

# Twickenham & Richmond Tribune



Spring in Strawberry Hill  
Photo by Berkley Driscoll

18<sup>th</sup> April 2025

T&RT

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Editors: Berkley Driscoll, Teresa Read

# Happy Easter from all the team at the Tribune



# TickerTape - News in Brief

## South Western Railway

Altered train services and buses replace trains in the Teddington area Saturday 19 to Monday 21 April.

The lines in the **Teddington** area will be **closed all day from Saturday to Monday, all days inclusive**, due to maintenance work.

Passengers for the replacement **bus** services should change at **Kingston**.

### Saturday

- **London Waterloo to Shepperton** services will terminate at **Hampton Wick**.
- **Buses** will run between **Kingston and Shepperton**.
- **London Waterloo to London Waterloo via Wimbledon and Richmond** services will terminate at **Hampton Wick**.
- **Buses** will run between **Kingston and Twickenham**.
- A **revised** service will run between **Twickenham and London Waterloo via Richmond**.

### Sunday

- **London Waterloo to Shepperton** services will terminate at **Hampton Wick**.
- **Buses** will run between **Kingston and Shepperton**.
- **London Waterloo to London Waterloo via Wimbledon and Richmond** services will terminate at **Hampton Wick**.
- The afternoon and evening **Kingston to London Waterloo via Hounslow** services will start at **Hounslow**.
- **Buses** will run between **Kingston and Twickenham**.
- A **revised** service will run between **Twickenham and London Waterloo via Richmond**.

### Monday

- **London Waterloo to Shepperton** services will terminate at **Hampton Wick**.
- **Buses** will run between **Kingston and Shepperton**.
- **London Waterloo to London Waterloo via Wimbledon and Richmond** services will terminate at **Hampton Wick**.
- **Buses** will run between **Kingston and Twickenham**.
- A **revised** service will run between **Twickenham and London Waterloo via Richmond**.



**The Tree Agency**

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# The Local Picture Postcard Page - Part 297

## David Garrick's Temple in Hampton - A Memorial to Shakespeare

By Alan Winter

David Garrick (19 February 1716 – 20 January 1779), was an English actor, playwright, theatre manager and producer who influenced nearly all aspects of European theatrical practice throughout the 18th century. He was the most famous of 18th Century actors. His great versatility shown by many successes both in comic and tragic parts especially in Shakespeare plays. He made a large fortune becoming a major social celebrity.

Garrick's Temple to Shakespeare is located on the Riverside at Hampton (TW12 2EJ).

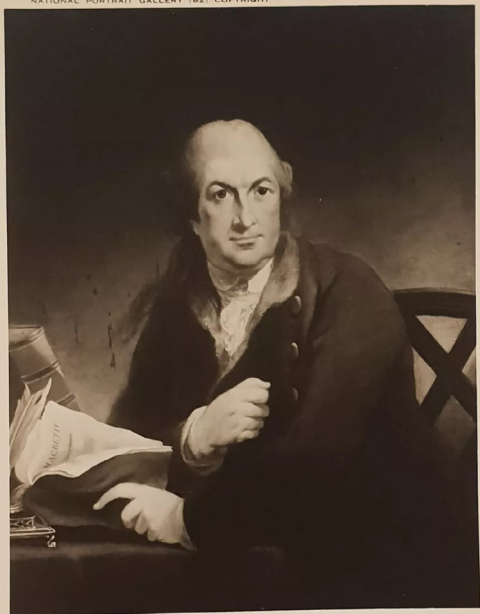


The first image this week is a photo showing the Temple in relation to Hampton Church etc and is taken from the Surrey side of the river.

We then move onto the postcards starting with Garricks Villa. The second postcard is a portrait of Garrick by Robert Pine which resides in the National Portrait Gallery. The third postcard shows a busy 1920's scene with a regatta taking place along that stretch of the river showing both Garricks Temple and Hampton Church. The final postcard is a reproduction of a painting of the Garricks relaxing at the Temple. This was originally painted by Johann Zoffany in 1762 and shows Garrick's temple to Shakespeare on the lawn of his country house at Hampton. The full length marble statue of the bard just visible through the open door. Garrick stands with his wife on the steps and gestures with his cane, inviting the viewer to survey his grounds.

In 1754, Garrick purchased Hampton House (now Garrick's Villa) which overlooks the River Thames at Hampton. He commissioned Robert Adam to improve the house, adding a classical portico and orangery. At some point in 1755 he decided to build a garden folly by the riverside which he intended to dedicate to his muse Shakespeare as a 'temple' to the playwright whose works he had performed to great acclaim throughout his career. Garrick used the Temple to house his extensive collection of





DAVID GARRICK, PAINTING BY ROBERT EDGE PINE

Shakespearean relics and for entertaining his family and friends. It now houses an exhibition about Garrick himself, featuring a number of reproductions of works by major 18th century artists, including Gainsborough, Reynolds, Hogarth and Zoffany.

Garrick's Temple to Shakespeare is located on the Riverside at Hampton (TW12 2EJ).

Garrick's Lawn is the name of the garden beside the Thames that surrounds the Temple. Garrick's residence was separated from his newly built Temple and riverside garden by the main road from London to Bisham, now the A308. He found the road to be a hinderance, and a year or two after completion of the Temple he proposed building a footbridge. Offering an alternative idea, his lifelong friend Samuel Johnson is quoted

as saying to Garrick "What can be overdone, can be underdone", and instead a tunnel was built. Emulating the style of 18th century grottos it is lined with flint and copper slag.

The Temple and garden formed the perfect setting for Garrick to cultivate his talent as a country gentleman. On May Day each year, seated on his special 'President of the Shakespeare Club' chair, Garrick and his wife dispensed money and cakes to the poor children of Hampton. Zoffany's great paintings of the Garricks in the Temple gardens give an idea of the amiable style in which the couple enjoyed their country retreat, far away from their hectic London life.



He died in 1779 aged 63 and was buried in Westminster Abbey. His wife Eva, a Viennese dancer with the Italian Opera, is buried alongside him.

The Temple is open to the public on Sunday afternoons (14.00-17.00) from Sunday 30th March 2025 until Sunday 26th October 2025.

If you have any old postcards or photograph albums that you would consider parting with, I'd be very interested in arranging to see them. Please contact me on 07875 578398 or by email at: [alanwinter192@hotmail.com](mailto:alanwinter192@hotmail.com)

I am happy to pay cash for anything like that which I find of interest. So don't throw old postcards etc. in the skip or recycling bins. Show them to me first!

# CrusaderTravel

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# Greens question Council's premature end of lease for trustees of Pensford Field

Despite stewarding the Pensford Field nature reserve in Kew for over three decades, the Pensford Field Environmental Trust (PFET) have heard that Richmond Council still plans to terminate PFET's current lease two and a half years early without fault or consultation.

Council leader Gareth Roberts intends to transfer the site's lease to Dose of Nature (DoN), a mental health charity chaired by Met Police Commissioner Sir Mark Rowley.

Alongside concerned residents and PFET volunteers, opposition leader Cllr Andrée Frieze raised the matter at a Full Council meeting back in October.

Cllr Roberts replied: "These are parts of the castle not normally shown to guests, ladies and gentlemen... sometimes we have to act quickly in order to stop much valued provision from leaving.

And if we had our time over again, would I have changed it? Yes, of course. It was a mistake."

Freedom of Information (Fol) requests by residents have since revealed that a meeting took place on 14 March 2024 between Cllr Roberts and Sir Mark Rowley, at which Cllr Roberts agreed to transfer the lease to Dose of Nature, of which Sir Mark is a trustee.

It remains unclear whether the Council has formally decided to make the transfer despite having informed PFET volunteers they had already done so.

Deputy leader of the opposition Cllr Chas Warlow has written to Cllr Roberts to ask:

1. Why were no minutes taken at the meeting with Sir Mark Rowley and possibly other trustees of Dose of Nature (DoN) on 14 March 2024?
2. Why was it so pressing to transfer the lease to DoN, rather than wait till it ended in March 2028?
3. Why couldn't a reasonable discussion have taken place between DoN and PFET to enable both parties to continue to use the Pensford Field and facilities?
4. Why is this Administration refusing to disclose relevant information transparently and in a timely fashion?
5. Why was this decision to terminate PFET's lease made at the Directors Board level rather than at a Service Committee, given that it affects more than one ward?
6. Why were the trustees of Pensford Field told that the decision to award the lease to DoN had already been made when it now appears not to have been formally taken?
7. When will the decision to award the lease to DoN be formally taken, how will it be made, and which service committee will scrutinise it?





# St George's Day

Sunday 27th April  
12pm-6pm  
Whitton High Street



Family fun  
for all!

Midday Parade  
Live Entertainment • Raffle  
Food & Drink • Marketplace



# Who Runs London?

## Boroughs Challenge the Mayor for Control

By James Knight

The leaders of London's 32 boroughs have called for a significant change to the capital's governance. They propose creating a new "Combined Board" to grant them joint powers alongside the Mayor of London regarding funding and city-wide decisions.

Their proposal, published by London Councils earlier this month, argues that boroughs need a formal role in the city's management. Currently, the Mayor and the Greater London Authority (GLA) hold the primary strategic powers, including those concerning transport, housing, and planning. Boroughs have limited influence over these decisions, even though they manage many local services.

Supporters of the proposal argue that it would enhance delivery, enable quicker decisions, and provide boroughs with a fairer voice. However, others perceive it as a means to diminish the Mayor's powers and establish a more complicated system. Additionally, there are concerns about whether this change would benefit or undermine public trust in how London is governed.

### A Move Against the Mayor?

Under the boroughs' plan, a new Combined Board would be established. It would consist of the Mayor and twelve borough leaders, selected from the London Councils executive. This group would make collective decisions on key issues, including new powers anticipated under the government's English Devolution Bill.

London is currently the only area in England with a strategic Mayor who does not share formal powers with local council leaders. In Greater Manchester and the West Midlands, Mayors are required to agree on budgets and plans with combined authority boards made up of council leaders.

The boroughs argue that this model should now apply in London. However, the government may not agree. In the English Devolution White Paper, published in December 2024, ministers warn that shared governance structures can slow down decisions. The paper states that Mayors elsewhere have "found it impossible to do the basics" due to local vetoes. It calls for stronger mayoral powers and simpler structures to support faster action.

If the boroughs' proposal were adopted, the Mayor might be required to seek approval for decisions that are currently within his or her own remit. This could lead to delays and internal disagreements on major policies.

### Falling Political Trust

There is also concern about how these changes could affect *political efficacy*—the public's belief that political involvement leads to real outcomes. The **House of Commons Public Administration and Constitutional Affairs Committee** warned in its *Governing England* report that England already suffers from low levels of political trust. Many people do not know who is

responsible for what. Adding another layer of shared responsibility could make things worse.

If decisions are made by a group of 13 elected leaders, it may not be clear to voters who to hold accountable. When responsibility is shared, it is easier for each side to blame the other when things go wrong.

### **Rebuilding Trust Through Simpler Structures**

The boroughs' solution to London's democratic deficit—more collaboration—may be well intentioned, but it risks obscuring accountability rather than improving it. When decision-making is shared, responsibility becomes diffused. Blame can be passed back and forth. Outcomes are delayed.

This has led some observers to argue that London should consider revisiting the model used by the Greater London Council (GLC), abolished in 1986. Under that system, each borough elected one member to a London-wide council, which then selected a leader. This approach could create clearer lines of democratic representation and give boroughs a voice in strategic decisions—without requiring a separate Mayoral office with conflicting authority.



An even bolder solution would be to move to a single, unified London authority—similar to Birmingham or New York City. These cities govern with fewer politicians and clearer lines of accountability. In Birmingham, a single council governs a population of over 1.1 million. In London, we have 33 overlapping authorities for a city of 9 million. A streamlined, unitary structure could reduce costs, accelerate decision-making, and improve public understanding of how power is exercised.

### **The Decision Ahead**

The **English Devolution Bill**, expected later this year, will set the direction for the capital. It is likely to give more powers to the Mayor, including over transport, housing, energy and skills. But whether those powers sit with the Mayor alone, or must be shared with the boroughs, is still to be decided.

Borough leaders believe their proposal will lead to better delivery. But critics warn it may create confusion, delay, and weaker accountability. There is also a wider debate about whether London has too many politicians—and whether a single authority could serve the city more effectively.

As with many issues in public life, the key question is trust. Londoners want to know that decisions are being made clearly, fairly, and in their interest. Whether that means more collaboration, or fewer layers of government, remains to be seen.

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# HRH The Duke of Gloucester unveils new almshouses in Richmond

From The Richmond Charities

The Chair and Chief Executive of The Richmond Charities welcomed His Royal Highness The Duke of Gloucester to Richmond to officially open The Elizabeth Twining Almshouses in Mitre Mews, Richmond.

His Royal Highness was greeted by residents, trustees, staff, members of the project team, the Mayor, representatives of the Council and dignitaries. He viewed the new almshouses and talked with residents, who have recently moved in, about their new homes. The Duke was then escorted into a marquee in the grounds of Church Estate Almshouses where he met further guests.

The Duke is the Vice Patron of The Almshouse Association and is very supportive of all almshouse charities and of charities continuing to develop more almshouses fit for the 21st century. His Royal Highness made a speech and unveiled a plaque.



Chief Executive of The Richmond Charities, Juliet Ames-Lewis, said: *'The royal visit was a celebration of The Richmond Charities and of the work we do to house elderly residents in our thriving community and the ways in which we are always looking to develop more almshouses in order to house more residents.'*

The Richmond Charities' next new development of 12 almshouses, located on Queen's Road in Richmond, will complete shortly, bringing the charity's total number of almshouses to 162.

[The Richmond Charities](#) provides a vibrant, friendly and caring community where older people are encouraged to live full and active lives within the setting of high-quality housing, support, comfort and security.



# Transport Disruption Targeted in Proposed Duty to Cooperate Bill

By Jonathan Hulley, Conservative parliamentary spokesman, Twickenham

As the Conservative parliamentary spokesman for the Twickenham constituency, I fully support the **Transport (Duty to Cooperate) Bill** introduced by Dr. Ben Spencer, MP for Runnymede and Weybridge. **This legislation aims to impose a legal obligation on transport authorities and utility companies to collaborate effectively**, thereby reducing the persistent disruptions caused by roadworks.



While I acknowledge the essential role of utility works in maintaining our infrastructure, the current coordination between utility companies and local authorities is insufficient. **This lack of collaboration often results in poorly managed roadworks, leading to unnecessary congestion and frustration among commuters in Twickenham area and beyond.**

**The proposed Bill aims to address this issue by requiring utility companies to consult with local authorities before commencing roadworks**, including those designated as emergency repairs. This requirement is expected to improve coordination, enhance traffic management, and significantly reduce congestion on our road networks.

Furthermore, the Bill advocates for publishing assessments that detail expected transport disruptions resulting from maintenance and construction activities. It also introduces reporting requirements to hold agencies accountable for their efforts to minimize delays. Given the current inconsistencies in coordination among transport agencies, which have frustrated Twickenham commuters, these measures are both timely and necessary.

An efficient local highway network, free from unnecessary congestion, is crucial for supporting economic prosperity. However, a significant imbalance exists between the statutory rights of utility companies and the capacity of local authorities to maintain roads and ensure smooth traffic flow. **By supporting Dr. Spencer's Bill, I join a growing chorus advocating for reform in the scheduling and execution of utility roadworks.** I urge the local Liberal Democrats to set aside political differences and back this essential legislation, which promises to bring tangible benefits to the residents of Twickenham constituency.

**The rules around "immediate" works – those which companies can start without a permit – are too loose.** Often, they're not really emergencies at all. I support tightening the definition, **so utility firms must apply for permits before they start digging.** That way, councils can plan ahead, inform residents, and reduce disruption.

There's also the problem of defective drain covers and utility boxes – those noisy, broken bits of infrastructure that clatter every time a car drives over them. Right now, councils can only act if it's an emergency. **We need clearer powers to demand repairs and impose fines if companies don't act.** Local people deserve safe, quiet, and well-maintained roads – not a bureaucratic shrug.

**And when roadworks do go ahead, it should be obvious who's responsible. Better signage is a must.** Too often, residents complain there's no information on who's doing the work, how long it will take, or why the road is shut. A simple sign could make a big difference in trust and transparency.

**The current system puts the convenience of utility companies ahead of the people who actually use the roads. It's time to flip that around.**

I call upon the local Liberal Democrats to support Dr. Spencer's Bill when it returns to the Commons on 25 April.

These measures are designed to enhance public trust in utility companies and empower local councils like Richmond to address prolonged roadworks effectively. **By working together, we can ensure a more efficient and reliable transport network for all.**

## Calling all female footballers

From Swans FC

Residents aged 18 and above are invited to join local football club Swans FC for free taster sessions across venues in Twickenham, Richmond, Barnes, Kew, and more.

[Swans FC](#) is offering a fully inclusive football experience to female players. Whether you've never played before or have played in the past, participants can learn and play football in a fun and welcoming environment. It's a great way to meet new people while promoting your mental and physical health.

A typical session will involve some warm-up activities and specific practices to help with technique, followed by some informal matches.

[Register now](#)





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# Amitié Freundschaft Friendship



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and the Richmond in Europe Association. Featuring:



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Regina Gossel  
(Soprano)



Clara Orif  
(Soprano)



Milette Gillow  
(Mezzo Soprano)



Elinor Popham  
(Soprano)

5.30-7.15pm  
Sunday 27th April 2025  
Tickets £20 per adult  
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St Mary's Church  
Church Street  
Twickenham  
TW1 3NJ

Light Refreshments  
sold in the interval

THE MAYOR'S CHARITIES THIS YEAR ARE: HOME START RICHMOND AND RICHMOND MIND

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Advanced booking is recommended  
given the success of last year's concert.

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# Whitton's Waste Problem:

## Why a Better High Street Begins with Taking Out the Rubbish

By James Knight

It may not be the most glamorous subject, but for the shopkeepers, residents, and parents navigating Whitton High Street each day, the commercial waste problem is as visible as it is intractable—and increasingly, it is becoming the defining feature of this otherwise proud local centre in the western part of the borough.

Take a stroll through Whitton at 9am and the scene is familiar: bin bags and cardboard boxes already clutter the pavement. This is despite commercial collections being scheduled for the evening. Behind the shops, in the service yards, the picture is worse—overflowing bins, fly-tipped rubbish, the stench of decay on a warm day, and the unwelcome presence of flies and rodents. Such conditions are not merely unpleasant; they represent a failure of both policy and leadership.



### A National Problem with Local Consequences

According to a major new report by the urban design think tank *Create Streets*, this situation is neither unique to Whitton nor accidental. In *Rubbish Refuse* (March 2025), the authors argue that Britain's commercial waste system is so fragmented and lightly regulated that such scenes are effectively "the system working as intended." In densely occupied town centres, they write, "bags of waste are almost omnipresent...a feature, not a bug."

While such resignation may be galling, it is also instructive. For years, Britain's high streets have suffered from declining footfall, squeezed margins, and competition from online retail. Cleanliness may seem a secondary concern—until one considers what it does to public perception.

### The Rubbish Test: How Waste Undermines Public Appeal

As part of its research, *Create Streets* commissioned a national poll of 1,749 people. Half were shown an image of a typical British high street with waste carefully placed for collection; the other half viewed the same street without it. The results were striking. Without rubbish, 82% rated the street as pleasant (six or above on a ten-point scale), with a median score of 8. With rubbish present, the proportion fell to 28%, and the median score dropped to 4. In effect, the perceived pleasantness of the street halved due to the visible presence of waste.

This decline in appeal is not merely aesthetic. It undermines civic pride, lowers trade activity, and reinforces the narrative of decline. No amount of seasonal bunting or pavement upgrades

can make up for the daily presence of decay. As Create Streets warns, such neglect risks turning our public realm into a textbook case of “private affluence and public squalor.”

## Behind the Shops, Behind the Excuses

In Whitton, the challenge is compounded by what happens behind the scenes—literally. The service yards to the rear of the high street are, in many cases, private land. This technicality has become a well-worn shield for the local authority. Richmond Council insists that, because these yards are privately owned, the responsibility for clearing them lies with landlords or businesses.

Yet this is only part of the legal picture. Under the Environmental Protection Act 1990, councils have the authority to serve notices on landowners, requiring them to clear fly-tipped waste or bring unsanitary premises up to standard. These so-called Section 47 or Section 215 powers exist for a reason, but in practice, Richmond appears reluctant to utilise them in Whitton.



A senior officer might argue that enforcement is time-consuming or that legal action incurs costs. However, these arguments oppose enforcement in general—not its necessity. When conditions threaten public hygiene or harm the local economy, inaction becomes dereliction. Put simply, if a council will not act in Whitton, where will it act?

## Lessons from Elsewhere

Elsewhere in London, local authorities and Business Improvement Districts (BIDs) have pioneered solutions. On Bond Street, a voluntary consolidation scheme reduced refuse vehicle movements by 94% and cut street rubbish by two-thirds. In Putney, a BID-led cargo-bike collection service, “Putney Pedals,” has slashed waste vehicle trips and boosted recycling. Camden is trialling grit bins to collect residential waste discreetly, and Hereford now runs an e-bike-led service that is both clean and commercially viable.

These are not abstract policy ideas. They are real solutions—practical, scalable, and already working elsewhere. All they require is focus, coordination, and political will.

## Time to Take Responsibility

Richmond, by contrast, remains curiously timid. Its refusal to enforce basic cleanliness in the service yards of Whitton is not merely a policy choice. It is a signal—to landlords, to shopkeepers, and to residents—that the public realm is not a priority. That is a troubling message indeed.

For now, Whitton’s bins remain where they are—on the pavement, long before collection time. But the lesson from *Rubbish Refuse* is clear: if we want thriving high streets, we must first clean them up. Whitton deserves no less.

You can read the full report [HERE](#)

Photos ©Twickenham & Richmond Tribune

# Hammersmith Bridge main carriageway open for pedestrians and cyclists

From Hammersmith & Fulham Council

New cycle and pedestrian lanes unveiled after engineers complete work to stabilise the 138-year-old cast iron suspension bridge. Hammersmith Bridge's main carriageway has reopened with new decking after a £2.9 million transformation to improve the experience for pedestrians, cyclists and e-scooter users.

There are now three separate lanes – one dedicated for cyclists traveling north, another for cyclists traveling south and a third two-way pedestrian path. The outer footways will also remain open to pedestrians only.

The new wider pedestrian lane offers more space, improving accessibility for people who use wheelchairs. E-cargo bikes, which fit between the newly-installed 1.2m wide anti-terror barges, are also being trialled on the bridge to shuttle older and Disabled residents as well as young children. They will use the cycle lanes.

The new decking has been funded by a £2.9m grant from the Department for Transport (DfT). The DfT has also granted Hammersmith & Fulham Council £4.7m for works to support the bridge hangers which connect the deck to the suspension chains.

Cllr Sharon Holder, Cabinet Member for Public Realm, said: *"We are grateful to the DfT for the grant funding that has enabled us to re-open the main carriageway with new decking as well as carrying out the essential work to support the hangers."*

The reopening of the main carriageway comes after our expert engineers successfully stabilised the Grade II\*-listed Victorian bridge. Hammersmith & Fulham Council has spent a total of £48million restoring and keeping Hammersmith Bridge safe since August 2020 – when it was fully closed on safety grounds.

## Redecking complete

Our engineers removed more than 1,000 deteriorated deck and footway panels for the main carriageway. [Watch the first stage of redecking on YouTube.](#)

Engineers replaced all the worn wooden deck boards, repaired some bulk timbers that support the decking, resurfaced the carriageway and walkways and installed anti-terror safety measures on the historic bridge.

H&F is trialling e-mobility options to shuttle residents across the bridge, notably older and Disabled people, subject to a 1.5-tonne vehicle weight limit imposed by safety experts. [See the photos here.](#)

We'll continue to monitor the number of pedestrians and cyclists safely crossing the bridge at one time to prevent overloading of the historic structure.

[More details about Hammersmith Bridge can be found here.](#)



# Major repairs underway to reopen Richmond to Kew towpath

From Richmond Council

Richmond Council is pleased to announce that major repair works on the Thames towpath between Richmond Lock and Kew Gardens car park (Ferry Lane) commenced this week, as part of the Council's planned programme of works.

The towpath has remained closed since 19 October 2024, following the structural collapse of a section of the pathway. Since then, the Council has undertaken extensive preparatory work to ensure the safe and effective reinstatement of this much-used route.

Initial emergency measures included closing the affected section, implementing a signed diversion, removing fallen vegetation, and installing scour protection to prevent further damage from tidal flow. A specialist marine design team was appointed, and detailed site investigations and surveys were carried out to inform a robust reinstatement plan.

Given the complexity of the site, the Council worked closely with key partners to secure the necessary permissions to begin works – including the Port of London Authority, Environment Agency, The Crown Estate, Syon House, Kew Gardens, the London Borough of Hounslow, and Royal Mid-Surrey Golf Course.

Councillor Alexander Ehmann, Chair of the Transport and Air Quality Committee, said the repairs mark a major step forward in reinstating an important local route.



*“This stretch of towpath is a valued route for many in our community – both for leisure and for active travel – and we know its closure has been frustrating for many. We’re pleased that permanent repair works are now underway and progressing on schedule.*

*“Large engineering projects like this can sometimes face unavoidable delays, but in this case, the Council and partners have worked incredibly hard to keep things on track.*

*“We said we’d aim to be on site and underway by April – and here we are, on site and getting the work done.”*

Works are expected to be completed in summer 2025. While the focus is on reinstating the collapsed section, the Council will also be incorporating ecological and safety improvements where possible.

Improving and maintaining the towpath across Richmond upon Thames remains a priority. In June 2024, following a competitive tender process, the Council appointed consultants to develop a comprehensive Towpath Improvement and Management Plan for the entire borough.

**Saturday 19 April**

**From 9am until the skip is full  
or 12noon (whichever comes first)**

**Haggard Road**

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# Wandsworth Labour Faces Turmoil as Tory Hopes Rise Across South-West London

By James Knight

Labour's hold on Wandsworth Council is under mounting pressure as Council Leader Simon Hogg faces an imminent leadership challenge from within his own ranks. Senior Labour councillors Kate Stock and Rex Osborn are said to be canvassing support ahead of a contest expected at the group's AGM later this month. Hogg, who led Labour to a symbolic victory in 2022 after decades of Conservative control, is now struggling to maintain unity amid growing disquiet over his administration's performance.

While Wandsworth continues to boast the lowest council tax in the capital and promote its green credentials, cracks appear beneath the surface. The council has come under heavy scrutiny following damning criticism from the Regulator of Social Housing and pushback from City Hall over its controversial housing plans. Internally, Labour councillors are increasingly frustrated with slow delivery and poor communication.



The turbulence at Wandsworth is spilling into neighbouring Richmond, with which it shares a joint staffing arrangement. A recent Local Government Association peer review revealed that the sheer scale and pace of Labour's policy agenda in Wandsworth is placing excessive strain on shared officers—many of whom are now struggling to meet demand in Richmond. Officers described navigating the dual governance systems as “clumsy and mechanical”, with growing backlogs and delays.

In Richmond itself, frustration is reaching boiling point. Residents complain of roads filled with potholes, poor-quality pavements, and a lack of meaningful action to address rising levels of petty crime. Disillusionment with the Liberal Democrat-run council is growing, exacerbated by poor attendance from some councillors at key meetings. Around 25% of councillors are expected to step down at the next election, prompting speculation of internal dissatisfaction and a looming exodus.

Conservatives are increasingly confident of a comeback across South-West London. Labour's national missteps—including the controversial cut to winter fuel payments—are eroding support while local councils struggle to turn rhetoric into results. As one local Conservative put it, “People are tired of lectures. They want competence—and they want their councils to work.”

# Planning permission approved for new café in Richmond Park

From The Royal Parks

The Royal Parks charity is pleased to announce that planning permission has been granted for a new café at Roehampton Gate in Richmond Park.

The charity, which manages London's eight Royal Parks, will fund the project to replace the popular café and improve the landscape around it to help increase biodiversity.

Current facilities at Roehampton Gate are temporary structures erected 20 years ago, after a fire destroyed the original buildings. They do not offer the capacity or modern amenities required to serve park visitors.

The new space, designed by David Morley Architects, will be transformed into an environmentally outstanding café in keeping with the landscape it sits in. It will be a more family-friendly part of the park, offering a wide range of fresh produce to meet increased visitor demand and expectations. The park landscape around the café will be improved and enhanced to increase biodiversity.



A new car park entrance and cycling infrastructure will also be created.

The 'Roehampton Restored' project will revitalise this part of the park by

replacing the existing café with a new "BREEAM "Excellent"-certified café. BREEAM (Building Research Establishment Environmental Assessment Method) is a long-standing method of assessing, rating, and certifying buildings' sustainability performance.

Paul Richards, Richmond Park Manager, The Royal Parks charity, said:

*"We are thrilled to receive planning permission for this excellent project that we know many have been looking forward to for a long time. The new café at Roehampton Gate will be a vital social space for many residents and park visitors, and the improved design will mean more people will enjoy the space for years to come. The significant landscape improvements being made will have a positive impact on the biodiversity of the park, fitting for a National Nature Reserve (NNR) and Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI).*

*"This milestone marks an exciting step forward, and we look forward to sharing more details with everyone soon."*

The timescale of the project is still to be confirmed.



## Easter Feasting Ideas

Well, the weather has unfortunately taken a turn for the worse just prior to the bank holiday weekend, but we can still enjoy getting together with friends and family and relaxing over the four day break. Of course, it's a very important time in the Christian calendar, and while we have access to hot cross buns all year round now, I hope you've had one or two on Good Friday - and still have plenty more for the rest of the weekend (see recipe below). I'm a traditionalist when it comes to the buns, but I do rather like serving them with either a slice of cheddar melting between the two halves, or even a slice of crispy bacon...try it, it works!

Pascal lamb is the traditional Easter dish for many of us, and there are some good offers in the supermarkets. But it might be worth treating yourself to some of the new season English lamb, so do check your local butcher to see what they have in stock.

With a view to the summer ahead, here are a few wines I'd suggest for the Easter weekend.

A delightful taste of Provence from Ocado is the **Sainte Roseline Prestige Provence Rose**. It's bright and pale in colour, with an intense bouquet of red fruits and hints of citrus. It's lively and expressive on the palate and has a long finish. It will pair perfectly with fish on Good Friday but will complement so many more dishes too. £19

And to go with the lamb on Easter Sunday the **Des Tourelles Bordeaux Superieur** is great value at £7.50 from Tesco. It's an intense and complex red with notes of plums, blackcurrant and woody spice. It will also pair well with cheese.



For Easter Monday (hoping the weather will be okay) a taste of Spring with Tasmanian **Devil's Corner Chardonnay** at £15 (also from Tesco). It's youthful, dry and has notes of melon and nectarine and a palate of citrus and perfect acidity.

On the assumption that you might have some hot cross buns leftover, here's an easy and delicious recipe from Bennett Opie for a rather special bread and butter pudding.

### Caramel & Ginger Hot Cross Bun Bread & Butter Pudding

**Prep time** 20 minutes **Cooking time** 35 minutes **Allergens:** gluten, dairy, eggs **Serves** 6

- 6 hot cross buns, sliced into 4
- 3 large eggs
- 300ml whipping cream
- 300ml milk
- 1 tsp vanilla extract
- 75g golden caster sugar
- 3 balls of **Opies Stem Ginger**, finely chopped, syrup reserved
- 3 tbsp Carnation caramel sauce



1. Take a large oven dish that will fit 6 hot cross buns comfortably and arrange the sliced hot cross buns in the dish.
2. In a large bowl whisk together the eggs, whipping cream, milk, vanilla extract, caster sugar and 2 tablespoons of the reserved stem ginger syrup.
3. Pour the batter evenly over the hot cross buns. Scatter over the finely chopped stem ginger, cover and leave in the fridge for a couple of hours to allow the hot cross buns to absorb the mixture. You could also leave it overnight. Pre-heat the oven to 190°C / 170°C fan / gas 3.
4. Drizzle over half of the carnation caramel sauce and cook in the oven for about 30-35 minutes, until the custard is set but still retaining a slight wobble.
5. Leave to cool slightly before serving with fresh custard and a little drizzle of caramel sauce.



And here's is a rather nice, and certainly unusual, savoury snack idea that you might like:

### **Easter Squeezy Cornflake Nests** (a savoury spin on the beloved Chocolate Cornflake Cakes)

*This creative twist swaps chocolate for creamy Cheese and Chive, giving the crunchy cornflake base a rich, cheesy flavour. Instead of mini eggs, these nests are topped with crispy streaky bacon rashers, a drizzle of maple syrup, and fresh chives for a perfect balance of savoury and sweet. Light, crispy, and utterly moreish, these nests are great for an Easter breakfast bite or brunch.*

- Primula Cheese and Chives
- cornflakes
- Streaky Bacon Rashers (cooked and cut up)
- Maple syrup
- 1 egg white
- Salt and pepper to taste
- Chives

#### **Method (makes 4 nests):**

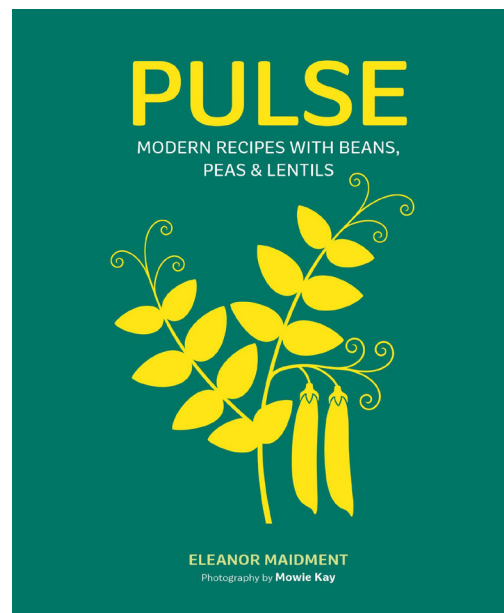
1. To a bowl add one egg white and whisk till fluffy and airy.
2. To the same bowl add a good squeeze of Cheese and Chives, and salt and pepper to taste.
3. Whisk till smooth and airy.
4. Add in 2 cups of cornflakes and fold carefully making sure each piece is coated without crushing them.
5. Carefully place the coated cornflakes in a muffin tin leaving as much airy space as possible. **Note:** do not pack and press down the cornflakes when placing into mould as this will make the nests dense and will lose its crunch.
6. Cook in the air fryer for 4 minutes on 200 degrees (or oven) until golden and crispy.
7. When chilled, take the nests out the muffin tray, top with a good squeeze of Cheese and Chives, pieces of crispy streaky bacon rashers and a drizzle of maple syrup.



## Happy Easter!

## A Perfect Pulse

We love pulses: whether it's a mixed can of beans from the local Mediterranean supermarket (some have really lovely sauces) or a jar of Bold Beans. And lentils are a favourite too. If you follow me on Instagram (@aca\_jee) you will have seen evidence of my love of cooking with pulses. So when I discovered Eleanor Maidment's fabulous new book **PULSE**, published by **Ryland Peters & Small** (£20) with photography by Mowie Kay I was in foodie heaven. This book is a cornucopia of fabulous recipes to take you through the whole year and give you so much inspiration. Covering dried, canned and jarred pulses, and including recipes featuring meat, poultry and fish, this book demonstrates how easy it is to cook with pulses through 75 delicious recipes as well as highlighting their nutritional benefits. Pulses can be deeply comforting, light and delicate, crisp and crunchy or soft and luxurious. Knowing how to cook with them is key. Every recipe in this book transforms a humble bean or lentil into something aspirational and appealing.



Leith's School of Food and Wine graduate **Eleanor Maidment** is a freelance food editor, recipe writer and consultant. The former Food Editor of the multi-award winning *Waitrose Food Magazine*, she is now Food Editor of *You Magazine (Mail on Sunday)*. Eleanor lives in London.

Here are a couple of recipes from the book that are perfect for this long weekend:

### **BURRATA, BUTTER BEAN & FENNEL SALAD** SERVES 2

*"Fennel's anise crunch goes so well with soft butter beans and creamy burrata. Try to use the fresh juice squeezed from an orange for this salad, rather than from a carton."*

- 1 ball burrata
- 2 tbsp extra virgin olive oil, plus extra to serve
- 1 tbsp lemon juice
- 1 tbsp orange juice (ideally squeezed from an orange), plus extra to serve
- 1/2 tsp runny honey
- a small grating of garlic, no more than 1/4 clove (optional)
- 1 fennel bulb
- 1 x 400-g can butter beans, drained and rinsed
- 1/2 red onion, thinly sliced
- 2 tbsp roughly chopped dill
- salt and black pepper



1. Take the burrata out of the fridge 20–30 minutes before you want to serve it. It shouldn't be served fridge-cold.
2. In a mixing bowl, whisk together the oil, lemon and orange juices, honey and grated garlic

(if using) with a pinch of salt and a grind of black pepper.

3. Trim the fronds from the fennel and set these aside. Cut the bulb in half lengthways, remove any tough or bruised outer leaves and cut out the tough core. Thinly slice the fennel and add to the citrus dressing with the beans, red onion and dill. Toss together and spread over a small platter.
4. Sit the burrata on top and gently break it open, drizzling it with a little more oil and seasoning with salt and pepper. Squeeze a little more orange juice over everything, scatter with the fennel fronds and serve immediately.

**COOK'S TIP** This recipe can easily be doubled or tripled to serve more people.

**PULSE SWAP** Cannellini beans would also be great here.

## **DOUBLE CHOCOLATE BROWNIE BEAN COOKIES** MAKES 10

*"I completely surprised myself with how good these rich, brownie-like cookies are. They are gluten-free (see cook's tip) and use significantly less butter and sugar than a regular chocolate chip cookie."*

- 1 x 400-g can red kidney beans, drained and rinsed
- 75 g unsalted butter, softened
- 75 g caster sugar
- 50 g dark (70% cocoa solids) chocolate, melted
- 30 g cocoa powder
- 1 tsp baking powder
- 1 egg
- 75 g white chocolate, cut into small chunks

1. Place all of the ingredients, apart from the white chocolate chunks, in a food processor.
2. Whizz until completely combined. Stir in the white chocolate chunks, scrape the mixture into a mixing bowl and chill for at least 2 hour (or up to 24 hours).
3. Preheat the oven to 180°C/160°C fan/350°F/Gas 4; line a large baking sheet with baking parchment.
4. Scoop spoonfuls of the cookie mixture and roll into balls. You should get 10 cookies from the mixture, each weighing about 55 g.
5. Spread out over the baking sheet (they won't spread too much during cooking, but if your sheet isn't big enough you may need to cook them in batches). Bake for about 14 minutes, then cool on the sheet for 15 minutes.
6. Transfer to a wire rack to cool completely before eating.



**COOK'S TIP:** Make sure you use a gluten-free baking powder and cocoa powder if cooking for people with allergies or intolerances.

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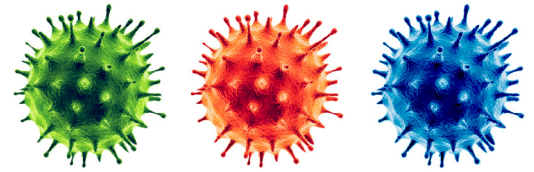
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## Covid Websites Replaced in USA

It was reported on X (formerly Twitter) that The White House has published a document online “The True Origins of Covid-19”; this may be of interest to readers who have followed Covid-19 articles in the Tribune.



The report published on a USA government website can be seen here: <https://www.whitehouse.gov/lab-leak-true-origins-of-covid-19/>

Since the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic theories have been put forward looking at a food market as a source of the virus and an alternative theory of a leak of the virus from the Wuhan Institute of Virology.

## Petition En7254 – Ban Trump from Australia

It has been posted on X (formerly Twitter) that Australia has started an official Government petition to permanently ban President Trump and his family and administration from the country.



### “Petition Reason

*Australians have VALUES of mateship, hard work, righting wrongs, and fighting for the underdog. We don't need Trump here, a Putin aligned dictator who is spreading misinformation, hate speech and stands for the opposite of what we do. His actions are hurting and endangering OUR COUNTRY and we should ban him from coming here as an agent of hate and a danger to world peace.*

### Petition Request

*We therefore ask the House to permanently ban Trump, his family, and his administration from Australia. We do NOT need their hatred, racism, and threats to world security here.”*

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

## Moscow Victory Day Parade

The Moscow Victory Day Parade is an annual parade of the Russian Armed Forces in Moscow's Red Square. The 80<sup>th</sup> anniversary – the Victory Anniversary parade will take place on 9<sup>th</sup> May 2025.



According to the Kremlin's press service the Serbian President, Aleksandar Vucic, has confirmed to President Vladimir Putin that he will attend the parade and send a unit to participate. However, it has been reported that the EU has warned Vucic that he could be removed from the EU Accession Program if he attends the event on 9<sup>th</sup> May.

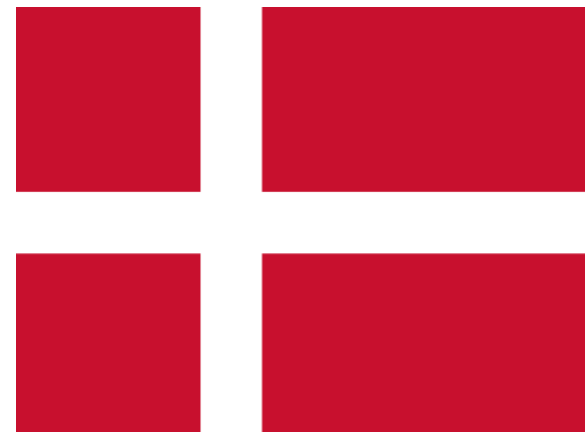
Russia <https://worldinfozone.com/gallery.php?country=Russia>

## Denmark Sending Army Teams to Ukraine to Study Drone Warfare

It has been reported that Denmark is sending army teams to Ukraine to learn, first hand, drone warfare tactics.

General Peter Boysen said: “*We are here to learn from the best*”. It is estimated that over seventy percent of Russian losses emanate from drones.

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



# So it's Easter? So what?

By Deep Patel

~ Through the Eyes of a Twickenham Shopkeeper ~

Easter...THE most sacred of all dates on the Christian calendar, we are all too familiar with the great overindulgence of chocolate (primarily in the form of hollow chocolate eggs and delicious soft fruity gooey hot cross buns) ...but what is Easter really about today? I have been conversing with my customers in my shop about this very topic this past week, and here is what I have found... don't worry I am not going to make this into a factual article about the historical origins of Easter (that's for Google to cover, not me) neither am I going to focus on heavily religious scriptures (although I have the greatest respect for this aspect), but more on an general underlying significance of what Easter generally means...from a general public view...at least from the views of those who come to my shop (now now, don't be judgemental).



Well, a lot of people today seem to see Easter as just 2 free bank holidays to go out and get drunk, whereas others have said it is a period for much needed family bonding, meeting siblings and relatives up and down the country for lunches and dinners (usually leading to fall outs and arguments by the end of it). Some have said they see Easter as a time to sleep and catch up on much needed rest and have a date with their sofa and TV for a good movie, homemade nachos and chill time (my kind of people!). I have even had some people say they believe Easter is a commercial waste of time designed to make people spend money of overpriced hollow chocolate eggs (well...they obviously haven't been to Meet & Deep Newsagents have they?).

So what exactly is Easter about then? Well, whether you are a Christian or not, this period represents something very special...something that we can all learn from...regardless of our beliefs...

Just like Jesus was said to have sacrificed himself for the benefit of humanity, this period can be considered a period for us to remember that sometimes, sacrificing our own joys, our own desires and our own gain in favour of another person's is what life is about. Because, everyone can take, it's easy to receive, but to give up something you want, something that is precious to you, something that makes you happy, just to see someone else smile...that is true beauty, that is true wisdom and that is true love. So next time you get the opportunity in life to either take or give...think of the message of Easter...be like Jesus and give instead...because it is only through giving...that one truly becomes fit to receive...

**Remember...**

***“In the joy of others... lies our own...”***

MY CREATURE KINDNESS TIP OF THE WEEK:

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 others...be they big or small 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 “INSECT LOVERS UNITE”. TheDeePatel@gmail.com

As always...Peace, love and good karma to all xx

## The Comedy of Errors

by William Shakespeare

YAT at the Coward Studio, Hampton Hill Theatre

Here's a whirlwind, full of youthful vigour and vitality, brash and raucous for modern audiences. Larger than life, and full of comic invention, it is mesmerising and engrossing.

*The Comedy of Errors* is simply a farce without any of the profundity of Shakespeare's later plays. It's an implausible tale of two sets of identical twins separated at birth in a shipwreck. Eventually they are inadvertently reunited when the long-lost father of one pair faces execution. Identities are mistaken, events are swapped and anarchy reigns in what is a delightfully silly romp.



Identifying the many colourful characters is challenging, more so when faced with two sets of identical twins with the same names: Antipholus of Syracuse and his servant Dromio: and Antipholus of Ephesus and his servant, er, also called Dromio. Confused? Well, that's all the fun of the fair.

Rowan D'Albert's strong direction maintains a fast pace with hardly a pause, and his placement of the characters and the composition of the scenes could be out of a painting. The comedy is well-timed, the mannerisms well-observed, and particularly enjoyable is the chase scene, with its breathtakingly executed entrances and exits. Indeed, the movement of the entire ensemble is outstanding, skilful choreography without the dance.

On the Syracuse side, Daniel Burley's interpretation of Antipholus is magnetic and powerful. His comic sidekick, the servant Dromio, played by Bryn Wilson with amazing gusto, is a joy to watch, full of comedy with nimble, limb-twisting contortions. Not to be outdone, on the Ephesus side of the equation, are Ed Couchman-Boor's stylish Antipholus and AJ Hill's impish Dromio.

Amongst other stand-out performances are Gio Nickson as the Syracusan merchant Aegeon, the father searching for his lost twin sons; and Kavi Noonan as a flamboyant Duke Solinus, doubling as Pinch, the eccentric doctor. As the seductive courtesan, Meaghan Baxter gives a mischievous and amusing cameo, a coy lady of favours.

Liz Lattimore's fitting sound design is perfect, from its opening music to the rousing "Benny Hill" chase, while detailed make-up and hair and colourful array of period costumes is exceptional.

The bare studio provides an excellent arena for producing this "in your face" enjoyably intimate feast, showcasing Shakespeare's comic play at its best.

Read Steve Mackrell's review at [www.markaspen.com/2025/04/10/cmdy-errors-yat](http://www.markaspen.com/2025/04/10/cmdy-errors-yat)

Photography by Handwritten





## *The Merchant of Venice 1936*

by William Shakespeare, adapted by Brigid Larmour and Tracy-Ann Oberman

Royal Shakespeare Company and Trafalgar Theatre Productions and at Richmond Theatre

With the world in the grip of anti-Semitism and economic convulsions, the resetting of Shakespeare's classic in 1936 into the mean East London streets of Oswald Moseley's Blackshirts is horribly timely. After two West End sell-outs it erupts onto the stage and leaves one gasping for breath with its power.

Mob rule and violence are the backdrop. Liz Cooke's strong set design, upturned furniture against a grim facade of a dark terraced houses, and the lighting and sound all dial up the tension.



The cast appear in party mode from the aisles, reassuring everyone not to panic, inviting them to join in the dinner party that starts in flickering candlelight with Jewish prayers. But an unremitting torrent of venom and antipathy is levelled at Jews throughout the two acts.

This electrifying play, heavily cut from Shakespeare's drama, is an historic portrayal with Shylock played as a woman. Tracy-Ann Oberman dominates in this role, and she is also associated in its directing, as its adaption is inspired by the life of her Jewish great-grandmother.

Oswald Mosley's British Union of Fascists appealed to a cross-section of English society from ex-servicemen and the unemployed, to aristocrats. Mosley was married to beautiful socialite Diana Mitford, with Hitler their wedding guest of honour.

The cocktail-sipping company is epitomised by Antonio (Joseph Millson) in clipped vowels, clipped moustaches and Brylcreemed hair as sleek as an otter. Suave Antonio becomes a Blackshirt, and the stylish Portia (Georgia Fellows) equals him in her poisonous prejudice.

Single mother Shylock runs a pawnbroking business from her house in Cable Street, earmarked for a paramilitary march against the Jewish community. She does the deadly deal with Antonio when he seeks a loan, securing the pledge with a pound of his own flesh.

The script is silky smooth, but the play rather judders to a halt with Shylock's desperate forced conversion and then a breaking of the fourth wall as she at last finds support from her East End neighbours during the Battle of Cable Street.

Oberman is both powerful and yet vulnerable, a loving mother one moment, a vengeful creditor the next. Villain or victim?

Read Gill's review at [www.markaspen.com/2025/04/08/merchant-venice-1936](http://www.markaspen.com/2025/04/08/merchant-venice-1936)

Photography by Marc Brenner







## Now! That's What I Call a Musical

by Pippa Evans

Royo at the New Wimbledon Theatre and on tour

Yes, there are now 120 albums, although no longer available on vinyl or cassette. But, to mark its fortieth anniversary, and with direction and choreography by Craig Revel Horwood, *Now! That's What I Call a Musical*, is brand-new.

Set in Birmingham on two timelines, we are transported back and forth between 1989 when our main protagonists are leaving school and dreaming of their futures, and 2009 when we catch up on the highs and lows of the last twenty years at the school reunion.

Younger Gemma and Younger April have two very different futures planned, one dreams of becoming a nurse and settling down with a husband and four children, the other of life as a Hollywood actress.



Fast forward twenty years, and Gemma is a respected senior nurse, but is unable to have children, and is married to womaniser Tim. After her dreams have failed, April has become incommunicado, imagining Gemma is living her perfect life.

Headliners Nina Wadia as Gemma, and Sam Bailey as April both shine, are perfect for their roles and have great chemistry. Bailey, however, could have been given more songs. (Who can forget that spine-tingling *X Factor* audition?)

However the Brummie setting is incongruous and some characters' life choices don't seem to fit with their personalities. Serious themes are flirted with superficially, then brushed over. Costumes are generic and era-stereotypical without nuance of what a particular character might have worn back in the day, and songs are randomly plonked in, with some fitting the story and others not. A case in point is Sonia's Eurovision banger *Better The Devil You Know*, which really is the antithesis of the message at that point of the plot and what happens next.

Anyone hoping to revisit their youth and see childhood stars will be slightly disappointed, as the 'fairy godmother' appearance of guest stars is fleeting (although on press night Carol Decker and Sinitta briefly appear).

*Now! That's What I Call a Musical* isn't a sophisticated or intricate piece of theatre, but as long as expectations are set accordingly, this is a fun night out. Just set nostalgia levels up to full blast, ignore the details and enjoy!



Read Thea Diamond's review at [www.markaspen.com/2025/04/11/now-musical](http://www.markaspen.com/2025/04/11/now-musical)

Photography by Pamela Raith

# 'TIS PITY SHE'S a WHORE

at the Mary Wallace Theatre

Brother and sister defy the laws of Church and state and their forbidden love leads on to tragic and murderous consequences. This Jacobean masterpiece, a classic and rarely-performed Revenge Tragedy, offers verse to rival Shakespeare, tragic roles as challenging as Romeo and Juliet - and a villain more devious than Iago. "An evening of white-knuckle theatre."

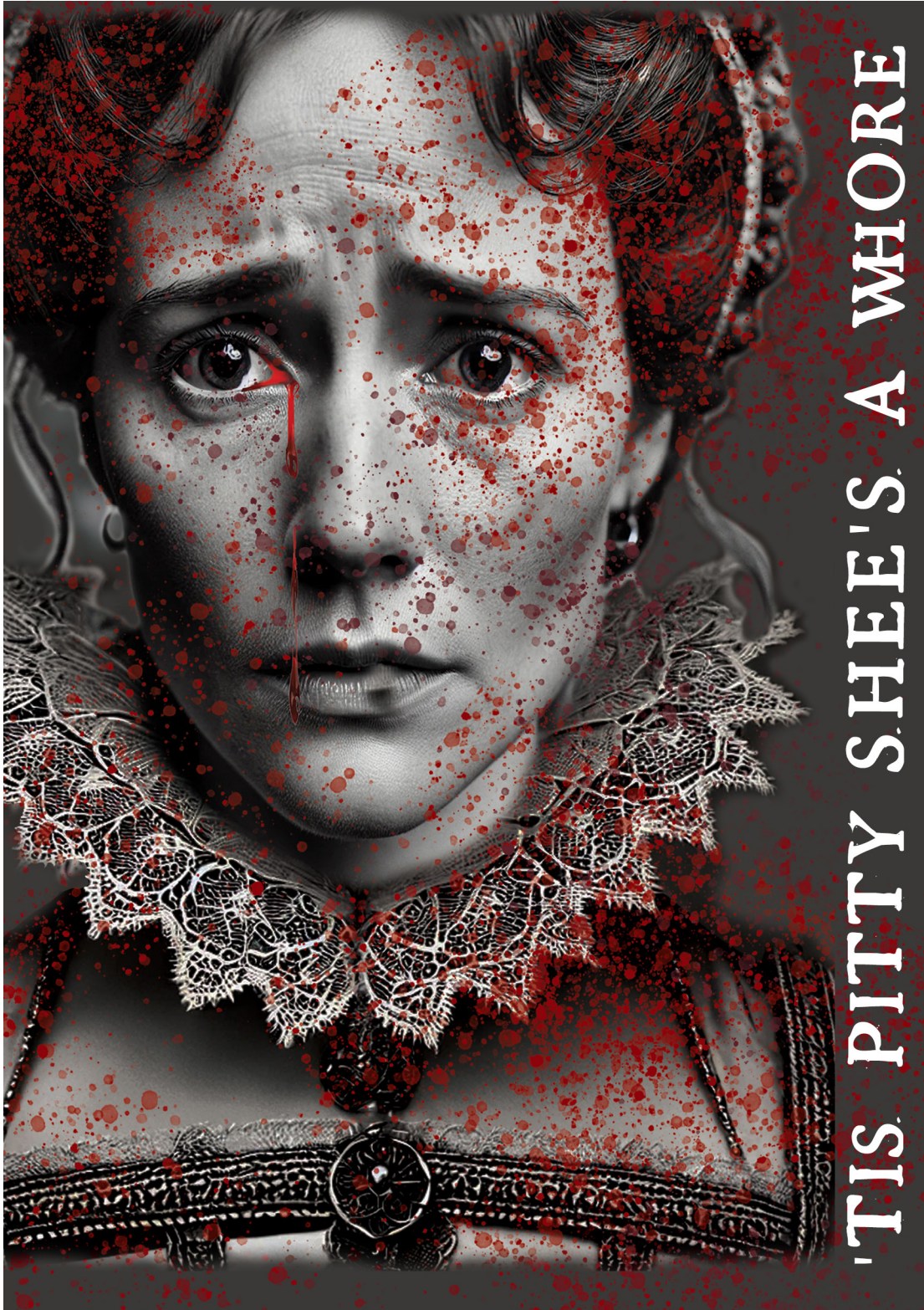
Giovanni: "Shall that I am her brother born, My joys be ever banished from her bed?"

'TIS PITY SHEE'S a WHORE" plays at the Mary Wallace Theatre on Twickenham's Embankment

from Saturday, April 19<sup>th</sup> to Saturday, April 26<sup>th</sup>. A few tickets still available at

[www.richmondshakespeare.org.uk](http://www.richmondshakespeare.org.uk)

Find the Mary Wallace Theatre on Thames Embankment, close to the Barmy Arms.



# 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

# Dance Student Wins Jack Petchey Award for Positivity and Enthusiasm

Level 2 Dance student Sophie Martin has won a Jack Petchey Award for her positive attitude to learning and enthusiasm for her subject.

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.

Sophie's peers nominated her for the award for being friendly, caring and supportive and always trying her best in class!

Her tutor, Delicia, commented on her efforts:

*"Sophie has been a great student and peer this year. She approaches everything with a positive attitude and has often overcome personal struggles to be present in class and support her classmates. She has delivered some excellent performances this year that showcase her true passion for dance."*

As well as her completing her coursework to a high standard, Sophie has also been exploring her interest in dance photography. During the annual dance festival, IGNITE, in March, she worked closely with a professional photographer, who commented on how enthusiastic and helpful she was. Sophie's passion and enthusiasm for everything she does define her as a student and make her an excellent example for others.



Great work, Sophie!

[Learn more about our courses and apply for September 2025 here.](#)



# Twickenham Woman to Run London Marathon in Memory of her Father

Isabel Burr, from Twickenham, will be pounding the 26.2 miles around London on April 27, to help raise funds for blood cancer charity, Leukaemia Care, a cause very close to her and her family.

Isabel's father, Martin, passed away in 2024 from complications caused by his leukaemia, but not before dedicating long periods of his life volunteering to help the charity, and as a 'buddy', for other patients going through the same challenges as him.

A charity fundraiser herself, 26-year-old Isabel, said: *"Running has been hugely beneficial for my mental health while my dad was so ill, and since he died. I really wanted a big challenge to focus on, especially over the first anniversary of his passing, and the London Marathon seemed perfect. I applied and the next day I got a place. My dad was diagnosed with leukaemia when I was young, and it had a huge effect on his life. He was so ill at many different times, and had a stem cell transplant. He volunteered for Leukaemia Care as a buddy to help others in a similar position, as well as using his skills from his career as a journalist to edit and proofread information. He died last year from a different type of cancer linked to his leukaemia, so it just felt right to support a charity that he also supported."*

Nearly 10,000 people are diagnosed with leukaemia every year in the UK, that's 27 people every day. Leukaemia Care exists to support patients and families through diagnosis, treatment and beyond.

Colin Dyer, CEO for Leukaemia Care, said: *"Isabel, and the thousands of runners like her put in a colossal effort just to reach the start line and we commend each and every one of them. Everyone has a story where they, or someone very close to them, have been affected by setbacks and challenges. At Leukaemia Care we work tirelessly to help improve diagnosis and detection, and support those impacted by leukaemia. To do that, we need people like Isabel who selflessly face this challenge head on and raise vital funds to enable us to be there for the people who need us the most."*



This will be Isabel's first Marathon, and she has been following a strict 20-week training programme to be ready when the day comes. And, while she's already surpassed her fundraising target of £2,300, she's determined to raise as much as she can to help others going through what her father went through.

Isabel added: *"The fundraising has gone really well, my friends and family have been so generous. My mum rented out the car parking space on our drive as we live near a sports stadium, so it's been really popular. And my sister is a dog groomer, so she offered special Christmas spas to her customers and all the profits have gone to my fundraising. I don't think I can quite put it all into words. I will be accomplishing something that's been a huge challenge both mentally and physically, and I think I will be just so proud of myself. I'm excited to run around a city I love so much, and see it in a completely different way. I'm also excited for the atmosphere. I've done a few park runs but I've never run with so many thousands of people, which I think will be amazing."*

To celebrate, Isabel plans to catch up on some much-needed sleep. *"I think I'll go straight home and chill on the sofa. I'm not sure if I'll be up to much more,"* she said.

To help raise funds for Leukaemia Care, and support Isabel, visit her Just Giving page at <https://www.justgiving.com/fundraising/isabelburr>

**Leukaemia Care**  
YOUR Blood Cancer Charity

# Donate to Barnes Common Limited's fundraiser and double your impact

From Barnes Common Limited

From midday on 22 April to midday on 29 April, local nature conservation and education charity Barnes Common Limited is taking part in The Big Give's Green Match Fund, aiming to raise £8,000 to restore the rare acid grassland in Barnes.

Barnes Common is home to some of the richest examples of lowland acid grassland in London, providing a home to rare insects and plants. The funds the charity plans to raise will go towards restoring this fragile habitat.

Any donations made via BigGive.org from midday on 22 April to midday on 29 April will be matched by a donor. If the charity raises £8,000, it will be doubled to £16,000.

*"Please take advantage of this exciting opportunity and schedule your donations for our match funding week, 22 to 29 April!"* says Jackie Marie, Business Operations Manager of Barnes Common Limited, *"Remember: one donation, twice the impact."*



[Donate now](#)

Lowland acid grassland is a UK threatened habitat of national conservation importance. *"Recent research has identified 57 invertebrate species linked to LAG and sandy soil habitats,"* says Conservation Manager Will Dartnell, *"with 15 species being of conservation concern, such as the nationally rare bryony mining bee (Andrea florea) and the ridge-saddled carpenter bee (Heriades truncorum). Several of the yellow meadow ant (Lasius flavus) hills found on Mill Hill are thought to be 150-200 years old!"*

However, historically, across the common much of this habitat has been lost through urban development and succession to scrub and woodland. Acid grassland is a fragile ecosystem and too much human disturbance can destroy it altogether, as can increases in nitrates from pollution and nutrients from dog fouling.

**Barnes  
Common**

# Hundreds of families plant trees to celebrate opening of Richmond Park's new Petersham Playground

From The Royal Parks

The Royal Parks charity welcomed hundreds of local families to plant trees to celebrate the opening of the renewed, nature-friendly Petersham Playground in Richmond Park, on Saturday, 12 April, 2025.

The charity, which manages London's eight Royal Parks including Richmond Park, held a day filled with fun activities, led by the charity's Help Nature Thrive conservation team and joined by the Friends of Richmond Park. Activities included nature-inspired crafts and games, and visitors were invited to plant hundreds of saplings for a new wildlife-friendly hedgerow.



The newly-renovated playground has been created to inspire children to connect with nature through wildlife-friendly features such as sculptures, bird boxes and bug hotels and by using natural materials for the new playground equipment.

It is set within a beautiful landscape, with new wildlife planting schemes based on species found in the park, which include native hedgerows, trees, shrubs and flowering plants, so that children can play alongside butterflies and birdsong. Better pathways and new seating improve accessibility.

The new playground's planting and sculptures, as well as the planting day activities have been made possible thanks to funds raised by players of People's Postcode Lottery.

Charlotte Cass, Help Nature Thrive Project Manager, said: *"It was fantastic to see hundreds of families come together to celebrate the re-opening of Petersham Playground and enjoy planting saplings together. Not only has the day been enormous fun for everyone, but it also helped children and young people connect with nature and understand the importance of protecting it - educating future generations while leaving a lasting legacy in this precious National Nature Reserve."*

The playground was designed by The Royal Parks' landscape team and was constructed by Blakedown Landscapes.

Paul Richards, Park Manager, Richmond Park, said: *"The sun was shining throughout this joyful community event to mark the opening of the new playground, which saw people of all ages creating connections with Richmond Park's unique natural heritage. This new facility will encourage thousands and thousands of children to explore the outdoors, develop new skills, and enjoy the many benefits of play – from boosting mental and physical wellbeing, to building friendships and confidence in a safe, inspiring environment, for many years to come."*



# Red Roses Team to Play Scotland

Jade Shekells will earn her first Red Roses start on Saturday as John Mitchell makes nine changes to his side to face Scotland at Mattioli Woods Welford Road.

The Gloucester-Hartpury back debuted for England in the opening round win of the Guinness Women's Six Nations against Italy and will partner fellow Olympian Megan Jones in the centre.

Lucy Packer and Holly Aitchison line-up in the half-back positions with Claudia MacDonald joining Abby Dow and Ellie Kildunne in the back three.

Props Kelsey Clifford and Sarah Bern are promoted from the bench with Lark Atkin-Davies remaining at hooker. Second row Rosie Galligan also starts, linking up with Abbie Ward.

Vice-captain Marlie Packer returns in the seven jersey and Maddie Feaunati is back at Number 8. Captain Zoe Aldcroft retains her place at blindside flanker.

## Red Roses team to play Scotland

- 15 Ellie Kildunne (Harlequins, 51 caps)
- 14 Abby Dow (Trailfinders Women, 50 caps)
- 13 Megan Jones (Leicester Tigers, 23 caps)
- 12 Jade Shekells (Gloucester-Hartpury, 1 cap)
- 11 Claudia MacDonald (Exeter Chiefs, 33 caps)
- 10 Holly Aitchison (Bristol Bears, 38 caps)
- 9 Lucy Packer (Harlequins, 29 caps)
- 1 Kelsey Clifford (Saracens, 12 caps)
- 2 Lark Atkin-Davies (Bristol Bears, 64 caps)
- 3 Sarah Bern (Bristol Bears, 69 caps)
- 4 Rosie Galligan (Saracens, 22 caps)
- 5 Abbie Ward (Bristol Bears, 72 caps)
- 6 Zoe Aldcroft (Gloucester-Hartpury, 61 caps) - captain
- 7 Marlie Packer (Saracens, 109 caps)
- 8 Maddie Feaunati (Exeter Chiefs, 13 caps)

## Replacements

- 16 May Campbell (Saracens, 2 caps)
- 17 Hannah Botterman (Bristol Bears, 54 caps)
- 18 Maud Muir (Gloucester-Hartpury, 38 caps)
- 19 Morwenna Talling (Sale Sharks, 20 caps)
- 20 Alex Matthews (Gloucester-Hartpury, 73 caps)
- 21 Natasha Hunt (Gloucester-Hartpury, 78 caps)
- 22 Helena Rowland (Loughborough Lightning, 37 caps)
- 23 Emily Scarratt (Loughborough Lightning, 117 caps)





# Match Preview: Brentford v Brighton

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 Brighton and Hove Albion at Gtech Community Stadium on Saturday (3pm kick-off GMT)

The Premier League run-in resumes on Saturday as Brentford take on Brighton and Hove Albion at Gtech Community Stadium (3pm kick-off GMT).

With six games of the season left to play, the Bees and the Seagulls are separated by five points in 11th and 10th respectively.

Yoane Wissa's 15th goal of the campaign [earned the west Londoners a point at Arsenal last weekend](#), while Brighton drew 2-2 with Leicester City at the Amex.

Analysis, team news, match officials and more. Here's everything you need to know ahead of a big game in west London.

## Pre-match Analysis

Richard Cole, Playmaker Stats: The key battles in Saturday's clash at the Gtech

Brentford welcome Brighton and Hove Albion to the Gtech with the Seagulls on a five-match winless streak.

Fabian Hürzeler's team have blown hot and cold this season having previously gone eight matches without a victory from late November until early January – [a run that included a goalless draw with the Bees at the Amex Stadium](#).

The Seagulls then followed that with nine wins in their next 11 games before their current form that sees them without a win in just over a month.

In Brighton's defence, they have been suffering from injuries this season with star winger Kaoru Mitoma also a doubt for the weekend's clash after missing the 2-2 draw with Leicester City.

The Japanese international would be a loss for the visitors. Mitoma ranks second in the Premier League and fourth in the top five European leagues with 135 progressive carries so far this season behind only Jeremy Doku, Lamine Yamal and Vinicius Junior. He is also in the top 10 in the league for carries into the penalty area.

Should he feature, Mitoma will be Brighton's most likely outlet of attack, and his team-mates are often trying to find him – only two players having received more progressive passes (274), Mohamed Salah and Bryan Mbeumo.

Meanwhile, Brighton's total tally of 292 successful take-ons in the league (ranking them third) is in part thanks to Mitoma's famous dribbling skills.

One player who will be back for Hürzeler is Jan Paul van Hecke. The Dutchman was sent off in Brighton's 2-1 defeat to Crystal Palace earlier this month and served his suspension in the game against the Foxes.



Van Hecke ranks fifth in the league for passes into the final third (188) and sixth for progressive passes overall (199), so is a key part of Brighton's build from the back.

The Bees backline will be ready to defend crosses from Pervis Estupiñán who ranks joint sixth in the league for crosses with 18.

The Brentford defenders also need to be wary of Brighton's press with the Seagulls one of only three teams to have made 100 tackles or more in the attacking third (100 exactly). Although this works both ways with Brentford and Arsenal leading that stat with 102 tackles in the offensive third.

At the other end of the pitch, Brentford's forwards may be interested to know that while Brighton have had just 120 shots on target against them (only Man City, Liverpool and Arsenal have faced fewer), they have suffered 49 goals with only the bottom three, West Ham and Wolves conceding more. So, should the Bees get their shots on target, there's a good chance they'll be converted.

It is likely to be a close-fought tie in west London, of the past five meetings between the two teams, both sides have won once with the other three ending in draws.

### Scout Report

Dan Long, *Sky Sports*: Brighton on track for a third top-half finish in four seasons

Brighton had great trouble holding on to leads during the first half of the season.

They took the lead in 11 of their first 19 Premier League games, but only went on to win four of those.

As a result, they were 10th at Christmas, but they really could have been challenging higher up, particularly given the absence of the pressure and increased load brought by European participation, as the Seagulls found out in 2023/24.

Had things panned out differently, Nottingham Forest might well have had company as the season's greatest surprise package.

On several occasions - [including after the goalless draw against Brentford at the Gtech the day after Boxing Day](#) - Fabian Hürzeler insisted his side "*deserved so much more.*" Then the rewards started to come at the start of 2025.

Following a 1-1 draw with Arsenal on 4 January, up to and including the 2-1 win over Fulham on 8 March, Brighton won nine of their 11 games in all competitions.

One of the two defeats in that run was a 7-0 reverse at the hands of Forest, and their record Premier League loss. It was damaging in that sense but, in the grand scheme of things, a minor mishap in an otherwise sparkling run of form.

Hürzeler's side had climbed to seventh by the time of the March international break, just two points behind Chelsea in fourth. They beat Newcastle to reach the quarter-final of the FA Cup, too, doing so for the third time across the last seven campaigns.

It has now been over a month since their last win, though. Forest dumped them out of the cup on penalties, following 0-0 draw after extra-time, and a run of six wins in eight in the league has made way for two points from the last 12 on offer.

Only Everton (14) have drawn more times this season than Brighton, who are level with Arsenal in second place on the list with 12.

The latest, against Leicester last weekend, brought boos from a section of supporters. It's easy to forget how

quickly expectations have risen at the club in recent years.

Still, it seems a drastic reaction when you consider what is still possible for Brighton in what remains of 2024/25.

The gap to the top six may have grown to six points, but there is still a five-point cushion between the Seagulls and the bottom half. The Opta Analyst is currently predicting a ninth-place finish; a third top-half finish in four seasons is not to be sniffed at.

European qualification is still very much on the cards, too, particularly given as many as 11 Premier League teams could well be playing in Europe next term.

Brighton have already scored 51 goals, which is their third-best Premier League return and, with six games still to play, they are one win away from 13, which would represent their second-best return.

They have only lost eight games to date, too, with their current record low the 11 losses in 2021/22.

And while it seems somewhat unlikely, a return of 15 points from the final 18 on offer would secure a record points tally of 63.

Regardless, Brighton have learned valuable lessons to take with them into next season – still just their ninth ever in the Premier League.

### **In the Dugout**

Fabian Hürzeler

Born in February 1993, during the time his Swiss father and German mother were working in the USA, Fabian Hürzeler started out as part of Bayern Munich's youth system after returning to Europe aged two.

He spent the best part of a decade with Die Roten, working his way up to play for Bayern Munich II, while also representing the German national team at U15, U16, U17 and U19 levels.

Hürzeler moved on in 2013, first to Hoffenheim II, then to 1860 Munich II a year later, before dropping to the fifth tier of German football with Pipinsried, where he combined playing with the role of head coach, while also working as assistant manager of Germany U18s and U20s.

His coaching credentials were clear from the start, as Pipinsried won promotion from the Bayernliga Süd in his first season.

After four years, he left the club in the summer of 2020 and was appointed assistant at St Pauli.

Two-and-a-half years later - aged just 29 - he became head coach after the departure of Timo Schultz, four months before he was granted his UEFA Pro Licence, and led the club to a fifth-place finish in 2 Bundesliga in 2022/23.

Hürzeler's side flourished in 2023/24, though, and went unbeaten in their first 20 games of the season, on the way to pipping Holstein Kiel to the title by a single point to secure a return to the Bundesliga after 13 years away.

Just three months after signing a new contract at St Pauli, Hürzeler took over from Roberto De Zerbi at Brighton, becoming the youngest permanent manager in Premier League history at the age of 31 in June 2024.



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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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