

# The Twickenham Times



All the best for 2017 from The Twickenham Times

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## That was the year that was

2016 may be remembered as the year that the “merger” – the shared staffing structure - between Richmond and Wandsworth councils took place. With all the consultations over Twickenham Riverside many of us may not have noticed the changes which have occurred in the Council offices and that we now share a Chief Executive Officer for both boroughs who is based in Wandsworth.

In the past the Council has shared services with other boroughs, such as Merton in the South London Partnership, but the arrangement with Wandsworth is much more encompassing. Emails from our Council officers now say “Serving Richmond and Wandsworth Councils”. On occasions our Councillors have to travel to Wandsworth to attend meetings there rather than in York House which has been the traditional meeting venue.

There has been some concern over the Wandsworth issue and people have asked why there has not been a Referendum on such an important matter. When asked about the merger Lord True said it was in his party’s election Manifesto in 2014 but at this stage no decisions had been made,



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“Wandsworth” was not in the Manifesto, and the residents of the Borough were not given the option of deciding whether they were happy with the amalgamation with Wandsworth. People have said that Kingston would have been more suitable as it is more akin to our borough bordering on some of our “Villages”. Putney in Wandsworth is on the border of Barnes but Wandsworth is a huge borough, much of it Inner City, bearing virtually no resemblance to the London Borough of Richmond upon Thames.

The Wandsworth amalgamation seems to have crept up on us, at the same time as the onward march of Cllr Fleming and the Francis Terry plans (originally Quinlan and Francis Terry plans) for Twickenham Riverside. Cllr Fleming, like Lord True, has obviously had a huge input into both of these ventures. Cllr Fleming has a number of portfolios covering a wide range of Council work for the whole borough: Environment, Business, Culture and Community.

To turn to the Terry plans for Twickenham Riverside, called “Terry Towers” on Twitter, the original plans were rejected and various consultations ensued which eventually led to a choice between three Francis Terry plans, all very similar.

Councillor Fleming has said that three thousand people took part in Council consultations (many of them against the plans) but she continues to refuse to take into consideration the three thousand people who have signed and written comments on a Change.org petition supporting a relatively small lido complex on the Riverside site which also includes the much promised but much missed “town square”.

In July Councillor Fleming was asked in Full Council: “Will Full Council consider the comments in the Petition on the Twickenham Alive website by the many in the borough in support of the Twickenham Lido complex?” Councillor Fleming replied in the following terms: “No” (Council Minutes).

However, despite all the “goings-on” in the Council, the changes in staffing arrangements and the decisions of councillors, local people in all our “Villages” continued to get on with organising our own community events. Amongst the many events in the borough there was Whitton’s Annual St George’s Day, the TryCycle event on Twickenham Riverside, the St Margaret’s Fair, the annual festival in Church Street, the Twickenham Alive Riverside Festival and the Twickenham Carnival.

Arts Richmond celebrated its 50th anniversary in an exhibition at Orleans Gallery entitled “The



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Golden Thread” and the Queen’s 90th birthday led to the organisation of many Street Parties on our side of the river: St Margaret’s and East Twickenham, Strawberry Hill, Teddington, Hampton Wick, Hampton, Hampton Hill and Whitton and Heathfield. The Strawberry Hill Residents’ Association which was founded fifty years ago, to prevent a road being built through the village, also celebrated its first half century in 2016.

An event which had been attended by the King and Queen in 1923 and was reintroduced after many years in 2011 was the Charlie Shore Boys and Girls Regatta on Twickenham Riverside. Again, this year, the event attracted many local children from the ages of 12 to 16, many of whom for the first time took part in rowing and/or a regatta.

On the same day as the Charlie Shore Regatta, Diamond Jubilee Gardens hosted the annual Best Banger competition and there was music on Twickenham Riverside at the Barmy Arms sponsored by Try Twickenham.

In August there a round of applause in Teddington when the Court of Appeals quashed planning permission for the Ham Teddington Hydro, a renewable energy scheme using three hydro power turbines on the Thames.

In October the annual Twickenham Alive Film Festival took place at the Live Room at the Rugby Stadium and in the same month American football (NFL) came to the Stadium in Twickenham.

In November £5 million of upgrades were unveiled at Whitton Station. A contribution to the improvements had been made by the RFU and Chris Donnelly, the new community engagement officer, said that he hoped the new upgrades would encourage people to visit Whitton - which has certainly seen changes in the High Street in the last few years.



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Places People Play

About this time problems were apparent with our only surviving local newspaper, the Richmond and Twickenham Times, causing fears for getting the news out, and The Twickenham Times began its tentative adventure into community journalism.

There are many local issues which need to be aired and these will continue into 2017: the Heathrow Third Runway, The Community Arts Centre and the expansion of St Mary’s University to name a few. It also seems that there is a permanent home in Whitton for the Turing House School and we have yet to find out what the future holds for the much-loved temporary community ice rink in Twickenham.

Best wishes for 2017 and a Happy New Year – together we will keep the news alive.

# New Year on local postcards

By Alan Winter

106 years ago, this New Year postcard (illustrated) was one of countless millions dropping through letterboxes across the British Isles. In those days, a postcard was a halfpenny to buy and a halfpenny stamp would send it on its way. So postcards were both the cheapest and for most folk, quickest form of communication. The card shown was posted in Portsmouth at 9.00pm on 31st December and would have been delivered to the recipient in Southall with its greetings message the following morning. In Edwardian Times, New Year's Eve and New Year's Day were normal working days for most of the populace.



Moving back to our own patch, the second postcard is relevant to New Year's Eve because my family and I spent many happy New Year's Eves (and other days!) in the Crown Public House



in Twickenham. Most of my family and I lived in cottages in Orleans Road which has the Crown at the top of the road and the river at the other end. My parents, brother and I lived in the cottage next door to the pub in the 1950's and 1960's and so it was very much part of our lives. This postcard of the Crown is circa 1907 and shows the changes since then quite clearly. Note the posters advertising the Shepherds Bush Empire on the left and the parade of shops on the corner of

Crown Road that are still there today. A policeman stands in "sentry" position at the junction which today is a mini roundabout and the only traffic in sight is a bicycle and a tram passing Marble Hill Park on its way to Twickenham. The pub was originally built in the 1730's and so is one of the oldest surviving pubs in our local area. Long may it remain so. I'll be back next week with more images of our area as shown on picture postcards throughout the decades.

Meanwhile, if you have any postcards to dispose of, any questions on this subject, or ideas for future articles, just drop me a line at [alanwinter192@hotmail.com](mailto:alanwinter192@hotmail.com) Have a peaceful, healthy and enjoyable New Year everybody!

## POSTCARDS WANTED

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07875 578398

# Competitions and Offers

## Prosecco winner

Congratulations to Peter Sheil, of Strawberry Hill, who correctly identified the mystery location as The Alexander Pope.

Peter (on left) was presented with his bottle of Prosecco by Richard Cross (on right), manager of The Alexander Pope.

The Alexander Pope, Cross Deep, Twickenham TW1 4RB  
[www.alexanderpope.co.uk](http://www.alexanderpope.co.uk)



## Win a 3 course meal for two at New Year's Eve!

The Alexander Pope is offering a three course dinner (for 2) with half bottle of wine (house selection) per person on New Years Eve and dancing after until 01.00 hrs.

Just answer the following question to be entered into the draw:

When did the name of the pub change from Pope's Grotto to Alexander Pope?

- A. 2008
- B. 2009
- C. 2010

Email your answer to [win@TwickenhamTimes.com](mailto:win@TwickenhamTimes.com) (include your name and postcode)  
The draw will take place at 1.00pm on Saturday 31st December

## Photography Competition - Coming Soon

Starting in January we will be introducing a monthly photographic competition for amateurs. The competition will be run in conjunction with [Strawberry Hill Golf Club](http://www.shgc.net)



[www.shgc.net](http://www.shgc.net)



# Getting into the Christmas Spirit!

(alternatives to cooking with water)

by Teresa Read

The blitz spirit was alive in South West London on Christmas Day when tweets informed people that there was no water in Twickenham, Teddington and Hampton and further afield.

At the same time as the loss of water was announced by Thames Water, Anthony Barnosky tweeted temperatures in the North Pole undergo a “heat wave” and Clive Finlayson from the Gibraltar Museum retweeted that in the last week the Arctic lost enough water to cover the UK.

Santa had done his nightly rounds and families and restaurants were desperately trying to cook Christmas dinner.

A tweet from Thames Water informed residents that pumps had failed and they were trying to get them restarted. They later tweeted that they were despatching a team to investigate and asked people to let them know if a burst water main was spotted.

Billy Martin from Hampton advised fellow tweeters to drink whisky neat. Whilst Hammerton’s Ferry in Twickenham wished everyone a Merry Christmas and hoped we would all have a great day! Tweeting Mitz suggested Merry Christmas #Thames Water. As Father Christmas made an appearance at Hampton Pool the White Swan in Twickenham tweeted that they had lots of beer but no water!

Andrew Hall tweeted photographs of bottles of Twickenham Fine Ales “Naked Ladies” – but off licences and most shops were closed!! Mike Holland asked The Twickenham Tribune whether he could cook spuds in red wine.

Hampton tweeted that apparently Thames Water had sent “experienced” engineers to fix the pump, commenting that it was reassuring to know that they had not sent useless ones. The Twickenham Tribune joked that apparently engineers were travelling by Southern Rail so expect water to be fixed by February.

Daniel Emery tweeted the advantages of collecting rain water as it could be used to flush the loo and steam cook (presumably the rain water was not a few years old like mine!). The Hamptonite could not get bottled water and suggested buying bags of ice to melt down. By now the news had reached Rachel Kennedy at the BBC.

The Prince Albert tweeted an abundance of mince pies and beer and Duncan Stone was collecting all water that was left in the pipes. Teresa Read urged Londoners to keep the blitz spirit going and asked Thames Water about a rebate – tweeting “we only have alcohol!”

At this stage Thames Water tweeted that they had managed to get the pumps going and that we would slowly regain water. Hampton People shouted Hurrah! Happy Christmas to everyone and thanks to the experienced engineers!!

The Twickenham Tribune was not convinced and said they were going to stick with whisky just to be safe.

Geraint in Whitton had still not got any water and asked Thames Water to turn on the water in Whitton as they had sprouts to cook.

As the water came back to homes in South West London The Twickenham Tribune advised Tweepers top tips for cooking without water: boil sprouts in ale, add whisky to turkey and make the gravy with vodka; Thomas Hoskins tweeted a photo of his supply of water - ingredients for a Bloody Mary.

The Anglers pub in Teddington was thanked for handing out water to local residents .As panic water buying was reported in the few shops that were open Thames Water tweeted to joannethejenius that water should be restored soon.

Julie\_twickers tweeted photographs of bottles of Bollinger and those of us who went to the pub were able to get larger but no lemonade!!

Christmas lunch turned into supper but at least we got the water back and a bath before the end of the day!

# Christmas Miracle!

by Julie Hill



© Sarah Smith

Sarah Smith and her family have something very special to celebrate this Christmas.

Their beloved black three year old cat Fluffles went missing from their Teddington home on 30th October. Despite extensive leafletting of her local area and a social media campaign, there were no sightings of Fluffles.

Gearing herself up to break the news to her young sons that Fluffles had found a new family, Sarah received a telephone call from Shipton on Stour vet's 7 weeks later to say that Fluffles was alive and well and was safe at their surgery 90 miles away in Gloucester! A very relieved Sarah picked up Fluffles as soon as she could the following day and he was clearly as relieved to be reunited with his family too, wrapping himself around her son's shoulder.

It seems that inquisitive Fluffles had jumped into a delivery or removal lorry and inadvertently been transported away. Sarah posted on social media "there's a yodel centre nearby so looks like he could have travelled in a Yodel van."

He had been found by firemen who had looked after him and fed him before taking him to the vets, where he was scanned for a microchip.

Sarah admitted she didn't think she would ever see him again and that it wouldn't have been possible had he not been microchipped.

Sarah gave thanks to the lovely people who found him, the friendly vets for checking him over and looking after him and to the hundreds of people who had been following his story and sharing his missing poster on social media.

Every year some 250,000 pets go missing but so many are never reunited because they are not microchipped. From 6 April this year it is compulsory for a dog to be microchipped but not cats. A microchip is a very small electronic device, about the same size as a grain of rice, that is implanted under your pet's skin. Every chip has a unique 15-digit number which can be "read" using a special scanner. Microchipping can be carried out at vets and Pets at Home stores. It doesn't hurt your pet, is quick to do and inexpensive. If your cat is not already microchipped, please do take him/her to your vets and have it done.

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# Arts and Entertainment

by Erica White

The Yo-Ho-Hos of the pre-Christmas period have fallen silent, while the He's Behind You's of the amateur pantomime season will be upon us later in January. Meanwhile there is plenty to distract you from the January blues.

New Year's Eve is heralded by American stand-up comedian, [REGINALD D.HUNTER](#) and others, presented by [OUTSIDE THE BOX COMEDY](#) at Hampton Hill Theatre at 7.15 on Saturday December 31. Tickets @14 online at [www.outsidetheboxcomedy.co.uk](http://www.outsidetheboxcomedy.co.uk) or call 07791 439363.

The same company presents [MILTON JONES](#) and others for more stand-up the following week, on Monday 9 January. Same venue, same details.

On Thursday, 5 January at 8.00pm at the Landmark Arts Centre, Teddington, [PAUL JONES AND DAVE KELLY](#) of BBC Radio R&B show offer an evening of vocals and live acoustic blues sets. Tickets, £20 reserved/£18 unreserved. Book on-line: [www.landmarkartscentre.org](http://www.landmarkartscentre.org) or phone 8977 7558.

Regular societies' programmes start up again. [TEDDINGTON THEATRE CLUB](#)'s monthly free coffee mornings and tours of the theatre recommence on Saturday 7 January (and succeeding 1st Saturday of every month) from 10.00a.m-noon. Visitors are always amazed at the hidden areas of this Tardis-like building, whether regular show visitors or not.

For young dancers [BOUNDLESS DANCE](#) gives classes every Wednesday during term time for the 8-13 age group at the Methodist Church, Teddington. [info@boundlessdance.co.uk](mailto:info@boundlessdance.co.uk)

For singers there is no shortage of opportunity to exercise their vocal chords. [VOCAL TONIX COMMUNITY SINGING GROUP](#) meet every Thursday at the ETNA Community Centre, 13 Rosslyn Road, East Twickenham at 1.30-3.30pm when Sheila Luscombe, vocalist, welcomes all. She states no singing ability is required to join in the singalong. [vocaltonix.co.uk](http://vocaltonix.co.uk)

[THAMESIDE HARMONY CHORUS](#) meets on Wednesdays at 7.45-10.00pm at the White House Community Centre, Hampton. These ladies describe themselves as a fun-loving a Capella group.

For Rock and Jazz enthusiasts the [EEL PIE CLUB](#) at the Cabbage Patch pub in Twickenham opens its doors at 8.30 with music starting at 9.15. On Thursday, January 12 entertainment is provided by The Pretty Things (acoustic) supported by Sam Brothers. Entry £13.

At the Patchwork Bar at the same pub, [TWICKENHAM JAZZ CLUB](#) has regular sessions from 8.00pm-11pm.

Local historians are not forgotten either. [TWICKENHAM MUSEUM](#)'s latest annual exhibition, [WORKING FOR A LIVING IN THE OLD BOROUGH OF TWICKENHAM](#), from earliest times right up to the present day, is on show. Open Tuesdays and Saturdays, 11-3.00pm, Sundays, 2-4.00pm. Free admission.

[TWICKENHAM LOCAL HISTORY SOCIETY](#) opens its doors again at 8.00pm on 9 January at St Mary's Church Hall, Church Street, Twickenham for a talk entitled enigmatically: [ANOTHER DR FRENCH SURPRISE](#).

So there's no excuse for anyone to be bored in the post-Christmas calm. Get rid of the January blues by getting involved in the numerous societies and groups around Twickenham. They all welcome new members with open arms, whatever your skills or lack of them. It's easy enough to help serving teas, coffees, or something stronger.

It has been a sad year for the world of performing arts professionals, from the January death of David Bowie through to the Christmas week announcements of Carrie Fisher and her mother, Debbie Reynolds. Sadly the unprecedented numbers are too numerous to list here, but we all had our favourites and they will all be missed. I, personally, will mourn the passing of the multi-talented writer, entertainer and actress, Victoria Wood. Thank goodness for modern media that she, like so many others, need never be forgotten.



# A STREETCAR NAMED DESIRE

By Tennessee Williams

## Teddington Theatre Club kicks off 2017 with a hard hitting theatrical masterpiece in the main auditorium of Hampton Hill Theatre

Directed by Rick de Kerckhove.

With no money, no job and nowhere else to go, Blanche arrives in rundown New Orleans to visit her sister. Here she comes face to face with the brutal, unforgiving Stanley Kowalski. A turbulent and violent confrontation ensues between the traditional values of Blanche's upbringing and the rough-edged, aggressive, new world. One of the finest plays of the 20th century, Streetcar takes us on a journey to a tragic and explosive climax.

Dates: Sat 29 Jan - Sat 4 Feb 2017

Performance times: Sunday 4pm, weekdays 7.45pm

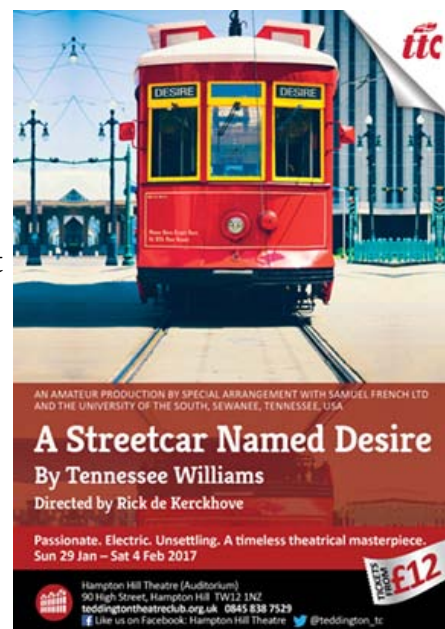
Ticket prices: £12.00 & £14.00

Box office: Telephone: 0845 838 7529 ((10am – 8pm)

Online: [ttc-boxoffice.org.uk](http://ttc-boxoffice.org.uk)

Website link

[www.teddingtontheatreclub.org.uk/production/a-streetcar-named-desire](http://www.teddingtontheatreclub.org.uk/production/a-streetcar-named-desire)



## The Expansion of St Mary's University, Strawberry Hill

St Mary's which dates back to the middle of the nineteenth century moved to Strawberry Hill in 1925; its aim was to train teachers to teach Catholic children. In 2014 St Mary's, which owns land in Waldegrave Road, gained University status.

This year saw St Mary's first Corporate Plan which will cost £100 million - the University plans to double the number of students by the year 2025 as part of the expansion. Student numbers will increase by around five percent a year and teaching staff will also increase in relation to the increased number of students.

In Edition 6 of The Twickenham Times it was reported that the Community Arts Centre in Brewery Wharf, opposite Twickenham Station, is rumoured to be a venue which St Mary's University might use for their students as they are short of teaching space. This has yet to be confirmed by the Council.

Further information is available in the Catholic Herald December 2016

[www.catholicherald.co.uk/issues/december-16th-2016/the-inside-story-of-the-st-marys-revival/?utm\\_content=bufferbc863&utm\\_medium=social&utm\\_source=twitter.com&utm\\_campaign=buffer](http://www.catholicherald.co.uk/issues/december-16th-2016/the-inside-story-of-the-st-marys-revival/?utm_content=bufferbc863&utm_medium=social&utm_source=twitter.com&utm_campaign=buffer)

# TWICKERS FOODIE

## New Year's Eve Guide

by Alison Jee

Some love to see in the New Year in style, while others prefer to make an early night of it. Whatever your preference, at the time of writing this, there is still a range of options available in and around the area – and, to make life easier after the excesses of Christmas, the Twickers Foodie has done some research for you:

If you are planning to go out for a meal, you really have left it a tad late, but there are still some options. For example **Osteria Pulcinella** in Church Street has a special three-course dinner at £35 per head, which includes a glass of fizz at midnight. And **Masaniello**, across the road, still has some availability for its delicious sounding eight-course tasting menu at £45 per head, but do book ahead. **The Alexander Pope** has a 'Dress to Impress' evening, which includes a three-course dinner, with a DJ and dancing, at £49.50 per person.

Richmond's **Orange Tree** pub has a DJ and a party from 7 p.m. £10 a ticket - to include a glass of fizz, - which must be purchased in person in advance. They won't be serving food that evening.

**The Fox** is staging a NY Eve 'Lock In' till the early hours, with live music from Paul Bowen. It is serving burgers and pies, and tickets must be bought in advance (£5 to include a glass of fizz at midnight) Entry closes at 11 p.m.

**The Cabbage Patch** will have the bar open as usual, and a ticket-only event for over 25s with a live DJ at £11 per person. The pub is serving food as usual.

**The Turk's Head** has a band in the main bar – free entry and open till 1.30 a.m. Over 21s only. The restaurant closes at 8 p.m. after which no food will be available.

Down on the riverside, **The Barmy Arms** is open as normal but with a DJ too. This venue saves itself for NY Day itself when it will have live music. **The White Swan** is already fully booked for food, but has live music and the bar will be open as usual so people are welcome to pop in for a drink and see 2017 in with friendly company.

Further afield in Hampton, **The Bell** Inn has live music and a buffet supper at £20 a ticket entrance fee. It is open till 2 a.m. but booking is important, as there is now only limited availability.

And for those who just want a normal evening at the pub, at **The Anglers** it is business and food as usual – no special party, but open till 1 a.m.

And of course, if you prefer a quiet lazy evening at home, there is always the **Marks and Sparks New Year Dine In for Two Meal Deal** at £20 for starter, main, side and dessert, plus bottle of cava or still wine. That's available from 29 December till 1 January. Open till 7 p.m. on NY Eve and open 10-6 NY Day.

However you plan to see in 2017, let's hope it is a happy, healthy and peaceful year for us all.

# Have your say

## Thoughts of a year gone by

by Shona Lyons

Everyone has impressions of a year gone by and mine are probably in no way unique. But a year filled with so many things that have really tugged at my heart strings in so many ways, has not been an easy one to experience.



Yes of course the on-going crisis in Syria has been difficult to view on the news and hear on the radio as well as on Social media. I suppose the difficulty is that like so many people in this country one feels helpless against the official government policy. It seems crazy when Freedom of Movement for European citizens has seen millions of economic migrants coming here from Eastern Europe, but that we can be so heartless about taking in people and particularly the many unaccompanied children that



are fleeing the war, these are refugees asking for asylum. Where have our ethics and values of compassion gone?



Then I had the very difficult and ongoing experience of an old client of ours who now he has reached 95 being put into a local home. He often used to walk to the office from his home near Twickenham Green and I have known him for at least 12 years now. I suppose he was lonely and would come at least once a week over the years for some tea and a chat and I and my family befriended him and would often take him to a concert, or invite him for Sunday lunch. It was shocking to find him in the home, often naked in bed when he would never have been seen at home like that, he was scrupulous about his appearance and would love to have me visit him, where I would find him watching TV or listen to the radio reading a newspaper. His deterioration in the last year has been marked. And it isn't just him.

On the walls of the home, they pre fix the name with "Care" but it is far from a caring place, with people being left in their beds for days, if not weeks, waiting for the next big event in their life which will be their death. Nothing happens, not much bathing seems to be done, dentures cleaned, and nails cut (Little things that cost nothing, but mean a lot!) Very few seem to go out anywhere. It is more like a detention centre for the old and very vulnerable. We will all get old, or at least we all hope to get old and are encouraged to live healthy lives in the hope that we will, but if that is the fate that awaits us, when we are old and vulnerable, then I think I don't put much value on living to a ripe old age. There is an old Aramaic Expression, Not for ever Strength. We will all be weak eventually, is that the fate that will await us?



It seems sad that our society thinks this is ok. Our society will be judged on our kindness and compassion particularly towards the very vulnerable. And one can see how our society is failing in regards to that.



I believe passionately in the community and am very active in organising events in Church Street to the good of our business community and also for local residents. We run the Twickenham Town Business Association, the chairman of both these Associations is my father. One of my earliest memories is of Bruce, helping a down and out stand up and helping him with his trousers that had fallen down. That was my dad trying to give some dignity back to someone who had lost everything. In our Associations it is very different and we try and provide a platform for people to connect with each other, and with the wider community. Business is for the strong, but we all need to find some space in our hearts for the weak as well because old age will come to us all and we will all find a time in our lives when we are weak and vulnerable.

# Have Your Say

## TWICKENHAM REDISCOVERED - NEW HEART FOR TWICKENHAM RESPONSE TO CONSULTATION

by PAUL VELLUET, B.A. Hons, B.Arch. Hons, M.Litt., RIBA, IHBC  
Chartered Architect, St Margarets

### INTRODUCTION

As a resident of the Borough since 1948 and a resident of Twickenham since 1983, I set out below my response to the recent public consultation 'Twickenham Rediscovered - New Heart for Twickenham', referring to the presentational material recently displayed at 27, Church Street, Twickenham, and to the A.3 copies of that material kindly made available at the exhibition.

In part, my comments draw upon my observations of December, 2015 responding to the Council's consultation on the original proposals for the Twickenham Riverside site prepared by Quinlan and Francis Terry Architects – a copy of which I attach by way of record. Many of my earlier comments in relation to those earlier proposals remain relevant in relation to the latest proposals. However, in submitting these comments, I have had regard to the modest and more extensive changes effected to the original proposals shown in the three, latest sets of proposals prepared by Francis Terry and Associates. Once again, whilst the Council's carrying-out further public consultation on emerging proposals for the future development of a key and presently and long-unresolved part of Twickenham's riverside adjacent to Water Lane and The Embankment is most welcome, the Council's approach to shaping the future of this site and the three sets of outline proposals recently exhibited remain disappointing. Sadly, the twelve months that have elapsed since the Council's consultation on the original development proposals do not appear to have been well used in reconsidering fundamental aspects of those earlier proposals in the light of critical public comment, other than in the welcome exploration of the alternative layout of blocks shown in Proposals 1 and 2 in contrast to the layout of shown in Proposal 3.

### THE BRIEF

Once again, the Council is silent on the shaping of the brief in terms of the desirable land-use mix; the quantum of floor-space required for the retail, restaurant and other non-residential areas; the desirable approach to the servicing of the development; the number, mix, size and nature of the residential units; and the number of off-street car-parking spaces that are likely to be necessary in order to secure a viable and realisable development. Once again, the Council is silent on the critical issue of the proposed approach to the funding and implementation of the development and its ownership on its completion – not least, if the site is sold-on after Planning Permission is obtained. Importantly, too, the Council is silent on the important issue of how best to secure safe vehicular access to the site for servicing and below-ground car-parking.

It is difficult to see how any architect can provide sound and realistic options to the development of this site in the absence of such a brief, including an independent analysis of the site and its broader setting, identifying their particular architectural and historic interest, character and appearance. Without such a brief, the exhibited sketch-proposals cannot carry any real conviction.

It is quite extraordinary for any local authority to give an entirely 'open-brief' to an architect to explore the development potential of land in the authority's ownership - not least, land of such strategic and heritage significance and potential commercial value. It can only be assumed that the appointed architects were encouraged or required to adhere to relevant London-wide and local planning and conser-

vation policies, and to the Council's supplementary planning guidance and to the relevant, published guidance of Historic England and CABI.

Importantly, there is no indication of the level of affordable housing that might be accommodated on the site, or where such affordable housing might be provided by the prospective developer elsewhere in Twickenham if not on the site.

### **THE ADOPTED DESIGN APPROACH IN EACH OF THE THREE PROPOSALS**

Given the fundamental deficiencies of the proposals presented for consultation in November and December, 2015, and the clearly expressed and extensively publicised and critical comments raised by the local and broader community, it is disappointing that the Council has encouraged a re-working of those proposals as one of the three sets of exhibited proposals (as Proposal 3) rather than setting aside those proposals and making an entirely fresh start. It is surprising, too, that the Council has not considered it necessary to draw upon other architects and urban designers with sound experience and skills in the design of new development in historic urban areas to contribute to the process of developing new and relevant ideas for this important site over the last year. Not only does the external design of a number of the proposed buildings lack authenticity and conviction, but the design of the presently proposed open areas of unrelieved paving offer little prospect of delight.

Disappointingly, despite the sound reputation of Quinlan Terry in particular, reflected in key aspects of the work of the Erith and Terry practice in the Richmond Riverside Development of 1984-1985, the scale and design of the each of the three, exhibited schemes for the Twickenham Riverside Site are decidedly insensitive to their setting. If a traditional architectural language is to be adopted, then it should demonstrate a sound understanding of the scale and design of the local vernacular, and of the English Georgian architectural tradition in particular. Such an understanding is not clearly discernible in the recently exhibited overall proposals.

Fundamental deficiencies are reflected in the excessive scale of the proposed development fronting King Street which rises by the equivalent of a complete sheer-storey above the deeply projecting eaves of the existing, three-storey, 1930s, retail and residential building immediately to the south-west (nos. 3 to 33 (consec.), King Street) and dwarfs the two-storey historic and other buildings at the Water Lane end of Church Street, and the modestly scaled and sensitively designed, modern housing that extends down the north-eastern side of Water Lane (nos. 7 to 21 (odd), Water Lane). Ironically, the former, three-storey, 1930s King's Head Public House that stood on the site at the corner of King Street and Water Lane until demolished about thirty years ago, performed a very much more successful townscape and architectural role than the options presently put forward in the three sets of proposals.

Disappointing too, is the failure to provide an attractive and sensitive treatment of the alternative elevations of the proposed, new development extending down Water Lane – a plain and un-relieved retaining-wall supporting a balustraded terrace, or an elevated, covered arcade will create a hostile setting to the important pedestrian route down to the riverside. Ironically, thirty years ago, Quinlan Terry resolved the Water Lane frontage of the Richmond Riverside Development with particular success. Perhaps the architects might usefully look at this as a potential precedent.

### **THE ROOFSCAPE**

It is disappointing that each of the three sets of proposals still fails to provide a lively roof-scape reflecting the architectural character of the adjacent part of the historic heart of Twickenham. Proposals 1 and 2 provide for entirely inappropriate and extensive use of flat roofs across the greater part of the proposed new development – anomalously without the necessary M+E plant-rooms – screened

or unscreened- and mostly without stacks. Proposal 3 still provides the tops of the two blocks of development insensitively treated as two large areas of flat roof, once again, without the necessary M+E plant-rooms, etc. and mostly without stacks. Importantly too, no indication is given as to how adequate protection for those accessing the flat roofs is to be achieved.

## THE PLANNING OF THE BLOCKS

The very basic plans supporting each of the three sets of proposals still fail to show where and how access to the upper, residential (?) floors from ground floor level in each block is to be secured, and how the retail, residential and other uses at ground, first, second and third floor levels are to be serviced from street or basement level. No indication is given as to how access for those with mobility impairment between The Embankment and the extensive terrace areas at higher level is to be achieved.

## CONCLUSION

As Chairman of the Richmond Society's Conservation, Development and Planning Committee in the late 1970s and 1980s, and as Chairman of the Society between 1984 and 1988, I was closely involved with other committee members in discussions and negotiations with the prospective developers, leading Council members and the local community that led to the final approval and implementation of the Richmond Riverside Development. Whilst not perfect in every respect, particularly with regard to the excessive quantum of office floor-space in relation to residential floor-space, the introduction of retail space into the Town Hall, the loss of a number of early-19th century buildings, and the design of the landscaping on the river frontage, the urban design aspects of the overall Riverside Development and Erith and Terry's external design of the individual buildings have rightly been recognised and celebrated since completion in 1988, including receipt of Awards and Commendations under the Richmond Society Awards Scheme. Of particular importance in contributing to the success of the development have been the creation of the Town Square and the exemplary handling of the roof-scape and the quality of detailing and facing materials of the individual buildings.

At present, none of the three sets of emerging proposals for the proposed development of Twickenham's riverside site yet show potential for the positive qualities of the Richmond Riverside Development to be realised by the side of Thames at Twickenham. If a traditional architectural language on the Twickenham site is to be adopted, it requires a very much more sensitive and contextual approach which relates properly to the understated and modest scale of the surviving 18th and early-19th century historic buildings in Church Street and on the riverside, and to the modestly scaled and sensitively designed, modern housing that extends down the north-east side of Water Lane (nos. 7 to 21 (odd), Water Lane). Importantly, too, the connection between King Street and the riverside needs to be devised with much greater regard to the existing topography of the site. In this connection, the character and scale of Erith and Terry's housing extending down the length of the south-east side of Water Lane in the Richmond Riverside Development is a highly relevant model for the treatment of the south-west side of Twickenham's Water Lane.

All in all, the development of Twickenham's riverside site deserves a very much more sensitive and carefully considered approach than that presently offered in the three sets of proposals.