



## Editor's letter

With her wealth of knowledge and boundless good cheer, Clare Balding makes presenting the biggest and most significant sporting events in British history look like a doddle. So it's reassuring to know that it's all backed up with meticulous planning, a heap of old-fashioned notebooks and a commitment to learning not just the names of her interviewee's family, but even those of their dogs!

Brilliant preparation lies at the heart of another story this month – the superb Shakespeare in the Squares theatre company which transforms London's garden squares and open spaces each summer with its magical touring productions. You can watch Titania and Oberon leading the faeries through the gardens of the extraordinary Royal Victoria Patriotic Building on July 7 & 9.

With summer fairs, festivals and Edinburgh previews aplenty, you'll find lots more dates for your diary on our What's On pages, as well as some excellent new recipes for BBQ cooking, a peek at gorgeous tiles for your bathroom or kitchen and some excellent tips for a first timer's trip to India. Enjoy!

SAMANTHA LAURIE  
samlaurie@sheengate.co.uk

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Photo: Eric Richmond

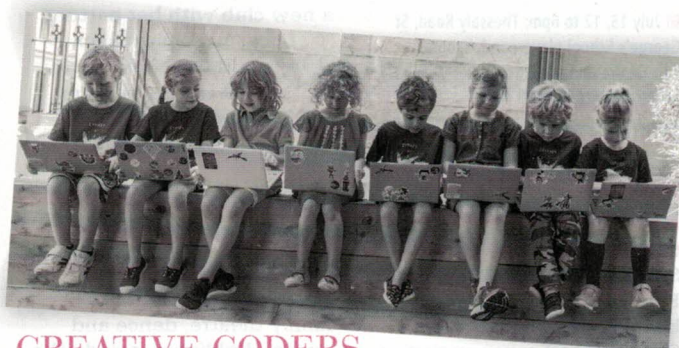
## DANCING STARS

We're delighted to hear that five local children have won places with London Children's Ballet to star in a West End production of Noel Streatfeild's bestselling novel, *Ballet Shoes* at the Peacock Theatre this month. Frank Davison (13), Isla McDonald (15), Olivia Coffey, (11), Ella Lewis (11) and Ella Ronte (13) join the 56-strong cast of 9-16 year olds to perform with specially commissioned choreography, sets, costumes and scores and a live orchestra.

Over 700 young hopefuls audition every year for this unique charitable ballet company that offers places irrespective of height, shape or income. Dancers are selected purely on their ability and those chosen are given over 100 hours of free ballet training.

"London Children's Ballet is one of the best things to have ever happened to me," says Isla McDonald. "The ballet industry is typically very harsh about body type and the thing I love the most about LCB is that no one cares what you look like or where you come from, it's just an incredible family working hard together because we love it."

■ July 4-7; The Peacock Theatre; londonchildrensballet.com



## CREATIVE CODERS

Coming to Wandsworth and Putney this summer is an exciting new type of tech camp that teaches coding skills through creative themes such as conservation, health and fitness and futuristic designs, enabling students to consider how everything from houses and cars to packaging and posters will look in the future. Each week-long camp includes hands-on craft and construction projects with outdoor games and time spent away from screens too. Suitable for 5-12 year olds, the courses run at Finton House School and Putney High School through the holidays and children can sign up for two or more days. ■ Find out more at [cyphercoders.com](http://cyphercoders.com)

## Teen cooking course

Despairing of the kitchen skills of her teenage son and friends, local chef and celebrity party planner, Lorna Wing is launching an interactive online cooking course for 14-18 year olds, with many taking it as part of their Duke of Edinburgh qualification. Once signed up to her 12-week recipe plan of simple everyday recipes, students send Lorna pictures of the dishes they've cooked via What's App, and she assesses them and offers advice.

"They can start in their own kitchen at a time and date that suits them. I wanted to make it easier for them to learn some practical cooking skills before they head off to uni or a gap year – but without adding to the burden of yet another after-school class!"

■ Courses cost £150; see [lornawingcookery.co.uk](http://lornawingcookery.co.uk)



## WIN! A private dining and whisky tasting experience for you and your friends!

The Scotch Malt Whisky Society is the world's leading whisky club, and its new venue on Battersea's Northcote Road is home to an incredible collection of single cask, single malt drams. What better way to discover them than over a perfectly matched tasting dinner with friends? In this fabulous reader prize worth £500, SMWS ambassadors will select the ideal malts for you and three friends to enjoy alongside a three-course dinner from the restaurant's award-winning Scottish-themed menu.

Not only that, you'll enjoy a welcome drink and all four of you will receive SMWS ([smws.com](http://smws.com)) membership, which includes access to an extensive programme of colourful tasting events, discounted dram prices and exclusive entry to the club's Members' Rooms in Edinburgh and London.

To be in with a chance of winning, enter online at [essentialsurrey.co.uk](http://essentialsurrey.co.uk). T&Cs apply, closing date July 31.



## Off to camp...

Keen to get your kids off their phones? The UK's only off-grid children's summer activity centre, Camp Kernow in Cornwall reopens with a brand new field kitchen with solar ovens to encourage campers to explore new ways of cooking. As well as shelter building and 'forest bathing workshops' to practice mindfulness, there's technical tree climbing, eco energy workshops, green woodworking, forging, foraging, kayaking, dusk bat walking, falconry, archery, silk screen printing, leatherwork and stone carving.

■ [campkernow.org.uk](http://campkernow.org.uk)

