

Opera live on screen

THE Empire cinema in Basildon will be hosting a live screening of Romeo and Juliet – beamed straight from one of London’s most iconic theatres.

Cinemagoers can watch the performance of the tragic Shakespeare love story at the multiplex on March 22, while ballerinas perform the show live at London’s Royal Opera House. The cinema is at the Festival Leisure Park.

Hunt for armed thief

POLICE are trawling through CCTV in an effort to catch the armed robber who struck at a petrol garage.

The crook, who attempted to hold up the Total garage, in Southchurch Road, Southend, at gunpoint is still at large.

He fled empty-handed at 12.30pm on Monday after a cashier pressed a panic alarm. Anyone with information should call Southend police on 101.

Teenager is arrested

A TEENAGER has been arrested after allegedly assaulting several people.

The incident happened in Wick Drive, Wickford. The 18-year-old man is alleged to have assaulted several people at about 5pm on Monday.

He has been arrested on suspicion of causing actual bodily harm and has since been detained under the Mental Health Act.

Fined for dog barking

A WOMAN has been fined following complaints about a dog barking at her home.

Neighbours complained about the barking at Michaela Beany’s former home in Essex Road, West Thurrock, in December 2010.

Beany, who now lives in Dagenham, was fined £1,250 and ordered to pay £1,228 in costs after being found guilty of five separate counts of failing to comply with a noise abatement notice issued by Thurrock Council.

A RESTAURANT specialising in Indian cuisine catered for a host of VIPs when it opened its doors for the first time. The Royal Oak, in Woodham Ferrers, served diners, including Maldon mayor Stephen Savage, when it opened on Monday.

MOTORIST HAD TO BE CUT FREE AFTER COLLISION

Crash at notorious filter lane junction

By GINA MARDEN
gina.marden@nqe.com

A MOTORIST had to be cut free from his car following a crash on a controversial sliproad.

The crash has prompted fresh calls from motorists and driving officials for the filter lane in Basildon to be changed.

The accident happened when a Mini Cooper and Mercedes Coupe collided on the sliproad where motorists leave the London-bound track of the A127 at the A176 junction for Basildon, to head towards Pippis Hill and the town centre.

Paramedics, police and firefighters raced to the scene and fire crews had to cut the roof from the Mini Cooper to free the man who had suffered back and neck injuries, following the crash at 9.25am yesterday.

The 56-year-old woman from Canvey, who was driving the black Mercedes, was reported for motoring offences by police, but she opted to take a driver improvement course rather than going to court.

However, fears have once again been raised about the safety of the junction.

Driving instructor Tariq Musaji, 43, of London Road, Wickford, said: “I saw the aftermath of the accident.

“I have always been very concerned about this sliproad. You have to have real skill to be able to see properly there.

“I always tell people to put the window right down and put their head out to see, or to do a complete U-turn and go in the far right lane as if they are going to the town, and go all the way around at the next roundabout.”

Motorist Emma Brown, 28, of Pine Close, Steeple View, added: “I just don’t see what the point of having that filter lane is, as when you get in it you still have to give way.

“Surely it would have made more sense and been safer to have a continuous filter lane, that filters all the way around to Pippis Hill.

Council: Sliproads safe

WHILE Essex County Council says there have been no reported accidents on the sliproads, it does admit receiving several complaints about the junction.

When they first opened in April last year, they were then mysteriously closed off a few days later to allow more work to be done.

County Hall now says further works and surveys have been done to make the junctions as safe as possible.

Tracey Chapman, county councillor responsible for highways and transportation, said: “Essex County Council has received a number of calls regarding the new left slip road layout.

“We can assure residents the design and construction of the left slip conforms to the design manual for roads and bridges, the basis on which all highway schemes are designed and constructed.



■ Aftermath – the Mini had to have its roof cut off

Picture: PAUL WATSON BA55251_08

“This slip lane is just an accident waiting to happen, as this crash has proved.”

Motorists say the main problem with the junction’s sliproads is that they have been laid out at too acute an angle, with drivers having difficulty seeing traffic approach from the right.

This difficulty is causing some motorists to pull out instead of giving way as they just can’t see other cars approaching them.

Motorists are also concerned that similar filter lanes are being built on the approach to Basildon town centre on Cranes Farm Road.

Essex County Council says that since the slip roads opened in April last year, no accidents have been formally recorded.

“Also, as is standard practice with all newly constructed schemes, an independent road safety audit was carried out on the completed layout.

“We can also confirm that, based on feedback received from members of the public, it carried out a second audit, this time with Essex Police present, where again the road safety engineers were content that the scheme conformed to the national design criteria for a new layout of this nature.

“A recommendation from the police suggested that an additional give-way sign be installed to raise awareness of the change in layout, which has since been done.

“There have been no recorded injury collisions on this sliproad since the work on the layout was completed. The junction will continue to be monitored while drivers adapt to the changes.”

Open Day
Sunday 26th February 2012
10.30am to 4.30pm



BRAXTED PARK[®]
WALLED GARDEN

*An exquisite backdrop
for your perfect
wedding memories*



Braxted Park Estate, Witham, Essex CM8 3EN
Telephone: 01621 892305 • Email: office@braxtedpark.com
www.braxtedparkweddings.co.uk