

# Twickenham & Richmond TRIBUNE

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## Editors

Berkley Driscoll  
Teresa Read



29<sup>th</sup> March 2024

T&RT

# TickerTape - News in Brief

## South Western Railway

On Wednesday 20 March we were notified of industrial action by the ASLEF union, taking place on the following dates:

- **Thursday 4 to Saturday 6 April:** Overtime ban
- **Sunday 7 April:** No industrial action
- **Monday 8 April:** Strike action
- **Tuesday 9 April:** Overtime ban

We will confirm our service levels, and the dates on which journey planners will be fully up to date, as soon as possible.

An overview of our plan for each date of industrial action can be found below, however, please check back for further updates.

Industrial action will affect other operators on all of the above dates, so please check your entire journey if it includes connections and other operators' services.

For more information on ticketing during industrial action, see our dedicated [strike tickets and refunds page](#).

### Thursday 4 and Friday 5 April – check before you travel

Revised timetables will operate across the mainland network, with reductions to some services. Services may be subject to late notice cancellations, so please check your journey before you set off.

### Saturday 6 April – check before you travel

Revised timetables will operate on the mainland network, with reductions to some services. Mainland services will also be affected by engineering work. Services may be subject to late notice cancellations, so please check your journey before you set off.

### Sunday 7 April – check before you travel

A normal timetable will operate, however, services will be affected by engineering work.

For more information, please visit our [Planned Improvements page](#).



**The Tree Agency**

darryl parkin

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25 King Edwards Grove  
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# Local Picture Postcard Column - Part 242

By Alan Winter

## Happy Easter Everyone!

Our Postcards this week feature Easter's iconic images from the 1900's to the 1920's. Angels, newly hatched yellow chicks, bunny rabbits, Easter flowers and Easter eggs. In today's world it seems that chocolate versions have taken over with Lindt's chocolate bunnies wrapped in gold paper being a global best seller.

Picture postcards were first made available for sale in 1894 during late Victorian Times and were sent in huge numbers across the world and domestically until telephones became more available in the middle of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. The first recorded "sent" postmark from Twickenham was postmarked 28<sup>th</sup> June 1898.

As a means of communication, postcards changed the world. Supported by a postal service that offered 3 and sometimes more deliveries a day, they brought the concept of fast, distant communication to a public that had previously to shout over the garden hedge to communicate with anyone who wasn't in earshot.



It cost a halfpenny on average to buy a postcard and a halfpenny to put a stamp on it to send it on its way. That's an old penny to communicate with anyone in the UK within 24 hours. Local postcards sent within a town were often delivered just a few hours later in the same day. A penny stamp was all that was

required to send a postcard internationally.

It didn't take long for postcard publishers to realise the potential market and very soon countless millions of picture postcards were sent with real and printed photographs of the



locality where they were purchased as well as covering every subject imaginable.

Greetings cards were dropping through the nation's letterboxes in huge numbers. Cards were sent on every occasion including Christmas, Birthdays and Easter. It didn't take long for the commercial world to realise the advertising and marketing potential of postcards.

My search for old postcards continues. I am always looking for old postcards and old photograph albums etc. The postcards can be British or Foreign, black and white or coloured and of places or subjects.

If you have any that are sitting unwanted in a drawer, in a box in the loft or in the garage or under a bed, please contact me on 07875 578398 or [alanwinter192@hotmail.com](mailto:alanwinter192@hotmail.com) I would like to see them and I pay cash!

Meanwhile have a very enjoyable Easter weekend. I shall be at Brentford tonight watching the Bees beat Manchester United. You heard it here first!

# CrusaderTravel

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With over 50 years experience we pride ourselves on being able to offer an unrivalled service with attention to detail. Come and have a chat with us in our cosy office off the Church Street Square, we are open 6 days a week from 11am until 6pm (Closed Sunday)



# Oh, Radnor Gardens!

Teresa Read

Now, in 2024, the Twickenham Riverside saga (“Oh, Twickenham Riverside”) is still causing consternation for some residents. Little is it known in quiet Strawberry Hill that the Twickenham Riverside development could change the character of the Strawberry Hill riverside area for ever.

It seems, that it was planned by the Council to maximise the number of private flats on Twickenham Riverside. However, this led to the conundrum of how to fulfil planning requirements to compensate for the loss of recreation area on the Twickenham Riverside site.

The plan proposes to locate the required recreation area elsewhere (the small tranquil park on the “site” of Radnor Gardens being considered), with no need to request further planning permission. ...Radnor Gardens with two small historic buildings in a tranquil setting, one of the prettiest areas on the Thames. Forget the flooding, this seems to be the Council’s answer.

Money versus nature and a plan hidden from public scrutiny in a myriad of documents. No one told residents in Strawberry Hill although the Twickenham Riverside issue was brought to the attention of the Strawberry Hill Residents Association (SHRA), but a request to put the Twickenham Riverside issue on the agenda caused a rift in the Committee. It was said by the Chair (a former councillor) that SHRA did not discuss anything outside its area.



*Radnor Gardens c1985*

On learning this week about the current situation regarding Radnor Gardens, a resident immediately raised the issue of parking, saying that anything that brought more cars to Strawberry Hill would cause problems as the streets are already fully parked at present. Another resident was concerned about spoiling one of the prettiest spots on the Thames, often flooded but with a sloping lawn leading up to two small historic buildings and seating areas.

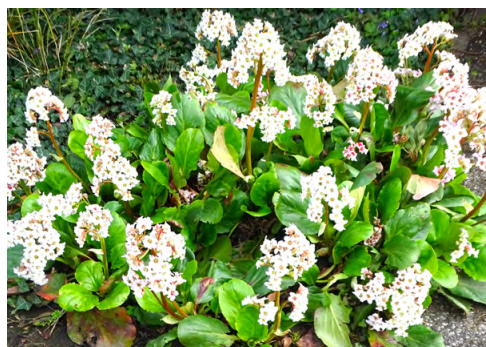
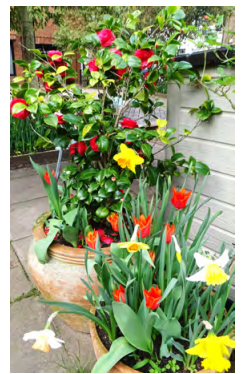
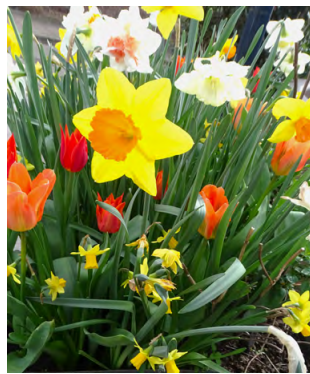
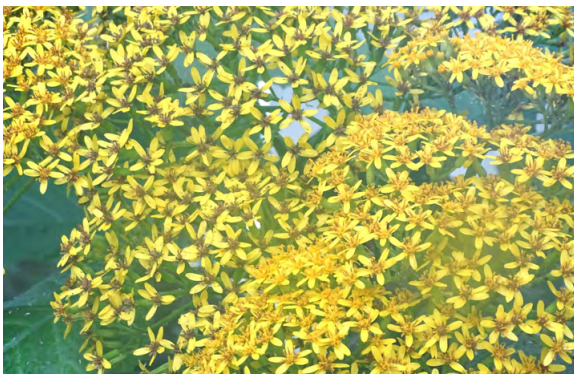
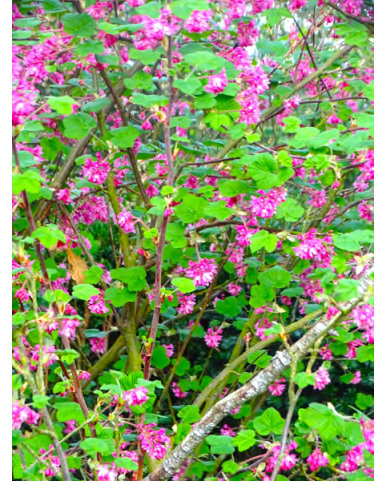
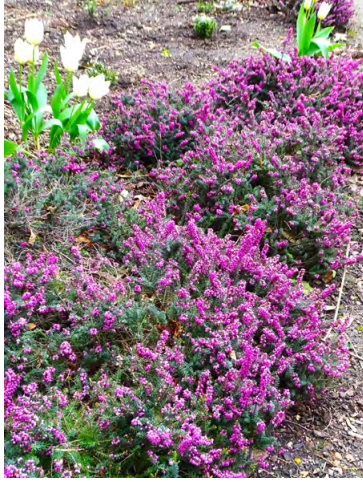
Added to these concerns, the police have been called on occasions when large groups of teenagers have descended on Radnor Gardens.

Is Radnor Gardens, a small riverside park with a playground for young children to one side and a bowls club, a suitable venue to offload the recreation area for Twickenham Riverside? Perhaps the Council should think again, or maybe there are councillors who do not plan to be in the Borough for the next election?

# Spring Colours In Twickenham

Pictures by Doug Goodman

The arrival of Spring in our borough brings bright colours to our gardens and open spaces. Camellias and magnolias are at their best, tulips are opening and trees are beginning to come into leaf.



# Keep fit in April and help fund cancer medical breakthroughs

By Ron Mushiso, Conservative GLA Candidate for South West London

Like most of us, I have had family and friends who have undergone a cancer diagnosis and subsequent treatment. It is a shocker that brings with it a rollercoaster of feelings and emotions, from devastation, emptiness, and fear. In some cases the support of friends and loved one can usher in a determination to fight amidst the doubts and uncertainty of the future.



I felt this personally last week when Steve Curran, former leader of Hounslow Council, died after a long battle with cancer. Steve was a friend away from politics and into his role in the council we shared another passion, sports. Steve and I were both members of Richmond rugby club. We would often debate passionately in chamber, and then he would invite to his office for a beer and catch up. Leaving party politics at the door.

If it were not for our shared interest in rugby, I probably wouldn't have known Steve beyond local politics. That is the transformative power of sports. An interest in sports and exercise gives us purpose and serves as key that unlocks our social networks. When I knew Steve, his playing days were over, but he was still involved socially as a parent.

Sports is not just about the social wellbeing; it is also about overcoming a physical challenge as team or as an individual. The satisfaction of taking part, of completing the task and of experiencing the physical adaptation like a lower resting heart rate, weight loss and better mobility are priceless.



So, I was encouraged when I read this week that [MacMillan](#) and [Cancer Research UK](#) have launched its 100 press up challenge. This is a way for all of us to show support for MacMillan's work and to push our mind and bodies. It is not for everyone; but I want us to rise to the challenge such as these. There are several Just Giving pages dedicated to this campaign if you wish to donate. You may also wish to start your own page, setting out your own challenge. I will be doing the press up challenge in solidarity to all those battling with cancer. I will also be doing so to encourage others to

be active. 100 press up per day for the whole month of April. My end goal will be to complete 100 press up in one sitting, on the 30<sup>th</sup> April. Right now, the most I could manage in one sitting is 30.

The challenge is set. Who will join me?





JOIN THE MAYOR OF RICHMOND,  
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THE MAYOR'S CHARITY EVENING

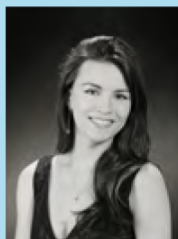
Light  
Refreshments

# Together ness Concert



The Power of Music Bringing People Together  
Hosted by The Mayor, Cllr Suzette Nicholson  
and Richmond in Europe Association

Featuring:



Clara Orif  
(singer)



Regina Gossel  
(singer)



Milette Gillow  
(singer)



Jack Redman  
(piano)

5.30pm  
Sunday 7th April 2024  
Tickets £15 per adult  
Under 18s Free

St Mary's Church  
Church Street  
Twickenham  
TW1 3NJ

Light Refreshments  
sold In the interval

THE MAYOR'S CHARITY THIS YEAR IS: SEEN AND AGE UK RICHMOND

Designed and Produced by Richmond and Wandsworth Design & Print. wdp@wandsworth.gov.uk MP159 (2.24). Illustration © iStock - softulka



Advanced booking is essential.

Tickets £15, available now by booking online:  
[www.richmond.gov.uk/council/councillors/mayor/mayors\\_charities](http://www.richmond.gov.uk/council/councillors/mayor/mayors_charities)



# British Summer Time Starts On Sunday 31st March



TwickerSeal would like to remind everyone to put their clocks forward by an hour this Sunday! (At 1am)

**NPL** 

## OPEN DAY

Friday 24 May 2024  
12:00 - 19:00 (UTC+1)

Book your tickets at  
[npl.co.uk/open-day](https://npl.co.uk/open-day)



# Share your views on GP services

Healthwatch Richmond wants to ask residents about their experiences of booking GP appointments and virtual consultations.

They are also interested to know about the additional roles now employed by GP Practices, including:

- Physician associates
- Physiotherapists
- Mental health link workers
- Social prescribers



The survey will help Healthwatch Richmond understand how to deliver optimal care. It should take 5 to 10 minutes and your answers will be anonymous.

**healthwatch**  
Richmond upon  
Thames

[Complete the Healthwatch survey](#)

## Annual photography exhibition to take place this spring

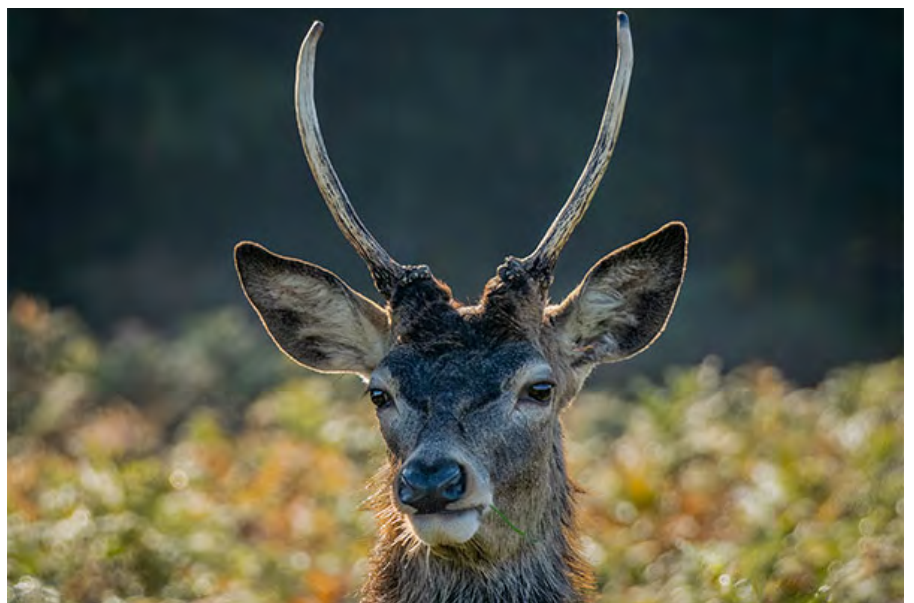
On Thursday 18 to Sunday 28 April, the Richmond and Twickenham Photographic Society will host their Annual Exhibition.

Taking place daily at Landmark Arts Centre between 10am to 4pm, a variety of photographic images will be on show.

Images range from portraiture to wildlife and from landscape to fine art, so there is sure to be something for everyone.

Admission is £4 for adults and children go free.

[Book tickets online](#)



# Adult Social Services, Health and Housing Committee

**Tuesday 26th March 2024**

By James Knight

The first part of the meeting dealt with the annual report from PA Housing, one of Richmond's most prominent social housing providers. They have around twenty-four thousand houses in the Southeast and the Midlands, with around two thousand in Richmond Borough. Repairs dominated the report; they acknowledged needing to improve their repair service. To this end, in June 2023, they changed to Wates as their principal contractor for repairs and took on a second contractor to respond when Wates did not have the capacity.

They have restructured their operation service so that each property manager has a patch of four hundred homes. They are expected to inspect and spend 80% of their time on the estates carrying out inspections and knocking on doors. In 2023/24, they budgeted to spend £1.4million in Richmond on planned works, including redecorating two hundred and ninety-two homes, replacing bathrooms in fourteen homes, replacing kitchens in fifty-two homes, replacing the roofs in thirteen homes, and replacing windows and doors in thirty-four homes.

They have fully dealt with fifteen cases of dampness but have two hundred and sixteen more treated and not fully resolved, and sixty-six identified and have not yet been treated. They said that some cases of dampness are caused by over-occupation rather than building defects, and in those cases, they will carry out a regular mould wash. They have twenty-one empty houses waiting for refurbishment before they can be relet and are looking to tender individually to refurbish these to speed the process up.

Cllr Richard Bennet (South Twickenham) asked about complex repairs and how these were dealt with. They replied that complex work is handled by their in-house surveyors and the planned work team, but sometimes, the initial contractor does not communicate the need for further repairs. The committee asked several other questions, but none revealed any new information.

Cllr Jim Millard (Hampton Wick and South Teddington) said the committee had overspent by three million because voids are slower. As a result, they decided to become a registered social landlord to buy temporary accommodation directly. He said this had been officially confirmed today, "So that is good."

These housing association reports are for information only, and this meeting section felt like an unproductive talking shop. With many residents suffering from ongoing dampness and a tardy repair service resulting in many complaints, the councillors were too accepting of what they were being told. They need their elected councillors to speak up and demand better on their behalf.

You can see the papers for the meeting by following the link [HERE](#)

# Verdi's Requiem by Teddington Choral Society

Report and pictures by Doug Goodman

All Saints Kingston was filled with the voices and music of The Teddington Choral Society last Saturday when Verdi's Requiem was sung to a sell-out audience. The choir, directed by Julian Collings, gave a powerful performance of the music composed in 1873. The Requiem was written in memory of Verdi's close friend, Alessandro Manzoni, who had died on 22nd May 1873.

Soprano Lisa Swayne, Mezzo Soprano Beth Moxon, tenor John Findon and baritone Edmund Danon accompanied by Phil Culling and the chamber orchestra kept the audience enthralled.

Future events: July 6th at St. Andrew's Surbiton, All Things French. December 6th at St. Andrew's Surbiton, Christmas concert.



# The Easter Fair at Hampton Court Green

The Easter Fair at Hampton Court Green has been held yearly since 1838, when Queen Victoria first opened Hampton Court Palace to the public for free. This impressive run was not even broken by the two world wars because it was thought to be an important measure to keep morale high.



## Easter holiday waste and recycling collections

There will be no changes to the schedule of waste and recycling collections over the Easter weekend.

We will continue to collect residential waste and recycling on households' usual [collection dates of service](#). You can find out your collection day by downloading the free [My Richmond app](#).

Townmead Road [Reuse and Recycling Centre](#) will be open on Good Friday, Easter Sunday and Easter Monday. The last available slot to book is 3 to 3:30pm. Slots will be limited over the bank holiday weekend, so it is advised to book early.

## Off The Chart Chaat

I was very excited to hear that legendary Indian chef **Vivek Singh**



planned to take over the old Carluccio's site in Richmond (much as I loved going to Carluccio's). It's now called **Cinnamon Bazaar** and inspired by the hustle and bustle of India's ancient and modern bazaars where goods, ideas, flavours and experiences were exchanged. The menu, from Executive Chef Vivek and Head Chef Rakesh Singh, runs from breakfast through to dinner and features pan-Indian, street food style dishes, along with a new innovative range of vegan friendly plates. It's brightly lit and very welcoming, and I loved



the eclectic decor - especially the Indian newsprint lining the ceiling.

It had only been open for a week when we went, and there were a few, minor, teething problems, but that's to be expected with any new opening. Being in the same group as Carluccio's, they've very sensibly kept on the staff, who've been on quite a learning curve to switch from Italian to Indian fare!

We ordered a couple of cocktails while studying the menu: I fancied the Maiden Garden (Camomile Whitley Neill Gin; St. Germain; Lemongrass and Nutmeg) and my non-alcohol drinking other half chose a Berry Burst cocktail. He thoroughly enjoyed his, which was served in a tall glass, but mine was a bit of a disaster, due to the fact that it was served in a copper mug, packed with ice, and a paper straw to drink through. Once I'd removed the mountain of ice, it did allow me to try to drink it, but they should rethink the vessels that some cocktails are served in - and the quota of ice!

We started with a selection of the wonderful chaat dishes, for which Vivek is famous. Dating as far back as the 1600s, bazaar traders would often work long days and indulge in these savoury snacks. To this day it continues to be one of India's most popular street foods. Mitra, our server, suggested we share three chaats between us: **Samosa Smash** (Punjabi vegetable samosas, curried white peas, onion and chilli); **Banarasi Tomato Cashew Chaat** (Poached cherry tomatoes and tamarind chutney) and **Dahi Bhalla Papdi Chaat** (Lentil dumplings, sorbet, wheat biscuits & chutneys). Reader, these were seriously fabulous and they were so tasty and different from anything we'd had before. The flavours were beautifully balanced, and a refreshing tamarind sorbet accompanied the tomato and cashew. Gentle heat built up in the mouth with the Samosa Smash and they were all so cleverly seasoned to allow the different flavours to come through without too much heat.



For mains, my husband had already earmarked the **Lamb Rogan Josh Shepherd's Pie** (according to Time Out one of 'The 100 Best Dishes in London'). He wasn't disappointed; he loved the fact that it had chunks of meat rather than mince, but wished it could have been a more generous portion for a main course (it was served in a small gratin dish). I opted for Tandoori King Prawn with a Goan curry sauce and Lemon rice...wow! The prawns were fat and juicy and so good. A finger bowl will be a useful addition, though, to avoid staining the nice fabric napkins. To accompany it we had a Bitter Gourd Super Salad (Crisp gourd, red onion, spice), which was really interesting - bitter gourd was a completely new taste to me - and a delicious one. Not being one to pass up a portion of Peshwari naan, my husband was very impressed - as was I with the tiny piece I managed to steal from him - it had lovely notes of cardamom.



As you can imagine, we were pretty 'pogged out' with this wonderful food, but my husband was persuaded to have some **Carrot & Ginger Toffee Pudding** with banana ice cream, which he said was particularly delicious as not overly sweet, and he wolfed it down extremely fast, so I didn't get to taste it. I had a portion of homemade nutmeg ice cream which slid down beautifully and was the perfect finale to a great meal.

A well compiled wine list offers a good selection starting at £6.60 a glass and beers and ciders at around £6.50.

Breakfast is soon to be introduced with a range of Indian dishes that sound very tempting indeed. We'll definitely be going back and Cinnamon Bazaar is, I'm sure, going to be a very popular addition to Richmond's dining scene - it certainly deserves to be!



## Hola Fatso!

At a time when we are indulging in an extraordinary amount of chocolate, I thought it appropriate to highlight a local chocolate company. Until I met Ella McKay (aka Fatso Numero Uno) from **Fatso** chocolate, I didn't realise that 97 per cent of UK households buy a bar of chocolate every week. Yep, that's a hell of a lot of chocolate. You may have noticed this new brand, one that's gaining distribution, and disrupting the UK chocolate scene, celebrates **dark chocolate**. Fatso is fun, a strikingly named and packaged range that's constantly looking at different formats and ways to celebrate dark chocolate. "After all," says Ella, "milk chocolate seems to have all the fun!"



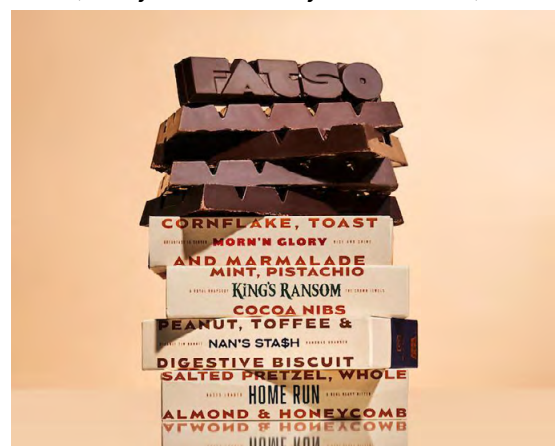
The name is taken from a Spanish term of endearment - gordo - meaning fat. But don't worry, it's so named as it is a fat bar of chocolate, not insulting you for buying it! The company is called Fatso and based in Richmond. Ella lives in Twickenham, so this really is a local business. She's a co-creator of Fatso and self-proclaimed foodie, with classic marketing training at some of the world's biggest brands. Fatso was launched in 2022, just as we were coming out of lockdown, and Ella's sterling marketing career with her preferred small, disruptor brands, stood her in perfect stead for her new vocation. Extensive research indicated to her that chocolate can be a very corrupt industry, and she was determined only to source ethically. Research led her to Luker in Columbia, now the sole supplier of chocolate to Fatso. Luker is a family owned business and a co-operative. Thoroughly ethical, it works closely with a network of farmers, alliances and communities to improve social welfare, biodiversity and farming practices. The chocolate is melted down in the Midlands, where flavours are added, and the team puts the fun into dark chocolate.



The germ of the idea for Fatso had started with a conversation between Ella and co-founders (and friends) about the dull dark chocolate market. "With a reputation for being bitter, serious, pretentious, 'the healthy option,' and seldom the choice for an ultimate treat, dark chocolate was fast becoming obsolete among fun-loving, life living chocoholics." says McKay. "In a world of seriousness and restraint, we asked, why should any chocolate;

white, milk, dark or pink, be anything other than delicious and indulgent?"

The first three products were launched simultaneously: **Morn'n Glory** (breakfast inspired, with crunchy cornflakes and a side of toast and marmalade - yes, and it really works); **Home Run** (salted pretzel, almonds and honeycomb, inspired by their US friends) and **Nan's Stash** (with peanuts, chewy toffee and digestive biscuit). The first two are 60 percent cacao and Nan's Stash is 70 percent.



Last year, in perfect time for the Coronation celebrations, they launched **King's Ransom**, a truly majestic bar with pistachios; crunchy cocoa nibs and a hint of mint packed into a 60 percent cacao bar.

Fatso has certainly shaken up the retail chocolate sector and, in just 18 months, is stocked by over 300 retailers, including top stores like Harvey Nichols and Liberty, as well as independents and gift shops. You'll also often find Fatso mini bars in smart hotels like The Standard and The Lanesborough.

# GIVE ME TIME! JUST ANOTHER 10 YEARS!

By Bruce Lyons

Many years ago (30yrs +) my friend Stuart Woolf created what is now the Iconic, one of a kind "GREAT RIVER RACE" This Legendary race now runs annually from Millwall (Greenwich) to Ham in September (September 21 in 2024 – I will be 90 by then!). Nearly 3000 rowers (Scouts to OAPs all rowing fixed seat boats of all shapes and sizes. The crews come from all over the British Isles and many from Overseas. Over time we have seen Australian, Scandinavian, Sardinian, Bermuda, Spain and always a very strong contingent from Holland & more.



About 10 years ago Stuart agreed to offer an accommodation package, which I created for him, till then practically everybody camped at Thames Young Mariners. In the first year I booked about 10 rooms at the Lensbury and a few rooms at Teddington Travelodge. Over time the demand grew & word spread & now provide accommodation across Teddington, Twickenham and Richmond and in this time I have also taken on the organising of the Shuttle coaches – some 700+ from the hotels and campsite to the Start and also promoting a Spectator Boat too, following the Race.

When the Australians came it gave me the opportunity to do what I always wanted to do, promote incoming tourism, ideally to our amazing borough. The Australians stayed in Central London actually, but went all over the UK on small visits. This year we have more



than 20 Americans from Massachusetts, most are staying in Teddington to start with and after the race splitting up for short breaks around the country. What I really like about this is it is what I tried so hard to do years ago, create a DMC (Destination Marketing Company) focusing on our truly amazing region. We have so many truly Unique Attractions; Richmond Royal Park, Hampton Court, Kingston and the Plantagenet Kings, The National Archives at Kew, Kew Gardens, The Poppy Factory, Twickenham Stadium and the Stoop -, the centre of the universe as far as Rugby is

concerned, Live Theatre in Richmond, Strawberry Hill House, Turners House and Marble Hill, Ham House. Hammerton's Ferry and THE VIEW of the Arcadian Thames, Maids of Honour the list is endless.

So, this year, I am doing a lot more hotels across the Borough and introducing excursions – like the Eel Pie Museum, Hampton Court etc.



The Americans have hired the Skerries built under Bamber Gascoigne's direction by Mark Edwards and Vic Griffiths and the youngsters from Grey Court School.

I tried hard those years ago to involve the Council in my idea and the two BIDS (now three-Kingston, Twickenham, & Newly Richmond) with no success, but who knows? Another 10 years should do the trick.

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# Crusader Travel & what it means to me

By Shona Lyons

My parents have always had a travel business. My mum when she came to England got a job as the English Secretary for the Israeli Tourist Office which is where she met my dad, after he had been on a travel agent's educational trip organized by the Tourist Office to Israel, which he really loved. They had a reception in the tourist office after the trip and they met, and the rest is history. My dad had been working in travel since his twenties after trying out all kinds of job, his real love was farming but he didn't have the finances to buy a farm, but he was an agricultural student for some time, and has always had green fingers and just loves the outdoors and growing things. He managed cinemas for a while and was even working as a casting agent but in his twenties got a job in a high-end travel agency in Soho and never looked back. He has an incredibly adventurous spirit and a big work ethic and has just kind of succeeded in this business which my parents worked in since 1966 when they opened their first travel agency in Church Street Twickenham. I look back at all the highs and lows of their lives in travel and I think what strikes me most is how brave they both were, picking them up and dusting themselves off on many occasions and carrying on regardless. You do have to be quite brave in this business, take quite a few risks here and there, and be prepared to work hard if you want to survive.



So I have been immersed in travel all my life, I was born at home above the shop in 1967, my parents were always travelling, my first job was making tea for everyone, stamping brochures & answering the phone. But later I drifted away from the business as I had always wanted to go to university and always had an interest in the arts, I worked in their travel agency for a few

years in the late 90s but it wasn't until 2005-6 when I returned to England after living in Israel for a few years that I worked with my parents in travel again. I hadn't really found my happy place until then. Life hadn't been at all easy and I think when I came back in 2005 or was it 2006, I remember going to the office and seeing how my dad seemed absolutely inundated with work, and seemed to be fielding all the calls and doing a huge amount himself and I said to myself that I just had to help him.

Then the office was 2 shops, 57 and 58 Church Street, as over the years my parents had also downsized and seen many changes. They were still working a lot with the Red Sea and Diving as well as being a general retail agency. I think there were about 10 staff then, but over the years people left and then Covid came, and we needed to really restructure the business if we were to survive the pandemic which had devastated the travel business, with almost 3 years of no travel at all. I started running the shop alone from the start of the Covid pandemic as both my parents were laid low with the disease and the other 2 staff were furloughed. I needed to learn all about the admin and accounts and also I needed to change a lot of contracts with suppliers and bring the overheads down.

My mum sadly never really got well enough to come back to work full time but she was still always very involved and we discussed everything as a family all the time but since Covid I have been running the business with my dad and we are now joint directors.

I really love my work, I love working in Twickenham. I actually am lucky enough to live a 10 minute walk and a 5 minute cycle ride from the shop. We have a lovely retail space, with just the 2 of us now. We get along really well and work well as a team. We love to garden the concrete square and over the years have managed to turn it into a green oasis, with lots of pots and squares around the trees which we fill with plants for all the seasons. We put a table and chairs out as well as putting the giant chess board out every day so the square really is quite a lively, pretty but peaceful place where people come to play chess with friends or family, eat lunch, meet friends, or just sit a while & and enjoy a bit of peace and quiet in a nice location, as a break from their work, with lots of birdsong around them, by the river.

My work I find really interesting and rewarding. I am quite a quiet person and I love the fact that so many different people come through the door all the time. I never know who I will meet and to me they are all friends & I am sure quite a few count me as their friends too, as I know that quite often they could book a certain holiday directly but choose to book with us, choosing to give us the business, which is a very kind gesture which we recognize, appreciate & treasure. I really enjoy building relationships with my clients, I get to know them really quite well, what they like, how their families are made up, what they like as couples, or as singles. I love providing a really personal service. I enjoy working and it gives me a sense of purpose. I actually love getting up in the morning, and knowing that I will go to the office a bit later on and every day, it is exciting because no day is the same. Sometimes it is a challenge and can be stressful, but both my dad and I really love it. I know my dad still enjoys the work, I often tell him that if he wanted to stay at home, I could and would manage, but we enjoy working together and I know he would be really bored at home.

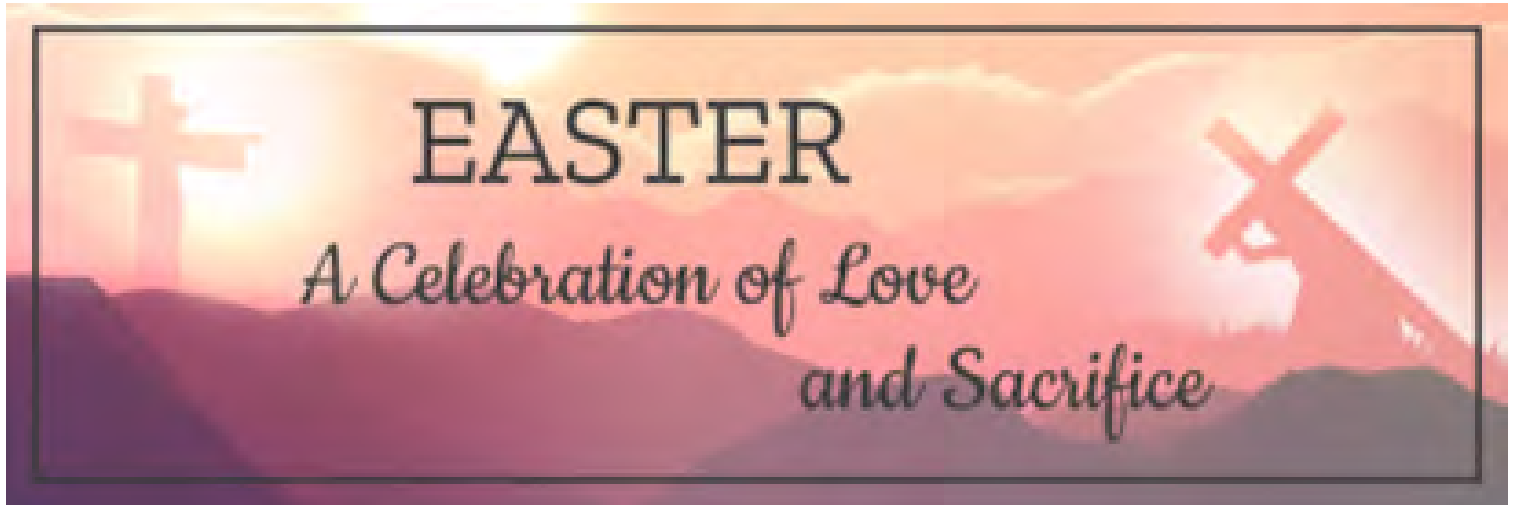
So really Crusader Travel is a lot more than just a travel agency for us. It is our happy place, it provides us with the means to have happy, fulfilling and purposeful lives, in our lovely home town, Twickenham.

And we must be providing a useful service as we are always busy really and have lots of happy and repeat clients.

# Easter?

By Deep Patel

~ Through The Eyes of a Twickenham Shop Keeper ~



So this is Easter...is it just me, or does it seem to have come around egg-stra fast this time? (sorry, couldn't resist that one) I mean, it only seems like a few months ago it was Easter, and here we are again...my shop shelves are loaded with cards with bunny rabbits on them and chocolate-eggs galore, and I always get a little anxious thinking to myself, have I over ordered this year...then as always...by Easter Sunday morning I have completely sold out and customers coming in are so desperate for something Easter-ish that they end up settling for a few crème eggs and say "I will put them in a bowl of straw and make a little Easter nest for a gift to a loved one! In some cases when I run out of crème eggs, customers have even purchased a pack of Maltesers and said "well, they kind of look like mini-eggs" so it seems Easter somewhat drives the imagination and enables people to think outside of the box when it comes to gifting chocolate eggs!

Apart from the science of Easter-egg purchasing habits, what else does Easter actually mean to you? Well, this was the key point of conversation in my newsagents shop over this past week...

There is very obviously the actual religious significance of Easter, as in Easter being arguably the most important period in the Christian calendar, the crucifying and resurrection of Lord of Jesus Christ, and many would say in actual fact, that is exactly what Easter is about, and factually they wouldn't be wrong in saying so either, but not everyone today is religious, so what could be drawn from the period of Easter for those that are not strictly religious too (apart from wolfing down boxes of hollow chocolate eggs like there's no tomorrow)?

Well, of the customers in my shop that I had this conversation with over the past week, the most popular answer I got with regards to what Easter was all about for them was "it's a few extra days off work", or "a couple of extra lay-ins" or even "time to eat far too much crap and watch TV"...well...you have to hand it to them...none of those answers are wrong are they? However, many also answered things like "some quality time with my wife and kids" (who's he kidding) or "a nice time to reflect on new beginnings" (no seriously, some people do that), but one thing that got me thinking was that for so many customers that I spoke to in my shop over this past week regarding what Easter meant for them, the vast majority of responses were

focused around themselves...what THEY would get out of Easter, things they could gain during this period, be that a few extra hours sleep in the morning or eating a ton of chocolate in the shape of hollow eggs, it was generally about gaining something more than usual...

It got me thinking about the actual message of Easter...a period focused NOT on self-gain at all, but on quite the opposite...on sacrifice...on giving up...on thinking of OTHERS before ourselves...on doing what is RIGHT for the greater good...not necessarily our own good, but for the greater good of those we care and love...they say the highest and most truest form of love is that of sacrifice...giving up something important to us for the happiness of others, in the case of Jesus...his own life...

So this Easter, I don't want to ask people to stop enjoying their lay-ins, or to reduce the amount of hollow chocolate eggs that they consume, rather to do all that (as you gotta give yourself love before you can truly love others) but also, this Easter, take extra time to think about how you can sacrifice something important to you in order to bring greater enjoyment to others around you...that may be sacrificing going out with your friends in order to spend time with your family, or perhaps sacrificing your free time to help someone vulnerable or less fortunate than you are in order to help make their Easter a little more joyful and less stressful, or even staying in one weekend and instead donating the money you would have spent going out to a cause close to your heart, be that a charity or church or even buying a lonely elderly neighbor a surprise bunch of flowers to say Happy Easter, every act of sacrifice you make, no matter how big or small counts...it really doesn't matter whether you are Christian or not, at the end of the day, to give is always something divine, and to give up a little of your own pleasure for the pleasure of someone or something less fortunate or in need is what makes our souls smile...

Happy Easter to all the readers of The Twickenham and Richmond Tribune, from Deep and Meet & Deep Newsagents.

**Remember...**

***“In the joy of others...lies our own”***

#### **MY CREATURE-KINDNESS TIP OF THE WEEK...**

**STOP MOTHS KINDLY (GOOD KARMA):** Mix 2 teaspoons of essential lavender, peppermint or citronella oil into a 250ml of warm water and pour into an empty spray bottle and spray into wardrobes and drawers and places you don't want moths (but NOT directly on them)...they will go without you having to harm them. This also helps keep spiders and many other insects away kindly too.

For ANY specific tip to stop any “pest” or insect KINDLY (for good karma/blessings), email me: [InsectLoversUnite@gmail.com](mailto:InsectLoversUnite@gmail.com) or join my Facebook page: “INSECT LOVERS UNITE”

## Private Lives

by Noël Coward

Richmond Shakespeare Society at the Mary Wallace Theatre, Twickenham



Noël Coward probably wrote *Private Lives* specifically for Gertrude Lawrence, the actress described as his “soul mate”. Lawrence Olivier and Coward himself were also in the cast at its premiere. But RSS’s actors and imaginative creatives breathe life into society between the wars ... at least how it was portrayed in the cinema in the thirties. Women were expected to dress prettily, to be servile to men, polite and accommodating; in contrast to men, expected to be assertive, dominant

and brave. The two men in *Private Lives* try to live up to these characteristics, but fail because the women have their own views of womanhood that certainly isn’t docile. Judging from the relationship between these couples, Coward didn’t think much of marriage, seeing it as war between men and women.

Oliver Tims portrays the essence of Noël Coward himself: sophisticated, languid, musical, witty, quick tempered. He holds attention and has pacy physicality. He and Amanda Adams, as Eylon and Amanda, are well matched to present a couple with a tempestuous relationship: at times it’s loving, mischievous and tender, but at other times brutal and violent. Adams plays this part with effervescence, whether angry or tender. Their coming together after a five-year separation seems like moths drawn towards a flame.

In contrast Eloise McCredie and Paul Grimwood have a difficult task as Sibyl and Victor, for they are without a shared past, but the play ends with them behaving in exactly the same way as the latter couple. Their portrayals succeed, however, through belief in their characters and through their acting skills.

As Louise, the elderly French maid, Deborah Tinsdale is a joy to watch, brilliant in her gestures and movement. Her final riposte brought the house down.

Junis Olmscheld and Trine Taraldsvik’s detailed sets are period-exact, stylish, hinting at romance. The actors wear the true to period costumes with flair.



Although violent spats between couples are hard to watch, Rick de Kerckhove’s direction is secure and the wit and humour stave off any unease.

Read Celia Bard’s review at [www.markaspen.com/2024/03/23/private-lives-rss](http://www.markaspen.com/2024/03/23/private-lives-rss)

Photography by Pete Messum





## Charlie and the Chocolate Factory

music by Marc Shaiman, lyrics Scott Wittman after Roald Dahl

Dramacube Productions at Hampton Hill Theatre

It's a recipe for success. Toe-tapping live music, exuberant ensemble, hilarious comedy characters, and...chocolate. You couldn't pack more scrumptious calories into one production without inducing a diabetic fit. For chocoholics, *Charlie and the Chocolate Factory* is irresistible entertainment.



Director [Matthew Bunn](#) and [Rory Cubbin](#), musical director and choreographer, inject Dramacube's award-winning Youth Theatre with tempo and pace throughout the show, its stage a mass of swirling, shimmering colour where set designer Hannah Calarco and costume designer Natasha Boyle fuse talents to create a fabulous confection.



Charlie Bucket (Rosie Preedy) is a delight, confidently portraying a child brought up in poverty with his widowed mother (Rose Botha) and four bed-bound grandparents. Existing on a diet of pre-loved veg, with protein provided by the odd snail, her family could only dream of affording a chocolate treat from Willy Wonka's mysterious factory, but eccentric chocolatier Mr Wonka (Grace Chenery) has a brittle carapace but a soft centre when it comes to showing lucky winners of gold tickets around his gloriously nutty empire.

The fortunate five include Charlie and an obnoxious quartet: Augustus Gloop (Alanna Pearman) a bulging Bavarian with yodelling chums in dirndl and lederhosen; Californian Pop Gum Queen Violet (Tabitha Gooding) who sparkled in midnight blue sequins and could well play a young Meghan Markle in *The Crown*; Mike Teavee (Emilia Taylor), a device-addicted geek who can't raise his eyes from his screen; and a spoilt Russian brat Veruca (Alexa Solhekol) ... all chaperoned by their equally dysfunctional parents.

Health and safety are not Mr Wonka's strongest suit. His army of Oompa Loompas, who look like Guantanamo Bay internees fallen into a vat of orange dye, fail to protect their child visitors from industrial accidents.

The young actors show great adaptability and confidence, plus amazing stamina. As Willy Wonka would say, "We are the music makers, and we are the dreamers of dreams."

The youngest theatre goer, Millie gave her verdict. "Delicious!" she beamed. But then she is biased ... she adores chocolate.



Read Gill Martin's review at [www.markaspen.com/2024/03/26/charlie-choc](http://www.markaspen.com/2024/03/26/charlie-choc)

Photography by Bomi Cooper

## The Lion Inside

by Sarah Punshon, music and lyrics by Eamonn O'Dwyer

Rose Theatre, Kingston until 14<sup>th</sup> April, then on tour until 29<sup>th</sup> August

*The Lion Inside* tells the tale of two contrasting characters, a timid mouse yearning for respect and friendship, and a proud arrogant lion flaunting its strength. The mouse resolves to find the roar of a lion; hence his brave quest to confront his fears and ask the dangerous lion for help. Clearly, some moral signposts here, courage, faith and an unshakeable self-belief.



The story is very familiar to the children in the theatre, and director Sarah Punshon successfully captures the spirit of Rachel Bright and Jim Field's original book, as loved by its avid readers, with the result clearly resonating with the young audience.

For my eight-year-old companion the best bit "was when the lion was scared by the mouse" but for his younger four-year-old sister, clearly a more discerning critic, "the best bit was the hippo when it did three poos out of its bottom."

As well as playing the parts of their characters, three actors, including Clarke Joseph-Edwards as the storyteller, are also nimble puppeteers. The main puppet, the mouse, has various sizes depending on the scene involved, and sometimes the actor himself becomes the mouse ... or indeed, the lion. Other animals are represented by random parts of their anatomy: elephant's ears and trunk, zebra's legs, buffalo's horns.

Amongst the bright musical numbers Caitlan Mallory as the lion, belting out an Elvis-inspired rock number *Lion O'clock*, is inspired. In total contrast is James Keningale's soft poignant solo *A Long Time to Feel Small*, reflecting on the mouse's sadness that "no-one ever sees me, nobody knows I'm here."

The most boisterous moments are scenes encouraging audience participation, such as invitations to roar loudly with paws in the air. It's comforting to think that perhaps "we all have a mouse and a lion inside", as we roar along to this delightful fun-filled gem of an Easter treat.

Read Steve Mackrell's review at [www.markaspen.com/2024/03/29/lion-inside](http://www.markaspen.com/2024/03/29/lion-inside)

Photography by Pamela Raith



# Appraisal

by Tim Marriott

Take Note, Epsilon and Smokescreen Productions at the Tabard Theatre, Chiswick until 13<sup>th</sup> April

Meetings are the practical alternative to work: team meetings, board meetings, committee meetings, follow-up meetings, pre-meeting meetings, interviews, and of course annual reviews and appraisals. Even the biggest fan of meetings – on company time, sitting around eating biscuits – would have to admit that they are ripe for satirical exploitation.

*Appraisal* takes no prisoners, lampooning corporate office culture, while also exposing the vicious attitudes that can lie beneath office politics, disguised with smooth words and passive-aggressive posturing.



During a tense meeting, a senior manager takes a team leader through her annual appraisal. Writing, directing and starring, Tim Marriott's apparently bland manager Jo seems somewhat hapless, and the meeting a routine box-ticking exercise, whereas Angela Bull's confident and assured Nicky appears defensive, and her bristling hostility odd.



However, cracks begin to emerge. Banal chat turns into a pointed statements from Jo about Nicky's team-members, even one recovering from a workplace injury. Then his agenda becomes clear. He threatens to advertise Nicky's job, sidelining her into a meaningless role. The mood darkens with hints of sexual harassment, and blackmail, as Jo's ruthlessness emerges.

Despite these darker topics, *Appraisal* is a very funny piece filled with moments that will resonate with anyone familiar with work reviews. Marriott has written a highly-crafted play which whistles through its hour's run. As a director, he uses the small space to its full potential, making this wordy piece feel animated and fresh.

Both actors give marvellous performances. Angela Bull imbues her character with assuredness and a quiet confidence, before she grows frustrated then incredulous at Jo's excesses. Marriott also gives an impressive performance, keeping all guessing for which of the two they ought to be rooting, and hints at Jo's darker nature are all the more effective as we realise we have been fooled by his affable manner.

Its two strong characters instantly recognisable in any office, *Appraisal* is a finely-tuned play that reflects some of the absurdities of the modern workplace, while providing some wonderful comic moments; an understated gem.

Read Andrew Lawston's review at [www.markaspen.com/2024/03/28/appraisal](http://www.markaspen.com/2024/03/28/appraisal)

Photography by Charles Flint

# The MARY WALLACE THEATRE in April

From April 20<sup>th</sup> to the 27<sup>th</sup> the Richmond Shakespeare Society will be presenting one of the Bard's greatest tragedies - **OTHELLO**.

On a hot, isolated Mediterranean island three outsiders - a black general in a white state, an unworldly young woman in a warzone and a vengeful malcontent nursing a grudge - are drawn inexorably into tragedy.

**OTHELLO** is a shattering examination of the interplay of status, privilege, power - and "the green-eyed monster".

Booking available from March 25<sup>th</sup> at [www.richmondshakespeare.org.uk](http://www.richmondshakespeare.org.uk)

*The Mary Wallace Theatre is situated on Twickenham's Embankment, between St Mary's Church and the Barmy Arms.*



**RSS**  
RICHMOND SHAKESPEARE SOCIETY

"I am not what I am"

**OTHELLO**

by William Shakespeare

**SATURDAY 20-SATURDAY 27 APRIL 2024**

THE MARY WALLACE THEATRE, THE EMBANKMENT, TWICKENHAM TW1 3DU  
[richmondshakespeare.org.uk](http://richmondshakespeare.org.uk)

GUIDANCE | Othello explores adult themes and includes depictions of violence

Richmond Shakespeare Society is affiliated to Arts Richmond and this production is entered for the Swan Awards for Drama and Musicals

RICHMOND SHAKESPEARE SOCIETY PRESENTS

## OTHELLO

by William Shakespeare

Directed by Francesca Ellis with Simon Bartlett

On a hot, isolated Mediterranean island three outsiders – a black leader in a white state, an unworldly woman in a war zone, and a vengeful malcontent holding a grudge – plunge into tragedy. Othello is Shakespeare's shattering examination of the interplay of status, privilege and power.

**Booking opens on Monday 25 March 2024**

Book online: [richmondshakespeare.org.uk](http://richmondshakespeare.org.uk) (credit or debit card)

Book by post: Please send your name, address, phone number and s.a.e. with your ticket request and cheque (made payable to Richmond Shakespeare Society) to:  
The Box Office, The Mary Wallace Theatre, The Embankment, Twickenham TW1 3DU

Subject to availability, tickets may be purchased at the door with cash or card

**Performance Dates & Times**

Saturday 20 April	Sunday 21 April	Monday 22 April	Tuesday 23 April	Thursday 25 April	Friday 26 April	Saturday 27 April
7.45pm	3.00pm	7.45pm	7.45pm	7.45pm	7.45pm	7.45pm


Tickets for each performance are £14 for RSS members and £17 for non-members

Please note: access to the auditorium is via several steps. With regret, we cannot therefore cater for wheelchairs within the auditorium at this time. Please contact the Box Office before booking if you need further guidance or have any queries about your booking. Either email [boxoffice@rss-mwtl.org.uk](mailto:boxoffice@rss-mwtl.org.uk) or phone 07484 927 662

Please note that:

- there are no refunds given on tickets purchased
- exchanges are at Box Office discretion and subject to availability
- latecomers will not be admitted until a suitable break in the performance

Richmond Shakespeare Society is a registered charity No. 276271 and a member of the Little Theatre Guild of Great Britain





# Landmark Arts Centre announce April arts programme

Residents of all ages can sign up for a number of exciting five to six week courses launching from mid-April.

## **Animation for Beginners**

This five week course held on Monday evenings from 15 April is open to young people aged 10 and over. Participants will learn the 12 fundamental Principles of Animation, and by the end of the course should be able to create a short animation in a hand-drawn or flipbook form, or in clay or stop-motion style.

Find out more about [Animation for Beginners](#).

## **Creative Writing for Beginners**

This five week course held on Monday evenings from 15 April is open to all adults interested in learning more about the craft of writing and the world of publishing. You'll be able to share your work with other writers in a safe, supportive environment.

Find out more about [Creative Writing for Beginners](#).

## **Mixed Media - Find Your Creative Voice**

This five week course held on Monday afternoons from 15 April is designed to help both beginners and improvers explore their creative side while learning about multimedia techniques like mark making, printing, painting, collage and colour planning to create an A3 work of art.

Find out more about [Mixed Media](#).



## **Illustrating British Butterflies**

This five week course held on Monday afternoons from 15 April is open to all adults who love drawing and painting and find butterflies fascinating. It will cover depictions of butterflies in a range of media, as well as observation techniques and accurate drawing methods employed in illustration.

Find out more about [Illustrating British Butterflies](#).

## **Victorian Photography Workshop**

This six week course held on Tuesday evenings from 16 April is open to all adults interested in photography and will cover the important developments in early photography. It will give participants the chance to learn about and try out the processes of Victorian photography, using replica cameras and genuine Victorian-era lenses.

Find out more about [Victorian Photography Workshop](#).

# Art House Open Studios Festival is looking for local artists

Arts Richmond has announced the return of the festival for a second year and is looking for local artists to take part.



The festival gives visitors a chance to meet with local artists, designers and makers of all types, and explore their studios.

Local artists who register to open their studios will have the opportunity to develop relationships with new clients, as well as continue to build relationships with existing clients and collectors.

The festival will take place on Saturday 15 June, Sunday 16 June, Saturday 29 June and Sunday 30 June 2024. Suggested opening times are 11am to 6pm on the days you have registered for.

You can register your studio as an individual or small group.

If you are unable to open for both weekends, Arts Richmond can offer individual weekends, as well as bespoke packages for larger groups.

The deadline to register is **Monday 1 April**. Once you've registered, Arts Richmond will contact you for all the details required for their marketing materials and brochure.

Please contact [arthouse2024@artsrichmond.org.uk](mailto:arthouse2024@artsrichmond.org.uk) with any questions.



# The Royal Parks seeks new apprentices with a passion for gardening and can-do attitude

The Royal Parks charity is looking for aspiring horticulturists to join the team of apprentices who help shape London's green spaces, including Kensington Gardens, St James's Park and Bushy Park, for everyone to enjoy.

The charity, which cares for London's eight historic Royal Parks, takes on up to 10 new paid apprentices every year, to train the next generation of horticulturists.

The Royal Parks is encouraging people with a positive attitude, a can-do approach, and a passion for gardening, to apply for the renowned apprenticeship scheme and learn from gardeners at the top of their game.

Applications for the scheme open, March 26, and will close on April 21 2024.

The scheme prides itself on its accessibility and is open to people of all ages. Many of the charity's apprentices have entered the role after changing careers - such as switching from a career in the hospitality industry or retail. Others have begun the apprenticeship after leaving school, aged 18.

Apprentices will master valuable skills including plant identification, propagation, landscape design, parkland management and hands-on training in operating horticulture machinery.

Adam Stoter, Assistant Park Manager at The Royal Parks, who oversees the apprenticeship programme, said:

*"We are seeking applicants with a passion for gardening. They should enjoy working outdoors in all weathers and be prepared for early starts."*

*"Our apprenticeship programme will foster life-long skills in horticulture, to provide a solid foundation for a successful career in this field."*

*"We look forward to nurturing the next generation of passionate horticulturalists so that they will thrive with the skills they develop through our programme."*

Apprentices also have access to the Hyde Park Nursery which grows 450,000 plants a year, supplying the flowerbed displays across all of the Royal Parks which are seen by the parks' 70 million annual visitors.

Erin Whittaker, 28, based in central London, studied art and design at university and worked in office and retail jobs before joining as an apprentice at The Regent's Park. The third-year apprentice said:  
*"It can be quite physical, but it's so rewarding."*



*“It doesn’t necessarily matter if you haven’t got tons of experience. It’s more about attitude and just being willing to get stuck in and eager to learn.”*

*“I never expected my life to go in this direction but I’m so glad it did! The world of horticulture is so broad, there are so many routes you could take. I’m excited to see where it leads me.”*

Jay Rathod, 30, based in Hackney, previously worked as a Store Manager on Oxford Street. The second-year apprentice at Kensington Gardens said:

*“As nature can nurture the planet, it can also nurture your mental state. Working in horticulture allows me to give back to the world and contribute to the green spaces around me.”*

*“You know you’ll be tired at the end of the day, but you know you’ve done something good for the world and for the community around you as well.”*



Rupert Lovibond, 40, from Hanworth, West London, previously worked at a pub before applying for the horticultural apprenticeship at Bushy Park.

The first-year apprentice said:

*“I love education, and I really wanted to be part of parks in general. It’s absolutely amazing for your mental health.”*

*“I cannot even put into words how much I’ve learned. It’s really nice to be able to say that about yourself, even at 40 years old.”*

*“I love my football, I love my sport, but suddenly, I love gardening. It’s absolutely wonderful. You meet new people, you learn new things, and you’re out in the open.”*



Many former apprentices at The Royal Parks have gone on to become park managers, supervisors or contract managers for the charity. Others have taken on roles at other high-profile locations worldwide, such as Kew Gardens, Crystal Palace Football Club, and Buckingham Palace.

To find out more and apply click [HERE](#)





# Comic Con Returns to RuTC!

On 26th of March, Richmond upon Thames College (RuTC) held its very own Comic Con event for the second year running. This was a chance for students and staff to celebrate their love of comic books and science fiction culture, and to champion their creativity.

The day was filled with fun and activities, including face painting, comic book drawing, robot racing and badge making. The main events were a K-9 building competition and cosplay runway competitions for both students and staff.



In the morning, we had several talented students enter our K-9 building competition, which was judged by a representative from Beard Construction, who we are currently working with on the development of our new STEM centre. Our winners were 'Steel Hounds' made up of Mechanical Engineering students, Wallace Fernandes and Yahya Shire. For their winning design, they were awarded a 'Beard' shield and the chance to participate in work experience with the company, or one of their partner organisations. Making up part of the audience were sixty Year 10 students from our neighbouring school, RTS (Richmond upon Thames School). It was wonderful to be able to inspire younger students and show off our college facilities and activities in this way.

Over lunch, students attended an insightful presentation from RuTC alumnus, Tom Box, who co-founded multi-BAFTA award winning animation production company, Blue Zoo.



They also had the chance to race K-9 robots in our sports hall, with winner, IT student, Maksym Stepanenko, securing a Nando's voucher.

Our afternoon cosplay costume competition gave entrants the chance to strut their stuff down the runway in our auditorium, showing off their amazing costumes to fellow students and staff. The two winners of the student competition were A-Level student, Ella Brooks, and Supported Learning student, Hasan Amdad, who entertained the audience with his ghost costume. Both students won two tickets to the upcoming MCM Comic Con event at Olympia London for their efforts.



Staff members also had fun with their costumes. In the runway competition we had two pairs of joint first prize winners. These were our reception team, Nicola Ross and Victoria Davis, who entertained visitors all day as 'Minions' and Art & Design lecturers, Christina Button and Toby Rye, who dresses as 'Daft Punk'.

Counselling and Mental Health Officer at RuTC, Lorna Edwards along with Administration Support Officer, Lottie Fernando were the driving forces behind the event. They worked tirelessly with other members of staff to create a truly memorable celebration.

Lorna commented, "I am so proud and happy at how well RUTC's second Comic Con event went. I knew it was going to be tough after last year's event was such a great success and would be a hard act to follow, but the amazing students and staff didn't disappoint. They donned their most imaginative costumes, creating a fantastic atmosphere and a strong sense of community."

Huge congratulations to all involved and the effort put into making the event such a success!



# St Mary's University

## St Mary's Alumnae Selected for Paris 2024 Olympics

Two alumnae from St Mary's University, Twickenham have been selected to compete for Team GB at the Paris 2024 Olympics in the Marathon and Triathlon.

Two alumnae from St Mary's University, Twickenham have been selected to compete for Team GB at the [Paris 2024 Olympics](#).

History graduate Charlotte Purdue will be competing in the Marathon, while former PGCE student Beth Potter will be competing in the Triathlon.

Beth is the current World Triathlon Championship Series leader, but previously competed in the 10,000m track event at the Rio 2016 Olympics from Team GB. Beth secured her place at the Paris Olympics in triathlon after taking the World Championship title in Spain last year with a time of 1:53:19.

Head of Sport at St Mary's University Andrew Reid-Smith said,

*"It is incredible that Beth has been able to successfully change from an international track athlete to a World Champion in triathlon, and Charlotte's selection comes off the back of running what was the second quickest marathon ever by a GB athlete."*

*"We are very proud of Charlotte and Beth; they have dedicated themselves to their sports and are world-class athletes who consistently produce brave performances - I'm sure we'll see more of the same in Paris."*



Both Charlotte and Beth are also alumnae from the [Endurance and Performance Centre \(EPC\)](#) at St Mary's University.

Charlotte will be making her Olympic debut in Paris this year, after qualifying at the Berlin Marathon with a time of 2:22:17 last September. Charlotte previously ran the marathon at the Doha 2019 World Championships, after training in world-class sports labs at St Mary's University to prepare for the heat.

These selections continue a proud history for St Mary's at the Olympic and Paralympic Games, with many former students having competed over the years.

[St Mary's alumni](#) who have gone on to win medals at the Olympic and Paralympic Games include Sir Mo Farah, Rebecca Romero, Moe Sbihi, Dave Weir, Matt Wells, and Corrine Hall.



**St Mary's  
University  
Twickenham  
London**

# Sophie Ellis-Bextor to perform half-time show to celebrate Red Roses return to Twickenham Stadium for Women's Guinness Six Nations match

- Sophie Ellis-Bextor will take to the stage at Twickenham Stadium on Saturday 20 April for the England (Red Roses) v Ireland Guinness Women's Six Nations match.
- The performance, co-funded by the RFU and O2, aims to draw in huge crowds as people get behind the Red Roses, the world's number one ranked women's team.
- Almost 60,000 fans attended the Red Roses' Six Nations title decider with France in April last year with the Red Roses victorious and winning a record 18th Six Nations titles
- Tickets for this unmissable event can be [purchased here](#).

British pop icon, Sophie Ellis-Bextor, will take to the stage at Twickenham Stadium on Saturday 20 April during the England (Red Roses) v Ireland Guinness Women's Six Nations fixture. Ellis-Bextor has achieved worldwide fame throughout her illustrious career and has recently experienced a return to the charts following the inclusion of her music in the BAFTA Nominated film, *Saltburn* (2023).

Having made her UK Official Chart debut in 2001, she has gone on to release six top 10 singles in the UK charts including fan favourites such as "Murder On The Dancefloor", "Take Me Home" and "Mixed Up World", achieving multi-platinum selling status.

The Guinness Women's Six Nations match between the Red Roses and Ireland will take place at the Home of Rugby, Twickenham Stadium, after last year's fixture between England and France saw almost 60,000 fans in attendance - the largest ever crowd for a women's rugby match.

More than 30,000 tickets have already been sold for the fixture, with numbers set to rise for the chance to see the world's top team in action. Tier 3 ticket prices start from £20 for adults and £5 for children and include the unique performance from Sophie Ellis-Bextor as well as the opportunity to get behind England's national women's team.

O2, the RFU and Women's Sport Trust launched a partnership in March 2023 to help close rugby's gender awareness gap with one of its key objectives to fill Twickenham Stadium for a women's rugby match by 2025. O2, Principal Shirt sponsor of England Rugby, also pledged in its recent contract renewal to equal spend parity across its men and women's marketing activity.

The Red Roses are the number one ranked women's rugby team in the world having won the Six Nations a total of 18 times, including 16 Grand Slam wins and two World Cup victories.

Sophie Ellis-Bextor, said: *"I can't wait to perform at Twickenham Stadium as part of this incredible occasion and I'm hugely looking forward to getting the crowd dancing at half-time to show support for the brilliant Red Roses as they take on Ireland."*

Alex Teasdale, RFU Executive Director Women's Game, said: *"We're really pleased to have the Red Roses back at Twickenham for their second standalone match. Having Sophie Ellis-Bextor perform, to an anticipated crowd of over 40,000, will add great half-time entertainment to the already amazing action on the pitch. We're sure the crowd will love her performance."*

Gareth Griffiths, Director, Partnerships and Sponsorship at Virgin Media O2, said: *"The incredible Red Roses, the number one ranked women's rugby team in the world, are back at Twickenham for a second year running. With such amazing talent on the pitch, as well as a half time performance by pop icon Sophie Ellis-Bextor, it has the makings of a fantastic day out for the family on what will be another momentous occasion for women's rugby and women's sport."*



Zoe Aldcroft will earn her 50th cap when the Red Roses host Wales at Ashton Gate in Round 2 of the Guinness Women's Six Nations.

The Gloucester-Hartpury second row debuted in a 2016 Summer Tour victory over France and was awarded World Player of the Year five years later.

She retains her place in the number four jersey as head coach John Mitchell makes seven changes from the opening round win against Italy.

Tatyana Heard and Megan Jones form a new centre partnership while Natasha Hunt and Holly Aitchison pair up in the half-back positions.

Maud Muir and Rosie Galligan come into the front five with Alex Matthews promoted from the bench to Number 8.

The back three of Jess Breach, Abby Dow and Ellie Kildunne remains consistent. Hannah Botterman, Lark Atkin-Davies, Sadia Kabeya and centurion Marlie Packer also continue their starting roles.

The Red Roses will break another attendance record when they take to the field on Saturday by taking to the field in front of their largest ever home crowd in a fixture not played at Twickenham Stadium.

*"We're excited to play in front of a home crowd for the first time in this year's tournament," Mitchell said. "To have sold 18,000 tickets with two days to go until matchday shows the appetite for Red Roses rugby in this country.*

*"The girls have been focused on the opportunity that a match against Wales presents and we have been planning and building on this short week for some time. All teams will be better for their second outing and we're looking forward to improving our game."*

## Red Roses side to play Wales

15 Ellie Kildunne (Harlequins, 39 caps)	1 Hannah Botterman (Bristol Bears, 43 caps)
14 Abby Dow (Trailfinders Women, 41 caps)	2 Lark Atkin-Davies (Bristol Bears, 55 caps)
13 Megan Jones (Leicester Tigers, 17 caps)	3 Maud Muir (Gloucester-Hartpury, 26 caps)
12 Tatyana Heard (Gloucester-Hartpury, 18 caps)	4 Zoe Aldcroft (Gloucester-Hartpury, 49 caps)
11 Jess Breach (Saracens, 34 caps)	5 Rosie Galligan (Saracens, 14 caps)
10 Holly Aitchison (Bristol Bears, 26 caps)	6 Sadia Kabeya (Loughborough Lightning, 14 caps)
9 Natasha Hunt (Gloucester-Hartpury, 68 caps)	7 Marlie Packer (Saracens, 100 caps) - captain
	8 Alex Matthews (Gloucester-Hartpury, 63 caps)

## Replacements

16 Connie Powell (Harlequins, 15 caps)	20 Maddie Feunati (Exeter Chiefs, 1 cap)
17 Mackenzie Carson (Gloucester-Hartpury, 11 caps)	21 Lucy Packer (Harlequins, 17 caps)
18 Kelsey Clifford (Saracens, 4 caps)	22 Zoe Harrison (Saracens, 47 caps)
19 Abbie Ward (Bristol Bears, 62 caps)	23 Sydney Gregson (Saracens, 3 caps)

# Match Preview: Brentford v Manchester United

**Analysis, team news, match officials and more. Here's everything you need to know ahead of Brentford's Premier League game against Manchester United on Saturday, which will be broadcast live on Sky Sports (8pm kick-off GMT)**

Written by Brentford Football Club

After almost a month away, Brentford return to Gtech Community Stadium on Saturday to take on Manchester United. The game kicks off at 8pm and will be broadcast live on *Sky Sports*.

Thomas Frank's side lost 2-1 to Burnley last time out, while United are boosted by a dramatic 4-3 victory over Liverpool in the FA Cup.

Analysis, team news, match officials and more. Here's everything you need to know ahead of the Bees' latest Premier League clash.

## Pre-match Analysis

Richard Cole, Playmaker Stats: United have displayed Jekyll and Hyde tendencies this season.

A superb performance saw Brentford come incredibly close to victory at Old Trafford earlier this season before Scott McTominay's late double.

Thomas Frank will be hoping his team have learned a valuable lesson from that game as the Bees welcome Manchester United to Gtech Community Stadium on Saturday.

And while it would be nice to have another performance like the 4-0 thumping that Brentford dished out to United early last season, with this opposition you really have no idea what to expect.

The Red Devils' epic morale-boosting win over rivals Liverpool in the FA Cup just before the international break is an ideal case study for a team full of inconsistencies.

United came out of the traps flying in that game with a goal from Brentford's familiar foe McTominay.

But teams have shown it's possible to get at this Manchester United midfield, who often give up ground to the opposition despite having talents like Bruno Fernandes, Casemiro and new England international Kobbie Mainoo.

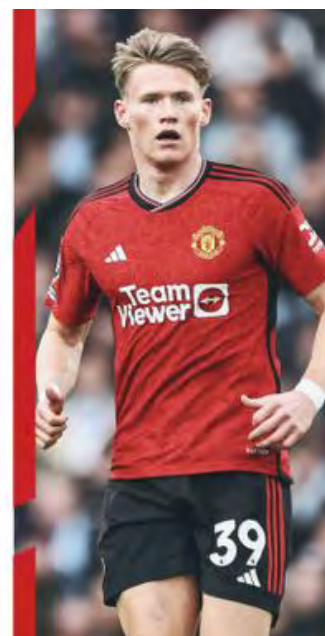
It's not too surprising then that Red Devils have conceded an average of 16.7 shots per game this season, behind only Luton Town (17.3) and Sheffield United (17.9). For context, Brentford have conceded 14.8 shots per game this term.

A quickfire double put Liverpool ahead before the break in that FA Cup tie, with the United defence making some familiar mistakes. Ivan Toney, Yoane Wissa, Neal Maupay and Bryan Mbeumo will no doubt be prepared to pounce on any more.



## Head to Head

	Comparisons	
41	Goals	39
54	Goals Conceded	39
265	Shots	274
45%	Possession	50%
69	Yellow Cards	65
2	Red Cards	1



United have had to manage with several injuries in defence this season including two vital players Lisandro Martínez and Luke Shaw absent in recent weeks.

Indeed, Saturday's game could have been a perfect chance for Sergio Reguilón to show the club he began this season with why they should have extended his loan stay. Unfortunately for the Spaniard, his sending off against Burnley means he'll have to watch from the stands.

Speaking of defensive absences, both Erik ten Hag and Thomas Frank will be able to share war stories about how much their teams have been hurt by long-term casualties this season.

Going back to that FA Cup classic, the Manchester side eventually won the game 4-3 with a last-gasp Amad Diallo winner late into extra-time. It was a special moment for the supporters, but the Red Devils have not been prolific in the league.

The Bees are currently out-scoring United in the Premier League by 41 goals to 39. In fact, United are just one of six teams to score fewer than 40 league goals and half of those six are teams currently in the relegation zone.

Brentford's luck has been out in recent defeats to Arsenal and Burnley, and they face something of a lottery when it comes to their next opponents.

Ten Hag's enigmatic United have displayed Jekyll and Hyde tendencies all season – and Frank's Bees will aim to locate the pressure points of a team that is simultaneously dangerous and fragile.

### **Scout Report**

Impressive form puts United in the hunt for Champions League qualification.

After the first seven Premier League games of this season, Manchester United had made their worst-ever start since the foundation of the competition in 1992 and also their worst since the 1989/90 campaign, three years into Sir Alex Ferguson's near three-decade reign in charge at Old Trafford.

Throw in the intense questioning of new goalkeeper Andre Onana, allegations against winger Antony and the exclusion of Jadon Sancho from the squad – and subsequent loan back to Borussia Dortmund - and things were looking pretty bleak in M16.

A late, late 2-1 win over Brentford on 7 October – courtesy of two goals from Scott McTominay in second-half stoppage-time – started to get United out of their troubling rut, though.

*“You have to find a moment in the season you can build on – I think we have found it now,”* said Ten Hag after the dramatic victory. *“This game reflects a lot of our season start; the mistake, but then the comeback, the personality, the character. This has to be a turning point. We know we have to change, reset.”*

They won five of the next seven league games – albeit often unconvincingly and by narrow margins – to establish themselves in the top six, though it was perhaps a false dawn; by the end of 2023, they had dropped back into eighth and been knocked out of the Carabao Cup and the Champions League, finishing bottom of the group - after just one win in six - in the latter.

If ever United needed a reset, it was now. The winter break could not have arrived at a more apt time.

Fortunately for them, for the most part, everything has gone swimmingly so far since the turn of the year; in the 12 games Ten Hag's side have played, they have won nine.

Five of those have come in the Premier League, where – despite their leaky defence – they have consolidated sixth and kept themselves in the hunt for a top-five spot that would likely seal Champions League qualification.

The other four have come in their perfect FA Cup run from the third round to the semi-finals, where Championship side Coventry stand between them and another final, potentially against sworn enemies Man City, who face Chelsea at the Etihad in three weeks' time.

While it remains a worry, the aforementioned leaky defence would be more of an issue if the attack had not reached its most potent levels of the campaign in recent months. United have scored 28 across their last 12 games, seven of which have been scored by Rasmus Højlund, who is beginning to show just why the club paid a reported initial fee of £64 million to sign him from Atalanta last summer.

The fact lifelong fan Sir Jim Ratcliffe was confirmed as a minority shareholder in the club in February, and has since taken control of football operations, has certainly lifted the mood around the club.

The 71-year-old billionaire is talking the talk fans have not heard under the ownership of the Glazer family: plans to refurbish or rebuild Old Trafford, developing a star of the same ilk as Kylian Mbappé rather than shelling out huge sums for his signature and, perhaps most importantly for United fans, knocking Liverpool and Man City "off their perch".

For now, there is positivity aplenty and targets to chase down in the final two months of another eventful season.

### **In the Dugout**

Erik ten Hag

Before he became a manager, Erik ten Hag had a 13-year playing career as a centre-back in his native Netherlands, the majority of which was spent FC Twente, whom he signed for on three separate occasions. He lifted the KNVB Cup in 2000/01 and retired at De Grolsch Veste, aged 32 in 2002.

He spent the four years that followed his retirement as a coach in Twente's youth set-up, before working as the first-team assistant to Fred Rutten and, later, to Steve McClaren during his first spell in charge of the Dutch club.

Rutten brought Ten Hag with him to PSV in 2009, helping the club to successive third-place finishes in the Eredivisie.

Four months after Rutten was sacked in 2012, Ten Hag was appointed as a manager in his own right for the first time at Eerste Divisie side Go Ahead Eagles, whom he led to promotion in his first and only season in charge.

He then moved on to Bayern Munich II, who he guided to the Regionalliga Bayern in 2013/14, with a squad that included Emre Can and Pierre-Emile Højbjerg.

In May 2015, he joined former club Utrecht and left after two and a half years, and a 51 per cent win ratio, to join Ajax three days after Christmas in 2017. It was at the Johan Cruyff Arena that he really started to make a name for himself.

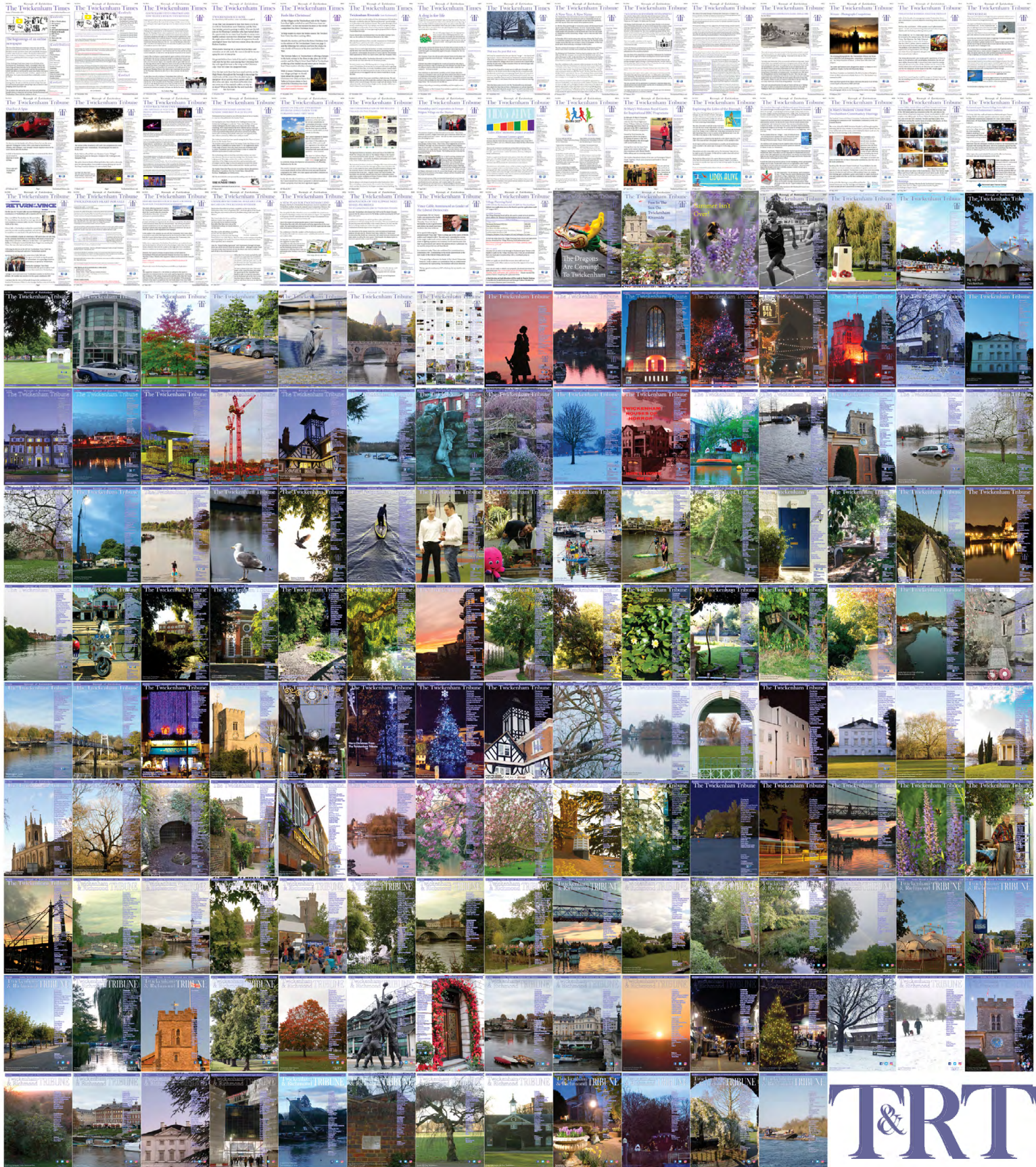
In four and a half years, his team won the Eredivisie three times, the KNVB Cup twice and the Johan Cruyff Shield on one occasion, as well as reaching the semi-final of the Champions League in 2018/19 and the quarter-final of the Europa League in 2020/21.

Ten Hag signed a new two-year deal with Ajax in May 2021, but, 11 months later, it was announced he would become the new Manchester United manager. He later left the Dutch club earlier than expected to begin work at Old Trafford after Ralf Rangnick's short spell in charge.

The Dutchman recently surpassed 100 games at the helm.



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