

Twickenham & Richmond Tribune



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TickerTape - News in Brief

Starting up: How to become a charity or social enterprise

From Richmond CVS

Do you have an idea for a new community group, charitable project or social enterprise but need some help to think it through and get started? Join Richmond CVS's interactive online workshop on 20 March.

This half-day session, led by an experienced coach and fundraising trainer, will cover legal structures, leadership risks, case for support and how to develop budgets.

Session details:

- **Date:** 20 March 2025
- **Time:** 10am to 1pm
- **Location:** This session will be held online

Those who live or study in Richmond can book their place for a heavily subsidised rate. This course is suitable for anyone who is setting up a community group, charity or social enterprise. Attend as:

- An individual
- With your co-leaders
- As a new group
- Someone who wants a refresher on charitable trends

It's a great chance to informally build a peer support network with likeminded individuals. After the workshop, attendees from Richmond will have the opportunity to receive one-to-one support to help them further develop their ideas.

You can [find out more and book your place today](#).



The Tree Agency

darryl parkin

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Local Picture Postcard Column - Part 292

King Street Twickenham- Phelps

By Alan Winter

Three different postcards covering the same bit of King Street in Twickenham this week. They all show the furniture seller and removals company Phelps in King Street before the business relocated to St Margarets. The King Street location was a prime spot for Phelps in what was effectively the High Street in Twickenham but the premises soon became too small and so the move to the corner of 133-135, St Margarets Road and Broadway Avenue was necessary.



Phelps Limited was established in 1870 with a horse and cart in Teddington by Mr Phelps' great grandfather. James Phelps not only bought and sold furniture but worked as an ironmonger, a plumber and a gas fitter.



The business thrived moving from Teddington to Twickenham and with the start of a removal business in 1920, the firm moved to the St Margarets address where the premises were reconstructed and extended to give more than 20,000 sq ft of showrooms in 1936.

Phelps Antiques as it became known, weathered the highs and lows of business, moving with the times, including hiring furniture and props to the television and film industries during the halcyon days of the 1960s and 70s.

I worked for Phelps one summer in the 1960's on their delivery vans and remember it was no fun at all with two of us trying to get a piano up three flights of stairs in Pimlico! That was hard work.

In February 2004, the shop closed for the last time, closing the door on one of the borough's longest established family firms after the company had traded in the Teddington and Twickenham areas for 133 years.



Please make a note in your diary for next Saturday 22nd March when the first local postcard fair of the year will take place in the Baptist Church in Church

Road Teddington. Open at 10.00 until 4.00. 14 dealers selling tens of thousands of postcards as well as ephemera, stamps, photos and coins will ensure that you can browse happily for hours. Light refreshments will be served all day. My tables are at the end of the hall by the stage. If you have any postcards for sale, please come and see me. I also have large quantities of local area postcards covering the Twickenham, Richmond, Hamptons, Teddington and Kingston areas. See you there!

**WEST LONDON
POSTCARD FAIR**
Including STAMPS, POSTAL HISTORY, COINS and EPHEMERA
**TEDDINGTON BAPTIST CHURCH
CHURCH ROAD, TW11 8PF**
SATURDAY 22nd MARCH
All 10am - 4pm Admission £2.00
14 DEALERS REFRESHMENTS
EASY BY RAIL - Teddington (on Kingston loop from Waterloo) -
EASY BY BUS - 33, 281, 285, 481, R68 and SL7
EASY BY ROAD - From M3/A316
Enquiries: ALAN WINTER
07875 578398 / alanwinter192@hotmail.com

CrusaderTravel



020 8744 0474

crusadertravel.com

Escapology Experts

info@crusadertravel.com

Your friendly local Travel Agency
established in Twickenham since 1966

With over 50 years experience we pride ourselves on being able to offer an unrivalled service with attention to detail. Come and have a chat with us in our cosy office off the Church Street Square, we are open 6 days a week from 11am until 6pm (Closed Sunday)



Engineering work will affect South Western Railway services on 15 and 16 March

South Western Railway is advising customers of engineering work in London affecting services on Saturday 15 and Sunday 16 March.

Network Rail engineers will carry out vital maintenance on a set of points – moveable sections of rail that allow trains to change from one track to another – at a busy junction between Queenstown Road (Battersea) and Clapham Junction.

Train services that run between London Waterloo and Barnes, Kingston, Reading, Richmond, Twickenham and Windsor & Eton Riverside, and some services via Surbiton, will be affected.



On **Saturday 15 March**, buses will replace trains between **Clapham Junction and Barnes**. The following service changes will apply:

- Services between London Waterloo and **London Waterloo via Richmond** will run between Barnes and Kingston via Richmond only.
- Services between London Waterloo and **Weybridge via Staines** will start from Barnes.
- Services between London Waterloo and both **Hampton Court** and **Guildford via Cobham & Stoke D'Abernon** will start at Surbiton.
- Services between London Waterloo and both **Reading** and **Windsor & Eton Riverside** will be diverted between Clapham Junction and Twickenham, with altered stopping patterns.

On **Sunday 16 March**, buses will replace trains between **Clapham Junction and Twickenham via Richmond**, and between **Kew Bridge and Clapham Junction**. The following service changes will apply:

- Afternoon and evening services between London Waterloo and **Kingston via Hounslow** will not run
- Services between London Waterloo and **London Waterloo via Richmond and Kingston** will only run between Richmond and Kingston
- Services between London Waterloo and **Woking via Staines** will start from Kew Bridge.
- Services between London Waterloo and **Reading** will be diverted between Clapham Junction and Twickenham, with altered stopping patterns.
- Services between London Waterloo and **Windsor & Eton Riverside** will be revised, with an hourly service starting from Richmond, calling at all stations.
- On both dates, **Queenstown Road (Battersea)** will be closed all day and customers are advised to use alternative stations.

Customers are also reminded that the following weekend, Saturday 22, sees the start of engineering work between Staines and Windsor & Eton Riverside. Buses will replace trains throughout, with additional service changes on other lines on Saturday 22 and Sunday 23.

Customers are advised to plan ahead using a journey planner and check www.southwesternrailway.com/plan-my-journey

Peter Williams, South Western Railway's customer and commercial director, said: "On the weekend of Saturday 15 and Sunday 16 March there will be many changes to train services. Rail replacement bus services will run and some journeys may take longer than usual, so it's important that customers plan ahead. For more information we recommend checking our website. We are very sorry for the disruption that this will cause, however, customers can expect a more reliable railway when this engineering work is complete."

Mark Goodall, Network Rail's Wessex route director, said: "We know that closing the lines in and out of London Waterloo station will be disruptive to passengers and we're sorry to anyone who will be impacted by this work. The junction between Queenstown Road (Battersea) and Clapham Junction is extremely busy and needs renewing to keep trains running safely and reliably. We urge passengers to plan ahead and check before they travel and thank them for their patience while we carry out this vital work."

HAMPTON CHORAL SOCIETY

BRAHMS GERMAN REQUIEM

Saturday 29 March 2025, 7.30pm

**Musical Director Emma Warren
with professional soloists & musicians**

**St James's Church, St James's Road
Hampton Hill, TW12 1DQ**

**Tickets: £15 (Adults), £7 (Under 16's)
Box Office: 020 8941 5394
on the door: contactless, card, cheque, cash
www.hamptonchoral.org.uk**

The richmond May Fair returns on Saturday 10th may 2025

Spring has finally sprung, and plans are well underway for the town's biggest community event of the year - the 2025 Richmond May Fair. This year's Fair will take place on Saturday 10th May between 10am and 5pm on Richmond Green and will be opened by the Mayor of Richmond upon Thames. Attracting thousands of visitors from across the borough of Richmond and beyond, it is a much-loved fixture for all the family to enjoy.

Old favourites like the vintage funfair and dog show return, along with a host of stalls, the craft marquee and a variety of food and drink. Local bands, schools and various performance groups will provide free entertainment throughout the day on the Riverside Radio stage.

With charities, artisans, businesses and schools all represented, the Fair is a showcase for all that Richmond has to offer and plays an important role in helping local charities promote their work and raise much-needed funds. This year, with more than 250 stallholders already signed up, the 2025 Fair promises to be bigger and better than ever.

Richmond in Europe will also be attending the Fair to launch their celebrations and mark 65 years of Richmond being in partnership with Fontainebleau (France) and Konstanz (Germany). Hundreds of guests from the twin towns will be visiting Richmond over the weekend of the 6-8th June 2025 and a wide range of commemorative events including receptions, parades and concerts are planned.

The Fair's Gold Sponsor is Oscars of London. Business owner, Oscar Doyle said: *"I've decided to be the main sponsor of the May Fair as I've worked in the real estate business, in the area, for more than 20 years and feel very much part of the local community. As a result, when I set up my own business my focus was giving back to the town where I can and partnering with the May Fair was the obvious choice to do that."*

Silver Sponsor, St Catherine's School, Twickenham added *"we are so proud to be a sponsor of the May Fair and look forward to deepening our ties with the local community."*

Digme, Third Space, Drop-in, Cinnamon Bazaar are proud Bronze Sponsors of the May Fair and Pet People are generously sponsoring the dog show.

Pamela Fleming, Chair of the Richmond May Fair Committee, commented: *"We couldn't put on the Fair without the generous support from our new sponsors in 2025 and our wonderful team of volunteers. The Fair is part of Richmond's rich heritage and fosters a real sense of community. Our aim is to make sure there is something for everyone and to suit every pocket and taste. We are all hoping the sun shines like it did for us in 2024 so residents and visitors can enjoy the day!"*



RICHMOND MAY FAIR
est. 1970

Saturday 10th May 2025 • 10am - 5pm

A tale of two Richmonds

From Councillor Richard Pyne, Mayor of Richmond upon Thames

My wife Helen and I have just returned from a three-day trip to our sister city – Richmond Virginia. The trip, the first one from a Richmond Mayor for 17 years, was an initiative I wanted to take to strengthen the links between our two cities. The trip was funded by Helen and myself.

Richmond Virginia takes its name from our home because early settlers thought the bend in the James River above Richmond reminded them of our famous view of the Thames from Richmond Hill. And I can confirm that the similarity is remarkable!



The local branch of the English Speaking Union (ESU) organised a whirlwind tour for us to the Virginia State Capitol, to the childhood home of Thomas Jefferson, the American Civil War Museum, the Virginia

Museum of Fine Arts and the Lewis Ginter Botanical Garden. We were also shown two 17th century houses which had been moved brick by brick from England to Richmond in the 1920's.

All these visits were extremely interesting for a keen historian and gardener like myself and I can heartedly recommend a trip to the city, but I suggest you spend at least five days there.

We had the chance to meet the city's newly elected Mayor, Danny Avula, and over lunch we discussed issues affecting us both. These include the future of our respective rivers, both of which are increasingly affected by flooding linked to climate change; the rise in mental health challenges affecting young people worsened by COVID and its consequences; and the need for more social housing.

We also met an organisation called Capitol Trees who are doing great work cleaning up unloved public places around railway tracks and former industrial sites. They operate through a network of dedicated volunteers as I do at Kew Gardens. Their work helps wildlife to thrive, reduces litter, and makes pedestrians feel safer.

Helen and I were struck by how many Richmond Virginia residents have links to us. They either have relatives or friends here, or they have visited as part of a holiday in the UK, or they want to see our world-famous sites like Hampton Court, Kew Gardens and Richmond Park. I told them about our forthcoming twinning reaffirmation weekend with our friends from Fontainebleau and Konstanz and I hope some of them will come over to join these celebrations.

I think we both can benefit from strengthening our links, encouraging more visits to our respective cities, and sharing ideas about how to address common problems. I would love to see regular exchange visits involving young people, history societies, environmental groups and sports teams. Our American cousins certainly have the desire to do just that.

News from Holy Trinity Twickenham

Foodbank Focus: March

We received the following message from Lynne at the Foodbank this week:

'We're getting busier at the foodbank and are low on many things, even basics such as tinned veg, fruit and soup - the only thing we have plenty of is tinned fish! We have seen a rise in the number of people visiting the food bank for their first time: it is concerning that more people are needing us, but so glad we can go a small way towards helping out.'

[A list of items currently being requested by the local foodbank can be found by clicking here.](#)

Donations can be deposited in the foodbank tubs outside the vicarage, 7:00am to 8:00pm.



THE GREEN POP UP CAFE

THURSDAYS

10.30-12.00



**The Green Room
Holy Trinity Twickenham
Twickenham Green
TW2 5TS**



A community space where
everyone is welcome to pop in
for refreshments, friendly chat and activities



Learn to row in traditional boats with Teddington's Skiff Club

From The Skiff Club

From Saturday 29 March, The Skiff Club is offering beginners' courses as well as free trial outings.

Regular club activities include rowing outings throughout the week and on weekends, often with a pub or cafe stop, along with ongoing coaching and training. A friendly bar is open on Thursdays for well-earned refreshments.

For the more adventurous the club organises expeditions to other waterways in the UK and abroad. This year's tours include four days on the River Wey, two days to Chertsey and back, skiffing at the Vogalonga festival in Venice and a three-day row upstream for Henley Regatta.



Skiffs are stable, making basic skills easy to learn, leading to good exercise and opportunities to race in local events on the Thames under the Skiff Racing Association. It is also a great way to enjoy the river, learn a skill, get some exercise and meet new friends.

Beginners' course details:

- **Date:** From Saturday 29 March 2025
- **Time:** 8:30am (each lesson will last 1.5 hours)
- **Location:** The Boathouse, Trowlock Way, Teddington, TW11 9QY
- **Price:** £60 for four sessions (refundable upon joining the club)

[Book now](#)



The Skiff Club

Road closure fee waived for VE Day 80 street parties

From Richmond Council

Richmond Council calls on communities across the borough to come together to mark the 80th anniversary of the end of the war in Europe by celebrating with street parties.

Victory in Europe Day – known as VE Day – marks the penultimate chapter in the Second World War when fighting came to an end in Europe.

VE Day is on Thursday 8 May 2025, however, the early May bank holiday on Monday 5 May is being dedicated to nationwide community celebrations and Richmond Council has issued a rallying call for communities across the borough to hold their own street parties, reminiscent of the celebrations that took place 80 years earlier.

The Council has agreed to waive the cost of closing roads on 3, 4 or 5 May. This includes the cost of the statutory adverts required to make drivers aware. Neighbours and resident groups will only have to find the cost of hiring 'road closed' signage.

Richmond Council previously waived the fees for street closures to celebrate King Charles III's Coronation with almost 200 street parties taking place across Richmond upon Thames, demonstrating the borough's community spirit.



Councillor Gareth Roberts, Leader of Richmond Council, said: *“The 80th anniversary of VE Day is a special moment for us to come together, remember the courageous sacrifices of the fallen, and celebrate the arrival of peace in Europe, just as people did at the time. The 75th anniversary came during the first COVID-19 lockdown, so we really want to support neighbours and communities to celebrate and commemorate VE Day 80 by joining together to enjoy food and music, echoing the celebrations that rang out across our nation 80 years ago.”*

Councillor Alexander Ehmann, Chair of the Transport and Air Quality Committee, added: *“We’ve made it as easy as possible to apply for a road closure so people can host street parties like those on the very first VE Day. Please apply in good time so that we can carry out the necessary work behind the scenes.”*

In the coming weeks, Richmond Council will be providing more information on opportunities to celebrate VE Day 80 across the borough.

The deadline for street party applications is Sunday 6 April 2025.

Richmond Station completes major restoration

From Richmond Council

Richmond Station's historic Art Deco features have been restored to their former glory following a major refurbishment, officially unveiled today at a special event attended by local councillors, community groups, and rail industry representatives.

It follows a collaborative improvement project between Network Rail, South Western Railway, the Railway Heritage Trust, and Richmond Council.

The restoration, supported by a £100,000 investment from the Council, has improved the station's historic features, preserving its character while making it a more welcoming space for passengers and visitors. With around 8.9 million passengers travelling through Richmond Station each year, it is a crucial transport hub.

Councillor Alexander Ehmann, Chair of the Transport and Air Quality Committee, said, *"Richmond Station is a key gateway to our borough. These improvements ensure the station is both functional and beautiful, improving the experience for everyone who uses it. Our investment, alongside the work of our partners, has helped restore a 1930's treasured landmark for generations to come."*



The targeted programme of improvements focused on restoring the station's Art Deco features, including a refurbished entrance canopy with a bronze-finished fascia and glasscrete rooflights. Other works included cleaning and polishing the station's bronze entrance doors, restoring overpainted stonework, renewing and repairing flagpoles, replacing canopy uprighters, refurbishing customer toilets, and adding new bronze-finish poster panels to the front elevation.

During the project, train services were unaffected, businesses remained open, and access to the station was maintained. The culmination of the restoration was a joint effort by the rail industry and local partners to improve the look and feel of Richmond Station.

"Many of the station's original features have been brought back to life," added Councillor Ehmann.

South Western Railway also welcomed the restoration, recognising the benefits for passengers and the local community.

Chris Gregory, Asset Enhancement Manager for South Western Railway, commented, *"Richmond is one of our most important stations and its beautiful Art Deco building is one of the architectural jewels of our network. For us, it's important that our customers enjoy a pleasant and welcoming environment when travelling with us, and that the communities we serve feel a sense of pride in their local station, which is the gateway to their area. That's why we've been so pleased to partner with Network Rail, Railway Heritage Trust, and Richmond Council to restore Richmond Station to its former glory. Our colleagues and partners have done a fantastic job,"* said Chris Gregory.

Richmond Council remains committed to improving the borough's transport infrastructure and town centres, ensuring Richmond continues to be an attractive and accessible place for residents and visitors.

Leader of Richmond Council, Councillor Gareth Roberts said, *"the transformation that has been achieved has been truly remarkable. Over the past forty years, the glories of Richmond Station's wonderful Art Deco heritage have been hidden behind various layers of unattractive and uninspiring clutter. This wonderful refurbishment now allows Richmond Station a chance to shine once more; and the really exciting thing is that there is still more work to do. I can't wait to see the full splendour of Richmond Station when the full works are finally completed."*

Councillor Roberts added, *"this project is much more than just improving the station's appearance – it's one of the many ways our transport network is being improved to build a safer, convenient, and attractive borough for all residents."*

Free minibus service is returning to Richmond Park

From The Royal Parks

The volunteer-run service will return to Richmond Park on Monday 17 March 2025, giving all park visitors better access to enjoy the natural environment of this large National Nature Reserve.

The free service will run every Monday, Wednesday, and Friday between all the Richmond Park car parks, Ladderstile Gate, Richmond Gate, Pembroke Lodge and Isabella Plantation.



The minibus is accessible, with a ramp and steps to aid access. Wheelchair users wishing to use the service should contact volunteering@royalparks.org.uk.

[Find out more about this service](#), including a timetable and route map.

POLICE LIAISON GROUP MEETING

**Wednesday the 19th of
March, 7pm, Day Centre,
Barnes Green, SW13 9HE**



Faith on Trial:

Liberal Democrats Face Legal Battle Over Christian Candidate's Deselection

By Michael Jones, TRT reporter

For a political party that has long championed diversity, pluralism, and tolerance, the Liberal Democrats find themselves in the midst of an increasingly uncomfortable debate over the role of religious belief in public life. The legal action taken by David Campanale, a former Liberal Democrat parliamentary candidate, against his own party for alleged religious discrimination has ignited a fresh controversy that raises questions about whether the party truly practices what it preaches.

Campanale, a former BBC journalist, was selected as the Liberal Democrat candidate for nearby seat Sutton and Cheam. However, he was later deselected, a move he claims was the result of a campaign against him due to his Christian beliefs. He is now crowdsourcing funding so he can take the issue to the courts, it is the first of its kind in British political history—an internal dispute in which a party member is taking legal action against their own party on the grounds of religious discrimination. Campanale and his supporters argue that this is a fundamental test of whether Christians and other religious individuals can participate in politics without fear of being sidelined for their beliefs.

The Liberal Democrat leadership has denied any religious bias, but the case is being closely watched as it unfolds. Senior figures within the party, including former Justice Minister Sir Simon Hughes and former Lib Dem Chief Whip Lord Alton, have expressed concern over how the matter has been handled. The Bishop of Winchester, Philip Mounstephen, has also criticised the decision to remove Campanale, describing it as “shockingly illiberal.”

The Religious Tensions in Twickenham

Interestingly, this controversy is playing out in the same party that, locally in Twickenham, has an MP with strong religious convictions. Munira Wilson, the incumbent MP for the area, has spoken openly about her Christian faith and how it informs her politics. Speaking to Tim Farron on his podcast, *A Mucky Business*, Wilson described how she came to Christianity after being raised in a Muslim family. She also shared a moment of spiritual realisation when dealing with the case of an Afghan refugee family, recounting how she heard God talking to her, “Stop trying to do this all in your own strength. I’ve got them.”

Yet, despite her faith, critics note that Wilson has been largely quiet on LGBTQ+ rights, an area where the Liberal Democrats have been particularly vocal and like to drape themselves in the rainbow flag. Some suggest that this silence reflects a form of self-censorship, a reluctance to engage on an issue that has proved politically fraught within the party. While the Liberal Democrats have made inclusivity and equality central to their platform, Wilson’s reticence on these topics has led some to question whether her stance aligns with the broader progressive direction of the party. This raises the question of whether the issue at play is truly about religion, or if it is more about how publicly one expresses alignment with key social issues championed by the party.

The Ghost of Tim Farron

This is not the first time the Liberal Democrats have struggled with the intersection of faith and politics. Tim Farron, a devout Christian, found himself at the centre of a storm in 2017 when he was forced to resign as party leader after a prolonged media debate over his views on gay marriage. Farron had consistently supported LGBTQ+ rights in Parliament, yet his personal beliefs—especially his reluctance to explicitly say whether he considered gay sex a sin—led to accusations of hypocrisy and intense pressure from within his party.

During the 2017 general election campaign, Farron faced repeated questioning about his views on LGBTQ+ rights and abortion due to his evangelical Christian beliefs. While he publicly stated his full support for same-sex marriage and equal rights, the scrutiny surrounding his personal beliefs overshadowed much of his campaign.

When announcing his resignation, Farron expressed the deep tension he had experienced between his faith and his role as party leader: “To be a political leader—especially of a progressive, liberal party in 2017—and to live as a committed Christian, to hold faithfully to the Bible’s teaching, has felt impossible for me.” Despite leading the Liberal Democrats to a modest recovery in the 2017 election—gaining four extra seats—he ultimately concluded that he could not reconcile his faith with the expectations placed upon him in modern liberal politics. He was succeeded by Sir Vince Cable, a figure seen as less likely to attract controversy over social issues.

Farron’s departure was seen as emblematic of the broader challenge facing religious politicians in secular, progressive parties. While his record in Parliament aligned with the party’s policy positions, the pressure for ideological purity in political discourse meant that personal beliefs could no longer be treated as private convictions. His resignation served as a stark reminder that faith remains a contentious issue in British politics.

A Liberal Party with Limits?

The Liberal Democrats position themselves as the standard-bearers of pluralism and inclusion. Yet, the treatment of Campanale, and before him Tim Farron, along with Munira Wilson’s self-censorship suggests that there are limits to that inclusivity when it comes to religious beliefs that do not align with the party’s dominant ideological stance on social progressivism.

This contradiction is not unique to the Liberal Democrats—political parties across the spectrum struggle to balance individual conscience with party doctrine. However, given the Liberal Democrats’ long-standing identity as the party of individual liberty, the pressure on candidates to conform on moral and ethical issues feels particularly at odds with their stated values.

As Campanale’s case progresses, it may serve as a landmark moment in British politics. If successful, it could force all parties to reconsider how they approach religious freedom within their ranks. But if the Liberal Democrats continue to treat religious belief as an inconvenient or unacceptable attribute, they risk alienating a significant segment of voters who believe that liberalism should mean tolerance for all—including those with faith. The tension between personal conviction and party orthodoxy is not going away, and how the Liberal Democrats navigate this delicate issue will be a defining test of their commitment to true liberalism in the years ahead.

RICHMOND MAY FAIR

est. 1970

SAT 10TH MAY
10AM-5PM
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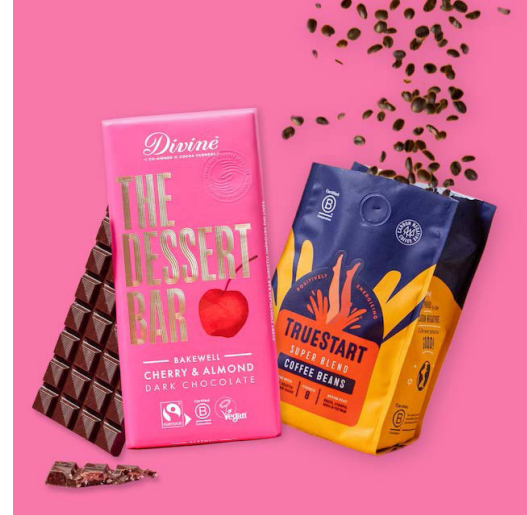
Sponsoring our Dog Show

PETPEOPLE  VETS

Mothers' Day Gift Ideas

It's Mothering Sunday at the end of the month, and here are some gift ideas to suit all types of mothers and all budgets.

For a divine mother, **Divine Chocolate** has the ideal gift: Featuring TrueStart's Super Blend Coffee and Divine's Dessert Bars, this tasty twosome is great. Available [online](#) now, priced at £9.99. It's a deliciously different way to celebrate mum, uniting two of the best things in life - coffee and chocolate. TrueStart creates coffee that actually makes you feel good - its range is packed with antioxidants and lab-tested for no nasties, giving you a clean cup every time - in fact, one cup of TrueStart contains more antioxidants than a cup of green tea. And still the only farmer-owned Fairtrade chocolate maker in the world, Divine has been doing things differently in the chocolate industry for over 25 years, with every bar of Divine purchased positively contributing to the future of its cooperative of farmers and to fighting exploitation in the cocoa industry.



A 'tongue in cheek' way to make her forget that diet! Choose to share a **FATSO** amount of love with the Love Bundle. It features three favourites; Home Run, Nan's Stash and Morn'n Glory, all wrapped together for [£20](#). Or for [£15](#) there is this FATSO Foursome with mini bars of all four of the FATSO flavours. Daring to be different, FATSO is famous for its epic flavour combinations and colossal chocolate chunks, all made with single-origin, ethically sourced dark chocolate from Colombia.

Hilton Macarons has taken inspiration from nature with its latest range of delicious hand-made macarons. The limited edition 'botanical' range includes six mouthwatering new flavours, gift-wrapped in the brand's rather classy signature purple box. These award-winning macarons are hand-made with Italian meringue and generously filled with a range of delicious flavours to create the finest sweet treats. The flavours included in the new range are Bergamot & Thyme, Rhubarb & Orange Blossom, Rose, Raspberry & Lychee, Blackberry & Lavender, Strawberry, Hibiscus & Vanilla and Lime & Basil. From £13 www.hiltonmacarons.co.uk



For a more savoury, and perfect for mums who are 'hot stuff' in the kitchen, how about **Banhoek Chilli Oil**? This premium, award-winning, small-batch 100% natural chilli oil from South Africa is now available in the UK, in Original and Garlic variants. The garlic flavour was launched in the UK earlier this year. Both won a coveted star at the 2024 Great Taste Awards. Whether drizzled over a fresh salad, added to pasta, or used to marinate meat, it's a great kitchen companion for mums who love experimenting with flavour. **Banhoek Chilli Oil Original** (RRP £8.50/250ml) is available on Amazon, Ocado,

Selfridges, Harrods, Sainsbury's, Fortnum & Mason, independent delis, butchers and restaurants throughout the UK. **Banhoek Chilli Oil Garlic** (RRP £12.00) is exclusively available in Harrods online and in-store.

If she's a coffee aficionado, then a subscription to some fabulous coffee makes a lovely gift. **Tambia** is a single origin, speciality coffee brand from Colombia that grows, harvests, and roasts its own coffee, ensuring full traceability and commitment to quality. Tambia oversees each step of the production process guaranteeing a coffee experience that is deeply rooted in origin, sustainability, and community. Finca La Sierra Coffee, a single origin coffee grown on Tambia's own La Sierra Farm, positioned in high-altitude on the slopes of the extinct volcano Cerro Bravo. Made from Castillo, a bean delivering a smooth, well-balanced cup with notes of chocolate, caramel, red berries, and roasted almonds. Versatile and full-bodied, Tambia Castillo is perfect for espresso, filter, or any brewing method. Three levels of roasting are available: light, medium and dark. Subscription starting from £7.43 a month for 200 g. Full details here [Gift Subscriptions – Tambia Coffee](#)



Nothing beats a good G&T in my opinion. And this **No. 3 London Dry Gin** from gin from [Berry Bros. & Rudd](#) at £39.50 for a 70cl bottle makes an extraordinarily good one, with a perfect balance of juniper, citrus and spice. It's also great for cocktails, and makes a stonkingly good dry martini. As well as being a lovely present, it reflects on her (and your!) impeccable taste. It is the only gin awarded 'World's Best' four times (2012, 2013, 2015, and 2019) at the International Spirits Challenge (**ISC**). A champion gin for a champion mum.

You could perhaps add some extra sparkle to her day with a bottle of **Fleurs de Prairie Sparkling Rose**. Crafted in the traditional Provencal style, the lightly sparkling Fleurs De Prairie is a pale salmon colour with delicate flavours of strawberry, rose petals, and herbs. It has a fine and elegant nose, a creamy palate, dominant strawberry milk notes, floral notes on the finish, nice length. Hopefully we'll have some more warm weather by Mother's Day so this will make a glorious and refreshing aperitif. From £8.75 a bottle at Morrisons and Ocado



Hampers are always a lovely surprise for the recipient, and there are a number of excellent options available. For example, [Hampers.com](#) has an excellent range of great value Mother's Day hamper ideas on its website from just £32, as has the [British Hamper Company](#). You can always create your own by choosing different contents and for a real taste of luxury, have a look at [Kings Fine Food](#) where you can really indulge her with caviar, fine chocolate, and all manner of other luxurious gifts.

Whatever you give her, she'll appreciate this demonstration of your love.

Sweet Treats With Bonne Maman



With perfect timing for Mother's Day, here's a lovely book that brings together a selection of Bonne Maman's delicious treats. ***Sweet Treats with Bonne Maman*** encourages bakers to bring the iconic taste of the Bonne Maman range into their own kitchens. The recipes are organised into family treats, bite-sized treats and treats for sharing, there is something for every baker – from kids to connoisseurs. It includes bakes such as marble cake, banana bread, madeleines, cookies, linzer biscuits, shortbreads and double chocolate muffins.

Just published by **White Lion**, at **£14.99** for a hardback, it's written by **Ilona Chovancova**, a passionate food stylist, photographer, and cookbook writer based in Paris. It will make a lovely Mother's Day or Easter gift, and, of course, you can also try one of these recipes yourself and present the results as a gift.

Lemon Squares

MAKES 12 SQUARES PREPARATION 25 MINS BAKING 40 MINS

SHORTCRUST PASTRY

- 260g (9¼oz) butter, softened
- 60g (2oz) icing (confectioner's) sugar + a little more for dusting
- 320g (11¼oz/scant 2½ cups) plain (all-purpose) flour
- ¼ tsp salt

LEMON CREAM

- Juice of 4–5 lemons (220ml/7½fl oz/scant 1 cup)
- 220g (8oz/heaped 1 cup) caster (superfine) sugar
- 7 medium eggs
- 50g (1¾oz) cornflour (cornstarch), or plain (all-purpose) flour
- Preparing the pastry
- Preheat the oven to 180 °C fan/200°C/400°F/ Gas 6. Line a 20 × 30cm (8 × 12in) cake tin with baking parchment.
- Make the shortcrust pastry by whisking together the butter and icing sugar in a large bowl or food processor. Then add the plain flour and salt. Mix to obtain a smooth, even dough.



Baking

Spread out the dough in the cake tin. Bake in the oven for 20 minutes.

Meanwhile, whisk the lemon cream ingredients together in a large bowl to obtain a smooth, even mixture. Pour this mixture onto the baked dough. Lower the temperature of the oven to 140 °C fan/160 °C/320 °F/Gas 3. Bake in the oven for a further 20 minutes.

Leave to cool before removing from the tin, then cut the pastry into squares. Sprinkle with icing sugar.

Remember to remove the butter from the fridge 2 hours before starting.

Double chocolate muffins

MAKES 9 PREPARATION 20 MINS BAKING 25 MINS + COOLING

- 160g (5¾oz) butter + a little more for the tin
- 180g (6¼oz/1 1/3 cups) plain (all-purpose) flour + a little more for the tin
- 100g (3½oz) dark chocolate (70% cocoa), broken into pieces
- 3 eggs
- 170g (6oz¾ cup + 1½ tbsp) granulated sugar
- 2 tsp baking powder
- 15g (½oz) unsweetened cocoa powder, sieved
- ¼ tsp salt
- 100g (3½oz) white chocolate, broken into pieces

Preparing the batter

Preheat the oven to 180 °C fan/200°C/400°F/Gas 6. Grease a 9-hole muffin tin with butter and dust with flour (or line the holes with muffin cases).

Put the butter and the dark chocolate in a small bowl and microwave in 30-second bursts, stirring in between, until the mixture is melted and smooth. Alternatively, place in a bowl over a saucepan of simmering water set on a low heat, stirring regularly until melted. Leave to cool.

Whisk the eggs with the sugar in a large bowl until the mixture becomes white and foamy.

Combine the flour with the baking powder and add the melted butter and chocolate, cocoa powder and salt. Mix thoroughly. Stir three quarters of the white chocolate pieces into the batter.

Baking and finishing touches

Divide the batter between the 9 holes. Bake in the oven for 25 minutes.

Remove the muffins from the oven. Leave to cool completely.

Once the muffins have cooled, melt the rest of the white chocolate and decorate the muffins with it.



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Neglected

By Doug Goodman

We've all seen pictures of the World War One battlefields with their immaculate rows of white crosses and beautifully tended gardens. Many of us have visited the cemeteries in Northern France and Belgium under the care of The Commonwealth War Graves Commission. As a military history writer I often visit a UK cemetery when I see the green signpost pointing to a war graves' resting place. Recently I explored the huge burial ground of Richmond and Sheen on the edge of Richmond Park hoping to find some graves of soldiers from London Regiments who died in WW1. There were several hundred from both wars with some areas restored and well maintained. However, there were many graves in a sadly neglected state: many fallen over and the majority with impossible to read inscriptions. A significant number of the graves were of veterans who died in the 1920s and 1930s at The Star and Garter Home and naturally were buried in the nearest cemetery.

Who, I wonder, is responsible for the upkeep of these neglected grave stones and who might be responsible for their urgent restoration? Could it be the Commonwealth War Grave Commission, whose sign points to the area, The Star and Garter Home for ex-soldiers or Richmond Council? Whoever it is should act quickly before the graves and the memory of the brave military personnel are lost for ever.



The cemetery



Well Tended



Neglected Graves



Illegible Inscription

Some Bizarre Experiences with our clients & their animal families 😊

by Bruce Lyons

You never know what you will be asked for next in our business. One thing it isn't is boring!



Back in the dark days pre Covid our dear friends Alex & Tamara Double, host on the MS Lady Jenny, the first regular charter "Liveaboard" in the Red Sea decided to retire to La Paz in Mexico & Gnasher their Parrot, famous for his signature tune "F***K off Tamara" which some mischievous members of the crew had taught him when Tamara was out diving, insisted on travelling too Along with his mummy. Bureaucracy don't even think about it! Suddenly we were working with Pet Freight Agents, health checks, endless forms, quarantining in Mexico City - it took three booked, & paid for, cancelled attempts, until we finally succeeded in getting Gnasher reunited with his family in Mexico City. But the moto - Never Ever Give Up is in the Lyons DNA. There we were one early morning @ 10pm the night before, Shona and me at an airport lounge, meeting Alex, Tamara, Mum and guess who Gnasher, with yet more paperwork and then at 6am the following morning off they went! As usual we followed their Journey - hitches! what could possibly go wrong? - like the domestic carrier refused to take Gnasher in the Cabin and he couldn't travel in an unpressurised hold but in the end Gnashers dogged confidence won over - and there he is now - new friends, exotic fruits and from time to time he calls us "F.....off Tamara"

In the midst of Covid, Good morning the caller said, wonder if you can help me "My friends are in Spain and their dog is stuck in Twickenham. His friends had taken off in a pocket of flying

possibility but had to make such a dash for it, that they had left their dog behind and were inconsolable. Their dog had nothing, no passport, no chip and this poor young man had to run around to all the vets getting all the right things, and again we had to use a Pet Freight Agent, special crates, forms for ever It took weeks to organise, and the friend took the dog to the airport and handed it to the agent, with the owner sorting out Customs. Job Done & everyone was happy.

Then there was another unusual request, “Can you get me and my dog to Helsinki” the enquirer asked, when he met us with his dog in the square. Then after many meetings, with the owner compulsively eating the chocolates we have for clients, whilst I peered at through all the maps and all the different routes, first it was flying – but there were just too many issues - so why not drive - the Scandinavian car ferries had been cancelled - so we turned to the Hook and Travemünde route, through the Netherlands and Germany - We worked out the driving time, asked the driver if the distance and times were manageable - the dates had to be changed twice, as the dates didn’t suit. Eventually off they went, he was desperate to bring the dog to his son, as he really missed him, I think and wanted the two to meet. What happened? Well the journey proved challenging on the outward journey - they made the ferry in Travemunde with minutes to spare and on the return. What worries me with these enquiries that the traveller expects us to deliver without them taking responsibility - like can they drive that far in that time etc? But it was a big challenge, and again we were in contact all the way and he did make it, but we needed to change the return times slightly to make the journey smoother and a lot less hair raising for both driver and his dog 😊 I suppose almost anything is possible really, where there is a will, there will always be a way 😊

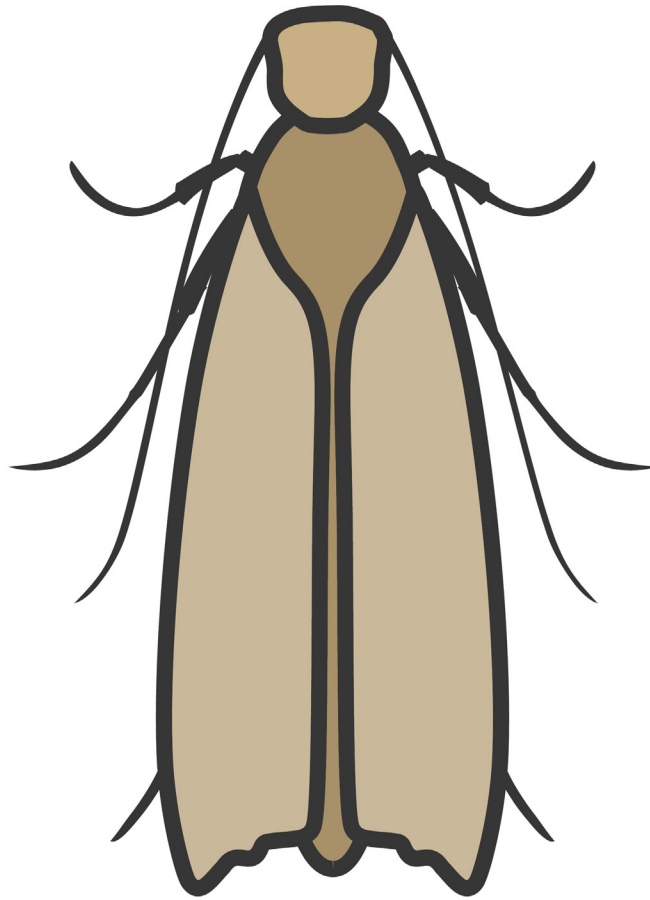


Crusader  ravel

Did someone say ...MOTH?

~ Through the Eyes of a Twickenham Shopkeeper ~

By Deep Patel



There was a golden little moth flying around my shop last week and a child shouted “yuk it’s a moth” and tried to kill it...I said to him this is not a moth...it is a golden fairy of the insect world, treat it with compassion, just as you would like to be treated...it’s good karma, he smiled and left saying he would always remember that in the future.

Have you ever seen a fairy?... maybe not...but you must have seen those golden coloured little moths that seem to turn to dust when we touch them. Well that gold dust (I like to call it fairy dust) is actually there to help them fly better, and they are pretty beautiful when you look at their metallic golden wings...but are they really stuffing their faces with your clothes for dinner?

The short answer is no. For years we have though moths eat clothes so they deserve to die...strictly speaking that is wrong...you see, adult moths don’t have a mouth!! Yes it’s true...they have NO MOUTH so how can we blame the glittering little beauties for eating our clothes? Well we kind of still can...

It’s not the adult moths that are causing the damage...it’s the larvae. Moths lay their eggs and then the larvae can cause damage to your clothes...but as I always say... there is ALWAYS a KIND way to stop any “pest” without being mean (and without

damaging your own karma).

First of all, buy yourself some lavender, peppermint or citronella lemon pure essential oil. Has to be the pure 100% essential oil, not a diluted version, it's fairly cheap online. Mix 30n drops of the one you prefer the scent of into a cup of water and then pour it into an empty spray bottle. Lightly spray this mixture on all your natural fibre clothes once a week (wool, silk, cotton etc) and leave the synthetic ones (polyester etc) as moths do nothing to synthetic fibres. Next wrap up all your woollen and natural fabric clothes in carrier bags and tie a knot in the bags so the moths cannot get in to lay in the first place (prevention is always better than cure!). This will stop them laying as the HATE these scents, and not only will you be left with lovely clothes, you will also have good karma for choosing a kind way...you never know when a little good karma may come in handy for you!

are not the only inhabitants of this beautiful planet and we should respectively learn to live and let live... (then you will definitely have good karma).

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.

I always say, even 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).

Remember...

“...They are golden fairies...not moths”

MY CREATURE-KINDNESS TIP OF THE WEEK...

STOP ANTS kindly sprinkle fine black pepper or white vinegar around places where you don't want them to come (but NOT directly on them) ...they will go without you having to harm them.

For ANY specific tip to stop any “pest” or insect KINDLY (for good karma/blessings), email me: InsectLoversUnite@gmail.com or join my Facebook page: “INSECT LOVERS UNITE”

BELARUS

<https://worldinfozone.com/facts.php?country=Belarus>

Russia will never agree to European peacekeepers in Ukraine

- Lukashenko, the Belarusian leader, March 2025

In Belarus, in the spring of 2024, the government of Alexander Lukashenko faced similar demonstrations taking place in Hungary and Georgia; the size of the crowds could be seen on X (previously Twitter); an unbelievable sea of people.

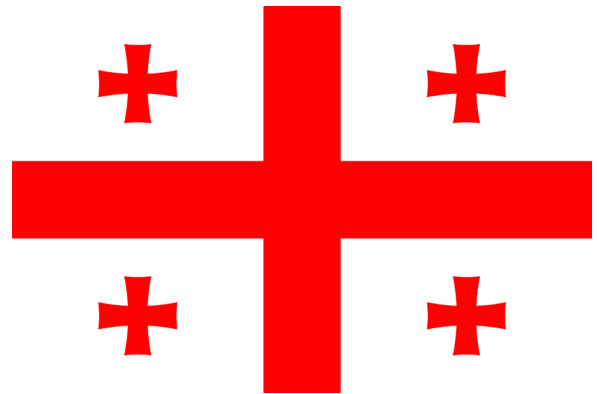


GEORGIA

<https://worldinfozone.com/facts.php?country=Georgia>

Protesters Block Rustaveli Avenue for 107th Consecutive Day 14 March 2025

Georgian Dream, the ruling party since 2012, has introduced a series of repressive laws aimed at stifling dissent. Despite brutal police repression, protesters across the country continue to demand new elections and the release of all those detained during the authorities' repression.



SERBIA

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

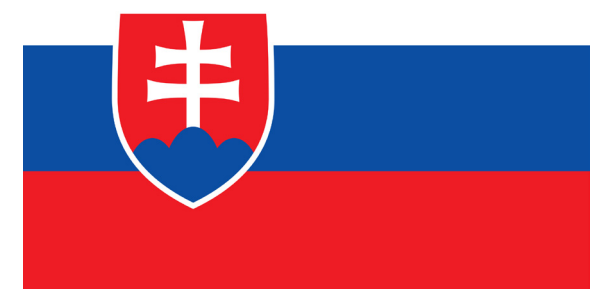
14 March 2025 Protests, sparked by the Novi Sad railway station disaster, became a serious challenge to rule of President Aleksandar Vucic rule of the Serbian Progressive Party in 2025.



SLOVAKIA

<https://worldinfozone.com/facts.php?country=SlovakRepublic>

8 March 2025 Thousands of Slovaks continue to protest across the country against the pro-Russian policies of Prime Minister Robert Fico's government, Euronews



The House Party

by Laura Lomas

Chichester Festival Theatre and Headlong at the Rose Theatre, Kingston until 22nd March, then on tour until 3rd May

It is Julie's 18th birthday party. Christine is being driven to Cambridge later that evening with her boyfriend Jon, for an interview for a place at the University. But Julie has other plans and what unfolds is an alcohol-fuelled power-play of sex and class, as she seeks to manipulate her two "friends".

The House Party is a modern reworking of Strindberg's *Miss Julie*. It retains the focus on class, friendship and privilege, but with today's teenage tensions. Despite their bravado, Julie (the spoilt rich girl), Christine and Jon (from the local estate) are unsure of themselves as they try to discover who they are and how they are perceived by those around them. Point scoring and one-upmanship flip their relationship between friends and mistress-servants.



Is Julie an expert manipulator or just a teenage girl worried about being left alone? As her behaviour becomes increasingly erratic, with the increasing drinking, it becomes difficult to decipher who is the real Julie – even at the play's climax.

Director Holly Race Roughan's naturalistic and very physical approach keeps the emotions real and raw. Designer Lauren Elstein's minimalist set, the kitchen-lounge of a high-end property, uses a glass rear wall to good effect, with back-lighting providing a window into Julie and Christine's hopes and dreams. We also have glimpses of the other rooms, which occasionally spill onto the stage, bringing us into the beating

heart of the party. These superbly choreographed moments from the ensemble bring injections of high energy into the proceedings, and give a perspective on the character's feelings and intentions played out on the dance floor.

The three main actors bring depth to their characters, conveying the complexity of the roller-coaster of their emotions. As Julie and Christine, Synnøve Karlsen and Sesley Hope depict a friendship that is strong, although under stress. They are a compelling force throughout the play. Tom Lewis as Jon brings a laid-back feel to the proceedings, suggesting a confidence in the character that is later found wanting.

The House Party's coda might split audiences. However, the trials and pitfalls of youth are not altogether new, though possibly more fraught in this age of social media. This is a *Miss Julie* for the today's generation

Read John Davies' review at www.markaspen.com/2025/03/08/house-party

Photography by Ikim Yum



A Man for All Seasons

by Robert Bolt

Theatre Royal Bath and Jonathan Church at Richmond Theatre until 15th March

This honest, confident, absorbing production of *A Man for All Seasons* “comes home” as it ends its tour in Richmond. The references to locations on the Thames between Chelsea and Hampton Court will be very familiar to local audiences, adding meaning to the historical events of 1530.



King Henry VIII’s dissolution of his marriage to Catherine of Aragon and his clash with the pope have far-reaching consequences for English history. For Sir Thomas More who stands alone in refusing to recognising the nascent Church of England, it results in his death. At the end of the day, it is his personal conviction that counts, the antithesis of Richard Rich (Calum Finlay) whose ambition trumps all, or William Roper (Sam Phillips) who sells his conscience for More’s daughter, Meg.

A Man for All Seasons raises many questions and moral arguments, but Bolts’ well-judged script is authentic and focussed. Few people have been so brave, so unshakeable, whether through faith or political belief, that they are prepared to pay the ultimate price. (Most recently Alexei Navalny springs to mind.)



The relative simplicity and authenticity of this production allows the text to flourish and us to follow and judge for ourselves the arguments: public declaration against private conscience, questions of friendship and loyalty. Was More’s dignified silence complicit or treasonable thought?

As More, Martín Shaw’s performance is dignified, measured and thoughtful. It demonstrates More’s unwavering strength of character through his balance; carefully choosing when to speak against the laws of England that are turned against him.

Orlando James, as King Henry VIII, provides a perfect counterbalance with a subtle lively charm, a breath of fresh air from the formality of the court, although he stops at nothing to get what he wants. Gary Wilmot, as the Common Man, the voice of the people, is engaging and amiable, as he lightly steps between allegiances.

Simon Higlett’s library set could have been overbearing but, cleverly enhanced by imaginative lighting by Mark Henderson, it provides perfect non-distracting hints of the Tudor period.

This clear, unpretentious, engaging revival of *A Man for All Seasons* still speaks to us of friendship and loyalty, morality and conscience. Perhaps less has changed than we think.

Read Claire Alexander’s review at www.markaspen.com/2025/03/12/man-seasons

Photography by Simon Annand

X

by Alistair McDowall

Teddington Theatre Club at the Hampton Hill Theatre until 15th March

The space station setting immediately opens into the world of sci-fi. Fiona Auty's apt design set may have an element of claustrophobia, but for a big screen at its focal point, showing a large digital clock.



The astronauts in X, clad in their simple yet strikingly conceived uniforms, are on the ostensibly barren and hostile planet Pluto. The digits on the screen show British time from a post-apocalyptic Earth. This is a lifeline to the fragile crew as we watch them fall apart, aware of the horror to come.

Commander Ray, played by Eric Petrossian, is locked in issues with his second-in-command, Ella Ashdown's Gilda. Their paranoia has firmly set in, and even the calming and intelligent presence of Mattie is no consolation. Kyra Shankar is convincing and sincere as Mattie, who has a good rapport with the vibrant Clark, who provides a welcome element of light relief, a role interpreted by Vincenzo Cirillo with his skilled dancing. However, Aidan



Kidder's Cole has an icier presence, and a biting pitch of brittleness, the strong voice of the doomed ... while emphasising that he isn't the only troubled member.

Directed in detail by Hannah Loble, X is an ambitious production, with effective sound and impressively bold lighting by Patrick Troughton. Betrayal and a volatile presence followed through the play. Although some scenes are over long, they still carry the impact of terror, as we lose the crew one by one. Oh, and ghosts, suicide and cancer are also included in this disturbing piece!

Read Heather Moulson's review at www.markaspen.com/2025/03/14/x

Photography by Rachel Burnham

Rattigan

at the Mary Wallace Theatre

The Richmond Shakespeare Society is enjoying its third sell-out production in a row as Terence Rattigan's **WHILE THE SUN SHINES** follows Christie and Ayckbourn into the Mary Wallace Theatre on March 15th for seven performances. This buoyant, giddy farce of mistaken identities and furtive assignations and was a West End hit in 1943 when it ran for over 1,100 performances and established Rattigan as a formidable writer of comedy. Returned tickets only available.

However, thrillers, comedy and farce are not the only fare on offer as our next production, John Ford's 'TIS PITY SHEE'S a WHORE, a full-blooded Jacobean Revenge tragedy follows in April. This harrowing and brutal tale of an incestuous relationship between brother and sister truly breaks the mould. More information available in further editions.



Booking at www.richmondshakespeare.org.uk from March 24th Another sold-out production perhaps? Book early to avoid disappointment.

The Mary Wallace Theatre is situated on Twickenham's Embankment, close to the Barmy Arms.

RSS
RICHMOND SHAKESPEARE SOCIETY

Circus Berlin Richmond 2025

Old Deer Park, Richmond TW9 2SF on 11th -21st April 2025

From the producers of some of the World's finest Circuses comes a brand-new show specially created for a brilliant UK Tour in 2025.

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Acts include a sensational high wire which has never been seen before in the UK, with the troupe flying in all the way from Spain & Africa for the performance.

Our stunt riding team will also be performing the Globe of Death. The most death-defying trick ever

completed, watch as the group of riders experience G-force similar to that of a fighter pilot, they loop vertically and horizontally all while encased in a mesh sphere. This is one for the petrolheads!

<http://www.circusberlin.co.uk>

Box office - 07494774008
Richmond, Old Deer Park, TW9 2SF
Friday 11th April – Monday 21st April



St Mary's University

St Mary's Launches 'Made at St Mary's' Website

St Mary's University, Twickenham (SMU) has launched its 'Made at St Mary's' project, which is a celebration of alumni success stories and the impact that their time at the University has had on them.

St Mary's University, Twickenham (SMU) has launched its 'Made at St Mary's' project, which is a celebration of alumni success stories and the impact that their time at the University has had on them.



From solicitors to social media superstars, educators to policy advisors, and even some of the world's best athletes, St Mary's alumni have gone on to great things.

But studying at university is more than just a future career. It's the lifelong friends you make, the hobbies and interests you discover, and how you grow as a person. Made at St Mary's explored the impact that their time at university had on their development and how St Mary's is where humanity ignites possibility.

The website features 16 alumni stories, who studied a broad range of subjects at St Mary's,

and who have gone on to have successful and inspirational careers. Their stories highlight not only how St Mary's has helped them on their career journey, but also how the University has given them important life skills.

Alongside the writeups on each alumnus, the site also features video interviews and photo content to bring each profile to life.

This is an ongoing project, with new alumni stories to be regularly added to the site. The current alumni featured are:

- Prof Jason Arday, Academic, writer, and fundraiser
- Gabby de Lord, Performance Analyst at Chelsea FC
- Joe Wicks MBE, Fitness coach, media personality, and campaigner
- Natasha Billson, Archaeologist and TV presenter
- Adelle Tracey, Elite middle-distance runner
- Eleanor Toomey, Corporate and commercial solicitor
- Nihal Arthanayake, Award-winning radio host
- Margaret Giblin, Head of Marymount International School
- Montel Douglas, Actor, writer, and director
- Conal Baxter, Policy and research officer
- Corrine Hall OBE, Gold medal cyclist
- Declan Whitebloom, Music video and film director
- Marina Izidro, Freelance sports journalist
- Chelsea McDonagh, Senior researcher and advocate
- Sir Mo Farah, Gold winning track athlete and campaigner.

[Read their stories here.](#)



St Mary's
University
Twickenham
London

Exceptional Business Student Wins Jack Petchey Award

Last term, Richmond upon Thames College (RuTC) [Level 3 BTEC Business](#) student, Fernanda Cerda, won a Jack Petchey award for her incredible hard work and positive attitude to learning.



The Jack Petchey Achievement Award Scheme recognises the positive contributions, efforts, and endeavours of young people aged 11-25 across London and Essex.

These achievements include being a great role model, volunteering, overcoming personal challenges, and supporting others over and above expectations.

Each term exceptional students are nominated by their classmates and teachers to win a Jack Petchey award.

The winner receives a £300 grant, which can be used for anything that will benefit the

class outside of necessary materials, which are provided by the college.

Fernanda's teachers and curriculum leaders cannot praise her highly enough for her contribution to class, commenting that she is a good team leader and overall communicator who maximizes her knowledge through hard work and revision.

Her efforts are also noticed by her peers, with one classmate stating:

"Fernanda is an enthusiastic, dedicated and caring person. She always tries her very best and helps others where she can. She is definitely an intelligent student with a bright future. It has been a pleasure sharing classes with her."

[Interested in studying with us? Check out our courses and how to apply for September 2025 entry here.](#)



**Richmond upon
Thames College**

Twickenham's new ecosystem restoration mural unveiled at Regal House

From Richmond Council

A striking new 30-metre-high mural celebrating the importance of local biodiversity and freshwater ecosystems has been unveiled at Regal House in Twickenham.

Residents, councillors, and the Deputy Mayor of Richmond joined representatives from the UN Environment Programme (UNEP) and non-profit Street Art for Mankind on Sunday 9 March 2025 to mark the debut of the public artwork.

Titled 'N6tur3' and created by Italian artist Vesod, the mural is part of the global #EcosystemRestorationMural series by Street Art for Mankind, in partnership with the UNEP, the Food and Agriculture Organisation of the United Nations (FAO) and funding partner e.on. The series aims to raise awareness for the United Nations Decade on Ecosystem Restoration, a global effort to halt, prevent and reverse the loss of nature.

The first of its kind in the UK, N6tur3 blends futurism with classical art, featuring key species and landscapes in Richmond upon Thames.

A central willow tree stands alongside regional wildlife, including the water vole - [recently reintroduced to Crane Park](#) - while the depiction of London as a river reflects the borough's own prominent waterways, like the Thames and Crane, envisioning a world where urban life and natural environments flourish together.

Twickenham Riverside ward councillors were brought in by creators to help shape the mural's vision, ensuring it reflects the deep local connection between people and nature.

Cllr Julia Neden-Watts, Chair of the Environment, Sustainability, Culture and Sports Committee, said: *"As one of London's greenest boroughs - supporting a range of different habitats and species - protecting and enhancing our natural spaces and biodiversity is a key priority shared by the Council, our partners and our residents. With 2025 marking 20 years since Richmond's first Biodiversity Action Plan was launched, it feels very timely that this mural helps bring to life our strong commitment to building on its legacy for future generations."*

Cllr James Chard, Vice-Chair of the Transport and Air Quality Committee, added: *"Art and creativity play a powerful role in reconnecting people with nature—a concept that is already well-embedded in our community through the Cultural Reforesting programme at Orleans House Gallery. This June, our [Arts & Ideas Festival](#) will explore this collaboration further, and I encourage everyone to get involved."*

Visitors can scan a QR code near the mural to access Behind the Wall®, a free app offering an audio guide, the story behind ecosystem restoration, expert insights and commentary from the artist.



The next station is... blooming!

Railway stations set to compete in prestigious South & South East in Bloom gardening competition

South Western Railway (SWR) has teamed up with South & South East in Bloom to celebrate the railway's many green-fingered volunteers and biodiverse stations.

SWR - which operates across Berkshire, Devon, Dorset, Hampshire and the Isle of Wight, Somerset, Surrey and Wiltshire - is sponsoring the 2025 edition of South & South East in Bloom and has introduced a special category, Celebration Stations.

South & South East in Bloom is one of 16 regions across the UK that make up the annual, nationwide gardening competition 'Britain in Bloom'. The competition inspires community groups in towns, cities and villages to make positive changes to their local environment through horticultural, environmental and community action.



The new category will be open to railway stations across the south and south east of England, many of which have been adopted by community groups and volunteers who lovingly tend to their stations' gardens and green spaces.

Station adoption is part of the growing community rail movement, which sees local groups volunteer

to take more active roles in their stations, helping them to better reflect and serve their communities. More than 100 SWR stations have been proudly adopted by nearly 500 local volunteers. Their projects range from vibrant murals and artwork installations to beautifully maintained planters and flowerbeds, bringing new life to these spaces.

At Raynes Park in South West London, the [Friends of Raynes Park Station](#) group have used a grant from SWR's Customer and Communities Improvement Fund to transform the station's wildlife. Volunteers have landscaped a nearby embankment, installed a wildflower garden, and just last week planted 350 new bulbs.

To encourage entries into the special category, SWR will sponsor nominations from volunteers like these across its network as part of its Railway 200 celebrations - a year of activities to mark the beginning of the modern railway in 1825.

SWR is also encouraging those who work on gardens and green spaces at stations on the Southern and Southeastern networks to send in their nominations. The deadline for submitting entries to South & South East in Bloom is March 31 and judging will take place between June and August 2025.

Peter Holman, Chair of South & South East in Bloom, and London in Bloom, said:

“South & South East in Bloom is thrilled to collaborate with South Western Railway to develop the Stations in Bloom initiative. This partnership opens up fantastic new opportunities for participating station adopters to engage with the regional and wider Britain in Bloom community.

“Together, we can shine a spotlight on the extraordinary dedication and creativity of the volunteers who are transforming our stations along the SWR routes into stunning green spaces. Let’s celebrate these incredible efforts and inspire even more communities to get involved.”

Paula Aldridge, South Western Railway’s community rail manager, said:

“South & South East in Bloom is an opportunity to celebrate those who make a positive difference to their communities. We have hundreds of volunteers and station adopters who make a real difference and take real care of the green spaces around our stations.

“It’s wonderful to have a category just for the region’s stations, especially as we celebrate the 200th anniversary of the modern railway. I love seeing our stations transformed into vibrant, welcoming spaces and we’re really looking forward to seeing nominations across the SWR network and beyond.”

Encouraging station adopters to introduce gardens and green spaces is just one of the many ways SWR is improving biodiversity.

Since 2023, SWR has invested more than £250,000 on a wide range of measures, including the use of ecologists to carry out detailed surveys at 33 locations. Their findings will shape biodiversity action plans, which are designed to manage and increase biodiversity for local species of plants, animals and insects for the next 30 years.

SWR has also introduced biodiversity gardens at its depots in Bournemouth, Clapham Junction, Farnham, Feltham, Fratton, Northam (Southampton), Ryde (Isle of Wight), Salisbury, Strawberry Hill and Wimbledon.

These dedicated spaces include ponds and vegetable patches that help to make areas more biodiverse while improving the environment for the colleagues that work there, demonstrating the clear link between biodiversity and wellbeing.

Lottie Leigh-Browne, South Western Railway’s sustainability lead, said:

“As the first UK train operator to join the Nature Positive Business Pledge, a commitment to halt and reverse impacts on nature, we really want to encourage our station adopters to share the great work they’re doing.

“We’re working on many different ways to increase biodiversity across our network, which is providing a benefit for local wildlife and our customers and colleagues.

“Natural habitats like station gardens and green spaces at our depot provide huge environmental value, with studies estimating that habitats around rail infrastructure could absorb more than 400,000 tonnes of CO2e over 30 years.”



England Team To Play Wales In Cardiff

England men's head coach Steve Borthwick has named his starting XV to play Wales at Principality Stadium on Saturday 15 March (kick-off 4.45pm, live on BBC One).



Saturday's Test match in Cardiff will be the 143rd meeting between England and Wales, with their first match taking place in 1881.

There are four changes to the starting XV who defeated Italy in round four of the 2025 Guinness Six Nations with Luke Cowan-Dickie, Marcus Smith, Tom Roebuck, and Ben Curry all included.

Cowan-Dickie takes his place in the front row at hooker, alongside vice-captain Ellis Genge at loosehead prop and Will Stuart at tighthead. Stuart is set to earn his 50th cap, having made his debut against France in 2020.

At lock, England captain Maro Itoje is partnered once again with Ollie Chessum. The back row features Tom Curry on the blindside flank, his twin brother Ben at openside, and Ben Earl at No.8 to complete the pack.

An unchanged half-back combination sees Alex Mitchell at scrum-half with Fin Smith at 10. In midfield, Fraser Dingwall is named at inside centre, with Tommy Freeman moving to 13.

In the back three, Elliot Daly shifts to the left wing, with Roebuck on the right to make his first start of the Championship, and Marcus Smith is brought into the starting line-up at full-back.

20-year-old Henry Pollock is set to earn his first senior England men's cap from the bench, joining England Test centurion, Jamie George, as well as Fin Baxter, Joe Heyes, Chandler Cunningham-South, Tom Willis, Jack van Poortvliet, and George Ford on a 6-2 split replacements bench.

"We're excited to face Wales at the Principality Stadium this weekend, one of the most iconic venues in rugby," said Borthwick. "The atmosphere will be electric, and we know we'll need to be at our very best to get the result we're aiming for."

Commenting on Will Stuart's milestone, he added: *"Reaching 50 caps is a well-deserved milestone for Will and a testament to the hard work he's shown throughout his career. We're excited to see him reach this landmark on Saturday and look forward to seeing him continue delivering performances at the highest level."*

WALES v ENGLAND

Saturday 15 March 2025, Kick-off: 4.45pm (GMT)

Principality Stadium, Cardiff

15. Marcus Smith (Harlequins, 43 caps)
14. Tom Roebuck (Sale Sharks, 3 caps)
13. Tommy Freeman (Northampton Saints, 19 caps)
12. Fraser Dingwall (Northampton Saints, 3 caps)
11. Elliot Daly (Saracens, 72 caps)
10. Fin Smith (Northampton Saints, 10 caps)
9. Alex Mitchell (Northampton Saints, 22 caps)

Replacements:

16. Jamie George (Saracens, 100 caps) – vice-captain
17. Fin Baxter (Harlequins, 10 caps)
18. Joe Heyes (Leicester Tigers, 11 caps)
19. Chandler Cunningham-South (Harlequins, 14 caps)

1. Ellis Genge (Bristol Bears, 70 caps) – vice-captain
2. Luke Cowan-Dickie (Sale Sharks, 48 caps)
3. Will Stuart (Bath Rugby, 49 caps)
4. Maro Itoje (Saracens, 92 caps) – captain
5. Ollie Chessum (Leicester Tigers, 27 caps)
6. Tom Curry (Sale Sharks, 60 caps)
7. Ben Curry (Sale Sharks, 10 caps)
8. Ben Earl (Saracens, 41 caps)

20. Henry Pollock (Northampton Saints, uncapped)
21. Tom Willis (Saracens, 5 caps)
22. Jack van Poortvliet (Leicester Tigers, 17 caps)
23. George Ford (Sale Sharks, 98 caps)

Brentford partners with tech provider SmartFrame

Written by Brentford Football Club

Brentford announces new partnership with SmartFrame Technologies to revolutionise sharing club photography

Brentford has signed a partnership with SmartFrame Technologies, a leading UK-based image streaming platform.

SmartFrame's technology allows Brentford to widely distribute and share its official photography taken on matchdays and at other official events with publishers through a digital image library.

The club will retain all associated rights to the images and SmartFrame's technology will also create new opportunities for advertising and commercialising the images.



A London-based company, SmartFrame Technologies was founded in 2015 and brings together sports brands and content owners with publishers, advertisers and online audiences.

Fran Jones, commercial director at Brentford, said: *“At Brentford, a forward-thinking approach and innovation is a part of our DNA. We’re pleased to be partnering with SmartFrame who align so well with us on these values.”*

“Our partnership will give us access to their advanced technology for documenting and sharing our moments both on and off the field.”

“We look forward to collaborating with SmartFrame and transforming the way we present and licence the club’s imagery going forward.”

James Prosser, global sports director at SmartFrame Technologies, added: *“It gives me great pleasure to welcome Brentford to the SmartFrame family.”*

“We have already built a strong rapport with the club’s commercial team over the past few months, and their positivity and openness have made it clear that we share many common values.”

“As more high-profile organisations join us, we move closer to our goal of revolutionising online image publishing and commercialisation.”



Match Preview: Bournemouth v Brentford

Written by Brentford Football Club

Analysis, team news, match officials and more. Here's everything you need to know ahead of Brentford's Premier League game against Bournemouth at Vitality Stadium on Saturday (5.30pm kick-off GMT)

Brentford travel to Vitality Stadium to face Bournemouth in the Premier League on Saturday evening (5.30pm kick-off GMT) looking to continue their fine recent form on the road, live on *Sky Sports*.

The west Londoners have won their last four away fixtures ahead of this weekend's trip to the south coast.

Analysis, team news, match officials and more. Here's everything you need to know before the Bees' latest test.

Pre-match Analysis

Richard Cole, Playmaker Stats: Brentford must be wary of a Bournemouth side that attack with speed and aggression

Bournemouth have earned plaudits for their enterprising football this season and rightly so with Andoni Iraola's side firmly in the hunt for European football.

But the Cherries have often come unstuck when facing the Bees in recent fixtures.

Brentford have won three and drawn two of the previous five meetings between the pair in the Premier League and another win would make it three on the bounce.

While Saturday's hosts have been putting in good performances, it hasn't always translated into results. The Cherries have won just one of their last five games in all competitions in normal time and that came against struggling Southampton.

Still, Bournemouth are a dangerous attacking outfit as anyone who has watched them this season will know.

The Cherries rank fourth in the Premier League for shots on target this season with 154 in total, and considering that Brentford generally allow shots against them (usually of fairly low xG quality), Mark Flekken may need to be alert.



Justin Kluivert in particular has had an excellent season so far, scoring 12 and assisting six. The Dutch forward also ranks fifth in the league for goals per 90 minutes (0.58).

A lot of the Cherries' efforts come from the fast, dynamic style of play that Iraola prefers. Bournemouth have a pass success rate of just 76 per cent (the fourth-lowest in the league) and have completed the third-lowest number of short passes.

Conversely, the wide men have put in 600 crosses – a stat only Fulham better. The impressive Milos Kerkez is particularly a threat in this area with 17 crosses into the penalty area this season (ranking him fourth overall).

Of course, you don't need to pass the ball for minutes on end to score if you simply win the ball high up the pitch. Bournemouth do this with speed and aggression.



Often, the Cherries win the ball in the middle third (243 tackles won there, the most of any team) before springing into life. No other team has had more defensive actions leading to a shot (20) this season, although only two of those led to a goal.

Thomas Frank will know his team have to concentrate and avoid any loose mistakes. This season, Bournemouth's opponents have made 40 errors that have led to a shot for the Cherries – no other team has managed to capitalise on mistakes in such a way. The south coast side also top the charts for ball recoveries (1,402 in total).

Winning the ball back aggressively naturally leads to conceding fouls which could be an area that Brentford can exploit.

Bournemouth have committed the most fouls in the Premier League (386, while the west Londoners are the second-lowest on 220) and have picked up 71 yellow cards in the process.

That can set up some very handy set-piece opportunities for the Bees who, as we know, are adept in these scenarios.

That's especially true for the big defenders, especially with Bournemouth losing 46.6 per cent of their aerial duels – the second-lowest success rate in the league. Indeed, only Wolves have allowed more dead-ball passes lead to shots against.

Perhaps Brentford have the kryptonite for Iraola's style. Bournemouth have the fourth-lowest percentage of dribblers tackled, which will no doubt have Bryan Mbeumo and co eager to test them.

Scout Report

Dan Long, *Sky Sports*: Europe-chasing Cherries taking it one game at a time

Bournemouth were sat 12th in the Premier League at the start of the November international break, having lost 3-2 to Brentford at the Gtech.

It came as a little bit of a surprise, given Andoni Iraola's side had beaten both Arsenal and Man City in their previous two home fixtures, and taken the lead twice in the game - but, if anything, it played a part in making what was to come all the sweeter.

The Cherries returned to action with a 2-1 defeat at Brighton, then went on a sparkling run of form that started with four wins and three draws up to the end of the year.

Among the highlights was Justin Kluivert scoring the first hat-trick of penalties in Premier League history during the 4-2 win at Wolves then, three days before Christmas - and for the second season in succession - beating Manchester United 3-0 at Old Trafford.

Iraola was modest about his side's excellent result. *"It was a solid performance. Not amazing, but solid,"* he said. *"I'm happy we kept playing the same way, kept pushing until the end."*

On New Year's Day, Bournemouth were seventh in the table; one point behind Man City, two behind Newcastle and just five behind Chelsea in fourth place. Even for a team continuously improving, it was nosebleed territory.

So then, typically, a spanner had to be thrown into the works. Evanilson fractured a metatarsal during the 1-0 win over Everton on 4 January and had surgery to repair it and, less than a week later, fellow striker Enes Ünal suffered an ACL injury during a training session. Clearly these two injuries disrupted plans, but you wouldn't have known it.

With Dango Ouattara shifted into the vacant central striking role, the Cherries came from behind to hold Chelsea to a 2-2 draw three days after thumping West Brom 5-1 in the FA Cup third round, then followed that up with a 4-1 win at Newcastle and a 5-0 victory over Nottingham Forest back at the Vitality. Kluivert hit another treble against the Magpies, before Ouattara did the same against Forest.

"I think it's a great result. A very good performance. The best thing is to enjoy it. Enjoy today," said Iraola after the win over the latter.

"You can look at the standings but that will not give us anything. We have to take it game by game. You can enjoy every week. That's how we should focus."

And it's easy to see why the Spaniard employs this rigid approach; in the five games that have followed, they have taken only four points. Hopes of European qualification for the first time in club history are still very much alive, but it's fair to say they have taken a bit of a hit as a result.

Whatever happens, it is certain to be another record-breaking season for the Cherries.

Two more wins will take them to 14 this term (current record 13), they need only 10 more goals for 57 (current record 56) and, given their current points-per-game figure of 1.57, they are on course to finish with 60 points, which would obliterate the record haul of 48 they set just last season.

Not to mention the fact the Opta supercomputer is predicting them to finish eighth, which would better their ninth-placed finish in the 2016/17 campaign - and they are in the FA Cup quarter-final for only the third time ever.

It goes without saying that it's an exciting time to be a Bournemouth fan.

In the Dugout

Andoni Iraola

A right-back by trade during his playing days, Andoni Iraola came through the ranks at Athletic Bilbao and made his debut during the 2003/04 La Liga season, following two years in the Segunda Division with Bilbao's B team and a year with Basconia – effectively the club's C team – before that.

Over the 10 seasons that followed his debut year, Iraola astonishingly missed only 26 league games, during which time he was part of the squad that finished as runners-up in the Copa del Rey twice, once in the Europa League and once in the Spanish Super Cup. Between 2008 and 2011, he earned seven senior caps for Spain.

He featured considerably less during 2014/15 - his final season at San Mamés – but captained Lehoiak in his final game for the club, in a third Copa del Rey final defeat, this time against Barcelona.

Iraola then signed for New York City of the MLS, where he spent 17 months, before retiring in November 2016.

Just over 18 months later, he was handed his first managerial role with AEK Larnaca, but lasted only until January 2019 after winning 12 of his 29 matches in charge of the Cypriot First Division club.

That summer, he joined CD Mirandés where, in his only season at the club, he masterminded a run to the semi-final of the Copa del Rey for only the second time in the club's history.

In August 2020, he took over at Rayo Vallecano, whom he led to promotion from the Segunda Division in his first season in charge.

Los Franjirrojos finished 12th in their first season back in La Liga and 11th last term, which led to an approach from Leeds United last February, which was rebuffed by the club's board.

However, he left at the end of the campaign when his contract expired and joined Bournemouth in June 2023. The 42-year-old signed a new contract last May, which will keep him at Vitality Stadium until the summer of 2026.



European Region reports highest number of measles cases in more than 25 years – UNICEF, WHO/Europe

127 350 measles cases reported in the European Region for 2024 – double the number reported for 2023 and the highest number seen in the Region since 1997
Geneva/Copenhagen, 13 March 2025

According to an analysis by WHO and the United Nations Children’s Fund (UNICEF), 127 350 measles cases were reported in the European Region for 2024, double the number of cases reported for 2023 and the highest number since 1997.

Children under 5 accounted for more than 40% of reported cases in the Region – comprising 53 countries in Europe and central Asia. More than half of the reported cases required hospitalization. A total of 38 deaths have been reported, based on preliminary data received as of 6 March 2025.



Measles cases in the Region have generally been declining since 1997, when some 216 000 were reported, reaching a low of 4440 cases in 2016. However, a resurgence was seen in 2018 and 2019 – with 89 000 and 106 000 cases reported for the 2 years respectively. Following a backsliding in immunization coverage during the COVID-19 pandemic, cases rose significantly again in 2023 and 2024. Vaccination rates in many countries are yet to return to pre-pandemic

levels, increasing the risk of outbreaks.

“Measles is back, and it’s a wake-up call. Without high vaccination rates, there is no health security. As we shape our new regional health strategy for Europe and central Asia, we cannot afford to lose ground. Every country must step up efforts to reach under-vaccinated communities,” warned Dr Hans Henri P. Kluge, WHO Regional Director for Europe. *“The measles virus never rests – and neither can we.”*

The European Region accounted for a third of all measles cases globally in 2024. In 2023 alone, 500 000 children across the Region missed the first dose of the measles vaccine (MCV1) that should be given through routine immunization services.

“Measles cases across Europe and central Asia have soared over the past 2 years – pointing to gaps in immunization coverage,” said Regina De Dominicis, UNICEF Regional Director for Europe and Central Asia. *“To protect children from this deadly and debilitating disease, we need urgent government action including sustained investment in health-care workers.”*

Measles is one of the most contagious viruses affecting people. As well as hospitalization and death caused by complications including pneumonia, encephalitis, diarrhoea and dehydration, measles can cause long-term, debilitating health complications such as blindness. It can also damage the immune system by “erasing” its memory of how to fight infections, leaving measles survivors vulnerable to other diseases. Vaccination is the best line of defence against the virus.

Measles remains a significant global threat. In 2024, 359 521 cases of measles were reported worldwide. Transmission of the virus across borders and continents occurs regularly, and outbreaks of this highly infectious disease will occur wherever the virus finds pockets of un- or under-vaccinated people, particularly children.

UNICEF and WHO are working together with governments, and with the support of partners including the European Union and Gavi, the Vaccine Alliance, to prevent and respond to measles outbreaks – by engaging with communities, training health-care workers, strengthening immunization programmes and disease surveillance systems, and initiating measles immunization catch-up campaigns.

UNICEF and WHO are calling for governments with active outbreaks to urgently intensify case finding and contact tracing and conduct emergency vaccination campaigns. It is imperative that countries analyse the root causes of outbreaks, address weaknesses in their health systems, and strategically utilize epidemiological data to identify and close coverage gaps. Reaching hesitant parents and marginalized communities and tackling inequitable access to vaccines must be central to all efforts.

Countries that do not have current measles outbreaks should be prepared, including through identifying and addressing gaps in immunity, building and sustaining public trust in vaccines and maintaining strong health systems.



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