Your magazine from Southwark Council

An inspiration
Celebrating Southwark’s rising stars

Borough of opportunity
How to follow your dreams

New homes, schools and salons
Transforming our borough for everyone

PLUS
Events and fun in the sun this summer
Southwark is a great place to be young: to find your feet, discover your passion, and gain the skills you need for a happy and rewarding life. This summer edition of Southwark Life is dedicated to inspiration and opportunity. We tell the stories of some of our incredible young people who have worked hard to overcome barriers and excel in their chosen field, and also hear from some inspirational adults with sound advice on how to get on in life. I hope young people will find plenty here to spark their curiosity, and give them confidence to chase their dreams.

As the long summer holidays approach, there’s no reason why any child or young person should find themselves at a loose end in Southwark. From free entry to world class galleries and events, to award-winning parks, free swim and gym sessions at all our leisure centres, and fun things happening at all our libraries, there is something exciting happening on our doorstep every day. Dip into this edition of Southwark Life to find out what’s going on this summer in our amazing borough.

And finally, I’m delighted to share news that residents have moved into 70 brand new council homes the council has built in Sumner Road, Peckham. We have committed to delivering 11,000 new council homes by 2043, with 635 already built, to help tackle the housing crisis and make sure all our residents have homes they can be proud of.
Double gong for Peckham kids

A huge congratulations to a very talented group of children from Peckham’s Ledbury and Lindsey housing estates who have won not one, but two awards for their animated film, ‘The Foodbank and the Fidget Spinner’ at the Into Film Awards. The 11 children, ranging in age from 6 to 13 and working together as the Bell Gardens Animation Club, produced the stop-motion animated film to battle the stigma of using food banks and to highlight issues of poverty and bullying.

You can view the short film right here: www.facebook.com/IntoFilm/videos/881683375667298/.

A new home for Southwark Works

Funded by Southwark Council, Southwark Works offers high quality employment support to Southwark residents who are looking for a job or apprenticeship or want to progress in work. The team at Southwark Works also provides a recruitment service to employers looking to appoint local candidates. The office will be moving from its current location at Elephant and Castle shopping centre to 376 Walworth Road, SE17 2NG from Wednesday 24 July 2019. Due to the move, Southwark Works will be closed for a week from 11 to 23 July 2019. During this time you can still contact Southward Works by email info@southwarkworks.com, telephone 07791846285 or 07788288548 or visit their website at www.southwarkworks.com

Does your Disabled Freedom Pass expire in March 2020?

If your Freedom Pass is set to expire in 2020, please keep an eye out over the coming weeks and months for a letter from us asking you to renew your pass. Once you receive your letter, please follow its instructions and complete the included form so that a new pass can be ordered for you by the time your current one runs out.

London Bridge and Borough Market incident support

Many people can be affected by traumatic events and, as a community, we want to make sure we support survivors of, and people bereaved through terrorism. The emotional impact of witnessing or being affected by a terrorist incident can be felt for days, weeks, months, or even years.

Following the second anniversary of the terrorist attacks in London Bridge and Borough Market, and the recent inquests, we feel it’s important we continue to highlight a number of support services that can help you if you feel affected by them.

For full details of the support on offer, please visit www.southwark.gov.uk/londonbridgesupport

Tate of the art

Cementing Southwark’s status as one of the UK’s key cultural hubs, Tate Modern, one of the borough’s crown jewels, was named the UK’s most popular tourist attraction last year, with 5.86 million visitors passing through its doors in 2018. With high frequency and a selection of free exhibitions, why not give it a visit over the summer months? If you’re looking for other calm and welcoming spaces to spend time this summer, why not visit one of our fabulous libraries - Canada Water library is our busiest, having welcomed 435,617 guests in 2018-2019. With a huge selection of books, activities and classes on offer, our libraries have something for everyone. Have you felt entertained this summer?

Find out more about our libraries at www.southwark.gov.uk/libraries or follow them on Twitter @SouthwarkLibs

Your Future, Your Ambition

In October more than 1,000 young people from Southwark and across London will attend the “Your Future Your Ambition” event at the Emirates Stadium. YFYA is an award winning initiative developed to inspire, excite and engage diverse talent in pursuing careers in science, technology, engineering, arts and maths (STEAM). YFYA provides younger age groups (7-14yrs) with exciting and inspiring activities, whilst providing the older students (15+ yrs ) with access to Blue Chip organisations through key workshops and exposure designed to provide the key tools top companies are looking for in respect of STEAM based careers. The event is taking place on Thursday 10th October 2019 at Emirates Stadium, London, and anyone wanting more information can contact info@yfa.co.uk or visit www.yfa.co.uk

Dolly Parton’s Imagination Library

If you have a young child and live in Southwark, you can make bedtime into book time by signing up to Dolly Parton’s Imagination Library. Your child will receive a book in the post, every month, until their fifth birthday – absolutely free. It’s a free book scheme that launched in 1995, brought to the borough through a partnership between Southwark Council, local company DialAFlight and the Dollywood Foundation. Register at www.imaginationlibrary.com/check-availability/

For news and events follow us on social media or find out more at southwark.gov.uk/news
Will you work with us to make all our estates Great Estates?

The council is excited to launch its Great Estates programme – a new approach to working with residents to shape improvements and investments to our council estates based on our guarantee that every Southwark estate is clean, safe and cared for. We want to hear your ideas about how to help make our estates great places to live.

For a flavour of the kinds of ideas we’re keen to back in our pilot programme, take a look at the Great Estates Guide, which contains the kinds of projects we think might enhance estates – from better lighting and painting, to public art and gardening projects, though all kinds of ideas will be considered.

Currently, £970k is available this year and we hope to also identify other external funds. For more info and to suggest ideas to improve your estate, go to www.southwark.gov.uk/greatestates

Cherry Garden Primary School celebrates official opening

Students and staff celebrated the opening of their fantastic new school last month with a visit from their local MP, Harriet Harman and the Mayor of Southwark. The completely rebuilt school can now accommodate 85 pupils with special education needs including children with profound and multiple learning disabilities. The Peckham school is home to specialist facilities including a trampoline room for rebound therapy, a hydrotherapy pool with climate control, a sensory room, art room, music room, music therapy room, food technology room and two soft play rooms.

Peckham residents were delighted to visit their new council homes in Sumner Road last month, as they prepared to move in to these brand new, high quality flats and maisonettes.

outhwark Council has promised to deliver 11,000 new council homes by 2043, and the 70 new homes at council rent in Sumner Road are the latest to be unveiled. The council has already delivered 635 brand new council homes in the last six years.

Resident Claire Fearon is delighted with her new home. She and her partner were living in nearby Blackthorne Court with their four children. Claire said, “This is just amazing; the six of us were squeezed into a tiny one bedroom flat with my poor son sleeping in the kitchen. On top of this I have hurt my back carrying the buggy up several flights of stairs everyday. Now we have a ground and first floor maisonette, with three bedrooms. I can’t tell you what a difference this will make to us. The kids are so excited too – they can’t wait to move into their new home.”

The Sumner Road development consists of 70 homes including 11 especially designed for wheelchair bound or disabled tenants. The ground and first floor maisonettes have a unique look to them in that the living room balcony also opens onto a beautifully landscaped communal area, which is likely to become a focal point for families. A new community hall has also been built to give residents a place to meet and get to know their neighbours.

As Southwark Life goes to press, virtually all the tenants have moved into their new flats, and residents in other parts of the borough are also looking forward to moving into new council homes. Opening soon will be new homes in Odessa Street in Surrey Docks, Sceaux Gardens in Camberwell, Meeting House Lane in Peckham and Tenda Road in Bermondsey.

Sumner Road opens its door to new council house tenants

Stylists at Peckham Palms

Our cover star Augusta Sesay, is just one of many local hairstylists who are loving the brand new Peckham Palms on Bournemouth Close, commissioned by the council. Specialising in Afro-Caribbean hair and beauty, the Palms is open 10am-10pm every day except Sunday (11am-7pm). Many local hair stylists have moved there from Blenheim Grove, where work to restore Peckham Rye Station Square is underway. Stylist Muna Williams was one of the first businesses to move to the Palms in February. She said, “It is great here, I love this place. It’s made such a difference to my life.”
But young people often say that they lack inspiration, positive role models, or just don’t know where to go for advice and support.

In this extended feature, we hear from a small selection of young people from Southwark who have overcome challenges to make it big in their chosen career or vocation, and ask them what they think was the key to their success. We also give a taster of the many schemes and services on offer that can help young people get a foot on the ladder to a rewarding career.

Who were your biggest inspirations growing up?

Charlie: “My biggest inspirations were my parents. They instilled confidence in me, they were always supportive of everything that I did. They made sure that I knew the opportunities that were around me and I needed to take advantage of every opportunity that came my way.”

George: “I grew up with a single parent mother so I saw her work super hard for everything and make sacrifices. That work ethic really brushed off on me. I was exposed to numerous groups such as the Amos Bursary that normalised successes. It allowed me to see lots of people doing well across London and it made me feel like I could achieve so much more.”

What were the biggest barriers you’ve had to overcome?

G: “One barrier could be understanding the languages in certain environments. When you go into the corporate world they speak a certain language and if you can’t communicate in that language it can be difficult to establish relationships.”

C: “Confidence is really important, having the confidence to walk into any corporate, formal environment, and be able to adapt yourself to feel comfortable in that environment. My school, Globe Academy, was very good at instilling confidence so we could go into any place, any interview and perform at our best.”

What advice would you give to someone thinking of going into business?

G: “The first thing I would say would be to download the Motivez app and get exposure to different environments so you’re pushed out of your comfort zone. You have to go to networking events.”

C: “I’d echo that. Everything I’ve learned is because I’ve pushed myself outside of my comfort zone and taken the opportunities that were in front of me. Nine times out of ten you’ll find yourself in an unfamiliar situation, which you might not like, but the only way you’re going to learn is by putting yourself in these situations.”

What have been the highlights of your careers so far?

G: “Being part of Southwark Scholars. Not having to worry about the debt was a big weight off my shoulders. It’s allowed us to take opportunities and calculated risks to benefit our community.”

C: “Gaining the scholarship in the first place was an amazing achievement, it was something I never thought would be possible.”

The Southwark Scholars

George and Charlie are both former Southwark Scholars (the council paid for their university fees) and now work together at Motivez, a company George founded while at university. Motivez is an app that collates the best events across London for young people to help improve their career prospects.

The applications for the Southwark Scholars have closed for the coming academic year, but you can find out more about the scheme at www.southwark.gov.uk/scholarships
Amelia, Simona and Adaobi from Southwark Pride basketball club have just celebrated national success after becoming under-18 league champions. They are part of an elite pathway that sees them dedicate 20 hours a week to basketball practice and compete in the Women’s Elite Academy Basketball League with their school team.

Do you see yourselves as role models?

Adaobi: “I feel like we are role models, we’re not the same as every single other young girl in our community so people do look up to us, especially the younger girls at our club. Even in school as well, you have to set an example of how to behave and how to act.”

Amelia: “I think we hold each other accountable as well, we’re role models to each other. It’s not just about basketball, they teach you so much more about life that’s so important and for your confidence especially for girls.”

What advice would you give younger girls who think sport may not be for them?

Amelia: “Everyone has opinions about everything you do and sometimes you’ve just got to forget about that and do what makes you happy. Have belief in yourself and find something that can help you because obviously school is stressful, life is stressful but having something like basketball or whatever sport you want to do is really important.”

Simona: “I think girls should continue with sport because it teaches you so much more, life skills, manners, lots of things. Even if they do decide it’s not for me they’ve learned that extra bit, you’ve learnt how to be a good person for the future. If you enjoy it carry on!”

Tell us about your journey with Cambridge House

“I was referred to Cambridge House when I was 16 and it was the best decision I’ve ever made. From day one I knew it was the right place for me and I’ve had so much support during my time here to help me grow a professional manner.”

What was the biggest challenge you faced?

“I used to have a mind-set of “I can’t do it” or “I’m going to quit” and I would easily give up on things. But I had that encouragement to give more of an effort when trying. I found it difficult to grow relationships with people and keep them strong, but at Cambridge House everyone’s like a big family and it’s easy to get along with people.”

How much of a difference has the support you received had on your journey?

“It has impacted me in a positive way because it gave me employment skills and the employment mind set of understanding work isn’t just me, it’s also other people and you have to build relationships with people. Along my journey I’ve always taken on board what they said and it’s led to great things.”

What advice would you give to a young person in your position?

“I would 100% recommend Cambridge House – different types of support will depend on individual needs, but try to see if it’s right for you. I would also recommend calling the National Careers Service. Their knowledge is amazing and when it comes to different types of jobs they know everything!”

The Youth Empowerment Programme run by Cambridge House, a local charity, provides long-term, intensive support for marginalised 16 to 21 year-olds. The programme aims to help young people overcome barriers, teaching them the resilience and life skills needed to succeed.

If you would like more information about the programme contact Rachel Zipfel at 0207 358 7716 or rzpfel@ch1889.org or visit www.ch1889.org/our-work/youth-empowerment
Kye Whyte started his career in Peckham and now trains in Manchester as part of the British cycling programme. Most recently he won his first ever World Cup title to add to his various British and European titles. Southwark boasts a strong record when it comes to BMX with 70% of the team coming from the borough.

How did you get into BMX?

"I started when I was two or three and my older brother was going to Brixton BMX club and in my first year when I was five I got British Champion and I did that every year until I was 13.

"Last year I got second at the European Games in Glasgow, and at the World Cup in Argentina in September - where the Olympic points system started - I made the two finals that gave me points towards qualifying for the Olympics. That was the first time I’d made the World Cup finals before.”

What's been the highlight so far?

"Winning the World Cup in Manchester was the best day of my life. I had a strong belief I was going to win, my times were the fastest and I was feeling good in myself. In the future my goal is to win at the Olympics and win some medals at the world championships."

What advice would you give to other young people?

"The best piece of advice is you could do so much with your life just riding a bike, for someone else that could be football or cricket. I’ve always thought in the back of my head that’s right, I can do so much from it. It’s always been in my head that I want to make it in BMX.

"Being from the area and with everything that’s going on I hope I’m a role model to people in my area, knowing where I’m from it’s very hard to get into the sport I do. You can get the mick taken out of you, I’ve had a lot of people say I ride a kid's bike before. For anyone thinking about getting into BMX or sport generally I’d say have fun. At a young age it’s all about having fun, if you’re winning even better but just has as much fun as you can."

The council’s world class BMX Track London is the proud home of Peckham BMX Club who run an enormously successful weekly programme. It offers the perfect stepping stone for riders who have attended learner classes and wish to further develop their riding experience, for more information about the BMX track, go to www.southwark.gov.uk/bmx

For further information regarding Peckham BMX please email pkhambmx@ymail.com

The Inspirational Intern

Mamusu Kamara, aged 18, was one of the 500 summer interns taken on last year in Southwark. Currently in the middle of her exams at City Of London Academy, last summer she completed a four week paid internship at property company British Land, Canada Water Masterplan developers, through the Southwark Career Ready Programme.

"I was very nervous when I first went there, but they were so good to me that I felt completely at home from day one.

"I grew up in Bermondsey so it was great that I spent time working on the Canada Water Project, just down the road from me. I was particularly keen to get involved in the community aspect, the social regeneration of the area, the building of houses – all things I have grown up with and now I found I could make my own, albeit small, contribution to it.

"I would recommend an internship to all students. It’s a great way of gaining first hand experience of working in a professional organisation, and just learning day to day things, which will ultimately help you in your future career. It is also a brilliant addition to make to your CV, and hopefully future employers will be impressed too."

To find out more about Career Ready, go to www.careerready.org.uk

If this article has inspired you, there are plenty more opportunities to get your teeth into in Southwark including:

Apprenticeships: www.southwark.gov.uk/apprenticeships
Careers advice for 13-19 year olds: www.southwark.gov.uk/southwarkchoices
Construction skills training: www.southwarkconstructionskillscentre.com
Employment: www.southwarkworks.com
Tell us about your journey into work.

“My friend told me about St Giles Trust and I went along and met someone who helped me build up my CV and apply for jobs. They helped me with training and gave me experience, which gave me more confidence. I applied for the job at Lumberjack café in December last year and was successful. I enjoy working here; it’s a very busy environment and I’ve learnt to juggle so much at once. It helps me to experience working in a fast-paced environment and I enjoy meeting lots of different types of people. Working at Lumberjack has helped me to improve my communications and team work skills, and to build up experience.”

What do you think has been the biggest barrier you’ve had to overcome?

“Applying for jobs was the hardest part. Not every job I applied for gave me the opportunity to have an interview. I don’t think everyone is confident enough in interviews, but you can build it up and come out of your shell.”

What inspires you?

“My siblings inspire me – they gave me motivation to be like them and succeed. Seeing people around me also motivated me more to get a job. I knew if I gave up then I wouldn’t succeed. I’ll always try my hardest no matter what the circumstances.”

What impact did the support you received from St Giles Trust have on you?

“It made me confident. St Giles helped me with a lot of different things, including training. They helped me to feel more experienced. If it wasn’t for the training I wouldn’t be here now.”

What advice would you give to other young people?

“I would definitely recommend St Giles Trust! They motivated me – it wasn’t hard to get a job because of their help and advice. “Chase your dreams because no matter how bad it is it will never last forever.”

Southwark Council has run several initiatives to help young people across the borough want to start up their own businesses – offering a range of support from advice from business experts to a cash grant.

Bella Tran started her business, ChickenWingsandChins Art, with support from one of these initiatives. Bella is an artist who sells prints of her artwork and does commissions. Eventually she plans to expand into putting her art on clothing, homeware and different things.

What made you want to start a business?

“I started my business because I wanted to share my experience and turn negativity into positivity. I’ve learnt to motivate and inspire people.”

What are the biggest challenges that you have had?

“Staying motivated. There have been times when I struggled to motivate myself because I realised I needed time for myself. Mental health was a big issue and the environment I was in – my challenge was myself and I have overcome a lot.”

How has support from the council helped you?

“It has helped me to start my business, get the equipment I need, software to make the prints. I have been learning to motivate myself, feeling more confident in what I do and having different experiences. It has also helped me to be more creative.”

What are your top tips for young people starting their own businesses?

“Just start it and see where it takes you. Even if you don’t see results straight away keep going and being consistent, you’ll get somewhere and sometimes you need to give yourself time for yourself to process, when you are ready get back onto it.”

What is happening next with your business?

“Hopefully I will have my art on different things and making a living from it. I want to share my experience and turn negativity into positivity.”

Bella says her ambition is to be more consistent, you’ll get somewhere and sometimes you need to give yourself time for yourself to process, when you are ready get back onto it.”

The Entrepreneur

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The Southwark Pioneers Fund, due to launch later this year, will help grow innovative commercial and social enterprises, as well as revenue-generating charities, through access to finance, business support and enhanced access to affordable workspace. Watch this space!

The Barista

Leon, aged 18, came to the St Giles Trust GROW (Generating Realistic Opportunities for Work) project after a difficult time at college. He struggled with a long term health condition that had kept him off school, he had little work experience and wasn’t sure what he wanted to do. With the project’s support, Leon was introduced to the world of hospitality and undertook training with an agency. He applied for a job in a local coffee shop where he now works. In addition, St Giles supported Leon to find a role with a virtual reality based training company, where he is learning innovative new skills.

What do you think has been the biggest barrier you’ve had to overcome?

“I wasn’t sure what I wanted to do. With the project’s support, Leon was introduced to the world of hospitality and undertook training with an agency. He applied for a job in a local coffee shop where he now works. In addition, St Giles supported Leon to find a role with a virtual reality based training company, where he is learning innovative new skills.

You can find out more about the St Giles Trust on their website at www.stgilestrust.org.uk

They are based in Southwark at 64-68 Camberwell Church Street, SE5 8JB

Call 020 7708 8000 (please be aware that all calls are monitored for quality and training purposes) or email info@stgilestrust.org.uk for more information.
Local resident Gwen Harris spotted herself and her family in an historic photo of the Bellenden area.

When these historic photographs were installed outside Belham School as part of a council Cleaner Greener Safer project, a local resident got a lovely surprise.

Sonia Case, Executive Head Teacher at The Belham School, said: “There were two older ladies perusing the pictures and we struck up a conversation - it turns out they lived in Bellenden Road, went to the school and one of them was featured in the street party pic - she was also able to point out her mum, her brother, and her best friend, Barbara.”

Sonia invited Gwen Harris, the lady in the picture, and a number of her friends and ex alumni of the school, for a tour. Gwen said: “It is amazing how it has been transformed into a beautiful, modern, well run school, with not a blackboard or piece of chalk in sight.”

Gwen still lives in the house on Bellenden Road, where she was born. She said: “I have faint memories of my first five years, but I do remember sleeping in our Anderson Shelter, which was buried in the garden. Bombs destroyed many houses in the area but, thank God, there was no direct hit on ours. We did however, have some bomb damage, our windows were blown in, with glass falling all around us where we were sleeping.

Despite rations, Gwen’s mum was very resourceful. “We never went hungry, people made casseroles and stews they’d go down and get meat or something! Mum was always making a suet pudding or a spotted dick. I do remember mum coming back from shopping, very excited, because she’d got some bananas! I do remember having my first banana. I was very excited about that.”

The council provides Cleaner Greener Safer funding for local improvement projects. Each year local people are invited to propose ideas, which are considered at public meetings run by local councillors. For more info go to www.southwark.gov.uk/cleanergreensafer
In previous editions of Southwark Life we have heard from some incredibly inspirational people, including Rio Ferdinand and Tom Daley, about their paths to success, and why Southwark is a great place to nurture your talents.

But out of the spotlight, there are countless amazing people doing incredible things in Southwark, often overcoming significant barriers personally, and helping others to do so too. Here we introduce you to three great role models for our young people, who work hard every day to challenge stereotypes and demonstrate what is possible when you work hard and believe in yourself.

Councillor Jason Ochere grew up in Southwark, and was a pupil at English Martyrs Primary School off the Old Kent Road, and St Thomas the Apostle College in Peckham. He graduated from The University of Manchester with a BA(Hons) in Politics, Philosophy and Economics, before doing a Masters at Oxford University. He now combines being a councillor for St Giles Ward with a communications career.

Why do you think you’ve been so successful at what you do?

“During my days at school I always told myself that the competition I faced was never in my immediate classroom. I always worked with the mind-set that I was competing with other students nationally – as such, this drove me to work harder and fuelled my appetite to strive for excellence. My Christian faith has also played a huge role in keeping me grounded and motivated. In Southwark we benefit from rich cultural diversity of which faith plays a huge role in the lives of our residents across the borough. I am hugely grateful that I have been a beneficiary of this. As a younger person I spent a lot of my time speaking to older people, to better understand what advice they would give to their younger selves. From this I was able to learn from their mistakes and navigate how to best make the most of the opportunities afforded to me.”

Who did you find inspiring when you were younger – who drove you to succeed?

“I found my peers inspiring. During secondary school and sixth form I was surrounded by ambitious young people who were keen to break down barriers. As such, I was always pushed by those around me to not just aim for an average standard. I would describe it as healthy competition.”

What was the biggest barrier you overcame to get to where you are today?

“Perception and statistics! The biggest barrier was proving people wrong and defying the perception and statistics commonly associated with young black men that come from Camberwell/Peckham.”

What advice would you give to a young person wanting to be the best they can be?

“The one piece of advice I would give to a young person, which is the same piece of advice I would give to my younger self – is strive as hard as possible now and make it your ambition not to regret what you could have easily avoided by making the most of the opportunities you have in front of you. Avoid the avoidable and don’t use laziness to learn the hard way.”

What has been the highlight of your life/career so far?

“No doubt, getting elected [as a councillor] last year in the borough I was born and raised in!”
How did you start writing?

“I studied Drama and Theatre Arts at Goldsmiths before joining two other women to write and perform comedy sketches, including 5 years at the Edinburgh Fringe. But eventually I stopped enjoying performing and started to focus on writing. I was working on dramas, community plays and even pantomimes.”

When did you first discover Emilia (Bassano, Shakespeare’s muse and mistress) and what made you want to write a play about her life?

“I started working on Emilia in August 2017. Michelle Terry (Artistic Director at The Globe) wanted a season of plays where characters called Emilia popped up, or women who were like her, and she wanted a play about her. I had a read of some of the research and realised how amazing she was and it felt very important to make a play that centred on her and told her story.

“There is very little we know about her. Unless you had done something of note, like Shakespeare, or something you had done was recorded in court – like when she represented herself to get her inheritance when her husband died or when she refused to pay rent for her school – nothing was written down about your life.

“I call it a memory play, rather than a history play. It’s not direct. There are different ways to tell the story and with so little information about her we had to draw our own assumptions.”

Emilia is showing how Shakespearean plays don’t have to be traditional, do you think there’s more that can be done to reach wider audiences with this type of theatre?

“Definitely! People feel shut out of history because of the way it is taught. What was wonderful about working with the Globe research team was getting to interpret how we saw things. That is what all historians are doing, basing what they see on their own experiences and making their conclusions. We looked at what was possible. It was fun to step into her shoes and get a feel of what it was like to be her, to really hear her and understand her.”

What advice would you give to young people wanting to get involved in writing?

“Look around at what is going on locally – there is a lot happening in Southwark with places like Theatre Peckham and the different things they do there. One of the things I suggest is to see and read things. People can sometimes feel they are shut out of theatre but if you look around you have places like the Young Vic doing lucky dip tickets where you can get decent seats for shows at a discount price. Go and see local stuff. The National Theatre has a great bookshop for plays to read, also the Bunker Theatre has a writing nook full of plays. The Bunker has very affordable tickets for new writing shows and you can get standing tickets at The Globe for just £5. There are other organisations like Arts Emergency or the Black Ticket Project that partner up with places like the National Theatre to encourage people from all backgrounds to give theatre a try. I recognise theatre can feel confronting and people feel they don’t belong but I would encourage people to look at these schemes and look for plays that would be up your street.

“Connect up with writers and performers who are interested in the same things as you. Tweet and DM writers. I am always happy to respond to people looking for advice. Find a group of people you want to collaborate with, the people who inspire you, and put shows on together. Speak to local venues about putting on shows. I always said a performance can be one person performing to one person. It can be quite scary, especially in a world you feel you don’t belong in but lots of people feel like that so surround yourself with your own community of people who like creating things. Every time you perform you build up skills. You need to practice and find your voice. Sometimes you get lucky but mostly you have to work and work.”

Southwark Council is trying to ensure local people have the opportunity to go to shows and events across the borough, to have access to culture. Why do you think it is important to have these opportunities?

“Theatre and the arts are often the first things that get cut when money becomes short, they are seen as luxuries. But if we don’t have theatre and art what do we have? Human beings are storytellers, whether through media or looking at history. We need it to remind ourselves who we are, pick us up when we’re low and develop ourselves.

“More theatre is showing representation, it is so important to be able to see ourselves, or elements of our story, on stage and relate to it. It’s like medicine for the soul, it’s so important to our existence.

“Particularly for children it is essential to see what is possible. It can be therapeutic and help them work through things they have no other way to work through. Theatre is representative of life and a cathartic process, especially for children. To heal as a society we need to value the arts and make sure the access is there for all, that is a very important part of what I am trying to do.”

To find out more about the council’s plans to offer all school children the chance to go to the theatre, go to www.southwark.gov.uk/news/2019/mar/council-announces-free-theatre-trips-for-all-southwark-primary-school-children

THE PLAYWRIGHT

Peckham-based playwright Morgan Lloyd Malcolm won acclaim last year when her hit play Emilia premiered at Shakespeare's Globe. We spoke to her about her own inspirations and what advice she has for budding writers.

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The Journalist

Ashley John-Baptiste is a Cambridge graduate and a BBC reporter and presenter. He also grew up in care in Southwark. Ashley is passionate about helping children in care and his reports often look into the issues affecting them, as well as other hard-hitting issues like the Grenfell fire. He wants care leavers to believe in themselves and make a great success of their lives, as he has done, which is why he is working with Southwark Council to organise the Be Inspired event for looked after children this summer.

You didn’t have the easiest start in life Ashley – what do you think spurred you on to becoming such a successful adult?

Ha, well it’s nice to be thought of as successful! I suppose it was a number of factors. I moved homes five times as a looked after child, but it was my last foster home that had the biggest impact, because I had a foster dad who was a really positive male role model for me. He was responsible, took care of his family, and was consistent with work – all good virtues. I think when you don’t have a positive role model it creates negative space. Having a positive role model for me was life changing. It propelled me to take opportunities like school seriously. My foster family also introduced me to a great community through their church and suddenly I had aunties and uncles who were inspirational and made me believe I had potential. I think it’s common for looked after children to struggle with self-worth, and being around people who believe in you really makes a difference.

Tell us a bit more about why you wanted to work with the council to organise the Be Inspired event....

I was expelled from school and just wasn’t aware of my academic potential as a child, but I was given an opportunity – a moment in time – when that all changed for me. I was invited by the Sutton Trust charity to attend a summer school at Cambridge University, and was suddenly exposed to a world class institution, which I knew I wanted to be a part of. That gave me the drive to work hard at school with the aim of studying at Cambridge.

I want all looked after children to have a moment like that. A moment of inspiration that sparks aspiration can change the trajectory of a young person’s life.

When you leave care you are confronted with the harsh reality of life and can become overwhelmed with the immediacy of day to day living, writing off any long-term goals. It’s important we change that to give young people practical tools to succeed, and I’m really pleased to be working with Southwark Council as they are the primary influence on looked after children in the borough. We want to build on all the great work social workers do to support care leavers, and create a platform for a vast array of really inspirational speakers who will hopefully give the young people a moment where they think “Oh my days, I want to do that!”

What was the biggest barrier you overcome to get to where you are today?

I think it’s the deeply ingrained view of what looked after children can achieve – the stigma is so strong. I’m a journalist and I hear the stats about care leavers who are homeless or in prison but you don’t hear a lot of positive stories. I battled with my sense of self, to believe I could do something. I’d never heard of care leavers who had been to Cambridge, and I had real imposter syndrome at first. I’d like the next generation to have a much better sense of what they can achieve, which is why we need to create a space where young people feel they have something important to give the world.

What advice would you give to a young person wanting to be the best they can be?

To care leavers I would say, do not let the care system define you. Define yourself by your vision, your hopes and your dreams. Don’t judge yourself for the worst thing you’ve done or messed up as there’s so much more to you.

Do the things you want to do even if you feel afraid – apply for that course, go to that open day, read that book.

What has been the highlight of your life/career so far?

I think it would be being nominated for the Royal Television Society Young Reporter of the year. I was shortlisted with two other young journalists, and to be in that room with so many of the country’s best journalists including Jon Snow was a real privilege.

Another highlight was travelling to Uganda recently for work and charity. I was blown away by the resilience, joy and gratitude of the children and young people I met there, and it helped to remind me that despite everything I’ve been through I am still really privileged. I have access to clean water, a free health service, education, and meeting these amazing kids reminded me that we should all really make the most of what we’ve got.

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SATURDAY 13 JULY  
11AM TO 7.30PM  
Mint Street Park, off Southwark Bridge Road/ Marshalsea Road, Southwark, London SE1 0EY  
www.mintstreetmusicfestival.info  
FREE  

This FREE event combines a quality line-up of live music with a relaxed and welcoming atmosphere in Mint Street Park, a lovely park just two minutes from Borough Tube, off Marshalsea Road. It's the sixth year the festival has taken place. The brilliant line-up this year includes Colombian/Cuban music from Kalima Project, Power Pop from Voodoo Radio, Folk from Away with the Faeries, Afroswing/Hip hop from Mr Jayvic, Surf Rock from Sun Bloom, Acoustic Indie from Jennifer Kamikaze, award-winning Latin dance displays from Los Rumberos dance academy, and choirs, community music groups, dance groups and spoken word performances. Music and dance acts for children include Boppin’ Bunnies, plus there’s Heart in Art Face-Painting by Kes and activities with JuPlay UK. The festival is single-use plastic free and we’ve been collecting empty crisp packets to make a giant Plastic Ocean mural – come and join in!

This year’s Camberwell Fair will welcome around 4,000 people from Camberwell, surrounding areas and all over London to come together to meet each other, eat, drink, dance, trade and celebrate. Camberwell has changed a lot since the original fairs of the 13th Century, and the Fair of course reflects the people of modern Camberwell, but the spirit is the same – a chance for the whole community to come together and unite.

The Wormfood stage will welcome internationally renowned artists: African, jazz, soul, dancehall and psychedelic music. The Camberwell Stage, programmed in partnership with local music charities and showcase organisations, will provide a platform for emerging artists. Local market specialists will curate a market with over 30 market stalls showcasing local businesses and organisations, plus a food market, bars, DJ stage run by local restaurant and bar Louie Louie, and games for both children and adults. In addition to the Fair itself, the organisers will offer an ‘Enterprise Programme’ and ‘Artist Development Programme’, offering training, showcase and mentoring opportunities in the run-up to the Fair – please visit the website for more details.

SATURDAY 31 AUGUST  
12NOON TO 9PM  
Camberwell Green  
www.camberwellfair.co.uk  
FREE  

A family-friendly event featuring music from local performers, dance routines from local school groups and a free bouncy castle. Plus food stalls, sports activities, craft stalls and lots of great bric-a-brac. And the Pearly King of Peckham is expected to make an appearance!

The event is deaf-friendly, with live subtitling of the on-stage performers, and we hope that anyone who is deaf or hearing impaired will find the festival accessible.

For these and more great events around the borough visit www.southwark.gov.uk/southwarkpresents
Rain or Shine
Rain or Shine is back for a second year of aerial circus, puppetry, theatre and workshops for children and those who are young at heart. Join Theatre Deli in Burgess Park for a weekend of free family fun for the whole community!
26 to 28 July 1pm to 6pm (check website for specific event times)
Free
Burgess Park
www.theatreddeli.co.uk/rainorshine

Dark Matter: 95% of the universe is missing
One of the biggest mysteries in physics today is what exactly makes up our Universe, and why – according to the world’s leading scientists – 95 per cent of it cannot be observed. In summer 2019, Science Gallery London will explore the elusive building blocks of the Universe with Dark Matter, a free exhibition and events season combining art, physics and philosophy, and drawing on the latest research from the Faculty of Natural & Mathematical Sciences at King’s College London. Imagining the unseen and questioning the invisible, the new season will explore fundamental physics, matter and materiality, the concept of invisibility and infinite divisibility, and the human quest for absolute truth and knowledge.
6 June to 26 August 2019
10am to 6pm, Tuesday to Sunday and also open on the August Bank Holiday (26 Aug)
Free
Science Gallery London at King’s College London
london.sciencegallery.com

Ironing Out
Amidst gentrification and displacement, injustice, seeking refuge, mysticism, cranes and the sea, an Ironing Shop survives. People from all walks go to seek help, advice, or company. But the shop is under threat. Come and experience a story told through shadow theatre, music, hip hop, dialogue, in English and Arabic by Alleyway Radical Theatre.
23 and 24 June 7pm on 23 June and 8pm on 24 June
£10 £9 (conc) £7.50 (Southwark residents)
Blue Elephant Theatre
www.blueelephanttheatre.co.uk/ironing-out

A Midsummer Night’s Dream
Gwendoline Christie (Game of Thrones) leads the cast in our latest immersive production. You can choose whether to sit wrapped around the action or follow it on foot, into the dream world of flying fairies, contagious fogs and moonlight revels.
Now to 31 August Mon to Sat 7.30pm, Weds and Sat 2.30pm
£69.50, £55, £39.50, £25, £15
Bridge Theatre
www.bridgetheatre.co.uk/whats-on/a-midsummer-nights-dream

In Edition
In Edition celebrates the launch of our new print publishing side of bo.lee. An exhibition of celebrated names in print alongside works on paper by our gallery artists will adorn the gallery walls in a rotating show, with work from artists including Bea Haines and Suzanne Moxhay.
Now to July 6 Wednesday to Saturday, 11am to 6pm
Free
bo.lee gallery, 222 Rye Lane, Peckham, SE5 4NL (closest tube Peckham Rye station)
www.bo-lee.co.uk

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Shakespeare’s Telling Tales
Celebrate the joy of storytelling at Shakespeare’s Telling Tales, our lively family festival. The festival brings together children’s authors, performers and storytellers to celebrate the power of storytelling and that amazing thing we call ‘our imagination’. Now to 28 July 2019 Various time, please see website for more details
Tickets available from £7. All those under 16 must be accompanied by an adult, all adults and children must have a ticket to each event. Shakespeare’s Globe
https://www.shakespearesglobe.com/seasons/shakespeares-telling-tales/

The History Plays: Henry IV Part 1, Henry IV Part 2 and Henry V
Our new resident Globe Ensemble kick off the Globe Theatre season with Henry IV Parts 1 and 2, and Henry V. These exuberant, life-affirming plays offer an extraordinary panorama of England as they tell the story of the reign of Henry IV, Hotspur’s enraged rebellion, Falstaff’s escapes and pranks, and ultimately Hal’s reign as King Henry V as he leads the English ‘band of brothers’ into battle. Across the three plays, our company of 11 actors play just short of 100 parts, moving fluidly between comedy and tragedy and from taverns to battlefields, all within the embrace of our ‘wooden O’, the Globe Theatre.
Now to 11 October 2019 Various time, see website for more details
Tickets available from £5 (standing)
Globe Theatre, Shakespeare’s Globe
www.shakespearesglobe.com/seasons/the-history-plays/

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AN INSPIRING PAST

Southwark is a place that values young people, and tries to nurture their skills and talents.

The borough’s children have made their mark on stages in London and around the world, and some of Southwark’s most famous residents began their careers working with young people. Here are some of their stories.

The settlement movement that began in the late 19th century placed special focus on improving the lives of children in deprived areas like Southwark: and they fostered pioneering endeavours. The Bermondsey Settlement seems to have been particularly focused on young people. Ada Brown Salter, the first female Mayor of London, to have been particularly focused on young people; Ada Brown Salter, the first female Mayor of London, fostered pioneering endeavours.

Her friend and colleague Grace Kimmins – better known as Sister Grace to the people of Bermondsey – tried to fight the lack of opportunity that blighted the lives of young people, by harnessing play as a vehicle for education. Sister Grace founded the Guild of Play (for girls) and the Guild of the Brave Poor Things (for children with disabilities) in the mid 1890s; they provided young people with opportunities to learn together in a relaxed environment, and to expand their horizons beyond the streets of Bermondsey. Their legacy includes modern play therapy and the Chailey Heritage School in Sussex.

The Guild of Play ticket 1910

Southwark had large amounts of overcrowded, poorly maintained housing, and relatively little green space for children to play. Instead, kids stayed at home with no room to play, or played in the streets with potentially disastrous results. When Methodist minister Jimmy Butterworth took over the Walworth Methodist Church in 1922 he sent his handful of congregants – who commuted in from the suburbs each Sunday – back to their homes, and instead focused on the underserved young people of Walworth. His creation was Clubland – a set of interconnected, self-governing youth clubs. After years of fundraising, Queen Mary opened a state-of-the-art Clubland facility in 1939. Jimmy wanted Walworth’s young people to have the best available to them and the building (designed by Sir Edward Maufe, the architect of Guildford Cathedral) featured club rooms, a gym, workshops and an art studio, a theatre, a hostel, and a rooftop playground as well as a church.

One of Clubland’s most famous alumni was Maurice Micklewhite – better known as Sir Michael Caine. In his autobiography, he credits Clubland giving him a start in show business and his first director’s credit (for a documentary of a Clubland camping trip to Guernsey). Clubland has a special link with his film Alfie. Sir Michael met the young man he modelled his portrayal on there, and when Sir Michael appeared on the Bob Hope Show to publicise the film, Bob sent his appearance fee directly to the club.

The current building: opened in 2016, houses a 200 seat theatre, two studios for training and rehearsals, office space, and a multi-functional foyer. This space allows Theatre Peckham to offer local young people the chance to train in theatrical skills like singing, dance, or acting, as well as technical skills like lighting, and sound. Its most famous alum is its newest patron – John Boyega, who worked with the company from the ages of nine to fourteen.

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Southwark businesses are the heart of our borough. From sole traders and start-ups, to large businesses employing hundreds of staff, local businesses play a vital role in growing our local economy and creating jobs for local people.

As a council we are committed to making Southwark a business-friendly borough, which is why we are developing a range of initiatives for local businesses including access to funding, business support and affordable workspace.

For aspiring entrepreneurs, early-stage start-ups and those who would like to start their own business, the Start-ups in London Libraries programme offers free support to help get your business idea off the ground. Working in partnership with the British Library, the council will be delivering free workshops, one-to-one business support and training in our libraries to equip budding entrepreneurs with the skills, information and connections they need to start and grow their business. The first workshops taking place in June are already booked up, but there are still spaces available for workshops on 17 and 18 September. If you are interested in taking part or would like more information please get in touch with Southwark’s SME Champion, Dean Williams, by emailing SouthwarkBusinessDesk@southwark.gov.uk.

Supporting businesses on Rye Lane

We’re pleased that the SGN gas works on Rye Lane have finished six months ahead of schedule, reducing the disruption for local businesses. The council is working with SGN to provide funding to support a programme of events and activity on Rye Lane to support traders and small independent businesses. The compensation process for traders affected by SGN’s works on Rye Lane is now open – details are available online: www.sgn.co.uk/Roadworks/Peckham-Rye-Lane/Information-for-Traders.

To find out what’s happening on Rye Lane this summer, go to www.southwark.gov.uk/PeckhamEvents.

Southwark is campaigning for the Bakerloo line to be extended down the Old Kent Road, which will transform the lives of thousands of people who live and work in the area. Extending the Bakerloo line will help deliver thousands of new jobs and homes in Old Kent Road, which will have a positive impact on the local economy and benefit new and existing businesses. Over 17,000 people have signed up to back our campaign – you can add your support by signing up at www.backthebakerloo.org.uk.

If you are a local business interested in supporting the campaign please get in touch at info@backthebakerloo.org.uk.

ARE YOU A LOCAL BUSINESS?

Sign up to our business newsletter by emailing localeconomy@southwark.gov.uk to hear about advice, training, funding opportunities and more business related news from the council.

You can also find out more about support services and information the council provides for businesses on our website at www.southwark.gov.uk/business.

START-UPS IN LONDON LIBRARIES

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HAVE YOU BACKED THE BAKERLOO?

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FREE EVENT!

BERMONDSEY CARNIVAL

Celebrating 150 years of Southwark Park

Saturday 6 July 2019, 12 noon to 8pm
Southwark Park bandstand (off Jamaica Road) SE16

Performances by The Real Thing, Indika Reggae Showcase, Quadrille Dancers, Kindred Soul and a host of other great artists and performers including Kinetika Bloco

Southwark Park 150th Birthday celebrations
• Create and Play zone • Food and crafts • Dance workshops • Rumble in the Jumble • Reuben Bond’s funfair

For full line-up and details visit: southwark.gov.uk/bermondseycarnival