

Increase in call outs

THE number of patients the air ambulance treated across Bromley, Bexley, Greenwich and Lewisham has jumped in the last year.

Figures released by the charity reveal the boroughs of Lewisham and Greenwich made it into the top 10 destinations across the capital.

Last year, the air ambulance treated 71 patients in Lewisham, seventh overall, while neighbouring borough Greenwich came ninth, with 69 people treated.

The helicopter was called out to treat 61 people in London's biggest borough, Bromley, but Bexley had only 38 patients treated.

However, all boroughs have seen an increase since 2014.

Greenwich saw the biggest rise, 20 per cent, from 55 call-outs, and Bexley was next with a jump of 18 per cent, up from 31 people.

Bromley had a much lower increase, 8 per cent, previously treating 56 patients and Lewisham was up seven per cent from 66 casualties.

Graham Hodgkin, CEO of London's air ambulance, said: "While our statistics show we were busier in some areas of the capital than others, trauma can happen to anyone, anywhere, at any time.

"Trauma doesn't have a postcode and neither do we."

Family-run Italian restaurant climbs to top of rankings Trattoria Raffaele toasts TripAdvisor rave reviews



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A SYDENHAM family-run Italian restaurant climbed to the top of TripAdvisor rankings, making it one of the best restaurants in London.

Trattoria Raffaele, in Sydenham Road, which scooped the top spot last week with a string of rave reviews, is owned by husband and wife Raffaele Giannandrea and Emily Berryman.

Their ranking on the review website has brought in new customers and shows the popularity of independent restaurants.

Ms Berryman, 35, said: "I think it is spreading the word a little bit wider, we have a good local clientele but it has made people aware of us from further afield.

"I think it's brought people into Sydenham, and we're lucky to have some nice pubs nearby so it makes it a bit more of a night out."

The restaurant's history and independence has added



Raffaele Giannandrea, Emily Berryman and chef Manuel Silva.
Top right: The family business; the interior of the restaurant

to its popularity and makes it stand out over high street chains.

Ms Berryman said: "We can afford to be a bit more

home grown, we're independent and people are getting fed up of the chains.

"We can offer a different experience.

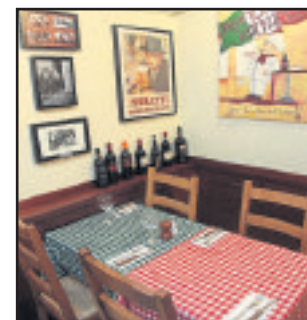
"It is a bit more personal. The restaurant has been in Raf's family for 45 years and we took over the restaurant about eight years ago, we have pictures up of the old place to keep that line running through."

Asked about the secret to their success, Ms Berryman added: "It's just balance, the front of house staff are really welcoming and if people have had good service and good food they will come back with friends or come back for another glass of wine.

"It's been word of mouth, we have been lucky that we haven't had to advertise and social media is great for small businesses."

The restaurant has since dropped to second place, being overtaken by Fiddie's Italian Kitchen, but is still streets ahead of big names such as Restaurant Gordon Ramsay, which comes in at number 22, and The Ritz Restaurant, at spot 51.

One reviewer called it a "true local gem", adding: "Have just come back from having a wonderful meal here



and wish I'd have come sooner.

"The food was absolutely amazing and service very friendly and efficient".

Another said: "This restaurant has really upped its game.

"We last went three or four years ago and it seemed pretty good, but nothing special. It is now exceptional.

"We won't leave it so long before our next visit."

Trattoria Raffaele also has a TripAdvisor Certificate of Excellence, given to restaurants that get consistently good reviews.

Great-gran beats cancer, grabs a 'toy boy'

A GREAT-grandmother from Keston is marrying her "toy boy" after beating cancer.

After leading a healthy life with no major illnesses, Margaret Soar, 80, was diagnosed with melanoma - skin cancer - on her shoulder in 2014.

Ms Soar, who's lived in Heathfield Road for 45 years, told News Shopper: "It was very, very frightening. I thought my number was up.

"I had to have quite a severe operation and plastic surgery on my shoulder. I had a lymph gland removed.

"I was in hospital for a couple of days.

"I got the all clear two years ago. It's marvellous, absolutely marvellous."

Shortly after beating the deadly disease, the mother-of-three was introduced to John Brown, 73, by a mutual friend.

After falling for each other, the former businesswoman is due to marry her husband number three after being widowed.

The grandmother-of-nine added: "I'm getting married, not bad for an 80-year-old.

"I was over the cancer when I met him. I think my lucky stars



Margaret Soar, 80, pictured with fiancé John Brown, 73, has beaten cancer

every day, we make the most of everyday. We're thankful for our health.

"We were both unhappy on our own, it's not much fun on your own. Happiness shared is happiness doubled."

They have set the date for June 4 at the Bromley Registry Office, in Stockwell Close.

The bride-to-be added: "There's quite a lot of organising to do.

But I'm very happy and very excited.

"We're going to Greece for honeymoon.

"He proposed to me many months ago. I really thought about it and considered it, and I accepted about a month ago."

She added: "All our friends were so happy, they've been telling us to get engaged.

"He's my toy boy.

John's given me a ring, I've got an engagement ring. Well, I've got a few."

To add to celebrations she recently scooped £1,000 from a prize draw at the Locksbottom branch of stockbroking firm Redmayne-Bentley.

But after her own happy ending, she decided to donate it to Cancer Research UK.

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