

Twickenham **T&RT** & Richmond **T&RT**

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Editors

Berkley Driscoll
Teresa Read



10th March 2023



A light dusting of snow
Photo by Berkley Driscoll

TickerTape - News in Brief

Rugby at Twickenham Stadium

ENGLAND v FRANCE

Saturday 11th March, KO 16:45

Attendance: 82,000

Whitton, Rugby & London Roads closed 14:45-16:45 and 17:15-19:45.

Full CPZ in operation 11:00-23:00.

Shuttle buses from Richmond & Hounslow.

Mothers Day

Don't forget its Mother's Day on Sunday 19th March!!

St Patrick's Day

And how could you forget it's St Patrick's Day on Friday 17th March!

Lá Fhéile Pádraig sona duit!

Twickenham Riverside Compulsory Purchase Order

The Council has submitted a request to the Inspector and Secretary of State, for modifications to the CPO and to the Section 19 Open Space Application.

Interested parties have received an email (dated 10th March), detailing this from Ardent Management Limited, "For and on behalf of The London Borough of Richmond upon Thames". Some recipients have expressed confusion at this, expecting to be kept informed by The Planning Inspectorate and not expecting to be contacted directly by the Council's own agent. No doubt there will be some comment once interested parties have had the opportunity to examine the Council's new representations.

At first glance the phrase smoke and mirrors comes to mind!

How this affects the Virtual Pre-Inquiry Meeting on Tuesday 14th March remains to be seen.

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Covid-19

By Teresa Read

IN THE NEWS THIS WEEK

BBC: GB News host Mark Steyn's Covid vaccine claims broke Ofcom rules.

Evening Standard: Elderly and vulnerable to be offered spring Covid booster jab.

South China Morning Post: With masks off and shows on, Hong Kong is back on track.

CBC.ca: Djokovic withdraws from Indian Wells because of vaccination status.

World Health Organization

Weekly epidemiological update on COVID

Data as of 5 March 2023

At the country level, the highest numbers of new 28-day cases were reported from the United States of America (1,027,596), Japan (539,251), China (454,575), Germany (379,505), and the Russian Federation (345,384).

The highest numbers of new 28-day deaths were reported from the United States of America (10,856), Japan (3,432), China (2,634), the United Kingdom (2,103), and Brazil (1,931).

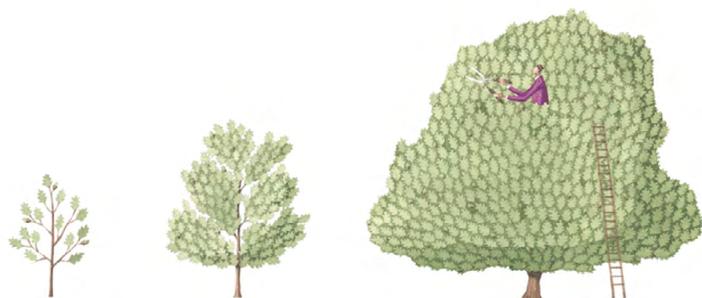
European Region

The European Region reported over 1.5 million new cases, a 12% increase as compared to the previous 28-day period.

Nineteen of the 61 countries for which data are available reported increases in new cases of 20% or greater, with the highest proportional increases observed in Kyrgyzstan, Poland, and the Republic of Moldova.

The highest numbers of new cases were reported from Germany (379,505), the Russian Federation (345,384), and Austria (138 388).

The highest numbers of new deaths were reported from the United Kingdom (2,103), the Russian Federation (1,019), and Italy.



The Tree Agency

darryl parkin

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The Tree Agency

Inspired by a true story

Jacko by Jeanne Willis

When Mick rescues an injured baby jackdaw, so begins a special bond between a nature-loving boy and his pet bird

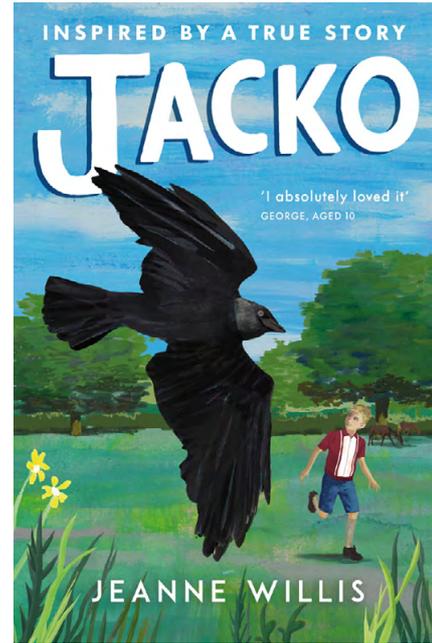
Based on the true story of the childhood of London Zoo's head keeper, Mick Carman. Mick grew up in Teddington and lived at the Railway Hotel (now The Railway Teddington) on Victoria Road, where he taught Jacko to fly, and set up the cage on the bar where locals would be greeted by him. Jacko became a local and national celebrity.

THE STORY

When Mick rescues an injured baby jackdaw in the park, little does he know that the bird is about to change his childhood for ever. Jacko soon recovers, and Mick teaches him how to fly. It's not long before Jacko becomes a beloved member of the community, amusing the punters in the family pub and guiding the trains into the station. As Jacko's adventures gain greater fame, Mick has to face whether he can ever bear to say goodbye to his beloved pet jackdaw...

THE TRUE STORY BEHIND JACKO

In October 1964, the real Mick Carman in this true story flew the nest. He left school and inspired by a certain jackdaw and a programme called Zoo Time on TV, he wrote to London Zoo asking for a job. He began work at the zoo in the Small Mammal Department, where he cared for civet cats, coypus, lemurs and Tasmanian devils to name a few. In 1965, he was transferred to the Ape and Monkey House, where he looked after the zoo's most famous resident, Guy the gorilla, for twenty-three years. Mick became Head Keeper in 1985, a position he held until he retired in 2008.



Mick is my neighbour and came to the rescue when I ran out of fruit flies to feed my pet praying mantis nymphs. He had some spare after feeding his tree frogs and as we chatted, he mentioned that he'd rescued a baby jackdaw years ago and wondered if it would make a good story. Mick had kept Jacko's press cuttings in a box and suddenly this wasn't just a story about a jackdaw earning his wings – there were two flight paths to navigate. Shortly after, I went with Mick to Teddington to visit the Railway Hotel where the story began. We went up to the function room where Jacko learned to fly, we stood at the bar where he held court and drank in the yard where his cage used to be. Afterwards, we peered into the station master's garden, stood on the bridge and watched the trains Jacko used to escort. In the afternoon, we wandered through the chestnut trees in Bushy Park, where Mick found him as a fledgling. The rest is history. There are a few places where I had to use guesswork, no one can recall everything that happened over half a century ago, but the things that matter are true. I'm indebted to Mick for sharing his story with me.'

Jeanne Willis.

Jeanne Willis is an award-winning children's author and scriptwriter. She had her first picture book published by Andersen at the age of 21, and has won the Silver Medal Smarties Prize (*Tadpole's Promise*), the Nasen Special Needs Award (*Susan Laughs*), the Sheffield Children's Book Award (*Who's in The Loo*) and the Red House Children's Book Award (*Bottoms Up*). Jeanne has also worked on scripts for TV, including *Polly Pocket* and *The Slow Norris*, and a pilot TV series for *Dr Xargle*.

Free activity sessions in the Royal Parks for London's schools

The Royal Parks charity is providing free and discounted school learning sessions to be held across the Royal Parks, thanks to a generous £50,000 donation from the Royal Parks Foundation USA.

The Royal Parks charity wants everyone to have a chance to explore the historic natural environments in the heart of London. But recognises that the costs of taking a group out to the parks can be challenging for schools and parents.

The [Schools Bursary Scheme](#) will help provide sessions to primary and secondary state schools in London who otherwise wouldn't be able to visit. It is estimated that over 5,000 children and young people from the most deprived areas of London will benefit from more than 200 full-day visits. The scheme is open to any non-fee-paying school or alternative education setting in Greater London that meet the bursary criteria:



- Schools where over 20% of students are eligible for free school meals
- Schools facing challenges around provision of a quality educational experience. For example, over 45% of students have English as an additional language or there is a large transient student population

The Royal Parks Learning team works with partners the [Field Studies Council](#) and [The Holly Lodge Centre](#) to deliver activities across the Royal Parks.

Ledy Leyssen, Head of Learning at The Royal Parks, said: "Thanks to generous funding from The Royal Parks Foundation USA we are excited to be able to continue inspiring the next generation.

"Our new bursary scheme will help more children and young people to connect with nature on their doorstep and discover the diverse habitats of the Royal Parks. Broadening access to the parks and everything they have to offer is such an important aspect of our learning programmes: over 1,900 students benefitted from the bursary scheme last year and we are looking forward to welcoming so many more in 2023."

Todd Ruppert, Chair of The Royal Parks Foundation USA, said: "The Royal Parks are an enormous contributor to the magic of London. We founded The Royal Parks Foundation USA to help fund the vital work of The Royal Parks.

"Over the years, we've supported numerous projects, including the launch of the Schools Bursary Scheme in 2019. This important programme will help connect thousands of children with the natural world, who might not otherwise have had the chance to do so, and it's great to see it continue and grow. We have other interesting projects ahead of us."



Richmond in Europe Association Chairman visits Germany

Richmond in Europe Association Chairman, Alan Mockford, has returned from our twin town of Konstanz in Germany, where he visited partner sports clubs, orchestras, choirs, and schools. Alan also paid a visit to staff in the international department of Konstanz Town Hall.

Alan met with the Head of Department, Martin Schröpel, and Antonie Langemann who is responsible for the link with Richmond. They are each holding mugs to commemorate the reaffirmation of the borough's partnerships with both Konstanz and Fontainebleau, which will be celebrated in Richmond from 6 to 8 June 2025.



The mugs can be purchased from the Museum of Richmond and the Landmark Arts Centre.

Alan also took part in the colourful and exuberant annual Fasnacht Carnival before his departure.

Read full [report of Alan's journey and details of joint international events planned](#) throughout the year in all three European towns.

If your club, association or school would like a partner in Fontainebleau or Konstanz write to richmondineurope@hotmail.com.

The Hampton Kempton Waterworks Railway season reopens this month!

It's a welcome back to everyone as the Hampton Kempton Waterworks Railway opens with heritage steam train rides and picnics.

As well as normal steam train rides, a free walk and talk tour will be held on Sunday 19 March. Guests will have the opportunity to look around a brand-new carriage shed housing a heritage rolling stock and learn more about the future of Hampton Kempton Waterworks Railway.



Recognising the need for an affordable family day-out, the railway has decided that ticket prices will remain the same for 2023 at £2 for children and £4 for adults.

[Find out more information and how to book](#)

Saturday 16th September 2023- A Date for your Diary

By Bruce Lyons

THE GREAT RIVER RACE, London's unique Thames River Race is back after 2 years of Covid-19 cancellation and last year's race being adapted to a Memorial Row in respect of the death of her Late Majesty 2 days earlier, the race is back on.



The 21-mile race from Greenwich to Ham is the longest race for fixed seat traditional craft, run from 1988 the race attracts "all sorts" from all over the British Isles and elsewhere in the World. We have seen entries from USA, Canada, Bermuda ,Australia ,Eire ,Sardinia ,France as well as a regular large contingent from Holland.

Started in 1988 with just 61 entries it's popularity grew overtime to 330+ boats with crews members up to 3000 – quite a sight!

In earlier years it started from Ham on the High Tide and ended in Poplar but in 2009 as an experiment it started from the Isle of Dogs and ended at Ham and on the High Tide . This proved much more popular and made for a late afternoon spectacle at Ham. Overtime there have been many unique entries, even Transatlantic ROWING BOATS, a Bronze Age Greek Galley replica, the earliest known rowing boat built in the 1800's in County Down.

There is Wherry's built with the encouragement of the Late Bamber Gascoigne and constructed by Mark Edwards MBE Richmond's own Master Boat Build of Richmond Bridge Boathouses. Mark, who also built the Gloriana the late Queens Royal Barge as well as many other River Craft built with the help of the Sea Scouts and pupils of Grey Court School. Together they built a number of Thames Cutters, named after people, associated with Rowing. One – The George Pocock after perhaps the worlds most celebrated "Shell" builder.



George Peacock was originally from Kingston, the son of the Eton College boat builder, who lost his job at the beginning of the 20th Century and together with his brother emigrated to the USA., overtime he built the most advanced shells ever and by 1936 clubs worldwide were using them.



Most famous was the boat rowed by Washington of Seattle who won in the infamous Hitler Olympics of 1936 much to Adolf's shame . You can find all about this amazing story from the book *The Boys in the Boat* which can be obtained from Open Books in Richmond.

This year, the GRR is expected to have up to 250 entries but sadly the PLA have decided that the River is not safe for Dragon Boats, which is hardly surprising as these flimsy boats take a lot of water in the rough seas in the London Basin.

For spectators there is a Spectator Boat from the slae of Dogs to Ham, but you need to book early as there is limited Space.

We are organising the transfers and accommodation for the race. Please see our web site for details, www.crusadertravel.com

The Council Budget – Council Tax

<https://cabnet.richmond.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=173&MId=500000016>

Recommend to Council to agree that the Band D level of Council Tax for 2023/24, including the Council's increase in Council Tax of 2.99%, the Social Care Precept of 2% and the GLA increase of 9.74%, be set at £2,141.21, an overall increase of 5.92% on 2022/23.

During meetings relating to Council Tax Councillor Geoffrey Samuel, the most experienced and longest serving councillor in the London Borough of Richmond upon Thames, said that there is no need to increase Council Tax.

Cllr Samuel said that instead, the Council should pass on to residents this year's underspend, which is in excess of £2.2m or 2% of Council Tax, the unexpected windfall of a £1.6m rebate from West London Waste which is over 1% of Council Tax, and the remaining 2.8% to be taken from Reserves which will be over £83m in April 2024 without evidence that so large a sum is really needed.

Cllr Samuel commented: It is significant that the Council accepted without any protest or even a murmur Mayor Khan's increase of over 9.5%.

Four out of five Green Councillors abstained and Cllr Samuel voted Against the increase

Teenager sentenced to ten years for killing student in Twickenham

By Mac McInerny

The killing was 200 metres from the front door of Mac McInerny who runs Heatham Alliance community group and Neighbourhood Watch, one of the largest groups in Twickenham.

He said: "Taking a life is senseless and this killing was horrific. The details from the Old Bailey are absolutely harrowing.

"Our thoughts and the thoughts of this whole community go out to the family and friends of the victim, Hazrat Wali, an Afghan refugee who studied at Richmond upon Thames College."

According to one report his killer, age 16 years at the time, was enrolled as a student at the same college.

New printmaking festival comes to the Landmark Arts Centre

A new biannual arts festival, Paper Ink Print, will run from Friday 17 to Sunday 19 March 2023. The festival will bring together the printmaking community to champion the art of hand-printmaking, artists' books, and papermaking.

Paper Ink Print is a three-day event of talks, classes, and demonstrations alongside special exhibits with over 50 stands of artists selling their work directly to visitors.

The festival will include a range of new exhibition work from guests including conceptual artist Lizzie Brewer, printmaker Frances Kiernan, and Shokoufeh Fallah, winner of the 2022 East London Printmakers Bursary Award.

Opening night is Friday 17 March from 4 to 8pm. Admission is free with an invite, or tickets can be purchased on the door.

Weekend hours run from 10am to 4.30pm on Saturday 18 March and Sunday 19 March. Admission is £5, concessions £4, under 16s and LAC Friends are free. Tickets are valid for entrance over the whole weekend.

Full details and booking information can be found on the [Landmark Arts Centre website](#).



Represent Richmond in the TCS Mini London Marathon 2023

We are looking for athletes to represent London Borough of Richmond in the TCS Mini London Marathon 2023 that is taking place on Saturday 22 April 2023 over the last 2.6km of the London Marathon course.

If you are aged between 11 and 17 years, live or go to school in the borough and would like to take part in the TCS Mini London Marathon, then you can apply to be part of our team.

If you would like to trial to be part of the team then you need to [register to trial](#) on our website by Sunday 26 March. You will need to complete a 5K parkrun event between Saturday 7 January and Saturday 25 March 2023. We will take your fastest time between and including these two dates.



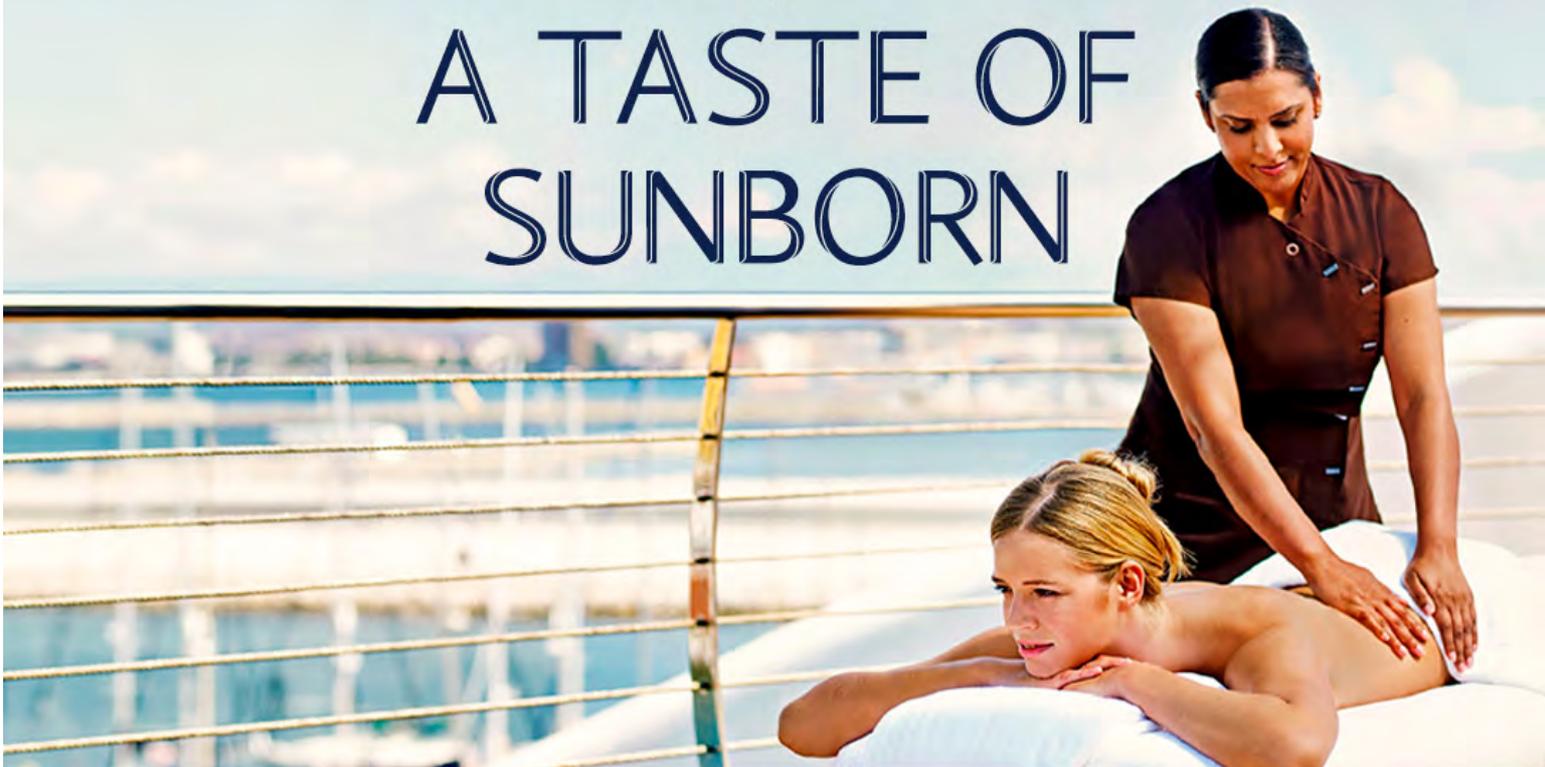
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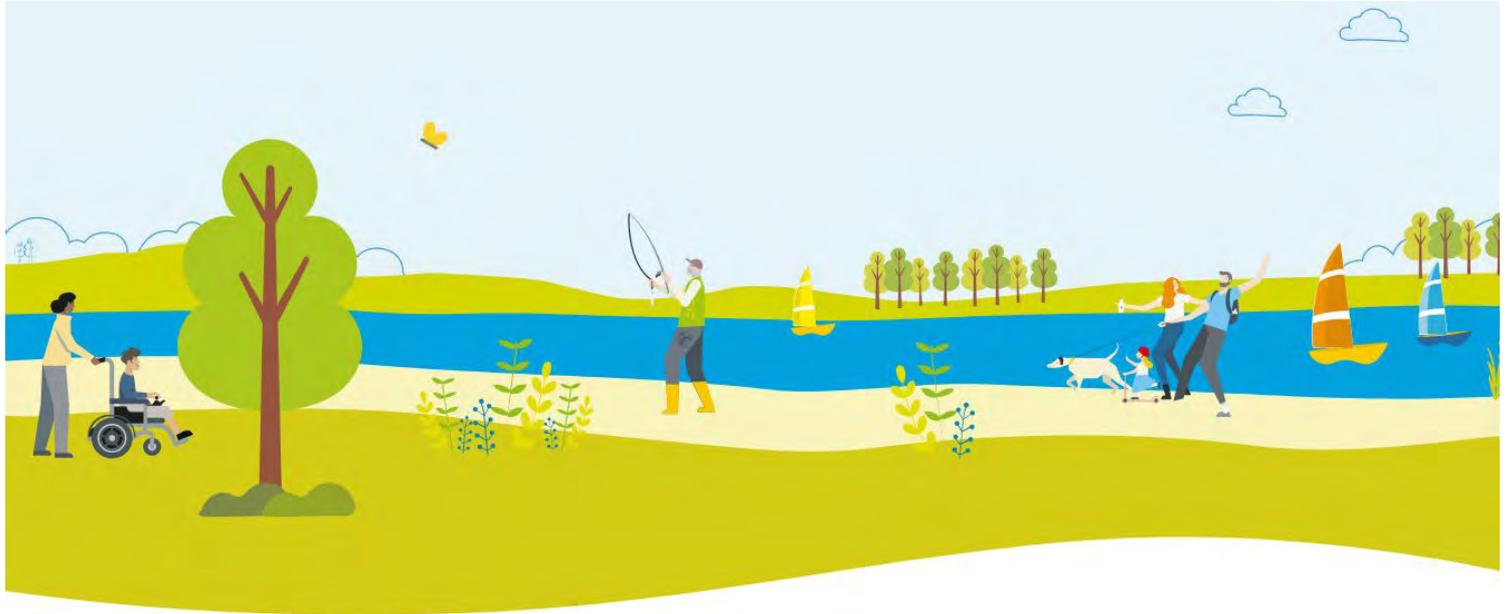
Terms & Conditions: Offer subject to availability

Package is subject to availability. Cannot be combined with other bookings. Reservations must be made direct via phone or email and cannot be made via third parties. Pre - payment is required & bookings cannot be cancelled but can be modified up to 1 year of the original reservation, subject to availability.

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The consultation on the future of our water supply will close on the 21 March 2023

We wanted to remind you that the consultation on our draft Water Resources Management Plan, which sets out how we propose to provide a secure and resilient water supply for customers now and in the future, will close on the 21 March 2023.



It's really important that we hear from you, so please visit our consultation website www.thames-wrmp.co.uk to read a summary of our draft plan, and the detailed technical reports, and let us know what you think. You can fill in the online form on the website or you can email your feedback to both consultation@thames-wrmp.co.uk and the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra) at water.resources@defra.gov.uk.

We want to hear your views on our draft plan. The easiest way to do this is by answering our consultation questions. You can answer individual consultation questions as you read through this website or you can select the button below and answer the questions collectively on our online feedback form. Either way, once you have completed the questions you want to feedback on, you will be asked to provide some contact details before submitting the form. The consultation questions cover the following areas:

- [Our approach to improve the environment](#)
- [Working towards the national target for water use](#)
- [Our approach to reducing demand for water](#)
- [The size of a proposed new reservoir](#)
- [New water sources](#)
- [Best value for our customers](#)
- [Other comments on our draft plan](#)

We encourage you to read the summary of the draft plan before responding to the consultation questions. This can be found in our dWRMP24 document library along with technical documents and appendices.

You can watch a short video on the consultation [here](#)

If you have already provided your feedback, thank you.

We'll carefully consider all the responses we receive, and in June we'll publish a report which sets out our consideration of the feedback and the changes we've made to our draft plan in response.



This consultation will close on 21 March 2023

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CONTACT: kewecofair@gmail.com



[@KewEcofair](https://twitter.com/KewEcofair)

BAKED IN ONE

Eloise Head, (aka Fitwaffle) is known to some 10 million (yes, **10 million!!**) followers on her social media platforms, and has built such a following for her fun, simple and indulgent bakes. She's a personal trainer, turned food 'influencer', turned baker. Her recipes are so quick and simple (and boy, can she talk fast when she's filming a reel!) and incredibly tempting.

Baked in One is her second cookbook (her first book *Fitwaffle's Baking It Easy* was a Sunday Times bestseller), and her new book gives 100 easy cakes and bakes that each can be made in the same tin, a 20cm square one. Eloise has a passion for fitness and nutrition, resisting the idea that you can't enjoy the foods you love and stay healthy at the same time. Lots of the recipes in the book have less than five ingredients, such as Chocolate Chip Cookie Magic Bars and Speculoos Cheesecake, as well as show-stopping creations to wow your friends and family. She's also created some seasonal bakes for special occasions - but I warn you, you'll want to make her Goopy Easter Egg Brownies all year round! **'Fitwaffle's Baked In One'** by Eloise Head is available in hardback now (Ebury Press, £22) Photography by Faith Mason. In the meantime, here are a couple of recipes to tempt you to buy a copy. Find Eloise on Instagram @fitwaffle and @fitwafflekitchen and on TikTok, Facebook and YouTube @fitwaffle



BANOFFEE BLONDIES Makes 16 (40 mins plus 1 hour cooling)

“These blondies are bursting with flavour. They taste of banana bread, mixed with a thick, fudgy caramel blondie, and have a hint of cinnamon flavour, with sweet white chocolate chips and a smooth caramel swirl throughout. They're dense and super fudgy. I love to eat these cold, but feel free to heat them up to make them warm and gooey if you prefer.”

- 160g (5.5oz) unsalted butter, melted
 - 250g (1 1/4 cups) light brown sugar
 - 1 large egg + 1 egg yolk
 - 1 tsp vanilla extract
 - 180g (1 1/3 cups) plain (all-purpose)
 - 1/4 tsp salt
 - 1 tsp ground cinnamon
 - 2 ripe medium bananas, mashed
 - 150g (2/3 cup) white chocolate chips
 - 100g (3.5oz) thick ready-made caramel sauce
1. Preheat the oven to 180°C (160°C fan)/350°F/Gas mark 4 and line a 20cm (8in) square baking tin with nonstick baking paper.
 2. In a large mixing bowl, using an electric hand mixer, beat together the melted butter and sugar



until fully combined. Then beat in the egg, egg yolk and vanilla extract.

- Using a rubber spatula or wooden spoon, fold in the flour, salt and cinnamon until just a few streaks of flour remain. Then fold in the mashed banana until just combined, followed by the white chocolate chips.
- Scoop the batter into your prepared tin and smooth it out evenly to the edges. Dollop the caramel onto the top, then swirl it through the batter with a knife.
- Bake for 20–25 minutes until the edges are light brown and the middle no longer wobbles. Leave to cool in the tin for at least 1 hour before cutting into 16 squares. Enjoy!
- Store in an airtight container at room temperature or in the refrigerator for up to 5 days.

CHOCOLATE HAZELNUT COOKIES and CREAM BARS Makes 16 (15 mins, plus 1 hour 20 mins chilling)

FOR THE BASE AND FILLING:

- 220g (7.7oz) cookies and cream biscuits (I use Oreos)
- 60g (4 tbsp) unsalted butter, melted
- 400g (1 1/3 cups) chocolate hazelnut spread (I use Nutella), melted

FOR THE TOPPING:

- 30g (2 tbsp) unsalted butter, softened
- 115g (4oz) full-fat cream cheese, at room temperature
- 260g (generous 2 cups) icing (powdered) sugar, sifted



FOR THE BASE AND FILLING:

- Line a 20cm (8in) square baking tin with nonstick baking paper.
- Put the biscuits into a food processor and process until finely crushed. Alternatively, put them into a plastic bag and crush with a rolling pin. Set aside 20g (0.75oz) of the crushed Oreos for the topping. Tip the rest into a medium mixing bowl, then pour in the melted butter and mix with a spoon until fully combined. Press the mixture firmly into the bottom of your prepared tin with the back of a spoon.
- Pour the melted chocolate hazelnut spread over the top, smoothing it out gently to the edges. Freeze for 20 minutes.

FOR THE TOPPING:

- In a medium bowl, using an electric hand mixer, beat the butter, cream cheese and icing (powdered) sugar until smooth and creamy. Remove the tin from the freezer and spread the topping gently over the chocolate hazelnut spread layer.
- Sprinkle the reserved biscuits crumbs evenly over the top, then chill in the refrigerator for 1 hour until the topping is firm. Cut into 16 squares and enjoy!
- Store in an airtight container in the refrigerator for up to 3 days.

Free Silver & Jewellery Valuations with TV'S Kate Bliss at:

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Wednesday 22 March (11am-4pm)

No appointment necessary

Free Antique & Collectable Valuations with Chris Hewitt at:

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Fisherman's Friends – The Musical

by Amanda Whittington

Royo at Richmond Theatre, now on tour until 20th May

If your lunchtime stroll took you along Richmond riverside recently you may have seen a lively crew of Cornish fishermen vigorously singing sea shanties. You can't keep an old salt away from water and boats (and seagulls) even when they are in in a sea fresh musical. *Fisherman's Friends* is exuberantly upbeat, heart-throbbingly, wildly, foot-tappingly so. It is a music-driven show; yet, not self-consciously so, for the music seems to arise spontaneously.



The plot, a simple warm-hearted blend of humour and pathos, is largely an excuse to sing the songs. A hearty group of sea fishermen, whose bond extends to singing together, is coerced into making a commercial recording, which they eventually succeed in doing ... in spite of themselves. The sub-plots are even simpler, boy gets girl, and landlord gets pub.

The design's triumph is the fishing boat buffeted by the storm, half hidden in haze, as exhilarating and impressive a start as you could wish for.



Danny, a Londoner, chances-by the village. When the tide swallows his car, he is tempted to stay, but in a Cornish fishing village, he is, well ... a fish out of water. Jason Langley's quick-talking Danny remains unfazed, seeing an opportunity to commercialise the fishermen's shanties as a way back into his lost career in the recording industry. However, when eventually they all go off to London with Danny, we know it's going to go to a bag of eels.

James Gaddas as the skipper, Jim is a hard-bitten and gruff stoic, but gravelly voiced Gaddas allows his humanity to show through. Robert Duncan plays Jim's father Jago, the gentle patriarch of the group, with sympathy and poignancy. Susan Penhaligon portrays Jago's wife Maggie as a vivacious and fun-loving grannie. Parisa Shahmir inhabits the role of granddaughter Alwyn, her spirited acting enhanced by her wistful musical solos.



The fishermen are robustly proud of their identity. *Fisherman's Friends* healthily rejoices in the value of their culture, with its humanity and coherence that is so often scorned in today's cloying self-denigration. It is a show that wears its heart on its sleeve.

Read Mark Aspen's review at www.markaspen.com/2023/03/02/fish-friends-rt

Photography by Pamela Raith

Oklahoma!

by Richard Rodgers, lyrics by Oscar Hammerstein

Summerscape at Wyndham's Theatre, West End until 2nd September

All the best known and brightest numbers from *Oklahoma!* are right at the beginning, but when *Oh, What a Beautiful Mornin'* opens this show, it is with an air of irony. Curly McLain sings and everyone else sits around a long table, oozing cynicism. Daniel Fish's fresh new take examines the darker sides of a much-loved musical. Dark is an appropriate adjective, as the inventive lighting design features as much as does the energetic music and singing, and incisive acting.



Two dozen rifle racks of six sharpshooters gives a gross of guns. It will soon be 1907, but in *Oklahoma!* it's still very much the Wild West. Expectations from life out-west are disappointing, and there are undertones of seething sexual frustrations and more than a mite of menace. Jud Fry, the outsider, is visited in his smokehouse by the charming but manipulative chancer, Curley, who viciously encourages Jud to commit suicide, in the cruel song, *Pore Jud Is Daid*. In a remarkable *coup de theatre*, the scene starts in complete darkness, then by night vision video, the two actors projected in close-up. Reactions are shown in forensic detail, Jud's quivering lips, the fall of a tear ... stupendous acting and consummate technical artistry.

Oklahoma! introduces a piece of Americana, the box-social, a charity auction for a picnic, with the aim of sharing it with the woman who, "anonymously", made it. Here it is a cattle market, buying the girls. There is comedy in this auction, when Will, none too bright on commercial transactions, vies with Ali the peddler, who is trying to escape a shotgun wedding. In contrast, it becomes a deadly serious competition between Curley and Jud, which eventually escalates into blood-splattered violence, shockingly and starkly depicted.

Nevertheless this musical is funny, it is entertaining, with plenty of ear-worms, but the punch that packs *Oklahoma!* is a real gut punch from an innovative look at an old favourite that is sad, visceral and highly memorable.

Read Mark Aspen's review at

www.markaspen.com/2023/02/28/oklahoma

Photography by Marc Brenner



The Light Burns Blue

by Silva Semerciyan

Questors Youth Theatre at the Judi Dench Playhouse, Ealing

“Photography is truth” said film director Jean-Luc Godard. But in 1917 a group of English girls demonstrated that this was a faulty premise. *The Light Burns Blue* tells the story of the “Cottingley Fairies”, an event that captured the imagination of a nation buckling under the burden of the First World War.

The simple set is covered with giant photo frames, giving a false sense of depth, sparking the idea of photographic trickery.

The play hangs on a confrontation between Wren James’s spirited Elsie and Sadie Noel’s determined Winifred Douglas, the young journalist sent to uncover the truth, who tries to get to the bottom of why Elsie chose to fake photographs of fairies.

Winifred and Elsie strike a great contrast. Elsie is desperate to become an artist but the local art club won’t accept her. Maybe the faked photographs will help her be accepted into art schools. What is the nature of art? Only 21 herself, Winifred has become a journalist thanks to a single article she wrote, but is finding her career fraught with difficulty.

Events escalate to the girls being invited to London by Sir Arthur Conan Doyle, the father of detective fiction, played with distinguished flair by Edward Gamazeliuc, who is completely taken in after providing a camera for a second set of photographs, a camera which was set up to reveal any signs of dark room trickery.

What could have been a harmless hoax is given extra dramatic weight by the attention given to the story by a society battered by three years of heavy losses in the trenches, as the bereaved write grateful letters to the girls and declare that their missing loved ones are “with the fairies”.

The Light Burns Blue deals with complex and weighty themes unflinchingly, and the large ensemble cast, supported by top-notch direction, lighting and design work, bring great energy and focus to telling the story: a wonderful evening’s entertainment.

Read Andrew Lawston’s review at www.markaspen.com/2023/02/27/light-burns-blue

Image courtesy of QYT





Hedda Gabler

by Harriet Madeley, after Henrik Ibsen

Girl Called Stephen at the Reading Rep Theatre until 11th March

Exploring the tensions between old passions and current duties, this adaptation of Ibsen's classic highlights Hedda's claustrophobia in her brand-new marriage. Annie Kershaw's direction draws on the pressures of conformity, and casts the feeling of societal entrapment in a fresh light as the protagonist grapples with the traditions and ideals of her upbringing against her desire to embrace a past relationship with Isla.



The theme of entrapment is defined by Amy Watts' inspired set design, creating a stage space for the dramas of Hedda's life and the interweaving love stories. The elevated stage holds Hedda and her world up for our viewing pleasure – a prize wife, to be shown off. The clash of gaudy pink carpet and ostentatious cushions against the traditional piano demonstrates the tensions in Hedda's life, overshadowed by the ominous presence of plastic sheeting, purposed as the walls of the room. If any substance were to be spilt – violently or otherwise - the plastic would prevent anything being staining the Tesman's pretence of perfection.

The performance of Hedda (Anna Popplewell) is meticulous in detail and perfectly captures the bitterness she feels. Her reluctance to embrace life as the new Mrs Tesman provides some welcomed moments of comedy as she avoids excessive closeness with her new husband. Popplewell effortlessly moves between contempt, pretence and panic as the plot unfolds and the entrance of Isla back in her life. Equally engaging is Mark Desebrock's portrayal of George Tesman, oblivious to Hedda's dislike of her new surroundings and like an excitable puppy, constantly eager to please.

This is a production of *Hedda Gabler* seeped in tension and inner turmoil. There's jealousy, betrayal, and tragedy, all beautifully told in this contemporary version. The ensemble retells this classic with clarity, bringing the original tensions into the modern world.



Read Sam Martin's review at www.markaspen.com/2023/02/28/hedda-gabler-rep

Photography by Harry Elletson



The Journey to Venice

by Bjørg Vik

Anarchy Division at the Finborough Theatre, Earl's Court until 25th March

How to negotiate the challenges of living longer, failing health and memory, financial pressures, loneliness and isolation, has very much become a theme du jour, most prominently in [Florian Zeller's *The Father*](#). Bjørg Vik's 1992 Norwegian play, fluently translated by Janet Garton, may be rather earlier but still feels very up to date.

We see an elderly married couple Edith and Oscar Tellmann (Annabel Leventon and Tim Hardy) coping with unreliable memory, weakened bodies, inability to pay the bills, and dead children. They do this by taking refuge in fantasy, in the form of imaginary expeditions to the places they have previously visited, without leaving their flat, which is desperately untidy with its piles



of books and burns in the carpet. From time to time, an ancient film projector gives us views of the mountains and Venice on a conveniently white wall, sometimes with the musical accompaniment of an old tape machine.



Reality intrudes in the form of a plumber, Christopher (Nathan Welsh), who is thrown by the fact that they are dressed for an expedition to the mountains. Once Christopher starts work, Edith reads aloud a racy extract from *Lady Chatterley's Lover* to her husband (something of a favourite passage we are encouraged to infer). They are interrupted by the arrival of a new cleaner, Vivian, (Charlotte Beaumont) who may be drunk or just utterly scatty, but is enthralled by D H Lawrence's sexual frankness.

Edith and Oscar are very much part of the intellectual middle classes, giving their cats names of composers and operatic characters and talking about Cervantes and Dostoyevsky as though they were old family friends. There is none of the suppressed class conflict, embarrassment, or scratching at a Brexit itch that a contemporary English playwright would be inclined to home in on if this encounter with a plumber and cleaner were set in the UK. And this refusal to go for the obvious (from an English perspective) was perhaps the most subversive and refreshing thing about this short, perhaps rather slight, play.



Read Patrick Shorrock's review at www.markaspen.com/2023/03/03/journey-venice

Photography by Simon Annand

TRAVELLER'S TALES 142

FAREWELL LYME

Doug Goodman looks back on 15 years visiting Lyme Regis



After 15 years of regular, long-stay visits to West Dorset's pretty town of Lyme it was time to say farewell. The drive from Twickenham on a good day took just over two and a half hours for the 142 miles but on a bad day the journey could be a daunting five hours. Having visited every attraction within about 50 miles and walked most local footpaths, it was time to move on and explore other beautiful places in the UK.

The visitor's first sight of the famous Cobb, the harbour dating from the 13th century, is usually from above in Langmore gardens. The vista over the beach, over Lyme Bay and beyond Golden Cap to Portland never fails to Impress. Much photographed is the little harbour sheltering fishing boats and private vessels. From the end of the Cobb the town seems to float above the water at high tide. The massive walls of the Cobb were originally built from stakes driven into the seabed but these were regularly destroyed in storms until the whole structure was rebuilt in the late 18th century using massive blocks of Portland stone. The promenade leading from the harbour to the town centre has many attractive houses, restaurants, a surf shop and a National Trust shop. The Marine Theatre, Philpot Museum with an excellent collection of fossils and much local history, the curiously shaped town hall and fossil shops can be found around Cobb Gate by the River Lym. A very pretty walk along Coombe Street and beside the river takes you over the fields to UpLyme in Devon. Walking west from Cobb Square by the lifeboat station you come to Monmouth Beach with its fossil pavement of giant ammonites. This spot is where, in 1685, the Duke of Monmouth landed to begin the rebellion against the rule of King James 11 and 12 of the rebels were later hanged. Above Monmouth Beach there's a footpath, accessed from the Holmbush carpark, which goes to Axmouth some 8 miles west. This can be a difficult walk with strong shoes and a map required. Journeying alone is not advised. There is an occasional bus back to Lyme. It was on The Undercliff and on The Cobb where filming of *The French Lieutenant's Woman* took place.



View over The Cobb



Lyme Harbour



Sailing in Lyme Bay

FINDING FOSSILS

Mary Anning is Lyme's most famous fossil finder who, in 1811, discovered a complete skeleton of an ichthyosaur. A statue to her looking out over the vast expanse of Lyme Bay was unveiled last year and fittingly she's accompanied by her dog. All sorts of fossils can be found on Monmouth Beach and to the east of the town along Charmouth Beach. The resort of Charmouth can be reached along the beach at low tide but beware of slippery rocks, mud slides and a tide which can leave you stranded. If you don't manage to find anything from 200 million years ago there is always something to be picked up from the cliff-top Victorian rubbish tip which disgorges china and glass, coins, the occasional musket ball and vast heaps of rusty metal onto the beach below. There are plenty of specialist shops

selling fossils too. The Jurassic Coast resort becomes very crowded in high- season: the town council seems unable to solve the parking problem which makes many visitors drive away in frustration. Kids enjoy the fossil museum as well as the Town Mill where water power is used to make flour.



Golden Cap



Summer Beach



Finding Fossils



Mary Anning

WINE AND DINE

I counted nine pubs in the town, many of which serve local beer brewed in the Town Mill Square. Restaurants cater for all tastes including the newly refurbished Rock Point Inn and The Pilot Boat Inn opposite. On January 1st 1915 it was to the Pilot Boat where survivors and the bodies of drowned sailors were brought after a torpedo sank HMS Formidable. The publican's dog fretted over one of the 'dead' sailors who regained consciousness from the dog's licking. The animal was called Lassie and from its act of saving the sailor the books and TV series came about. My favourite restaurant is the Harbour Inn by The Cobb. Portions are always huge and in summer you can sit at tables on the sandy beach. St Michael's Church has some magnificent tapestries while in the grounds you can find the Grave of Mary Anning. Many shops in Broad Street are independent with several specialising in local art and crafts. Sadly there are no banks and even the post office closed last year.



Sea Front



Town from the Cobb



Town Centre

FURTHER AFIELD

There's much to see within a short drive of Lyme: Golden Cap, the highest point in the south-west provides excellent walking opportunities. Sidmouth, Axminster, Beaminster and the market town of Bridport are close. At Symondsburry, just west of Bridport, there's a fine restaurant, a life-style shop and an imaginative art gallery. Bikes can be hired here and the iconic Colmer's Hill offers a stiff climb to its summit. The view is superb. Gardens at Forde Abbey, Mapperton and Burrow Farm are spectacular. Burrow Farm is always uncrowded and has a wonderfully diverse range of plants and trees. Farm shops are convenient places for stocking up on local produce. Felicities Farm Shop between Chideok and Charmouth is an essential stop for a little shopping.

The train from Twickenham to Axminster via Clapham Junction removes the strain of a long drive: there are buses to Lyme connecting with train arrivals. Once the railway carried visitors direct to Lyme but closed in the 1960s. Its history is well documented in books, on film and in the Philpot Museum. During the 15 years of regular visits to Lyme I've made many friends, enjoyed studying the resort's history, geography, geology and exploring the region. I'll miss it but to avoid withdrawal symptoms a little cottage not far from Lyme has been booked for April.

WIZ Tales: Sao Tome and Principe – Rising Sea Levels

Teresa Read



The Democratic Republic of Sao Tome and Principe, one of the smallest island countries in Africa, is in the Gulf of Guinea. The country consists of the islands of Sao Tome and Principe and some islets.

The islands are part of an extinct volcanic mountain range and are important sites for the conservation of forest birds: the Sao Tome Oriole, the Sao Tome Sunbird and the Sao Tome Weaver. The islets of Tinhosa Grande and Tinhosa Pequena support thousands of waterbirds such as the Brown Booby, Brown Gannet, Black Noddy and Sooty Tern.

Sao Tome and Principe is experiencing rising sea levels and an increasing frequency of storms; Sao Tome is just one of many Small Island States currently suffering from climate change.

The United Nations Secretary-General has warned that rising sea levels threatens “a mass exodus of entire populations on biblical scales”. He went on to add that the situation has already forced people to relocate in Fiji, Vanuatu, the Solomon Islands and elsewhere.

This week the UN published details of the High Seas Treaty. “Secretary-General António Guterres congratulated UN member countries for finalizing a text to ensure the conservation and sustainable use of marine biological diversity of areas beyond national jurisdiction, calling it a “breakthrough” after nearly two decades of talks”. UN News



More information on Sao Tome and Principe: <https://worldinfozone.com/country.php?country=SaoTome>



**Teddington
Choral
Society**

Julian Collings
Music Director

Lisa Swayne
soprano

Beth Moxon
mezzo soprano

Joseph Doody
tenor

Gavin Horsley
bass

English Sinfonietta



HAYDN
Missa in Angustiis (Nelson Mass)
and
MOZART
Vesperae solennes de Confessore

Saturday 1 April, 2023
at 7:30pm

All Saints Church

14-16 Market Pl, Kingston upon Thames KT1 1JP

Tickets: **£15** (under 16 free)
Eventbrite: **www.eventbrite.co.uk** (search Teddington Choral Society)

Information: **www.teddingtonchoral.co.uk**

TCS REG. CHARITY NO. 299421

What on earth are the worms doing?

By Deep Patel

~ Through the Eyes of a Twickenham Shopkeeper ~

Each morning when I have opened my newsagents shop this week, I have been greeted with rain. Yes, it's good for the garden and yes the hard ground needs it, not to mention how it clears the air of pollutants and toxins, just that sadly, there is one little creature that is putting itself at danger of sudden death each time it rains...I'm talking about the good old worm...so I adjusted my morning shop opening ritual so that the first duty I perform is walking up and down the street outside my shop using my



phone torch and a nearby leaf to pick up and move all the stranded snails, worms and slugs off the pavement so I don't see them squashed by people walking by when I walk by later (the guilt is unbearable). I would like to ask all readers of my article to henceforth do the same. And I promise something good will happen back from you for caring...try it...

If you could do one kind thing today, be a hero for an earthworm...keep an eye out for the poor noble earthworm and move it into a near garden using a nearby leaf, also use your mobile phone torch to see them when it's dark at night. Remind yourself that it is the innocent party that has been forced out of its home due to the water-logging of the pavement and as a result become helplessly stranded on the street where it can easily be stepped on by anyone walking by...they can live for up to 8 years so definitely worth saving and if left out in the daylight, they become paralysed (daylight has this effect on worms sadly hence they live underground mainly)

Earthworms are actually fascinating creatures...There is not just one type, there are thought to be 4,400 species of earthworm...a noble kind being that largely minds its own business, residing largely way deep beneath our feet, enriching our soil so that we can have bigger vegetables and brighter flowers, doing no harm whatsoever...so then isn't it also OUR duty to ensure that they come to no harm too? Also if you truly believe in the old sentiment "respect your elders", perhaps we need to start showing the common earthworm more respect...their species is said to be over 600 million years old, that's around 593 million years before we were!! At this point you may either be thinking, yes...but how? (or you may have switched off reading this article, thinking it's boring?...hopefully the former...this article will be far from boring...at least I hope you will think that by the end of it...)

Did you know, all earthworms possess both male and female reproductive organs? Despite this, they can't actually mate with themselves, although they can hold up to 20 eggs. Of these 20

eggs, only one worm usually emerges. Earthworms surprisingly have 5 hearts. That's a lot of loving! As well as this, earthworms have bodies that are bilaterally symmetrical, meaning that the two sides of their bodies are identical! They don't sound so boring now do they!! So in the coming weeks when the weather is turning very damp, when you are out and about walking on the pavements, please keep an eye out for the poor noble earthworm and move it into a near garden using a nearby leaf, also use your mobile phone torch to see them when it's dark at night. Remind yourself that it is the innocent party that has been forced out of its home due to the water-logging of the pavement and as a result become helplessly stranded on the street where it can easily be stepped on by anyone walking by...they can live for up to 8 years so definitely worth saving and if left out in the daylight, they become paralysed (daylight has this effect on worms sadly hence they live underground mainly). Not to mention that for every worm you save, you will get good karma, a life saved is still a life saved...big or small...and one good turn deserves another. So there we have it, the end of another article with me Deep Patel, through the eyes of a Twickenham Shopkeeper. I hope you have enjoyed reading it as much as I have enjoyed writing it.

Those who follow my articles will know, what I am about to say about kindness towards little lives...but just in case you are a first-time reader, I always like to share these little good-karma gems, helping each other and all the life forms on this beautiful planet we call home. We are not the only inhabitants of this beautiful planet and there is a kind way for everything... 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. Just picking up a slug off a 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 say gently lift the pots if you need to move them rather than dragging them to avoid crushing little lives). As I always say, the true key to our own happiness lies in the happiness of other life forms...until the next time...have a lovely week ahead and look after the smaller life forms and the universe will look after you. For further tips, check out my Facebook page "Kind World". As always...Peace, love and good karma to all xx

Remember...

***“No life deserves to suffer...so be kind and remember, one good turn...deserves another”
(PICK UP THAT WORM).***

St Mary's University

St Mary's Graduate Lands Role as Football Analyst at Tottenham Hotspur FC

Graduate of [BSc Sport Performance Analysis & Talent ID](#) and current master's student at St Mary's University, Twickenham, Lewis Roberts has become an analyst at Tottenham Hotspur FC.

Lewis joined the BSc Sport Performance Analysis & Talent Identification course in September 2020, as part of the first ever cohort on the contemporary course. Headshot of Lewis on a white background

The Sport Performance Analysis and Talent Identification two year accelerated course is designed to give graduates a competitive edge within elite sport. The course allows students

to maximise future career opportunities through professional experience on placements with elite organisations. The blended learning programme taught online and on the historic St Mary's London campus, allows flexibility within the learning environment.

Lewis Roberts said, "When I started this course, it was a different dynamic to a traditional university learning setting, we were distanced learning, which was a new challenge for me at the age of 23. My placements really gave me the confidence to apply myself to the best of my ability on placement, in the developing necessary skills and learning about new and challenging methodologies."

In December 2022, while studying his Masters, Lewis began his role as an Academy Analyst overseeing the foundation phase at Tottenham Hotspur F.C. Alongside this main role, he continues to gain experience assisting other age groups from under 13's to under 21's.

Now working full time in the role at Tottenham, Lewis reflected; "It's still a pinch me moment. Seeing how the

club functions, while having exposure to detail of processes is immense and being able to say, I enjoy my work, is just amazing."

Lewis took a proactive approach to networking within the industry, gaining a placement at AFC Wimbledon in December 2020 as an academy analyst and coach behaviour analyst. In July 2021, Lewis progressed on to be the lead analyst for the foundation phase, ages 9 to 12 years old. During this time, Lewis created innovative and contemporary assessment work in line with his role at Wimbledon.

Fast forward onto July 2022, Lewis became the first team men's analyst at AFC Wimbledon, having shown dedication, innovation and hard work

throughout his time as a Foundation Phase Analyst.

After completing his undergraduate degree at St Mary's University, Lewis joined the [Professional Development: Performance Analysis Master's](#) cohort in September 2022 as an alumnus. This course aims to facilitate the development of theoretical knowledge and the development of practical and professional skills of sports performance analysts, working or hoping to work in the professional sports industry.

Lewis added, "The masters is a great opportunity to widen knowledge and further develop knowledge by being relevant and skilful in the industry". Distance learning has also allowed Lewis to progress on his professional journey in the specialised industry, alongside developing his professional skills.

"Throughout my time on my studies, the modules and content have provided me with an insight in to what the demands of my future career. I am still able to implement and utilise the skills and understanding gained from the course within my current full-time role at Tottenham."



St Mary's
University
Twickenham
London

St Mary's University

Successful Winter Season for St Mary's Athletes

Athletes and alumni from the Endurance Performance Centre (EPC) at St Mary's University, Twickenham saw a successful winter season, competing indoors, cross country and on the road.



At the World Cross Country Championships, hosted in Australia, current student Joe Wigfield competed in the men's relay event for Team GB, finishing in sixth place overall, and the first placed European team. EPC athletes also saw success at the English National Cross Country Championships. In the Women's Senior Race, Alumna Sarah Astin won the Gold Medal, with EPC Associate Rebecca Murray finishing in fifth place. In the women's U20 race, current student Megan Gadsby finished in the Silver Medal position, with fellow student Kirsten Stillwell finishing in eight.

Elsewhere in Cross Country, the EPC saw four teams compete. At the British Universities and Colleges (BUCS) Cross Country Championships The Men's Long Course team came fifth, with Joe Wigfield winning the Bronze medal, the Women's Long Course team finished 6th, the Women's Short Course team won the Bronze Medal, and the Men's Short Course Team finished just outside the medals in fourth.

At the UK Indoor Championships, alumnus Blake Moore claimed his first senior champion medal as he took the Bronze in the Men's 1500m. Blake was joined in the race by current student Olly Lill,

who finished in seventh as he made his senior championship debut. In the Men's 3000m, current student Henry McLuckie finished in fourth place. Jack Rowe also competed in the Men's 3000m, unfortunately being disqualified, but he went on to compete at the European Indoor Athletics Championships, finishing 9th in the final. Elsewhere, Alumna Adelle Tracey set a national record for Jamaica as came third in the Women's Mile race at the World Athletics Indoor Tour Gold, ORLEN Copernicus Cup in a time of 4:30.17.

A number of students competed at the BUCS Indoor Championships, with Jade Spencer-Smith winning the Gold Medal in the Women's Pole Vault. EPC athletes also saw success at the championships with Henry McLuckie won the Silver Medal in the Men's 3000m race. Elliot Pocock came in fourth place in the men's 1500m final and Shaun Gee came in sixth place in the men's 800m final. Juliet Hodder and Mia Waldmann competed in the Women's 3000m, coming in sixth and ninth respectively.

On the road, alumnus Emile Caires set a new 10-mile European record of 45:57 at Barrowford, Lancashire. Elsewhere three alumni competed at the HOKA London Winter Run. Ellis Cross won the race in a time of 28:54, Thomas Randolph came in fourth and Steph Twell finished at the second placed woman and eight overall. At the Brooks Armagh International 5k, regarded as one of the best 5k road races in the world, current student Henry McLuckie set a course record of 13:37 as he won the race.

Speaking of the Winter Season, EPC Performance Coach Craig Winrow said, "There has been some great performances over the winter months on various surfaces which highlights the array of talent the EPC has.

The athletes will be looking forward to continuing this success in the summer months."



**St Mary's
University
Twickenham
London**

Passengers urged to prepare for disruption as RMT union members set to strike during March and April

Passengers are being warned to check before they travel on 16 and 18 March, due to strike action called by the RMT leadership.

The strikes will affect services on 14 train companies with trains due to start later and finish much earlier than usual - typically between 7.30am and 6.30pm. It is expected that nationally between 40 and 50 per cent of train services will run, but there will be wide variations across the network, with no services at all in some areas.

It is likely that evening services on some lines will be affected on the days before each strike. Morning services on those lines may also be disrupted on 17 and 19 March because much of the rolling stock will not be in the right depots.

Passengers are advised to check before they travel for the latest information, and they should also check the times of the last trains on the evenings before the strike days and early trains in the mornings following the strikes.

They can check at www.nationalrail.co.uk/industrialaction or with their rail operator.

Steve Montgomery, Chair of the Rail Delivery Group, said:

"This latest round of strikes will be a further inconvenience to our customers, who have already experienced months of disruption, and cost our people even more money at a time they can least afford it. They will also be asking why the RMT leadership blocked the chance to resolve this dispute by refusing to give their members – many of whom would have benefited from a 13% increase – a say on their own deal.

"Unfortunately, while we will pull out all the stops to keep as many trains running as possible, there will be reduced services across many parts of the rail network on all four strike days, so our advice is to check before you travel.

Tickets for 16 and 18 March can be used the day before the ticket date, or up to and including Tuesday 21 March.

Tickets for 30 March and 1 April can be used the day before, or up to and including Tuesday 4 April.

"Passengers with Advance, Anytime or Off-Peak tickets for travel on strike days can also have their ticket refunded with no fee if the train that the ticket is booked for is cancelled, delayed or rescheduled."

Ticketing arrangements

Passengers with Advance, Anytime or Off-Peak tickets for travel on 16 or 18 March can instead use their ticket on the day before the date on the ticket or up to and including Tuesday 21 March. They can also have their ticket refunded with no fee if the train that the ticket is booked for is cancelled, delayed or rescheduled.

Tickets for travel on 30 March or 1 April can instead use their ticket on the day before the date on the ticket or up to and including Tuesday 4 April.

If the Advance ticket is for a train that is scheduled for a strike day is not cancelled, delayed or rescheduled, but a customer prefers not to travel, they should contact their ticket retailer. Customers with 2 x Advance tickets (an outbound and a return), to be used as a return journey, may be able to get a fee-free refund or change of journey for any unused legs/tickets, if either of the legs is scheduled for a strike day. Customers should check with their ticket retailer.

Passengers with season tickets (flexi, monthly or longer), who do not travel, can claim 100% compensation for the strike dates through Delay Repay.

Passengers can check on the [National Rail Enquiries website](http://www.nationalrail.co.uk/enquiries) or their rail operator's website for further travel advice.

Rail Delivery Group





ITA *v* WAL
11TH MAR / 14:15



ENG *v* FRA
11TH MAR / 16:45



SCO *v* IRE
12TH MAR / 15:00



KICK OFF TIMES

***LOCAL TIMES**

B BREITLING

England v France, Guinness Six Nations

Steve Borthwick has named his England side to take on France in the Guinness Six Nations this weekend. England will host Les Bleus at Twickenham Stadium on Saturday (4.45pm KO).



Ellis Genge will lead the side out as captain for the first time. He will be joined in the front row by prop Kyle Sinckler and hooker Jamie George.

In an unchanged forward pack from England's 20-10 win over Wales in Cardiff in the last round of the tournament, Maro Itoje and Ollie Chessum are at lock.

Flankers Jack Willis and Lewis Ludlam, along with Alex Dombrandt at No. 8, complete the pack. Marcus Smith starts at fly half and Jack van Poortvliet is at scrum half. Ollie Lawrence is at inside centre, Henry Slade stays at outside centre. Anthony Watson is on the left wing, Max Malins is on the right wing and Freddie Steward is full back.

Owen Farrell and David Ribbans are named as replacements, alongside Jack Walker, Mako Vunipola, Dan Cole, Ben Curry, Alex Mitchell and Henry Arundell.

Borthwick said: *"We look forward to welcoming a strong France team to Twickenham this weekend in what will undoubtedly be another exciting encounter in this year's Six Nations competition.*

"Over the last three years France have built a formidable side and with just three games behind us, this England team has an excellent opportunity to test itself against one of the very best teams in the world, as we progress and build on the foundations we have put in place in the short time we have been together.

"The players selected to face our visitors are again a reflection of what I see to be the right balance of personnel for the challenge we face in this game. Marcus Smith starts at fly half and Dave Ribbans returns to the match day 23.

"Congratulations to Ellis Genge who will captain the side for the first time. Ellis will lead from the front with the sort of dedication and spirit that now rightly typifies this England team.

"I know that a sold-out Twickenham will be in full voice, and that our magnificent supporters will make Saturday a very special occasion with a brilliant atmosphere."

England v France is live on ITV and BBC Radio 5 Live.

ENGLAND XV

15. Freddie Steward (Leicester Tigers, 20 caps)
14. Max Malins (Saracens, 17 caps)
13. Henry Slade (Exeter Chiefs, 54 caps)
12. Ollie Lawrence (Bath Rugby, 10 caps)
11. Anthony Watson (Leicester Tigers, 53 caps)
10. Marcus Smith (Harlequins, 20 caps)
9. Jack van Poortvliet (Leicester Tigers, 10 caps)

1. Ellis Genge (C) (Bristol Bears, 46 caps)
2. Jamie George (Saracens, 75 caps)
3. Kyle Sinckler (Bristol Bears, 59 caps)
4. Maro Itoje (Saracens, 65 caps)
5. Ollie Chessum (Leicester Tigers, 8 caps)
6. Lewis Ludlam (Northampton Saints, 17 caps)
7. Jack Willis (Toulouse, 8 caps)
8. Alex Dombrandt (Harlequins, 12 caps)

REPLACEMENTS

16. Jack Walker (Harlequins, 2 caps)
17. Mako Vunipola (Saracens, 77 caps)
18. Dan Cole (Leicester Tigers, 98 caps)
19. David Ribbans (Northampton Saints, 3 caps)

20. Ben Curry (Sale Sharks, 3 caps)
21. Alex Mitchell (Northampton Saints, 3 caps)
22. Owen Farrell (Saracens, 104 caps)
23. Henry Arundell (London Irish, 5 caps)

Match Preview: Everton v Brentford

Analysis, team news, match officials and more. Here's everything you need to know ahead of Brentford's Premier League game against Everton

Written by [Brentford Football Club](#)

Brentford travel to Everton looking to extend their 12-game unbeaten run in the Premier League.

It's a run of form that has Thomas Frank's side comfortably inside the Premier League's top 10 heading into the final third of the campaign.

Saturday's hosts Everton find themselves at the other end of the table, occupying the final relegation spot following just two wins in all competitions since late October.

The opposition

Everton slip back into the relegation zone following three-game winless run

When Everton came to west London for their game at the Gtech Community Stadium in August, the [brentfordfc.com](#) match preview suggested that, after a tough 2021/22 campaign, 'early indications are that this season may not be much easier.' And so it has proved.

Just three wins from 20 Premier League games to begin the campaign cost Frank Lampard his job in late January.

Replacement Sean Dyche had an instant impact with two victories, over Arsenal and Leeds United, in his first three games in charge, but one point from their last three matches has seen Everton slide back into the relegation zone.

Much of the blame from Everton fans for the situation they find themselves in has been directed at those in charge off the pitch, rather than on it.

Goals have been in short supply all season for the Toffees, with their tally of 19 the lowest in the Premier League.

That situation hasn't been helped by Dominic Calvert-Lewin's injury issues, but it has been the sales of Richarlison and Anthony Gordon which has particularly upset the blue half of Merseyside.

Demarai Gray is Everton's top scorer with four league goals this season but, behind him, Dwight McNeil is the only other player still at the club with multiple league strikes to their name.

Calvert-Lewin has not been the only key Everton player to spend much of the season out injured; Yerry Mina, Ben Godfrey and Mason Holgate all missed the majority of the pre-World Cup fixtures.

In their place, former Bee James Tarkowski and Conor Coady established themselves at the heart of an Everton defence which has only conceded three goals more than Manchester United and two more than Tottenham Hotspur.



Since Dyche has come in, he has tweaked Everton's set-up to play a 4-5-1 as supposed to Lampard's 4-3-3.

Jordan Pickford has missed just one game in goal all season with Vitaliy Mykolenko and Seamus Coleman at full-back in recent weeks.

In midfield, 21-year-old Amadou Onana has been one of Everton's standout players this campaign with his midfield partner Idrissa Gueye leading the league in interceptions.

Abdoulaye Doucoure has started every game since Dyche has taken over with Alex Iwobi and McNeil playing out wide in support of another former Bee Neal Maupay as the lone striker.

Team news

Brentford's Lewis-Potter set for spell on the sidelines, while Everton's Calvert-Lewin is doubtful for Saturday

Keane Lewis-Potter will be out for up to two months due to a knee injury picked up in training ahead of Brentford's game against Fulham.

Goalkeeper Thomas Strakosha (ankle) has returned to training but will not be available for the trip to Goodison Park.

Everyone else is fit and available for selection.

For Everton, Dominic Calvert-Lewin (thigh) and Nathan Patterson (knee) are both making progress, but Saturday's game looks set to come too soon for the pair.

Vitalii Mykolenko is trending in the right direction, following a virus, with Andros Townsend (ACL) a longer-term absentee.

The manager

Sean Dyche

Having made his name keeping Burnley in the top flight for seven years, Sean Dyche is now trying to do the same with an Everton team he inherited in late January.

A no-nonsense centre-back, Dyche played more than 200 games for Chesterfield, scoring as the Spireites shared six goals with Middlesbrough in the 1997 FA Cup semi-final.

He also featured for Luton Town, Watford, Bristol City, Millwall and Northampton Town, earning promotion with each of the last three clubs.

He retired in 2007, taking up coaching with the youth teams at Watford.

He had a brief stint as manager at Vicarage Road following Malky Mackay's move to Cardiff City in 2011. The Hornets finished 11th in his only season in charge, their best in four seasons, but still replaced him at the end of the season.

A month coaching in the England Under-21 set-up was quickly followed by his appointment at Burnley in 2012.

Dyche won them top-flight promotion in his first season, but they suffered relegation at the first attempt.

He guided the side back to the Premier League in 2016, where they stayed until last season.

With relegation looking certain, Dyche parted company with the Clarets in April last year, spending nine months out of the game before his appointment at Goodison Park.



Closing the gene writing gap

NPL and partners examine DNA synthesis technologies to close the gene writing gap

NPL, in collaboration with London Biofoundry and BiologIC Technologies Ltd, have released an analysis on existing and emerging DNA Synthesis technologies in [Nature Reviews Chemistry](#), featuring the work on the front cover.

The study, which was initiated by DSTL, set out to understand the development trajectory of DNA Synthesis as a major industry drive for the UK economy over the next 10 years. The demand for synthetic DNA is growing exponentially. However, our ability to make, or write, DNA lags behind our ability to sequence, or read, it. The study reviewed existing and emerging DNA synthesis technologies developed to close this gene writing gap.

DNA or genes provide a universal tool to engineer and manipulate living systems. Recent progress in DNA synthesis has brought up limitless possibilities in a variety of industry sectors. Engineering biology, therapy and diagnostics, data storage, defence and nanotechnology are all set for unprecedented breakthroughs if DNA can be provided at scale and low cost.

As an example, DNA has already been used to write books, episodes of Netflix series, video games and is being applied to catalogue the entire British Library. Just one gram of DNA is estimated to store over 17 Exabytes of information, whereas 5 Exabytes is all that is needed to store all the words spoken by mankind.

The Review details DNA chemistry, cross-compares the efficacies of synthesis technologies, outlines pros and cons of commercialised techniques versus future optimisations, and discusses oversight, security, deskilling, automation, and standardisation of DNA synthesis.

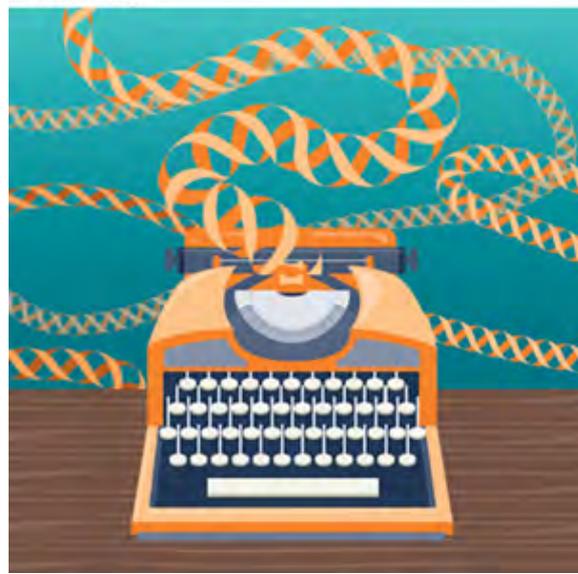
The review identified common trends and dependences in DNA synthesis technologies, as well as leading companies who develop innovative solutions to circumvent current limitations. With existing technologies, it is now possible to make large DNA molecules and many DNA molecules simultaneously on tiny microchips. DNA synthesis becomes affordable, and there are many options available from industry, from customised DNA synthesis to benchtop DNA printers allowing non-expert users themselves to make DNA. However, much remains to be addressed before we can reach the ability to make full sized genes and genomes and thereby close the gene writing gap.

Max Ryadnov, NPL Fellow, said: “Among other challenges, the development of robust metrology and suitable standards are required to accelerate and safeguard the uptake of synthetic DNA by the end users. Of particular relevance this is for the UK’s National Engineering Biology programme, designed to build on the UK’s capabilities to boost businesses and commercialisation of enabling technologies. NPL supports this endeavour by developing a toolbox of traceable reference materials, methods and standards, which will underpin further developments in the field.”

[View the paper in Nature Reviews Chemistry here](#)

nature reviews
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March 2023



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PROMOTERS OF TAX AVOIDANCE TO FACE CRIMINAL CHARGES

- People who refuse to stop promoting tax avoidance in the UK could serve time in prison. the Chancellor is expected to announce at next week's Spring Budget.
- Fewer non-compliant tax avoidance schemes operating in the market cuts the likelihood of people getting involved with them and facing thousands of pounds in unexpected future tax bills and penalties as a result.
- Part of Chancellor's commitment to help protect taxpayers and public services.

People who refuse to stop promoting tax avoidance in the UK could serve time in prison, the Chancellor is expected to announce at next week's Spring Budget.

The UK loses around £400 million per year to marketed tax avoidance, money which could be going towards public services, and it is the users of schemes, including agency workers, contractors and freelancers, who can end up with big tax bills, rather than the promoters who sold it to them.

Wednesday's expected announcement is part of the Chancellor's commitment to continue cracking down on those selling tax avoidance schemes to help protect taxpayers and public services.

Chancellor of the Exchequer Jeremy Hunt said:

"It is everyday people who lose out from tax avoidance, whether it's individuals facing big bills after getting involved with harmful schemes or funding being taken away from public services.

"That is why I am determined for promoters to face the music for the damage they cause and the lives they harm by stopping them in their tracks."

Marketed tax avoidance schemes tempt people into avoidance landing them with unexpected tax bills. Promoters of schemes are behind the schemes, and they often use a network of sellers to help them. Over the last 18 years, they have shifted focus away from wealthy clients towards people on middle incomes. Today the market is dominated by umbrella companies that choose to target contractors and agency workers.

To help everyday taxpayers, HMRC are laser-focused on driving promoters out of business. 31 tax avoidance schemes and 27 of their promoters had been named by HMRC to warn thousands of taxpayers to not to get involved.

There are also already financial penalties in place for promoters who ignore "Stop Notices" and don't stop promoting.

But the Chancellor is expected to go one step further at the Budget by announcing a consultation that could result with promoters serving time in UK prisons when found guilty in a court of law.

While individuals are ultimately accountable for their own tax affairs, this action will also help up to 2.4 million contractors, including hospital workers, who can become involved in tax avoidance through the agencies they trust to handle their tax affairs. According to HMRC, hospital workers, including those working part-time, are the highest users of tax avoidance schemes in the UK out of any sector.

Fewer non-compliant tax avoidance schemes operating in the market cuts the likelihood of people getting involved with them in the first place, and facing thousands of pounds in unexpected future tax bills and penalties as a result.

Case Study – Tanya, nurse

Tanya got caught up in a tax avoidance scheme and has shared her story as a warning to others.

Tanya is a single parent. She works as a critical care nurse at her local hospital. She found her job through an agency, and they recommended an umbrella company that provided payroll services. Tanya chose an umbrella company that gave her the highest take-home pay. This turned out to be a tax avoidance scheme which she joined. This left her with an unexpected tax bill, on top of the high fees she had paid to the umbrella company for using the scheme.

“I was sold on the benefits of higher pay.”

Tanya explains...

“As a nurse I trust my patients and they trust me, that is the relationship of care. I trusted my agency and umbrella company and I feel like they lied to me and scammed me, I thought my umbrella company would care but they didn’t. My agency and umbrella company sold me the benefits of higher pay through what they described as their Tax Plan model. This has now left me owing HMRC money and my umbrella company has washed their hands of me, they just disappeared and left me with the tax bills.”

It is unlikely that Tanya will be able to recover the high fees charged by her umbrella company, as they are now seeking voluntary liquidation. She must also pay tax of nearly £7,500 and some interest.

Tanya contacted HMRC and wanted to sort everything out. If she can’t settle her taxes and pay what she owes in one go, she will be offered time to pay her tax bill by instalments.

As well as criminalising promoters of such schemes, the Chancellor is also expected to announce that their directors could be quickly disqualified from directing companies. This builds on the government’s existing work to deter promoters from promoting schemes.



HM Treasury

Olympia London announces new international climate event

Olympia London is delighted to announce the dates for the launch of a new international climate event this year: Innovation Zero – Climate & Clean Tech Congress

Innovation Zero is chaired by the Rt Hon. Dr Liam Fox MP, the former Secretary of State for International Trade. Its inaugural event is endorsed by UK Prime Minister, Rishi Sunak.

7,000 UK and international business leaders from finance, business and policy will come together at Olympia London for [Innovation Zero – Climate & Clean Tech Congress](#) to drive solutions for decarbonisation.

Over 200 exhibitors and 250 speakers will collaborate on creative action across two days, 24-25 May 2023, with the common goal of accelerating the low carbon transition. Leaders from companies such as Unilever, Virgin Atlantic, Heathrow Airport, British Gas and UK Infrastructure Bank (UKIB) are lined up to speak alongside international political figures.

Olympia London's sustainability focus through its Grand Plan was a key reason for Innovation Zero choosing the venue for this important event, as well as its location offering a gateway into London.

Paul Dunne, Co-Founder & Director of Clean Tech Events, said that Olympia London was a fitting destination for the event:

“I'm delighted to announce Innovation Zero, the UK's flagship Clean Tech innovation and decarbonisation leadership Congress has chosen Olympia London.

Innovation Zero, which is chaired by the Rt Hon. Dr Liam Fox MP, and partnered with the UK Government brings together thousands of policy makers, Clean Tech innovators, major investors and leaders from the public and private sector to implement net zero solutions. It's fitting that our home is the UK's most sustainable major business event venue,” said Dunne.

Olympia London's CEO, Julie Driscoll commented: “We're enormously excited to host this event and about the outcomes of bringing key decisionmakers together at our venue to accelerate partnerships and deal-making between those developing and producing low carbon solutions, and those who will fund them. It aligns closely with our pledge of becoming a net zero venue and is also the first large international event to launch in the iconic [Olympia Grand hall](#) since the pandemic.”

This news follows the venue being recognised at the [London Venue & Catering Awards](#) with the Sustainability Award, and the venue's recent roundtable with Exhibition News: [“Is sustainability just a line in your P&L?”](#)



Progress delivering the Emergency Services Network

Plans for a new communication network for emergency services have fallen further behind schedule, with the Home Office spending almost £2 billion on it since the programme began in 2015, according to a report by the National Audit Office (NAO).

The new Emergency Services Network (ESN) will enable every police, fire, and ambulance service across England, Scotland and Wales to continue to communicate by voice and data, between the field and control rooms. The existing Airwave network, provided by Motorola, continues to offer 99.86% availability. EE and Motorola both had contracts to provide elements of ESN.

By March 2023 the Home Office will have spent just under £2 billion on ESN, and a further £2.9 billion to maintain Airwave. However, eight years after proposals for a new system to replace the outdated Airwave platform were unveiled and having agreed Motorola will no longer work on ESN after 2023, the Home Office does not currently know when ESN will be ready or how much it will cost.

In 2019, the NAO assessed the programme as poor value for money. A reset, started in 2018, has not worked. In 2021 the Home Office wrote to the Competition & Markets Authority (CMA).

The Home Office considered that Motorola's Airwave profits were excessive and had concerns about its incentives and ability to complete ESN within the time available. The CMA has provisionally estimated that, without a price control, Motorola could make super-normal profits of £1.1 billion between 2020 and 2026 from Airwave.

Motorola told the Home Office that it may not continue as a supplier when its contract ended in 2024. This was to remove the risk that the CMA would force it to sell Airwave. In December 2022, the Home Office agreed to end the contract with Motorola early and pay it £45 million; this included £27 million to settle disputes.

Motorola has been paid more than £300 million since 2015. The Home Office does not expect to use the critical software or systems that it has paid Motorola for, although it considers that it has obtained some value from this work which, for example, can be used for testing.

After analysing its options, the Home Office will award a new contract to replace Motorola. The Home Office recognises that although Motorola leaving the programme will address significant risks it also creates further delays and uncertainty.

Most notably, other suppliers' work developing elements of ESN has been paused until the Home Office has replaced Motorola.

This new contract will be the Home Office's third attempt to introduce this technology, although the market for this technology has widened, and it has not yet been tested in real-

world conditions to the scale necessary.

Other elements of the programme have also been delayed with some not able to progress until the Home Office replaces Motorola, although EE has nearly completed its work to establish the main network for ESN.

More widely, the Home Office must still obtain planning permission for work on 42 of the 292 remote area sites and has paused considering how ESN will operate.

The Home Office plans to award EE a new contract, without competition, to avoid delaying the programme, which it intends to re-compete when the new contract ends.

Individual police forces will make their own decision about when to stop using Airwave and move to ESN. The Home Office told us it has now increased confidence in the programme's leadership, who has improved user relationships which is critical to ESN being accepted.

The Home Office is developing a new business case for approval in 2024, which will set out a revised timetable and costing, alongside a strategic case for continuing the programme.

This will take account of any charge control on Airwave that the CMA may propose. A provisionally proposed charge control could lead to potential savings for the taxpayer of more than £150 million a year.

The timetable for completion has been pushed back to 2026 at the earliest and is still uncertain. Maintaining Airwave into the 2030s could cost at least £250 million a year.

Regardless of how ESN is taken forward, the Home Office will need to improve the programme's management information so it can monitor progress and identify where action is required.

Gareth Davies, the head of the NAO said:

“After eight years and almost £2 billion, it is extremely worrying that the Home Office does not now know when the Emergency Services Network will be ready or what it will cost.

“Home Office is in the process of letting new contracts to put the programme on a sounder footing.

It must now also put in place a realistic timetable and robust contractual and governance arrangements to address the significant risks this programme still faces and avoid any further waste of taxpayers' money.”

Click here for the [full report](#) and click here for the [PAC Chair's statement](#).



National Audit Office

Massive efforts needed to reduce salt intake and protect lives

A first-of-its-kind World Health Organization (WHO) *Global report on sodium intake reduction* shows that the world is off-track to achieve its global target of reducing sodium intake by 30% by 2025.

Sodium, an essential nutrient, increases the risk of heart disease, stroke and premature death when eaten in excess. The main source of sodium is table salt (sodium chloride), but it is also contained in other condiments such as sodium glutamate. The report shows that only 5% of WHO Member States are protected by mandatory and comprehensive sodium reduction policies and 73% of WHO Member States lack full range of implementation of such policies.

Implementing highly cost-effective sodium reduction policies could save an estimated 7 million lives globally by 2030. It is an important component of action to achieve the Sustainable Development Goal target of reducing deaths from noncommunicable diseases. But today, only nine countries (Brazil, Chile, Czech Republic, Lithuania, Malaysia, Mexico, Saudi Arabia, Spain and Uruguay) have a comprehensive package of recommended policies to reduce sodium intake.

“Unhealthy diets are a leading cause of death and disease globally, and excessive sodium intake is one of the main culprits,” said Dr Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus, WHO Director-General. “This report shows that most countries are yet to adopt any mandatory sodium reduction policies, leaving their people at risk of heart attack, stroke, and other health problems. WHO calls on all countries to implement the ‘Best Buys’ for sodium reduction, and on manufacturers to implement the WHO benchmarks for sodium content in food.”

A comprehensive approach to sodium reduction includes adopting mandatory policies and WHO’s four “best buy” interventions related with sodium which greatly contribute to preventing noncommunicable diseases.

These include:

1. Reformulating foods to contain less salt, and setting targets for the amount of sodium in foods and meals
2. Establishing public food procurement policies to limit salt or sodium rich foods in public institutions such as hospitals, schools, workplaces and nursing homes
3. Front-of-package labelling that helps consumers select products lower in sodium
4. Behaviour change communication and mass media campaigns to reduce salt/sodium consumption

Countries are encouraged to establish sodium content targets for processed foods, in line with the WHO Global Sodium Benchmarks and enforce them through these policies.

Mandatory sodium reduction policies are more effective, as they achieve broader coverage and safeguard against commercial interests, while providing a level playing field for food manufacturers. As part of the report, WHO developed a [Sodium country score card](#) for Member States based on the type and number of sodium reduction policies they have in place.

“This important report demonstrates that countries must work urgently to implement ambitious, mandatory, government-led sodium reduction policies to meet the global target of reducing salt consumption by 2025,” said Dr Tom Frieden, President and CEO of Resolve to Save Lives, a not-for-profit organization working with countries to prevent 100 million deaths from cardiovascular disease over 30 years. “There are proven measures that governments can implement and important innovations, such as low sodium salts. The world needs action, and now, or many more people will experience disabling or deadly—but preventable—heart attacks and strokes.”

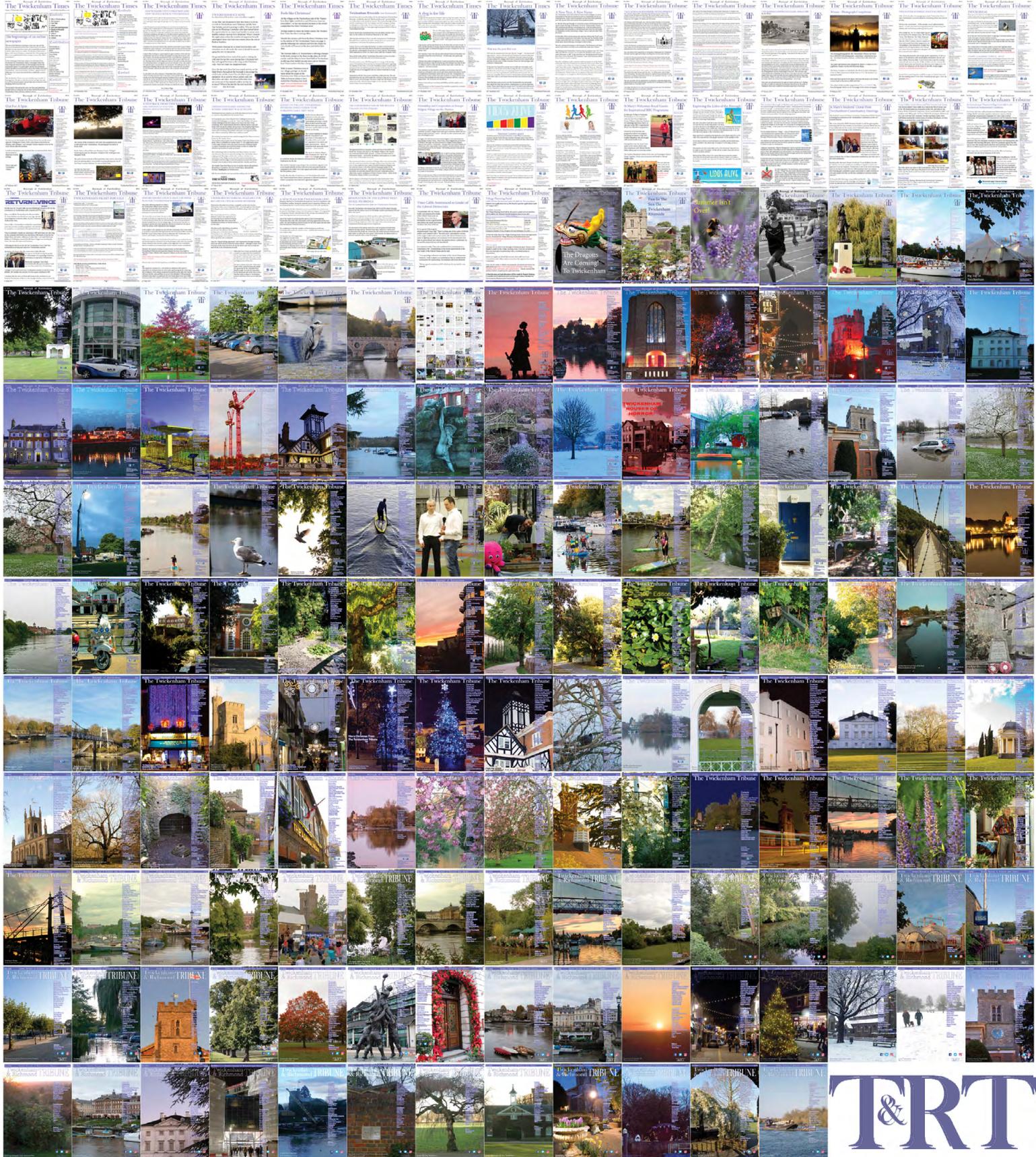
The global average salt intake is estimated to be 10.8 grams per day, more than double the WHO recommendation of less than 5 grams of salt per day (one teaspoon). Eating too much salt makes it the top risk factor for diet and nutrition-related deaths. More evidence is emerging documenting links between high sodium intake and increased risk of other health conditions such as gastric cancer, obesity, osteoporosis and kidney disease.

WHO calls on Member States to implement sodium intake reduction policies without delay and to mitigate the harmful effects of excessive salt consumption. WHO also calls on food manufacturers to set ambitious sodium reduction targets in their products.



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Published by:

Twickenham & Richmond Tribune (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

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