

Twickenham & Richmond TRIBUNE

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- Berkley Driscoll
- Teresa Read



9th October 2020



Autumn Riverside, Twickenham
Photo by Berkley Driscoll



TickerTape - News in Brief

Council wins £500k bid to help residents save money and improve their homes!

Local people who are on a low income and live in properties with poor energy ratings will soon be able to apply for funding to improve the energy efficiency of their home and save on bills.

Owner occupiers who meet the criteria will be able to apply for up to £10,000 of works on their homes. Where homes are rented from landlords, £5,000 will be available, with the landlord expected to make at least a 33% contribution on top. Information regarding the Council's grant scheme will be announced in the next few weeks. To sign up to be kept informed, email: greenhomesgrant@richmond.gov.uk

Tickets now on sale for this year's Literature Festival!

The programme takes place throughout November 2020 and includes talks by authors, historians, politicians, poets and more, with writing workshops, as well as activities for children and families.

The full programme of events can be found at [Richmond Lit Fest website](#). You can book online or by phone. View how to [book](#)

"Porch Pirates" seek to steal your home deliveries!

Since the start of the COVID-19 pandemic, parcels left outside people's homes or in communal areas by delivery drivers have been stolen.

Whilst couriers such as Amazon and Hermes have been advised on how to make sure packages are safe, we are also encouraging local people to do their bit to protect their delivered goods.

The Met Police website has more crime prevention [advice](#).

[Visit the News page for more stories](#)



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Oh dear, the Twickenham Riverside grumbles rumble on!

TwickerSeal doesn't spend much time on social media (there are more important things as CaptainQuack pointed out on Twitter [here](#)), but it does seem that Twitter has been awash with discussion about the council's unpopular scheme for Twickenham Riverside (well, awash until the Environment Agency steps in to install order).

TwickerSeal is confused though; the council lauded the Stakeholder Reference Group (and the two independent residents on the Design Panel) as a shining example of its transparency and consultation. But now that the SRG (and DP members) disagree with the council and are asking the council to slow its timetable, suddenly they are irrelevant and unrepresentative.

Apparently, the many thousands represented by the SRG don't count and the council wants to hear from the 'public'. Would that be massive number (455) who took part in the last 'consultation' (which took place over a year ago). or the Twitter residents, who mostly appear to support the SRG views?

TwickerSeal can't help but think the council continues to prefer to '*get it done*' rather than '*get it right*'. Obviously, the council elections in May 2022 have no bearing ...

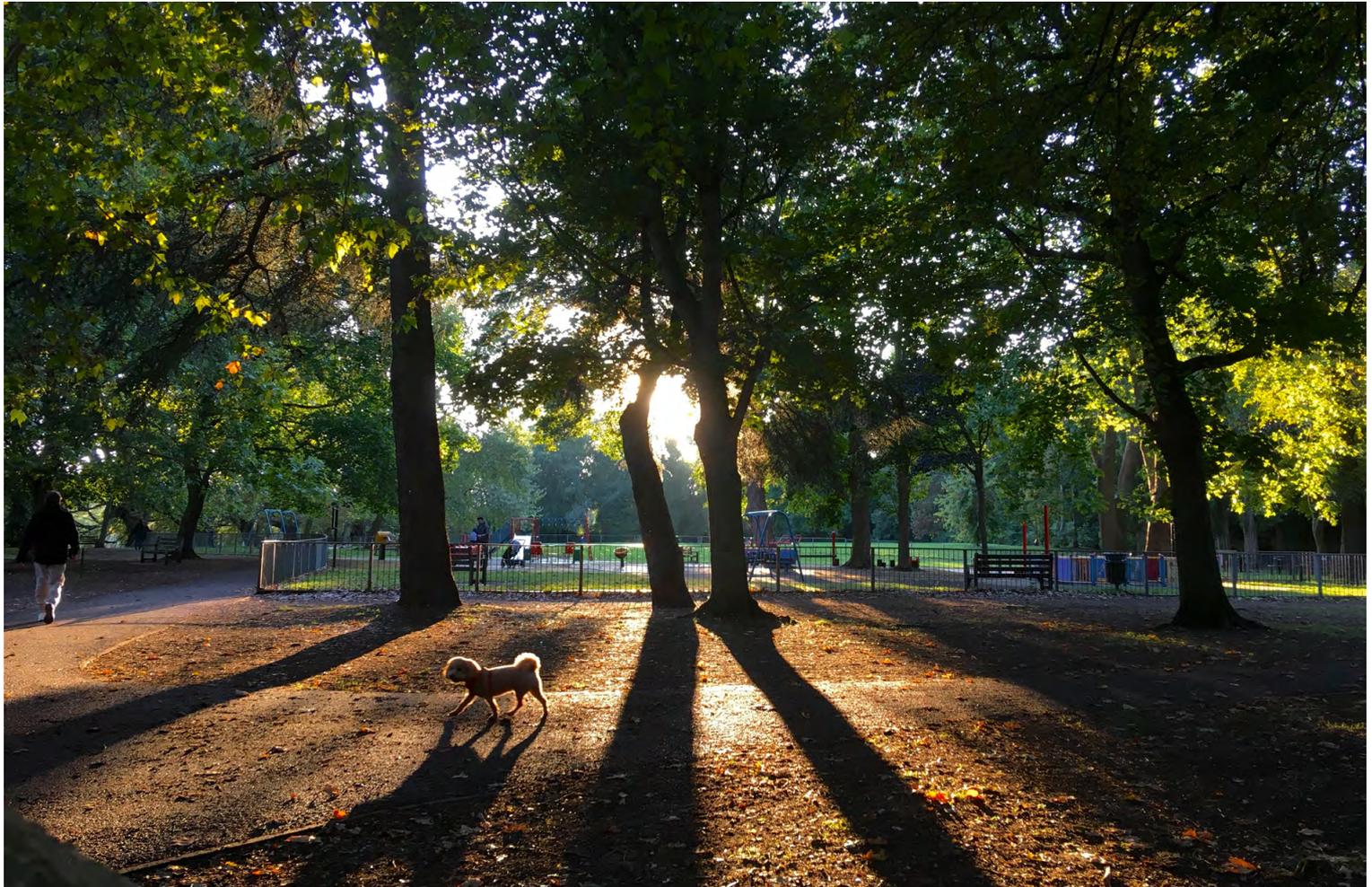
The image the council didn't put on the website



Borough View By Graeme Stoten

'Orleans Gardens riverside'

Capturing the late afternoon mood and atmosphere from Warren path overlooking the pleasure gardens, and the adjacent northern bank, as perhaps we see the last of the summer-like balmy evenings disappear.



The party to end all parties at number 6, Montpelier Row

By Maurice Parry-Wingfield

An article by Alan Winter on pages 6 to 8 of the Twickenham and Richmond Tribune of 2 October 2020 mentioned that the Beatles and other pop groups frequented the Twickenham area in the 1960s, and added the sensational news that the Beatles had a party at number 6, Montpelier Row, saying that:

At this time a legendary party happened in Montpelier Row, Twickenham where John's psychedelic painted Rolls Royce was parked for most of the night. Word soon got round that all four Beatles had been spotted going into the house and chaos ensued as many of us climbed onto the garden wall at the Crown Pub to watch the goings on in the next gardens.

He asked if anyone was there at the party.

My interest aroused, I contacted the daughter of Lorna Houseman, who lived at number 6. She was indeed there. She was 14 at the time (1967). The common link between Lorna and the Beatles was Norman Parkinson, a celebrated fashion photographer who died in 1990. The Twickenham riverside and Eel Pie Island was of course the haunt of many pop stars, helped by the fact that there were a number of film studios not far away, so it was hardly surprising that Parkinson mixed in that milieu. He was a great friend of Lorna, having previously lived at number 12 but seemingly having moved to somewhere smaller in the vicinity. No doubt that was why Lorna had offered her house for his party.



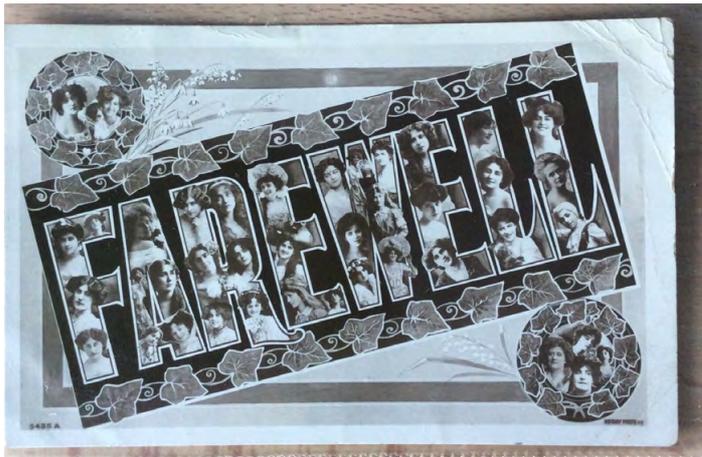
With Parkinson's background it was unsurprising that many glitterati of the day were invited. It was a momentous occasion because the Beatles had just had their Sgt Pepper's Lonely Hearts Club album published, with its iconic sleeve showing them in their brightly-coloured costumes.

Among the guests were not only the four Beatles, though George and Ringo left early, leaving John and Paul. As mentioned, John turned up in his iconic, psychedelically painted Rolls Royce. Also there were Twiggy, Mary Quant, Richard Attenborough, disc jockey David Jacobs and his wife, and many other famous people. The whole of the Row was invited too, no doubt because it would prove to be very noisy. Lorna's daughter said she'd never seen anyone as lovely as Twiggy aged 17 in a sequined dress.

There was of course dancing, in a marquee extending the whole length of Lorna's garden, and the party ended with breakfast at 5.00 in the morning. Doubtless an occasion to remember for those who were there.

All things must pass and this column is no different. After nearly four years and 200 consecutive weeks, I have decided to call it a day and so this will be my final local postcard column in the Twickenham and Richmond Tribune.

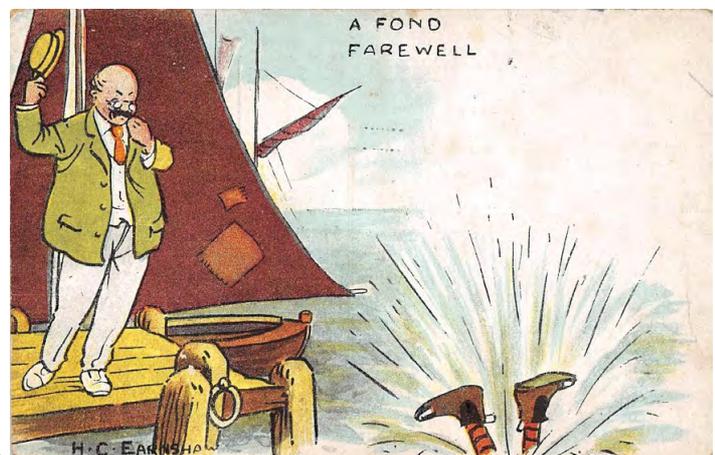
My thanks of course to editors Teresa Read and Berkley Driscoll for giving me the platform and also to those many readers who have corresponded, answered questions and contributed valuable input across the years.



We have covered a lot of ground with about 750 picture postcards showing images of the borough from 1898 when the first ever Twickenham and Hampton picture postcards that we have found to date were published and sent. The Twickenham image was of Popes Villa and the Hampton one showed St. Mary's church.

This column covered the end of the Victorian era, and all of the Edwardian period as well as two world wars and the reigns of George V and George VI. Postcards are certainly not used as much today but they are still published, often for promotional purposes and of course we have also shown images from the almost 70 year reign of Queen Elizabeth II.

We wandered across the borough showing high streets, river and street scenes and parks and gardens. Popular buildings included shops, cinemas, town halls, pubs and breweries, palaces, stations, hotels and churches scattered across Twickenham, St Margarets,



Whitton, Teddington and the Hamptons and south of the river to Richmond, Mortlake, Barnes and Kew.

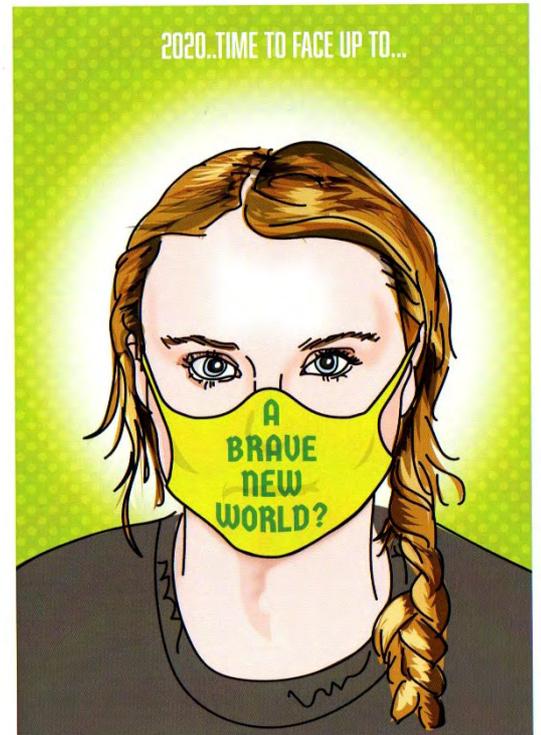


The biggest postbag of any article followed Part 176 in April of this year when I featured several postcards showing the F W Woolworth shop in King Street, Twickenham. It was amazing how many of you had such fond memories of the café and the record counter. Some of you worked there and one or two of you who I won't name popped in regularly to grab a few sweets from the pick and mix counter when no one was looking!

I also enjoyed starting and writing the weekly football column for a couple of years before handing over to James Dowden who is a very competent young sports reporter. James will continue to keep us up to date with the very exciting events surrounding Brentford FC and Hampton and Richmond Borough FC this season. Come on you Bees!

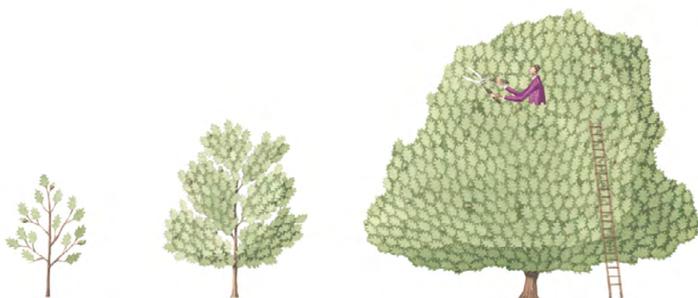
My final postcard in this column brings us bang up to date. It was designed and published by John Devaney of Ace Card Enterprises last month. It is not a local postcard, rather a card that should touch every part of this planet of ours. If ever a message was appropriate for today surely this is it. It shows Greta Thunberg wearing her virus mask. The reverse of the card reads "Since our leaders are behaving like children, we will have to take the responsibility they should have taken long ago". Well said Greta and with that, farewell to all of my readers.

I shall still be buying and selling postcards and being an optimist hope to be running three postcard fairs at the Baptist Church Hall in Church Road, Teddington next year. The dates for your diary are Saturdays 13th February, 12th June and 9th October. Hopefully these fairs may be able to go ahead. As we get nearer to these dates it will be best to ring me first to see if we are going ahead with them.



If you trip over any old postcards, old envelopes with stamps on, or photograph albums that you would consider parting with, I'd be very interested in arranging to see them. Please contact me on 07875 578398 or by email at: alanwinter192@hotmail.com I am happy to pay cash for anything like that which I find of interest. So don't throw old postcards etc. in the skip or recycling bins. Show them to me first! Thanks, stay safe and well.

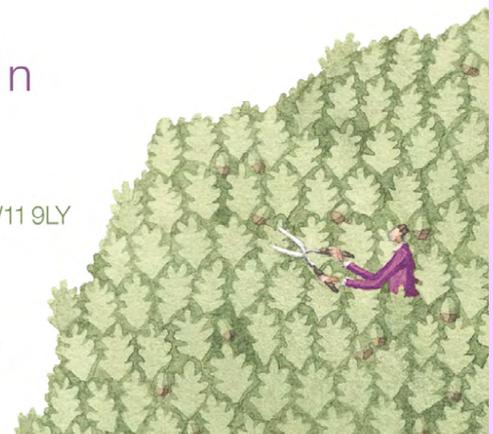
All 200 previous articles in this weekly local postcard column are accessible by visiting www.twickenhamtribune.com Just go the archive editions which start in 2016



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COVID-19

Teresa Read

From the Director General of the World Health Organization this week:

“Although all countries have been affected by this virus, we must remember that this is an uneven pandemic.

10 countries account for 70% of all reported cases and deaths, and just 3 countries account for half.

Here are roughly four different situations that countries are facing:

First, some countries acted decisively and quickly and have avoided large outbreaks.

Second, some countries have had large outbreaks but were able to bring them under control, and continue to suppress the virus.

Third, while some countries brought the virus under control, as economies and societies have eased restrictions, there has been an increase in cases.

And fourth, there are still some countries that are in the intense phase of transmission.”

Further reading:

This Overlooked Variable Is the Key to the Pandemic

<https://www.theatlantic.com/health/archive/2020/09/k-overlooked-variable-driving-pandemic/616548/>

REMEMBER: avoid places where the three C’s come together – crowds, closed spaces, close contact

Cases of COVID-19

total to 8 October 2020

1,099 Richmond-upon-Thames 1,152 Kingston-upon Thames 1,980 Hounslow

Countries with High Numbers of Deaths Recorded by the World Health Organization

Deaths Worldwide 1,049,810

USA 209,450

Brazil 147,494

India 105,526

Mexico 79,714

The United Kingdom 42,515

Italy 36,061

Peru 32,914

Spain 32,562

France 32,211

Iran 27,658

Colombia 27,017

Russian Federation 22,056

Argentina 21,827

South Africa 17,103

The Heroes of Hampton

By Simon Fowler

The Blitz saw many actions of heroism by the rescue services as they sought to find men, women and children buried in the rubble. It was dangerous and painstaking work. Often these acts went unrecognised – the real reward was successfully saving a person's life.

But occasionally such heroism was recognised by the authorities. In February 1941, William Woods, the Chief Fire Officer with Twickenham Fire Brigade, was awarded the George Medal, and his crew Station Officer Ernest Stevens and Fireman Ernest Weller received MBEs for saving a family in Hampton. Then aged 59, Woods had been a fireman the whole of his life. The official records tell the story of how and his colleagues merited their distinction.

During a raid on Hampton on 11 October 1940, Mr and Mrs Tuffin, who lived in Warfield Road near the centre of the raid, became trapped by debris after a high explosion bomb had dropped nearby, killing four people.



*William Wood and his crew would have found a similar sight as they arrived in Warfield Road.
Credit Imperial War Museum (HU 86166)*

Mr Tuffin was found 'pinned down by a large dining table on its side across his legs and a huge slab of concrete on his back and his chest wedged between the back of the chair.'

His wife, meanwhile, was buried in debris up to the waist under the table, where the couple had been sheltering. Mr Woods and his colleagues, working in the pitch black:

...first to cut an aperture in the table top to make contact. This was very difficult, owing to the close proximity of Mr Tuffin and the small space to work in, then to relieve the pressure from his legs, the major portion of the debris had to be lifted with a 5-ton jack.

To release Mrs Tuffin 'it was necessary to remove with the hand, and lying on the stomach, about a yard of debris.'

One witness reported how Mr Woods had held the hand 'sympathetically of a half-buried but still living victim.' At the same time the crew was in danger of having tons of masonry collapse on them.

The rescue took nearly three hours. But it was successful. Eventually, the Tuffins were pulled free and taken to hospital where they recovered from their traumatic experience.

After they had successfully dug out the couple Mr Woods and his crew went onto another job and remained on duty until the early hours of the next day. His bravery, and that of his crew, was reported by several eyewitness to Twickenham's town clerk who recommended Woods and his colleagues for the award.

I haven't been able to what happened to William Woods and his colleagues. They seem to have vanished from history, just leaving this act of bravery as a memorial.

Autumn in Marble Hill Park

By Kate Slack -Head Gardener

Autumn has definitely arrived at Marble Hill Park and the trees are beginning to turn in colour, the many Sweet Chestnut and Horse Chestnut trees are dropping their bounty and the misty mornings bring an atmosphere of mystery and anticipation to the Park.



The weeping silver birch in the autumn sunlight, loved and played on and around by so many local children.



Marble Hill House nestled between the woodland quarters.

Autumn for the gardener is a time to reflect on the past year as well as planning for the next year ahead, although the vegetable garden is still producing its harvest it is time to begin planting the bulbs for next spring and order in the seed catalogue for the winter nights in front of the fire.

We have had a challenging but prolific year in the park at Marble Hill, we have almost completed two of the woodland quarters, extended the wildflower meadows on the west side of the park with hay from the ancient meadows of Ham House, produced and sold basket loads of vegetables to the local community, greatly improved one of the football and rugby pitches as well as providing some wonderful free outdoor entertainment for the locals in what has been strange year for us all.



Our volunteers collecting hay for the moving meadows day.



Some of our autumn harvest from the vegetable garden.

All of which we could not have done without our amazing army of volunteers who never fail to inspire me with their enthusiasm and hard work. So whilst visiting the Park and enjoying the lovely autumn colour, keep an eye out for our gardens team and feel free to ask us (from a safe distance!) about the work we are doing as we'd love to tell you about it!

Council questions accuracy of COVID-19 data

The Leader of Richmond Council, Cllr Gareth Roberts, is calling for an urgent review of the accuracy of the COVID-19 data after Richmond Council discovered that a large proportion of the positive cases in the borough are individuals who had their tests conducted far away from the area.

Since 20 September, there have been 421 positive test results reported in Richmond upon Thames*. As part of the Council's review of the data, to identify any trends or linkages, it has found that whilst almost half (40%) are missing the location of where the individual was tested, and almost a quarter of those we do know, were tested far away from London – including places such as Leeds, Exeter, Manchester and Durham. The data also shows that these individuals are aged 17-21 years old.



As the Capital is hurtling towards potential further restrictions, the Leader of Richmond Council is demanding that before any additional measures are put in place, the Government urgently reviews the data.

Cllr Gareth Roberts, said:

“This is the latest ‘testing shambles of the week’ and the Government needs to get a grip. This is not just a Richmond issue, it’s not even just a London issue; this is a national issue. Before any further restrictions are put in place the data needs to be cleansed and correct.

“Some of our positive cases seem to be students who may have acquired the infection in other parts of the country. So why are they being attributed to Richmond?”

“People need to have the confidence in the data, if they don’t then how can we expect people to follow the rules. Come on Mr Hancock – we know your Government struggles with algorithms – but get a grip!”

*This data includes those who have been tested more than once.

A breakdown of the data is shown at right

Category	Number	% of total tests	Additional Comments
Total Tests	421	100	Not the same as number of cases. People may be tested twice as part of their care.
Pillar 1	50	11.9	No location provided for these
Pillar 2	371	88.1	See below for additional info
Missing Location	117	27.8	No postal code
Away from Greater London and Surrounding areas	70	16.6	Including: Leeds, Newcastle, Manchester, Birmingham, Bristol, Durham, Glasgow.

Services to support your mental health this World Mental Health Day

To mark this year's World Mental Health Day (10 October 2020), residents are reminded by our Public Health team of the free support services that can help.

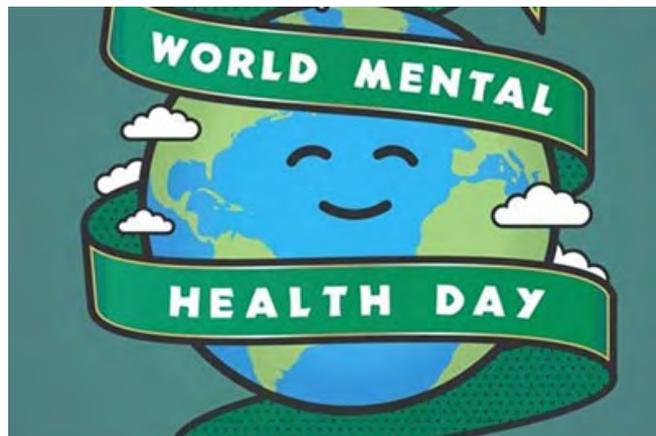
COVID-19 has made this year a particularly difficult one - months of lockdown and loss have had a huge impact on mental health. If you have been affected, or you know someone who has been, try reaching out to one of the below free support services.

- [Good Thinking](#) is a free virtual resource provided by Thrive London, Public Health England and the NHS. It aims to provide digital mental wellbeing support for London through online quizzes, workshops, podcasts and activities.
- [Richmond Wellbeing Service](#) offers a range of free and confidential talking therapies and specialist support for adults. You can visit the website or give them a call on 020 8548 5550.
- RB Mind's Helpline offers a safe place where you can speak to someone who will listen, offer you support and guide you to further help if needed. The service is for anyone over 18 years old living in the borough.

The emotional support line: **0203 137 9590**, is open:

- » Monday to Friday: 9am to 10pm
- » Saturday: 2 to 10pm
- » Sunday: 2 to 8pm

- [Kooth](#) is a free, safe and anonymous place for young people to find online support and counselling.
- If you need mental health support in a crisis, you can call the South West London and St George's Mental Health NHS Trust 24/7 Mental Health Support Line on **0800 028 8000**. It is open to everyone and if required you can then visit the 24/7 Orchid Mental Health Emergency Service at Springfield Hospital in Tooting, London, to receive specialist care from expert mental health professionals.



Virtual World Mental Health Day Festival

Thrive London is hosting a virtual World Mental Health Day Festival from midday on Saturday 10 October. The day features workshops, performances and panel discussions all with the aim of supporting you to build resilience and promote positive wellbeing.

[Find out more and register](#)

Cllr Piers Allen, Lead Member for Adult Social Services, Health and Housing, and Chair of the Richmond Health & Wellbeing Board, said:

'It has been an extremely tough year for everyone and so this World Mental Health Day is the most important one yet.'

'Making positive change can be difficult, especially during uncertain times. It can be overwhelming to know where to start. But if you are up to doing one thing today to help your mental health, why not try visiting the Good Thinking website or calling RB Mind's Helpline for a chat. Take those first steps this World Mental Health Day to support yourself or to reach out to someone else.'

Dear Sir,

Richmond Council's traffic management:

Further to the Brian Shepherd's letter entitled 'Richmond Council's traffic management' which you published last week, may I suggest that we now have the classic situation whereby 'Authority' has decided to impose a blanket restriction on its society, in this case a 20 mph limit on the streets, which the vast majority of that society voted against. Inevitably, the result is an almost total ignoring of the traffic speed restriction across the borough.

This has created an interesting side-effect in the road on which I live. This road has had a 20mph limit for many years and, by and large, that restriction was adhered to by drivers. The thinking being, I would suggest, that there must be a serious reason for this road to be singled out for a 'special' speed restriction and should therefore be obeyed. The result being that most drivers slowed to around 20-25mph.

Now, with this unwarranted speed limit imposed across the borough, the traffic speeds along the road where I live have increased significantly and are often in excess of 30mph.

Worse still, as we have speed humps along our road, vehicles, especially the many vans and trucks (some with trailers), now travelling much faster than before, bounce over these humps creating noise and, indeed, such vibration that can be felt in the adjacent properties.

I despair at this Council Administration's decision-making, its lack of understanding of the potential impacts of its poor decisions and its readiness to ignore the democratic process whenever that leads to a decision it doesn't like. This Liberal Administration won power by promising to listen to local people. So is it that it listens but doesn't hear or is it hearing but not listening?

Whichever it is, it clearly chooses to ignore any response from local people that it doesn't like – which seems to be most of them, as we've seen, not only on road speed limits but with the debacle over Twickenham Town centre redevelopment, the provision of public toilets, CPZ implementations and so on.

It's time for this Council to turn on its listening ears or to switch on its hearing aid.

Yours faithfully,

Name & address supplied



This Chiff Chaff was still for a change and gave us a photo to share along with all the fungi growing in abundance after the rain.

Mushrooms by Mary Oliver

“Rain, and then the cool pursed lips of the wind draw them out of the ground - red and yellow skulls pummelling upward through leaves, through grasses, through sand; astonishing in their suddenness, their quietude, their wetness, they appear.....”



We have been re-reading Richard Mabey’s 1972 book, Food for Free – A guide to the edible wild plants of Britain and it describes over 300 foods which include fungi, seaweed, edible roots, weeds, flowers and fruit. Nutritional and gastronomical values are discussed and how to find, gather and cook these free foods. The Illustrations by Marjorie Blamey are works of art as well as informative. Leave your ‘phone at home and take a book with you on your walks to look up what you see or to sit on a bench and be astounded at what can be found in our wonderful green spaces. The Author dedicated this book “For my Mother” and we need our parents/carers more than ever to teach our children the value of nature so they can remember us with fondness



Acorn hunter strikes again!

The Real Junk Food Project 2020 at The ETNA Centre is worth supporting and take a look at their video explaining what they do and how you can Help, Get Free Food and enjoy home cooked offerings and company in their café.
[real food project 2020](#)

River Crane Sanctuary: [Website](#). [Instagram](#)

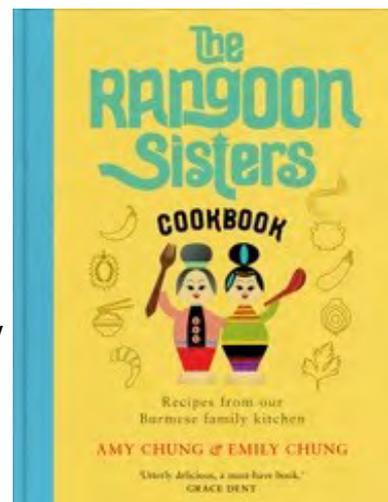
Sisters Are Doin' It!

I don't know about you, but Burmese food is not something I am very familiar with...until now that is: I've discovered a fabulous new cookbook written by Amy and Emily Chung – aka **The Rangoon Sisters**. These siblings are not only great cooks; run incredibly popular supper clubs (raising a great deal of money for charity in the process) but they also both happen to be doctors, working for the NHS and at the frontline this summer when their debut cookbook was launched! Born and bred in South London, with Anglo-Burmese-Chinese heritage, they grew up watching their parents cooking from a wide-range of influences, getting involved and picking up skills along the way. They soon began to cook like their Mum and Grandma, seamlessly throwing in a little bit of this and a splash of that to create delicious dishes. They first visited Burma with their mother, back in 2012 and were blown away by the generosity and kindness of strangers; they were welcomed into their homes and given tea as they shared food and stories. They combined this spirit with their love of hosting and entertaining friends, to create their first supper club in East London in 2013, which quickly became the hottest culinary ticket in town, with guests travelling from far and wide to eat, talk, mix and make new friends.



So, to the book itself; it has lots of engaging and personal anecdotes, as well as talking the reader through the ingredients needed for the store cupboard, as well as obligingly providing some information as to where to buy them (most are in fact easily available from a good supermarket or online). Special, family recipes have been properly documented for us to share and enjoy together. **The Rangoon Sisters** is a celebration of the incredible food and flavours found throughout Burma: rich bowls of slow-cooked curry are contrasted with fresh, zingy salads, vibrant garnishes, and heaps of steaming rice. With chapters on Snacks, Salads, Curries, Rice, Noodles and Sweets, the simple recipes are perfect for a quick weekday family meal or a comforting slow cook on a weekend. With easy to follow instructions, and no specialist equipment or expensive ingredients needed, *The Rangoon Sisters* is ideal for anyone wanting to make tasty, simple Burmese food at home. Published by **Ebury Press** at £20 (hardback), it is a great introduction to this delicious cuisine.

I've chosen a couple of recipes for you to try – not curries (you'll need to buy the book!) but both quite straightforward and requiring no exceptional technical skills. The tomato dish is perfect for those of us who have lovingly cultivated our own crop throughout the summer and it makes a lovely starter or a side dish. And the meringue dessert: well, I couldn't resist it, as fabulous mangoes can be available at the moment at knockdown prices from your local greengrocer such as Twickenham's Paul Cooper or Kingston market. I think it would also work well with passion fruit too or instead of mango



Khayan jin thee thoke (tomato and crunchy peanut salad) – serves 4 as a side

This salad contrasts crunchy peanuts with vibrant fresh tomatoes. Use the best-quality tomatoes you can buy to get the most out of this dish. It is best made fresh on the day, and can be served as a side with one of our curries or just simply with some rice.

- 50g unsalted roasted peanuts
- 300g tomatoes, at room temperature, quartered
- ½ green finger chilli, deseeded (optional) and finely sliced
- 1 tbsp dried shrimps (optional) 1–2 raw shallots, peeled and thinly sliced
- 3–5 tbsp garlic oil
- Juice of ½ lime
- 2 tsp fish sauce (omit to make vegetarian, then season with salt)



- Small handful of coriander leaves
- 1 tsp gram flour, toasted
- Crispy fried shallots to garnish

Crush the peanuts using a pestle and mortar or pulse a few times in a food processor (to the size of the nubs you get in a shop-bought crunchy peanut butter).

Place the tomatoes, chilli, crushed peanuts and remaining ingredients in a large bowl and mix. Ideally, do this with clean hands to fully combine all the ingredients. Taste and adjust the seasoning, adding more fish sauce or chilli if necessary. Transfer to a serving dish and garnish with the crispy shallots

Thayet thee ohn thee mont (Mango Lime and Coconut Meringues) – makes 8

This is an absolutely winning combination of flavours that we have served up at several supper clubs over the years. It's perfect for entertaining because the meringues and lime curd can be made the night before, so the dessert only needs a quick assemble just before serving. Our meringue-making method is the Delia Smith one – reliable every time.

For the meringues:

- 3 egg whites
- 170g caster sugar

For the lime curd:

- Zest and juice of 2 limes
- 3 egg yolks
- 25g unsalted butter
- 50g caster sugar

For assembly:

- 50g unsweetened desiccated coconut 300ml double cream
- 200g mango, stoned, peeled and diced into 1cm pieces



Preheat the oven to 150°C/300°F/gas mark 2

In a clean and dry mixing bowl, whip the egg whites with an electric whisk. Start on a low speed and gradually increase the speed over the next 2–3 minutes to the highest setting until the egg whites are stiff peaks, then stop. Add half the sugar to the egg whites and whisk at high speed, then add the remaining sugar until the meringue is glossy and firm – this usually takes 2 minutes.

Line two baking sheets with greaseproof paper. Spoon four mounds of meringue onto each sheet, spaced out evenly. Using the back of a spoon, make a shallow dip in the centre of each meringue, where the topping will sit once they're cooked. Place the trays in the oven for 35 minutes; once that time is up, switch off the oven and leave the meringues to cool and dry in there overnight.

While the meringues are cooking, prepare the lime curd. Make a bain-marie with a heatproof bowl set over some simmering water (make sure the bowl does not touch the water, though) and add all the ingredients for the curd to the bowl. Stir to dissolve the sugar and melt the butter. Making the curd requires a bit of patience, as it will take anywhere between 6 and 8 minutes to thicken: it should coat the back of a wooden spoon when it is done. We then strain it through a sieve, to get rid of the zest, and let it cool before refrigerating overnight in a covered container.

For the assembly, toast the desiccated coconut in a dry frying pan on the hob, stirring throughout – watch it carefully and don't let it turn brown, it will only take a minute. Whip the double cream until it's thick. Plate up the meringues, then top each one with a spoonful of cream, a dollop of lime curd, some mango pieces and finally a sprinkling of toasted coconut. Serve immediately.



Virtual First

Poetry Performance, On-Line, 4th October

There is one art form that is solitary in its creation and fireproof in lockdown. That is poetry. If proof is needed that poetry has thrived in 2020, then *Virtual First* stands witness to the fecundity of verse, which, like a rosebay willow herb on a bomb-site, has blossomed in lockdown. Its [monthly readings at the Adelaide](#) had become the must-do for lovers of the liquidity of language.



Restrictions since March though have forced Teddington's poets back to their metaphorical garrets. Nevertheless, the garret windows have now been flung open with Poetry Performance's inaugural on-line conversazione, an experimental toe-in-the-water. With a mixture of established work and new writing, the evening buzzed with enthusiasm. The poets' own works ranged eclectically from ecology to ecdysiasts, exhibited with éclat.

The late Bob Sheed, co-founder of Poetry Performance, who tragically suffered a fatal accident last spring, was commemorated with his own poems, a pæan tinged with poignancy. Sheed's trademark was humour and a rich vein of humour was mined during the evening by many of the contributing poets.



Heather Moulson has a knack of [finding humour as she reminisces](#) about her youthful days. In *Recollections of Soho* she recalls a daring outing made with a school-chum [in 1976 to the sleazy heart of Soho](#), then the epitome of a seedy red-light district. (Disclaimer: they returned unscathed.)

Andrew Evzona upstaged all with his polychrome wig. However, his 2020 had a serious tone, the pandemic causing a slip from the community spirit of the spring to the spectre of the descent into anarchy manifest in worldwide radical protests.

If this is too stress-inducing, the answer is given by Connaire Kensit in his excellent poem, *Stress Management*. "You're the expert on things about you", he asserts, while Silvia Kogan reading of Christopher Smart's 1757 eulogy on his cat describes the what-me-worry attitude of the moggie.



For real impact though, Bob Kimmerling's *Donald* is outstanding. A childhood reflection, seen through the wisdom of decades, its nostalgia is not a mawkish *recherche du temps perdu*, but a bitter regret for wrongs done in innocence

Read Mark Aspen's review at www.markaspen.com/2020/10/07/virtual-1st

Photography by Carl Spitzweg and Toby Bright.

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Travel Blues

By Bruce Lyons

Overtime I have seen some strange times in Travel, perhaps none as bad as Covid-19 Pandemic ones. BUT, there is always a BUT, for some there some bonuses.

For many years (Over 25) I specialised in travel to The Middle East, Israel, Egypt and Jordan And whenever there had been outbursts of hostilities (and that was fairly frequent) then Travel came to a standstill, for a while and it was always noticeable that after a short time.

People would start to book, again, if the price was right- small bonuses for the client and off they went – especially if the weather was better (which it usually is) there than here. People need a carrot to encourage them to travel – and over the weeks Nile Cruises and Beach stays as well as Diving holidays were taken up again. Oddly Diving Holidays and trips to the Holyland were always the first to start moving.



So with the Pandemic the standstill is there – more so than ever before , since March the FCO advice has been “all but essential” and that invalidates your insurance – so pretty well nobody is going pretty much anywhere- Greece, Italy, Madeira , Azores Gibraltar stay “open for business” but the protocols can

change – with a flick of a finger from Mr Shapps.

So what there is for the more intrepid travellers, though we do have clients overseas just now and for the School Break there are some lovely offers to the Greek Islands and some to the Caribbean- best is Antigua.

However if you hanker for bargains with no financial risks there are operators looking to entice you; Wendy Wu has a whole new collection of 2021 trips to Japan with FREE flights (worth £800 per person) Seabourn and Silversea are offering 10% off their 2021 sailings if you book (and pay now)

Snag, there is no snag, all these offers and more are Covid protected. That is to say, if the departures are not allowed you get all the money back – you can also protect yourselves with travel insurance that covers the unlikely event that you catch Covid before you travel

On many of the 5* holidays and upmarket cruise companies these saving can add up to more than a £1000 saving per person – so please ask

And there are some good offers for Spring (2021) Nile Cruises & I am sure you know they have just discovered some new Mummies in Egypt.

**Save
For
2021!**

TRAVELLER'S TALES 82

Seashells from the Seychelles

Doug Goodman visits tropical Seychelles



The Seychelles really lived up to my expectations of a tropical island. After a flight to Mahe in Air Seychelles' Pearl Class I didn't think the trip could get any better. But it did. The sea was a brilliant blue, the fine sand resembled gold dust, coral, shells and coconuts littered the beaches and the picture-postcard palm trees hung at just the right angle over the beach. The temperature hovered around 28 degrees centigrade. Paradise!



Crystal Clear



Tropical Beach



Beach Safari

The Seychelles consist of 115 islands south of the equator in the Western Indian Ocean. It's away from the cyclone areas with a year-round temperature between 24 and 35 degrees. A large number of domestic flights and boats link the scattered islands and some are a considerable distance from Mahe. The first settlement took place in 1770 when the French occupied the islands. In 1814, after Napoleon's defeat at Waterloo, The Seychelles were ceded to Great Britain and finally became independent in 1976. Architectural styles reflect the French and British colonial times while music, food and culture have strong Creole roots. Today the republic's 98,000 inhabitants rely on tourism, sugar cane, coconuts and products from coconuts to maintain the economy.



Island Hopping



Round Island



Local Transport

DIVERSITY

UNESCO granted The Vallee de Mai with its curious coco de Mer fruits and Aldabra, the world's largest coral atoll World Heritage Sites and over 50 percent of the land is designated as a nature reserve. The vast sandy beaches are breath-taking with seven of the world's ten most beautiful ones claimed to be in The Seychelles. Building is strictly controlled as nothing must be higher than the palm trees and hotels must be set back from the shore to protect turtles'



La Digue Island



Palm Beach

My thatched cottage, a few yards from the sea at Beau Vallon, was cool and comfortable but I was a little wary of the giant spiders in their webs outside the windows even though I was assured they were harmless.

Trekking and bird watching trips were arranged but you can be sure that beach games and water sports were the most popular activities. Fishing trips, diving and snorkelling in the clear waters around the granite and coral islands and jeep safaris around Mahe occupied the daylight hours. Evenings were spent listening to Creole music, trying to dance the salsa and enjoying hot spicy dishes and tropical fruit under the stars. On a boat trip to La Digue, where hotel transfers are by bullock cart as cars are not allowed on the little island, we spotted some very large fish and a few turtles. A flight to Praslin was a highlight of the Seychelles week. A grass landing strip with a 'bus shelter' as the terminal was the only way of knowing it was a domestic airport. The beaches were empty and the water full of brilliantly coloured fish. We encountered giant tortoises and saw so many tropical birds that I forgot to write down their names as our guide identified the species. My favourite was the Fody.

The tropical forest on Praslin is home to the Coco de Mer Palms. Only found in the Seychelles this rare tree produces the plant kingdom's largest seed. Looking like two large coconuts joined, on closer inspection it resembles part of the female body. Legend gives it magical healing powers. The nut is closely protected so don't even think about trying to smuggle one home.



Old Tortoise



Fody

PERFECT HOLIDAY.

Whether you want an active holiday or simply to spend a week or more relaxing on a beach, The Seychelles has everything. The Seychellois are a fascinating mix of nationalities and extremely friendly towards to visitors. Each island has its own attractions and eco-system. Accommodation ranges from five star resorts to bungalows by the beach. No visas are required and the time difference with Europe in the summer is only two hours. Although it's nearly 40 years since visiting the tropical islands I can still remember the sweet smell of the plants, the sound of coconuts falling onto the sand, (don't sit under a coco palm) and the delight of often being alone on a beach.

Armenia and Azerbaijan

Nagorno-Karabakh is in the news as fierce fighting has broken out once again.

In 1924 the USSR created the Autonomous Province of Nagorno-Karabakh - with a mainly Armenian population - within Azerbaijan.

At the end of the 1980s Armenians campaigned for the unification of Nagorno-Karabakh, in Azerbaijan, with Armenia.

Conflict started in 1989 and continued for five years. In 1994 a ceasefire was signed, followed by an uneasy truce. A ceasefire has just been announced, starting 10th October 2020.



Azerbaijan



Azerbaijan



Armenia



Armenia



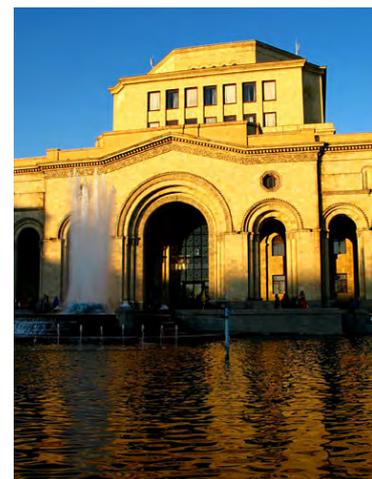
Armenia



Armenia



Armenia



Armenia

Photographs were sent to the World InfoZone project by individuals living in Armenia and Azerbaijan. Information was received from Onnik Krikorian of Oneworld Multimedia in Armenia and from the editor of Baku Today in Azerbaijan.

More photos and country information:

<http://worldinfozone.com/gallery.php?country=Armenia>

<http://worldinfozone.com/gallery.php?country=Azerbaijan>



RFS The Best of our Recent Historic Screenings

Issue 29, 9th October 2020

TEHRAN TAXI

A new series for those of you who are missing Richmond Film Society's screenings or, indeed, trips to the cinema generally as a result of the COVID-19 crisis. Their committee is producing a number of weekly recommendations of films screened during the last 20 years that were extremely well received by their audiences. Should the notes reproduced below entice you to try and catch-up with this recommendation, then you should be able to do so, as it is available on streaming services and for purchase as DVD/Blu-Ray discs from the online retailers as indicated below.

RFS Context: **TEHRAN TAXI** was 756th film screened by RFS on 4th October 2016. **Tehran Taxi** was the top ranked film of Season 54, it got an approval mark of 92% from those attending.

Panahi's 2018 film **3 Faces** holds the dubious accolade of being the last film RFS were able to screen pre-lockdown. **Tehran Taxi** can be streamed from Amazon Prime plus the discs are available from Amazon and others.

TEHRAN TAXI

Country:	Iran, 2015	Director:	Jafar Panahi
Screenplay:	Jafar Panahi	Cinematography:	Jafar Panahi
Editor:	Jafar Panahi	Language:	Farsi/Persian
Running Time:	82 min., colour		

Leading Players:

Jafar Panahi (himself)

Taxi Tehran is a docufiction starring and directed by Jafar Panahi (one of whose previous films includes **The White Balloon** (1995). Panahi rigged a taxi with three hidden video cameras and surreptitiously filmed himself driving round Tehran, picking up an assortment of passengers. The film is partly a nod to Panahi's compatriot Abbas Kiarostami and his pioneering in-car drama **Ten** (2002). The film is humorous, spontaneous and engaging. However, look out for the end sequence.



All of this makes sense when Panahi's background is known. After making several robust realist dramas about the challenges of everyday life in Iran – among them **The Circle** (2000), **Crimson Gold** (2003) and **Offside** (2006) – Panahi fell foul of the Iranian government, which threatened him with imprisonment, prevented him from travelling and banned him from making films for 20 years. He has protested by filming in extreme secrecy to make three extraordinary works – **Tehran Taxi** (2015), **Closed Curtain** (2013) and **This Is Not A Film** (2011) – that are guerrilla film-making from internal exile, and a raised fist of defiance to Iranian authorities.

Tehran Taxi won the Golden Bear prize at the 2015 Berlin International Film Festival. Because Panahi was legally unable to leave Iran to attend the festival, his niece Hana Saeidi (who appears in the film) was there to accept the award on his behalf. Berlin Jury president Darren Aronofsky described the film as “a love letter to cinema...filled with love for his art, his community, his country and his audience.”

Shortly after the film's premiere at Berlin was announced, Panahi released an official statement in which he promised to continue making films despite the ban and said “Nothing can prevent me from making films since when being pushed to the ultimate corners I connect with my inner-self and, in such private spaces, despite all limitations, the necessity to create becomes even more of an urge.”

Sara Steinke



BRENTFORD FC

Second half collapse costs Brentford dear Brentford 2 – 4 Preston North End

Brentford conceded four goals in just under 18 second half minutes to throwaway a game in which they had looked comfortable. A brace from Ivan Toney looked to have set the Bees on course for a convincing victory but a second half salvo from Preston, inspired by Scott Sinclair, saw the visitors turn the game on its head.



The Bees have looked at home in recent weeks at their new Brentford Community Stadium and took the lead inside eight minutes via Toney. The move started at the back from the Bees with Ethan Pinnock passing the ball to Dominic Thompson in the left fullback position. Thompson curled a perfectly weighted ball into the path of Josh Dasilva who dribbled on and delivered low into the box. Breaking into the six-yard area was Toney who on the stretched poked the ball home for the lead.

The Lillywhites were ambitious themselves though and Brad Potts cut infield past a couple of Brentford challenges, before slipping the ball into the path of Sean Maguire who shot first time left footed which Luke Daniels had to get down low to hold.

The game then meandered with neither side able to generate significant goal scoring opportunities with Preston enjoying the greater share of territory and possession but the Bees appearing comfortable in their defensive shape.

With two minutes to go in the first half the Bees doubled their lead as Toney claimed his second goal of the afternoon. The goal originated with a sublime through ball from Sergi Canos. Appearing to be boxed in and inside his own defensive third the Spaniard switched the ball over 50 yards to Bryan Mbeumo to set up a two v one situation. Mbeumo drew the Preston defender before passing into Toney who after a couple of touches to set himself, finished past Declan Rudd.

Seven minutes after the restart Preston pulled one back through Sinclair. A deep cross towards the back post from Joe Rafferty was knocked down by Patrick Bauer to the unmarked Sinclair who swept the ball in.

And just eight minutes later Sinclair was once again celebrating as he scored his second of the game to level the match. Mbeumo was guilty on not clearing his lines quickly enough and Andy Hughes disposed him in a dangerous area. Hughes then fired the ball across into the path of Sinclair who squeezed the ball through the legs of Daniels at the near post.

With the momentum swinging in favour of the visitors the comeback was completed moments later when Potts was allowed time and space to shoot from distance, his shot catching Daniels unsighted and curling into the bottom corner.

Preston secured an unlikely three points with a fourth goal in a devastating 20 minute spell. A corner from Ryan Ledson found the head of Ben Davies who knocked the ball down to Maguire who reacted quickest inside the six-yard box to the deep frustration of Brentford.

Vitaly Janelt signs for Bees

Brentford have unveiled the signing of German U21 international from Bundesliga 2 side VfL Bochum. The German signs for an undisclosed fee and arrives on a four-year contract subject to international clearance.

Janelt played as a defensive midfielder and spent time at the Hamburg and RB Leipzig academies before making his professional breakthrough at VfL Bochum in the second tier of German football. Janelt has been capped by Germany at a number of youth levels and was part of the squads at the 2015 UEFA U17 Championships and the 2015 U17 FIFA World Cup.

Speaking to club media Head Coach Thomas Frank was pleased with the signing, "I am very pleased that Vitaly has signed for us. He is another exciting player that we have been able to add to the squad. He is a midfielder who can play in a variety of roles.

"He is composed on the ball and is comfortable playing the possession-based game that we want to play. He is dynamic in his play and strong in the middle when it comes to duels. Most importantly, he has the aggressiveness and intensity in the high press that we want to have. He also has the ability to get around the pitch, which is important, not just in the Championship, but in modern football generally."

Dasilva and Raya signs contract extension until 2024

David Raya has signed a contract extension that will keep him with the Bees until at least the summer of 2024. The 25-year-old Spaniard moved to Brentford last summer from Blackburn Rovers and his first season was a huge success with 16 clean sheets in the league seeing him share the Golden Glove award for fewest goals conceded in the division.

Speaking to club media following the news Thomas Frank said, "We are very pleased that David has signed a new contract. He showed last year that he was a very important player for us and, for me, he is one of the best keepers in the league. He fits our style of play; he is really brave with his high line and takes everything that goes in behind, as well as crosses. He is strong in one on one situations and does a good job dominating his box. His distribution is good as well. Those are the key areas where he fits us really well. He made some big contributions in key moments last year and that's something I want to see even more of going forward.

Midfielder Josh Dasilva meanwhile has also committed his future to the club penning a four year deal that will see him playing in red and white until 2024. Dasilva originally joined the Bees from Arsenal in August 2018 and entering his third season for the club has playing 75 times, scoring 13 goals. Dasilva was also recently called up to the England U21 squad and made his debut in September 2020 in European Championship qualifying.

Speaking to club media Thomas Frank said, "This is fantastic news for Brentford FC and a top example of how we work. We signed a top talent and our staff have worked together with Josh over the past few years and he is now a very influential player in the Sky Bet Championship. He has grown over the past two years and has been a very big part of the team for the past year.

"We all know Josh's skill set on the ball, but he has developed off the ball. His running and his pressing are getting better and better and he is taking responsibility defensively. He is magnificent on the ball; he can dictate a game and he scores goals. I expect there is even more to come from him."

Halil Dervişoğlu departs on loan

Halil Dervişoğlu will join Dutch side FC Twente on loan for the 2020/21 season. The striker joined the Bees from Sparta Rotterdam and the Turkish U21 international will head back to play in the Eredivisie.

Speaking to club media Thomas Frank said, "Halil is a young player that we have a lot of belief in and one we think has a big future at Brentford but he is at the stage of his career where he needs to

play First Team matches. The competition for him with Ivan Toney and Marcus Forss is very strong. It is important for him to go out and play minutes to get up to top speed. When we send players out we see them coming back stronger like Marcus, Mads Bech Sørensen, and Emiliano Marcondes have in the past. We think Halil can do the same.”

Come on you Bees!

Hampton & Richmond Borough



Beavers made to work to progress in cup

Hampton 1 – 0 Corinthian

A solitary goal from Ruaridh Donaldson ensured Hampton progressed into the FA Cup Third Qualifying Round and avoided a potential banana skin in the FA Cup, although they were made to work against a spirited Corinthian side.

For Hampton this was their opening competitive game of the season whilst for their opposition, from three divisions below and appearing at this round of the FA Cup for the first time in their history,

The first key chance of the game arrived to Hampton when Sam Deadfield lofted a ball into Ryan Hill on the right hand touchline. Hill then showed a clean pair of heels to burst past his opposite marker and cross for Niko Muir. Muir was a fraction too late and the ball went past his attempted backheel attempt and with Donaldson closing in at the back post, Corinthian were able to clear the ball away.

Deadfield then whipped in an out swinging corner that found the head of the onrushing Dean Iman who headed the ball powerfully at goal, but the Corinthian goalkeeper did well to catch the ball from underneath his crossbar.

Hampton's greater quality was on show and Hill exchange a couple of neat passes with Muir inside the Corinthian box. Muir then demonstrated quick feet to dig the ball out and fire a venomous shot towards goal, which the Corinthian goalkeeper saved at full stretched.

The Beavers did eventually take the lead through Donaldson. A brilliant bit of play from Hill and Muir once again led to Jake Gray firing a shot goalwards which the Corinthian keeper could only push along the goalmouth where Donaldson finished from close range.

At the other end of the pitch Alan Julian, making his official debut for the club, was forced into a flying save to his left after the Corinthian winger had wriggled his way past Charlie Wassmer.

After the interval there were further chances for Hampton to make the tie comfortable. A short free-kick from Hill into Deadfield had promise but the latter's shot was weak and was blocked inside the area.

The closest Corinthian went was from a free-kick themselves which went low, under the wall and which Julian had to react quickly to push the ball away from danger.

Late on Deadfield went on a skilful run into the box where he skipped through a number of lunging challenges but was foiled at the last second by a very good save. In the end it proved immaterial as the Beavers kicked off their season with a victory and progression into the next round where they will face Hornchurch FC in the Third Qualifying Round.

Hampton fall to opening league defeat

St Albans City 1 – 0 Hampton

Hampton & Richmond Borough finally kicked off their belated 2020/21 National League South season with a frustrating defeat by a goal to nil against St Albans City at Clarence Park in a game played without the presence of spectators.

Former Hampton player Shaun Jeffers started the game well against and created a couple of promising chances in the first half. He forced a save from Alan Julian onto the post and from the subsequent corner kick the ball broke to him, but Julian was once again on hand to deny the Saints striker.

Jake Gray went closest for the visitors in the opening 45 minutes when he drew a save from Michael Johnson with a curling effort.

After the break Gray once again went close for the Beavers after a good passing team move but his shot lacked power and was easily gathered by Johnson.

With the game drifting to a conclusion the Saints struck via Solomon Nwbuokei. A free-kick from a central position from Jeffers forced Julian into parrying the ball and the St Albans reacted quickest to bury the ball into the bottom corner.

St Albans nearly grabbed a second when Mitchel Weiss burst into the penalty area and curled a shot which Julian once again parried and as the ball broke loose Tyrell Miller-Rodney had to clear the ball off the line.

As the clock ticked into the final two minutes things went from bad to worse for Hampton as Miller-Rodney was set off for a lunge on Nwbuokei to compound a disappointing league opener for the Beavers.

UP NEXT FOR HAMPTON

Game 1

Opponent: Dartford (H) Saturday 10th October 15:00 Beveree Stadium

Nickname: The Darts

Competition: National League South

Manager: Steve King

2019/20: National League South (6th)

Interesting fact: Dartford's home ground Princes Park has been described as one of the most ecological ever built with the pitch level is sunk two meters below the external ground level to reduce noise and light pollution, as well as solar panels on the roof serve the community changing areas and public toilets hot water storage cylinders.

Game 2

Opponent: Hornchurch (H) Tuesday 13th October 19:45 Beveree Stadium

Nickname: The Urchins

Competition: FA Cup Third Qualifying Round

Manager: Mark Simson

2019/20: Isthmian League Premier Division (season abandoned)

Interesting fact: The 2003–04 season saw the club reach the first round of the FA Cup for the first time. After beating Third Division Darlington 2–0 in the first round, they lost 1–0 to Tranmere Rovers in the second

Come on you Beavers!

England squad update

England head coach Eddie Jones has named a 28-man squad to convene for a three day training camp at The Lensbury from Tuesday 6 until Thursday 8 October.

Eddie Jones said: "Our preparation to build the team for the Italy game starts now. We have a three day camp this week and another one next week then we're into the week of our Quilter Cup match against the Barbarians. We'll be slowly building up, working on the basics and working on team cohesion.

"We're excited to be back together in camp representing England. This autumn we want to play for the fans and give them something to smile about."

An updated squad will be confirmed ahead of England's next training camp from Thursday 15 to Saturday 17 October.

England have six upcoming fixtures this autumn starting with the uncapped Quilter Cup against the Barbarians (25 October, KO 2pm GMT, live on Sky Sports).

Following a trip to Rome to face Italy (31 Oct, KO 4.45pm GMT, live on ITV) in the final round of the delayed 2020 Guinness Six Nations, England will play four matches as part of the Autumn Nations Cup. Quilter Internationals at Twickenham Stadium against Georgia (14 November, KO 3pm) and Ireland (21 November, KO 3pm), an away match v Wales (28 November, KO 4pm) before returning to Twickenham for a placing match to determine final position in the competition (6 December, KO 2pm). All Autumn Nations Cup games will be live on Amazon Prime.

Backs

Ali Crossdale, Saracens*
Elliot Daly, Saracens
Fraser Dingwall, Northampton Saints*
Nathan Earle, Harlequins*
Owen Farrell, Saracens
George Ford, Leicester Tigers
Piers Francis, Northampton Saints
George Furbank, Northampton Saints
Willi Heinz, Gloucester Rugby
Joe Marchant, Harlequins
Jonny May, Gloucester Rugby
Alex Mitchell, Northampton Saints*
Ollie Thorley, Gloucester Rugby*
Ben Youngs, Leicester Tigers

Forwards

Jack Clement, Gloucester Rugby*
Alex Dombrandt, Harlequins*
Ellis Genge, Leicester Tigers
Jamie George, Saracens
Joe Heyes, Leicester Tigers*
Maro Itoje, Saracens
Simon Kerrod, Harlequins*
Lewis Ludlow, Gloucester Rugby*
Alex Moon, Northampton Saints*
David Ribbans, Northampton Saints*
Jack Singleton, Gloucester Rugby
Billy Vunipola, Saracens
Mako Vunipola, Saracens
Mark Wilson, Newcastle Falcons

* Uncapped players



RFU COMMITTED TO IMPROVING DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION

The RFU has announced its progress and plans to improve Diversity and Inclusion (D&I) in rugby. Following in-depth research, the Union has made a commitment to improving D&I across four key areas of the game:

Fans, Followers and Partners; Game Play – Players, Coaches, Match Officials; Staff and Board and Game Administration – Volunteer leaders within Clubs, Constituent Bodies and Council.

RFU Chair, Andy Cosslett said: “The RFU needs to step up its efforts to improve diversity and inclusion across our game. We are living through testing times, but this will not deter us from grasping the opportunity to better reflect the society we live in.

“We have worked hard to understand our starting point and are now underway with a plan that we are confident will produce big improvements in our diversity and inclusion over the next few years. Rugby Union has always prided itself as being a ‘game for all’...we must now demonstrate beyond any doubt that we mean it.”

Research

The RFU has conducted research with over 4,400 people from the rugby community to understand attitudes and opinions to D&I in rugby and it has undertaken a detailed analysis of sport participation from Sport England Active Lives and YouGov data. The findings will inform areas of focus for D&I action planning in each part of the game. The results included:

- Despite growth of the women’s game and the most diverse England men’s team ever, compared to the overall England adult population, those who participate in rugby union are significantly less likely to be female, of a BAME ethnicity and of the lowest socio-economic group.
- 57% of those involved in the game agree that rugby is representative of the local community it is in, but only 31% agree it is representative of the general population.
- Compared to the overall England adult population, those that consider themselves followers of rugby union are significantly less likely to be female, under 55 years old, of a BAME ethnicity and of the lower C2DE social grade.
- Respondents from every background said they personally experience less discrimination in rugby compared to everyday life. 5% claim to witness discrimination often in rugby versus 11% in everyday life.
- Survey respondents who have been involved in the community game for ten or more years (the vast majority) agreed that they experienced or witnessed significantly less discrimination in rugby last season than when they were first involved in the game.
- Of those who witness discrimination often or sometimes in rugby 25%, the primary characteristics they have seen someone discriminated on were race 54%, sex 31% and sexual orientation 30%.
- Females, those of a BAME ethnicity and those of an LGB sexual orientation have a significantly lower perception that ‘Rugby in England is inclusive for all’ versus their counterpart characteristics.
- Research on Swing Low, Sweet Chariot concluded that 74% of people, rising to 84% of those from a BAME background agreeing that it is important for England Rugby to actively educate fans on the origins of Swing Low while 69% of respondents said the song shouldn’t be banned. The RFU will use the findings of the detailed research to inform action plans for four key areas of the game.

Further updates on the action plans will be announced in the future and interim progress includes:

Staff and Board

The RFU Board has made a new commitment to achieving a Board composition of 30% females and 15% BAME by 1 August 2022 latest. The current board of 14 consists of four female members and by 2022 there will be two BAME members.

The targets have been set to provide real commitment from the top of the game on the desire to improve in areas of diversity and inclusion. The Union is also undertaking research among colleagues to gain insight into what teams look like to better understand the employee profile so that targets can be set to achieve a greater diversity balance.

Game Administration – Volunteer leaders within Clubs, Constituent Bodies and Council

The RFU Diversity and Inclusion Working Group, Chaired by Genevieve Glover has now appointed its members to implement recommendations that were developed by the previous D&I Group to improve diversity and inclusion among volunteer leaders at Club, Constituent Body and Council. The vision of the group is: building an inclusive and sustainable game through skilled and diverse leadership.

In the coming months the Group will be working on ensuring its recommendations are ratified and joined up with the wider RFU plan and reflect the current vision for diversity and inclusion in English rugby.

Speaking about the appointments Genevieve Glover said: “I was thrilled with the high level of applicants for these volunteer roles; we have an impressive, diverse and energetic team committed to effecting real change alongside our RFU colleagues.”

Fans, Followers & Partners

The RFU has stated it will not ban Swing Low, Sweet Chariot as it has a long-held place in rugby history however, the Union will use its social media and event audiences to proactively educate fans on the history and provenance of the song as well as providing platforms for diverse voices across the game.

Ahead of the first England game since lockdown, the RFU will release a short form documentary on the history of Swing Low. Featuring prominent current and former BAME England players as well as Josephine Wright, Professor of Music and Black Studies at The College of Wooster (Ohio), USA. The film will debut on England Rugby channels on 23 October and it will also feature in matchday content when fans are allowed back into stadiums.

The RFU is committed to using its channels to listen, educate and provide a platform for a wide range of diverse voices across the game. Recent examples of this include.

The RFU is also working with all partners to ensure diversity across its content to ensure equal prominence of women and BAME participants; the recent England Umbro kit launch being widely praised evidence of this strategy in action. Recent examples of this include:

[Jimmy Peters story](#)

[Maggie Alphonsi thread \(Twitter\)](#)

[Rugby, race and the women's game part 1](#)

[Rugby race and the women's game part 2](#)

In its marketing and match day presentation the RFU will continue to support the message of Black Lives Matter as well as Rugby Against Racism. The Union is not making or supporting political statements but recognises both messages are powerful in the need to take positive steps forward in diversity and inclusion.

Game Play – Players Coaches, Match Officials

The RFU plans to build on the success of its community rugby programmes which include the All Schools participation programme which is an initiative that started in 2012 as part of the Rugby World Cup 2015 Legacy Programme to increase the number of secondary state schools playing rugby union and to encourage new players to join local clubs. In 2017-18 it found that BAME participation was at 22%. And in addition, over 10,500 students have joined local rugby clubs having been part of the All Schools programme.

Since its inception in 2016, 23,000 women have attended ‘Inner Warrior’ camps, a series of rugby fitness training camps for women, run by clubs across the country designed for fitness and as a great introduction to rugby for those that have never played. This has and will continue to ensure the continued growth in women and girls participating in rugby.

England’s men’s and women’s players and match officials will be consulted and given the choice on how and if they wish to make gestures to help raise awareness for diversity and inclusion before the start of each future game. The RFU will support any player and match official gestures, but equally believes the plans off the England stage are equally important in driving necessary improvement and change.



NPL celebrates Space Week with latest Measurement at Home challenge

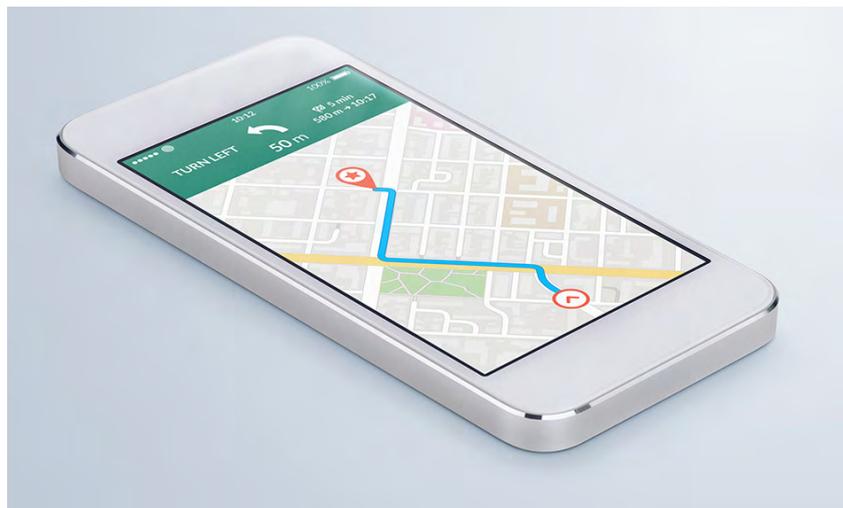
In celebration of Space Week, NPL has created a Measurement at Home challenge based on one of the most useful inventions of the 21st century, the Global Positioning System (GPS).

Signals from satellite, received by devices like smartphones, tell taxis where we are, help locate pets and are key in navigation.

The electromagnetics team at NPL use anechoic chambers to measure power of transmitters, response of receivers and blocking effects of materials. Their measurements include work on the type of radio waves used by GPS. The time waves take to travel from satellites to your device indicates distance, and therefore your location. Your device knows where **all** satellites are at any moment. Signal from one satellite indicates you're somewhere on a circle. Another signal, from a second satellite narrows it down to 2 points. A with 3 satellite signals you can pinpoint your location on the Earth's surface.

Buildings can affect how well this system works as they can absorb the radio waves that bounce in between them. NPL's 'Where on earth am I' experiment aims to investigate the true affects buildings can have on GPS accuracy.

Using a GPS Status app, we're asking participants to record a range of results indoors and outdoors to determine how the GPS accuracy was impacted.



Full details on how to participate and submit results can be found [HERE](#).

In collaboration with the Institute of Physics' Space Week activity, Andrew Hanson, Outreach Manager, Riley Ilieva, Higher Research Scientist and Peter Woolliams, Senior Research Scientist, will be hosting a live session on 10th October to discuss the conclusions from the data submitted by participants.

Andrew Hanson, NPL's Outreach Manager states:

"I hope that through participants' evaluations of measurement repeatability (actually the range of locations recorded for fixed positions inside and outside of buildings) we shall discover how well we can trust GPS location in a variety of environments. From an educational point of view, the task is great in helping people understand the metrological meanings of the words accuracy, precision and resolution."

Investigation into the Bounce Back Loan Scheme

The National Audit Office (NAO) reports that the Bounce Back Loan Scheme succeeded in quickly supporting small businesses, but government faces a potential loss of £15 billion to £26 billion through businesses not being able to repay the loans and fraud.

The Bounce Back Loan Scheme was announced on 27 April 2020 to quickly provide loans of up to £50,000, or a maximum of 25% of annual turnover, to registered and unregistered small businesses to support their financial health during the COVID-19 pandemic.

The Department for Business, Energy & Industrial Strategy (BEIS) and the British Business Bank (the Bank) expect the Scheme to lend £38 billion to £48 billion by 4 November, substantially exceeding the assumed £18 billion to £26 billion when it launched. As of 6 September, HM Treasury data shows that the Scheme has delivered more than 1.2 million loans to businesses, totalling £36.9 billion. Around 90% of the loans have gone to micro businesses¹ with turnover below £632,000. The real estate, professional services and support activities sectors received the largest amount of support – £8.5 billion from 283,000 loans.

The loans are delivered through commercial lenders such as banks and building societies. Government provides lenders a 100% guarantee against the loans under the Scheme. Businesses are expected to repay the debt in full and failure to do so may negatively affect their credit score and ability to borrow in the future. However, if they do not repay in full, government will step-in and repay the lender. The five largest UK lenders have been responsible for 89% of the value of the loans distributed.



The NAO found that lenders approved loans for existing business customers within 24 to 72 hours but approval times for new customers take substantially longer. Two large lenders that offer loans to new customers estimate that these applications may take between four and 12 weeks because of the high volume received and operational constraints relating to the pandemic.

The government imposed less strict eligibility criteria for the Bounce Back Loan Scheme than other COVID-19 related business loan schemes², to improve quick access to finance for smaller businesses. It relies on businesses self-certifying application details with limited verification and no credit checks performed by lenders for existing customers. This lower level of checks presents credit risks as it increases the likelihood that loans are made to businesses which will not be able to repay them, leading to losses of taxpayers' money.

Government also recognises that the decision to provide funds quickly leaves public money exposed to the risk of fraud. A third-party review commissioned by the Bank found that, while

some risks can be mitigated, there remains a “very high” level of fraud risk, caused by self-certification, multiple applications, lack of legitimate business, impersonation and organised crime.

The nature of the Scheme places the responsibility for managing fraud risk on the lenders as part of the loan approval process. To support lenders, the Bank established fraud prevention forums to share best practice and aid implementation of additional fraud measures, including a method to prevent duplicate applications. The Bank, alongside BEIS and lenders, intends to start using the information they collect centrally to provide monthly fraud reports from October 2020 onwards. The Bank is currently unable to estimate the overall level of fraud. The Cabinet Office’s Government Fraud Function believes that fraud losses are likely to be significantly above the 0.5% to 5% which is generally estimated for public sector schemes.

As a result of credit and fraud risks, BEIS and the Bank have made a preliminary estimate that 35% to 60% of borrowers may default on the loans, based on losses observed in previous programmes which are most similar to the Scheme. Assuming the Scheme lends £43 billion, this would imply a potential cost to government of £15 billion to £26 billion, but these estimates are highly uncertain. Over the coming months, the extent of losses due to fraud will become clearer, but the full extent of losses, both credit and fraud, will not emerge until the loans are due to start being repaid from 4 May 2021.

Government provides a 100% guarantee to lenders owing to the absence of credit checks, but this reduces the lenders’ incentives to recover money from borrowers. If a borrower does not repay the loan, lenders are still expected to try to recover the loan, but they can claim on the government’s guarantee within “a reasonable time” or if no further payment likely. Any outstanding debt collected by the lender after the guarantee has been claimed should be paid back to the government.

On 24 September, the government announced the extension of the Scheme as part of the Winter Economy Plan. The Scheme will offer borrowers more time and more flexibility for loan repayments under its ‘Pay as you Grow’ option, though details are yet to be announced.

The NAO calls for government to implement a thorough debt-recovery process with lenders and consider how it might better prevent fraud in any future schemes.

Gareth Davies, the head of the NAO, said:

“With concerns that many small businesses might run out of money as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, government acted decisively to get cash into their hands as quickly as possible.

“Unfortunately, the cost to the taxpayer has the potential to be very high, if the estimated losses turn out to be correct. Government will need to ensure that robust debt collection and fraud investigation arrangements are in place to minimise the impact of these potential losses to the public purse. It should also take this opportunity to consider now the controls it would put in place to protect against the abuse of any future such schemes.”

View the full report [HERE](#)



National Audit Office

Epic SUP

Eel Pie Island Club SUP

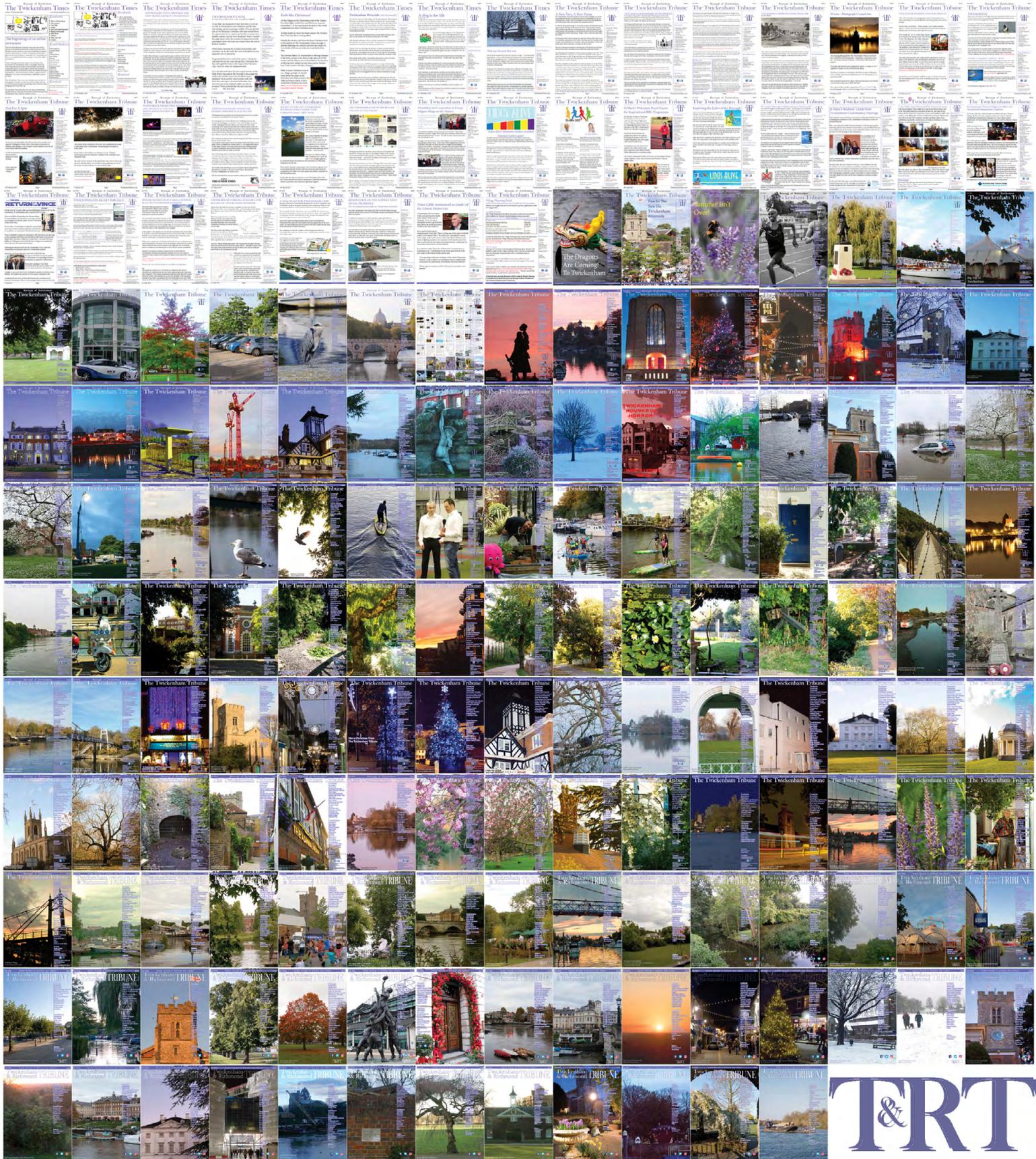


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