

Twickenham & Richmond TRIBUNE

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30th December 2022

T&RT

TickerTape - News in Brief

New Year services

Until Monday 2 January 2023, there will be planned works, service changes and strikes. Most TfL services, including most of the Tube, will continue to run but customers are advised to check before they travel. For more information, visit the [Christmas and New Year travel page](#).

New Year's Eve

- There will be road closures in central London from early afternoon, with buses on diversion to support the London New Year's Eve fireworks event. From 23:30 on New Year's Eve until 02:00 on New Year's Day some stations near to the fireworks event or in other busy areas of London may become exit or interchange only at short notice
- Some TfL services, including most of the Tube, will run all night. Abellio bus services, mostly in west and south London, are expected to be disrupted due to strike action. Visit the [New Year's Eve travel page](#) for information on TfL services that are planned to run, and check before you travel
- National rail services will be subject to some changes. Plan ahead and check before you travel on the [National Rail website](#)

TfL is not able to provide free travel on New Year's Eve.

January national rail strike action

Most TfL services, including most of the Tube, are planned to run on each strike day. However, we expect there to be some disruption on the London Overground, Elizabeth line, Circle line and parts of the Bakerloo and District lines on the following dates:

- Tuesday 3 and Wednesday 4 January
- Friday 6 and Saturday 7 January

Services on the mornings of Thursday 5 and Sunday 8 January may also be disrupted.

If you're travelling, plan ahead and check before you travel for the latest information on how services are running. For full information on services expected to run, [visit the strike page](#).

Bus strikes

Strikes on Abellio bus services are expected on dates in December and January, including Saturday 31 December, which will affect routes mostly in west and south London.

For details on other dates affected, [visit the strike page](#).

If you're travelling, [plan ahead](#) and [check before you travel](#) for the latest information on how services are running.

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Covid-19

By Teresa Read

WHO meets with Chinese officials on current COVID-19 situation

A high-level meeting took place on 30 December between WHO and China about the current surge in COVID-19 cases, to seek further information on the situation, and to offer WHO's expertise and further support.

High-level officials from China's National Health Commission and the National Disease Control and Prevention Administration briefed WHO on China's evolving strategy and actions in the areas of epidemiology, monitoring of variants, vaccination, clinical care, communication and R&D.

WHO again asked for regular sharing of specific and real-time data on the epidemiological situation—including more genetic sequencing data, data on disease impact including hospitalisations, ICU admissions and deaths—and data on vaccinations delivered and vaccination status, especially in vulnerable people and those over 60 years old. WHO reiterated the importance of vaccination and boosters to protect against severe disease and death for people at higher risk.

WHO called on China to strengthen viral sequencing, clinical management, and impact assessment, and expressed willingness to provide support on these areas, as well as on risk communications on vaccination to counter hesitancy. Chinese scientists are invited to engage more closely in WHO-led COVID-19 expert networks including the COVID-19 clinical management network. WHO has invited Chinese scientists to present detailed data on viral sequencing at a meeting of the Technical Advisory Group on SARS-CoV-2 Virus Evolution on 3 January.

WHO stressed the importance of monitoring and the timely publication of data to help China and the global community to formulate accurate risk assessments and to inform effective responses.

See news headlines below

Happy New Year from



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COVID-19 IN THE NEWS THIS WEEK

News Headlines 29 December 2022

BBC: Covid in China: People rush to book travel as borders finally reopen.

SKY NEWS: Half of passengers on China flight to Italy have COVID - as US becomes fifth country to tighten restrictions on Chinese travellers

No plans for mandatory COVID-19 testing of arrivals from China, UK government says.

ALJAZEERA: Countries imposing COVID rules for travellers from China: The US, Italy and other countries introduce restrictions after surge in infections in China.

INDEPENDENT: Covid: Britons told to stay at home if unwell in final Christmas warning as cases rise again.

Rising Covid cases should be a wake-up call for every one of us.

INDIAN EXPRESS: Effective face mask practices to reduce spread of Covid-19, including new variants (review of study in the American Journal of the Association for Professionals in Infection Control and Epidemiology).

News Headlines 30 December 2022

ALJAZEERA: Growing list of countries imposing COVID rules on China arrivals. Malaysia, South Korea join the US, Italy and others in introducing restrictions after infections surge in China.

Euronews: Which countries are introducing new COVID restrictions? So far Japan, India, Italy, Malaysia, South Korea, Spain, Taiwan and the USA.

THE WEEK: Ministers resist Covid pressure: The government is resisting calls from senior Tories to introduce curbs on travellers from China where there has been a surge in Covid infections. Government scientists are concerned about the poor quality of Beijing's Covid data, amid fears that a more severe or immunity-evading variant could evolve.

BBC NEWS, 17.55 GMT: China Covid: UK set to require negative test for arrivals.

Financial Times: UK, France and Spain rush in new Covid controls for arrivals from China.

CNN Travel: China responded by claiming its Covid situation was "under control," and accused Western media of "distorting" its recent policy changes.

HM Govt of Gibraltar: Update to COVID-19 testing requirements for travellers from China, Macao and Hong Kong

SKY NEWS: Travellers arriving in England from China will need to show negative COVID test

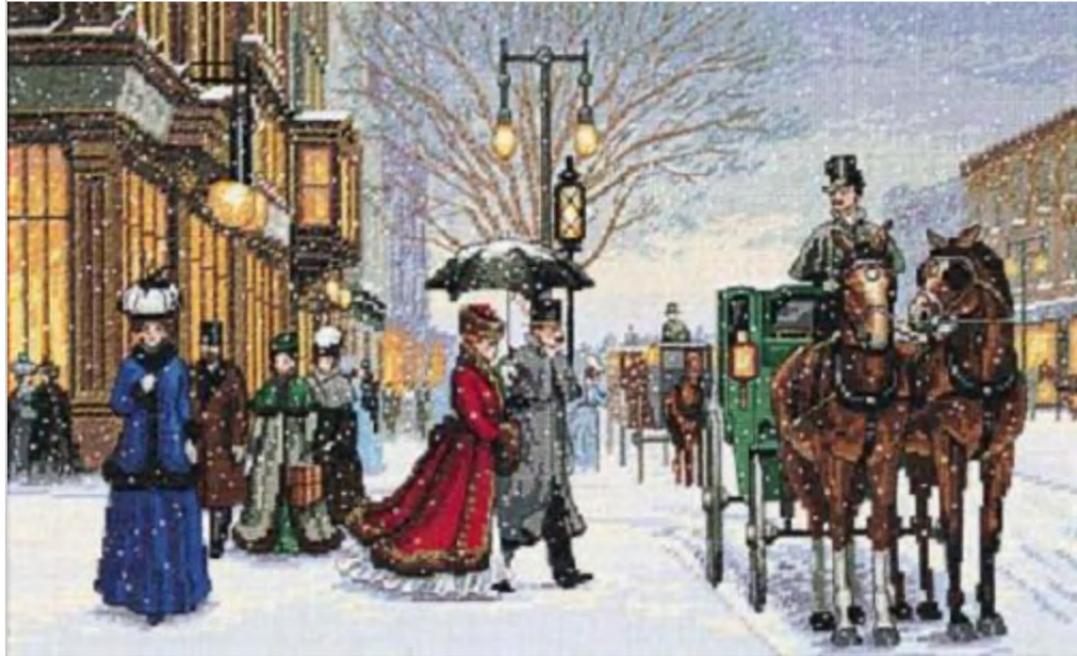
World Health Organization: Dr Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus, WHO Director-General, said it was "understandable" that some countries were imposing these fresh restrictions

Kicking up a Storm

By Simon Fowler

Conditioned by Charles Dickens' novels we tend to think that Victorian winters were very snowy. Then, as now, heavy falls were rare. One such occurred in early January 1886:

The heavy fall of snow which began at an early hour on Wednesday morning is almost the first tangible sign that winter must still be reckoned as one of our four seasons. In November and the beginning of December we had a few very cold days; and among the devotees of skating, hopes were excited that we should have a good hard Christmas. These expectations were misguided. The Christmas week was exceptionally mild, and the ordinary Briton, having got



over New Year's Day, began to look forward to the gradual advent of spring. He was rudely, awakened from his dream of fair weather by the sight which met his eyes at breakfast time on Wednesday.

The Post Office authorities issued an official notification to the effect, that there would be a considerable delay in telegraphic communication between London and offices in the south, south east, south-west, and west of England, and to South Wales as well as the outlying . metropolitan suburbs. One of the Richmond wires over the police station was broken and several other connections were injured. Telegraphic communications to Richmond were entirely suspended and messengers were despatched to London by train. On Wednesday night and Thursday, the mails were late in arriving, and the delivery of letters was considerably delayed owing to this. and the difficulty the postmen experienced in getting along the roads. The newspaper train on Thursday morning was also about half an hour late.

The fall of snow ceased in the afternoon and in the evening it commenced to freeze, which made it difficult for pedestrians to get about, the best walking places being in the middle of the roads. Communication with the Hill from the Railway Station was only to be maintained by the employment of two horses instead of one in each cab. The local authority at early hour set a number of men to work to clear the roads, and Thursday the greater portion of the frozen snow was removed, being shovelled into carts and then tipped into the river. The butchers and other tradesmen had to deliver most of their orders on foot owing to the slippery condition of the roads.

A soup kitchen was opened on Saturday in the Talbot Hotel Yard run by the Philanthropic Society. This was good news indeed to many deserving families whose breadwinners were thrown out of work through no fault of their own. So long as the severe weather lasts, the kitchen we believe will be kept open twice a week. One hundred quarts of soup and one hundred loaves was distributed on Saturday.

Richmond Herald, 9 January 1886

FUNERAL

DORIS MARTIN – WINTER

Will take place at South-West Middlesex Crematorium, Hanworth, on Wednesday January 4th at 3.00.

Anyone who knew Doris is welcome to attend and to join the family afterwards at The Winning Post Pub for food and drinks.



COVID-19 and flu vaccine clinic pops up in Hampton in the new year

Residents in and around Hampton will be able to access a COVID-19 or flu jab on Saturday 7 January 2023 at a pop-up vaccine clinic at the Tangle Park Children's Centre.

Cold weather can make some health problems worse and even lead to serious complications, especially if you are 65 or older, or if you have a long-term health condition. Having a flu and/or COVID-19 jab can help make sure you and those you care for are well protected during the winter months.

The pop-up vaccine clinic will take place from 10.30am to 3.30pm.

The address is the Tangle Park Children's Centre, 1 Bramble Lane, Hampton, TW12 3XB. The Children's Centre is located a short bus journey from Hampton train station.

Anyone aged 12+ who is due their first, second, or booster vaccinations will be able to have their COVID-19 jab.

The seasonal (winter) booster is only available for those aged 50+ or those considered clinically vulnerable. Flu jabs are available for those aged 50+ or anyone typically eligible for a free flu jab.

More information on the eligibility for COVID-19 and flu jabs can be found on the [NHS website](#). All other services are open for all ages.

No appointments are required, and people can just walk in.

If you have recently tested positive for COVID-19, you need to wait before getting any dose of the vaccine and the number of weeks depends on how old you are.

Find out more about [who is eligible for the COVID-19 vaccine](#).

If anyone is hesitant about the vaccine or has any questions, the pop-up clinics are an opportunity to speak to experts from the NHS in a private and confidential environment.



Photographic reminders of community opposition to “development” on Twickenham Riverside

The photographs, taken in Clarendon Hall, York House, Twickenham, show a meeting of residents unhappy about the prospect of housing on Twickenham’s unique Thames side site, Twickenham Riverside, under threat of development once more; this time by the present administration of the London Borough of Richmond upon Thames.

There has been huge opposition to housing on the site; following consultation with the Department for Communities and Local Government, Electoral Reform Services (ERS) was engaged by residents to find out the views of people in Twickenham via a completely independent postal vote.

The Electoral Reform Services Result: The postal vote result was 93.5% against housing on Twickenham Riverside.

Local community groups such as the Richmond United Group and Save Our Riverside promoted the result of the referendum gaining much public support. It is also interesting to note that at this stage the story of Twickenham Riverside was publicised by national journalists in the New Statesman, Private Eye and the London Evening Standard.

Photographs copyright Brian Holder, Teddington Society Representative of the Richmond United Group

Teresa Read, Chair of the Richmond United Group, can be seen discussing the Twickenham Riverside issue with residents in the London Borough of Richmond Upon Thames.

[Twickenham Riverside Under Threat Again](#)

[The History of Saving Our Riverside](#)

Photographs copyright Brian Holder, Teddington Society



Hampton North Ward News

Councillor Geoffrey Samuel

In this the first edition for 2023 I send my very best wishes to all our residents for a happy, healthy and better New Year.

PORTABLE TOILET ON HAMPTON COMMON?

The Council is proposing to erect a portable toilet on Hampton Common for the Football season. Some months ago when the Council proposed that it provided a Football pitch on the Common to encourage Girls' Football I supported the idea in principle, provided that it was acceptable to local residents. However I was concerned that there was no provision for changing facilities and no toilet: their answer was that The White House, which is a little way from the site of the pitch, would be available. And now the portable toilet! Part of the reason must be that the Council is not maintaining The White house as a community centre opening all day and some evenings throughout the week. The friends of Hampton Common – and I support them 100% in this – insist that those who live near to the site must be consulted. It is their view, and one expressed to me by a number of residents, that few people want to overlook a toilet and those queueing to use it. Although the consultation is not as thorough as I have requested I have achieved a commitment that consultation must be open until 3rd January. If you have an opinion on this please contact the Council directly – with a copy to me.

BURTONS ROAD SCHEME

The Transport Committee will consider the scheme at a meeting on 10th January on the basis of officer recommendations due to be published no later than 3rd. If the recommendation is to make it permanent the Hampton Hill Community Group will oppose and if, as I do, you support them in opposition, please contact them on hamptonhillcommunity@gmail.com

ALL SAINTS CHURCH

With The White House no longer offering the range of courses, classes and activities which existed until 2020 All Saints is committed to increase its community support and I am pleased that, with my support, they have been given a grant as part of the Council's programmes during the cost of living crisis including Warm Spaces. The Church Hall is already used by other parts of the community and an upgrade is due to be completed during the early part of 2023. This will increase provision for the local community. This is obviously expensive and I am deeply disappointed that the Hampton Fund – created to benefit Hampton people- has refused to give it a modest grant.

RECYCLING CENTRE – TANGLEY PARK

The litter, debris and fly-tipping are an eyesore. The Council provides CCTV at six other sites – but not here. However, at my request, the number of cleaning visits to the site is being increased to three times a week. In answer to a local request it has been confirmed that

residents visiting other sites, where the access is double yellow lines, may park there to recycle without receiving a penalty.

BROAD LANE CROSSING

The scheme has been agreed, the finance for it confirmed but at this stage the Council cannot say when the work will actually be carried out.

FULMER CLOSE

I was pleased to have a very useful meeting with a Director of PA and to discuss problems with him. The Council has now installed some double yellow lines but is not able to say how many parking spaces have been lost or where displaced parkers will now go. I am becoming increasingly of the view that any proposal to reduce parking should state where it is expected that the displaced may park so that residents in the road[s] may also be consulted. PA is still investigating the possibility of some additional parking and is looking to the future when there will be a real demand for electric car charging points

SHORTER ITEMS

- Due to the strike Abellio postponed the arrangements for Nick Rogers, our GLA member and me to visit their local Control Centre
- RHP has appointed two new Contractors to take over from Mears whose contract ends in March
- Once again I am having no success in making contact with the housing Association Inquilab on behalf of local residents
- I am dismayed that the Council is still not able to rehouse a local family of five living in a one-bedroom flat
- I have yet to obtain the full details of an incident in Hampton Cemetery where an incident took place which has been variously described as a stabbing or other form of attack. I have contacted both the Police and the Leader of the Council, who is now investigating the matter
- I am supporting a resident who wants to install a crossing to provide access to his driveway so that he can provide a charging point and purchase an electric car.

Unless you tell me to the contrary I may forward any of your comments/complaints to the relevant councillors and Council officers.

Keep in touch with me by phone or gjshn@btinternet.com: tell me of issues which concern you: I am here to help. The e-mail address is the best form of communication: I check the Council e-mail address less frequently and, with rare exceptions!, do not access social media.

As I walked down Church Street on a Winter's Day

By Bruce Lyons

As I walked down Church Street today, I was saddened and disappointed to see the state of the planters at the top, above which fluttered a ripped banner, which advertised an event now 2 weeks old. In Bell Lane, which was never supposed to be permanently closed, huge ugly barriers now "permanently" close it but half of them are now fallen & strewn on the road. To me it seems that no one cares very much. It makes me sad because for years I worked with others to raise the profile of the street with events and lots of publicity to bring people to Church Street and make it the jewel in the crown of Twickenham. It was years and years of work, since I came as a resident and shop owner in 1966 with my wife and where my second daughter was born. I am not saying it was all me, but I chaired an Association for the street for a long time and a huge amount of the work was down to me and my family but after quite a lot of years of bullying and intimidation which just got worse in recent years from several of the traders, we decided to call it a day and resign after a particularly toxic meeting on the 24th of August 2022.

We were told very shortly afterwards – I think the following week, by the same people who had been shouting at us, that the Association was already taken over and a big committee was now in place to be organising things going forward but apart from a few paltry events I have not seen much apart from rather neglected planters and a rather neglected air about the street.

We have nothing to be ashamed of. In fact, my family & I are proud of the years of hard work & creativity we gave to Church Street. The maintenance, helping to organise Al Fresco Dining and recently Pedestrianisation, putting up flags, producing Festival Guides, Christmas in Twickenham Guides, promotional posters & leaflets & putting on a really huge number of events and fairs to help bring the street to what it became, the jewel in Twickenham's crown. It was all done voluntarily – we were not paid and didn't do it for money or power. We just did it for the benefit of community of which we are part of and for a street that we love. So yes, it is with sadness & disappointment that I walk down the street now.

By this time last year 2021 we had already planted all the bulbs as I had done with my daughter for years. The bulbs were already coming through & about to put on a really lovely Spring display again throughout the street.



This year about the same time, nothing seems to have been done even with the planters, even though we resigned in August, when there would have been plenty of time to have planted these with bulbs by now. It is just a sad picture of neglect.



Apprentices celebrated at award ceremony in Hyde Park

The Royal Parks horticultural apprentices, gathered at The LookOut in Hyde Park to have their achievements recognised in this year's award ceremony.

Apprentices who had completed their apprenticeship were awarded their diploma or horticultural certificate by Chief Executive of The Royal Parks charity, Andrew Scattergood. Next up was the presentation of The Royal Parks Guild Awards, with the winners announced by the Chair of The Royal Parks Guild, Mike Fitt.

- The George Cook Award, given for 'outstanding commitment and achievement over the course of the apprenticeship scheme,' was awarded to Aimee Spanswick, of The Regent's Park and Primrose Hill.
- The Royal Parks Guild Award given for 'achieving excellence in academic learning, practical skills and support of colleagues' was awarded to Jade Colgan, first year apprentice at St James's Park.



- The Royal Parks Guild Award given for 'outstanding self-learning and continuous development' was awarded to David Setchell, third year apprentice in **Richmond Park**.
- The Toni Assirati Award, given for a 'positive influence on others, society and the environment' was awarded to Louie De Witt, at **Bushy Park**, who has gone on to complete his Diploma at **Kew Gardens**.

The Royal Parks Horticultural Apprenticeship scheme has been running since 1962. The current scheme started in 2008 and is run as a partnership between The Royal Parks, the Landscape Maintenance Contractors, the Learning Provider (now [Capel Manor College](#)) and The Royal Parks Guild who provide mentoring, awards, masterclasses and other special events.

Applications for the apprentice scheme will re-open in February 2023. For more information about the scheme visit [The Royal Parks Horticultural Apprenticeship Scheme](#).



Stonehouse – The Twickenham Connection on ITV this coming week

CLlr Geoffrey Samuel has kindly alerted Twickenham residents via the Twickenham & Richmond Tribune of ITV's three-part programme this coming week that might be of interest to readers; the subject of the programme embarked on his political career in Twickenham.

Older people may remember that John Stonehouse began his political career as Labour Candidate for Twickenham in the 1950 General Election; his vote of 23,088 was 13,669 behind the sitting MP E. H. Keeling (Conservative).

Starting Monday 2 January 2023, 9pm until 10.05pm on ITV; A three-part programme Broadcasts on ITV1 with full series drop on ITVX on Monday 2 January.

John Stonehouse (28 July 1925 – 14 April 1988) was a British Labour and Co-operative Party politician, a Member of the Cabinet in Harold Wilson's government. Stonehouse is remembered for his unsuccessful attempt at faking his own death in 1974.

From Southampton, Stonehouse was first elected as Labour Co-operative MP for Wednesbury in the 1957 by-election; he contested Twickenham in 1950 and Burton in 1951.

The drama stars Matthew Macfadyen as John Stonehouse who, in 1974, devised a plan to disappear in Reggie Perrin style.

AGATHA CHRISTIE at the MARY WALLACE THEATRE! January 21st - 28th



An Agatha Christie mystery for January when the Mary Wallace Theatre presents **THE HOLLOW!**

A classic Christie "whodunnit" with the family assembled at a remote country house for the weekend. A murder is committed! A Detective Inspector is summoned from Scotland Yard and it transpires that several members of the assembled party had a motive.

But which of them is the murderer - the doctor, the wife, the artist, the butler? And then there is the mysterious appearance of the lobster! Can the Inspector solve the crime? Can you?

Join us at the Mary Wallace between January 21st and 28th when the truth will, eventually, be revealed.

Booking open now at www.richmondshakespeare.org.uk

Find the Mary Wallace Theatre on Twickenham's Embankment, between St Mary's Church and the Barmy Arms.



New YEAR... New YOU?

By Deep Patel

If you are reading this right now, give yourself a massive hug for getting through what has been a rollercoaster of a year for so many of us (yes, it is possible to hug yourself, and it feels sooooo good...do it now and wrap your arms around you and squeeze hard)...feels good right!...told you!



We all have hopes and resolutions for the new year, whether it be to give up smoking, start to exercise more, or to continue being your existing fabulous self (my family will tell you, that is my perpetual resolution every year)...but what exactly does a “new year” really mean?...

We all feel the 1st of January is a GREAT opportunity to wipe the old slate clean, to start a fresh...to turn over a new leaf...and why the heck not? Any reason to let bygones be bygones and to “bury the hatchet” or forgive and forget can only be a good thing. Life is too short to hold grudges...the past is in the past and it’s behind you for a reason...because that is where it belongs...it no longer serves you...so as the famous Christmas song says “look to the future now, it’s only just begun...”

So what’s the point of my article today? “He hasn’t mentioned saving any insects yet” I hear you say...Well, I want to appeal to all the lovely people out there to do 3 things this coming new year week...just 3 things...to all the very lovely people...(clearly all the readers of the Tribune fall into that category)...3 things this week...from every reader...just 3 things is all I ask...can you do that for me?...Please?...pretty-please?...if you do these 3 things...I this coming year...start with these 3 things this coming week...and you will see...

1. Think of one person who you REALLY enjoyed being around but for one reason or another have become distant from over the past year...it could have been an argument that caused the distance...a misunderstanding...self-pride...or just lack of time...think of them...then pick up the phone and either text them or give them a call. When they answer, just say “I just wanted to say happy new year and wondered how you were getting on”...healing a past relation is incredibly nourishing for our souls, it will help your new year begin with a healing energy that will see you through any adversity that may come during the course of the year... just as it is said...start as you mean to go on...
2. Give something to someone who may need it unexpectedly...it could be that neighbor who you secretly hate (oh come on...everyone has one?)...it could be that older lady you see struggling with her shopping each week (you could give her that shopping trolley that you have 2 of?) or the young children across the road who’s family you know struggle for the basics in life...Just give...whatever...to whoever...just give...do it with an open heart...without expectation...it is only when we give that we become worthy of receiving...everything good in life always starts with giving...

3. What did you say?...”why hasn’t he mentioned the kindness to little creatures yet?”...well it goes without saying...any new start should start with kindness from the smallest of living lives...the little creatures trying to survive all around us just like we are...we are not the only inhabitants of this planet and there is a kind way for everything so for any of the “pest issues” check out my Facebook page “Kind World” and click share on just one of the posts there...if any little life somewhere in the world is saved through your sharing...that good karma will come back to you to help start your year well...perhaps when you most need it...but least expect it...If you have rodent issues, consider live capture traps where you can catch the rodents alive and release them in woodland or parkland areas far from homes. Try electronic high-frequency sound deterrents (check online for ones with good reviews and ones that are safe for your pets if you have any).

Put empty jam jar lids filled with white vinegar all around areas where you don’t want them to stop them without harming them (they HATE the smell of white vinegar). This also works for foxes, squirrels, mice and rabbits.

Even simply picking up a slug off the pavement with a leaf and moving it over a wall counts as a good deed... choosing a kind way to stop ants (like talcum powder around where they come but not on them) counts as a good deed. Avoid sweeping/washing the garden patio too often to help save countless tiny almost invisible little lives that live there (particularly under large pots in the garden, hence I always say gently lift the pots if you need to move them rather than dragging them to avoid crushing little lives).

The key to your own happiness lies in genuinely forgiving the past...whether it is forgiving ourselves...or others...we must focus our efforts on growing from those lessons to become the best versions of our true selves that we can possibly be.

In the happiness of others around us lies our own...be they friends, work colleagues, slugs or ants...everything counts and ultimately forms a part of our karma and karmic baggage...so let’s start the new year as positively as we all can with the will that the entire year ahead will proceed accordingly too...until NEXT YEAR...stay well wonderful friends and Tribune readers worldwide. May good karma come to you all in 2023...

For further kindness tips, follow my Facebook page “Kind World”.



Five days of strike action across the South Western Railway network, Tuesday 3 to Sunday 8 January 2023

- Due to the planned national strikes, SWR customers are urged only to travel if absolutely necessary from Tuesday 3 to Sunday 8 January 2023
- From Tuesday 3 to Sunday 8 January, strike action will see a severely reduced service between 07:15 and 18:30, on a limited number of routes, for customers who have to travel
- On Thursday 5 January there will be no services on the Island Line due to strike action by the ASLEF union
- Sunday 8 January will also be impacted by the strike; first trains across the network will start from around 07:30 and are likely to be very busy
- SWR also remind customers that there will be a limited number of additional services from London Waterloo to help them get home from New Year's Eve events



South Western Railway (SWR) is urging customers to only travel if absolutely necessary from Tuesday 3 to Sunday 8 January due to strike action. The latest information and details of which services are running can be found [here](#).

National strike action by the RMT union on Tuesday 3, Wednesday 4, Friday 6 and Saturday 7 will mean a severely reduced service on infrastructure made available by Network Rail. Trains

will run between 07:15 and 18:30 only.

On Thursday 5, national strike action by the ASLEF union, which will affect depot drivers and significantly limit the number of trains that can be brought into service, will again mean a severely reduced service and the same timetable operating as on other strike days. This strike action will also impact drivers on the Island Line and so there will be no Island Line services on Thursday 5 January.

Significant parts of the network will be closed entirely between Tuesday 3 and Saturday 7 January. Those trains that are running will be far less frequent and much busier than normal.

Due to the impact of these strike days, customers are also advised to check before travelling on Sunday 8 January, when first trains will start from around 07:30 and are likely to be very busy. A regular weekend timetable will operate on Sunday 8 January after this late start up.

SWR's reduced timetable will consist of:

- Four trains per hour in each direction between London Waterloo and Windsor & Eton Riverside
- Two semi-fast trains per hour in each direction between London Waterloo and Basingstoke
- Four trains per hour in each direction between London Waterloo and Woking
- Two fast trains per hour in each direction between London Waterloo and Southampton Central

Trains will not stop at all the stations on these routes. There will be no SWR services across the rest of the network.

SWR would also like to remind customers that on Saturday 31 December, New Year's Eve, services will finish by 2200. To help customers return from New Year's Eve celebrations in the capital, a limited number of additional services will run from London Waterloo between 0030 and 0315 on Sunday 1 January, New Year's Day. Customers intending to travel to London and back should check both parts of their journeys carefully.

South Western Railway's Managing Director, Claire Mann, said:

"I'm sorry that due to the damaging, national strike action by both the RMT and ASLEF unions, a severely reduced service will operate on our network. We must urge our customers to only travel if absolutely necessary between Tuesday 3 and Sunday 8 January."

"Large parts of our network will be closed between Tuesday 3 and Sunday 8 January. On Sunday 8 January there will be a late start to services and so we urge our customers to carefully check their journeys, before they travel, using journey planners."

"We share our customers' frustration over this nationwide strike action and the impact it has on our network and services. We are grateful to our customers for their continued cooperation, patience, and understanding as the rail industry works to bring this damaging strike action to an end."

**South Western
Railway**

Christmas hamper appeal a phenomenal success

Crossroads Care Richmond raised £2665 in their Show an Act of Kindness at Christmas appeal, aiming to lift the spirits of often lonely older carers by hand-delivering hampers to them.

Surpassing the popularity of last year's appeal, the amount raised meant that the charity was able to make this year's hampers extra special.

Crossroads wants to express their huge gratitude to those who showed generosity and acts of kindness towards older carers who work round-the-clock to look after loved ones, often living with dementia.

Caring for someone with dementia can take a massive toll on the mental health of carers, so being given a Christmas hamper has been a real moment of light.

Care support workers at Crossroads thoroughly enjoyed delivering the hampers which have raised many smiles among the carers the charity supports.

Carers loved the personalised Christmas cards designed by pupils of St Mary's and St Peter's School in Teddington. Andrew Wilson of Wild London also donated stunning calendars depicting photographs of local landscapes to go inside the hampers,

Upon receiving her hamper, Joyce, 92, said: "People are so kind."

Another carer said:

"A big thank you for the lovely surprise of a gorgeous basketful of goodies. I cannot thank Crossroads enough for their help and support. It is truly appreciated. May you all have a marvellous Christmas."

Visit the Just Giving page to find out more about the [Christmas Hamper Appeal](#).

If you would like to know more about the charity or are interested in getting involved, visit the [Crossroads website](#).



Vine Road Community Growing Project grows and grows and grows!

From Barnes Common

As we came out of the Covid lockdowns in the Autumn of 2021 our volunteers Rashadee Miller and Claire van Rhyn agreed to take on the leadership of the Vine Road Community Growing Project.

When we were unable to grow together, families and individuals in the community 'adopted' the growing beds and planters and kept the project going. Just over a year later the project has re-established itself as a community food growing project and has certainly undergone quite a transformation. It is now supported by a team of over 20 regular volunteers, as well as working with local groups; The Mortlake Powerstation Youth Centre, the Eco Team from Barnes Primary School, Barnes Community Gardeners, Duke of Edinburgh Award volunteers and many more.

Established in 2016, this project is now volunteer led (supported by Barnes Common, formerly Friends of Barnes Common – FoBC). The project aims to encourage people of all ages, abilities and backgrounds to grow food together, at the same time, inspiring engagement, participation and ownership by the whole community and in turn, helping to reduce social isolation, build wellbeing and strengthen community cohesion and resilience.

Using growing methods that are organic and regenerative, cultivating soil health and encouraging biodiversity, last year, we successfully started all but a few of our crops from seed. In the fenced, raised bed area – referred to as The Encampment – there has been an impressive range of shared crops grown including broad and French beans, sweet corn, potatoes/sweet potatoes, fennel, turnips, strawberries, garlic, okra, squash, tomatoes, peppers, chillies, aubergines, tomatillos, cucumbers, chard, amaranth, quinoa, Jerusalem artichoke and carrots while the brassica crops are well underway for winter and early spring harvests. We also made a particular effort this past season to interplant both wild and cultivated flowers to support pollinators and establish a better growing ecosystem. The flowers have delighted visitors and passers-by alike and we even won an award at the Twickenham Beekeeper's annual show.



We have also started two new key projects. The first of these has been establishing regular food box deliveries via the Richmond Foodbank Network at Castlenau Community Centre, where we successfully managed to provide 15 weekly deliveries of fresh, organic produce that benefitted many local families in need. We are now making plans to scale this support in 2023 and hope to build closer ties between the Growing Project and the families the network serves.

Our second project has been to engage with the International Seed Sovereignty campaign and establish seed saving as part of our annual seasonal tasks. Besides becoming more self-sufficient in seeds for the next season's main crops, e.g., tomatoes, we have also been able to contribute seeds of five locally adapted varieties to the London Freedom Seed Bank to share with other community groups.

We are active throughout the year and in all weathers! There is always a range of tasks for all levels of skill and energy with support on hand to help participants along. Currently, we run weekly open sessions on Saturdays, Mondays and Wednesdays but please contact communitygrowing@barnescommon.org.uk if you would like to know more!

Recycling services over New Year

Regular waste and recycling revised collections

Normal collection day	Revised collection day
Thursday 29 December 2022	Friday 30 December 2022
Friday 30 December 2022	Saturday 31 December 2022
Monday 2 January 2023	Tuesday 3 January 2023
Tuesday 3 January 2023	Wednesday 4 January 2023
Wednesday 4 January 2023	Thursday 5 January 2023
Thursday 5 January 2023	Friday 6 January 2023
Friday 6 January 2023	Saturday 7 January 2023

Garden waste

Garden waste collections will continue until Friday 23 December 2022, then resume on Monday 9 January 2023.

We will continue to collect bulky waste except on weekends and bank holidays.

Townmead Road Recycling Centre

Townmead Road is open throughout the festive period, except for Sunday 25 to Tuesday 27 December 2022 and Sunday 1 to Monday 2 January 2023.

Check their [opening hours](#) regarding early closing times on Saturday 24 and Saturday 31 December 2022.

Christmas trees

Find out [when Christmas trees will be collected](#) in 2023.



SporTedd donate over £1700 to Twickenham school

Teddington community group, SporTedd have announced their latest donation of more than £1700 to Healthfield Junior School in Twickenham.

The donations will be used to purchase a much needed range of cricket equipment for the school.

SporTedd members James Johnson and Tim Chadwick paid a visit to the school to see the equipment being used.



James said:

“We both felt immensely proud to see at first-hand how our funds are being used. The kids were really enjoying themselves and it reinforces the view that our efforts, even when relatively small, compared to big charities, can really make a difference in the community.”

Since its launch, SporTedd has donated over £50,000 to more than forty local projects.

If you are involved in a local sports community project, you can [apply for financial support](#).

Residents donate 68 stockings of essential items for young care leavers

As part of the annual Richmond Christmas Day Dinner for care leavers between 18 and 25 years old, residents in the borough helped to raise 68 stockings full of essential items.

With the annual Richmond Christmas Day Dinner fast approaching, the event has shared their gratitude with the community.



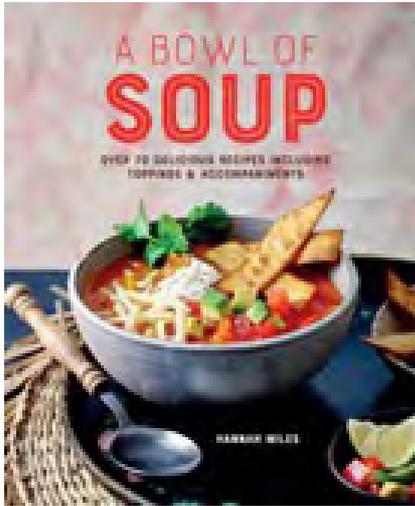
Despite a tough year, residents in Richmond have helped with the planning of the event, wrapping presents and hampers, and donating 68 stockings with essential items for the young care leavers. The generosity shown by members of the community is greatly appreciated.

The Christmas Day Dinner is an annual event for care leavers between the age of 18 and 25. For the last four years, the event has celebrated care leavers for their resilience and helped to create positive memories. No young adult care leaver should feel alone during the Christmas holidays.

Find out more about the [Richmond Christmas Day Dinner](#) and how to volunteer in future years.

A BOWL OF SOUP

Soup. A rather nice four-letter word. And at this time of year, there's nothing quite as comforting and nourishing as a warm bowl of soup and just recently a great new cookbook was published that covers everything from broths and chowders to dunkers and dippers. “**A Bowl of Soup**” by Hannah Miles is published by Ryland, Peters & Small at £20 for a hardback, packed with over 70 recipes to take you through the year with a suggestion for any reason or season.



A lawyer and MasterChef finalist, **Hannah Miles** has developed a second career as a cake maker and food writer. She's written other books such as Popcorn Treats and Milkshake Bar but this latest is a real soup bible - and not content with giving recipes for the soups, Hannah gives recipes for dunkers and dippers with everything from toasties and sandwiches to crisp-breads and wraps. To warm you up on a cold winter's day, here are a couple of taster recipes from 'A Bowl of Soup'

MASSAMAN POTATO SOUP (SERVES 4)

“Massaman curry is a Thai delight – a mild but flavour-packed curry bursting with peanuts and potatoes and rich with coconut milk. This soup is inspired by that curry and trips to Thailand. Traditionally a Massaman curry is made with beef, but this is my vegetarian interpretation.”

- 1 tablespoon olive oil
- 1 onion, finely chopped
- 1 garlic clove, finely chopped
- 1 tablespoon massaman curry paste
- 450 g potatoes, peeled and cut into 2.5-cm/1-in. cubes
- 2 tablespoons peanut butter
- 200 ml coconut milk
- 600 ml vegetable stock
- freshly squeezed juice of 1–2 limes, to taste
- 1 tablespoon pure maple syrup
- salt and pepper
- salted peanuts, finely chopped, to serve
- red chilli slices, to serve

Heat the olive oil in a saucepan over a gentle heat and sauté the onion until it is soft and translucent and starts to caramelize. Add the garlic and cook for a further few minutes, taking care it does not burn. Add the massaman paste and cook for a further 1–2 minutes.

Add the potatoes, peanut butter, coconut milk and stock and simmer until the potatoes are very soft. The potatoes will break up and the soup will thicken. Add the lime juice and maple syrup and season with salt and pepper. Although you can blend the soup, I prefer to leave the potatoes in chunks to add texture to the soup.

Pour the soup into bowls and sprinkle with chopped peanuts, chilli slices and some black pepper to serve.



SAUSAGE & CABBAGE SOUP (SERVES 4)

“This hearty soup reminds me of a trip to Germany with my friend Maren where we enjoyed a ‘kohl und pinkelfahrt’ – a long snowy trek through the woods, drinking schnapps, followed by steaming bowls of cabbage and sausage at the end of the walk. This soup has a meaty broth with sweetness from the cider and a tang of mustard seeds. If you prefer not to make the sausage balls, you can use cooked whole sausages instead and just cut them into slices and add to the soup. Make sure they are heated through in the soup broth before serving. To avoid having to slurp too much with this soup, make sure you cut the cabbage into short, finely shredded pieces.”

- 3 pork sausages
- 1 tablespoon olive oil
- 1 large onion, finely chopped
- 125 g bacon lardons
- 1 garlic clove, finely chopped
- a large sprig of fresh rosemary
- 1 heaped teaspoon wholegrain mustard
- 300 ml pear or apple cider
- 700 ml beef stock
- 1 small Savoy cabbage, stalk and outer leaves removed, finely shredded and rinsed

roasting pan, lined with baking parchment

Preheat the oven to 180°C (350°F) Gas 4.

Remove the skins from sausages and roll the meat into small balls, about 6 or 7 from each sausage. You need them to be small enough to eat in a mouthful of soup. Place them in the lined roasting pan and bake in the oven for about 10 minutes until they are lightly golden brown, turning regularly so that they are golden brown all over. Drain on paper towels to remove any excess fat. Set aside whilst you prepare the soup.

In a large saucepan, heat the oil over a medium heat and fry the onions until soft and translucent. Add the lardons, garlic and rosemary to the saucepan and fry for a few minutes until the bacon is cooked through. Add the mustard to the saucepan and fry for 1 minute, then add the cider and stock and bring to a simmer, then cook over a low heat for 15 minutes. Add the finely shredded cabbage to the saucepan and continue to simmer for about 10 minutes until the cabbage is soft. Add the reserved sausage balls to the pan and heat for a further 5 minutes.

Season with salt and pepper, tasting before adding too much salt as the soup will already contain some salt from the bacon. Remove the rosemary sprig before serving into bowls, making sure that the sausage balls are evenly distributed.

A Bowl of Soup by Hannah Miles, published by Ryland Peters & Small (£20)

Photography by Alex Luck © Ryland Peters & Small



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Legally Blonde, the Musical Jr.

by Laurence O'Keefe and Nell Benjamin

Dramacube, Twickenham Purple Cast at Hampton Hill Theatre

The musical *Legally Blonde, the Musical* is a fun coming-of-age story set in a Californian high school and the law college at Harvard. Director Matthew Bunn has taken on [two different teenage casts in two different venues](#) for Dramacube's version of *Legally Blonde*. Not having seen the film nor the West End production, it was delightful to enjoy the talent and music brought to its full potential with Rory Cubin's musical direction and choreography.



At Hampton a simple set with "Elle" lit in big letters, surrounded by balloons and other pink girly paraphernalia, made the opening focus as Elle's friends brought the heroine into the frame with *Omigod You Guys*. Dressed for a dream date with her steady guy Warner Huntington III, Elle was given the elbow when Warner (Chester Barnes) revealed his upward mobility, intending to move onto Harvard without her. Elle, played by Mimi Worsley, was convincingly upset and outraged, and dealt with the catalyst moment well. Was Elle "Too blonde? Too pink?" However, in the end, despite what the cad feared, blonde and pink worked for her.



With support from her loyal pals such as Kate, played with gusto by Oriel Gooding, Elle made her way into Harvard and warmed to the rather nerdish Emmett, the law-teaching assistant (a convincing Jamie Brindsen). Elle determinedly made her way to win back her man, not letting love rival and classmate Vivienne, played beautifully by Megan Went, stand in her way. The cast, with doubling roles, were really strong and the sorority sisters of Delta Nu worked well as a Greek chorus. The best musical number was *Bend and Snap*, where the girls of the cast really pulled together.

Runaway scene stealers were the captivating beautician Paulette, vibrantly played by Charlotte Taylor, who became a close friend, and her delivery boy beau Brendan.

With its thoughtful lighting by Gary Stevenson and Lizzie Lattimore, *Legally Blonde's* tightly packed seventy minutes made a welcome foil to the ubiquitous pre-Christmas pantos.

Read Heather Moulson's review at www.markaspen.com/2022/12/23/legally-blonde-purple

Photography by Simone Sutton



The Remarkable Theatrical Adventures of Peregrine Proteus

by Jane Dewey

The Questors at the Studio, Ealing until 31st December

The Remarkable Theatrical Adventures of Peregrine Proteus, an original work written by award-winning Questors' member Jane Dewey and based on the 1825 Pierce Egan novel, *The Life of an Actor*, is a very satisfying distraction if panto isn't your thing.



The play tells the story of Peregrine Proteus, who falls under the spell of theatre at an early age and vows to make his fortune as an actor. The journey to such fortune is, of course, less than smooth and what follows is a roller-coaster ride through the early 19th century dramatic environment, societal mores and economic convulsions.



A large classical picture frame hangs above the thrust staging, which the cast never leaves. Within this frame, are projections of 'humorous engravings' of Theodore Lane, an artist championed by Peirce Egan, plus intertitles in a period font. Costume designer Jenny Richardson gets the maximum effect out of seemingly minor changes. A hat here, a waistcoat there and hey presto, a different character!

The proceedings are blessed with Musical Director, Graham Reid, playing music by Charles Dibdin, the late-Georgian composer, actor and singer on a keyboard set appropriately to a harpsichord-style effect. This attention to detail gives a real boost to authenticity.

Zac Karaman plays Peregrine Proteus throughout with an admirable sureness. David Bentley as Quill gives an admirable example of true friendship. Saskia Moon as Maria shows us a principled sweetness - I nearly went into Bernstein! Holly Hurrell, whose named role is Miss Kick-Her-Heels showed remarkable adaptability, transforming between character types physically, verbally and plausibly, at the drop of a hat. Everyone gives it their all in a true ensemble production.

Peregrine Proteus is fast-moving, funny, and crafted by people who clearly care about getting things right. It has the stamp of an authoritative piece, which it wears suitably lightly. It was even worth missing the World Cup Final for, so make of that what you will.



Read Vince Francis's review at www.markaspen.com/2022/12/19/peregrine-proteus

Photography by Evelina Ponyte

Did Tito keep the lid on the Balkans?

Teresa Read



For many the breakup of Yugoslavia was to be celebrated - after Germany's defeat in 1945 Yugoslavia had become the Socialist Federal Peoples' Republic of Yugoslavia, controlled by Josip Broz "Tito" for thirty-five years.

The breakup of the socialist republic after Tito's death led to the formation of [Bosnia and Herzegovina](#), [Croatia](#), [Macedonia](#), [Montenegro](#), [Serbia](#) (including the regions of Kosovo and Vojvodina) and [Slovenia](#).

The transition has not been easy for some of the former Yugoslav countries, the relationship between Kosova and Serbia is a prime example.

Kosovo suffered inter-ethnic unrest and civil war leading to the US-NATO aerial bombardment of Serbia and the deployment of KFOR (a NATO-led peacekeeping force) and UNMIK (the United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo) to secure and administer the Kosovo region on behalf of the international community.

In April 2013 Kosovo and Serbia reached a landmark agreement normalising relations that granted a high degree of autonomy to Serb-majority areas.

Towards the end of this year ethnic tensions flared again over Serbian/Kosovan car number plates; Serbian troops on the border between Kosovo and Serbia were reported on 27 December 2022 as being in a state of combat readiness with the Serbian president stating that "all measures be taken to protect the Serbian people in Kosovo".

The inflammatory issue was the order by officials in Pristina to replace Serbian vehicle licence plates with Republic of Kosovo licence plates. The border between Kosovo and Serbia, the Merdare crossing, important for road freight and has international rail links, was closed.



Left: U.S Marines' road block near the village of Koretin, Kosova, checking for weapons, 16 June 1999



Left: Fadil Hoxha, vice-president of the Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, 1978 to 1979



Left: Camp Bondsteel, the main base of the United States Army under KFOR command in south-eastern part of Kosovo near the city of Ferizaj



Left: US President Bill Clinton with Albanian children during his visit to Kosovo, June 1999 - refugee camp near Skopje, Macedonia

Further information: <https://worldinfozone.com/facts.php?country=Serbia>

RICHMOND SHAKESPEARE SOCIETY PRESENTS

THE HOLLOW

by Agatha Christie
Directed by Derek Stringer

Richmond Shakespeare Society



at the Mary Wallace Theatre



Saturday 21 to Saturday 28 January 2023

THE MARY WALLACE THEATRE, THE EMBANKMENT, TWICKENHAM TW1 3DU

Book online at: www.richmondshakespeare.org.uk

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

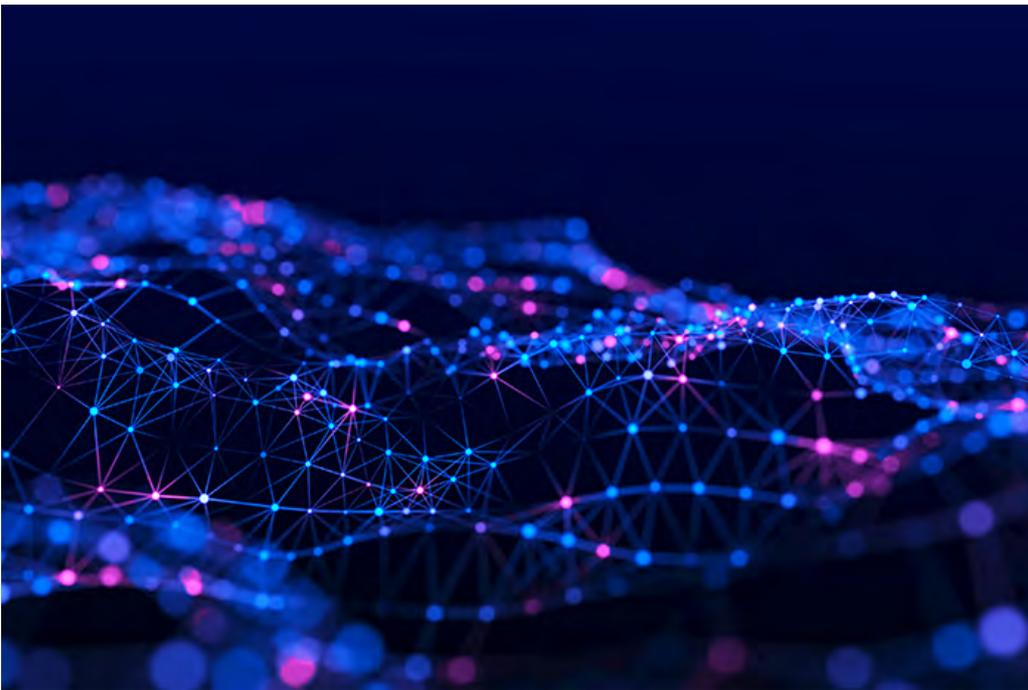
This amateur production of *The Hollow* is presented by arrangement with Concord Theatricals Ltd. on behalf of Samuel French Ltd.
www.concordtheatricals.co.uk

St Mary's University

St Mary's Awarded £1.7m OfS Grant to Develop Computer Science Centre for Excellence

The Office for Students (OfS) has announced that St Mary's University, Twickenham has been awarded a capital grant to develop a suite of computer science laboratories and teaching facilities on its campus in Strawberry Hill.

The grant, worth £1.7m, will enable the University to establish state-of-the-art facilities, allowing students joining its [Computer Science BSc](#) and [MSc](#) programmes to be a forefront of developments in computing.



Speaking of the grant, St Mary's Vice-Chancellor Anthony McClaran said, "I am delighted that the Office for Students has awarded this funding to St Mary's.

The new facilities will mark a new chapter for the University, and I look forward to seeing students using them next year."

The facilities, which will be amongst the most modern computer science facilities in

the country when they open, will include state-of-the-art computing equipment in a contemporary setting designed to enhance the student experience and prepare them for the professional world.

The new Computer Science programmes have been designed collaboratively with industry IT experts and senior IT managers to equip graduates for the digital job market of the future.

The degrees give students training in data management, artificial intelligence, cyber security, computer programming, cloud computing, IT service management and financial operations.

Dean of the Faculty of Sport, Health and Allied Science, Dr Leanne Griffiths, added, "These new courses mark our first steps into the STEM subject areas, and we are delighted that students joining next September will have access some of the most modern computer science facilities in the country.

St Mary's has a strong reputation in research and teaching excellence in the sport, psychological and health sciences and I am sure our computer science programmes will join this tradition."



**St Mary's
University
Twickenham
London**

Brentford duo nearing return

Thomas Frank has confirmed that both Kristoffer Ajer and Aaron Hickey are closing in on a return to first-team action

Written by Brentford Football Club

Thomas Frank has confirmed that both Kristoffer Ajer and Aaron Hickey are nearing a return to first-team action - but won't be available for Brentford's trip to West Ham United.

The Bees head coach revealed that the duo could be back for the FA Cup third-round tie against the Hammers at the Gtech Community Stadium on Saturday 7 January.

When asked about Ajer and Hickey's availability, Frank responded: "They're not ready for selection, unfortunately. Ajer trained fully with us today, so it's very nice to have him in the training group.

"Hickey is getting closer to full training with us, so they're progressing well and they're actually a little bit ahead of schedule, so that's positive, the medical guys have done a top job.

"[Thomas] Strakosha is getting closer, he was involved in the bigger squad against Tottenham but didn't make it to the bench.

"Shandon [Baptiste] is still out with a groin injury and Frank [Onyeka] won't play - he's got a hamstring injury."

Frank added: "With Hickey, we can hope for something against West Ham [in the FA Cup] but it'll still be tough to make. Kristoffer, he's more likely to make that West Ham game."

Despite their poor form, Frank was keen not to underestimate Friday's opponents.

The Hammers have lost their last four Premier League games - as well as an EFL Cup tie with Blackburn Rovers on penalties - which leaves them in 16th, just one point above the relegation zone.

When asked if that meant it was a good time to play West Ham, Frank replied: "Or a very bad time!"

The Dane admitted that he is still wary of the threat that David Moyes' side possess, before praising the work the Scot has done in east London.

"When a team has lost four games and they're playing at home, they want to bounce back," Frank said.

"I don't know any manager or any player that doesn't want to do that and come flying out.

"On that note, I will say that I've read some of the stuff people have written about West Ham - it's a huge club. I think David Moyes and his staff have done a top job over the last three years.

"They have maybe over-performed, but definitely top-performed, in terms of stabilising them and then getting sixth and then seventh - two unbelievable positions."

Frank added: "They're also performing in Europe, they reached the semi-final of the Europa League and, now, they are also in the next stages of the Conference League.

"I understand it's about results, but this league is on a knife's edge depending on if you are winning enough games or not winning enough games."



BATTERY FIRES PUTTING SAFETY AT RISK

LITHIUM ion batteries are responsible for a growing number of fires - and new rules are urgently required to safeguard the public, a leading environmental group has warned.

Experts say blazes linked to the items are worse over Christmas and New Year - especially in recycling centres and in the back of refuse collection vehicles.

That's because so many more of us are chucking away batteries which, if not properly recycled, can start fires.

A spokesman for the Environmental Services Association told GB News: "Fires are a perennial issue for our sector because people put all sorts of flammable things out into the rubbish and in ways that they shouldn't. But what we are seeing at the moment specifically is that lithium ion batteries are responsible for a growing proportion of the fires we face. They really are quickly becoming the number one culprit. So we would urge people to absolutely please recycle all batteries. But particularly with lithium ion batteries, recycle them separately, using proper battery recycling banks or small waste electrical recycling banks."

Experts say that as our dependence on recharging grows, new laws will be needed to make it easier to recycle batteries in the right way.

Next year, the Government is consulting on the issue of battery regulations and that could even put slightly tougher regulations on producers of batteries to fund collection infrastructure and make it easier for people to recycle batteries.

The comments come amid an ongoing campaign by a leading recycling association which says new rules are needed now to prevent households throwing unwanted electrical equipment out with the general waste over Christmas.

The call from the British Metal Recycling Association comes as figures show waste electrical and electronic equipment (WEEE) can be linked to three times more fires inside bin lorries and at household waste recycling centres than initially thought.

James Kelly, the CEO of the BMRA, said: "Councils need to introduce kerbside collections for discarded WEEE items. We are seeing increased fires happening in bin lorries and at household waste recycling centres as well as metal recycling sites like those of our members where these items can end up in the incorrect waste stream. People's lives are at risk."

The BMRA says the fires are often caused by damaged lithium and lithium-ion batteries inside the discarded electrical items. There have long been fears that they cause fires, but research by the Recycle Your Electricals campaign led by Material Focus say they can now be linked to 700 fires in the past 12 months.

And Mr. Kelly, whose trade association represents the £7 billion UK metal recycling sector, said the problem is particularly bad at this time of year.

"Almost two fires a day across the country can now be linked to these batteries, according to new research," Mr. Kelly said. "In the space of 10 weeks, thanks to Black Friday deals, Christmas gifts, Boxing Day sales and January sales, we are likely to see millions of electrical items discarded. If there is not an easy option, such as kerbside collection, it is likely that much of this will be disposed of incorrectly. This massively increases the risk of fires across the waste sector. That is why we need to see kerbside collections introduced right away."

WEEE generally covers products that have a plug or need a battery, such as fridges, vacuum cleaners, cookers, mobile phones and computer equipment.

Discarded items may contain batteries which can cause fires if they are damaged, and they need to be treated differently to general household waste.

And with councils set to collect two million unwanted WEEE items, the British Metal Recycling Association (BMRA) say local authorities should carry out kerbside collections.

According to the results of the recent [survey](#) by Material Focus, fires caused by batteries are potentially a far bigger issue than previously reported in waste sector reports. The survey shows that nearly 90% of the 60 local authorities surveyed said fires caused by batteries are "an increasing problem".



BRITAIN'S NEWS CHANNEL

Find a local public body's audit report

About this tool

Each year, local auditors give an opinion on local public bodies' financial statements and assess whether they have proper arrangements in place to secure value for money (VFM). Depending on their findings:

- where auditors are not satisfied that financial statements give a true and fair view, they issue a **non-standard audit report**
- a non-standard audit report may also be issued where the auditor decides to draw attention to a matter that they consider readers of the financial statements should be aware of
- from 2020-21, under the 2020 Code of Audit Practice (the Code), where auditors identify a significant weakness in the body's arrangements to secure VFM, they report this matter and raise a recommendation in relation to the issue(s). Previously, under the 2015 Code relevant to audits up to and including 2019-20, the auditor would have issued a qualified VFM conclusion where they were not satisfied with the body's VFM arrangements.

Use this map to see explore auditor reporting locally in the NHS and local government in England.

The map has been updated to reflect 2021-22 auditor reports for NHS providers and commissioners issued up to the end of November 2022.

The map has also been updated for outstanding local government audit reporting.

As the NAO originally [reported in March 2021](#), significant delays are continuing to affect the timeliness of auditors' work in local government. These delays mean our app does not yet include audit reporting for every local body covered by the 2020 Code. We will address this through further periodic updates as audits are completed.

How to use this tool

Local area colour shading

In the mapping tool below, local areas are shaded in:

- green where auditors issued a standard audit report.
- red where auditors issued a non-standard report or not satisfied with the body's arrangements to secure VFM.

Select options

To explore the reports for these areas, make selections from the drop down options in the side bar:

1. Select the **type** of local body you want the results for (e.g. NHS Clinical Commissioning Group).
2. Select the **audit year**. This tool covers 5 audit years.
3. Then choose which **type of report** you want to see (available report types are explained below):

Report types

Opinion on the financial statements

This sets out whether the auditor is satisfied that:

- financial statements give a true and fair view
- income and expenditure is in accordance with relevant laws and regulations
- the body can reasonably expect to continue to function for the foreseeable future, usually regarded as at least the next 12 months.

Auditors may also decide to draw attention to an issue (emphasis of matter) that they consider readers of the financial statements should be aware of. For 2021-22, all auditor reports of NHS clinical commissioning groups include an emphasis of matter drawing attention to the demise of these bodies on 30 June 2022 and commissioning responsibilities being transferred to the newly created integrated care boards from 1 July 2022 under the Health and Care Act 2022.

Value for money arrangements

This sets out whether the auditor is satisfied that proper arrangements are in place to secure value for money.

Additional reporting powers

This sets out whether the auditor has used additional powers to bring an issue to the body's or public's attention.

Click on a local area to view report

Zoom into the map using the + and – buttons or your mouse scroll wheel, then:

- click on a red shaded local area on the map to see a non-standard report for that area
- click on a green shaded local area on the map to see the standard audit report for that area

A pop up box with a link to the report (PDF format) will appear.

Alternatively, if you know the name of the local body, you use the drop down list on the left to select it. It will then be highlighted on the map and you can click to see the link to the report.

Further information about auditor reports

Click on the “Types of auditor reporting” tab to read more about the types of auditor reporting and auditors' additional powers and duties.

Our Code of Audit Practice pages on the [NAO website](#) explain the changes to auditors' work on VFM arrangements and reporting from financial year 2020-21.



National Audit Office

Ex Met-Detective blasts UK police forces, as Labour vow to get tough on crime

THE standard of policing has been described as “catastrophic” by a former Scotland Yard detective.

Peter Bleksley told GB News that many senior police leaders were failing and that the public were being let down.

Speaking to GB News, Mr Bleksley told Dawn Neesom: “The state of British policing is now quite frankly, so catastrophic in many regards. And that’s borne out by the number of police services that are in special measures.

“And quite frankly, some senior police leadership, which actually sanctions and embraces waving flags, painting, police cars, and this other kind of nonsense, need to realise this has nothing to do with the fundamental core aspects of policing. That’s keeping the streets safe, preventing crime and when crime is committed, investigating it.

Commenting on figures that emerged yesterday about unsolved crimes, he continued; “If anybody is in any doubt, they only need to recall yesterday’s headline of 1,145,000 crimes of theft, burglary, not being investigated. That’s astonishing - a million thefts unsolved.

“Unfortunately, our police are doing so much social work and mental health work at the moment that they really aren’t deploying the resources like they should do to the core principles of policing. And that is part of the reason why they’ve got themselves into such a tangle and is a major factor in why so many people on the streets of Britain, quite frankly do not feel safe.”

Mr Bleksley’s comments come after Labour set out their plans for how they’d deal with crime if they won power.

The shadow justice secretary, Steve Reed, said he will update Tony Blair’s “tough on crime, tough on the causes of crime” slogan and put prevention at the heart of their approach.

Reed said increasing and strengthening the use of such sentences would tackle reoffending rates and give “a voice directly to victims”.

He said: “Victims will be able to select the unpaid work that offenders carry out, so victims will be seeing justice done.”

Labour wants to widen the scope of community sentences work beyond tasks such as clearing wasteland, decorating community centres, repairing churches and removing graffiti. It also proposes that victims sit on new community payback boards overseeing sentences and ensuring they are completed.

Reed said he wanted to update Blair’s 1990s slogan by reviewing how to put prevention at the heart of the criminal justice system. The review will look at how countries such as New Zealand have adopted an approach of providing specialist treatment to prevent reoffending by those living with domestic violence or parents with serious mental health problems.



UK borders are safe in the hands of the British Army - Defence Secretary insists

UK borders are safe in the hands of the British Army, the Defence Secretary said today.

Ben Wallace spoke out as he attended Manchester Airport to witness the job soldiers were doing in the place of striking Border Staff workers.

Rejecting claims the country's borders are less secure when they're being manned by members of the armed forces he told GB News: "The claim is just pure propaganda put out by the unions. That's not the case. I witnessed it today. And I am the former Security Minister so I know exactly how the borders work. So I think that's just using propaganda to try and muddy the waters. The simple reality is our borders are safe and secure. These individuals are members of the armed forces that come to help out when the strikes are on. They are coming out with a very straightforward function. And of course, they are backed up by computer systems and scans that allow us to identify people of worry coming into the country."

Asked whether he felt the Armed Forces were more efficient than Border Force Staff he continued: "I've been here at Manchester Airport for over an hour and seen queues rapidly decrease. I think it's pretty efficient, especially here in terminal two of Manchester, which is a brand new facility.

"I think what it demonstrates is the Armed Forces are managing to substitute for striking workers on the point of entry into the UK. They're using technology to make sure that it is run efficiently and cleanly through the system and passengers are getting the service that they expect from Manchester Airport and I think overall, we're not seeing any disruption here to people's travel. I think that's a good thing. I think it also shows that ultimately, the government's responsibility is to secure the border, but also to make sure you people can come back and go about their business unhindered."

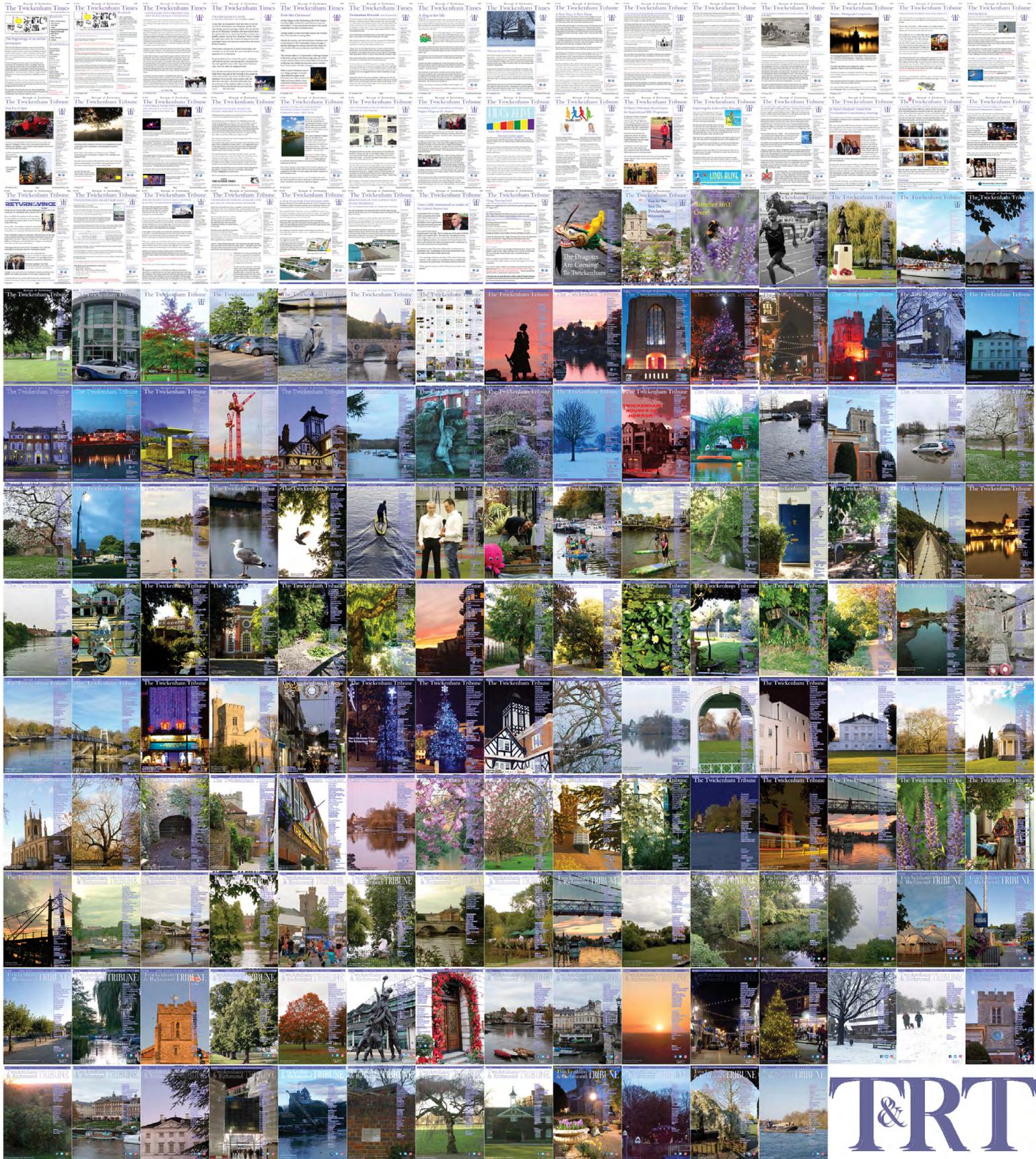
Meanwhile Mr Wallace also said the UK's response to China opening up overseas travel is "under review".

He said: "The government is going to keep that under review and review whether different countries with COVID outbreaks etc should face different restrictions. As we speak the situation relating to China is being reviewed, and I'll expect to see some clarification on this point probably today or tomorrow. The Department of Transport will work out the balance between the medical advice that it receives, and indeed, the flow of traffic. I think it's very important at this time of year that we make sure those countries that don't have COVID can travel freely to the United Kingdom and vice versa."

During an interview at Manchester Airport, Mr Wallace also praised the job of the Armed Forces who had stepped in for striking Border Force staff.



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