

# THE ELEPHANT

MAGAZINE

Issue 17 / Winter 2020



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# 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.



**Keep in touch**  
Remember: you can find regular updates about the regeneration of Elephant and Castle on our website at [www.elephantandcastle.org.uk](http://www.elephantandcastle.org.uk)

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We welcome your ideas, comments and contributions, so please get in touch.

**Photography from left to right:**  
Ruth and Lily, Be Enriched; young dancer, Superarts; Imperial War Museum; East Street sign; School of Historical Dress; spy camera, Escape Plan; dessert at the Castle Canteen; Luisa, Draper Together; The Cinema Museum; food at Mercato Metropolitano; House of Magic; volunteer, Castle Canteen; Simon Drake; drama at Draper Hall; Castle Centre sign; Beehive pub; St Mary's Churchyard Park; Elephant statue



# BUILDING A BETTER FUTURE

For more than three years the Southwark Construction Skills Centre has been helping local people get into work and helping the wider community in the process.

The figure 8,020 makes John White pause for a moment then shake his head in disbelief.

Standing before the brass plaque – unveiled by the Mayor of London, Sadiq Khan to commemorate the opening of the Southwark Construction Skills Centre in 2016 – John says “When we started, we were quoted as saying we’ll train thousands of people. I remember thinking ‘that’s going to be difficult.’ But now, three years on, we’ve actually trained more than 8,000. I didn’t realise we’d be so successful.”

It’s a cold winter morning at the Skills Centre, based at Lendlease’s Elephant Park development. To the left of the entrance stands the training yard, where a group of young, unemployed locals are being taught the art of scaffolding. It’s just one of the skills taught at the centre, which focuses on helping local Southwark residents (and those from further afield) to undertake apprenticeships, pre-employment courses, short-term construction qualifications and National Vocational Qualifications (NVQs).

Despite passing the 8,000 mark, John isn’t satisfied. He believes the centre can

do better still. Just over half of those who attend their initial screening events go on to get a job or an apprenticeship. “This still isn’t good enough” he says, “but it’s better than a lot of other providers. There’s lots more work to do.



For me, it’s about the ones that don’t achieve. The ones that don’t get jobs. How do we re-engage them?”

Helping people get into work isn’t the only way in which the centre helps the local community.

“Lots of people say they’re community-based, but you wonder what they actually do?” says John. “We have apprenticeships, we have this and that but we ask ‘what else can we do to help, locally?’”

One example is a project on nearby King James Street, where apprentices have been working on a community garden. The Diversity Garden is part of the award-winning affordable housing

scheme, Muro Court, and is tended by residents with help from the Skills Centre apprentices and Bankside Open Spaces Trust (BOST).

John, who was awarded an MBE in the New Year Honours list, believes that projects like this can give something back to the community during the disruption caused by regeneration. But they also provide a good training opportunity.

“It’s a good way to address how our trainees conduct themselves” he says. “When you’re working in a place like the Diversity Garden you need to understand that people are living all around you. You need to be quiet. You’re not going to come down there with your music blaring. It’s about respect and education. It sounds obvious but these are important things to remember, they make you employable.”

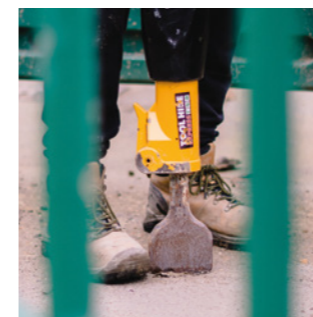
The Skills Centre will move from its current base at Elephant Park later this year. It’s due to relocate to Canada Water (another major regeneration area). But the exact location isn’t critical for John. It’s what they do when they get there that counts. “No matter when or where we move, I want 2020 to be the year we really up our game” says John, before returning to one of the centre’s bright orange porta-cabins to address a group of new arrivals.



## James, 16: Level 2 Highways and Maintenance

Straight after leaving school, I did the course for my CSCS (Construction Skills Certification Scheme) card. The course was at Compass school in Bermondsey but for three days out of the two weeks I came here. I actually failed the course, but they rang me back and said ‘we have some work experience for you and if you come on time, that will help.’ And I do. I came here every day – on time – and

now I’m in the second month of an 18-month apprenticeship. I’d recommend other young people to give it a try. Whether you want to be on site or in the office – there’s something for everyone. No one judges each other and it doesn’t matter what qualifications you have, everyone is welcome. My long-term goal is to get a black CSCS card.



Apprentices working on the Diversity Garden



Molly Gadenz, BOST and Matt Strutt, CSCS



## George, 19: Level 2 Drylining

As work is going to fill a large part of my life, the only way to be satisfied and happy is to do the best I can and to love what I do.

I chose construction because I was never good, academically, at school. I was always more craft orientated and so I didn’t want to work in an office environment. I was going to college and was asked by a mentor if I’d like

to interview for Stortford Interiors doing drylining. Today, I really enjoy my job. I’ve worked across various sites in London and no two days are the same. It’s all about working as a team. I’ve made some good friends and the supervisors are always on hand to help and offer advice. I have a sense of pride and joy in what I do, especially when I see the end results.

Find out more at [www.southwarkconstructionsskillscentre.com](http://www.southwarkconstructionsskillscentre.com)



# A LOVE LETTER TO ELEPHANT AND CASTLE



Trieve and Kayode as  
Kazim and Jeremiah

*Enterprice, Kayode Ewumi's hit show, returns to the BBC for a second series later this year.*

Kayode Ewumi grew up in Wolverton House on the Aylesbury estate and describes his TV comedy-drama series, *Enterprice*, as “a love letter to Elephant and Castle.”

“You don’t see stuff on TV about this area that’s nice and positive, so I wanted to show people what I knew and saw” says the 26-year-old writer and actor. “It was tough at times but growing up here I had a lot of fun too and I wanted to highlight that.”

“I also wanted to show how people of different races and cultures can all live together” he adds.

The TV series follows two friends Kazim (Kayode) and Jeremiah (Trieve Blackwood-Cambridge) as they attempt to get their small business – a delivery service named Speedi-Kazz – off the ground.

“It’s about two black boys trying to make it and the funny things that happen along the way. It’s something I think everyone can relate to” says Kayode.

Four 30-minute episodes aired in 2018 and it was so popular that the BBC commissioned a second series which was filmed last summer.

From an early age Kayode says he was always “cracking jokes and making people laugh.” He cites his mum, Oluyemisi as a big inspiration. “Mum’s always telling stories and has such a great laugh” he says.

Kayode went to English Martyrs RC Primary School on Flint Street and then to Thomas the Apostle secondary school in Peckham.

“School was cool. I enjoyed it” he recalls.

“I liked it because there were always funny

things happening. I got into trouble sometimes and maybe I wasn’t the smartest – but I did OK.”

He also spent a lot of time at Inspire youth club which is run from St Peter’s in Liverpool Grove.

“I probably went there once or twice a week from age 11 until 17” he says. Damien Brown, who was a youth worker there, did all sorts of great stuff for kids on the estate. It was a safe haven for us where we did everything from cooking classes to drumming and playing video games.”

At home, Kayode loved watching videos.

“We didn’t have that many so we watched the same ones over and over again. I remember seeing Jim Carey in *The Mask* where he plays a bank clerk and gangster and being fascinated that he could be both characters. That introduced me to the idea that you could act.”

After leaving school, Kayode studied theatre and drama at City and Islington College and then went to Coventry University where he did a degree in theatre.

After graduating, he caught the attention of TV producers when he created a mockumentary, called *#HoodDocumentary*, with his old school friend, Tyrell Williams.

“Tyrell and I bought a video camera, from Curry’s or somewhere, and we paid half each” he recalls. “Then we started shooting stuff around the area.”

*#HoodDocumentary* followed aspiring MC, Roll Safe (Kayode) as he attempted to convince people that he might be the next big grime act. Or maybe even the next James Bond.

They released two episodes on YouTube and the reaction was huge. Within weeks it had been viewed more than two million times.

“At the time, it felt crazy. It took off so quickly but it really opened doors for me” says Kayode who was named a BAFTA Breakthrough Brit in 2016.

He then started writing *Enterprice*.

The BBC commissioned a pilot which led to the first series.

“Originally, we looked at filming it in Tottenham but my producer, Phil Gilbert, said ‘why don’t you film it where you’re from?’ It made so much sense” says Kayode.

“It was lovely to film where I grew up. Knowing people locally made it so much easier and it meant all my family could come and watch.”

In the opening scene of the first episode, Kayode is seen walking through East Street Market, eating a pattie, and East Street is still very much a part of his life.

The Aylesbury estate is being regenerated, block by block, and all the council tenants have been given the option to be rehoused nearby. Kayode’s family moved near to East Street and he still lives here with his mum, dad, two sisters, Mary and Lola, and his cousin, Kamil.

“I feel that with gentrification there are positives and negatives” says Kayode. “Some of the flats were not in great condition and the heating was old” he remembers. “If it means that people can move to somewhere else in the area then that’s good, but it’s not good if you move people out of places and they can’t afford anything else around here.”

“When I was a teenager my mum often sent me to East Street to get chicken and plantain. If I’m at home, that still happens. Even now!” he smiles.

Kayode says his family has been a huge support to him.

“They were understandably cautious at first but then I proved that this is what I wanted to do. Since then, they’ve pushed me and encouraged me” he says.

“My faith also plays a big part in what I do” he adds. “I’m not a big one for going out. Most of the time I’m either working, at church or tucked up in bed.” Although keen-eyed locals may occasionally spot him getting something to eat at Bagel King, Morley’s or Ossie’s Jerk Chicken on Walworth Road.

And, although he’s clearly going places, you might still bump into him in the market on an errand for his mum.

*The first series of Enterprice is available to watch on BBC iPlayer with the second series on the way.*



# Elephant says hi!

*Elephant Says Hi is a new community initiative to make Elephant and Castle the most welcoming place in London.*

If you've noticed colourful elephant stickers popping up in the windows of local cafes, shops and community spaces then you've discovered a new project designed to make Elephant and Castle more welcoming for everyone.

Created by Liza Makarov and Jenny Sawyer, the Elephant Says Hi project launched with a party for neighbours on Wansey Street last September. Since then, dozens of local businesses and organisations have signed up to the scheme.

Liza and Jenny came up with the idea when they took part in the Loneliness Lab, an 18 month project founded by Lendlease and non-profit organisation, Collectively. The idea was to find new ways to make London a less lonely city.

"It's estimated that nine million people in the UK are lonely and we're on a mission to try and change that in the Elephant" explains Jenny.

As part of their initial research, the pair set up a 'talking table' at Hej Café on Rodney Road and invited people to share their experiences of living in Elephant and Castle.

"We found that quite a few people did things outside the area – despite there being so many things to do locally. We decided to try and create more of a sense of belonging and cohesion by connecting people to each other and to all the interesting spaces, places and activities in the neighbourhood" says Liza.

"Elephant and Castle is undergoing a lot of transition so – now, more than ever – we need to support one another"

adds Jenny. "We want to encourage more people to say hi to a neighbour, join a group, support a local café or try a new activity."

They worked with students from London College of Communication (LCC) to create an Elephant Says Hi website and their distinctive branding. "It was wonderful to be able to use local talent. The LCC students really helped to make it all happen" says Liza.

Over the last six months, Liza and Jenny have toured the neighbourhood, inviting local businesses and community organisations to sign up to their Elephant Says Hi Welcome Charter.

"We asked everyone to commit to being open, friendly, inclusive and welcoming to different types of people in different ways. The response has been great" says Jenny.

"There's a wonderful range of places that have joined, from Baldwin's the herbalists on Walworth Road to the Elephant Barbers on Wansey Street. We've also signed up some pretty unique places like 55 East and Drawing Room (an art studio where children can pop in and draw after school)" she adds.

All the participants can be found on the Elephant Says Hi website which filters them via different categories such as Eat & Drink or Learn & Do. They also put a sticker in their window to let everyone know that they're part of the scheme.

Liza and Jenny officially launched Elephant Says Hi last summer with a community street party organised with Ernest Harris, Building Manager

for South Gardens Elephant Park and local residents. As well as food and drink, the party included music, African drumming, acrobatics and face-painting.

"We chose Wansey Street and Sayer Street as you have the old Victorian houses on one side and the new estate on the other. We want to connect newcomers with those who have lived in the area for a long time and vice versa" says Liza.

They arranged long tables in the middle of the street and encouraged people to bring dishes to share. There was also food provided by local cafes, including Tasty Jerk and Hej as well as the new wine bar, Diogenes the Dog, and there were numerous stalls where people could find out more about the Elephant Says Hi participants.

"There were 200 people of all ages and it was really diverse" says Jenny.

"We had residents who have lived here for 35 years and others who had only moved in three months ago. It was a great way to introduce neighbours, with people chatting to people they hadn't spoken to before. I particularly remember one lovely lady, who the neighbours don't see very often, who decided to bake a cake and come and join us. To me – that's what Elephant Says Hi is all about."

"Elephant Says Hi is starting to create a real buzz in the area and we're looking forward to signing up more members, putting on more events and doing all we can to make Elephant and Castle the most welcoming place in London" adds Liza.



**Greg Barnes,**  
local resident

Greg Barnes and his partner Tomasz moved into a flat on Trafalgar Place four years ago. They were just two of the locals who helped to organise the street party.

"Being involved was a great way to get to know the team from Elephant Says Hi as well as neighbours from the original houses on Wansey Street and all the new homes. The planning meetings were lively, social gatherings with people swapping stories about their experiences of living or working in the area and everyone had ideas and suggestions.

On the day, there was a fantastic turnout and a good mix of people. The support from local businesses was amazing and the variety of goodies on offer gave a taste of just how vibrant the area is.

For me, it was a perfect example of how people from very diverse backgrounds who normally might never meet, let alone stop and chat, can come together, have fun and build relationships."

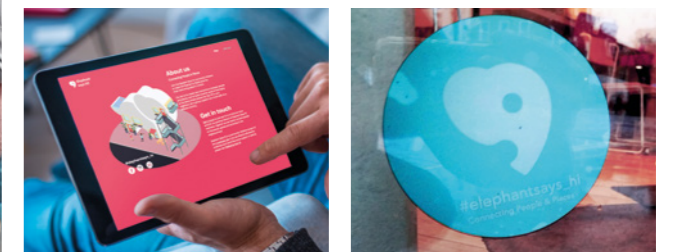
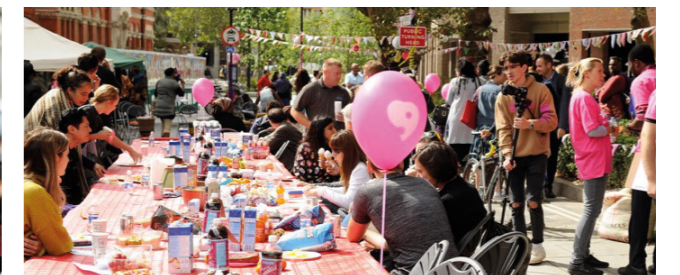


**Milly Bianchini, Events and**  
Community Manager at 55 East

55 East, a community café, kitchen and event space on East Street, is one of dozens of places signed up to Elephant Says Hi.

"We've been involved in Elephant Says Hi since last summer. It's a great project and a lovely way to bring old and new residents together. It's also a good way for us to network with other organisations and businesses in the community.

We had a table at the street party. It was such a joyful occasion and it was great to be able to tell more people about what we do. We told everyone about our Community Cuppa events, where people get to chat over a free cup of something hot, and we definitely got new people joining us. Being featured on the Elephant Says Hi website and map is also a great way to let people know that we're here but it's also good to have the stickers in the windows as not everyone's online."



Find out more about the project, including participating venues, at [www.elephantsays-hi.com](http://www.elephantsays-hi.com)

# TEN YEARS OF THE CUL DE SAC GALLERY

*The Elephant's Cul de Sac Gallery is moving on. Founder, Stephen Hall spoke to the Elephant Magazine about his decade in the neighbourhood and what comes next.*

The Cul de Sac Gallery opened in a recession and survived the age of austerity. As well as the start of a new decade, 2020 also marks the start of a new chapter for the gallery – beginning with the destruction of its most iconic piece of work, the *Tale of Two Cities*, a replica of Trafalgar Square's famous fourth plinth.

This February, the gallery's County Street building will return to its landlord. As a result, the 16 tonne monument, which has stood in the street since 2011 as a symbol of austerity, will be torn down.

"The plinth has become its own legend" says Stephen, gallery founder and plinth creator. He says the concrete mass not only

defined his career and the reputation of the gallery but also changed and influenced the surrounding area and made a bold statement on society and politics.

Now, despite having to move from its County Street home, Stephen reveals that he plans to reopen his studio elsewhere in Southwark.

Given its many achievements, it's perhaps surprising to hear that the Cul de Sac Gallery actually came about by accident.

After leaving arts school, the – now 51-year-old – Dubliner moved to London. "I'd lived in Camberwell and was working in Elephant and Castle at the London College of Communication" says Stephen. "I found a studio, next door to the current building in County Street, just around the time that the 2008 financial crash happened."

The company occupying the building folded and I met the landlord by chance. We got chatting and I proposed we turn the buildings into seven studios. That was during the recession, when the property was cheap."

Named after County Street's dead end (near the Bricklayers Arms) the Cul de Sac's programme ran between 2009 and 2014, during which time a handful of staff and a team of volunteers managed to exhibit around 126 international artists.

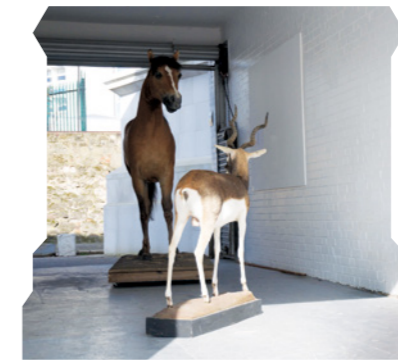
"The plan was to run a project space for artists by creating a number of studios. We built a yard and then added the gallery on to it. This gave us extra space where we started doing shows."

At the time, says Stephen, "There was a great scene in London with East End art tours and lots of small spaces doing lots of shows. You'd come to our opening and then go on to one nearby, say in Peckham or Bermondsey."

But Cul de Sac was always more than just a gallery. "We ran a scheme working with the National Skills Academy (NSA), employing young, unemployed school leavers. We gave them six-month work placements and trained them in areas such as arts management and fabrication."

Funding-wise, the gallery got an Arts Council grant for the County Street Urban Garden, while all of their shows were self-financed. But things began to change after 2010.

The 2008 financial crash, cuts to Government funded programmes and the age of austerity all took a toll on the arts world. Many community projects lost funding and, in Stephen's words, the



funding for the Cul de Sac's NSA training was "totally axed."

In 2013, a change to the national planning rules, which meant that commercial buildings could be converted for residential use more easily, piled on the pressure.

"This changed the landscape" says Stephen. "Artists depend on cheap buildings in popular areas that aren't being used for other purposes." To add to the pressure, the gallery faced a 40 per cent rent increase in 2014. They were running out of money and, at the same time, Stephen decided to take time out for parenting. From 2015, the gallery only put on occasional projects, all of which were funded by the studio business.

At seven meters long and four meters tall, the hulking *A Tale of Two Cities*, which has stood between industrial warehouses and the Ark Globe Academy for more than eight years, will certainly be remembered as the gallery's most prominent work. Delivered in partnership with Southwark Council, it was originally built to be a social commentary on austerity.

According to the website, "An empty plinth, de-centred from the tourist hub, reminds us that while high profile sites like the fourth plinth persist,

the funding for the arts and for local authorities has diminished significantly. In an area struggling to shake off the hangover of its post-industrial decay, this Victorian replica displaces the emptiness of political rhetoric into the reality of urbanism."

As well as functioning as art, the plinth also helped deter antisocial behaviour. "Gangs would congregate here" says Stephen. "Sometimes there were up to 30 people in this dead-end space, smoking, drinking and causing a nuisance. There was a lot of crime and I thought, let's just do something to 'design out the problem'. The plinth became our intervention."

Stephen spent £4,000 creating the sculpture with local stonemasons. It took seven days and comprised 16 tonnes of aerated concrete blocks. As for the gangs, Stephen says: "They immediately stopped coming because there was no room for them anymore. They realised something was changing."

Since then, the artwork has become its own legend. "It was the first public art piece I did and it's been a defining moment in my career ever since. I meet people today and they still go, 'Oh, you're the plinth guy. Amazing! I love that piece.' It's kind of flattering – I never expected

it to live that long."

But now the plinth has met its end, with Stephen considering destroying it in one final act of performance art.

Stephen wants to stay in Southwark and is hoping to find space for a new gallery in Camberwell. The council is keen to support local arts organisations – whether in temporary spaces, such as Drawing Room (nearby in Rodney Place) or with permanent premises such as Hotel Elephant in Spare Street. It maintains a register of organisations on the look out for space and will try to match them with suitable opportunities.

As for Cul de Sac's legacy, he says: "Our approach was influential for other organisations and exhibition making. Our 'open source' programming was adopted by the Centre for Contemporary Arts Glasgow, and our hosting of other galleries was a precursor of the 'condo movement' of gallery space swaps which is now an international phenomenon."

Stephen adds, "Following the General Election, it looks as though the demolition of *A Tale of Two Cities* will coincide with the end of ten year's of austerity, so perhaps it should be viewed as a monument to austerity itself."

« A Tale of Two Cities will be remembered as the gallery's most prominent work »

[www.culdesacgallery.com](http://www.culdesacgallery.com)

Find out more about arts and culture in Southwark at [www.southwark.gov.uk/events-culture-and-heritage](http://www.southwark.gov.uk/events-culture-and-heritage) and join the register for arts and culture space at [tinyurl.com/rklqjlg](http://tinyurl.com/rklqjlg)

# READY, TEDDY, GO!

At the start of the 50s, the Elephant didn't seem like the kind of place from which Britain's first big, youth culture phenomenon would burst into life. \*



Yet it was here that a group of working class teenagers and young men created a movement that would soon become known as the Teddy Boys or more simply, Teds.

Today, almost seventy years later, the Ted culture lives on. And the Teddy Boy uniform of drape coat with velvet-trim collar and pocket flaps, bootlace tie, high-waisted drainpipe trousers, crepe-soled shoes (brothel creepers) and big hair, moulded into greasy Brylcreem quiffs, has changed remarkably little.

Today's Teddy Boys are a gentle lot, but when the Elephant and Castle Teds first came to attention, they quickly attracted media notoriety; largely due to their flash fashion, a refusal to acknowledge their 'betters' and their raucous behaviour. Here, in post-war Britain, still a society bound by class and conformity, was a bunch of rebels without a cause.

The original Teds based their style on a craze for Edwardian clothing that had taken hold amongst upper class men. These were wealthy youngsters with money to spare for the new (albeit retro) suits that Saville Row tailors had reintroduced after WW2. Short for Edward, the style soon became known as Ted.

The idea of aristocratic youths, swanning around Mayfair in expensive suits, might seem a world away from the working classes of 50s Walworth. Nonetheless, young locals quickly began to adopt elements of the new style and made it their own.

Initially, the look couldn't simply be purchased off the peg and employing a tailor to make the bespoke drape coats and trousers could cost as much as £50

– more than five weeks' wages for the average man. Consequently, being a Ted was quite a commitment and many paid off their clothing bills via a weekly tab while others resorted to more dubious means.

The emergence of the Elephant's Teds was picked-up by the tabloid press which regarded these tough young men, dressed in their flash clobber, as something of a novelty. But it was the arrival of American rock 'n' roll, which gave the Teds their own soundtrack and propelled them into the national spotlight.

Bill Haley & His Comets entered the UK singles charts with *Shake, Rattle and Roll* in late 1954 and then exploded into the national consciousness in January 55 when their record, *Rock Around The Clock* roared up the charts (four months before doing the same in the US).

In 1956, when *Blackboard Jungle*, a Hollywood film which featured Haley's song in the opening credits, screened at the Trocadero (a 3,000 seat cinema and live music venue on New Kent Road) the local Teds grabbed their girlfriends and jived in the aisles, while a handful made trouble and slashed the seats.

Their behaviour hit the headlines, leading to copycats elsewhere and feeding a growing moral panic about rock'n'roll and delinquency. Later that year, when Bill Haley arrived in London to play his first UK dates, the local Teds headed over to Waterloo Station to greet him, along with a couple of thousand excited teenagers. This created even bigger headlines.

But Haley's time in the spotlight was brief. Younger, more exciting rockers would soon be inspiring Britain's teenagers. One of these was the Texan,

Buddy Holly who played the debut concerts of what would be his only UK tour at The Trocadero on 1 March 1958 (two performances in one night). The Teds were a notoriously tough crowd (they threw coins at Cliff Richard when he appeared at the same venue) but they loved Buddy Holly and his band, The Crickets.

The Trocadero played host to many of the big international stars of the 50s, including Frank Sinatra and Ella Fitzgerald. At the same time, a new generation of local talent was emerging from the surrounding neighbourhood. Bermondsey's Tommy Hicks first met the songwriters Lionel Bart and Mike Pratt at a bohemian hangout known as the Yellow Door and the trio soon began performing nearby at The Cave – a coffee bar on Waterloo Road – under the name The Cavemen.

Bart would go on to write West End musicals (including *Oliver!*) while Hicks would rename himself Tommy Steele and become Britain's first rock 'n' roll star and the first to have a top 40 hit in America. Not that the Teds thought much of Steele, as far as they were concerned – only the Americans could really rock.

The Teddy Boys were the first of several generations of British youth to mould their own, group identities around fashion, dance, slang and the very latest music. In the following decades, the Elephant would bear witness to a succession of youth movements and sounds, from mods to ravers; from garage to grime. But it was the Elephant's Teds who pioneered British youth culture, the ones who got it started – the ones who got things rocking and rolling!

## MARK BAXTER ON THE TEDS

The local author and documentary maker recalls how his father's generation adopted the style.

"My old man was born in 1934 so would have been twenty when rock 'n' roll and the Edwardian look began to hit" says Baxter.

From what he told me, it was the clothes and hair cut – the legendary DA (or Duck's Arse) – which he and his pals adopted.

From what I gather, there were some 'tasty' Teddy Boy gangs around Elephant and Castle but, knowing my dad, that wasn't something that would have interested him. He was a music and style man. He wasn't into trouble and he certainly wouldn't have risked ruining the line of his jacket.

I know he had his suits made at Levy's in

the Elephant and from Albie in The Cut. The cloth they would have had made up would be 'customer's own'. Where they got that from is lost in the mists of time.

He loved a shirt with a 'Billy Eckstine Collar'. Detail was all and he remained a fussy dresser to the end of his life. His hair would have been taken care of by one of the many barbers on the Walworth Road and in Camberwell, with a 'Tony Curtis' requested when that became the Barnet of choice.

My mum, also a Camberwell girl, was born in 1936 and she too was a bit of a music nut. Guy Mitchell and Johnny Ray were her faves. Her clothes were made by 'Betty' who I remember still making bespoke clothes well in to the 70s and early 80s.' \*



# IT'S ALL HAPPENING AT ELEPHANT PARK

*2019 was an exceptional year at Elephant Park  
and 2020 is set to be even better.*

Elephant Park has burst into life over the last twelve months thanks to the completion of more than 500 homes; the arrival of new food and retail destination, Sayer Street; new public space and a packed programme of community events.

A number of new businesses opened their doors on Sayer Street for the first time, including a range of independent restaurants with an outstanding offering of global cuisine.

Koi Ramen Bar has been winning fans with a seriously tasty array of Japanese dishes – including their traditional Tonkotsu ramen (a rich and creamy pork soup noodle). Tasty Jerk brought an authentic taste of the Caribbean to Sayer Street while Ethiopian restaurant, Beza has established itself as a local favourite with a range of healthy, vegan specialities. Meanwhile, sports bar, The Tap In has discovered a winning formula which mixes Latin American inspired food (by Cubana) with one of the best craft beer ranges anywhere in London.

Many more businesses are set to join the Sayer Street selection in the coming months, including a new branch of Elephant and Castle's home-grown foodie paradise, Mercato Metropolitan.

The summer months promise to be particularly lively with a host of special events planned and free activities for the whole family. Last year's season

launched with a series of family events and a big screen in the park. The first film to be shown was family favourite, *Dumbo* (naturally) followed by other classic crowd-pleasers, including *Grease*, *Sister Act* and *The Italian Job*. There was also an opportunity to catch some nail-biting sports action from the Ashes through to the US Open.

But perhaps the highlight of the year was Elmer the Patchwork Elephant's birthday.



To celebrate the 30th anniversary of the much-loved children's character, a cavalcade of brightly painted elephants arrived in town. The sculptures, designed by local community groups, formed the basis of a special Elmer art trail at Elephant Park.

The trail was a community initiative supported by Lendlease. Primary schools, pensioners, youth groups and other local residents all got involved

in creating the unique designs, each of which included a special anagram for trail followers to solve. The sculptures will be auctioned off, with all the proceeds used to support local community projects.

The anniversary culminated with a birthday party at the end of August: an all-day celebration filled with free activities including an Elmer-themed tea party and a chance to meet the patchwork pachyderm himself.

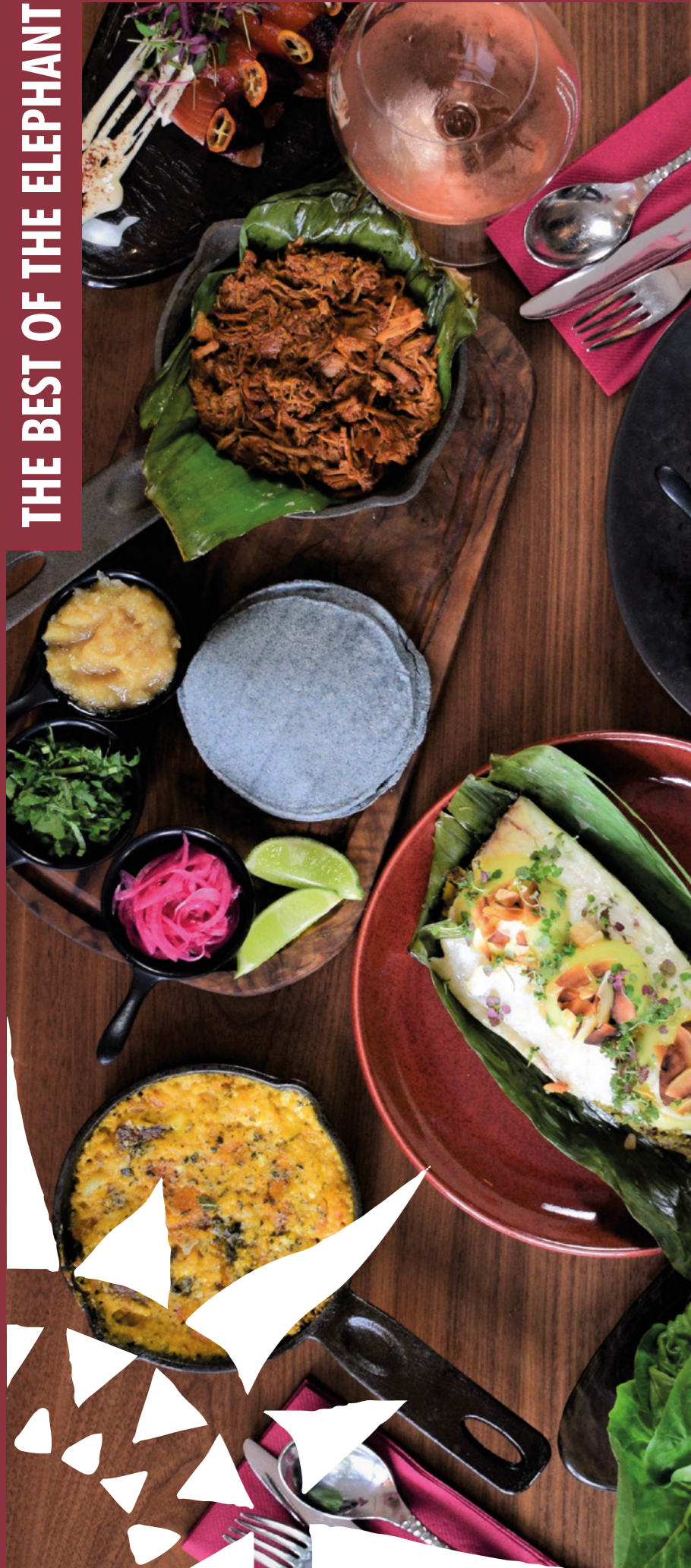
2019 ended with a fiesta of festive fun, as Sayer Street and the new, temporary wildflower meadow were transformed into a winter wonderland, complete with a twinkling Christmas tree forest and magical 'snow' showers. And for those who were hunting for unusual presents, the Merry Elephant pop-up shop came up trumps. Run by SoLo Craft Fair (a local south London organisation promoting local makers, musicians and workshop leaders) it proved to be the perfect place to find a fantastic range of craft gifts.

*Lendlease will reveal more detail on the plans for 2020 (and beyond), shortly. So keep an eye on [www.elephantpark.co.uk/events](http://www.elephantpark.co.uk/events) to make sure you're amongst the first to hear the news.*



From left to right: Koi Ramen Bar; films in the park; Elmer celebration; Beza; The Tap In; Elephant sculpture trail





## A fusion featuring the best of Latin American cooking is on the menu at Paladar.

“When people walk through the door at Paladar, I want them to feel like they’re stepping into another world; one where they can have a holiday without leaving Elephant and Castle” enthuses general manager, Charles Tyler.

Charles opened his vibrant and stylish Latin American restaurant on London Road just over two years ago, along with Colombian head chef, Jose Rubio-Guevara, Ecuadorian sommelier, Rafael Cabezas-Castro, Cuban front of house manager, Yalain Pita-Salomon, and French bar and operations manager, Cedric Gaultier.

“Latin America is known for its variety of flavours, distinctive spices and fresh ingredients and we’ve brought all these together to create something very special” says Charles.

“We’re very much a neighbourhood restaurant and lots of our guests live and work in the area. There are Latino families who come here for birthdays, as well as tourists and theatre-goers, so it’s always an interesting and diverse mix.”

Since opening in 2017, Paladar has received rave reviews from everyone from Trip Advisor to the Financial Times.

“We were pleasantly surprised when we got the number one spot on Trip Advisor just seven months after opening. Now we regularly get five star reviews across the board” says Charles.

Last August, food writer, Bill Knott wrote about Paladar’s ‘sensational Latin American cuisine’ for the Financial Times.

“Bill originally contacted Jose, our chef, as he was writing about ajiaco, which is a traditional Colombian potato and chicken soup. But when he came to visit, he was so impressed by what he saw and tasted that he did a lovely write up on the restaurant too” says Charles.

“We were also delighted to win the Best New Business Award in the 2018 Southwark Business Excellence Awards.”

As well as being vegetarian and vegan friendly – their roast aubergine with fried beans and their cassava fritters

with guava sauce are particularly popular – the restaurant is also 100 per cent gluten free.

“We had a lot of people asking about gluten free options and we realised, that with a few simple tweaks, our entire menu could actually be gluten free – as it’s mainly based on corn rather than wheat” Charles explains.

“We’re featured a lot on gluten free blogs and social media as somewhere people can come and eat anything without having to worry. The Instagrammers love the fact that it’s not only gluten free and delicious but that it looks great too!”



### Instagrammers love the fact that it looks great too



Charles fell in love with Latin American food and culture after travelling extensively all around the continent in 2013.

He was born in south east London and has lived here for much of his life. He’s also no stranger to the restaurant business, having previously run Asian restaurant, Champor-Champor (near London Bridge) which he eventually sold after 11 years.

“I wasn’t planning to open another restaurant but when I got back from my travels I was fired up by all the things I’d seen and tasted there and my Latin American friends persuaded me to do something together.”

But opening Paladar wasn’t without its challenges. Charles discovered the former La Dolce Vita Italian restaurant was up for sale when cycling past on his bike one day. But the Grade II listed building needed a lot of work.

“La Dolce Vita had been open for 26 years and it was a bit of an 80s time

warp” he recalls. “We pretty much had to change everything. At one point a structural wall and part of the ceiling almost collapsed but luckily the builders put a prop in place and rescued the situation.”

Paladar has a small bodega (shop) which sells the Latin American wines and spirits served in the restaurant.

“Most people know about Chilean wine and Argentinian wine but Brazil now produces some delicious sparkling wines and we’ve made some great finds from Uruguay, Peru and Mexico too” says Charles.

The bodega has a chef’s table (with a view into the kitchen) which can be hired for groups. In the summer, guests can eat in their walled garden too.

“Our hidden gem” says Charles.

The restaurant also hosts a regular programme of exhibitions by Latin American artists and photographers.

“We’ve just had had an exhibition by Cuban artist, Daniel Diaz, which explored his vision of the English countryside and included a country cottage in every painting. Our new show is curated by a local councillor, Maria Linforth-Hall, who’s from Ecuador” says Charles.

The team at Paladar also makes a point of celebrating all the Latin American holidays and festivals.

“Mexico’s Dia de Muertos (Day of the Dead) is always a big thing for us and we celebrated the 500th anniversary of Havana last November too. This February, we’re marking Peru’s Dia Del Pisco Sour and Chile’s Dia de la Pisco Sour with special offers on piscos. Any excuse for a party!” smiles Charles.

#### Paladar

4–5 London Road SE1 6JZ

020 7186 5555

Open Monday–Friday 12pm–3pm  
and 5pm–10pm

Saturday 1pm–10.30pm

[www.paladarlondon.com](http://www.paladarlondon.com)

# The horrible history of Horsemonger Gaol

*For much of history, the Elephant, Borough and Bankside were home to all the activities that “respectable” London wanted to keep at arms-length on the other side of the river.*

The Romans felt the threat of restless spirits was too great to allow their dead to lie inside the city. Instead, as the 2018 discovery of an ancient sarcophagus in Harper Road reminded us, the area between Borough and the Elephant was used as a vast Roman necropolis.

In the Elizabethan period, this stretch of Southwark was used for theatres, bearbaiting, prostitution and any other kind of activity considered too disreputable for London proper. In fact,

having long existed beyond the bounds of the city’s jurisdiction, the area had earned itself a reputation as somewhere for shady characters to escape the long arm of the law.

Unsurprising then that Newington Causeway, in Elephant and Castle, would come to house a number of London’s gaols. And it made sense to keep prisoners – especially those who had committed crimes against the state – well away from the established seats of power in Whitehall.

Horsemonger Lane Gaol, built between 1791 and 1799, at the junction of Harper Road and Newington Causeway was one of the biggest.

The main gaol for the county of Surrey, it replaced a number of smaller, local prisons (mostly ramshackle, repurposed buildings, a hundred years old or more) including the White Lyon Gaol which stood between Borough High Street and Tennis Street.

Horsemonger Lane is now Harper Road and the gaol was located on the site of

the present day Newington Gardens. It was a three-storey quadrangle with three wings for regular criminals and a fourth for debtors.

The gaol’s gallows, where 131 men and 14 women were executed between 1800 and 1877, stood on the roof of the gatehouse.

Rooftop gallows enabled executions to take place in public, which the authorities thought would deter crime. Ironically, these gruesome events actually contributed to crime and disorder, especially pickpocketing, since the sheer spectacle of an execution drew enormous crowds.

Horsemonger Lane had a number of famous prisoners.

In 1813, the poet, Leigh Hunt was imprisoned here over a newspaper article he wrote about the Prince Regent; W C Minor (one of the most active contributors to the Oxford English Dictionary) was held in the gaol before his 1872 trial for murder. He was found not guilty by reason of insanity and spent the remainder of his life in Broadmoor.

Edward Marcus Despard, a former viceroy of British Honduras, was executed at Horsemonger Lane in 1802.

He hatched a plot to incite a popular uprising with a plan to assassinate King George III and seize both the Tower of London and the Bank of England. But, before he could put it into action, he was arrested and tried for treason. His hanging attracted more than 20,000 spectators.

Perhaps the most notorious of all the Horsemonger prisoners, were Maria and Frederick Manning – perpetrators of what became known as the ‘Bermondsey Horror’.

Maria emigrated from Switzerland to England in the early 1840s to work in domestic service. In 1847 she married Frederick Manning, a guard with the Great Western Railway, at St James’s Church, Piccadilly.

Frederick lost his job shortly after the wedding and the couple moved to Taunton where they opened an inn. However, within a couple of years, business at the inn had dried up and they returned to London. By this point, drinking heavily, Frederick was unemployable.

Later that year, the Mannings would be found guilty of the murder of Patrick O’Connor.

O’Connor was what we’d now describe as a tax-collector and was one of Maria’s former suitors. On top the income from his day job, O’Connor had grown wealthy through some lucrative, albeit criminal, sidelines, including smuggling and usury (lending money at extortionate rates).

On 9 August 1849, Maria asked O’Connor to dinner at their Bermondsey home, where she and her husband shot him and beat him with a crowbar. They buried his body under the flagstones of their kitchen before Maria broke into O’Connor’s lodgings and stole cash, stock certificates and letters she had written to him. She fled to Edinburgh with most of the loot, while Frederick fled to Jersey.

They were soon caught and were both tried in October of the same year.

They were executed at Horsemonger Lane on 13 November – the first husband-and-wife execution for decades and one of the last public executions in Britain. It drew a crowd of around 40,000 people (in which one person was crushed to death and two more injured)



Charles Dickens

and printers produced 2.5 million broadsheets (newspapers) featuring lurid details of the crime.

Charles Dickens was amongst the spectators that day. He later wrote a scathing letter to The Times, criticising the practice:

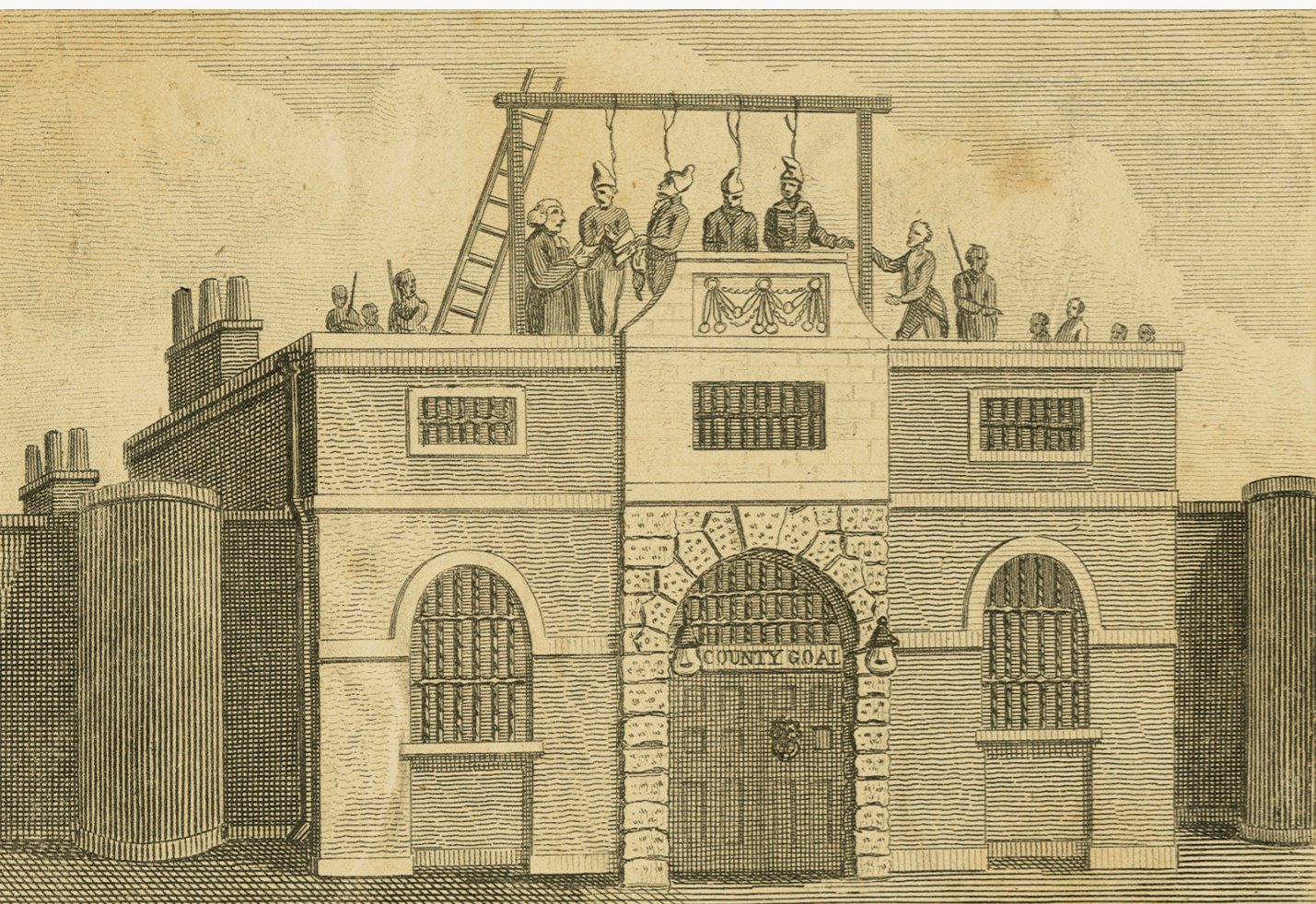
“I am solemnly convinced that nothing that ingenuity could devise to be done in this city, in the same compass of time, could work such ruin as one public execution, and I stand astounded and appalled by the wickedness it exhibits. I do not believe that any community can prosper where such a scene of horror and demoralization as was enacted this morning outside Horsemonger-lane Gaol is presented at the very doors of good citizens, and is passed by, unknown or forgotten.”

The protests of Dickens and many others eventually led to change and Britain’s last public execution was in 1868.

Today, Newington Causeway continues to play a major role in the British judicial system. It is now home to the Inner London Crown Court, located just a few feet from where the Horsemonger Lane Gaol once stood.

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

[www.southwark.gov.uk/libraries](http://www.southwark.gov.uk/libraries)  
[www.elephantandcastle.org.uk/more-history](http://www.elephantandcastle.org.uk/more-history)



Despard had already done a spell in prison for debt. He’d also been suspended from office for treating the white colonists and freed black slaves of Honduras equally (even with the abolition of slavery on the horizon, this was still a step too far in the opinion of many in the British establishment).

# MY ELEPHANT AND CASTLE

Locals tell us what they love about the Elephant



**Umar**

I came from Manchester to work here four years ago and I think the area's changing for the better. I'm in construction, so the new developments are putting food on my table but they're also providing employment for lots of local people. I like how there are new cafes like Hej where they do great coffee, but there are also plenty of halal places and food for all cultures.



**Aidan**

What I like is that it's nice, quiet and relaxed and it's not too expensive compared to other parts of London. There are lots of good cafes and pubs and it's quick to get to central London. I came here two years ago and now some of my friends have moved here too. I like the Elephant and Castle pub but I've also got to give a mention to The Woolpack on Bermondsey Street – as I work there.



**Silvie**

My husband always said Elephant and Castle was 'up and coming' and now it finally seems to be. He doesn't want to live anywhere else. We're just off the Walworth Road so we have everything on our doorstep. It's so easy to hop on a bus and get to places. We have a three-year-old daughter and a five-month-old baby and there are lots of good playgrounds. We often go to Chumleigh Gardens in Burgess Park, Pelier Park and Pasley Park. And they have a lovely music class for young children at Pembroke House.



**Seyi**

You used to have to travel out of the area to go out, but now there are more things locally. I like the new Diogenes the Dog wine bar on Rodney Road. It's nice, chilled and relaxed and not too expensive either. I also like Ossie's Jerk and Bagel King on the Walworth Road. The area has really changed. There are positives but negatives too. I'm sad that some of the people I grew up with have had to move further out of London and can't reap the rewards.



**Sarah**

We've lived in Elephant and Castle for seven years. I like the vibrancy of the area and the diversity. My children go to Robert Browning School, which is a nice, small community school in East Street. I often shop for fruit and veg and plants in the market and you can buy anything and everything at the local independent shops. My children loved the Elmer the Elephant trail around Elephant Park last summer. It was nice that the sculptures were all designed by local community groups and primary schools. I largely like the changes and watching the area develop but there are always pros and cons.



**Sonia**

I'm an artist and this area is great for art. Drawing Room on Rodney Place is the only place (outside of New York) that specialises in drawing and I'm on my way to their Donna Huddleston exhibition right now. All the exhibitions are free and the people who run it are very nice. They also do talks and workshops. You can actually do a whole circuit walking around here and looking at art. There's the Imperial War Museum, the Danielle Arnaud and the Corvi-Mora galleries. And Morley College is great for art classes.



**Paul**

I've lived here since the early 90s. In fact, my grandmother was born and grew up in the tenements that were here before the Aylesbury estate. It was really hard back then and she said she remembers walking barefoot past the house where I live now. In the last five years, the area has really changed. There's a nice mix of people and we have a street party with all our neighbours every year.



**Hind**

For years, the focus has been on west and central London but now things are improving in south east London too, which is good. It's now a lively area with a nice vibe and, if you do want to go anywhere else, it's really central and the transport is 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](mailto:councilnews@southwark.gov.uk)

Read more about the regeneration programme at [www.elephantandcastle.org.uk](http://www.elephantandcastle.org.uk)