

THE ELEPHANT

MAGAZINE

Issue 8 / Summer 2016

THIS ISSUE

PUMP IT UP

The council's new leisure centre proves a big hit. And now there's free swim and gym for locals

SUMMER FUN

The Elephant bursts into life with a host of free events and festivals this summer

EL VERGEL

The best in Latin American and Mediterranean food served fresh at this family favourite

THIS IS THE ELEPHANT

This is the Elephant.
And this is the Elephant Magazine.

The Elephant Magazine is the publication dedicated to all things Elephant and Castle. We want to celebrate all that is fabulous about our neighbourhood and our community. We want to look back with fondness on the area's past and look forward with optimism to the future. The Elephant is changing and the Elephant Magazine will be following every step of the way.



The Elephant Magazine is published by Southwark Council. We welcome your ideas, comments and contributions, so please get in touch. Editor: Richard Wells / Additional copy: Nikki Spencer / Main photography: Hannah Maulefinch / Designed by Westco Design and printed by Swiss Post / Enquiries: councilnews@southwark.gov.uk



Photography from left to right: East Street market sign; market trader, Strata; elephant statue; Metropolitan Tabernacle; Elephant and Castles band; musician; historic East Street; Jamyang food; LCC exhibition; Ilaria Mezzogorii; Cuming collection vase; market trader and produce; People's Bureau; Rockingham estate; City Hunt; Cinema Museum; Elefest; Metro Central Heights; Baldwins; Imperial War Museum; LCC paint pots; Reg and Jean Brown.

THE LOW-DOWN ON THE LOW LINE

A new street beneath the railway line in Elephant and Castle is set to become a creative hub for the whole borough.

Up to one hundred burgeoning artists, designer-makers and creative start-ups are due to move into Spare Street, the new permanent home of local arts organisation Hotel Elephant.

Spare Street is a new street that has been created from a series of refurbished railway arches (between Steedman Street and Hampton Street) just off Walworth Road.

The project has received funding from the council and The Mayor of London's Regeneration Fund. It represents the first phase of a joint council and Network Rail plan to refurbish underused railway arches as part of a 'Low Line' project, loosely based on the famous High Line in New York.

"We decided to name it Spare Street after the early 20th century artist, Austin Osman Spare, who lived and worked in the area" explains Hotel Elephant director and local artist, Reuben Powell.

"At only 17 years of age, Spare had his work accepted for the Royal Academy Summer Exhibition in 1904. So it's fitting that our project, Spare Street, is all about encouraging young talent" says Reuben. "So many young people come to study creative subjects at London College of Communication and we want them to be able to stay on in the area and work here. Finding affordable studio space is notoriously hard so this will make a huge difference."

But providing studio space is only part of the plan. Spare Street also includes public space, with a coffee bar and gallery, and an extensive programme of talks and events is planned.

Reuben explains "Spare Street is very much about nurturing talent, so we'll help and support young people and provide a springboard for their careers through our Creative Enterprise Programme which includes talks, networking events, skills workshops, mentoring sessions and new commissions for emerging artists."

Spare Street officially opened in June and the first of many artists and creatives are already starting to move in.

"We'll have everyone from fine artists to jewellery makers and graphic designers" says co-director and Camberwell graduate, Emily Woodhouse. "We'll make sure that there's a good mix so they can bounce ideas around and complement each other."

"What's also great about Spare Street is that it's very flexible" she adds. "There's hot-desk space and individual and open-plan workspaces alongside growth space for expanding creative businesses. Also, rather than being hidden away, alone in a studio somewhere, these artists make up one whole street, with a café and public exhibition space that anyone can visit. All of which will help to raise their profile."

To make the most of the space, the original mezzanines have been extended to run the full length of the arches. The first arch is

home to the public space, with the Sidecar Coffee bar downstairs. Upstairs, in the hot-desk area, there are traces of Elephant and Castle's past, including 1970s signage reclaimed from the doctor's surgery on the Heygate estate (where Hotel Elephant was based for a while) along with signs from the bakery and the old Giraffe pub.

"We thought it would be good to have them here" says Reuben "for continuity." Meanwhile, large neon letters taken from the former London Park Hotel (now the site of the Highpoint development) spell out 'HOTEL' over the arches at the front of the building.

"The name 'Hotel Elephant' came from the title of an exhibition I did at the Morley Gallery and it just stuck" explains Reuben, who has lived and worked in the area for over 30 years. He set up Hotel Elephant as a not-for-profit company in 2009, with the aim of providing much needed studio and exhibition space in Southwark. Emily joined in 2011 and, over the years, they've had temporary premises all over Elephant and Castle but this is their first permanent home.

"We're delighted, as it enables us to build on the success of our previous projects. Our mission is to establish Spare Street as a destination which celebrates and encourages creative enterprise and artistic production in Southwark" says Reuben, proudly.

"It feels wonderful" says Emily "I think it's still sinking in that, after years of moving, we don't have to move anymore" she smiles.



Hotel Elephant Arches 1-5, Spare Street, London SE17 3EP
www.hotelephant.co.uk



THERE WERE TIMES WHEN I GOT THE JITTERS BUT I COULDN'T THINK OF ANYTHING ELSE I'D RATHER DO, SO I JUST KEPT GOING.



GOING INTO ORBIT

Hidden away in railway arches just off Walworth Road, Orbit Beers combines owner Robert Middleton's passion for craft beer with his lifelong love of indie music. It's even had the thumbs up from cult American band the Pixies.

Robert Middleton, of Orbit Beers, admits that he knew very little about brewing until four years ago when he embarked on a road trip around his native Scotland in his VW camper van after chucking in his job in the city.

"I'd worked for 26 years in the pensions industry and I couldn't stand the excitement a minute longer" the 53-year-old says, with his tongue firmly in his cheek. "I had no idea what I wanted to do but I knew I never wanted to see an office again."

"I was looking to give the trip a purpose and someone I got chatting to in a bar suggested I tour around all the craft breweries in Scotland, so I did. Until I drank beer in Scotland I wasn't a beer aficionado at all - I used to drink Stella and didn't really think about it - but the independent, craft beers tasted so good. As I learned more about the industry and got to understand more about beer, I realised that this was what I wanted to do."

On his return to London he set about making it happen.

"I'd never run a business before and I still didn't know that much about beer, but I put a business plan together and went for it. There were times when I got the jitters but I couldn't think of anything else I'd rather do, so I just kept going" says Robert.

When premises became available in a double railway arch on Fielding Street he jumped at the opportunity and spent five months converting the former car mechanic's garage into a small craft brewery.

"We put in a new floor and drainage, juiced up the electrics and improved the water flow as we need a lot of water to make beer" Robert explains.

In May 2014, Robert hired Mario as head brewer and they made their first beer a few months later. Assistant brewer, Robbie, joined in October that same year.

"It's very much a team effort" says Robert, adding "it was scary at first."

"London is a crowded market with more than 75 craft breweries but the European styles of beer we do are a bit different. We have grown slowly but steadily and have had lots of warm and positive feedback from customers."

Orbit's tag line is "Hi-Fidelity Brewing" and Robert's love of music is reflected everywhere. Beers have names such as Nico (after the Velvet Underground singer) and Peel (after DJ John Peel) and their limited edition "White Label" beers are named after the new releases that used to be sent to DJs and radio stations.

The company logo is a spindle adaptor from a vinyl 45. "It's one of my earliest memories" says Robert. "I had older sisters and I was fascinated by their records and record player." "I've always gone to gigs and festivals so I wanted to bring music into the business somehow and people seem to really appreciate it" he adds.

Coming up to Orbit's second anniversary, they now brew 1,600 litres of beer twice a week and supply bars and restaurants and shops and pop-up events across London.

Every Saturday during the summer they have 'Tap Room' days so people can see the brewery, meet the team and either drink in or take away.

"It makes the brewery a bit of a community hub" says Robert. "Local people really enjoy it."

Once a month, they create a bigger event, playing a selection of vinyl, provided by Rat Records in Camberwell, and have a food van.

"It's a lovely laidback atmosphere and a bit different from just going to a bar" he adds.

Perhaps not surprisingly, music is always playing while the trio work, although they all have quite different tastes. "For Robbie it's hip hop, Mario likes left-field jazz and for me it's indie. Whoever gets in first gets to play DJ."

Earlier this year, Orbit was asked to brew a one-off beer for an exhibition in Greenwich by legendary art director Vaughan Oliver, who designed the Pixies' album covers. It was a dream come true for Pixies fan Robert.

"Lead singer, Black Francis, surprised everyone by turning up on the opening night so I have a picture of him and me, and my grown-up son who was down from Edinburgh, all drinking Orbit's special Pixies beer" Robert says with obvious pride. "It doesn't get much better than that!"

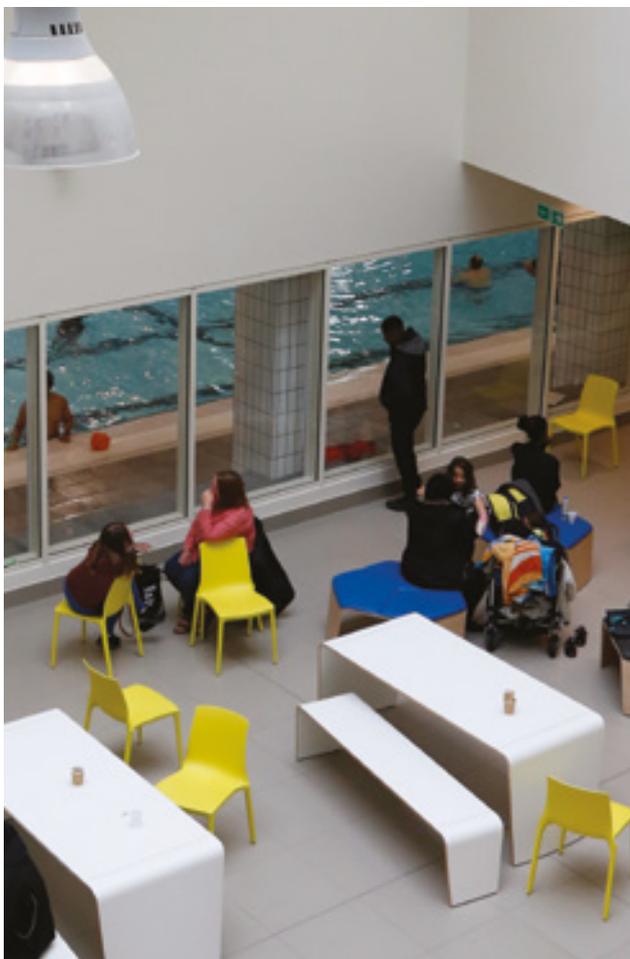
Orbit Beers

225 & 228 Fielding Street, SE17 3HD

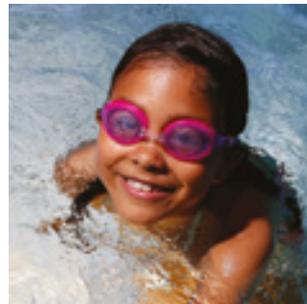
www.orbitbeers.com



The Castle Centre is the Elephant's brand new council leisure centre, which opened on 30 April this year. The £20m centre - paid for with regeneration money - is already proving a big hit with locals.



- Six-lane, 25m swimming pool
- Learner pool
- Four court sports hall
- 140-station gym
- Two exercise studios
- Dedicated spinning room
- Sauna and steam room
- Cafe
- Crèche
- Free Wi-Fi
- Fully accessible



FREE SWIM AND GYM

We recently launched our all day Friday and Saturday/Sunday from 2.00pm free swim and gym sessions for all residents at our six Southwark leisure centres including the Castle.

For more information visit

www.everyoneactive.com/southwarkfreeswimandgym

For more information about facilities and classes at the Castle Centre, visit

www.southwark.gov.uk/leisure

SUMMER IN THE ELEPHANT

Mercato Metropolitano:

All Summer

Borough Triangle, Borough Rd, SE1

Fresh from Milan, Mercato Metropolitano brings a Mediterranean market vibe to the Elephant. A paradise for foodies, the Mercato sells the very best food and drink from small producers working across Italy and the UK. Expect everything from gourmet coffee and craft beer through to fresh fish and specialist charcuterie - all served up with a dollop of music, education and live entertainment.

Find out more at www.mercatometropolitano.co.uk

Artworks Unplugged:

Saturday nights from 7:30pm

Artworks, Elephant Road, SE17

Live music every Saturday night in the courtyard at Artworks. Unplugged boasts the newest and best upcoming acts from near and far. Curated by We're Not Just Cats Records, these Saturday sessions are a chance to catch some fabulous acoustic performances while you enjoy some of the best street food in London.

Find out more at www.theartworks.london

**Plaza Latina: 23 July,
Nursery Row and East Street, SE17**

Carnaval del Pueblo are back with London's best Latin American festival. Expect a riot of live music, food, dance, carnival costumes, arts and crafts and plenty of activities for the kids. Time to brush up your samba moves...

Find out more at www.plazalatina.co.uk



Mercato Metropolitano

The Rhone Touch:

21 - 31 July

London College of Communication

LCC invites you to immerse yourself in the worlds of art, food and wine. This unique exhibition has been designed to recreate the sensory experience of the Côtes du Rhône region through sound, smell and touch. Produced by Interaction Design Arts students in partnership with Côtes du Rhône Wines, it will include plenty of opportunity to sample some great food and drink.

Find out more at events.arts.ac.uk

**Camberwell Fair: 20 August
Burgess Park, Albany Road, SE5**

This year's Camberwell Fair will be held on the Walworth side of Burgess Park. A welcome addition to our part of town, this popular festival includes a main stage featuring live soul, jazz, soca, afro, reggae and rumba plus a second stage to showcase local talent.

Find out more at www.camberwellfair.co.uk

The Lost Zoo:

9 September (7pm - 8:30pm)

Pasley Park, Chapter Road, SE17

A lantern procession of animals made by local children will bring to life the lost world of the Royal Surrey Zoological Gardens. Music, actors and African drummers will all help to tell this fantastic tale of Pasley Park's past. Come dressed as an animal and take a promenade through history.

Find out more at www.southwark.gov.uk/events

Pasley Park Festival Fete:

10 September (12pm to 5pm)

Pasley Park, Chapter Road, SE17

This community fete, featuring crafts, food, music, games plus the famous dog show, has become a summer staple for the people of Walworth. Join in the fun and rediscover the joys of this hidden park.

Find out more at www.southwark.gov.uk/events

PARK LIFE

The regeneration of Elephant and Castle includes several new parks and squares as well as improvements to existing public space. St Mary's Churchyard is just one of the places getting a revamp.

With the arrival of the Castle Centre, Lendlease's One The Elephant development and Realstar's Highpoint tower, St Mary's Churchyard has already seen a lot of change. And it's not just the new homes and infrastructure surrounding the churchyard that's breathing new life into the area but a range of improvements to the park itself.

Funded by the council and its regeneration partner, Lendlease, the park is undergoing a two-phase transformation that includes new trees, new seating and several water

features. The first phase of improvements, completed last year, delivered a new children's playground with a zip wire, trampoline, climbing frame and dedicated under 5s play area.

The next phase, due to complete this autumn, will introduce an ornamental pond and a new, paved plaza featuring a multi-jet fountain at its heart. The new pond, which also includes a central fountain, will greet visitors at the Newington Butts entrance to the park. It will be surrounded by wildlife planting and will make use of recycled rainwater, captured on site.

The plaza will sit further back (on the west side of the park). It will be a paved area with new seating set around a modern fountain, which will feature spotlights and an array of 'interactive' water jets. A number of new trees are also due to be planted, completing the transformation of the park into a fun and relaxed green oasis for everyone to enjoy.

For more information about St. Mary's Churchyard and other parks in Southwark visit:

www.southwark.gov.uk/parks



Homes completed, under construction and in planning	Total homes	Total affordable homes
1 Arch Street	52	52
2 Brandon Street	18	18
3 Clarkson House	103	103
4 Comus Place	37	37
5 Elephant Park: Trafalgar Place	235	54
6 Garland Court	19	19
7 Harper Square	72	72
8 Library Street	40	40
9 Meadow Row	19	7
10 Muntion Road	29	29
11 New Kent Road	21	21
12 O Central	182	44
13 Printworks	164	67
14 Royal Road	96	96
15 Signal Building	38	11
16 South Central	113	25
17 Strata Tower	408	98
18 Vantage Tower	68	20
19 Wardroper House	15	15
20 BASE17	140	84
21 Elephant One	373	0
22 Elephant Park: South Gardens	360	76
23 Elephant Park: West Grove	593	123
24 One The Elephant	284	0
25 Realstar Living	457	179
26 St George's Circus	336	79
27 Two Fifty One	355	65
28 Amelia Street	55	20
29 The Foundry	54	17
30 Rockingham Street	30	10
Total	4766	1481

Affordable housing includes homes provided at social rents or on a shared ownership basis.

KEY

-  Completed
-  Under Construction
-  Planning
-  Opportunity Area
-  Elephant Park
-  Borough Triangle
-  Town Centre

32: Borough Triangle

Borough Triangle is a Peabody scheme to redevelop a 2.5 acre site - providing new homes, commercial space and a new Head Office for Peabody.

7: Harper Square

This Family Mosaic Housing scheme delivered 72 affordable homes including 22 three/four bed units and 8 wheelchair accessible flats.

3: Clarkson House

Completed in January 2013, all 103 homes in this Wandle Housing development were delivered as affordable housing. It is one of the largest developments in the council's rehousing scheme for former Heygate residents.

THE HOUSING MAP

The regeneration of the Elephant is creating thousands of new homes. The council is committed to ensuring at least 35% of all new homes built in Southwark are affordable. This includes at least 1,650 affordable homes for Elephant and Castle. This map shows the housing completed so far alongside those underway.

5, 22, 23: Elephant Park

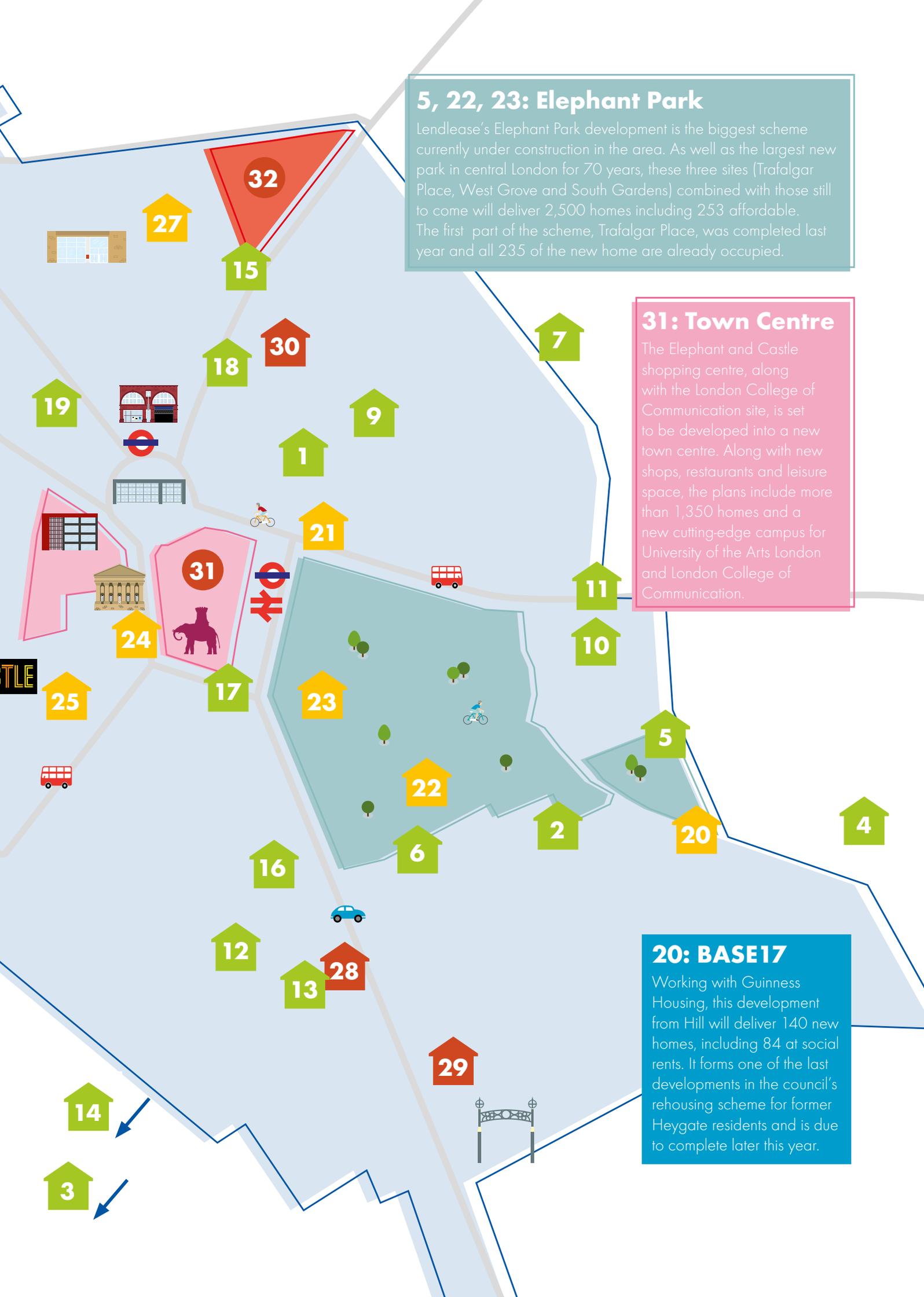
Lendlease's Elephant Park development is the biggest scheme currently under construction in the area. As well as the largest new park in central London for 70 years, these three sites (Trafalgar Place, West Grove and South Gardens) combined with those still to come will deliver 2,500 homes including 253 affordable. The first part of the scheme, Trafalgar Place, was completed last year and all 235 of the new home are already occupied.

31: Town Centre

The Elephant and Castle shopping centre, along with the London College of Communication site, is set to be developed into a new town centre. Along with new shops, restaurants and leisure space, the plans include more than 1,350 homes and a new cutting-edge campus for University of the Arts London and London College of Communication.

20: BASE17

Working with Guinness Housing, this development from Hill will deliver 140 new homes, including 84 at social rents. It forms one of the last developments in the council's rehousing scheme for former Heygate residents and is due to complete later this year.



JOBS AND TRAINING AT ELEPHANT PARK

The council's regeneration partner, Lendlease, is leading efforts to create jobs and training opportunities in Elephant and Castle.

Lendlease are working on several developments in the area, including Elephant Park. So far they've built hundreds of new homes at Trafalgar Place and One the Elephant and have provided workspace for a number of start-up businesses at the Artworks.

In the process, they've created hundreds of new jobs.

Since 2013, the Elephant Park scheme alone has provided work for 479 Southwark residents. Almost half of whom were previously unemployed.

In fact, unemployed residents from every ward in Southwark have now found work on the development. Now, the council and Lendlease are going one step further by opening a new Construction Skills Centre at Elephant Park.

Justin found work at Elephant Park

26 year-old Southwark resident, Justin Kamara, was referred to Lendlease's not-for-profit company, Be Onsite, in 2015.

After a two-day selection event organised by Be Onsite, Justin was given an opportunity to work as a general operative with Careys, one of Lendlease's sub-contractors at Elephant Park. Initially, he completed two weeks' work experience, to gain first-hand experience of what a construction site was like and to find out if the construction sector was for him.

Following his work experience, Careys offered Justin a position and, over the last year, he's worked his way up the team. Justin now works with the engineering team and has taken courses that provide him with the foundations needed to become a fully qualified engineer.

Justin said "I'm still a long way from becoming an engineer, but now I know what I want, I know I'll do it. The progress I've made on site and in my role gives me a great sense of achievement.

I didn't think it would have worked out so easily. Be Onsite, Southwark Works and Careys have done an excellent job in supporting me to achieve my goals."





The Southwark Construction Skills Centre

In addition to the jobs and training opportunities created for local residents by the regeneration, the council and Lendlease have built a new Construction Skills Centre at Elephant Park to further help people to find work.

Throughout the borough, there's a huge amount of construction happening with much more on the way. The idea behind the Skills Centre is to equip local people with the skills necessary to make the most of the job opportunities being created - not just in the Elephant but across the borough.

This innovative new centre will train 500 local residents per year in the skills the construction industry needs. And being based at Elephant Park means the classrooms are at the centre of one of the country's largest regeneration projects as well as in the heart of the borough.

The centre will provide courses suitable for entry-level positions all the way up to management qualifications.

If you're interested in a career in construction you can contact the Southwark Construction Skills Centre on **020 8004 6970** or email **scsc@qtstraining.co.uk**

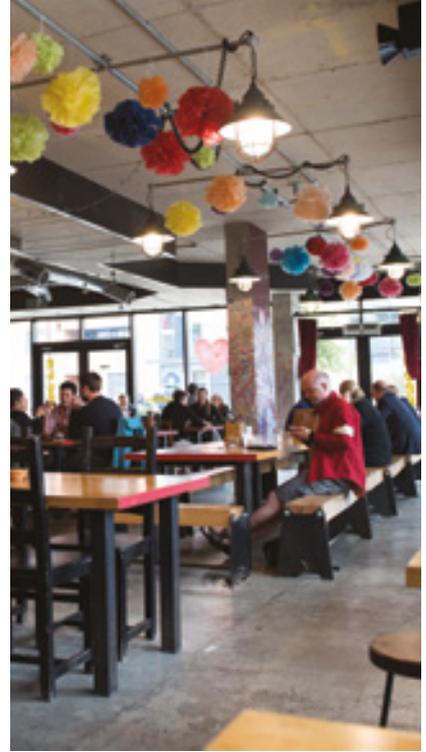


**THE NAME
EL VERGEL
MEANS
AN OASIS
WHERE
EVERYTHING
GROWS
FRESH**



THE BEST OF THE ELEPHANT:

EL VERGEL



Authentic Latin American and Mediterranean food is on the menu at popular local gem, El Vergel.

There aren't many restaurants where they encourage you to write on the walls but the moment you walk into El Vergel, with its large wooden tables and benches, pendant lights and brightly patterned cushions, you can tell that it's an easy-going kind of place.

"It's very much a family business and our regular customers are like family now too. Some of them have been coming nearly every day since we opened" says Stella De Garcia, who started El Vergel as a catering company with her Chilean husband 28 years ago. "All our children have worked with us and our chef has been with us for years" she adds.

"The graffiti dates back to when we had a kitchen and takeaway around the corner on Lant Street. People started writing messages on the wall and it grew from that. It's usually prohibited so it liberates people when they're given permission."

Pens are provided for customers and Stella points out that some have even gone further and donated their own artworks and decorations. There's a mural created by a Chilean artist whose cousin got married at El Vergel, and the huge colourful pompoms that hang from the ceiling were left after another wedding.

They opened their Webber Street restaurant seven years ago. "Our takeaway got really busy with queues all the time, so we wanted a bigger place where people could sit down" explains Stella.

Local designer, Tim Sherwood, project managed the building's conversion and created the industrial chic feel. And it's proved hugely popular, with El Vergel's reputation for good value Latin American food, in a stylish setting, catching the attention of everyone from Time Out to The Observer and The Sunday Times.

Everything at El Vergel is freshly made, from the churrasco queso traditional Chilean steak sandwiches with melted cheese, to the towering plates of colourful salads, Mexican tacos, empanadas and Spanish omelettes.

"The name El Vergel means an oasis where everything grows fresh" explains Stella. "We make all our dishes from scratch using the freshest ingredients from nearby Druid Street Market and we bake our own traditional Chilean bread every morning at 7am."

Customers range from students and tourists to local residents and workers.

"We get a lot of barristers, as we're near the law courts, and lots of designers and professionals too" says Stella. "There are sometimes so many business meetings that it can look like an office until mid morning."

They close at three in the afternoon. "People would like us to stay open later but that would mean bringing in a manager and I don't want to lose that family touch" Stella explains.

As well as catering for clients ranging from the Design Museum to Channel 4, they also hire out El Vergel in the evenings for private parties. "We recently had a 40th birthday party for a local family and we often do weddings - moving back the tables so people can dance" says Stella.

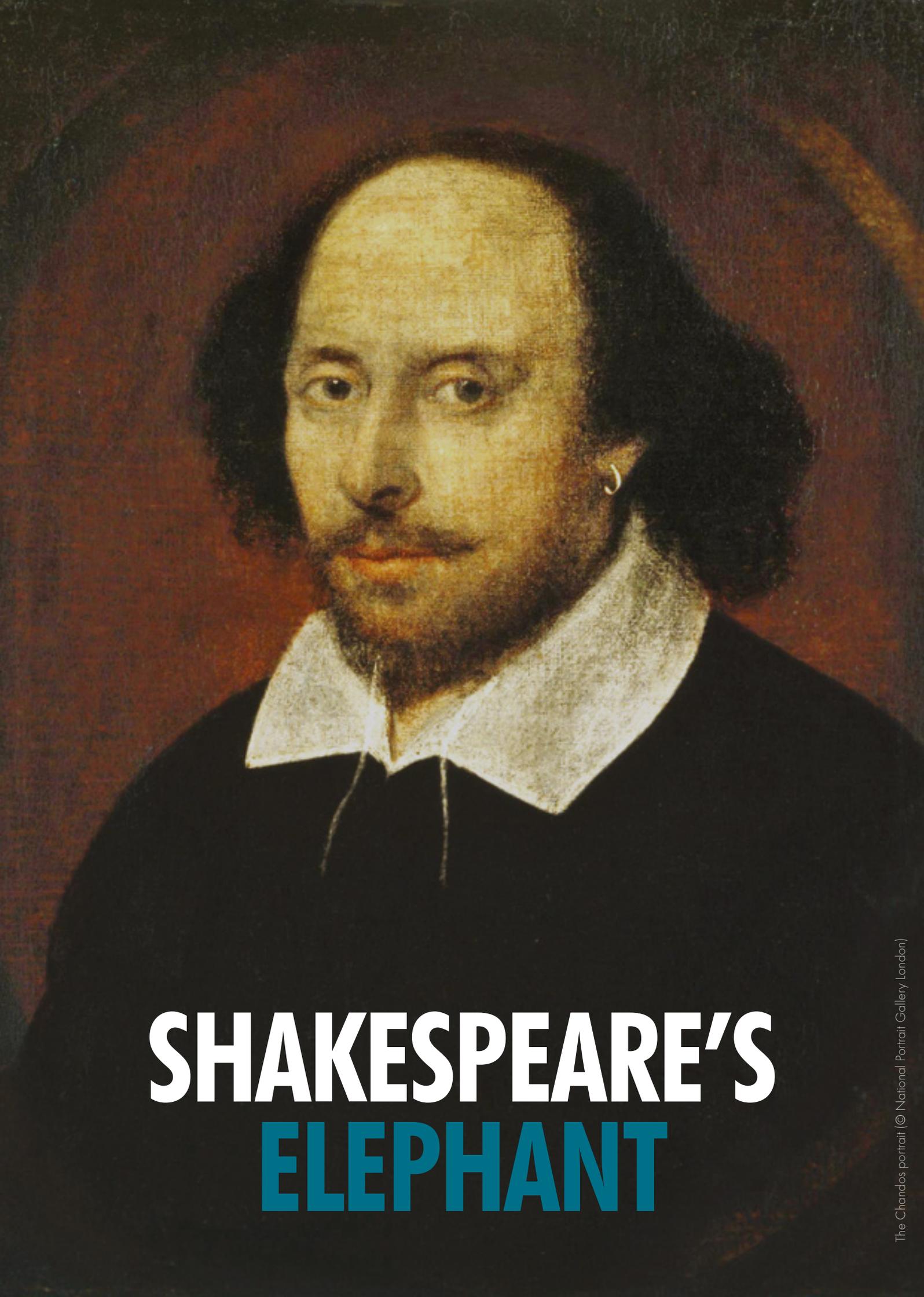
On Saturdays they offer an all-day Latin breakfast menu. We get more families and couples at the weekend and we're busy from the moment we open until we close. It's hard work co-ordinating everything but, even after 28 years, I still enjoy it most when its really busy" says Stella.

**Open Mon – Fri 8am – 3pm,
Sat 10am – 4pm**

El Vergel, 132 Webber Street
SE1 OQL

020 7401 2308

www.elvergel.co.uk



SHAKESPEARE'S ELEPHANT

Shakespeare's 400th anniversary is being celebrated throughout the world this year and nowhere more so than in Southwark. But while Bankside and the Globe theatre might be the centre of attention, we think Elephant and Castle deserves a look in too...

"In the south suburbs, at the Elephant, is best to lodge."

It's often been said that this line - from one of Shakespeare's best-loved comedies, Twelfth Night - refers to lodgings in Elephant and Castle.

While the play itself isn't set in London (or even Britain for that matter) it wasn't unknown for Shakespeare to include a local reference for his London audiences. These were intended either as a kind of in-joke or possibly as an early type of product-placement to supplement box office receipts. In the Henry IV plays, for example, several taverns get a mention, including the Boar's Head in Eastcheap and the Windmill in St George's Fields (also in the vicinity of Elephant and Castle).

Indeed, were Twelfth Night being performed in Bankside (at the Globe, the Rose or the Swan) then, according to this theory, Shakespeare was directing his audience to a hostelry located less than a mile south of where they were sitting (or, quite likely, standing) at that very moment.

However, while the Elephant and Castle does indeed, famously, take its name from an inn in the area, there is no hard evidence of an inn by this name until 1765 - more than 160 years after the play in question was written.

Shakespeare would certainly have known the northern part of Southwark well and it's possible he was referring to another establishment much closer to the Bankside theatres (an inn on Horseshoe Lane has been suggested). Or perhaps he just chanced upon the name - after all, the first documented performance of the play, in 1602, wasn't actually in Southwark at all, but at Middle Temple Hall, on the other side of the river.

Yet, although he might not have actually name-checked the neighbourhood in one

of his scripts, Shakespeare may still have been familiar with Elephant and Castle (or at least the village of Newington as it was then). His plays were performed in London from 1592 onwards and it's likely that he was actually living in Southwark by 1599, the year his company erected the Globe in Bankside.

The Globe was one of a number of new, purpose-built, public theatres that were operating just beyond the boundaries of the City of London, at that time. It was constructed using timber recycled from an earlier playhouse that had been built in Shoreditch in 1576. It is thought that

"In the south suburbs, at the Elephant, is best to lodge"

this original Shoreditch theatre may have been the first of its kind. However, another contender for that title lies a little closer to home.

The Newington Butts theatre, in what we now call Elephant and Castle, could have been operating as early as 1575 and was certainly staging productions by the 1580s. Whether it was purpose-built isn't clear, as the details of this oft-forgotten piece of local history are hazy to say the least. Should any fragments of the theatre survive, it's thought they probably lie somewhere near the junction between Walworth Road and Newington Butts - possibly beneath what was, until recently, the southern roundabout.

One reference to the theatre from 1592 states "by reason of the tediousnes of the waie...plaies have not there been used on working days" which suggests it could be a pain getting around Elephant and Castle even back then.

It was probably the awkward and (at the time) suburban location that eventually put the theatre out of business. But, thanks to documents kept by the theatrical impresario, Philip Henslowe, we know that, while it survived, it definitely staged at least two Shakespeare plays. The records show that both Titus Andronicus and The Taming of the Shrew were performed here in 1594. Furthermore, as Shakespeare was also an actor for the Chamberlain's Men, who put on a number of productions at the Newington playhouse, it's quite possible that the man himself appeared on stage here too.

Although the theatre appears to have closed down later that same year, the area's Shakespeare connections endured a little longer. For Newington was also home (in later life) to Thomas Middleton, a first class playwright

in his own right, and an associate of Shakespeare, who worked on several of his plays.

Best known today for his own writing, Middleton revised the text of both Macbeth and Measure for Measure and also collaborated with Shakespeare, helping to write Timon of Athens and possibly All's Well that Ends Well. Middleton died in 1627, outliving his fellow dramatist by 11 years. He's buried in St Mary's Churchyard, just a stone's throw from the site of the Newington Butts theatre and now, of-course, home to the Castle Centre.

For more local history visit the Southwark Local History Library and Archive at **211 Borough High St.**

See www.southwark.gov.uk/libraries for details.

MY ELEPHANT AND CASTLE

Locals tell us what they love about the Elephant



Madhu

I like the Castle Centre as it's all new and lovely. I go to the silver aqua sessions for older people in the swimming pool. It's a good way to keep fit and it's nice to meet new people too.



Jennie

My husband was born in the old Lambeth Hospital and I've lived round here since the 60s. It's a very cosmopolitan area, which is nice as you meet people from every walk of life. I also like all the parks and amenities. My grandchildren love the zip-wire and trampoline in the new playground in St Mary's Park.



Hollie

I've lived here all my life and I love it - even more now we have the Castle Centre. It's a great place to bring my six-year old. People who don't live here can be a bit dubious about the Elephant but not me. The people are great and it's right in the middle of everything. The only thing we could do with is more clothes shops.



Deborah

I was born in King's College Hospital and grew up here. I moved to Brighton and when I came back, a few years ago, it felt very different - in a good way. It's much easier to get about now you don't have to use the underpasses. As a kid, I was a bit scared of them. I like the fact that the area is being regenerated but I hope there will still be community spaces and we need more social housing.



Elizabeth

I like Elephant and Castle as it's a hub. It has great transport links and you can hop on a bus to anywhere. I like it more now that the road works are coming to completion. I also like the shopping centre as it's got everything you need but it doesn't tempt you to spend money like some other big malls.



Dal

I love the churrasco quesco grilled sandwiches at El Vergel. The food is great and it's a real local gem. I go in the morning with my dog, who's a beagle, and the staff are always so nice to us. I also like Dragon Castle as they do the best dim sum at weekends and it's good value too. I was worried it had shut down but they've just been refurbishing.



Gbegima

Elephant and Castle is always a good place to get something to eat. I like the fast food restaurants down the Walworth Road especially the Best Kebab. There's also so much to do around here. I go to Offbeat, which is a drama place in Camberwell and my nieces have been to dance and hip hop classes at Corsica Studios.



Ousmane

I like Husky Studios on Amelia Street. I work in music production so it's good for rehearsing. I'm sad that The Coronet is closing. I was hoping we could keep it open. I used to play football but I can't anymore so I need to keep fit and the new gym at the Castle Centre is great. I think Elephant and Castle is getting better but the changes have to benefit local residents.



David

I really like La Chatica, the Colombian café under the arches. The empanadas are only a pound. I also like La Bodeguita. They have good music and coffee and there's always a nice vibe. I've just finished studying at LCC but I plan to stay around as I like the area a lot. However, it's changing very quickly and I'm not sure that's so good.

The Elephant Magazine is produced by Southwark Council. We would love to hear your feedback and welcome suggestions for future features. Drop us a line at councilnews@southwark.gov.uk

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