

Twickenham & Richmond TRIBUNE

Contents

TickerTape
 TwickerSeal
 Twickenham Riverside: Councillor
 Confusion
 COVID-19
 Was Education Better In The past?
 Letters
 Birds, Bats And Bombs
 Church Street Twickers
 History Of Twickenham Riverside
 St Mary's Summer Fair
 Can We Count On You?
 Watch Out For Tax Scams
 Kneller Hall Sold To Local School
 Sustainable Development
 Twickers Foodie
 Review
 Grant Shapps – All Change!!
 WIZ Tales - Peru
 Sunday Times Good University
 Guide

Contributors

TwickerSeal
 Simon Fowler
 Richmond In Europe Association
 TwickWatch
 Mac McInerney
 Teddington Residents Association
 Alison Jee
 Mark Aspen
 Shona Lyons
 Bruce Lyons
 Doug Goodman
 World InfoZone
 Royal Shakespeare Society
 Rose Opera
 St Mary's University
 Richmond CVS
 The Times And The Sunday Times
 RFU
 Princess Alice Hospice
 NAO
 LBRuT

Editors

Berkley Driscoll
 Teresa Read



17th September 2021

T&RT

TickerTape - News in Brief

Richmond restaurant fire

A fire on Lower George Street, Richmond caused severe traffic disruption on Friday 17th September. The fire, at itsu restaurant, appears to have been caused by a fire in the extraction ducting system.

Six fire engines and around 40 firefighters attended and the fire was safely brought under control. The whole of the extraction system from the first floor to the roof of the building was damaged by fire. Part of the roof was also damaged by the blaze.

The Brigade was called at 1524 and the fire was under control by 1825. Fire crews from Kingston, Park Royal, Hammersmith and Acton fire stations were at the scene.

Next phases of bicycle hangar installations begin next week - register your interest!

From Monday, 13 September, CycleHoop will begin works to install the next phase of on-street bicycle hangars. Bicycle hangers will be installed in over twenty locations across the borough.

The installations works are likely to take two weeks to complete at all designated locations. If you are interested in renting a space in one of the new bicycle hangars, please get in touch with [CycleHoop](#) to register your interest.

Some areas are experiencing a high level of demand so you may be placed on a waiting list. If there are no bicycle hangars in your area you can request them in your area. Find out more about [how to request a new bicycle hangar](#) in an area.

Emergency road closure on Station Road, Hampton

Thames Water are attending a sewer collapse on Station Road, Hampton at the junction with Warfield Road on an emergency basis.

A road closure is currently in place and the works are expected to complete by Tuesday, 28 September.



skyelectrical

Replacing your halogen recessed lights with LEDs will:

- ✓ SAVE ENERGY
- ✓ SAVE YOU MONEY
- ✓ PROVIDE BETTER LIGHTING

So...

- ✓ CALL US TODAY FOR A FREE HOME ASSESSMENT AND QUOTE

For a timed appointment please call Sky Electrical on 020 8894 1799
22 Fifth Cross Road, Twickenham, Middlesex, TW2 5LF
www.skyelectrical.co.uk

020 8894 1799
info@skyelectrical.co.uk



TwickerSeal and his chums had been having a discussion about the council's planning application for Twickenham Riverside.

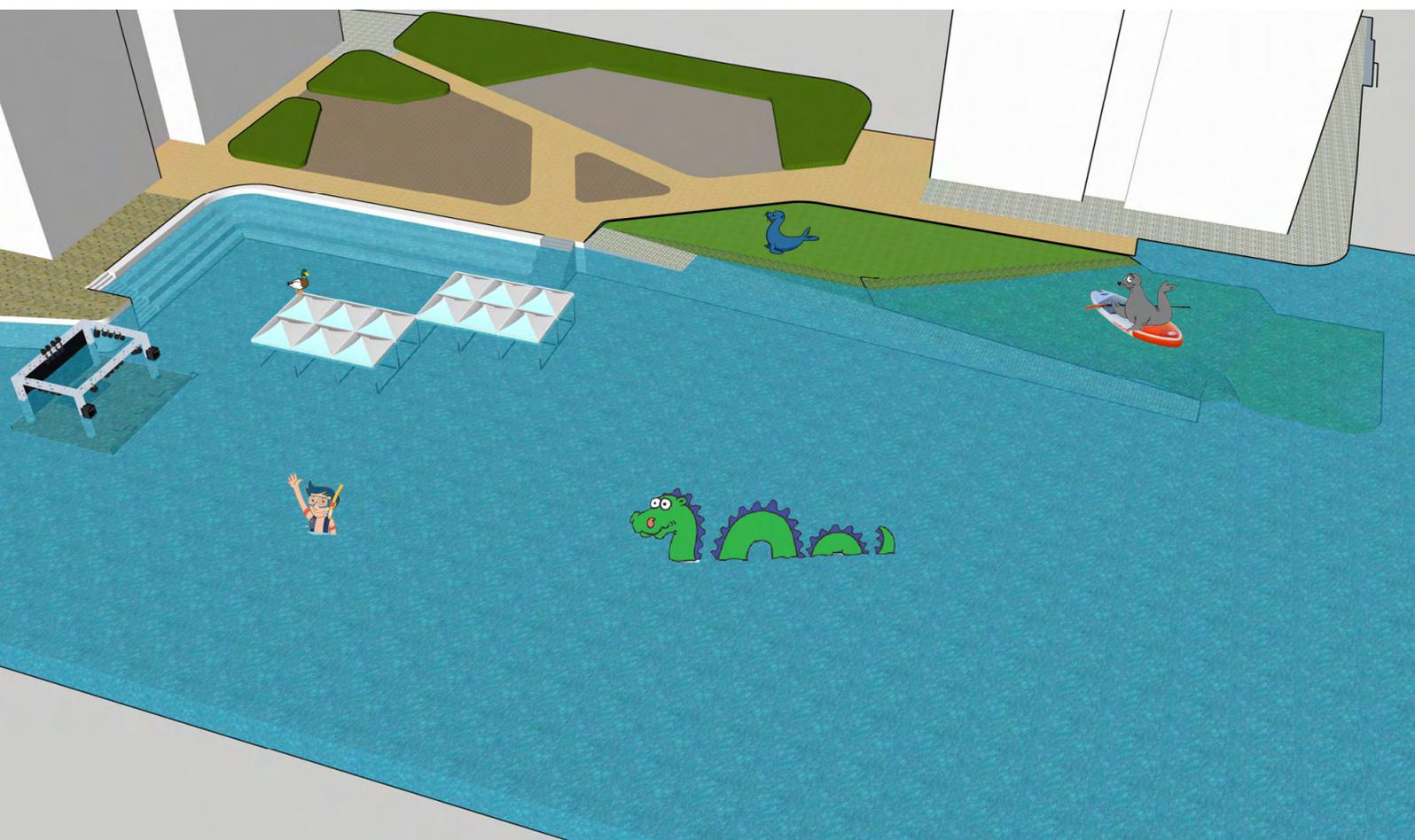
They were astonished, and pleased, at how much the council was catering to its amphibious residents.

Many residents had asked for a new Lido to replace the much-loved Twickenham Baths that had formerly occupied the site, but the council had gone even further! They had created an aquatic park!

They had taken the safe, secure (dry) Diamond Jubilee Gardens and replaced it with three patches of grass, two of which were under the flood zone.

And then they have provided an event space / town square completely in the flood zone. All TwickerDuck needs to do is source a submersible music stage and some waterproof gazebos; if you want to attend future riverside events, don't forget your Lilo!

At least those lucky people able to afford the luxury flats that have been plonked on top of our, former, public open space won't get their feet wet.



Twickenham Riverside: Councillor Confusion

Some councillors may be eager to promote the planning application for Twickenham Riverside, but it should be remembered that not everyone they represent shares their enthusiasm for the plan.

Councillor Michael Wilson - husband of Twickenham Lib Dem MP Munira Wilson - has posted supporting the Twickenham Riverside plan on the Council's planning application website as "Mr" not Cllr. Cllr Wilson is the Vice-Chair of the Policy and Resources Committee making decisions on the application.

There was also a paid advertisement this week for the Twickenham Riverside planning application from Cllr James Henry Chard, Councillor for Twickenham Riverside. Someone may have questioned this, as it seems that the Facebook advertisement has since disappeared.

The Financial Cost to Ratepayers in the London Borough of Richmond upon Thames of the Twickenham Riverside Development

On Monday 20 September 2021 the LBRUT Finance, Policy and Resources Committee will meet to discuss a number of issues which will include a Compulsory Purchase Order on the Diamond Jubilee Gardens on Twickenham Riverside.

<https://richmond.public-i.tv/core/portal/home>

"On costs, Officers noted that previous reports stated that £35,000 would be needed to prepare the CPO. Significant costs would be incurred if there was a need to take the CPO to Inquiry."

"The current approved available capital resources for this scheme as revised elsewhere on this agenda is £2.834 million over the two-year period 2021/22 – 2022/23. (LBRUT Director of Resources, Finance, Policy and Resources Committee)"

"It was noted that some members of the committee had misgivings about committing to the scheme's cost when residents were not aware of these in full."

<https://cabinet.richmond.gov.uk/documents/g5144/Public%20reports%20pack%20Monday%2020-Sep-2021%2019.00%20Finance%20Policy%20and%20Resources%20Committee.pdf?T=10>

From Pages 17 to 32

Covid-19

By Teresa Read

Weekly epidemiological update on COVID-19

Overview

With nearly 4 million new cases reported globally in the past week (6-12 September), this represents the first substantial decline in weekly cases in more than two months. All regions reported declines in new cases as compared to the previous week. The number of deaths reported globally in the past week also decreased as compared to the previous week, with just over 62,000 new deaths. The African Region reported an increase in the number of weekly deaths (7%), while the South-East Asia Region reported the largest decrease (20%). The American and Eastern Mediterranean Regions reported slightly smaller decreases, 9% and 6% respectively, while the numbers of deaths reported in the European and the Western Pacific Regions were similar to last week. The cumulative number of cases reported globally is now over 224 million and the cumulative number of deaths is just over 4.6 million.

Total cases to 17th September 2021

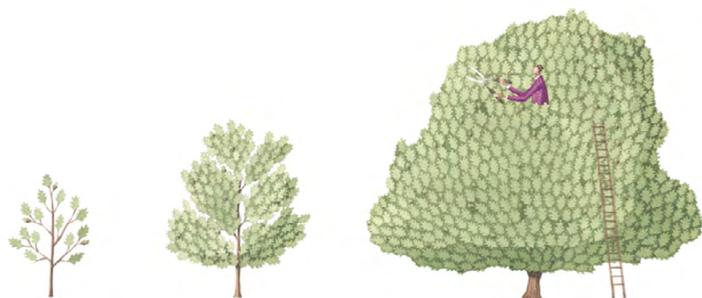
Richmond upon Thames 18,046

Kingston upon Thames 18,382

Hounslow 34,374

World Health Organization: Countries with High Numbers of Deaths. Deaths Worldwide 4,666,334

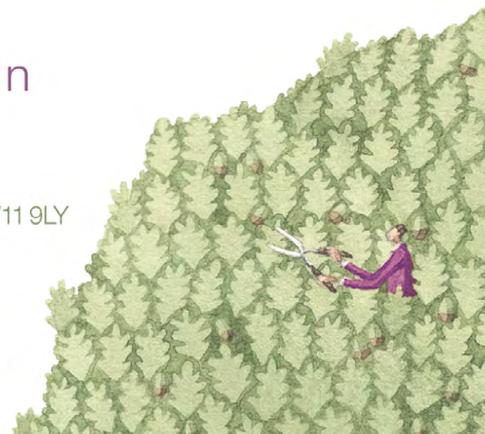
USA	663,141	Hungary	30,123
Brazil	588,597	Canada	27,305
India	444,248	Bangladesh	27,147
Mexico	269,913	Pakistan	27,004
Peru	198,860	Belgium	25,494
Russian Federation	196,626	Tunisia	24,244
Indonesia	140,138	Malaysia	22,355
The United Kingdom	134,805	Iraq	21,683
Italy	130,167	Bulgaria	19,876
Colombia	125,753	Bolivia	18,616
Iran	116,072	Netherlands	18,097
Argentina	113,969	Portugal	17,888
France	113,813	Japan	17,030
Germany	92,857	Myanmar	16,944
South Africa	85,779	Egypt	16,908
Spain	85,739	Viet Nam	16,425
Poland	75,473	Paraguay	16,118
Turkey	60,903	Thailand	15,124
Ukraine	54,750	Kazakhstan	15,031
Chile	37,293	Sweden	14,753
Philippines	36,018	Greece	14,354
Romania	35,359	Morocco	13,729
Ecuador	32,559	Guatemala	12,907
Czechia	30,427	Slovakia	12,569



The Tree Agency

darryl parkin

The Treehouse
25 King Edwards Grove
Teddington, Middlesex TW11 9LY
Telephone 020 8274 0107
Mobile 07960 123580
Fax 020 8274 0119
info@thetreeagency.co.uk
www.thetreeagency.co.uk



The Tree Agency

Was education better in the past?

By Simon Fowler

The modern education system starts with the 1870 Education Act, which said that children must attend school between the ages of five and twelve. In most towns basic educational facilities were already available for children, generally run by local churches and funded by donations from wealthy parishioners and a penny or two contributed every week by parents. Schooling was available for children between three and fourteen, although most left when they reached their eleventh birthday. These schools were meant for poorer families, most middle and upper-class children were either educated at home or, for boys, at public schools.

In early 1870 a report was published about schooling in Richmond and Twickenham. It was prepared by T. Paynter Allen, the former headmaster of the Earl Russell School in Petersham. He had already provided similar reports about schools in Brentford and Ealing for the Royal Society.

Paynter Allen paints a depressing picture of education here and the effect poor teaching had on children. He found: 'a mass of ignorance and juvenile preparation for vice and crime' and claimed, with little evidence, that more money was spent on beer than in educating the young. Which suggests that then as now education was run on a shoestring.

He cited the example of the Royal Surrey Militia 'whose strength consist of 887 young men for the most part drawn from the district, who had much same facilities afforded them for getting education as those now in existence there are 332 quite unable to write their names.'

Just over a thousand boys and girls between three and fourteen were habitual absentees from school: 'loitering about their doors, in the streets or in the fields, without acknowledged occupation or intention of seeking any.' They were 'lawless youths who respect no authority but that of the police, a class just retaining sufficient knowledge of a forgotten education to chalk vulgar inscriptions on the walls, but who are otherwise quite illiterate.'

And even among those who went to school, a quarter only received only intermittent education, being kept at home to help their parents in market gardens or looking after their younger siblings: 'their school training is practically worthless, while they are subject to influences from without which are likely to perpetuate evil and vicious habits.'

The quality of teaching was also poor: 'our infant methods are so crude that the child's mental growth is stunted by an over-burdening of the memory.'

It did not help that schoolmasters were paid by result, which one teacher told Paynter Allen: 'It is notorious that the instruction has become more mechanical, and that mental training is almost, or quite, neglected.' Again there are hints of the debates over the today's curriculum.



Built in the 1860s Whitton School had been abandoned when this photograph was taken a century later.

Credit Richmond Archives and Local Studies LCF/22919.

Dear Editors,

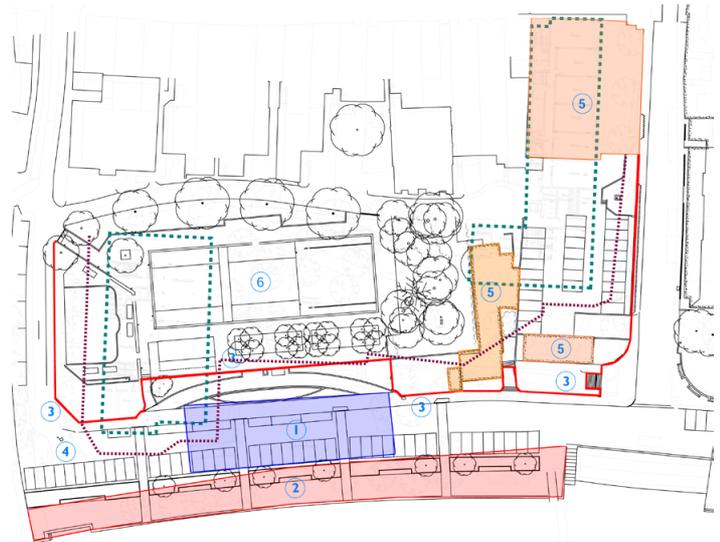
Twickenham Riverside Construction

I have been plodding my way through the 2000 or so pages in the Council’s planning application for Twickenham Riverside and have now reached the Framework Construction documents. I suppose I should have realised it, but the details have actually stopped me in my tracks as to the reality of this insane planning application. I will put Council quotes in bold italics.

It is currently anticipated that the Twickenham Riverside Project will be carried out in one single phase. Diamond Jubilee Gardens will be closed for the duration of the proposed development. It is currently anticipated that construction will commence on the site in the spring summer of 2022 with an estimated duration of 25-30 months.

So we will eventually be allowed back onto the site in 2025. I urge the elderly, children and the disabled to make the most of this safe and enclosed space while it lasts.

A secure site and compound will be established during the early stages of the project enclosed with a 2.4m high timber hoarding along the site boundary. The precise site set up and location of the Contractors compound and storage will be confirmed once a Principal Contractor has been appointed but one possible location would be the Embankment. Site office and welfare facilities will comprise site management offices, meeting rooms, induction room, canteens and welfare facilities. (See area coloured blue on map shown in Framework Construction, [Appendix G](#), as at right)



There is also a map showing access to the site for local residents, including those living on Water Lane, the Embankment, Eel Pie Island and the flats at the back of King Street. There will be a “banksman” who will direct and supervise all traffic movement on to and exiting the site. (See [Appendix E](#), Framework Construction).

All vehicle movements will ensure entry and exit from the site in forward gear to prevent risk to pedestrians outside of the site. Presumably the articulated and large lorries (Iceland) and the refuse lorries servicing the back of the shops on King Street will have to both enter and exit a two way Wharf Lane, as they won’t be able to reach there via the Embankment. How will this affect the traffic on King Street while they swing out in order to make this difficult turn into Wharf Lane, and where will they be able to make the three point turn in order to exit the site again “in forward gear”? And how do they reach Wharf Lane if they are coming from the West?

It is noted that the loading/unloading for Church Street currently takes place at the top of Water Lane. This will either need to be retained “***or re-provided in a new loading bay along King’s (sic) Street fronting 1-5 retail units***”. Another obstacle for the traffic on King Street to overcome.

All the construction details and safety audits will be finally decided after planning permission has been given – and of course it will be given, as the LibDems outnumber others on the planning committee.

With best wishes,
Sue Hamilton-Miller, Twickenham resident

Letters published do not necessarily reflect the views of the Twickenham & Richmond Tribune, its Publisher, its staff or its advertisers.

Letters of approximately 500 words of body text will be printed at our standard 14pt font size, which will publish as a single page.

All letters must be submitted by the end of Thursday, prior to publication the following day on Friday.

The Tribune prefers letters to include the writer’s name, but will publish anonymously provided details are supplied.

Notice of application for a Premises Licence

Notice is hereby given that Cheeky Chops Play Ltd has applied to Richmond Council for a new premises licence at 37-39 York Street, Twickenham, TW1 3LP for Supply of Alcohol between 12-17:30.

Any person who wishes to make a representation in relation to this application must give notice in writing by 14/10/2021 stating the grounds for making said representation to: Richmond Licensing Authority, Regulatory Services Partnership (Serving Merton, Richmond and Wandsworth Councils) Merton Civic Centre, London Road, Morden, Surrey, SM4 5DX or by email: licensing@merton.gov.uk

The record of this application may be inspected Monday to Friday (except Bank Holidays) by prior appointment at the offices of Richmond Licensing Authority, Regulatory Services Partnership (Serving Merton, Richmond and Wandsworth Councils) Merton Civic Centre, London Road, Morden, Surrey, SM4 5DX between the hours of 10.00 a.m. and 4.00 p.m. Information on all new and variation applications received by the Licensing Authority can be viewed on the Council's website www.richmond.gov.uk

It is an offence, under section 158 of the Licensing Act 2003, to knowingly or recklessly make a false statement in or in connection with an application, punishable upon conviction by an unlimited fine.

Birds, Bats and Bombs

For many years an Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) was requested by residents for the Twickenham Riverside site and it was not until this week that an EIA for "Twickenham Riverside" was found, quite by accident, on the internet.

The date on the report is 1 April 2020 and it is labelled as Restricted but leaving it on the internet is probably not the best way to keep the report confidential.

The report states that there are 5 lowland mixed deciduous woodland Habitats of Principal Importance within 1km radius. The site is within a 1km radius of Ham Lands Local Nature Reserve. Habitats suitable for bats and hedgehogs were identified. Apparently works can be arranged to take into account potential effects on birds and/or bats.



The study goes on to say that a 2017 study identified areas of contamination within the southern parts of the site. A preliminary risk assessment report is recommended due to the known falling of a V-1 bomb immediately south of the site; a detailed risk assessment should be completed. A risk assessment should be submitted with the planning application.

Latest Coronavirus News Alert a La Church Street Twickers!

By Shona Lyons



Soon we will have the High Tide Festival (26 Sept) but that is an Eel Pie Records affair so I am sorry I don't have too much information about that but I am sure more will be revealed soon! My news is that we will have a Halloween Event on the 31st of October, so you still have plenty of time to plan your costumes! So far, we are just alerting El Council to this fact, talking to stall holders and traders, and looking at entertainment options but watch this space. Also, we are

going to have a craft fair in Church Street for the Light Switch on event on Sunday the 21st of November. Again, plans have only just begun but the idea will be for quite a few stalls & Xmas entertainments & all the lovely traders in the street will be sure to be putting on great Xmas displays of their wares too!



In Church Street's bargain basement this week we have Snax's ice cream cabinet that they just brought last year but they really

need the space it takes for their tables now that Autumn and winter is coming so they want to offer it to whoever could use it. It is in full working order. Contact Vera at murati@live.co.uk if you would like to take up this offer. We are also trying to make some space and are selling stackable garden chairs and a garden table that we inherited for events but time has come to pass them onto a better home. We are asking just £40 for these and they would be good for someone who has a small space and maybe needs to stack them as the table also is collapsible info@crusadertravel.com / 020 8744 0474



Also, we are selling off the last of the grass that we had for the last Church Street Goes Green Event in 2019. It is grass that was just used once

and so is in great condition. Crusader owns the grass but we need to sell what is left of it as we think the end has come for Church Street Goes Green events. We had them for 2 weekends every year since 2014, but now with the street pedestrianized and all the hospitality traders making the most of their Summer Al Fresco dining options there just isn't the space to have those kind of big summer fairs anymore we think. Some in the street have already brought some for their front spaces, like Pulcinella, which looks really nice and Snax is also going to follow suit, but we will still have about 20 X 4 meters left if anyone wants any please let us know. It is just £5 per square meter (from £8) Email info@crusadertravel.com for more details.

The Illustrious History of Twickenham Riverside

Teresa Read

I am surprised that there are some Councillors associated with the current planning application for luxury flats and a pub on Twickenham Riverside who seem to think there has been forty years of neglect in the area in question. For those councillors and residents who are new to Twickenham I am setting out our history of more recent events.

An email from the Liberal Democrat Party sent to many residents states the forty years error and mentions the exciting public events we can have with their plan but surely, they have not forgotten all the events on Diamond Jubilee Gardens which have taken place and on Twickenham Riverside. (There is more information at the end of this article). Or maybe they are new to Twickenham?

This email which many of us received disingenuously showed three photos of the unused Santander car park next to Water Lane, which the Council purchased and has boarded up for a number of years, not allowing vehicles to use the service road behind the shops. Promotional pictures from Hopkins Architects showed us how it could look. Not rocket science!

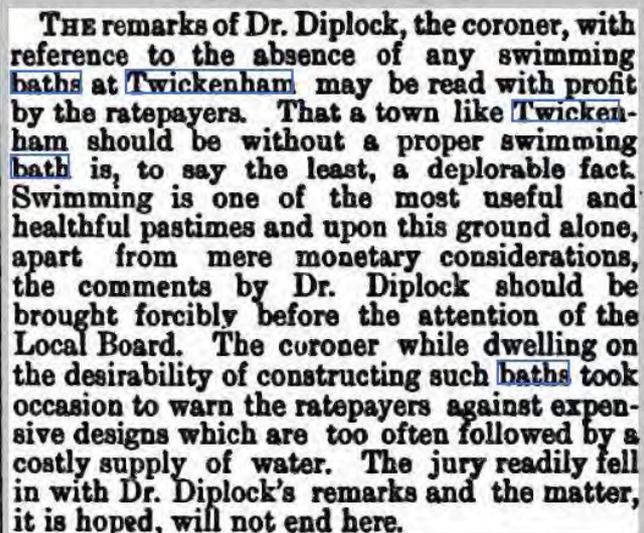
Attached to this unsolicited email was an embedded Clickable link taking the reader straight to the Comment box on the LBRUT Planning website, bypassing other readers' comments, after just having seen photographs of the car park on the far side of the Twickenham Riverside site.

I am also surprised that in the planning application there is no acknowledgement of the illustrious past of the Twickenham Riverside site, including a connection to the royal family acknowledged by letter from Kensington Palace.

For information I will add a synopsis of former residents on the site:

Strawberry Hill (Twickenham) is known as the home of Walpole, Pope and nearer to my home, Abraham Prado, but just down the river - on the Twickenham Riverside site to be developed - an even grander house stood from 1662, Richmond House. The home to many of the rich and famous throughout the centuries although the impressive original house with its outstanding art collection was replaced by a more modest building during the early nineteenth century.

The story starts with the Birkheads. Edward, the first inhabitant (1662) married Eleanor Myddleton.



THE remarks of Dr. Diplock, the coroner, with reference to the absence of any swimming baths at Twickenham may be read with profit by the ratepayers. That a town like Twickenham should be without a proper swimming bath is, to say the least, a deplorable fact. Swimming is one of the most useful and healthful pastimes and upon this ground alone, apart from mere monetary considerations, the comments by Dr. Diplock should be brought forcibly before the attention of the Local Board. The coroner while dwelling on the desirability of constructing such baths took occasion to warn the ratepayers against expensive designs which are too often followed by a costly supply of water. The jury readily fell in with Dr. Diplock's remarks and the matter, it is hoped, will not end here.

Members of the Birkhead and Middleton families emigrated to America and Henry Middleton was a signatory of the American Declaration of Independence. At the end of our project in June 2013 Kate Middleton, the Duchess of Cambridge, was very pleased to receive a copy of "Richmond House" on Twickenham Riverside.

Richmond House also has connections to nearby Strawberry Hill House and it is documented that the descendants of Edward Birkhead, the owner of Richmond House, sold various plots of land to Horace Walpole. Of course, the original property at Strawberry Hill, known as Chopped-Straw Hall, had been bought by the retired coachman of Francis Newport, the Earl of Bradford, who purchased Richmond House in 1682. A very large art

collection belonging to the Newports was later transported to Weston Park.

Throughout the centuries the list of illustrious inhabitants continued with lords, ladies, earls and viscounts, until we come to 1923 and Joseph Theophilus Mears, a founder of the Chelsea Football Club, bought the house. Mears also owned a large fleet of passenger launches on the Thames, cinemas and a coach company.

The rest of the story, as we say, is history. Mears bought the Richmond House site for £10,100 and sold it to the Council for £11,350 a year later. Richmond House was demolished in 1927 and the land along King Street sold to a property developer.



A petition by residents resulted in a public bath house and outdoor swimming pool on the site, opened in 1935 in time for George V's Silver Jubilee. After the pool's sudden and unexpected closure in 1980 proposals for developments have come and gone. It remains to be seen whether the site of Richmond House will see the return of an outdoor pool or whether relatively mundane housing will be the fate of this land which had such a grand history.

In 1924 the Council bought the land registered in the name of the Mayor and the Burgesses

of the Borough, the land was bought for "public walks and pleasure grounds". As most of us know Twickenham Baths, a classic lido of its time, was an important centre of Twickenham life.

LidosAlive: Twickenham Lido <https://lidosalive.com/twickenham.html>

In 2005 a cafe and much-used children's playground were opened on the site. The adjacent Gardens were formally opened by HRH Princess Alexandra and the Council made the following announcement: "Diamond Jubilee Gardens on Twickenham Riverside have been formally protected, following approval by Richmond Council's Cabinet. The gardens have been designated as public open space and are protected for public use, performances and events. The picturesque spot was established and opened in 2012, and is located on the site of the former Twickenham Lido." EVENTS CONTINUED IN THE DIAMOND JUBILEE GARDENS UNTIL THE INTERVENTION OF COVID-19.

Various events took place on the Gardens and on the riverside for a number of years, organized by the Twickenham Riverside Trust, the Twickenham Bid and Twickenham Alive https://worldinfozone.com/features.php?section=Twickenham%27s_News&page=2

At the time of we are waiting to see if the London Borough of Richmond upon Thames will go ahead with a Compulsory Purchase Order on the protected land.

The current Planning Application can be seen here:

https://www2.richmond.gov.uk/lbrplanning/Planning_CaseNo.aspx?strCASENO=21/2758/FUL

ST. MARY'S SUMMER FAIR

By Doug Goodman

Sunshine and the smell of sizzling sausages attracted visitors to the St. Mary's Church and Off The Record summer fair in Twickenham last Saturday.

The cake stall did brisk business while beer and wine were served alongside traditional snacks cooked on a BBQ. Off The Record and Fairtrade stalls were popular while visitors enjoyed music in the sun and children took part in activities.

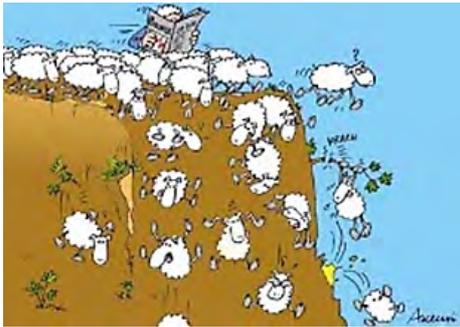


Can We Count On You?

By: TwickWatch

The next Council election, 5 May 2022, is a little over six months away and it's time to ask councillors, "Can we count on you?" before they ask "Can we count on your vote?"

Tired of elections in recent years? YES! Tired of hearing from candidates only a month or two before they want your vote? YES! Do you bother to check their past successes or broken promises? NO! Do you wait until you suddenly start to get leaflets and canvassing calls, from the people many feel you rarely hear from the rest of the time? YES! You aren't bothered about track records of our locally elected representatives? - don't have time! - "add your own excuse/s here!....."



It seems a lot of voters cast their vote on party lines like a lamb to slaughter, without much thought as to the important duties and responsibilities they are delegating and entrusting to their local elected representatives. Shouldn't we all be looking at each candidate's previous record if any, their future potential, their integrity, the abilities and skills they have to offer? Have they previously let voters down, been condescending to residents, failed to live up to previous promises or have they stood as a candidate to truly help people to the best of their ability or to attain personal status?

Why not take advantage of the several months to go, to pursue pertinent questions you seek answers to, giving councillors plenty of time to respond fully and not dodge the issues. Never forget you are awarding them a position of trust and responsibility. Question them regarding current and past performance you may feel have let you down as a voter - it is your right and duty. Transparency, effective consultation, demonstrable concern for the community, meaningful responses and effective actions not just verbiage or diatribe spring to mind.

There is a pre-election time window for a fair exchange of ideas and the elected representatives to prove their worth and your trust in them. Candidate names of course are not known yet but invest a little of your time to ask existing candidates, many of who will stand again, their views and policies for future change. Go on - surprise them! The ballot box is there to change things.

In the end there doesn't have to be, anyone, who understands you individually. There just has to be someone that wants to! Elections belong to the people. People have marched, fought, died and shed endless tears for you to be able to vote. Even if you dislike all of the candidates, maybe vote for the one that you dislike the least BUT VOTE!

You can't be all things to all people.

People in the Borough should [contact the electoral services team at Richmond Council](#) to check if they're already on the register. Postal voting, however busy your life is, gives everyone the opportunity to vote - so why not apply and register for it?

Here in St Margaret's, to give an idea, are just a handful of ongoing concerns aired by a small sample of residents. Highlight your own local concerns to your councillors and let your voice be heard and their voice be accountable.

- Riverside regeneration - retaining lack of facilities for the young
- Policing and crime - begging and shoplifting
- The very dangerous Crown Road/St Margaret's Road junction
- Minimal surface patching of Crown Road - the most patched borough road?
- Riding on footpaths
- Perceived/suspected fudging of consultations

Will you be sticking your head in the sand and not voting or placing your cross at the ballot box without a thought? Will your vote be based on the effectiveness and integrity of your elected councillor?

Watch out for tax scams



By Mac McInerney, Heatham Alliance community group
and Neighbourhood Watch

The season for making tax returns is nearly upon us again and so are scam messages from fraudsters posing as HMRC.

Next month millions of tax return forms have to be sent to HMRC, presenting a prime opportunity for criminals to pressurise individuals and attempt to steal their money. The prime targets of these scams include university students who had part-time jobs and are new to dealing with HMRC.

NB - Any communication through WhatsApp claiming to be from HMRC is a scam.

HMRC warn that if you receive a text message, email or phone call which is unexpected, threatening or demanding unpaid tax, or offers a refund, tax rebate or grant, asks for bank details or other personal information or instructs you to transfer money, then it is suspicious and could very well be a scam.

If in doubt, HMRC advise you not to reply directly. Instead, you should contact HMRC online through GOV.UK straight away.

In the past year almost one million people reported scams to HMRC.

ENSURE YOU STAY SAFE FROM FRAUD

Teddington CC Ground

New gates (team & pedestrian) that have been put in the fencing around the cricket ground to provide disabled and general public access to the playing field area



The Mayor & local MP, Sarah Olney, unveil a third information board about our twin towns in East Sheen

Friday 10th September 2021. Local MP & REA member, Sarah Olney, joined our patron, the Mayor of Richmond, Cllr. Geoff Acton, to unveil another magnificent information board about Fontainebleau & Konstanz outside the East Sheen centre. Prior to the ceremony the board was draped with the flag of Konstanz.



The flag of Fontainebleau was also prominently displayed as St. Margaret's Elastic Band, which is twinned with Union Musicale de Fontainebleau, entertained a large crowd with a programme of English, French & German music before Sarah & Geoff unveiled the attractive information board to the strains of Beethoven's 9th Symphony.

[Click on this link to see a short film of the unveiling](#)

Richmond's Twinned Towns
in France and Germany

Fontainebleau lies 60 km south-east of Paris close to the left bank of the river Seine. It is centred on a magnificent chateau on a site which was inhabited by every French king and emperor over more than 800 years and is now listed as a UNESCO World Heritage Site.

The first royal residence was a hunting lodge built in the 12th century. In the 16th century François I, contemporary and rival of Henry VIII, replaced the earlier building with a Renaissance-style palace which, in its turn, was modified and enlarged by later monarchs. The chateau was beloved by Napoleon Bonaparte, who restored and completely refurbished it after the French Revolution. It was here that Napoleon had a staff of 400 officers of his Old Guard when he abdicated in 1814. With more than 1500 rooms, Fontainebleau remains the most richly furnished of all the French royal chateaux. It also contains one of only two active Real Tennis courts in France.

Konstanz enjoys an idyllic setting on the shores of Lake Constance (Bodensee in German) at the point where the River Rhine leaves the lake, with the Swiss Alps providing a stunning backdrop. Although most of the modern town lies north of the Rhine, the Old Town lies on the south side of the river, surrounded by Swiss territory. Because of this, the historic centre escaped bombing by the Allies during World War II.

The area around Konstanz was inhabited from prehistoric times. The Romans settled the site in the first century AD and it is from the name of a Roman emperor that the name of the town is derived. In the Middle Ages, Konstanz became an important religious and commercial centre, with the only bridge in the region across the Rhine.

The area around Konstanz was inhabited from prehistoric times. The Romans settled the site in the first century AD and it is from the name of a Roman emperor that the name of the town is derived. In the Middle Ages, Konstanz became an important religious and commercial centre, with the only bridge in the region across the Rhine.

Konstanz is known particularly for the Council which was convened there from 1414 to 1418 to resolve the schism of the Catholic Church between rival claimants to the Papacy. The Council led to the election of a new pope, Martin V, the only time that the election of a pope has taken place north of the Alps. During the course of the Council, the Czech religious reformer Jan Hus was called to Konstanz where he was condemned and burned at the stake. The Council is commemorated artistically by the statue of Imperia, erected in 1993 at the entrance to the harbour.

Today, Konstanz is a lively regional centre with a broad economic base and a thriving university. It has become a popular resort for tourists, and for visitors from neighbouring Switzerland. Amongst its many attractions are the cathedral, dating back partly to the 10th century, the Konstanz building where the Council of Konstanz was held, and the oldest continuously used theatre in Germany. The town also encompasses the "flower island" of Mainau with its renowned arboretum and gardens.

The town twinning movement started after World War II as part of the process of reconciliation and to contribute to the peaceful development of Europe. Richmond has been twinned with Fontainebleau in France since 1977 and with Konstanz in Germany since 1983.

The twinning is reaffirmed every five years, with celebrations held in each of the three towns in turn. This information board has been installed to commemorate the reaffirmation which had been due to take place in Richmond in the pandemic year of 2020.

Sporting, cultural and educational links between Richmond and its twinned towns are promoted by the Richmond in Europe Association, which has provided this board under a Civic Pride grant. For further information please go to www.richmondineurope.com

Logos: Richmond Borough Council of Twinned Towns, REA, Civic Pride

This information board is the third of its type to be unveiled in the borough.

The information boards were designed by REA treasurer, Hugh Morrison. The other two can be found in Orleans House Garden & the Riverside Terrace Garden in Richmond. After unveiling the board both Sarah & Geoff remained to chat with local residents.

REA members also engaged with a large

number of interested spectators during & after the ceremony to explain about the opportunities which twinning affords.

Sarah & Geoff later visited East Sheen library, which is currently exhibiting a display about our twin towns to coincide with the unveiling.

In climate week, (1st-8th November), service trees of Fontainebleau, which originate from the world famous Forêt de Fontainebleau, will be planted on the green by the new information board as well at other sites throughout the borough.



Kneller Hall sold to local school

Kneller Hall in Whitton is likely to become a school, as the Ministry of Defence (MOD) has confirmed the site has been sold. New owner Dukes Education has confirmed its intention to transform the Grade II listed building into an Upper School for nearby Radnor House.

Kneller Hall was previously the home of the Royal Military School of Music and has a history of educational use. In 2016 the Secretary of State for Defence announced a long-term plan to optimise the Defence Estate for its future operational requirements. This included confirmation of the intention to release the Kneller Hall site to the market.

To ensure any future development of the site would meet community needs, Richmond Council secured funding from Government as part of the One Public Estate initiative to create a [Supplementary Planning Document \(SPD\)](#) in collaboration with the Defence Infrastructure Organisation (on behalf of the MOD).

The Council adopted the SPD last year, having listened to and taken account of people's views on how the site could be developed and used in the future. The SPD builds on the Council's adopted planning policy for the site to ensure that any future development makes a positive contribution to both Whitton and the wider community and respects the important history of Kneller Hall.



Dukes Education are proposing to create a new home for the Upper School of Radnor House. It is understood that the new owners are keen to reflect a number of the aspirations that are set out in the planning guidance, including showing sensitivity to Kneller Hall's heritage, building links with the local community, creating an ecological corridor, and sharing the site's outdoor space for the benefit of the borough's residents.

The Council will be seeking to work with Dukes Education on its proposals for the building and the wider site to ensure that its important features are protected and enhanced, and to help realise the new owners' stated ambition to place Radnor House at the heart of the community.

CLlr Julia Neden-Watts, Chair of the Environment, Sustainability, Culture and Sports Services Committee for Richmond Council, said:

"Kneller Hall has a unique place at the heart of the Whitton community. The Council voiced its disappointment at the Royal Military School of Music leaving Kneller Hall, but with that beyond our control, we did what we could to ensure the site will have a positive impact on the local community in Whitton for years to come.

"We look forward to working with the new owner to achieve the vision we have developed in conjunction with the local community for this site. Having a viable long-term use for the Grade II listed Kneller Hall, that respects and reflects its heritage significance and cultural legacy, is a key part of the vision.

"We will be seeking to clarify how the new owners intend to support the provision of new homes alongside employment and community uses, which is a key part of the adopted planning policy and vision for this site. For now, I am pleased that the new owner has stated their intentions to create a new ecological corridor as well as build links with local groups and share the site's outdoor spaces."

View the new owner's statement on Kneller Hall [HERE](#)

Sustainable Development

By Teddington Residents Association

Richmond Council's words and policies are ambitious in response to the climate emergency. In its Local Plan, the council commits to the highest standards of sustainable design, energy conservation and efficiency to meet its target for achieving carbon neutrality. However, under greater scrutiny, some of council's development plans appear to fall short of these worthy ambitions.

Elleray Hall redevelopment plans are one such case in point.

When examined by the Richmond Design Review Panel, the body of independent professionals were less than impressed with the councils' endeavours on sustainability. The panel reached a conclusion that:

'For both sites...the team needs to push harder to achieve the highest sustainability in line with the Council's ambitions. We feel there should be a stronger narrative around sustainability and strive for net zero carbon as a Council-led scheme needs to be an exemplar in this regard.'

The Richmond Local Plan clearly states the minimum requirements for the reduction in carbon dioxide emissions; *'All new major residential developments (10 units or more) should achieve zero carbon standards in line with London Plan policy.'*

However, Clive Chapman Architects responsible for the proposed designs on the two sites admit in their Energy and Sustainability Report that, in the case of the proposed housing development, there will indeed be a carbon shortfall.

The council officials appear satisfied that this carbon shortfall can be offset by the proposed carbon offset payment of £20794. The council, as the developer, would effectively be paying itself for failing to meet the net zero carbon targets.

The carbon offset principle sets an unhelpful precedent and reveals a questionable attitude to sustainability. Creating excess further carbon emissions that are then 'offset' by planting trees, for example, legitimises the polluting act. This should be resisted. Rather, it would be more responsible and sustainable to develop in a carbon neutral manner in the first instance.

The option of redeveloping the Elleray Hall on the current site has been dismissed by the council without proper consideration and without any regard for its merits, from financial to reduced amenity impact and, most importantly, reduced environmental impact.

For all its claims to high sustainability standards, the council appears to lack the imagination to create something new from existing assets. Elleray Hall appears structurally sound, is sympathetic in scope and scale and provides an important historical link with the past. The Richmond Design Review Panel noted that the current Elleray Hall building *'represented a structure that is uncommon and dates from the early 20th century.'*

High quality refurbishment of the current structure would represent significant financial savings to the taxpayer whilst also conserving the natural environment.

Reducing the demand for new materials and extending the life cycle of sound structures surely makes for a strong moral argument. No doubt, the new materials and low carbon technologies will support the environmental agenda, but the expenditure of energy associated with demolition and disposal of old material, as well as significant new construction, will remain a debt to be paid by future generations. Reducing emissions associated with the above must surely be a priority.

There are experts who understand the urgency and encourage us to repurpose our architecture rather than tear it down.

Andrew Whalley of Grimshaw Architects writes:

‘Sustainable development is best served by exploring the potential of existing structures before rushing to demolish and build something shiny and new. While we give attention to buildings for reasons of heritage or other architectural importance, we should also consider the inherent sustainability in adaptive reuse projects. Not only are they sustainable, but often they are well-loved by users as well. There’s something rewarding about something that is old repurposed into something new – and potentially exciting.

It should be incumbent on us all to consider the potential in existing structures before gravitating towards a shiny replacement.’

It may well be that a complete rebuild of Elleray Hall on the present site is the best compromise, but we will not know until comprehensive assessments have been carried out to help inform such a significant decision.

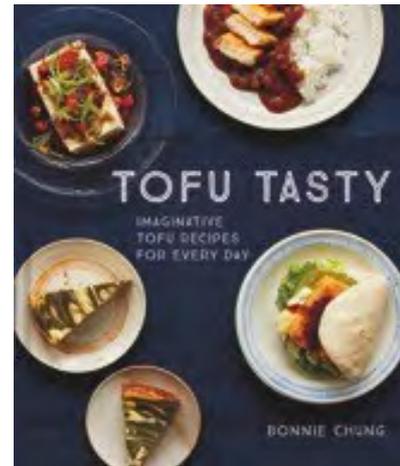
After declaring a Climate Emergency in 2019, we would expect more determined efforts from the Richmond Council to achieve carbon neutrality. The redevelopment plans for Elleray Hall and North Lane East car park do not achieve zero carbon standard, and fall short of council’s own ambitions and the London Plan policy requirements.

If the concerns expressed resonate with you, please join other local residents in opposing the council’s proposals using the link to the council website below:

https://www2.richmond.gov.uk/PlanData2/Planning_CaseNo.aspx?strCASENO=21/2533/FUL

TOFU TASTY – AND IT CERTAINLY IS!

Tofu, or bean curd, is derived from soya. It's made by curdling fresh soya milk, pressing into a solid block and cooling – similar to traditional dairy cheese made by curdling and solidifying milk. The whey is discarded, and the curds pressed. Tofu is a key ingredient in Asian cookery, and incredibly versatile as well as being packed with protein. Not surprisingly it's very popular with vegetarians and vegans, as well as meat eaters, wanting to cut down on their consumption. If you wondered how to prepare and cook tofu, then look no further: a great new cookbook by Bonnie Chung – **Tofu Tasty** - has just been published. Bonnie is the founder of the brand **Miso Tasty**, the UK's first brand dedicated to miso. An award-winning entrepreneur and former food blogger, she's been dedicated to the



research of miso for the last five years. Her Miso Tasty products are now available at 1000 stores in the UK from Sainsbury's to Selfridges, and more recently Miso Tasty has launched a tofu range. In **Tofu Tasty**, Bonnie embraces both her love for Japanese cuisine as well as her own heritage in Chinese and Cantonese cooking.

In **Tofu Tasty**, Bonnie hopes to expand our tofu horizons, sharing the many different types and the multitude of ways in which you can cook it. The book's organized into seven chapters to distinguish between the different types and textures of tofu; crispy dishes like **Oat Flake Salt & Pepper Tofu** and **Lime & Coconut Crispy Tofu Salad**; soft steamed dishes including **Ma Po Tofu with Button Mushrooms** for the spice lovers and a creamy **Curried Coronation Tofu** for those of wanting tofu in a sandwich. There are mashed tofu dishes including a wanton recipe inspired from Bonnie's childhood; a mouth-watering **Tofu & Mushroom Dan Dan Noodles** stir-fry; a whole chapter on the marmite of tofu – fermented tofu – to try out like **Red Fermented Tofu Cauliflower Steak** or a **Noodle Hotpot** and even desserts. Impress your guests with a **Baked Matcha Tofu Cheesecake** or **Tofu Doughnuts with Miso Caramel** – light and fluffy and a tiny bit tart, these definitely hit the spot!

All the recipes are vegetarian and some include twists that may include meat, fish and other swaps. These should whet your appetite!

CURRIED CORONATION TOFU (Fills 6 sandwiches very generously)

'I love a creamy sandwich filling: Marie Rose sauce with prawns (shrimp); cheese and coleslaw; egg and cress... and this one, unashamedly based on the classic Coronation chicken. Firm tofu pieces are coddled in a thick sauce, surrounded by raisins, mango and sweet curry flavours; it is a delightful new arrival in my life. Great in sandwiches, or to top salads and baked potatoes.'

- 150ml/5fl oz/2/3 cup mayonnaise
- 150ml/5fl oz/2/3 cup Greek yogurt
- 2 tsp Worcestershire sauce
- 2 tbsp medium curry powder
- 3 tbsp mango chutney
- 70g/2 1/2 oz/1/2 cup dried apricots, finely chopped
- 40g/1 1/2 oz/1/4 cup golden raisins, the bigger the better
- 1 thumb of fresh ginger, peeled and grated
- 300g/10 1/2 oz block of firm tofu, drained for 20 minutes and chopped into 1cm/1/2 inch cubes
- handful of coriander (cilantro), chopped
- 1/2 tsp sea salt flakes
- pinch of freshly ground black pepper



1. In a large mixing bowl, simply mix together the mayonnaise and yogurt until combined. Add the Worcestershire sauce, curry powder and mango chutney and mix thoroughly. Add the dried fruits and the grated ginger and mix again.
2. Carefully fold in the tofu, being careful not to mix too hard, which would break up the pieces.
3. Add the coriander and season with the salt and pepper.

TWISTS: Adding some finely chopped walnuts or celery brings extra crunch and texture. To make this recipe vegan, simply swap the mayonnaise with vegan mayonnaise and the Greek yogurt with soya or almond milk yogurt.

OAT FLAKE SALT & PEPPER TOFU (Serves 2 as a main course, or 4 as a starter or side dish)

'An absolute classic; the combination of salt and pepper is delightful. Creamy tofu calms the dish down, while the sharp seasoning teases the palate. This dish is all about chasing that salty, tantalizing heat, down to the final bits of charred onion. Oat flakes provide my killer twist; plump and ready to take on the magic dust, they add that extra 'nuggetty' chew, allowing the punchy flavours to linger for longer and the tofu to shine even more brightly. Here I take on the challenge of pushing this already 'A' dish to 'A star'... and I dare you to leave a single morsel behind.'

- 300g/10 1/2oz firm tofu, drained for 20 minutes and sliced into 1.5cm/1/2 inch cubes
- 100g/3 1/2oz/3/4 cup cornflour (corn starch)
- 6 tbsp vegetable oil, plus extra if needed
- 2 tsp sea salt flakes
- 1 tsp freshly fine-ground black pepper
- 1 large chilli, deseeded and finely sliced, plus extra to serve
- 2 spring onions (scallions), finely sliced, plus extra to serve
- 4-5 tbsp jumbo rolled oats
- leaves from 2 coriander (cilantro) sprigs
- greens or salad, and rice, to serve (optional)



1. Put the tofu cubes in a shallow dish with the cornflour and turn them gently, to coat all sides.
2. Heat half the oil in a large frying pan (skillet) over a high heat until bubbling hot, then add the cubes one by one, making sure there is at least 1cm/1/2 inch between each cube. (You may need to do this in batches.) If you need more oil to fry all the tofu, add a little more. Turn the cubes until all sides are crisp and golden. Drain on kitchen paper (paper towels).
3. In a small bowl, mix the salt and pepper together.
4. In a clean frying pan, heat up the remaining oil for 2 minutes, then add the chilli and spring onions. Stir-fry for 2 minutes, then add the oats and sprinkle with the salt and pepper. Stir-fry gently for a further 2 minutes, until the oats are golden and have taken on the flavours.
5. Add the crispy tofu, tossing it in the pan until the seasonings coat the cubes. Serve immediately, scattered with more chilli and spring onion and the coriander. Just as it is, this is a great starter; add greens or salad and rice if you are eating it as a main course.

TWISTS: This recipe is also great with whole button mushrooms instead of tofu, or – which is the classic dish – with squid.

Tofu Tasty: Imaginative tofu recipes for every day by Bonnie Chung, published by Pavilion Books. Images: Yuki Sugiura.

A Dog's Solution

by Richard Franklin

Charterhouse Square Productions at Baron's Court Theatre until 2nd October

Beyoncé is a street-dweller, she has a home but it's chaotic and she prefers the street and the companionship of her 'dog' Jimmy. Alongside this she worries about the state of the planet and where climate change and other related world issues will lead. Over the course of an hour and with the help of Jimmy and several other characters, Beyoncé examines the future of the developed world via a mix of metatheatre, a little pantomime and a dash of school play. Such is *A Dog's Solution*.



Opening with what might be a conventional story line the play widens out. Two young men appear from time to time and offer small vignettes and explanatory asides. There is also a mysterious old Bag Person with philosophical insights (and a rich father), a lobbyist and a suited corporate-type to complete the spectrum of present day world influences. After the interval the audience is involved in the proceedings, voting, winning virtual prizes in a section that needs a clearer point than it currently has.

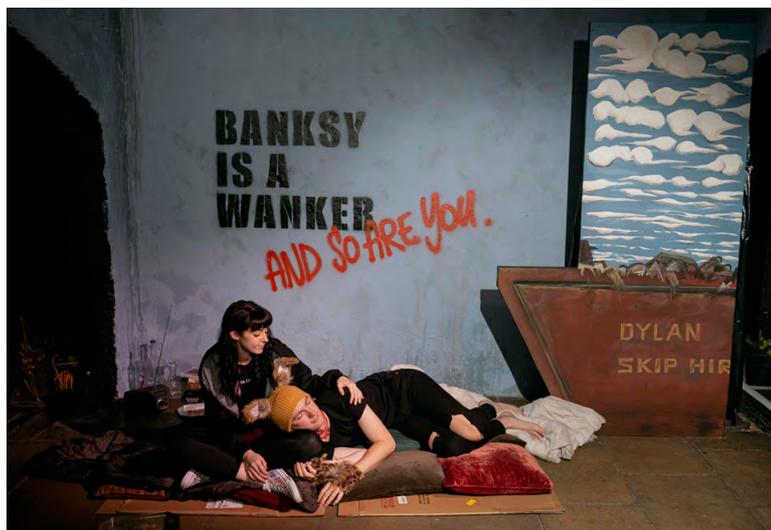
The actors can only be praised. Carolyn McCallion's performance as Beyoncé is mature, authentic and rather elegant. Benedict Esdale, as Jimmy the dog is endearing in a challenging role; Chris Monplaisir suitably eccentric as the Bag Person, and Casey Jones and Oscar Farmer, despite a slight air of self-consciousness, work well together as Gus and Tom, the chorus pair. David (Marc Gordon) and Constansia (Seden Asti Eron) as corporate man and lobbyist are underwritten as characters, but nonetheless acquit themselves well. Placing those two characters in the action more often might provide balance to the argument and prevent it from losing focus.

A Dog's Solution is an ambitious attempt to examine global politics, interrogate the means by which we've arrived at our present difficult point, and explain why we are all, probably, doomed

Read Eleanor Lewis' review at

www.markaspen.com/2021/09/12/dogs-soln

Photography by Alice Lubbock





Barons Court Alive

StarChild, at The Curtain's Up Theatre, Baron's Court

A balmy September evening, a quirky pub in a side street in Barons Court, a darkened, vaulted cellar, with a small stage illuminated by an artfully placed light string; add in a poetic girl with flowing red hair, dressed in paisley top and pyjama-striped trousers, delivering heartfelt folk-based compositions whilst accompanying herself on acoustic guitar, supported by a stylish young chap on a jazz-voiced electric guitar. Top it all off with a decent pint and one could be back in 1966. But this is no mere flibbertigibbet fantasy, no boozy bagatelle; no, indeed. This is *Baron's Court Live* and the aforementioned songstress is the lyrical Aurora Manola, who, with Deniz Stern on electric guitar, make up StarChild. The theatre is in an intimate space, in what was the cellar of the pub. Old cinema chairs form the short rows around three sides of the playing area, adding to the feel of a different era.

This was the premier for the music performed in the first set, some written by Aurora herself and some in collaboration with Deniz and others. The songs embody the influences of the great female folk artists of yore, but the songs have their own identity and give a relaxed and thoughtful insight into the duo's musings. Aurora's voice gently engaged us and kept us eager to hear every next phrase. Deniz Stern supported, enhanced and decorated the songs with tasteful Blues and Country influenced licks and added a relaxed baritone vocal harmony where required. The audience were vocal in their support for the folk-based output and so was I.



The second set was a little more muscular in its approach. Aurora and Deniz were joined by Trystan Winn-Davies and it was immediately apparent that Trystan is a strong and confident performer, vocally accomplished and happy to communicate with the audience directly. This was a covers set, delivered with great energy and enthusiasm and deservedly received in likewise manner, particularly by this old geezer. These three worked well as a trio in a very satisfying evening of music in an atmospheric venue.

Read Vince Francis's review at www.markaspen.com/2021/09/12/barons-court-alive

Photography by Alice Lubbock



Ordinary Days

by Adam Gwon

BROS Theatre Company, Hampton Hill Theatre, until 18th September

A big city can seem cold and impersonal; its anonymous people are overwhelmed by its demands. But look closely and see the individuals there. They are trying to make sense of their lives, each to have a meaning and a name. One such city, New York, is the setting for *Ordinary Days*, a paired-back musical about four individuals, their relationships with each other and with that city post “9/11”.

Adam Gwon’s *Ordinary Days* is a challenging sung-through song-cycle, which becomes thematically entwined as the story progresses.

It is an ensemble piece, but each of the skilful cast brings a different timbre and texture, both vocally and in characterisation, a tribute to the quality of the four singers. BROS’ production weaves the many themes of *Ordinary Days* into a wistful extended poem.

Warren, frustrated by his own lack of success, writes epigrams on pieces of paper and leaves them about the city. [Sam Sugarman](#) delivers the cheeky chappie cheerfulness of the eccentric Warren, his edgy tenor adding a hint of something unsettling. Deb is writing a master’s dissertation. However, she has become disillusioned and cynical. Things come to a head when she loses her Filofax, later retrieved by Warren. Deb is a gem to play, and the versatile Abby Francis’s jazz mezzo attacks not only the anxiety of the role, but its humour.

Jason finds it difficult to express his emerging love for Claire. Adam Stickler portrays Jason with great charm, and his warm tenor voice in *Favourite Places* makes the repressed romanticism of Jason really touching. Claire is trammelled by the past, but in soprano Emily Murray’s picture of Claire we just feel the secret of her reticence to accept her much desired new life with Jason, even if we do not yet understand it

Read Mark Aspen’s review at

www.markaspen.com/2021/09/15/ordn-days

Photography by JoJo Leppink



Grant Shapps – All Change!!

Travel news by Bruce Lyons

As Millicent Martin would have said “What a Week that Was “

Our revered Transport Minister probably realises that many of us have learnt our way round his disciplines, protocols and Traffic Lights (that was!) and more. So, thinks Grant, if we change things it might look like more freedom but for most it will still confuse! Give em more places to go and then put caveats in – and other little dodges. Thou Shall Not travel! But our world is getting larger at last!

Grant Shapps removed from the Red List six notable tourist destinations

Turkey, Maldives, Egypt, Sri Lanka, Oman and Kenya all good for some winter sun and especially for the October School Break.

Good news for many, but beware it is sure to release pent up desires to have a holiday but prices are sure to increase – despite the wider range of destinations available.



Sharm el Sheik, really hot in October & for a 4* all-inclusive on Saturday 23rd prices are from £800 – far less in cost than the same standard in the Canaries yesterday! Don't delay

the prime days will fill quickly. What's new? Well the Canaries is just about as expensive as it has been ever in recent years for prime dates, but this evening's news will spread the choice and whilst they are Warm, Sharm el Sheik will be a good & affordable choice for October, as the Red Sea is warmer and the seas are full of amazing snorkelling. Tomorrow we will see Hurghada (opposite) available too and this gives rise to two weeks with a Beach and a Nile Cruise available. You will be able to have an amazing holiday for around £1000 – something that has not been available for the best part of two years! Another little comment on School Break is that as there were so few hot destinations available at affordable prices, the Eastern Med tour operators have now extended their season and their October Break offerings have incredible prices at amazing quality. A feature of the Eastern Med is that the sea stays warm till far beyond the end of October! £2000 will buy you Saturday flights to Chana in Crete, a villa for three with pool – car hire and all under £2000 – really good value.



Now for something completely different. I am sure you have all noticed that GREEN little Iceland has become Mega popular this last two years. Of course, it is a great destination with

all its natural space, green lands and waterfalls, glaciers, hot sulphur pools, volcanoes, geysers and much more. What it doesn't have is an inexhaustible supply of SUN SEA & SUN Well! Hang on there a New Iceland coming to an airport near you! Yes, the Azores! And its vast Archipelago in the mid-Atlantic has caught the eye of BA. I remember stopping off there on a Concorde flight there once in the middle of the night of the way to Caracas (Venezuela) – anyway from next Summer BA will fly twice a week, as well as the current weekly flight from Gatwick and twice weekly Ryan air flights and this will make the Azores a sought after Destination. Whale Watching, Diving, wonderful scenery, a rich country in wildlife, agriculture, flora and more. Go there before the hordes but you need to know that it is much warmer than Iceland and the cost of living is lower too. You can find good sandy beaches as well.

Busy week dear reader – but at last the world is opening-up. We could do with a few more doors open to the East! If you get a chance, please mention that to Mr Shapps – He did at least keep his job!

WIZ TALES - Peru

The Republic of Peru is in western South America; Lima is the capital city.

Early civilizations in Peru included the Chavin (1500-300 BC), the Moche (200 BC-700 AD) and the Chimú Kingdom (900-1450 AD). The Inca Empire developed much later, reaching its peak in the early sixteenth century.

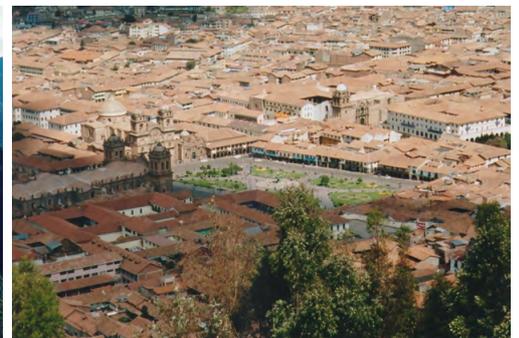
The Nazca people (200 BC-900 AD) made huge geometrical drawings in the desert, some over 200 m long. These are known as the Nazca Lines - designated a World Heritage site - and thought to have been made for ritual astronomical purposes.

Peru is a mountainous country with steep canyons, a narrow coastal plain and Amazon rainforest. There are many rivers and a number of lakes. Lake Titicaca, in the Central Andes, is the highest navigable lake in the world and the largest lake in South America.

World Heritage sites also include Huascarán National Park, Manu National Park, Rio Abiseo National Park and the historical Sanctuary of Machu Picchu.

The most well-known Peruvian archaeological site is Machu Picchu, often referred to as the Lost City of the Incas. Machu Picchu is set dramatically on the eastern slopes of the Andes, its walls and terraces blending with the natural environment.

Also high in the Andes, the Inca city of Cuzco was an Inca urban centre. However, Baroque churches and palaces were built over the ruins of the Inca city when it became a Spanish possession.



More information and photographs of Peru:

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



The Children

by Lucy Kirkwood

Directed by: Michelle Hood

Saturday 18 to Saturday 25 September

Mary Wallace Theatre

Richmond Shakespeare Society



at the Mary Wallace Theatre

Lucy Kirkwood may be considered a bit of a soothsayer – her play **'The Children'** premiered at the Royal Court Theatre Downstairs, London, on 17 November 2016 and in the five years since, heat bubbles, catastrophic wildfires and devastating floods have sharply focussed the world's attention on the issues of climate change and the impact of people on the natural world – topics which have been discussed, but largely ignored, for at least three decades. Audiences and reviewers loved it

- *"Grips compulsively"* The Guardian
- *"A richly suggestive and beautifully written piece of work.... Kirkwood is the most rewarding dramatist of her generation"* The Independent
- *"A witty, slippery play of debate as well as an engaging character study"* The Stage
- *"This is sci-fi kitted out with real people, real dilemmas, real scope. It's really good"* Time Out



Transferring to Broadway in 2017, with the same cast of Francesca Annis, Deborah Findlay and Ron Cook, it received two Tony Award nominations - for Best Play and Best Featured Actress in a Play (Findlay). Its Australian premiere, in 2018, won awards for Best Play, Best Direction and Best Female Actor in a Play

The play is set in 'a small cottage on the east coast', where Hazel and Robin, two retired nuclear scientists in their 60's, are living in the aftermath of an accident at the local power station where they used to work. Even though electricity is rationed and a Geiger counter is on hand

to check for signs of radiation, they preserve a semblance of normality: Robin now farms, while Hazel practises yoga and the pair keep in touch with their eldest daughter, Lauren. But when Rose, a fellow nuclear physicist whom they haven't seen for 38 years, suddenly turns up, their precariously ordered existence is disrupted, and they are forced to consider the impact of their lives on the next generation.

In 2019, the Guardian rated the play at No 3 in a list of the 50 best theatre shows of the 21st century stating: *"Lucy Kirkwood's probing, thoughtful play showed three nuclear physicists reunited in the wake of a disaster at a local power station. This opened up huge questions about the poisoned legacy we are handing on to future generations and about whether having children heightens or diminishes one's sense of responsibility. It was an impressive, slow-burning work that confirmed Kirkwood's status in the front rank of British dramatists"*

Come along and see if you agree with these impressed reviewers:

"Lucy Kirkwood's new play is a richly suggestive and beautifully written piece of work, provoking questions that will continue to nag and expand in your mind long after the lights have slowly died..."

"Lucy Kirkwood's "The Children" is two achievements rolled into one. First, it's a terrific traditional drama, in which three relatable characters speak to one another about life and loss in the confines of a kitchen. Second, it's a piece of social commentary about our moral duty to look after our Earth – to make sure it's in good shape for future generations"



Grand Opera at Your Doorstep

On October 22-24th Rose Opera returns to its home at the beautiful Victorian Normansfield Theatre in Teddington to perform Richard Wagner's early opera, *The Flying Dutchman*. With three performances only, it is promising to be a memorable event in many respects.

During the pandemic many performing arts venues remained silent, a difficult time for all musicians. In March 2020 Rose Opera had to halt its *Dutchman* rehearsals, just two weeks before the opening night. In October 2021, Rose Opera, which is local to Teddington and specialises in grand operatic repertoire, is fully ready to return with a blast - with a full orchestra, chorus, and an impressive line-up of soloists, many of whom are local to Surrey and West London. In all, approx. 80 people will be involved in each performance.

Singing Wagner is a formidable challenge, requiring singers' dramatic voices to "ride" the full orchestra of 40, create the drama and tell the story. Above all, it is beautiful symbiosis of vocal and orchestral colours and the beauty of human voice supported and enhanced by stunning orchestration. In Act 3 the two choruses – the Scottish sailors (Wagner's original edition is set in Scotland) and the ghostly crew of the *Flying Dutchman* (fondly nicknamed by the singers in the rehearsals as "zombies") enter a vocal battle not to be missed.



Staging Wagner is a test for a company of any size and Rose Opera are rising to the occasion to perform this masterpiece to audiences in Teddington. A set has been built specially for this production, including a wreck of the *Dutchman's* ship. This will be the first *Flying Dutchman* performance in the Normansfield Theatre's 142-year history as well as the first documented performance in Teddington.

Since its foundation in August 2018, Rose Opera has taken a keen interest in supporting young up-and-coming singers through the **Rose Opera Young Artist program**. The second cohort of young singers have just started to rehearse with the company. Previous Young Artists have had the opportunity to perform opera scenes and arias at Rose Opera's Gala Concerts, whilst this year's cohort may

also be able to perform at Rose Opera's newly established recital series, **Rose Opera In Recital**. This art-song series kicks off on November 17th with a beautiful program of Mahler, Strauss and Rachmaninov in the **1901 Arts Club** in Waterloo. The inaugural concert also features a contemporary British composer, James Francis Brown. Consequent recitals, mostly hosted in Normansfield Theatre, will bring to the audience an exquisite collection of rarely performed song cycles by Sibelius, Wolf, Prokofiev as well as all time favourites.

In the two and a half years since its foundation, Rose Opera has taken on some ambitious projects. The Company's maiden opera was Tchaikovsky's stunning last opera, *Iolanta*. This was followed closely by two of Mozart's masterpieces, *Idomeneo* and *Così fan tutte*. *Der fliegende Holländer* is the company's fourth production since its foundation. All four of these have been completely new productions, with costumes, sets, staging and musical direction conceived to allow the company to present an innovative and dynamic take on these musical masterpieces.

In March 2019 the team could not imagine how different its 2020 season would be. The Company is returning to the wonderful Normansfield theatre full of hope and optimism that the 2021 season will be one to remember!

www.roseopera.co.uk

<https://langdondowncentre.org.uk/event/der-fliegende-hollander/>

Rose Opera is grateful for and acknowledges the support of Big Yellow Sheen, Waitrose and The Normansfield Theatre.



St Mary's University

St Mary's Bakhita Centre to Lead Research Programme on Survivors of Modern Slavery

The Bakhita Centre for Research on Slavery, Exploitation and Abuse at St Mary's University, Twickenham is to undertake innovative research into British survivors of modern slavery experience of support in Britain.

The study is one of five announced innovative research projects announced by the Modern Slavery and Human Rights Policy and Evidence Centre (Modern Slavery PEC) from its call for research on survivor support and recovery.



The five projects aim to fill gaps in evidence on the best ways to improve the current support system for children and adults with lived experience of modern slavery so that systems are better able to support victims in short and long-term recovery towards fulfilling their full life potential.

The research funded in the project aims to cover a range of areas key to improving the policy response in the UK for survivor care, with three projects looking at adults and two at children affected by modern slavery practices. For adults, they include projects on survivors' mental wellbeing, improving support for British nationals and establishing a set of core short and long term outcomes

for survivors. For children, they're set to improve participation and outcomes and examine best practice based on the example of the Scottish Guardianship Service.

Speaking of the research Dr Carole Murphy, Acting Director of Bakhita Centre, said, "The support for people who were identified as survivors of modern slavery in the UK was established with the needs of foreign nationals in mind. Although awareness of the plight of British nationals affected by modern slavery has grown in recent years, the specific needs of British Survivors have not been well understood. Our study aims to change that and produce clearer protocols for improved support going forward."

Executive Chair of Arts and Humanities Research Council (AHRC), which funds the research, Professor Christopher Smith, said, "AHRC is committed to bringing marginalised communities into the research process and supporting research that is created, used and valued by all.

"Through listening to the lived experiences of modern slavery victims, the projects funded as part of this investment will make a vital contribution towards supporting and protecting some of the most vulnerable members of society.

"These projects are an example of the crucial role that AHRC is paying in tackling contemporary challenges in order to build a better future for all."



St Mary's
University
Twickenham
London

St Mary's University

St Mary's Climbs to Highest Ever Position in Good University Guide

St Mary's University, Twickenham has climbed to its highest ever ranking in the 2022 edition of the Times and Sunday Times Good University Guide.



The annual ranking, which compares universities from across the UK in a range of categories, sees St Mary's climb 19 places to sit in its highest ever ranking of 67th in the league table.

The 2022 edition of the guide also marks the first time St Mary's has sat in the top half of the national ranking. Locally, the University came 12th in London, being ranked second for teaching quality and student experience.

The findings of the Good University Guide come following excellent feedback from students in the 2021 National Student Survey (NSS). The annual survey, which asks final year students to rate their university experience in a range of areas, found that students at the University have rated St Mary's second in London for overall student satisfaction, excluding small and specialist institutions. St Mary's also continued to outperform the wider sector, ranking 18th nationally for overall satisfaction, 6.3% ahead of the sector average.

These results are testament to the work of the amazing academic teams we have at the University, and the focus they place on delivering the best experience and outcomes for our students. Anthony McClaran

St Mary's also ranked second in London amongst higher education institutions with university status for learning opportunities and learning community. The University outperformed the sector average in the six other key categories:

- Teaching on my course
- Academic support
- Student voice
- Assessment and feedback
- Learning resources
- Organisation and management

Speaking of the publication of the Good University Guide, St Mary's Vice-Chancellor Anthony McClaran said, "I am delighted to see St Mary's enter the top half of the Good University Guide for the first time. These results are testament to the work of the amazing academic teams we have at the University, and the focus they place on delivering the best experience and outcomes for our students.

"We are just a few days away from the start of the new academic year and I look forward to welcoming our new and returning students back to campus to continue their academic journeys. We place the student experience at the heart of learning and students will benefit from our new Face to Face + model for academic delivery this year. Face to Face + places in person on campus activity firmly at the core of teaching, underpinned by the best of virtual learning."

St Mary's Student's Union Education President Vic Calvino said, "This is great news for the University and the student body, I know that we will all be proud to be Simmies today! The SU Team and I look forward to working with the University to carry on these brilliant results over the coming years."



**St Mary's
University**
Twickenham
London

Richmond CVS online Trustee Recruitment Event

Thursday 14 October 2021, 6.30pm – 8pm

Join us for this year's online Trustee Recruitment Event.

Being a trustee is a specialised form of volunteering and fulfils a vital role in any charity. Richmond CVS' friendly informal event is one of the best ways to learn more about it, as well as hear directly from a range of local charities that you could get involved with right now.

Every charity needs a diverse team of individuals on their board, with different backgrounds, skills, experience and interests but a shared passion and goal.

You could be the perfect addition to introduce fresh ideas and knowledge to help an organisation's continued development.

Trustee roles are strategic and can often fit around regular commitments or employment and they can also be a great means of personal development too.

Whether trusteeship is a completely new idea for you, or you're on the lookout for a new role, we'd love to have you with us. It's free to register and open to anyone aged over 18 years.

Find out more and register for your free place [HERE](#).



Ever thought about being a local trustee?



Join Us

Richmond CVS Online Trustee Recruitment Event

Thursday 14 October 2021, 6.30pm - 8pm



www.richmondcv.org.uk



The Sunday Times Good University Guide, top universities in London

Imperial College London has won **The Times and The Sunday Times' University of the Year and University of the Year for student satisfaction** thanks to improved National Student Survey scores between 2020 and 2021. Imperial has also overtaken London School of Economics and Political Science as the top university in London, now ranked nationally fourth and fifth respectively.

Alastair McCall, editor of **The Times and The Sunday Times Good University Guide**, said:

“Imperial College showed the university sector how to deliver higher education for undergraduates in lockdown. No one did it better, a fact reflected in this year’s National Student Survey, where Imperial improved its scores for student satisfaction during a year that took a heavy toll on those scores elsewhere. It was a remarkable achievement and Imperial is a worthy winner of both our University of the Year award and the title of University of the Year for Student Experience.”

“While it innovated for its students to maximum effect during the pandemic, Imperial also played a critical role in the life of the nation. Its epidemiologists kept the country and the government informed of where the pandemic was going next, helping shape the government response to the unfolding situation. At a time of national and international crisis, Imperial demonstrated its worth as an academic powerhouse of global significance.”

London universities continue to bookend the new UK university academic rankings published by **The Times & The Sunday Times Good University Guide 2022**, with three institutions in the top 10 and five in the bottom 10 including Ravensbourne and East London who occupy two of the bottom three spots in the national rankings.

Goldsmiths, University of London is the biggest riser in this year’s list having gone up from 36 places from 97th to 61th. The University of Arts has also considerably jumped up the list by 31 places from 83rd to 52nd.

The Times and The Sunday Times Good University Guide 2022 provides the definitive rankings for UK universities and the most comprehensive overview of higher education in Britain. It includes profiles on 135 universities, making use of the latest data published in the past two months.

After a year of closed campuses and a move to online learning, the new edition of the Good University Guide reveals most universities have seen a dramatic drop in student satisfaction and teaching quality scores in the latest National Student Survey.

A fully searchable website with 70 subject tables, full interactive tables and additional features goes online on The Times and The Sunday Times on Friday 17th September: <https://www.thetimes.co.uk/article/good-university-guide-in-full-tp6dzs7wn>

A 96-page supplement will be published with The Sunday Times on 19th September.

In support of prospective and current students The Times and The Sunday Times has partnered with Perlego, the online library of academic titles. Every new student subscriber to The Times and The Sunday Times will get 6 months free access to Perlego, all for £26 a year.

<https://www.thetimes.co.uk/subscribe/student/>



THE SUNDAY TIMES

London rank	University	National rank	Last year's national rank	2021 National student survey teaching quality (%)	2021 National student survey student experience (%)	Graduate prospects (% in high-skilled jobs or graduate-level study)	Completion rate (%)
1	Imperial College London	4	5	77.7	79.3	92.0	97.5
2	London School of Economics and Political Science	5	4	75.3	69.8	92.0	96.5
3	University College London	7	8	72.8	69.9	85.3	94.3
4	King's College London	18	30	71.5	65.6	82.8	91.3
5	Royal Holloway, University of London	26	22	74.5	70.5	72.5	91.2
6	SOAS, University of London	33	50	72.1	66.4	67.8	83.5
7	Queen Mary, University of London	40	41	72.1	69.3	74.6	91.6
8	University of the Arts London	52=	83=	70.9	56.7	58.2	85.5
9	City, University of London	55	82	68.5	67.5	79.0	88.1
10	Goldsmiths, University of London	61	97	67.4	57.7	61.3	79.1
11	University of Roehampton	65	78	73.1	68.3	60.2	77.5
12	St Mary's University, Twickenham	67	86	80.4	78.1	66.6	81.1
13	University of West London	74	60=	80.3	75.5	62.4	77.5
14	St George's, University of London	78	49	64.5	59.2	94.4	93.0
15	University of Greenwich	89=	98	74.9	70.0	71.0	81.7
16	London Metropolitan University	100	125	81.0	74.9	57.1	68.0
17	Kingston University	101=	104=	75.1	69.2	62.2	82.4
18	Brunel University London	121	88	63.4	59.2	67.1	87.4
19	Middlesex University	123	121	71.6	66.8	59.3	76.2
20	London South Bank University	127	123	71.8	63.1	65.4	75.2
21	University of Westminster	129	126	70.7	66.5	57.3	80.2
22	University of East London	130	129	74.8	69.4	57.7	76.5
23	Ravensbourne University	131	130	65.8	54.7	61.4	79.7

The guide provides prospective students and their families with the right information to make an informed choice about their higher education, evaluating everything from satisfaction with teaching quality and the student experience through to degree completion rates and graduate employment prospects.

Readers can also join in the conversation online by using the hashtag: #gooduniguide

PGB statement - new Covid-19 strategy for the elite game in England

THE PROFESSIONAL Game Board (PGB) has today announced a new Covid-19 strategy that will incentivise players and management from the elite game in England to be fully vaccinated.

From Monday 13 September, the policy will allow Gallagher Premiership Rugby, Allianz Premier 15s or Championship Rugby clubs to relax some elements of the current COVID-19 Minimum Operating Standards (MOS) once they reach a vaccination rate of 85% in both the player and staff groups.

Following a recommendation from the PGB's COVID-19 Minimum Operating Standards Review Group, the PGB has approved the new approach and remains committed to the two core principles of protecting the health of all players and staff and reducing the risk of any disruptions to matches or training.

Therefore, once both the playing group and staff group reach a level where 85% or more are fully vaccinated, elements of the current COVID-19 Minimum Operating Standards (MOS) can be relaxed. For the avoidance of doubt, a fully vaccinated person is currently defined as two weeks post their last dose of the Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency (MHRA) approved vaccine. It should also be noted that these changes apply to domestic competitions only and it is likely that other cross-border competition standards may vary. The EPCR testing and MOS requirements will be updated once agreed with EPCR.

Chris Booy, chair of the PGB said: *"The health and safety of everyone involved in the elite game is our priority and we know it is vital we ensure the vast majority of players and management are fully vaccinated as soon as possible. It is still a personal choice as to whether you receive a vaccination, but we want to strongly encourage as many players and staff as possible to be vaccinated so that we can proactively contribute as much as possible to the safety of our wider communities and of our players, staff and supporters. Whilst we hope that there will be no need to reverse any of these proposed changes, the PGB will continue to review all MOS in line with Government advice."*

The PGB can confirm that from Monday 13 September once a club reaches a level of 85% vaccination status in both the overall playing and support staff groups the following relaxations may be applied subject to club risk assessment:

Training Environment

- Social distancing for players and support staff can be removed both indoors and outdoors.
- Masks will be recommended but no longer compulsory for players and support staff both indoors and outdoors.
- Masks must still be worn by players in the medical room

Match Day Environment

- Social distancing for players and support staff within the Red Zone is no longer required. This will apply to all areas of the Red Zone including the changing rooms and substitution benches.
- Masks will be recommended but no longer compulsory for players and support staff both indoors and outdoors.
- Medical staff will continue to wear appropriate PPE for the role that they are undertaking and masks must still be worn by players in the medical room.
- Where there is a match that is played between a team that is less than 85% vaccinated and a team that is more than 85% vaccinated, only the team who are more than 85% vaccinated will be able to apply these new MOS. Any team that is less than 85% will still be required to follow the current MOS in full.

Testing

- Given the relaxing of these other measures, the PGB believes it is important that the current testing processes remain in place whilst any impact of the above changes are being evaluated.
- All clubs will still, therefore, be required to conduct a minimum of two lateral flow tests (LFTs) per week, however, the earliest time-point when a pre-match day test can be undertaken will move from match day minus two to match day minus one (no change at Championship and AP15s).
- The testing requirement for all external visitors remains unchanged and any Red Zone match day staff will need to take a LFT on match day minus one or on match day itself, regardless of vaccination status.



Ocean Cycling continue their support of Princess Alice Hospice

Since 2015, Ocean Cycling has been raising valuable funds for Princess Alice Hospice by cycling 300km from the Hospice in Esher to Paris; now in its sixth year, the group was determined to continue the event despite COVID restrictions, which necessitated them rerouting from Esher to Land's End instead.



Ahead of their quest to raise funds, the cyclists gathered at the Hospice to fill up on bacon butties, croissants, tea and coffee before being waved off on their adventure: four gruelling days of cycling across the English countryside, covering a total of 580km to reach their destination in Redruth for a well-earned rest.

The annual event, which is organised by Kevin Taylor and Matt Pegg, started out with just four riders and has expanded to 20 this year. Since beginning the event, they've managed to raise almost £80,000 for the Hospice and donations for this year's challenge are still coming in two weeks after the event. Their target this year was £10,000 and at the time of writing the total raised was more than £12,500.



Organiser Kevin said: "It feels amazing to finally put on a ride for the Hospice, after having to cancel last year's event. This one is a bit different to our usual trip but one we won't forget!"

Community Partnerships and Events Lead at the Hospice, Claire Woodward, said: "What a great group they are and what a fantastic job they're doing of raising funds for us. Four days in the saddle with only short breaks sounds like hell to me, but they battle on, through blisters and muscle aches to do an amazing job - thank you guys."

Anyone interested in taking up a cycling challenge for the Hospice can register here -

<https://www.pah.org.uk/events/category/cycling/>



The Environmental Land Management scheme

Core elements of the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs' (Defra's) new environmental grant schemes for farmers are not yet in place, increasing the risk to the initial roll out planned for 2022.

Under the EU's Common Agricultural Policy (CAP), English farmers received around £2.4 billion annually. Approximately 80% of this was distributed through the Basic Payments Scheme (BPS), which provided direct payments to farmers. Following EU Exit, the Government is phasing out these direct payments over seven years, starting in 2021. While there is considerable uncertainty over the financial impact this will have on farmers, Defra's analysis indicates that the average net profit made by farms in England between 2017 and 2020 would have been 53% lower without direct payments.

Defra is developing the Future Farming and Countryside Programme, which it considers a "once in a generation opportunity to reform agriculture". Central to this is the Environmental Land Management scheme (ELM), which will pay farmers for undertaking actions that improve the environment through the Sustainable Farming Incentive (SFI), and the Local Nature Recovery and Landscape Recovery schemes. Defra is piloting SFI with an initial cohort of up to 1,000 participants from October 2021. It plans to launch some core elements of SFI at scale in mid-2022 (SFI2022).

Defra has made progress in several important areas of ELM's development and design since the NAO last reported in 2019. This is despite resourcing challenges caused by ongoing EU Exit work, and the need to respond to the COVID-19 pandemic. In November 2020, Defra published the Agricultural Transition Plan with an update following in June 2021, to provide further details of its plans for ELM. It has also submitted the outline business case for ELM to HM Treasury, and received approval for piloting.

Defra has not yet established objectives to support its high-level vision for ELM. The outline business case for ELM sets out 24 objectives related to the government's 25-Year Environment Plan and net zero carbon ambition, but these are described as provisional. HM Treasury guidance requires more specific strategic policy objectives to turn the vision for ELM into an implementable programme. Defra told the NAO that development of these objectives is in progress but cannot be completed until government has made key decisions about its approach to meeting UK carbon budget targets and set legally binding targets in the Environment Bill.

In March 2021, Defra invited farmers to express an interest in participating in the SFI pilot which is due to go live from October 2021. Defra had assumed that there would be between 5,000 and 10,000 expressions of interest out of around 44,000 eligible farmers, from which it would select a representative 1,000 participants. In the event, it received only 2,178 responses, a response rate of just 5%. Defra is confident that this provides a "healthy pipeline" to test the many aspects of SFI, but has not shown the NAO any analysis to support this. A continued low level of interest could threaten Defra's environmental ambitions.

The introduction of SFI2022 is a significant change to the original ELM programme and Defra is having to design it quickly, adding risks to delivery. Initially, Defra did not intend to put a scheme in place to allow most farmers to replace lost CAP income until 2024, but decided in late 2020 to introduce SFI2022 to give farmers an earlier opportunity.

Defra has reduced some of the risks associated with the launch of SFI2022 by reducing its scope. The scope now focuses largely on soil management, whereas the initial scope also included integrated pest management, nutrient management and livestock management. Defra acknowledges some important delivery risks remain, particularly around staff resources and lack of detailed planning beyond 2021. The SFI2022 launch will be the first time that tens of thousands of farmers will experience the ELM scheme in a live situation. Failure to launch SFI2022 successfully would cause Defra further reputational damage and reduce long-term participation in ELM.

Despite adapting its engagement plans during COVID-19, Defra has not yet regained enough trust from farmers to be confident in achieving a high level of participation in ELM. Defra lost farmers' trust as a result of difficulties with its management of past agricultural subsidy schemes. Delays in informing farmers which actions they will be paid for in the SFI pilot and SFI2022, and how much they will be paid, have made matters worse. Defra sees rebuilding trust as vital, but both the NAO's and Defra's own evidence show it has not yet succeeded.

Defra has made some progress in developing its approach to countering fraud and error in ELM, but is behind where it needs to be. The NAO recommends fraud and error measures are in place when a government programme is launched. Defra set out a high-level prevention strategy in early 2021, but expects to develop its understanding over several years. Defra believes it will reduce the risk of not having fraud measures in place by making use of existing systems and digital infrastructure.

The NAO recommends that Defra identifies why there was a lower-than-expected level of interest in the SFI pilot, and develops measures to achieve a more positive response in the future. Defra should also closely monitor if it can realistically deliver SFI2022 on time, and regularly check whether its plans are deliverable leading up to the full launch of ELM in 2024.

Gareth Davies, the head of the NAO said:

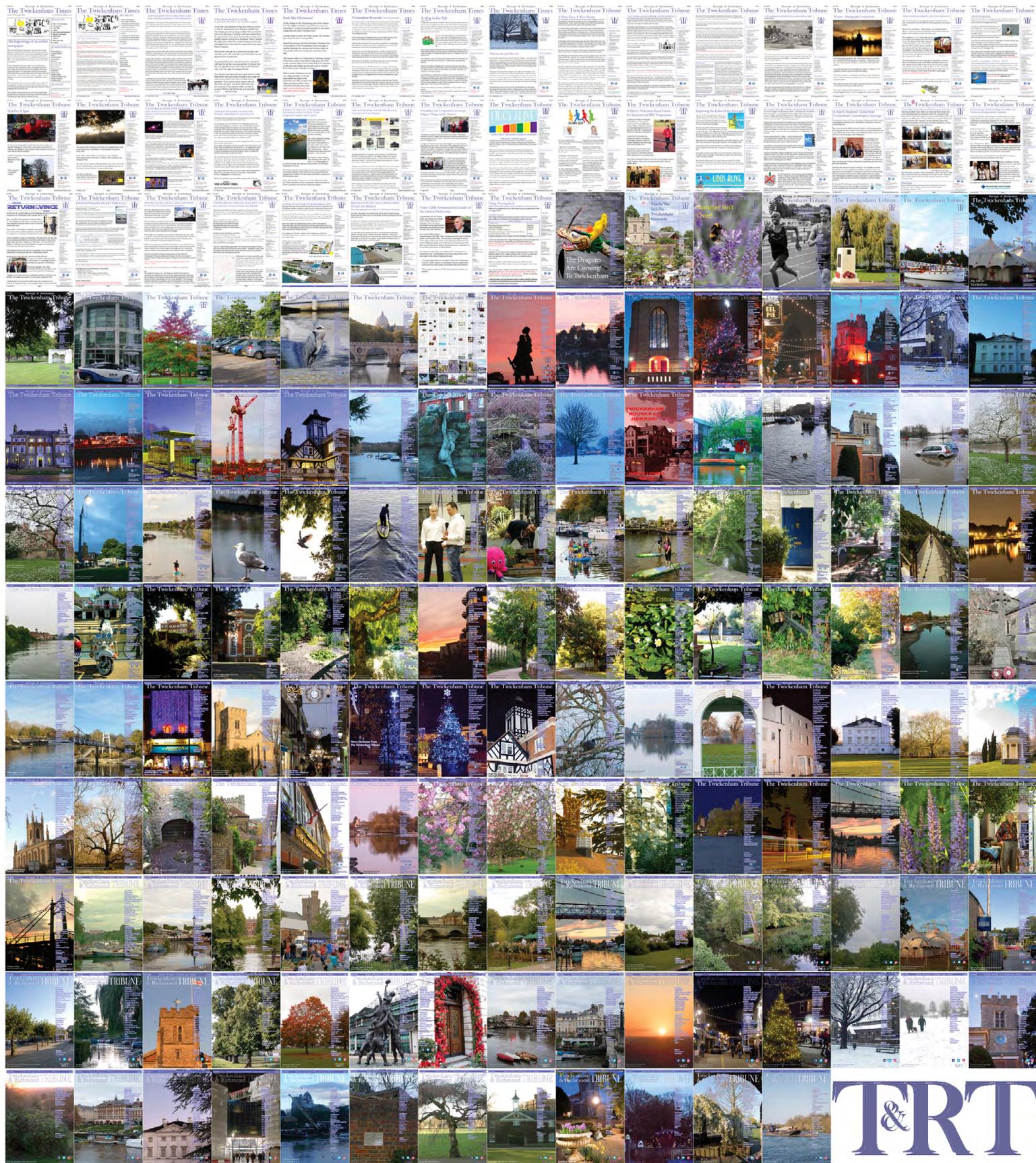
“The success of the Environmental Land Management scheme depends on securing participation from farmers. Defra has not yet set detailed objectives for the scheme and has been slow to provide information on what farmers can expect from it. Defra must now develop detailed plans for the scheme's delivery if it is to achieve its intended environmental goals.”

Click [HERE](#) for the full report



National Audit Office

254 editions of the **Twickenham & Richmond Tribune** online - Lots to read: News, Reviews, History, Sports and On-going Sagas in the Borough of Richmond upon Thames



Half Page

Quarter Page
Landscape

Quarter Page Portrait

Eighth Page

Eighth Page
Landscape

Example advert sizes shown above

Thousands read The Twickenham & Richmond Tribune

If you are reading this you could be advertising your business with
The Twickenham & Richmond Tribune. Community rates are
available

Contact: advertise@TwickenhamTribune.com

View ad details at www.TwickenhamTribune.com/advertise

Contact

contact@TwickenhamTribune.com
letters@TwickenhamTribune.com
advertise@TwickenhamTribune.com



Published by:

Twickenham Alive Limited (in association with World InfoZone Limited)
Registered in England & Wales
Reg No 10549345

The Twickenham Tribune is registered with the ICO under the Data
Protection Act, Reg No ZA224725

©Twickenham Alive Limited. All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be used or reproduced without the permission of Twickenham Alive Limited. While we take reasonable efforts, this online newspaper cannot be held responsible for the accuracy or reliability of information. The views and opinions in these pages do not necessarily represent those of Twickenham Alive Limited or The Twickenham & Richmond Tribune. [Terms & Conditions](#)