

Twickenham & Richmond TRIBUNE

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26th March 2021



TickerTape - News in Brief

Osteria Pulcinella Windows Vandalised

The popular restaurant in Church Street, Twickenham had its windows vandalised on Thursday night. Residents were shocked at the senseless damage, particularly at this difficult time for the hospitality businesses. More info on Twitter [HERE](#)

Teddington named best place to live in London

The annual Sunday Times Best Places to Live guide has named Teddington as the best place to live in London. Found out more [HERE](#)

Santander to close 111 branches

The branches will close by the end of August and includes the Twickenham and Hounslow Bath Road branches

Speeding in Richmond Park

A vehicle was clocked doing 49mph whilst overtaking another vehicle in Richmond Park (20mph speed limit) on Friday evening. They were reported for driving without due care & attention

Level crossing closures and changes to train services from Monday 29 March onwards

Strawberry Hill level crossing will be closed from Monday 29 March until Wednesday 7 April. The level crossing at **North Sheen** will also be closed for the weekend of Friday 2 April, until Monday 5 April.

Between 2 April (Good Friday) and 6 April there will be no trains running between **Mortlake and Whitton** (no services at **Richmond** or **Twickenham**).

Reading and Windsor services will be diverted via Hounslow, and **Whitton** services will run via Hounslow. There will be no trains running between **New Malden and Shepperton**. **Kingston** services will be diverted to **Hampton Court**.

Replacement bus services will be in operation. Please use alternative routes where possible.

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



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TwickerSeal has heard that the council are in the process of changing the lamp posts at Richmond Green. It seems that the council has ignored residents' views that the replacement lamps are not appropriate for the historic Green and are ploughing ahead regardless.

Richmond Council's Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Transport, Streetscene and Air Quality recently described these concerns as "utter tosh", showing a complete disregard for the residents' concerns.

TwickerSeal was worried that the same fate might befall the lighting at Twickenham Green. Luckily, top council officer Avril Furst arranged for TwickerSeal to see a selection of the new lighting being considered by the council.

TwickerDuck was pleased to see that the council was taking residents' concerns seriously and was being diligent in sourcing appropriate replacement lighting.



Borough View By Graeme Stoten

The Landmark Arts Centre.

Once nicknamed 'the cathedral of the Thames Valley' this 19th century former Church of St Alban, designed by architect William S Niven in the French Gothic style, is now a lively and dynamic home to celebrate the Arts. Hosting a multifarious range of concerts, classes, and exhibitions the building is both magnificent and formidable located close to Teddington lock.



Professor Kevin Fenton, London regional director for Public Health England, reflects on the one-year anniversary of the UK's first lockdown

In this year since the first lockdown was announced, we have been presented with challenge after challenge and have all had to adapt in ways we previously wouldn't have thought possible.

London's communities have been hit hard in so many ways. Far too many people have sadly lost their lives, thousands are still being impacted by long COVID and physical and mental health has suffered across all ages of the population like never before.

We've also seen how lockdown affected parts of the city differently, much like COVID-19 itself. Health and social inequalities have been ever present, reminding us all that there is much work to do to put all Londoners on an equal footing.

It has undoubtedly been an extraordinary 12 months, and though at times it might have felt like a loop of lockdowns, we haven't been standing still. We've been learning and adapting. We are now much better at supporting local communities, schools and workplaces to respond to the virus. We now have strong messages on prevention of transmission and a robust testing infrastructure throughout the city. We are now delivering contact tracing and self-isolation support for those diagnosed with infection and have seen significant improvements in our clinical management of the disease. Running in parallel we have of course had the impressive, successful development and rollout of highly effective vaccines.

Learning to understand the virus and its impacts better has enabled us to constantly review and update our responses and measures. We are now engaging regularly with Londoners of all backgrounds, our faith communities, business, creative, hospitality and educational sectors, ensuring that the information and tools needed to control the pandemic are readily available and that all Londoners are supported in playing their part.

In amongst the terrible loss, suffering and uncertainty of the last year, I have been encouraged and motivated by the efforts and resilience of the public, and the incredible dedication shown by everyone working tirelessly across public health, in our local communities, the NHS and local government. In this unprecedented time, organisations across the city have come together and collaborated in truly remarkable ways.

Now we've started on the roadmap out of lockdown with schools and colleges reopening, we remain cautiously optimistic that the data will support ongoing and further easing of restrictions. Until then, we must keep going.

Though our lives might not return to the 'normal' we knew, with collective and continued efforts we can hopefully get back to doing the things we've been missing sooner rather than later.

So, if you've not already had it, when you get the call for the vaccine, please do take it up, and once you have, remember that you'll still need to follow national restrictions and keep going with the basics of prevention. By washing your hands regularly, wearing a face covering and maintaining social distance, you'll know that every action you take is helping to keep London safe, and brings us closer to better days.

Overview From the World Health Organization

"Globally, COVID-19 confirmed cases continued to rise for a fourth consecutive week, with just under 3.3 million new cases reported in the last week. Concurrently, the number of new deaths reported plateaued after a six week decrease, with just over 60 000 new deaths reported. A marked increase in the number of new cases was reported from the South East Asia, Western Pacific, European and Eastern Mediterranean regions, all of which are on an upward trajectory in recent weeks. The European Region and the Region of the Americas continue to account for nearly 80% of all the cases and deaths." 19 – 23 March 2021.

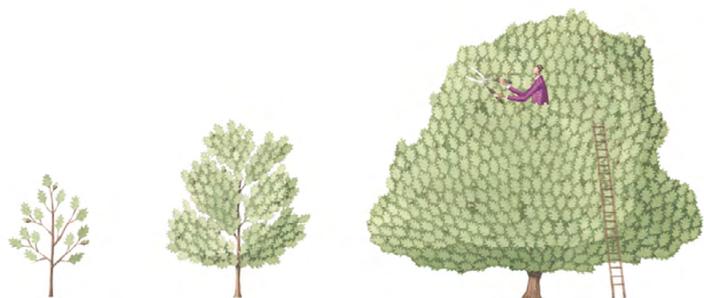
Total cases to 26 March 2021

10,658 Richmond upon Thames
 12,061 Kingston upon Thames
 24,429 Hounslow

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

Deaths Worldwide 2,744,543

USA	540,320	Poland	50,860
Brazil	300,685	Peru	50,656
Mexico	199,627	Indonesia	40,081
India	160,949	Ukraine	31,135
The United Kingdom	126,382	Turkey	30,462
Italy	106,339	Czechia	25,450
Russian Federation	96,612	Belgium	22,786
France	92,608	Canada	22,759
Germany	75,440	Romania	22,579
Spain	74,064	Chile	22,524
Colombia	62,394	Hungary	19,224
Iran	62,142	Portugal	16,805
Argentina	54,946	Ecuador	16,582
South Africa	52,372	Netherlands	16,371



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The Tree Agency

The time traveller of Richmond

By Simon Fowler

Richmond Local History Society receives many enquiries from historians of all kinds. Many find their way to me for answer, with which I'm happy to help.

The weirdest request I have had was an enquiry from a Greek gentleman who asked me to research Dr Robert Pensley, a Victorian time traveller who was supposed to have lived in Richmond.

Unfortunately, time travel is scientifically impossible.

Certainly, on the surface the information my correspondent supplied seemed authentic: a name, a respectable profession and a local address that actually existed.

Published in 1895, H G Wells' *The Time Machine* was one of the first novels to discuss the concept of time travel. It is set in Richmond, which is where the 'time traveller a gentleman scientist and inventor' lives. He gives no name to the traveller nor describes the house.

The area appears in several of H G Wells' other novels, notably *War of the Worlds* and it is the sort of London suburb where Wells liked to set his books.

My enquirer asked whether Dr Robert Pensley had lived in the town in the 1890s. Pensley was supposed to have been a graduate of Cambridge University and given papers to the Philosophical Society. Nobody with that name appeared in the census or in trade directories.



Google, however, revealed that Pensley was the name given to the time traveller in a 1976 novella by Richard Cowper. 'The Hertford Manuscript' purports to be a sequel to the *Time Machine*. Cowper imagines that the Time Traveller as being stranded in London at the time of the Great Plague. His book contains much atmospheric detail about how a gentleman inventor of the 1890s might have lived.

I can imagine that a reader might well be fooled by the story.

My correspondent asked me to look at 12 Petersham Road where he thought the time traveller had lived. The trade directory said it was a bicycle shop.

Of course, at the time, a cycle shop owner might have been an ideal person to make a time machine as he would have had the mechanical skills useful in making and maintaining it. It is little surprise that many of the pioneers in the embryonic British car and aviation industries, of the 1890s started in the cycle trade.

Although, of course, a time machine would have been a great deal more complicated than anything that could be knocked up in a bike shop.

I eventually replied to my enquirer politely suggesting that the whole idea was preposterous.

But, if, just if, the science was wrong? The online British Newspaper Archive, for example, comes up with lots of entries for 'time travel' and 'time traveller.'

It is kind of spooky!

Sage

By Kas Rasenberg

The volunteers of Marble Hill Park have been planting a variety of herbs near the entrance to the old Coach House. Lavender and catmint may thus bloom here in the summer, when the cafe will long have opened and the broad beans harvested from the kitchen garden may be sold. Another variety that has been planted by the volunteers is the common sage, or the *salvia officinalis*. This latter variety is a woody herb that may be planted after the last frost.



Leaves of *Salvia officinalis*



Volunteers planting up the soon to open café beds at Marble Hill Park

The common garden sage is native to the Mediterranean region. It belongs to the Lamiaceae family, to which we also owe varieties such as the knotted marjoram and the English winter thyme. The herb has bluish flowers, which are visited by a large array of Lepidoptera. Its oval leaves are rough and may appear to be wrinkled in the sun.

The dried leaves of sage have been known to many of the ancient writers. Both Theophrastus and Pliny the Elder have written about the medicinal properties of the herb. In the Jacobean period, or so I read, it was assumed that leaves of sage could aid our memory. We may now support it with a large array of technical materials, but, at some point in our history, a memory would have been all that you had.

Many monks have named the herb one of salvation. It has also been associated with the alleviation of grief. Samuel Pepys, or the English politician whose diary is one of the more renowned records of the Restoration, described a little churchyard passed by on his journey from Gosport to Southampton. The graves, or so he reported, had been strewed with the leaves of the humble sage.

Some women are said to have brought their herbs to a sermon. The strong smell of sage would have prevented them from falling asleep in church. Its dried leaves may also have been stored in the closets of their cottages. Here it would have acted as a repellent against moths.

The leaves of sage may soon be used in the Coach House Cafe. Its doors will be opening in the coming weeks. Perhaps it is here, then, that a new aspect of the park may be experienced. A small taste of what has been growing on the grounds of Marble Hill Park.

Richmond Green - Conserving Our Heritage?

Teresa Read

This week's Tribune News item (22 March) on social media "*the Imminent removal of very fine, elegantly proportioned, late-1950s cast-iron lamp-columns from Richmond Green*" met with a two word dismissal on Twitter from Cllr Ehmann, Deputy Leader and Chair of the Transport and Air Quality Services Committee. Read the article [HERE](#)

It should be remembered that the style of the lamp-posts on Richmond Green and Little Green was an issue extremely important to the community in the past leading to the formation of the Richmond Society.

Unfortunately, Cllr Ehmann called the excellent Tribune News item, by a highly regarded architect, "utter tosh". Cllr Ehmann also copied a diagram of the new lamp-posts into his Twitter post. However, it was not possible to see from the representation that the replacement lamp-posts are much taller than the present ones and may result in light pollution in residents' homes.

It is understood that a formal Council consultation with residents was not arranged but local residents who wrote to the Council voicing concerns were invited to a zoom meeting. However, this was of no avail as the Council has not deviated from their original plans but it is also understood that residents suffering from light pollution could make a request for the installation of "light shields" - to be assessed by the Council.

As the Council had planned, the works on The Green commenced on the morning of the 24th March, despite the very informative article and request in the Tribune's [social media] News item by Paul Velluet:

"It is hoped that even at this 'eleventh-hour' Richmond-upon-Thames Council might be persuaded to defer the removal of the 'Revo' columns and adopt instead a sound and more cost-effective, conservation-based approach to upgrading of the lighting on The Green."

- dismissed by Cllr Ehmann on Twitter as "utter tosh".

Paul Velluet, M.Litt.; RIBA, IHBC, Chartered Architect, who has a distinguished career and is very well known in the Borough, took the opportunity to visit Richmond Green once work was in progress and observed:

"Contrary to the suggestion that the columns were in a poor condition, the below-ground cast-iron bases (as seen in photos) appeared to be in remarkably good condition despite having been installed back in 1959."

In his article for the Tribune published as a News item Paul Velluet reminded us of the importance of Richmond Green, described by Sir Nikolaus Pevsner, the famous architectural historian (The Buildings of England), as 'one of the most beautiful urban greens surviving anywhere in the country'.

Surely the replacement of the lamp-posts on historic Richmond Green should have been subject to a full public consultation and a more considered approach made towards upgrading?



Photos by Paul Velluet

COVID-19

Avoid places where the three Cs come together
Crowds, Closed spaces, Close contact

Follow strict personal hygiene advice, wear a mask
and keep indoor areas well ventilated

DO IT ALL

www.twickenhamtribune.com

STEP 1 8 March

29 March

EDUCATION

8 MARCH

- Schools and colleges open for all students
- Practical Higher Education courses

SOCIAL CONTACT

8 MARCH

- Exercise and recreation outdoors with household or one other person
- Household only indoors

29 MARCH

- Rule of 6 or two households outdoors
- Household only indoors

BUSINESS & ACTIVITIES

8 MARCH

- Wraparound care, including sport, for all children

29 MARCH

- Organised outdoor sport (children and adults)
- Outdoor sport and leisure facilities
- All outdoor children's activities
- Outdoor parent & child group (max 15 people, excluding under 5s)

TRAVEL

8 MARCH

- Stay at home
- No holidays

29 MARCH

- Minimise travel
- No holidays

EVENTS

- Funerals (30)
- Weddings and wakes (6)

STEP 2 No earlier than 12 April

At least 5 weeks after Step 1

EDUCATION

- As previous step

SOCIAL CONTACT

- Rule of 6 or two households outdoors
- Household only indoors

BUSINESS & ACTIVITIES

- All retail
- Personal care
- Libraries & community centres
- Most outdoor attractions
- Indoor leisure inc. gyms (individual use only)
- Self-contained accommodation
- All children's activities
- Outdoor hospitality
- Indoor parent & child groups (max 15 people, excluding under 5s)

TRAVEL

- Domestic overnight stays (household only)
- No international holidays

EVENTS

- Funerals (30)
- Weddings, wakes, receptions (15)
- Event pilots

Teddington residents have launched a campaign to SAVE the NORTH LANE CAR PARK, SAVE ELLERAY HALL AND STOP OVER DEVELOPMENT

By Roger Hackett

In spite of strong local opposition, the council is proposing to close the small North Lane (East) car park opposite the large Council car park in North Lane, and build a new Elleray Hall on it. If new Residents Only controlled parking in adjacent roads is put in place, the NL(E) Car park needs to be kept to relieve congestion, support local shops, provide an electric car charging station, and car club space. Also ten local residents and businesses currently have permits allowing use of parking spaces in the NL(E) car park, and they need to be retained, or comparable spaces provided elsewhere. The Council has failed to disclose exact details of all its parking plans, but when it does, it is hoped that a full and open public debate will take place before any decisions are made.



The cost to local residents of the proposed new Elleray Hall has already risen from £2m to £3m in less than a year and is likely to go much higher. The proposed new community centre design should be adequate for present needs, but it does not have much in the way of the spare capacity that will be needed in the local area for new skills training to compensate for likely job losses arising from implementation of new BREXIT and COVID 19 rules, and the various business closures that are currently occurring. As far as Affordable Housing is concerned, there are other more suitable and cheaper sites in and around Teddington.

Instead of being built on the small NL(E) car park, an upgraded Elleray Hall would better if rebuilt on its existing site in Elleray Road, creating an imposing new public building for central Teddington, in the full knowledge that it has capacity for all current needs, and more than adequate space for upgrading and expansion to meet future technology needs. In addition, public access is much safer, with few vehicle movements and none of the air pollution caused by cars entering the main North Lane car park.

Help Save the North Lane (E) car park, Elleray Hall, and Stop Over Development BY COMPLETING THE ON-LINE PETITION AT <https://www.change.org/saveourcarpark>

Dear Sir,

To the Editor, Twickenham & Richmond Tribune

Twickenham Riverside Consultation Jan/Feb 2021

The author of last week’s letter ‘Twickenham Riverside’ deserves applause for casting a critical eye over the Council’s consultation results and highlighting the tip of an iceberg. But first a brief word about squabbling that might endanger the long, long-awaited strengthening of Twickenham’s economy and its local businesses and revitalising this unique and treasured site along the Thames.

The need to give a boost to Twickenham has grown after decades of neglect and unsuccessful initiatives for this site. The current project is part of the plan that was kicked off by Richmond Council to regenerate Twickenham and enhance this unique riverside setting – and that plan was nearly eight years ago. In our letter to the Twickenham Tribune on 5th March we asked everyone to stay clear of making political capital out of this situation, because we are getting closer - but not yet close enough - to achieving the full, long-overdue benefits for Twickenham and all who live and work here.

Turning back to the point which is especially relevant today, the consultation held by Richmond Council had almost as many deficiencies as the Council’s proposals for Twickenham Riverside - and this is very worrying. This consultation was frankly a pretty worthless exercise:

- Consulting on incomplete proposals and designs, instead of the full consultation that was promised last November by the Director of Environment and Community Services,
- Mists and fog surrounding what was being proposed and the benefits of the proposals,
- Neglecting to actively seek feedback on the traffic proposals, parking and other vital questions,
- Predictably ambiguous and contradictory findings arising from the format of the questionnaire,
- Lack of a fundamental understanding of what the consultation was about
- And many errors in the analysis which resulted.

On 2 March 2021 Cllr Roberts stated publicly that the consultation team are “professional in their field”. However, the conduct of this consultation did not conform to the principles of good practice for public consultations - and it shows.

We were told (LBRuT press release, 18 March 2021) that the consultation results ‘will be used to inform design development as the Council and Design Team work towards a submission of a Planning Application’. However, the consultation process was not fit for purpose in the first place. Continuing down the path of producing further unsustainable designs for this very special spot on the Thames in Twickenham is entirely fruitless and it is not in the public interest.

We repeat our call for Richmond Council to pause in this senseless dash towards a premature planning application, prepare proposals that will deliver what they said they will deliver and table new plans and designs – in full - for public scrutiny and consultation. And pause now, before preparing any Planning Application.

We are still watching this space.

Yours sincerely

The Twickenham Coalition – ‘Love our town’

(Address supplied)

Dear Sir,

Fly-tipping

Over the past year, like so many of us, I've discovered more of our local parks and green spaces and come to love and appreciate them on my daily exercise.

Unfortunately, places like Ham Common Woods and the woods next to Meadlands Drive are just two examples of green spaces that are all too often blighted by fly-tipping.

Fly-tipping isn't just an eyesore. Discarded material and chemicals are a danger to us and our children playing there, as well as being harmful to the plants and wildlife.

Every borough seems to have its own plan to deal with this but there seems very little cooperation across boroughs. Fly-tippers have no respect for boundaries and rubbish from Kingston may end up here in Richmond and waste from here may end up being dumped in Kingston.

In 2019-20, London had by far the most instances of fly tipping across the whole of England, while in August 2020, Green Party AM Caroline Russell revealed that instances of fly tipping in London went up nearly 400 per cent under the first lockdown.

This is why I support Sian Berry's proposal for a new [Habitat Crime Unit in the Metropolitan Police](#). This unit would coordinate work across London and deal with the organised fly-tippers ruining our favourite places.

It's this kind of innovative and joined up thinking that Londoners will get if they elect Sian as the first ever Green Mayor of London in May.

Kind regards,

Andrée Frieze

Green Party Candidate South West London Assembly Constituency



Dear Sir,

Twickenham Riverside: The Council is Delivering what most Residents Wanted

A 'promotion feature' by the 'Twickenham Coalition' appeared in last week's Twickenham and Richmond Tribune making claims about the Riverside proposals that simply do not stand up to scrutiny (however boldly presented). One wonders whether this is about a improving our town centre and riverside – or more about a desperate attempt by a small group of malcontents to drag the Riverside (that most convenient of targets) back into a political scrap to the detriment of all our residents.

The Twickenham Coalition claim to represent a 'growing number of residents and community groups'? So who are they, and why are they so shy? It appears that one needs to email them to find out. If the so-called Twickenham Coalition are sincere about improving our Riverside, then where were they when the Council asked for community stakeholder representation over two years ago?

Eleven stakeholder groups representing a wide range of community interests met in York House for the first time in December 2018, and have been engaged with the development process since then. The Twickenham Riverside Park Team (TRPT) are one of those stakeholder groups. Our objectives are clearly stated on our petition website <https://www.change.org/p/a-town-square-and-riverside-park-for-twickenham> launched over three years ago and supported by nearly 3,000 people – the majority of whom are Twickenham residents.

We need to move away from the 40-year destructive cycle that is being perpetuated by the so-called Twickenham Coalition. The claims they make against the current scheme that has evolved since the appointment of Hopkins Architects simply do not stack up. We believe that the Architects and the Council have delivered on the primary issues:

- An integrated 'whole site' solution including the current poorly developed gardens to maximise the benefits of this magnificent location;
- The removal of vehicles and parking from the riverside west of the pedestrian bridge to create a fully pedestrianised and cycling area;
- The creation of a large beautifully landscaped public space at the heart of the site, including an open accessible terraced garden with more trees, areas of natural lawn, a large children's play area, a large café overlooking the gardens and play area, a hard landscaped events area with tiered seating providing for a range of uses (from markets to outdoor cinemas, and then some); this more than meets our requirement for a 'riverside park and town square';
- Elegant, light, flexible, sustainable buildings that reflect our riverside heritage, and of a massing and scale that befits this space and location.

We respond to the 'three issues' raised by the Twickenham Coalition as follows:

- The Wharf Lane Building is not monolithic; it is segmented into four connected volumes of different sizes that reduce in height towards the central open space. The tallest of these four volumes on the west side is 4 storeys (roof spaces are not counted as a 'storey');
- The current full area of the Diamond Jubilee Gardens has to be retained in the new scheme; this has been done; there is no reduction due to building 'encroachment';
- We are fortunate in that the public space at the heart of the site enjoys a southerly aspect, further enhanced by a south facing slope for the gardens; Shadows will obviously be cast by the Wharf Lane

Building in the afternoon – but due to stepping down the lower volumes on the eastern side, the impact will be reduced (this was shown by Chris Bannister of Hopkins at the public consultation presentation); in any event, later afternoon shading in this area may be very welcome, especially in the summer months;

- The focal point for the site will be the new large central open public space comprising the beautiful gardens and numerous activity spaces (as requested by residents), together with the multi-functional events area which works very well as a ‘town square’; the focal point is not the south-west corner space, allocated mainly for riverside activities – important as this secondary public space will be;
- The new site will be far more accessible for all than the current site is; this is clearly shown on the ‘accessibility’ plan and explained by Chris Bannister at the public consultation presentation; there is no need to access the ‘amphitheatre’ or gardens above by the steps provided, as a ramp is provided.

Richmond Council are delivering what the majority of Twickenham residents have requested, working with one of the best architects and consultants in the UK to bring about a truly visionary scheme. The process is far more transparent than has ever been the case previously, even given the obstacles generated by the pandemic. There has been more scrutiny than ever before with the resident stakeholder groups playing a pivotal role. It would appear that the Twickenham Coalition chose not to take part.

Yours sincerely,

The Twickenham Riverside Park Team

Dear Editor,

Vaccine Passports

Why all the fuss over Vaccine Passports?

From the ages of 5 to 25 my RAF pilot father was stationed in Africa, Aden and Singapore. We had to travel everywhere with a little blue envelope marked Royal Air Force Inoculation, in which were papers proving we’d had Tetanus, TABT, Yellow Fever, Polio, Typhoid (para A+B), Cholera and Malaria.

Without that, the RAF would not have permitted us to go.

Then, in 2001, I got an excellent ‘Health Passport’ from British Airways where you can see Oral Polio, Diphtheria and Tetanus - both effective until 2011 + Malaria, Hepatitis & Typhoid.

Also inside the passport is all the current information about which countries had specific requirements.

So why would anyone consider this a problem - if it allows us all to go travelling again, what’s not to like???

But don’t expect us all to have an App or a Smart Phone!

Sue Weaver, Sheen.

30.6 million Brits currently at risk of digital exclusion due to a drop in cash use

At least 30.6 million Brits could be at risk of being left vulnerable in society due to an inability to use digital payment methods amidst a significant drop in cash use, new data reveals.

[Global Payment Trends](#) collates official data from payment reports and demographic statistics to reveal the potential societal repercussions of digital exclusivity, whereby coins, banknotes and cheques are replaced by eWallets, credit transfers and debit cards.

Analysis has revealed that if this reduced access to cash continues, 30.6 vulnerable Brits would suffer due to their dependence on physical payment methods - including the 17.032 million people identified by Mind as struggling with their mental health on a daily basis.

Also at risk in the UK are the 280,000 Brits that are estimated to be homeless, the 11.9 million residents aged 65 and over that may struggle to adapt to digital services due to a generational divide, and the 1.3 million people that are currently unbanked.



Data reveals that cash use fell by 71% across the UK based on eCommerce transactions, while digital/mobile wallets are now the top online checkout method. This noticeable decline in cash use appears to have been accelerated during the pandemic given the closure of brick-and-mortar stores.

This paired with the World Health Organization's earlier concerns that the virus could be transmitted via banknotes could leave millions of people without vital access to cash.

Vulnerable members of UK society

Homeless	Aged 65+	Unbanked	Mentally Ill
280,000	11,989,322	1,300,000	17,032,285

According to Mind, more than half of the 12 million people currently living with severe mental health problems in the UK have difficulties carrying out essential admin tasks via the phone, while more than one in five people with mental issues struggle to deal with crucial services.

It's never been more important for government bodies to ensure adequate provisions are in place to support vulnerable members of society - especially given that the incidence of poor mental health across the UK is suspected to have increased during the pandemic.

Helen Undy, Chief Executive of the Money and Mental Health Institute, said: *"When you're struggling with your mental health it can be much harder to stay in work or manage your spending, while being in debt can cause huge stress and anxiety – so the two issues feed off each other, creating a vicious cycle which can destroy lives.*

"Ensuring that money advice is routinely offered to people using mental health services would increase recovery rates, as well as improving the financial wellbeing of the millions of people currently dealing with this terrifying combination of problems."

Research gathered from a range of sources, including the World Health Organisation, Mind, WorldPay Global Payment Trends, Shelter and the Office for National Statistics. The UK population figure used is 68,129,139

Dear Editor

Twickenham Riverside Development - Access for all

The Twickenham Riverside Gardens and Embankment are a valuable retreat for many, particularly for the less able who do not have a blue badge and any scheme should recognise this. With the current proposal access to the riverside will be lost. A partner or carer would have to drop the passenger off on the end of Water Lane, go back up Water Lane, turn left into King Street, turn right onto Copthall Gardens and continue on past Richard Reynolds school, loop round via Station Road, then exit on London Road to park in Aragon Road or Holly Road car park, then walk back to the riverside. Less able visitors will only come once, discouraged by being directed to a car park and realising how far they have to go. Welcome to the new world in Twickenham where if you are less able and can't use public transport you are excluded. The riverside development scheme should recognise that the Twickenham riverside and gardens must remain accessible to all. There is a better solution to improve this wonderful retreat.

It is no surprise that the council have said that they only sent details of the scheme consultations to 4000 homes in Twickenham CPZ and targeted residents via social media and the Richmond and Twickenham Tribune and their on-line facility. Up to 90000 residents have not have been informed as a result. The results of the consultation are clearly skewed towards digital users and as such this does not meet expected council equality standards. By comparison every home in the borough receives publicity material for London Assembly nominations. No mention of the Twickenham Riverside development scheme here as the council clearly don't wish to engage all of the electorate. They want to go to planning with a host of unsolved problems answered by "we are looking at them" but using online Covid 19 public consultation restrictions to restrict public awareness. For a scheme of this importance, we should at least have a proper public consultation in open forum when Covid restrictions have eased and before going to planning. What's the rush? is it a political timetable? The right scheme is more important than that. Twickenham Riverside and Gardens must remain accessible for all.

Yours sincerely,

Name and address supplied (Whitton)

Dear Editors,

Excluding the elderly

A recent flyer through my letterbox from our LibDem MP says that she is "standing up for the excluded". Maybe she could turn her attention to what is happening on her own doorstep. Her own LibDem Council are excluding the elderly and those without computers in their consultations, the consultation on the Twickenham Riverside plans being one example. Another is the plan to remove the ability to use cash in Pay and Display parking meters. Sadly the cohort of "excluded" is growing week by week in our Borough and it needs to stop.

A Twickenham Pensioner
Name and address supplied

Book Review

Meadows, Mansions and Munitions: Stories and Lives of Cambridge Park

Written and Compiled by Jonathan Crofts

Bringing together existing and new research, this is the story of the people, architecture and development of Cambridge House and Park in East Twickenham by Richmond Bridge on the Thames

Foreword by Sir Vincent Cable

Jonathan Crofts' book *Meadows, Mansions and Munitions* is a relatively slim volume, at just under 200 pages of text. However, this hides a wealth of scholarship. Following an opening chapter of paintings and drawings of 18th and 19th century East Twickenham, it goes on in approximate chronological order.



*An engraving by John Landseer of Twickenham Meadows, later known as Cambridge House, 1803. Richmond Bridge is to the right.
(By permission of Richmond upon Thames Borough Art Collection, Orleans House Gallery)*

The first half of the book covers some of the notable aristocrats and other interesting characters who frequented Cambridge Park between 1600 and the 1850s, most notably Richard and George Owen Cambridge. Of course, both Pope and Horace Walpole get a look in too. Subsequent chapters on the Pelabon factory (the Munitions of the title) and the Richmond Ice Rink cover relatively familiar ground. Somewhat more mundane (but equally interesting) aspects follow – cinemas and public transport, for example.

There is an excellent index, a great boon for those who wish to find particular topics. The book is lavishly illustrated, with maps and comment from many contemporary sources. It adds greatly to the already considerable wealth of information available on the local history of the Borough of Richmond.

Reviewed by members of the Richmond Environmental Information Centre

Richmond Bridge Media

Published 8 March

ISBN 978-1-8382510-0-0

RRP £17

You can purchase the book online at <https://richmondbridgemedi.bigcartel.com/>

Dear Sir

Residents' campaign for public loos

Readers of the Twickenham & Richmond Tribune will be pleased to read in Edition 228 (Friday 19 March 2021) that “the council has backed down and is finally going to provide toilets for Twickenham and Richmond Green! (Albeit temporary ones)”.

It is inaccurate to say that “none of the local amenity groups were supportive”, however. This unattributed statement is wrong.

The Richmond Society, a civic and amenity group of 1,270 members, has long campaigned for provision of public lavatories. Our campaign became more urgent after the anti-social behaviour witnessed last year when people desperate for relief resorted to urination and defecation on public and private property, including doorsteps and gardens.

At the height of a spate of this behaviour last year we urged the Leader of Richmond Council, Cllr Gareth Roberts, to provide public lavatories. He said there is no requirement on the part of the Council to provide public toilets and it could be argued that in providing toilets in public places such as the Riverside and the Green “we are, in effect, encouraging gathering and drinking”. Providing toilets was costly and reopening those which were long closed would cost thousands and that expenditure could not be afforded, he said. Hiring in toilets came at a financial cost along with a residential amenity cost.

We continued our campaign nonetheless (see <https://www.richmondsociety.org.uk/society-to-council-open-public-loos-now-to-prevent-anti-social-behaviour/> in February this year) and we have been working over many months with other amenity organisations and groups of residents as well as the three South Richmond Ward councillors to try to persuade the Council to change its mind. Further details were published in our latest quarterly Newsletter in February - Public loos: Richmond can do better (<https://www.richmondsociety.org.uk/docs/newsletters/Newsletter265.pdf>) and in our latest monthly Bulletin (<https://us4.campaign-archive.com/?u=131a41e6ad42dd4791ae6a399&id=a1029d66f4>).

So you can see that The Richmond Society has been very active in campaigning for the Council to do something. We are glad that it has now changed its mind. The temporary solution it has proposed should help in the short term, and we are grateful for that. What is needed, however, is a permanent solution to this perennial public health problem, and we hope the Council will also address that.

Kind regards,

Barry May
Chairman, The Richmond Society

The need for toilets on Twickenham Green; TwickerSeal's comments

This week the Tribune received thanks from local residents in the Twickenham Green/ Strawberry Hill area for the campaign to provide toilets on the Green; as reported last week the London Borough of Richmond upon Thames has decided to install temporary toilets on the Green this year.

Welcoming temporary toilets on Richmond and Twickenham Greens Cllr Pamela Fleming told the Tribune that she thought some kind of social distancing would go on for quite a while and that we would need permanent toilet provision. Of course, Arthur's Restaurant used to be a public toilet and there was obviously a need for this facility - and now public toilets are needed more than ever on the Green.

For those of us living around Twickenham Green in Strawberry Hill/South Twickenham and West Twickenham we have found ourselves for two years, a year before Covid, suffering from the toilet needs of visitors to Twickenham Green - especially as plenty of alcohol is sold around the area of the Green. Unfortunately, private property is used, with urination in full view of local residents. Residents objecting to the anti-social behaviour (ASB) have met with threatening and abusive behaviour. It is also sad to note that walls of a local church have not escaped desecration and girls have been seen squatting on the pavements.



The comment by TwickerSeal (who was on Twickenham Green) did not make it clear that the reference to local amenity groups was to Twickenham Green and Strawberry Hill. Thus, we published a letter from the Chair of the Richmond Society which supports residents on the Richmond side of the river in the need for public toilets.

One local resident who has responded to the problem is Cllr Geoffrey Samuel who called a Special meeting at the Council to ask for toilets on Twickenham Green; this was voted against by the current administration. However, it is good to know that in the third year of asking the Council is now taking some action. William Stewart, also deserves credit and the community's thanks for his repeatedly urging the Council through the Tribune's Letter pages to place temporary public toilet facilities on Twickenham Green.

TEMPORARY TOILETS IN RICHMOND AND TWICKENHAM ARE A VICTORY FOR COMMONSENSE, COMMUNITY GROUPS AND CONSERVATIVE COUNCILLORS

Last Spring when lockdown restrictions were relaxed Conservative Councillors warned LibDem Council Leader Gareth Roberts that social distancing and Government guidelines would make it impossible for businesses to continue participating in the Community Toilet Scheme and temporary toilets were essential once people were allowed to meet in groups outside. Instead of listening he obstinately continued to peddle the scheme offering businesses a £350 quarterly payment. Far from taking up this paltry offer existing Richmond businesses pulled out of the scheme because it was unmanageable. Residents' complaints about public urination and defecation failed to move him and eventually Conservative Councillors secured a special Council debate only to be rebutted once again and told by Cllr Roberts that temporary toilets would encourage anti-social behaviour.

Cllr Pamela Fleming Joint Deputy Leader of the Conservative Group said "We've spent best part of a year campaigning for toilet provision and it's a relief that finally the penny has dropped and the Council has agreed to provide temporary toilets in Richmond and Twickenham. This is a time when we need to encourage visitors and without this facility people that require regular access to toilets for health reasons and pregnant or menstruating women will be reluctant to come to Richmond and Twickenham."

"Although we welcome this change of heart, it is not the long term solution and if Cllr Roberts hadn't been so determined to prop up the Community Toilet Scheme last year and had begun the review into permanent toilet provision this costly stop gap may not have been needed. The battle is not over and we must now turn to ensuring he keeps his word about Community Groups and Ward Councillors contributing to this review and that he is serious about providing the borough with new modern public toilets"



Easter Bank Holiday waste and recycling collection one day later

Following the Easter Bank Holidays on Friday 2 April and Monday 5 April 2021, Richmond Council will carry out general rubbish, food waste, garden waste and recycling collections for domestic properties one day later than usual, for one week.

For example, Friday collections will take place on Saturday, and Monday collections on Tuesday.

Over the Easter period:

- There will be no change for those receiving commercial waste and recycling collection services
- There will be no collections for bulky waste available on Friday 2 April or Monday 5 April 2021

Normal domestic collection schedules for general rubbish, food waste and recycling will resume a week later on Monday 12 April 2021.



Residents are asked to ensure their recycling and refuse is available for collection by 6am on collection day at the boundary of their property beside the entrance, i.e. where their front garden or drive meets the pavement.

To reduce issues with street litter and trip hazards, only households without front gardens, drives or equivalent are permitted to present recycling and refuse on the pavement and should only do this after 8pm on the day before collection.

The Council is also encouraging residents to be mindful of excessive packaging from Easter egg boxes and to dispose of packaging correctly via household recycling collections.

Similarly, residents are being asked to avoid doing any major clear-outs during this time and are reminded that charity shops are currently closed. Leaving unwanted items outside charity shops will be classified as a fly-tip and residents may be fined for doing so.

Residents are reminded that Townmead Road Household Waste and Recycling Centre will be open over the Bank Holiday, but pre-booking is essential. Residents can [book a slot](#) to bring household waste to Townmead Road for free.

You can [confirm your revised collection day](#). For any further enquiries please call 020 8891 1411.

Normal collection day	Revised collection day	Normal collection day	Revised collection day
Friday 2 April	Saturday 3 April	Tuesday 6 April	Wednesday 7 April
Saturday 3 April	No collection	Wednesday 7 April	Thursday 8 April
Sunday 4 April	No collection	Thursday 8 April	Friday 9 April
Monday 5 April	Tuesday 6 April	Friday 9 April	Saturday 10 April

Dear Sir,

Anti Ageing Richmond

Last week's Tribune letter by a 'Twickenham Pensioner' about Richmond Council being 'Anti-Ageing' is extremely apt. But it is not only pensioners who have to rely on their cars because our public transport is so appalling.

Richmond Council is now removing parking machines because increasing fraud and hygiene concerns are leading to declining use. But these reasons should not preclude the design of a modern, efficient, contactless machine.

They will be replaced by the wonderful RingGo parking system.

But both the present parking machines and RingGo are completely unreliable.

I have tried many times to use my Richmond card with the parking machines but the machines are extremely sluggish and my Richmond card turned out to be faulty and had to be replaced.

To go to Richmond, Kingston or London, I used to drive to Strawberry Hill station and park in Wellesley Road beside the playing fields and golf course where there was always plenty of space, and then take the train as recommended by our environmentally enthusiastic Council.

But Richmond Council then made this a paid parking zone (maximum stay of two hours).

Apparently this was at the request of the residents but I have been informed that only a minority were in favour of the scheme so it seems to have been approved by the Council in the same way that the ULEZ and 20 mph speed limits were, namely, by asking a small minority. In any case, practically all the houses in that area have their own off-road parking so it is yet another scheme by the council to squeeze even more money out of residents.

There is no public transport near Strawberry Hill station. I did once try a bus but it involved a long walk at night in the snow and icy rain to the bus stop. The bus then failed to stop at my local bus stop and actually dropped me off at the Apex Corner roundabout in the road and I had to climb over the railing to get onto the footway to avoid being hit by the traffic. The bus company apologised and disciplined the driver but it has rather put me off buses.

The last time I tried to park in Wellesley Road, I telephoned the RingGo system (with which I had previously registered) from my non-smart phone but it would not recognise my two credit cards. The information signs regarding the parking zone numbers were totally confusing so it was impossible to tell which zone I was in.

It took three phone calls to pay for the parking and, in doing so, I missed my train in spite of arriving 20 minutes early. That was more than 20 minutes completely wasted plus another 30 minutes waiting for an unreliable train which was late.

So I now drive everywhere – on our appalling roads.

And, as 'Twickenham Pensioner' rightly said, not everyone has a smart phone. No doubt all our councillors have one so that they can have more meetings to get more revenue from even more unnecessary parking zones but why should anyone else be forced to buy such an expensive item? Why should you have to pay in order to pay?

The present parking machines are absolutely awful. Too many buttons, tiny print on the instructions, and a display which is unreadable in sunlight, make them absolute torture to use.

They are similar to the train ticket machines installed when Richmond station was renovated which are totally inefficient and puzzling. I always compare such things to Japan and I can assure everyone that the Japanese system of ticket purchase in every station is fantastic because you can buy a ticket in five seconds. Tōkyō's Shinjuku station's 3.5 million passengers each day prove it!

Richmond's parking systems are yet more examples of arrogant officialdom not caring at all about the people who have to use their so-called services.

And pay through the nose for them.

Yours sincerely,

Michael Jay, Hampton

Free Sunflower Seeds are a bright way to raise money for charity at Squire's

Many charities have found it a challenge to raise money during the pandemic, so Squire's Garden Centres has come up with a bright idea to raise money for charity and cheer people up at the same time. They are offering children a free pack of sunflower seeds in April in return for a donation to the local charities that they support.

Collect a FREE pack of sunflower seeds at Squire's from 1st April & donate to charity

Pick up a free pack of sunflower seeds and a growing guide from Squire's Garden Centres Information Desk (excludes Chertsey) from 1-30 April. One pack of sunflower seeds per household, under 16s only, while stocks last.



A donation to Squire's local charity is invited, simply pop some cash into the collection box. Your donation will go directly to the local charity (see list below), plus an additional 30p from each pack of seeds will go to BBC Children in Need, who support children and young people in communities right across the UK.

Plant seeds at home

Follow the growing guide which contains expert tips to ensure that your sunflowers reach for the sky! With many seeds in each pack your garden could soon be transformed into a swath of bright yellow cheery sunflowers, which your child can grow and nurture.

Enter the competition in August to win £100!

Take a photo of your child next to their tallest sunflower between 1-20 August 2021. Ensure you include a measuring tape that clearly shows the sunflowers height. Email your photo to competitions@squiresgardencentres.co.uk or post it on Squire's Facebook or Instagram page. Full details can be found on the [growing guide](#) or at www.squiresgardencentres.co.uk. The winner will be announced by 27 August and will receive a £100 gift voucher to spend at Squire's! There are also 2 Runners Up prizes of a £50 gift voucher to spend at Squire's.

Squires Twickenham is raising money for **Integrated Neurological Services**



THE TEDDINGTON SOCIETY



ART COMPETITION

For children in Teddington

WHAT: "MY HOME IN TEDDINGTON"

**A painting or drawing of the outside
of a house or flat**

**Any medium: paint, crayon, pencil, ink, collage.
Any size up to A4 297mm x 210mm**

WHEN:

The Easter Holidays

**Name, age, address, telephone number and email
address of parents on the back and deliver to
65 Kingston Lane. TW11 9HN
by Friday 23rd April**

CERTIFICATES FOR ALL ENTRANTS

More information at www.teddingtonsociety.org.uk

**3 AGE
GROUPS
UNDER 7
7-11, 11 AND OVER**



PRIZES

**Vouchers to use at
the Happy Potter or
for books/art
materials.**



**WINNING ART
WORK**

**to be displayed in
shop windows in
Teddington**



A WALK ON THE WEBSITE

Finding Teddington's hidden nooks and crannies

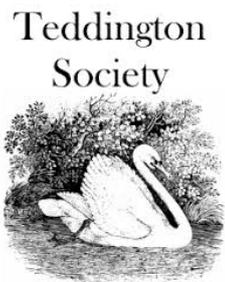
The Teddington Society

Shortly after the Teddington Society was founded in 1973, historian Eileen Pilborough had the idea that we should print a booklet called "A Walk In Teddington" highlighting all the places of interest and historical note. The first edition came out in 1977, followed by a second in 1990; both written by well-known local historian, Paddy Ching. Now all these years later we have a brand-new version on our website, this time it's an electronic version put together by Jenny Michell as a FREE download. It comes together with a fascinating map compiled by Liz Waters with a key so that you can plan your walk according to your fancy. You can find the oldest house in Teddington, the site of the old town hall or the cottage linked to a famous 18th century actress and friend of David Garrick.

Jenny is planning another couple of walks and as she says: "They can be done in stages, at your own pace." This is the first of several ideas that we hope will attract more members who will bring their new ideas to us. You don't have to live in Teddington to join, we have members all over the country and even as far away as Germany.

Go to our website: www.teddingtonsociety.org.uk

While you're there you'll find details of a painting competition for children specially for Easter.



British Summer Time Starts On Sunday 28th March



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

REMEMBER! THE ROYAL AIR FORCE

By Doug Goodman

The Royal Air Force was formed on April 1st 1918 by the amalgamation of the Royal Flying Corps and the Royal Naval Air Service. As early as 1908 the government realised that aircraft would have a major role to play in future conflicts. A Committee for Imperial Defence was set up in 1911 and the following year it recommended that a flying corps should be established consisting of a naval wing, military wing, central flying school and an aircraft factory. In 1918 these four arms were amalgamated into the RAF which still uses the famous red, white and blue roundel. The RAF was founded by Hugh Trenchard and became the first and largest independent air force in the world. Aircraft were first used in September 1914 for spotting enemy activities, then came aerial combat and photo reconnaissance. Unarmed initially, the pilots carried revolvers before machine guns were fitted during a period of rapid development in design and fighting techniques. By the end of WW1 there were 3,300 machines in the RAF. The Sopwith became the best-known British aircraft and was credited with shooting down 1,294 German planes.



Red Arrows



WW1 Fighter



RFC and RAF Badges



Lancaster, Spitfires and Hurricane

When WW2 began the RAF was heavily outnumbered by the Luftwaffe but the rapid construction of our main fighters - The Spitfire and Hurricane eventually brought victory. As Churchill said, 'never was so much owed by so many to so few'. Today there's just one Battle of Britain pilot surviving out of 3,000 who served. In 1944 over one million personnel were serving in the RAF.



Hendon Museum Spitfire Experience



WW2 Posters



Centenary Parade

Today you can see the aircraft in action when The Battle of Britain Memorial Flight and The Red Arrows give air displays. The Memorial Flight consists of six Spitfires, two Hurricanes, a Lancaster, a Dakota and two Chipmonks. During WW2 a total of 20,341 Spitfires, 14,533 Hurricanes and 7,377 Lancaster Bombers were constructed. Few of these iconic aircraft are still airworthy but many UK museums have preserved a vast range of military and commercial planes. RAF Hendon has one of the most comprehensive collections of aircraft where you can sit in a Spitfire. But for the best day out examining old aircraft and the chance to fly in a Spitfire, amongst several memorable aircraft, visit Duxford. Cosworth and The Fleet Air Arm museums have fascinating displays and there exist many collections open to the public around the UK.

EASTER GIFTS ARE FOOD FOR THOUGHT

Oh no! Another Easter weekend in lockdown! Those of us wanting to celebrate the most important date in the Christian calendar are still banned from attending a proper church service, and we still can't visit many of our friends and families. If you plan to arrange an online delivery of an Easter treat or two, it's worth sorting this out ASAP or you might miss the cut off date. There are so many things we can order as gifts this Easter; cheese boxes, flowers, chocolate eggs, cakes, hampers and meal deliveries from top restaurants (many of which are now nationally available). But many of us will be at home next weekend, and wanting to treat ourselves (after all, we're worth it!), so I've put together a few suggestions for indulging others and ourselves.

If you fancy a traditional Italian Easter delicacy, you should try a Colomba, a traditional Italian Easter dessert. Made with flour, eggs, sugar, natural yeast and butter it usually contains candied peel and is topped with pearl sugar and almonds. It's shaped in the form of a dove symbolising peace. **Orange Moon**, famous for its delicious almond pastries (also does mail order) has a good range of [Colombe](#) from £20, so all the family can enjoy a piece. For anyone in - or near to - Twickers, Il Corto in Church Street has a great range, plus other fabulous Italian delicacies, but they are selling fast!



To Germany next, and the **Niederegger** range. A few years ago I was lucky enough to visit Lubeck and the town's wonderful Niederegger café, so became a fan of these yummy products. I just love this nostalgic design of marzipan eggs. There are products for children and grown ups – the truffles are delicious too. From [Chocolates Direct](#) or John Lewis (also, Waitrose stocks a Niederegger chocolate coated bar for just £1.50, which is a great way of trying it). They will make a lovely Easter table gift.

How about sending some cakes as a gift? Or even better, perhaps, some mini Simnel or cup cakes, or a selection of four large loaf cakes for £20? Also available to buy at branches of the Co-op, Fatherson Bakery has launched a range of limited-edition cakes to celebrate Easter, all created from local, British ingredients. What's more, they are very reasonably priced, so you can afford to be ultra-generous! More info on mail order is here but last order date for **Easter delivery is 31 March**.



Good old **M&S** has really gone to town this year with its Easter offerings. As always, the prices are reasonable and the quality top-notch. There's a new chocolate character to join Percy Pig and Colin the Caterpillar (£5 for the Colin egg pictured): the The Ombles – ideal for youngsters. The G&T egg appeals to me! And for anyone who



doesn't eat chocolate, how about this cheesy 'dippy egg'? A great Easter breakfast or brunch idea, this blend of Barbers 1833 Cheddar, soft cheese and crème fraiche has a Red Leicester 'yolk' all ready to bake in the oven and serve with toast soldiers. £5.

Other supermarkets with some excellent own label Easter eggs or chocolate characters at great value prices are Aldi and Lidl.



What has happened to hot cross buns? I've never seen so many different variations available. Chilli & cheese, blueberry, double chocolate, cheese & Marmite, honeycomb, brioche and even rhubarb & custard! I have to admit to being sceptical, but I've enjoyed trying a few different flavours. For me, the traditional hot cross bun is still the favourite; mind you, I think I might try making a hot cross bacon butty, which I understand is a new craze. I've always enjoyed a slice of cheese in a toasted hot cross bun – try it, it's delicious!



A perfect Easter gift for the beer aficionado who is missing pubs being open is the introductory offer from **Flavourly**, the online craft beer specialist. It works with dozens of independent breweries and delivers an extensive range of small batch, and exclusive, craft beers at supermarket beating prices. The company's introductory offer will make a fab present. A mixed 24 can case, that includes two tasting glasses, for just £32 inc delivery.

Cheers, and happy Easter 'egg' hunting!

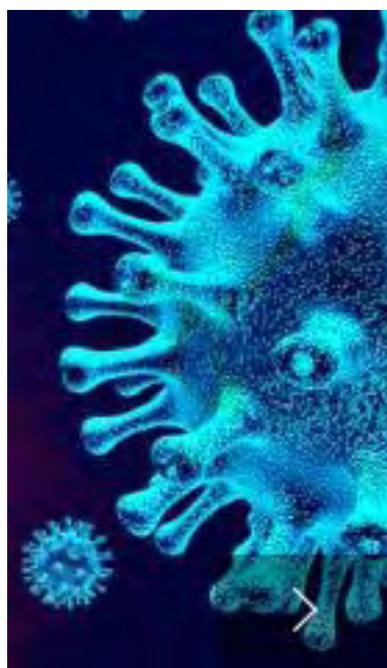


Young Writers Festival 2020-21

Arts Richmond, publisher's release on 28th March

Stand back and take a look at ourselves objectively. Isn't it clear that the pandemic has affected everyone's state of mind, whatever our age?

The booklet, [Young Writers Festival 2020-21](#), which is to be published during the last week of March, comprises twenty-six pieces of poetry and prose from the finalists of Arts Richmond's annual competition to celebrate talented local writers who are still of school age.



Younger children seem to have a great empathy with animals. Alba Spencer-Brown (6) is the youngest writer, but the theme of her *Wolves*, overcoming fear, is pertinent to these uncertain times. She is in snowy forest, gathering firewood; is that wolves howling? Wolves have a bad press, but Max Wilkinson (8) in *The Polar Bear's Mission* puts an arctic wolf in a better light, when an abandoned polar bear cub overcomes his fear and finds a friend in wolf cub.

For some very sophisticated writing though, we must go the teenage authors. Nia Videnova's piece is *Heron*, set in Bushy Park. It is a study in ennui, the tone cynical. There is a slightly surreal air about it. It seems to describe a walk in the park, but it took me several readings to link in the title. The girl of the story is personified in the heron, still and waiting.

It is customary to say what I found outstanding, but in truth there is so much in this slim book that is worth reading, and re-reading. It is available by [mail order at Arts Richmond](#), but a copy is included with tickets for the *Young Writers Festival*, live streamed from the Exchange Theatre on Sunday 28th March. Tickets are on sale at [Young Writers Festival | TryBooking United Kingdom](#).

This year's *Young Writers Festival Competition* reflects the spirit of times during the latter half of 2020 when they were written. Many touch on escape, on fear of the unknown and on introspection, but there is empathy, hope and humanity there too. The pandemic is brought down and packaged in this little gem of a book.



Read Thomas Forsythe's comprehensive review at www.markaspen.com/2021/03/25/ywf-20-21
Photography by John Bentlee, Doug Lindstrand, and Derek Winterburn

TRAVELLER'S TALES 93

EXPLORING THE CEVENNES

Doug Goodman visits France's wild region



It sounded as if someone was hitting the car's roof with a hammer. The noise was deafening and I feared that the windscreen would shatter. We pulled off the narrow road on the high plateau and sheltered under a tree while the giant hailstones bombed the land around us. Nature certainly gave us an alarming introduction to the wild lands in South-West France – The Cevennes notorious for extreme weather. The Cevennes National Park created in 1970, part of which is UNESCO listed, is amongst the least visited and populated areas of France. This wild nature park is dominated by plateaux, granite limestone outcrops, narrow gorges, forest-covered mountains, fast-flowing rivers and unpredictable weather. Pretty villages, abandoned old houses built from schist- a local stone- dot the landscape and narrow roads take you through empty plains and alongside deep ravines. The Cevennes' park covers nearly 400 square miles and it is an isolated and sometimes desolate region. The Cevennes is within the departments of Ardeche, Aveyron, Gard and Lozere.



Rafting in the Gorges



Cevennes Camp Site



Swimming in the Gorge

Hotels can be found in the big towns of Nimes, Montpellier and Ales but out in the wilds there's little in the way of accommodation. Camping is the only way to enjoy the outdoor atmosphere and activities, with the best sites often by a river offering swimming and boating. We drove from London in two days with an overnight stop south of the Loire. A notorious bottleneck over the gorge valley of the Tarn at Millau has been removed by the opening in 2004 of a spectacular bridge: on the A75 south of Clermont -Ferrand it's the world's highest at 1,100 feet. You can fly to Montpellier but a car is essential when you're having a camping holiday. From Mt. Lozere at 1700 meters to the deep Gorge du Tarn there's a lot to do and see on holiday. Crossing the grand Causses we saw weathered stone memorials, beautiful flora and fauna particularly the protected carlina thistle, griffon vultures, golden eagles, and roe deer but sadly missed beavers and cranes. Self-catering provides a wonderful opportunity to try local dishes and wine and buy fresh produce such as fragrant melons, shiny tomatoes, and juicy peaches from the many roadside stalls. The local cassoulet was delicious, the wines from Cahors and Banyuls exquisite and accompanied the famous blue cheeses Roquefort and Bresse Bleu. Robert

Louis Stevenson, when he made his 12 day trek across 120 miles of The Massif Central in The Cevennes in 1878, lived off local produce: his recalcitrant donkey Modestine carried his provisions.

LOCAL ATTRACTIONS

If you get tired of the wild country there's plenty to see within an easy drive. The grottoes at L'Aven Armand and Dargilan contain spectacular colours and huge stalagmites. The Pont d'Arc on the Ardeche River is a much photographed landmark whose beaches become quite crowded. To escape the crowds and enjoy a very wet excursion, a white-water rafting expedition along the Gorge de L'Ardeche is not to be missed. Another very popular spot is the Pont du Gard to the north-west of Nimes. This huge Roman aqueduct, spanning the River Gardon, was built in the first century AD to carry water 31 miles to Nimes.



Memorial Cross



Cevennes Thistle



Local Produce

If you love steam trains then an eight mile trip between Anduz and Saint Jean du Gard through amazing scenery is great fun and you see La Bambouseraie – a park with 240 species of bamboo, maple, sequoia and ginkgo.



Pont du Gard



Steaming through The Cevennes



La Couvertoirade by Remy Foulquier

On the return journey we followed a route near Millau to La Couvertoirade: a village I heard described as the most picturesque in France. Built by The Knights Templar in the 12th century this tiny medieval village is a centre for arts and crafts. From the low battlements we walked above the workshops where potters were creating beautiful objects, weavers were busy making carpets and artists turned out local landscapes. I met painter Remy Foulquier and bought his picture of La Couvertoirade as it once looked. This remains a very happy memory of a part of France that I long to re-visit.

DID YOU KNOW??

Travel news by Bruce Lyons

When they were building the A316 (a while back!!) It was dubbed “The Road to Nowhere”. This seems to resonate with the slowly unravelling story of how you may holiday this Summer!! Overseas maybe!! But you will have to wait till April 5th to hear how, that’s a week earlier than previously promised) But I don’t envy the Ministers and Scientists making the rules – no doubt aided and abetted by our Bosom pals in the EU who all seemed to have suddenly remembered from their youth that whatever is wrong in the world must be the fault of the Brits (Though I did see on the Cover of Metro as I had my second jab this morning MACRON BLAMES THE EU! - Make up your mind I thought)

So what is the news – Wales has broken ranks – from tomorrow you can self-cater in Wales – Snag, you have to live in Wales!!

So here is the latest from the “Horses Mouth” 5th April PM tell us what he plans to ratify on the 12th April. This last month there has been a “Travel Task Force” hard at work trying to unravel the complex issues. 12th April – You CAN self-cater in family bubbles of 6 and kids in the Britain-remember this

is for some the last week of Easter School Holidays, that means you can rent houses, go boating on the Broads, row down the Thames, (yes I can rent you a skiff camper boat with camping gear) you can bike/sail/hike/Golf/climb mountains and many other outdoor pursuits,



26th April self-cater in Scotland and maybe by this time Wales will be open for the Brits too. 17th May Ok for Hotels in UK to open and possibly Scotland too with Coach Tours and Rail trips.

There are small group tours even a wild life Safari company that two years ago worked in Chile doing high end Wildlife tours, now are making wildlife safaris in England – One thing the Pandemic did was wake up the Staycation markets – There are some fantastic trips on offer. I found an amazing small group Discovery Tour to Holy Island and Lindisfarne and the Northumbrian Castles

Absolutely magic – and the TV has hosted amazing travelogue programmes – next week is Matt Baker of The One Show / Country File on his farm in the Dales (31st March) Want to walk in the Dales? Lakes? Hadrian’s Wall or the Devon and Cornish Coastal Path? This is also the date (17th May) that Sea-cations have the OK and believe me even since I wrote last week

more boats have been added to the choice-Just today Disney Line announced their Disney Magic Experience is going on sale in April. It is a total on board experience (i.e. you stay on board all the time).

It’s a family fun packed experience. Disney Stories, Characters and entertainment including Mickey Mouse, and characters from Frozen and Marvels Super Heroes. There are now cruises of every type of ship imaginable to choose from for 3/4/5/7 days and more. Luxury to converted fishing boats, Expedition Boats and Luxury small ships. So there you go folks – want to know more please email info@crusadertravel.com



WIZ TALES - Iceland

Teresa Read



Iceland is on a geological fault line; there are active volcanoes and the island experiences earthquakes. Iceland is known for lava fields, hot springs and geysers. Icefields and glaciers cover some of the highest areas.

On Friday, 19 March 2021, the volcanic eruption in the Geldingadalur region of Iceland sparked concern that this would be the beginning of volcanic eruptions in the area.

The Grimsvotn and Laki eruptions, 1783-1784, are among the largest volcanic eruptions known in Iceland.

In 1996 a volcanic eruption beneath Vatnajokull caused a glacial outburst flood, known as a jokulhlaup.

Hekla is Iceland's most active volcano, thought to have erupted around twenty times since 874 AD; an eruption took place in 2000.

On 14th April 2010 the glacier covered volcano Eyjafjallajokul erupted in its first major eruption since 1821. A cloud of volcanic ash spread across Europe grounding airline flights throughout the continent and causing chaos for travellers and airlines for several months.



Photographs from the Iceland Tourist Board

More photographs of Iceland

<https://worldinfozone.com/gallery.php?country=Iceland>



RFS The Best of our Recent Historic Screenings

Issue 53

26th March 2021

JAR CITY

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.

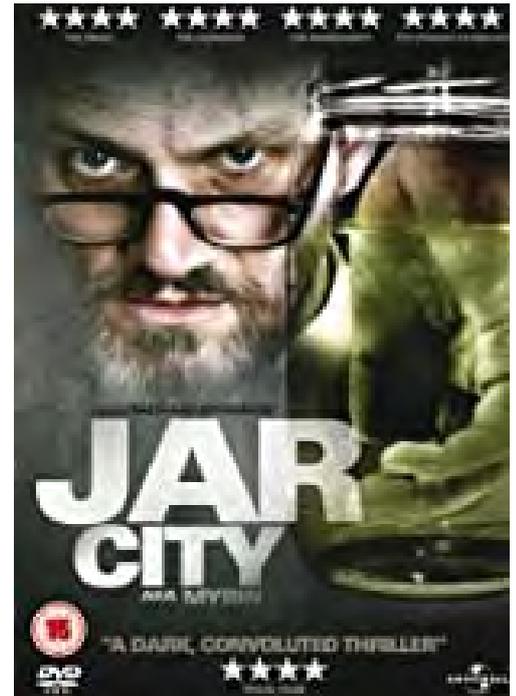
RFS Context: **JAR CITY** was the 652nd film screened by RFS on 3rd November 2009. **Jar City** was the fifth ranked film of Season 47, it got an approval mark of 84% from those attending; from season 47 we have also already featured its top four ranked films, in order: **I've Loved You so Long**, **Man on Wire**, **The Wave** and **Flame and Citroen** as **Issues 14, 18, 21** and **28** respectively. Sadly, the editor of these reviews was unable to find, at present, **Jar City** on any streaming service but the discs are available from Amazon and others.

JAR CITY (Mýrin)

Country: Iceland, Germany & Denmark, 2006
Director: Baltasar Kormákur
Screenplay: Arnaldur Indriðason & Baltasar Kormákur
Language: Icelandic
Editor: Elísabet Ronaldsdóttir
Music: Mugison
Cinematography: Bergsteinn Björgúlfsson
Running Time: 93 min., colour

Leading Players:

Ingvar Eggert Sigurðsson	(Erlendur)
Ágústa Eva Erlendsdóttir	(Eva Lind)
Björn Hlynur Haraldsson	(Sigurður Óli)
Ólafía Hrönn Jónsdóttir	(Elínborg)
Atli Rafn Sigurðsson	(Örn)
Kristbjörg Kjeld	(Katrín)



Directed by Baltasar Kormákur, (who also directed 101 Reykjavik - also shown by Richmond Film Society).

Jar City is based on one of a popular series of crime novels by Arnaldur Indriason. It is a gripping and intriguing thriller, set against the bleak landscape of Iceland.

The story starts with the discovery of the body of an elderly man murdered in his basement flat. Meanwhile, Örn (Atli Rafn Sigurðsson), mourns the four-year-old daughter who died from a rare congenital disease.

This dual narrative exerts a powerful and emotional grip as Inspector Erlendur (Ingvar Eggert Sigurosson) carries out his crime investigation. The discovery of a photograph seems to link the murder to a 30-year-old unsolved case involving a dead child, but when Erlendur tries to investigate further he runs into a wall of silence.

These seemingly disparate story lines gradually weave together with a slow, deliberate precision - although so entirely unrelated are the two strands that it's obvious that Orn must have some link to the dead man.

With a population of only 300,000, everyone in Iceland knows about the crime and a fair proportion of the locals could be considered suspects. In addition, Inspector Erlender has to contend with the local criminal element flaunting their knowledge of his own unravelling family life - his daughter is a pregnant, heroin-addicted former prostitute.

Baltasar Kormakur maintains an excellent pace, allowing the mystery to unravel naturally, while keeping us hooked as the various elements gradually link together.

Jar City is a uniquely Icelandic work - as dark and brooding as the long winter nights, it is infused with a sardonic northern humour so understated that you almost miss it.

Mike Day

Arts Richmond's Young Writers Festival

Out of over 400 entries from children around the borough, 26 will be brought to life and you will be able to enjoy this from the comfort of your own home. Each booking will be posted a booklet of all the children's work.

Young Writers
Virtual Awards
Afternoon in
association with
The Exchange
Twickenham.
Performance will
start at 2.30pm
Virtual doors
open at 2pm
On Sunday 28
March 2021 at
2:00 PM to 4:00
PM

Book [HERE](#)





BRENTFORD FC

Bees held to a draw for second game in succession

Brentford 1 – 1 Nottingham Forest

Brentford were pegged back in the second-half for the second game in a row as they were forced to settle for a draw at the Brentford Community Stadium. An early Ivan Toney penalty had got the Bees up and running but Filip Krovinić equalised with just over an hour played to restrict Brentford to a point from the lunch time kick off.



Brentford took the early lead courtesy of a penalty from Ivan Toney with just over ten minutes played. The spot kick was awarded when a corner was delivered in from the right hand side and Toney was pulled down by Gaëtan Bong as he jostled to get on the end of the cross. Toney dusted himself off to step up and calmly stroke the ball past Brice Samba for the opening goal.

The Championship's top scorer, buoyed by his early goal, was lively in the first half and was combining well with Bryan Mbeumo in the final third. Mbeumo himself had a good chance from within the box after having dribbled through the Nottingham Forest backline, but he narrowly dragged his shot wide and Toney himself shot wide from distance.

At the other end of the pitch Alex Mighten was cautioned for simulation after a challenge from Mathias Jensen but they struggled to create many clear cut goalscoring opportunities in the opening 45 minutes.

Brentford could have added to their lead when a training ground routine from a corner kick saw them denied by the woodwork. Mbeumo's delivery found Vitaly Janelt in space at the back post but the German midfielder's attempt was hit into the ground on the volley and ricocheted back off the crossbar. Henrik Dalsgaard then following in couldn't react quickly to divert an effort on target, as he shot wide from within the six yard box.

David Raya's first contribution of the game came when he had to be quick off his line to deny Filip Krovinić, who had escaped from the Brentford backline, after

Sammy Ameobi had looked to find the deep late run from the midfielder.

Forests' best chance of the half came right at the end in stoppage time when good combination play from Mighten set Bong into space to and he in turn picked out Lewis Grabban with a great cross, but Grabban headed over from a promising position.

After the interval Mbeumo had a glorious chance to add to Brentford's lead. Some fantastic build up play saw Toney initiate the move and Christian Nørgaard then played a super reverse pass to set Toney though on goal. The striker then unselfishly squared the ball for Mbeumo who looked certain to score, but Bong recovered fantastically to make up the ground and produce an excellent block.

Brentford were made to pay soon after as Nottingham forest scored an equaliser with just over an hour played. There was an element of controversy as Cafú appeared to foul Jensen as he disposed the Dane on the halfway line, but wasn't punished, and he played the ball onto Mighten. Mighten in turn set the ball back for Bong, who took a touch and crossed for Grabban to flick on. Grabban's flick on then rebounded off Winston Reid and Krovinović reacted quickest to slot home.

Saman Ghoddos came on as a substitute for the Bees and within minutes had nearly restored their lead. Once again it was good passing between the lines that was the trigger and Toney flicked the ball in behind for the Iranian but Cyrus Christie produced some superb last ditch defending to make the block.

Ghoddos was lively off the bench and a brilliant backheel from Toney gave him the half space to get a shot away that went narrowly wide.

Raya survived a claim for a handball outside the area as both sides pushed late on for a winner. A deflected sot from Christie nearly crept into the top corner but it drifted narrowly wide.

As the clock ticked towards injury time Nottingham Forest made their third superb block of the day when substitute Tariqe Fosu was denied Christie from inside the box to once again thwart Brentford.

At the death Toney nearly won it with a deflected shot but it went agonisingly wide to ensure that Brentford would be forced to take a point from their afternoon's work.

Come on you Bees!

Red Roses name squad for 2021 Six Nations



England Women head coach Simon Middleton has named a 38-player squad for the 2021 Women's Six Nations. The Red Roses will assemble in Doncaster on Monday ahead their opening Pool A game against Scotland at Castle Park (Saturday 3 April, KO 3pm, live on BBC iPlayer).

Sarah Hunter returns from a long term injury lay-off to captain the group while Loughborough Lightning teammate Cath O'Donnell is set for her first international action since July 2019. Saracens quartet Hannah Botterman, Bryony Cleall, Vicky Fleetwood and Sarah McKenna, Gloucester-Hartpury duo Zoe Aldcroft and Ellena Perry and Worcester Warriors' Lydia Thompson return after missing the autumn fixtures through injury. The group also includes six development players. Front rowers Maud Muir and Flo Long, plus backs Ellie Green, Merryn Doidge, Beth Wilcock and Flo Robinson have been part of Red Roses training squads since the new year and have impressed in the 2020/21 Allianz Premier 15s season to date. They are joined by Flo's sister Emily Robinson (back rower) who makes her first senior squad.

All 38 players are part of the Six Nations tournament testing protocols which means they can train with the group and are eligible to feature in matchday squads if selected. England have carried out individual risk assessments with players to allow them to work or play for their clubs outside of England camps with further measures put in place to protect the training bubble. Following the match in Yorkshire, England take on Italy at Stadio Plebiscito, Padova (Saturday 10 April, kick-off 1400 BST and live on BBC iPlayer) before hosting the final play-off match, the first Women's Six Nations fixture to be broadcast on the main BBC network (Saturday 24 April, KO 1400 BST, BBC Two) with the venue to be confirmed.

The Friday after the tournament concludes, Simon Middleton's side will travel to Lille to take on France in a Women's Six Nations exhibition game in their maiden visit to Villeneuve d'Ascq (Friday 30 April, KO 2000 BST, BBC iPlayer).

Sarah Bern (shoulder), Natasha Hunt (ankle), Laura Keates (ACL) and Morwenna Talling (ACL) are ruled out of the tournament due to injury.

Head coach Simon Middleton said: *"From a performance point of view we've been training really hard for a few months now. We have a lot of evidence from training to say we've raised our intensity and physicality whilst at the same time developing our ability to execute accurately and make good decisions under the pressure that comes with that type of intensive pressure training, that's what we want to see when we go into the Scotland game. We want a high tempo, high energy game with quality play off the back of it. We have named a wider squad than usual and are able to bring in a number of development players from the pathway. With the pathway being impacted by the pandemic, we saw an opportunity to help support the development of young players, bringing them into senior camps which was a win-win all round and there's every chance we could see those players feature over the course of the games. We're pleased to have Alex Matthews, Helena Rowland and Megan Jones available given the crossover with the GB Sevens programme. They'll be with us for varying degrees of the Six Nations and then continue their preparations with the GB set-up. This will be our first international since Katy Daley-Mclean's retirement. It'll be great to see how our young fly halves, Zoe Harrison and Helena Rowland steer the ship. We'll have some new half back combinations and it will be interesting to see how they go. "It feels like we've been training for a long time and I think the staff are as desperate for the games as the players are. The players play week-in week-out with the clubs but as a staff group we don't get that release so it feels like we've been preparing forever. We're all really looking forward to the games and getting into competition mode."*

Forwards

Zoe Aldcroft (Gloucester-Hartpury, 20 caps)
Sarah Beckett (Harlequins Women, 20 caps)
Hannah Botterman (Saracens Women, 20 caps)
Shaunagh Brown (Harlequins Women, 20 caps)
Bryony Cleall (Saracens Women, 1 cap)
Poppy Cleall (Saracens Women, 43 caps)
Amy Cokayne (Harlequins Women, 53 caps)
Vickii Cornborough (Harlequins Women, 56 caps)
Lark Davies (Loughborough Lightning, 28 caps)
Vicky Fleetwood (Saracens Women, 76 caps)

Detysha Harper (Loughborough Lightning, 3 caps)
Sarah Hunter (C; Loughborough Lightning 123 caps)
Flo Long (Worcester Warriors Women, 0 caps)*
Alex Matthews (Worcester Warriors Women, 40 caps)
Harriet Millar-Mills (Wasps FC Ladies, 58 caps)
Maud Muir (Wasps FC Ladies, 0 caps)*
Cath O'Donnell (Loughborough Lightning, 16 caps)
Marlie Packer (Saracens Women, 74 caps)
Ellena Perry (Gloucester-Hartpury, 10 caps)
Emily Robinson (Harlequins Women, 0 caps)
Abbie Ward (Harlequins Women, 45 caps)

Backs

Jess Breach (Harlequins Women, 15 caps)
Merryn Doidge (Exeter Chiefs Women, 0 caps)*
Abby Dow (Wasps FC Ladies, 15 caps)
Ellie Green (Harlequins Women, 0 caps)*
Zoe Harrison (Saracens Women, 27 caps)
Megan Jones (Wasps FC Ladies, 10 caps)
Ellie Kildunne (Wasps FC Ladies, 11 caps)
Claudia MacDonald (Wasps FC Ladies, 12 caps)

Sarah McKenna (Saracens Women, 32 caps)
Amber Reed (Bristol Bears Women, 58 caps)
Leanne Riley (Harlequins Women, 40 caps)
Flo Robinson (Exeter Chiefs, 0 caps)*
Helena Rowland (Loughborough Lightning, 3 caps)
Emily Scarratt (VC; Loughborough Lightning, 92 caps)
Lydia Thompson (Worcester Warriors, 46 caps)
Lagi Tuima (Harlequins Women, 6 caps)
Beth Wilcock (Harlequins Women, 0 caps)*

*Denotes development players

Red Roses 2021 Six Nations fixture details and Scotland match accreditation information confirmed

The 2021 Women's Six Nations fixture details have been confirmed with holders England returning to Castle Park for their opening pool game.

This year's Women's Championship will see a new and condensed format of two pools of three teams with each team playing one home and one away fixture. Once the pool round matches are complete, teams will face off against the opposing ranked team from the other pool in play-off matches.

Drawn in Pool A, the Red Roses begin this year's campaign against Scotland at Castle Park, Doncaster (Saturday 3 April, KO 1500 BST and live on BBC iPlayer) before taking on Italy at Stadio Plebiscito, Padova (Saturday 10 April, kick-off 1400 BST and live on BBC iPlayer).

England are at home for the final play-off match, the first Women's Six Nations fixture to be broadcast on the main BBC network (Saturday 24 April, KO 1400 BST, BBC Two) with the venue to be confirmed.

The Friday after the tournament concludes, Simon Middleton's side will travel to Lille to take on France in a Women's Six Nations exhibition game in their maiden visit to Villeneuve d'Ascq (Friday 30 April, KO 2000 BST, BBC iPlayer).

England head coach Middleton said: "The Six Nations is always a special competition and we're all looking forward to getting underway.

"We've had wonderful support in our previous visits to Castle Park.

"It's great that the games will once again be shown on the BBC and this time, we want to make sure everyone can enjoy watching from home."

Michael Casey, Commercial Manager, Doncaster Knights said: "We're delighted to welcome the Red Roses back to Castle Park and to work alongside the England Rugby team again.

"England have an unbeaten record in Doncaster and we're excited to bring another showcase international rugby fixture to the town."



England Women fixtures:

England v Scotland – Women's Six Nations

Saturday 3 April, KO 1500 BST – live on BBC iPlayer
Castle Park, Doncaster

Italy v England – Women's Six Nations

Saturday 10 April, KO 1400 BST – live on BBC iPlayer
Stadio Plebiscito, Padova

England v TBC – Women's Six Nations play-off finals

Saturday 24 April, KO 1400 BST – live on BBC Two
Venue TBC

France v England – Women's Six Nations exhibition game

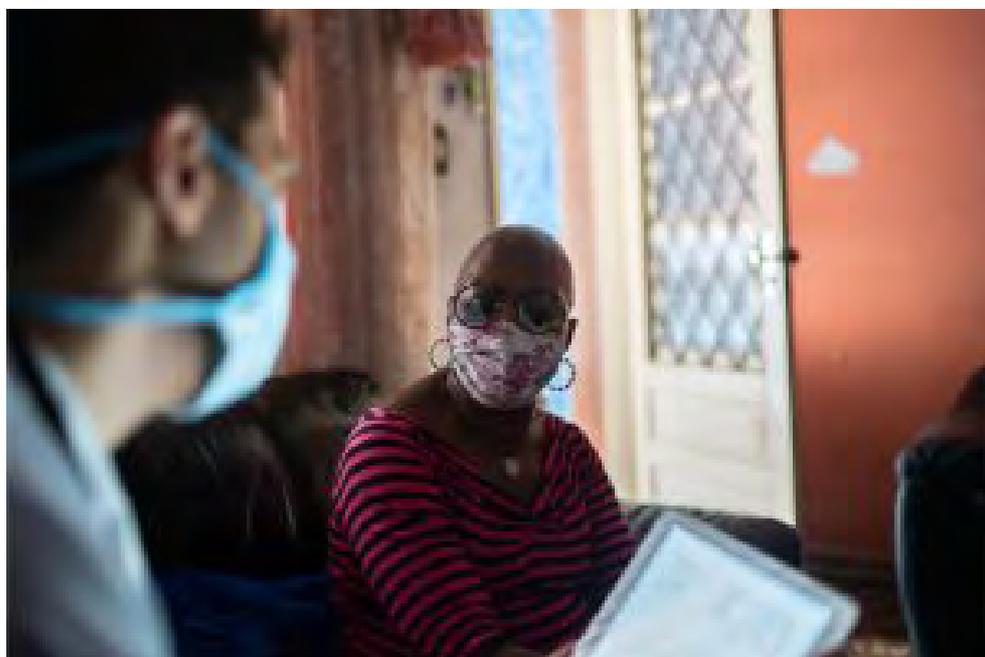
Friday 30 April, KO 2000 BST – live on BBC iPlayer
Villeneuve d'Ascq

The adult social care market in England

Short-term funding and the lack of a long-term vision has hampered planning, innovation and investment in adult social care. The current accountability and oversight arrangements are ineffective for overseeing the care market, according to a report by the National Audit Office.

The Department of Health & Social Care (the Department) is responsible for setting national policy for adult social care and for the overall performance of the care system. The Care Act 2014 places a range of duties on local authorities. Under the Act, local authorities are responsible for commissioning adult social care from around 14,800 registered providers, most of whom are independent. In 2019-20, local authorities spent a net £16.5 billion on care. The Ministry of Housing, Communities & Local Government oversees the distribution of funding to local government and the financial framework within which local authorities operate. The Care Quality Commission (CQC) regulates care providers for quality and oversees the financial resilience of the largest and potentially most difficult to replace providers.

Current accountability and oversight arrangements for adult social care are ineffective. Although the CQC rates most care as good, the Department lacks visibility of how effectively local authorities commission care and the outcomes achieved. It has no legal powers to intervene or hold individual authorities to account. This limits the Department's ability to assess how well money is being spent, or what additional funding is needed to support care users.



The Department has increased its focus on adult social care in response to COVID-19; it has taken steps to increase its capacity and address data gaps, and in February 2021 published a white paper with proposals to improve the data it collects and its oversight of local authority delivery of social care.

The Department has not met previous commitments to tackle recruitment and retention challenges for the 1.5 million people who work in care. It has not produced a workforce strategy since 2009, despite committing to do so in 2018. The Department told the NAO that a workforce strategy would be dependent on the next spending review and wider reforms committed to in the recent white paper.

The Department does not have a clear strategy to develop accommodation for adults with care needs and does not monitor the condition of current accommodation itself. Uncertainty about future funding and care policy mean providers are reluctant to invest in accommodation. Funding for new investment is ad-hoc with no co-ordinated, long-term vision across

government about how new accommodation will be developed or existing accommodation adapted to meet care needs.

Short-term funding settlements have hampered long-term planning for adult social care. The NAO has previously emphasised the importance of clarity over funding beyond the end of a spending review. Uncertainty has made it difficult for local authorities, facing significant financial pressures, to plan how much care they could purchase beyond the current financial year, constraining much needed innovation and investment. For 2019-20, the Department assessed that most local authorities pay care providers below a sustainable rate for care.

Stakeholders lack visibility of provider finances across the care market. Pre-COVID-19, many care providers were not financially resilient, and the impact of COVID-19 could have further consequences. In view of local authority responsibilities for care and CQC's market oversight role, the Department does not collect additional information on provider finances. Analysis by CQC of the large providers indicates that government support has helped to stabilise the market. Falls in occupancy from around 90% pre-pandemic to 80% in February 2021, raises concerns that ongoing support may be required.

In 2019-20, 839,000 adults accessed long-term support arranged by local authorities. Pre-COVID-19, Carers UK estimated there were around 7.3 million unpaid carers in England. Around 24% of adults aged 65 and over have unmet care needs.

There are likely to be large increases in future demand for care, leading to rising costs. The Department projects that around 29% more adults aged 18 to 64 and 57% more adults aged 65 and over will require care in 2038 compared to 2018. Over this period, the total cost of care is projected to rise by 90% for adults aged 18 to 64, and 106% for adults aged 65 and over. These projections are highly uncertain and will also depend upon any changes to the way care is delivered, which the Department has not yet assessed.

Despite many years of government papers, consultations and reviews, the Department has not brought forward a long-term plan for care. The pandemic has delayed promised reforms as government prioritises the COVID-19 response. The Department will be leading reform plans and has committed to bringing forward proposals in 2021. Reforming the sector will be a significant challenge and will need a whole system, cross-government approach.

Gareth Davies, the head of the NAO, said:

“The lack of a long-term vision for adult social care coupled with ineffective oversight of the system means people may not get the care that best supports them.

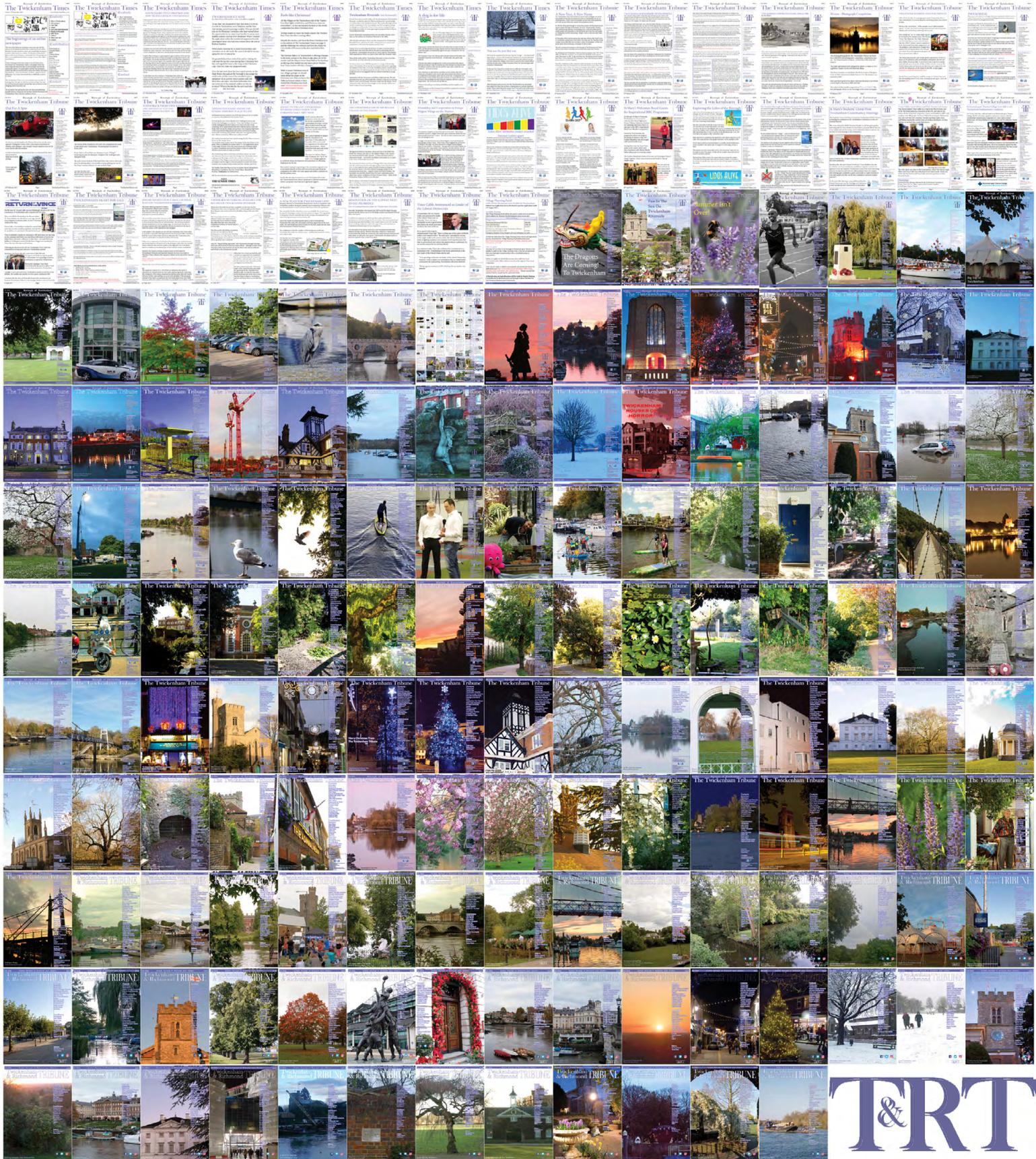
The Department of Health and Social Care has increased its focus on adult social care in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. It needs to build on this to ensure that its long-awaited reforms deliver affordable, high quality and sustainable adult social care for the future.”

Read the full report [HERE](#)



National Audit Office

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