ready-made frames, while bespoke frames can be provided if money isn't necessarily an issue.

"All our mounts are acid-free, which is really important when it comes to preserving artwork. We always use UV glass which stops pictures from fading and has a low reflection factor – it looks like there's no glass there at all," she adds.

Frame Set and Match, 113 Notting Hill Gate, London W8
020 7229 7444 www.framesetandmatch.com



It's not too late...

For those of you who haven't had the chance to experience an enchanting evening of music at Leighton House it's not too late.

The Kensington & Chelsea Music Society 2011-2012 season of recitals comes to an end in a few months but there are still three exciting and different concerts left for you to enjoy at this unique venue on the edge of Holland Park.

The first is on Tuesday 20 March with a recital of piano pieces played by award winning Meng Yang Pan. She will be performing Beethoven's Piano Sonata in D Major Op. 10, No.3, Debussy's Estampes, Schumann's Etudes Symphoniques as well as pieces by Liszt. ▶



Meng Yang Pan plays at Leighton House on Tuesday 20 March

▶ This is followed by The Kathleen Ferrier Award Prizewinners' Recital on Tuesday 17 April. Baritone Njabulo Madlala – winner of the 2010 Ferrier Competition, and mezzo soprano Kitty Whately – winner in 2011, sing a programme of works which will include Schubert, Schumann, Debussy and Vaughan Williams with an accompaniment by the sought-after pianist Simon Lepper.



Njabulo Madlala



Kitty Whately



Simon Lepper

The Williamson Clarinet Trio will perform the final concert on Tuesday 22 May. Sarah Williamson and her friends formed a trio of clarinet, cello and piano to explore a rewarding repertoire which will include an evening of Beethoven, Bruch, Brahms and Rota.

Mountgrange Heritage are proud to sponsor KCMS for the sixth year running and you can drop in to any of our offices now to pick up a programme with full details of all of these concerts.

www.kcmusic.org.uk

The Williamson Clarinet Trio

The first three people to call in and pick up a programme can win a FREE pair of tickets.



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