

# Twickenham & Richmond Tribune



Heron visits Strawberry Hill House  
Photo by Berkley Driscoll

2<sup>nd</sup> May 2025

T&RT



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Editors: Berkley Driscoll, Teresa Read

# TickerTape - News in Brief

## South Western Railway

Altered train services due to Rugby at **Twickenham Saturday 3 May**

### London Waterloo – Shepperton

- Between 0911 and 2211, all **Shepperton to London Waterloo** services are diverted via **Twickenham**.
- Between 1012 and 2312, all **London Waterloo to Shepperton** services are diverted via **Twickenham**.

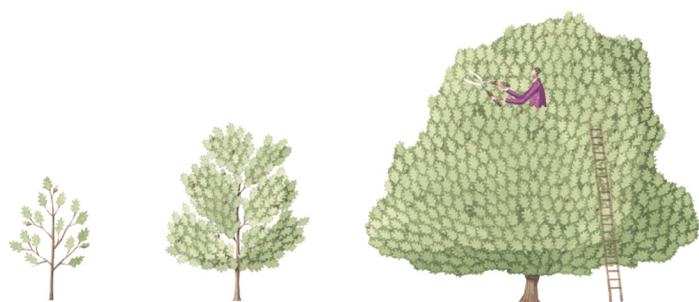
### London Waterloo – Reading

- Services will depart **earlier** from **Reading** through most of the day (at xx:05 and xx:35).
- Trains departing **Reading** between 1500 and 2200 will call additionally at **Putney** and **Vauxhall**.
- Services will also run **later** from **Richmond to Reading** before the match.

Altered train services and buses replace trains in the **Teddington** area **Sunday 4 May**

The lines in the **Teddington** area will be **closed all day** due to maintenance work.

- **London Waterloo to Shepperton** services will be diverted after **New Malden** and will terminate at **Hampton Court**, calling additionally at **Surbiton**.
- **Buses** will run between **New Malden and Shepperton via Kingston**.
- **London Waterloo to London Waterloo via Wimbledon and Kingston** services will be diverted after **New Malden** and will terminate at **Hampton Court**, calling additionally at **Surbiton**.
- **Buses** will run between **New Malden and Twickenham via Kingston**.
- The afternoon and evening **London Waterloo to Kingston via Hounslow** services will terminate at **Hounslow**.
- Some **London Waterloo to Windsor** services will be retimed to leave **London Waterloo earlier** and will make additional stops between **London Waterloo and Twickenham**.



The Tree Agency

darryl parkin

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*The Tree Agency*

# The Local Picture Postcard Page - Part 299

## The Railway Tavern - Mortlake

By Alan Winter

Facing Mortlake Park / Green throughout its life as a pub, The Railway Tavern sat in Sheen Lane SW14 until its closure in 2011.

The park was formerly known as Kings Arm Field and the site was given to the residents of Mortlake by Earl Spencer in 1860 for their use and enjoyment as a recreation ground.

Mortlake locals drunk in this location for about 175 years until the pub's closure in 2011.

The pub is thought to have formerly been a private dwelling built circa 1800. After the railway station at Mortlake was opened in 1846, the premises were opened as The Railway Tavern beer house close by at the intersection of Sheen Lane and Vineyard Path.

It was run by a man named Wheatley who was apparently a great handbell ringer. Sadly, soon after opening the beer house, he was accidentally drowned in the river near 'The Queens Head', Mortlake. Exactly when Elizabeth Robinson aged 50 and her sister then took over the pub is not known, but the census shows that they were there in March 1851. Elizabeth was listed as a Beer house Keeper, born in Church Stretton, Shropshire. Ten years later the 1861 census still records her as a "Beer house Keeper" at the tavern



The census returns and trade directories consistently describe Elizabeth as a "beer house keeper" or "beer retailer", never a "publican" or "innkeeper". It seems therefore that the Railway Tavern was a beer house rather than a full-blown public house or inn. Beer houses were



established by the Beer house Act, 1830, which was passed in an attempt to counteract widespread drunkenness through gin consumption - it also led to the rise of the Temperance Society which campaigned for closure of the 'gin shops'.

A beer house could sell beer, ale, porter, cider or perry, but was not permitted to sell spirits or fortified wines. For a small fee of 2 guineas payable to the local excise officer, any householder who paid rates could set up a beer house, usually in their own home.



The Railway Tavern continued as a public house throughout the remainder of the 19<sup>th</sup> century and the whole of the 20<sup>th</sup> century with various owners and landlords. Postcard 1. shows the view before demolition of the neighbouring properties to

the left of the tavern as it faces the green. Our second photograph this week shows that the pub had taken over the space for outside seating once the property next door was demolished.

In 2011 the pub was put up for sale with a Freehold price of £495,000 plus VAT and like the adjacent properties from 13 to 21 Sheen Lane, the tavern was then converted into residential flats and office space.

Some of the content of today's column has been taken from a website called **South West & West London the Bygone Years**

and was written by **Alan Bissell** who I thank very much.

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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[crusadertravel.com](http://crusadertravel.com)

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# Last Chance to Object: Council's Plan to Hand Over Pensford Field

By James Knight

A small public notice buried in last week's local press has lit the touchpaper on one of the borough's most controversial decisions in years – the proposed disposal of Pensford Field, a long-cherished green space in Kew, to a private charity under a ten-year lease.

The notice, published on 24 April in the *Richmond and Twickenham Times*, reveals the Council's intention to lease the site to Dose of Nature, a mental health charity. It invites objections by 22 May under Section 123 of the Local Government Act – a legal requirement for disposing of open space. But many local residents believe the process is a mere formality.



Campaigners say the public is being misled into thinking the field will remain open. The Pensford Field Environmental Trust (PFET), which has managed the land for more than 30 years, says the proposal would remove the legal protections that guarantee access. In an open letter to supporters, Chair Sarah Atkins warned: “...*This is your last chance to influence the Council so please act now.*”

Atkins argues that the plan would strip the field of its statutory status. “*This statutory obligation, which is currently in place, will be lost altogether and replaced by contractual obligations in the new lease,*” she wrote. “*Even if it did [include access], the terms*

*could change at any time, may not be enforced by this Council (or any successors following elections in May 26) and the public will have no direct rights to hold the Council to deliver its promises.*”

The Council has previously stated in public meetings that the decision had already been made. Critics now ask how the Council can assess objections with a genuinely open mind. “*The Council has already made up its mind – this has been made clear by the Leader at various Council meetings from October 2024 to March 2025,*” Atkins said.

There are also questions over transparency. When PFET requested details of early decision-making under Freedom of Information rules, the Council refused, citing the need for a “safe space” while lease negotiations continued. “*The Council cannot rely on safe space arguments when it has consistently portrayed the decision as a fait accompli at every Council meeting between 1 October 2024 and 4 March 2025,*” said the Trust.

The fallout has spread beyond the field itself. According to PFET, “*the Council’s reputation in Kew has, in the words of Sarah Olney, Lib Dem MP for Richmond Park, ‘been severely damaged by this debacle.’*”

The final decision is set to be made at a meeting of the Finance, Policy and Resources Committee on 24 June. But residents and campaigners are clear: the damage to public trust in the council may already be done.

You can find out more on the Pensford Field Environmental Trust website [HERE](#)



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# Ordinary people, extraordinary impact: Richmond's community heroes honoured

From Richmond Council

From saving surplus food to fight hunger, to protecting green spaces and helping to uplift the most vulnerable among us – some of Richmond upon Thames' most inspiring grassroots initiatives were celebrated last night at the 2025 Community Heroes Awards.

The annual event, organised by Richmond Council, shines a spotlight on the individuals, groups, organisations and businesses whose tireless efforts make the borough a more compassionate, inclusive and sustainable place to live.

Councillor Nancy Baldwin, Richmond Council's Spokesperson for Communities, Equalities and the Voluntary Sector, praised the finalists and winners, highlighting the extraordinary breadth of grassroots action locally.

*"At the heart of Richmond upon Thames is a powerful spirit of kindness, generosity and connection. Our Community Heroes remind us that lasting change often begins with small, consistent acts of care – whether it's a volunteer offering a friendly lift or someone standing alongside a neighbour through hardship.*

*"These humble members of our community dedicate their time and talents to tackling inequality, championing inclusion, protecting the environment and building strong, resilient communities."*

With more than 150 nominations across 10 categories, the awards showcased powerful stories of compassion, innovation and leadership from every corner of the borough.

This year's winners are:

- **WR-AP (Business Contribution in the Community)** – for championing environmental conservation in Petersham Common and Ham Lands, protecting biodiversity and connecting residents to nature.
- **Cocoon - Care After Care (Communities Together)** – for providing much-needed emotional and practical support to care-experienced young adults.
- **Richmond Soup Kitchen (Community Group of the Year)** – for creating an inclusive, volunteer-led service offering food and companionship to those in need.
- **Vine Road Community Growing Project (Community Project of the Year)** – for tackling food insecurity and isolation through community gardening and wellbeing activities.
- **Jamie Toma (Community Spirit Award)** – for founding a self-funded playgroup providing an essential support network for struggling families.
- **Surplus to Supper (Environmental Award)** – for rescuing surplus food and transforming it into thousands of meals while tackling food waste.



**Sue Garner (Lifetime Achievement Award)** – for decades of dedicated support to carers of people with mental health challenges.

- **Wendy Salmon (Posthumous Lifetime Achievement Award)** – for her enduring impact through the co-founding of local charities supporting children and families in Hampton.
- **Shane Forrester (Outstanding Volunteer Award)** – for using his lived experience to offer practical and emotional support to rough sleepers with homelessness charity SPEAR.
- **Kate McCormack (Trustee of the Year)** – for transformative leadership at the Cambrian Community Centre, strengthening local services.
- **Eliza Downes (Young Person Achievement Award)** – for her empathy and dedication supporting young people with additional needs through Riding for the Disabled sessions at the Horse Rangers Association.

The ceremony also featured a special Leader's Award, presented by Council Leader Councillor Gareth Roberts, recognising the invaluable contributions of local foster carers.

Sue Richards was honoured for dedicating more than 20 years to fostering, providing care, love and stability to some of the borough's most vulnerable children.

Councillor Baldwin added: *"These awards are our opportunity to say thank you. Our nominees may not seek the spotlight, but their impact is deeply felt and truly inspiring. They make Richmond upon Thames not just a place to live, but a place to belong."*



You can [find out more about becoming a foster carer on the Achieving for Children website](#).

Learn more about [this year's Community Heroes Awards and explore the inspiring stories behind our shortlisted nominees](#).



Dear Tribune,

## Another Survey?

I see that Richmond Council is conducting yet another so-called survey, this time about transport:

[www.youtube.com/watch?v=8CrTVwt9RMU](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8CrTVwt9RMU)

Readers may remember my Tribune letter on 8 December 2023 about our Council spending (wasting?) £45,000 of OUR money on a previous survey for '*ways to improve Richmond*'.

And let's hope the present survey is better than their so-called consultation in 2021 for the Twickenham Riverside development about which Cllr Gareth Roberts, Leader of Richmond Council, was reported as saying:

*"Local residents like this scheme and they want to see it delivered. If the Tories think their path back to power in Twickenham will be by opposing public investment in this key site to create a beautiful riverside destination, and in doing so block **the first scheme ever that has had broad public support**, then they will find themselves losing at the next and subsequent local elections, and deservedly so."*

That was in spite of the fact that the '*broad public support*' he quoted was actually only 0.3% of Richmond's population, even less than in their Ultra Low Emission Zone survey (19%) or the 20mph speed limit survey (5%).

None of the councillors featured in the above video should be asking what we need, because they should already know what we need, namely, reliable trains, reliable buses, better roads, and less interference in people's lives. And less bikes illegally on footways putting us all in constant danger of injury and assault.

Obvious, really. But obviously not obvious to them.

I am also wondering why the Council has chosen VE Day 80 for their public meeting at York House in which we are all invited to discuss its '*New Transport Strategy*'.

Perhaps they are hoping that the World War II veterans who gave their all for this country will be unable to turn up and take them to task for all the increased tax misery inflicted on them by our caring councils and government.

Why did they bother?

Michael Jay  
Hampton.

Dear Tribune,

**VE80 Thursday 8th April 2025**

I see from Richmond Council's latest bit of virtue-signalling that we are all invited to York House on Thursday to '*help shape Richmond upon Thames' new Transport Strategy*' - the outcome of which is, of course, pre-determined.

[www.youtube.com/watch?v=8CrTVwt9RMU](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8CrTVwt9RMU)

This campaign has been on-going for some weeks but we all know that asking us what we think is a massive waste of time because, whatever we say, they will not take a blind bit of notice and go their own sweet way.

However, the point of this rant is to ask who made the disgraceful decision to choose one of the most important dates of the year to expect us to turn up at York House. Maybe they don't know what this day is actually for?

Presumably this is Cllr Ehmann showing his 'caring' side, at a time when most of us can only think of the real sacrifices made 80 years ago by what's left of our veterans and our chance to thank them for fighting and dying so that councils and politicians can increase our taxes at will to ensure they have a miserable and poor old age.

Victory for Ehmann? - I don't think so.....

Name and address supplied.

## Next week at Richmond Council

On Thursday morning, the **Licensing Sub-Committee** will convene to discuss granting a late-night refreshment licence to Popeyes restaurant on the Quadrant, Richmond. The Richmond Society and The Friends of Richmond Green oppose the application. The online meeting will begin at 10:30 a.m.

For details, click [HERE](#)

On Thursday evening, the **Policy & Performance Review Board** will meet to discuss: (1) voter ID, (2) vehicle crossover review (3) weed control trail. The meeting will commence at 7 pm, York House, Twickenham.

For details, click [HERE](#)

For guidance on how to participate at different types of council meetings, such as speaking or asking written or verbal questions, please click [HERE](#)






Come & join the adventure

# FAERY TRAILS

at Strawberry Hill House &  
Garden



Two enchanting Faery Trails are taking shape, one in our enchanted garden and one in the house. Join the adventure this summer to discover hidden faery doors & find faeries tucked away in the house.

24 May - 7 September



# Council Ambitions vs. Public Reality

By James Knight

Richmond Council's **Finance, Policy and Resources Committee** met on Monday. Among the most pressing issues discussed are: a multi-million-pound overhaul of the Civic Centre in Twickenham, a new violence against women and girls (VAWG) strategy, and the rollout of permanent CCTV monitoring. Each policy, in isolation, is laudable; however, taken together, they paint a picture of a local authority increasingly absorbed in top-down transformation projects while the public reports that council services are declining across the board.

## Multi-Million Pound Refurbishment of Civic Centre

The flagship Civic Centre redevelopment was presented as a win-win: an energy-efficient building, better use of public assets, and a more “modern” approach to work. However, beneath the architectural visuals and low-carbon rhetoric lies a more disruptive agenda – namely, a drastic shift to remote working and hotdesking, justified as cost-saving modernisation but increasingly perceived as a root cause of declining service quality.

The project's costs have now escalated past £17 million, with £1.18 million allocated for “consolidation” – a vague term that, when pressed, officers explained includes new furniture and a lift for the annex at York House. This is intended to accommodate staff relocating from the 91 Queens Road office, which is being vacated as part of the council's long-term estate reduction plan. However, there are concerns that Richmond Council is accumulating large amounts of debt, raising questions about the value for money and the return from the project.

What has not been openly discussed is the real consequence of this “rationalisation.” The Civic Centre redesign is based on an eyebrow-raising 3:10 desk ratio – just three desks for every ten staff – and an office density of 8 square metres per person.

While the private sector may thrive on agile working, local government depends on proximity, collaboration, and human contact. From adult social care to housing enforcement, service delivery often suffers when teams are dispersed and staff are assigned desk spaces like hotel rooms. Insiders have reported fragmented teams, reduced supervision, and an erosion of institutional knowledge – all by-products of a model prioritising estate efficiency over public service.

## Liberal Democrat Identity Politics Undermines Violence Against Women & Girls Strategy

Members of both the Liberal Democrats and the Green Party welcomed the updated strategy on violence against women and girls. However, Richmond's decision to adopt a definition of “woman” that explicitly includes trans women reveals a deeper ideological tilt – one that prioritises gender identity politics over the protection of sex-based rights.

Instead of adopting a balanced approach to the issue, the Liberal Democrat-led administration has aligned itself with the most radical edge of the debate, disregarding the concerns of women who believe their rights, safety, and privacy are being compromised.

Richmond's new definition contradicts recent legal clarity. In *For Women Scotland v Scottish*



Ministers, the Court of Session reaffirmed that under the Equality Act 2010, “sex” refers to biological sex – a ruling which has significant implications for policy around prisons, refuges, and data collection across the UK. Yet rather than pause for reflection, the Council has charged ahead, apparently more concerned with activist approval than legal or biological realities.

The result is a policy that, although dressed in the language of inclusion, risks alienating the very women it purports to protect.

### **CCTV Expansion: Restoring What Was Lost**

On the matter of CCTV, the Council agreed to make permanent a previously piloted scheme of active monitoring. In isolation, this would be uncontroversial. However, what remains largely unacknowledged is the extent to which Richmond’s public surveillance infrastructure has been allowed to wither under Liberal Democrat oversight.

For years, staffing was reduced, and capital investment in monitoring capabilities was postponed. Today, the Council claims that both Twickenham and Richmond town centres are “well covered,” yet the reality is more nuanced. Much of the existing infrastructure consists of traffic enforcement cameras, which are not designed for real-time public safety monitoring; the result is a patchwork network with substantial blind spots.

### **A Council of Intentions, or One Losing Its Bearings?**

Taken together, these three headline issues suggest a local authority that talks a great deal about transformation, but struggles with execution and relevance. Environmental retrofits, inclusive definitions, and CCTV monitoring may satisfy internal targets and activist checklists. But none of them address the quiet frustrations building up among local residents: that they are paying more for less.

## **Dive into nature and ecology this summer**

From Barnes Common

From Wednesday 11 June, local charity Barnes Common Limited is hosting an exciting line-up of walks, talks and workshops on resilience.

Resilience refers to the ability of environments and communities to react to change in a way that enables them to continue thriving. How we create flourishing and resilient environments and communities is a pertinent question for our times.

This series of walks, talks and workshops encourages us to consider this question by looking at nature and food growing in new and unique ways. Roy Vickery encourages us to re-think the uses of plants we dismiss as weeds. Tanya Moulding shows us how to make botanical

scents, Connor Butler uses the lens of queer ecology to challenge what we think of as ‘natural’ while poet Edward Adonteng considers the spirituality of gardens. Stay tuned for more exciting activities!

Visit Barnes Common Limited’s website to [view the full event series and book your tickets](#).



# Join the fun at Richmond May Fair and celebrate our community

From Richmond May Fair

With more than 250 stallholders already signed up, the much-loved Richmond May Fair will take place on Saturday 10 May between 10am and 5pm on Richmond Green. It will be opened by the Mayor of Richmond.

At the fair, [Richmond in Europe Association](#) will kick off their celebrations and mark 65 years of Richmond being in partnership with Fontainebleau (France) and Konstanz (Germany). A wide range of commemorative events including receptions, parades and concerts are planned for the Twinning Reaffirmation Weekend from 6 to 8 June. Some activities have already started, with more events continuing throughout the summer. You can [view the full event programme](#).

Old favourites like the vintage funfair and dog show will 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.



Pamela Fleming, Chair of the Richmond May Fair Committee and [recently recognised at the Community Heroes Awards 2024/25](#) for her dedicated work on the fair, 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!”



# News from Holy Trinity, Twickenham

## Gardening Socials

Come and be part of the Holy Trinity gardening gang during their upcoming meets this term. Gardening mornings will be running from 10.30am-12.30pm on the following Saturdays (please bring along gloves and tools if you have them):

Saturday 17 May / Saturday 28 June

## Rotary May Fair - Monday 26 May 2025

This year we will once again open our doors and welcome fair goers. It is a great opportunity to engage with the local community and also make some money at the same time. We are looking for volunteers to help prior to the event and on the day.

[You can click here to sign up to volunteer at the May Fair](#)



## 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



HOLY TRINITY TWICKENHAM

# Move If You Don't Like It

By Michael Jones

In the ongoing debate over Twickenham Stadium's future, a familiar refrain is often heard on social media: "If you don't like the disruption, don't live near a stadium." At first glance, it sounds like practical advice – brisk, tidy, and free of sentiment. But beneath the surface, this argument conceals a deeper problem: a failure to seriously consider the lived experience of local residents and a basic error in logic known as the sunk cost fallacy.

The reasoning goes like this: anyone who chooses to live near a major sports stadium must have known what they were signing up for. If they now object to matchday traffic, late-night noise, or fans spilling out of pubs, the solution seems simple – move elsewhere. But this binary framing presents a false dilemma, suggesting that residents must either accept all disruption without complaint or entirely uproot their lives.

The reality, as any policymaker or planning officer knows, is more nuanced. Communities evolve, expectations shift, and large venues increasingly seek to diversify their commercial offerings. In Twickenham, that means not just more rugby fixtures, but potentially more concerts and even – if reports are to be believed – the temporary hosting of Chelsea Football Club during its stadium redevelopment. This represents a profound change in character, not a minor variation on the familiar.

It is perfectly reasonable for residents to request that such expansion be carefully assessed and responsibly managed. This means introducing stricter licensing conditions, ensuring more effective traffic and crowd control, enforcing and preventing public urination with greater rigor, and exploring financial contributions from the stadium towards local services or infrastructure improvements.

The suggestion that residents should simply "move if they don't like it" also dismisses basic economics. Relocating in London often incurs tens of thousands of pounds in stamp duty, legal fees, and moving costs. For families with school commitments, elderly relatives, or local ties, this is not a viable solution – it's a dismissal dressed up as advice.

Moreover, many local residents have put down roots: they have invested not just in bricks and mortar, but in friendships, schools, voluntary roles, and community life. Their concerns are not petulant objections; they are legitimate responses to a changing environment. They deserve to be treated as such.

Some consequences of expanding the stadium's event calendar are more than a nuisance – they are serious quality-of-life issues. On match days, residential streets become congested, bins overflow, and drunken behaviour can spill over into the unacceptable – including, notoriously, public urination in gardens and alleyways. These are not problems to be waved away with glib remarks about location. They require management, investment, and genuine civic dialogue.

Recent reports that the RFU may consider relocating if not granted greater flexibility to host concerts have added pressure to the debate. But this should not become a game of municipal blackmail. Planning and licensing decisions must rely on evidence, public interest, and the long-term cohesion of the town, not threats or ultimatums.

I hope that the Licensing Sub-Committee, chaired by Councillor Lesley Pollesche, approaches this matter with the seriousness it warrants. This means conducting a thorough, transparent review of current impacts, consulting meaningfully with residents via a formal council consultation, and identifying practical ways to mitigate existing harms before considering further expansion.

Twickenham Stadium is a proud part of the town's heritage. But it does not exist in isolation. It sits within a community – and communities, unlike corporations, cannot simply be relocated.





HOLY TRINITY TWICKENHAM

# Can you help please?

The Rotary May Fair on Twickenham Green  
On Monday 26<sup>th</sup> May 2025 from 10am to 4pm

Holy Trinity will be open for refreshments, baguettes, cakes and, of course, toilets!

We need volunteers for any of the following activities:

- Bake / bring a cake
- Bake / bring a quiche
- Prepare baguette fillings the night before
- Prepare baguettes to order on the day
  - Lend outdoor tables / chairs
- Lend cake stands / plates / cake knives
  - Set up on the day from 9.30am
  - Welcoming / serving
- Clearing / tidying from 3.30pm

We have divided the day into 7 x 1 hour slots. On the day we are looking for volunteers to fill one, or maybe more slots. Whatever you can do to help is very much appreciated.

Scan the QR code to sign up, or visit <https://bit.ly/4hrZOV9>



# London Assembly Sounds Alarm

## Notting Hill Carnival Safety and Protest Strains

By James Knight

A London Assembly report has issued a stark warning over public safety at Notting Hill Carnival, calling for urgent measures to prevent what the Metropolitan Police fear could become a “mass casualty event.” The report, produced by the Assembly’s Police and Crime Committee under the chairmanship of Cllr Susan Hall AM, highlights critical concerns over crowd control at one of London’s most celebrated cultural fixtures. Its deputy chairman, Cllr Gareth Roberts AM, who also leads Richmond Council, lends the findings a distinctly local resonance for outer boroughs grappling with the knock-on effects of stretched policing.

Notting Hill Carnival is a vibrant hallmark of London’s Caribbean heritage, attracting close to two million attendees annually. Yet this scale brings formidable challenges. The Metropolitan Police Service (Met) recorded over 100 crowd-related incidents during the 2024 event, raising fears that inadequate stewarding and dangerous overcrowding could lead to disaster. On several occasions, officers were compelled to assume stewarding roles themselves—diverting them from policing duties and raising questions about the sustainability of the event in its current form.

However, the Carnival is only one facet of a broader and increasingly strained public order landscape. Since October 2023, the Met has contended with an extraordinary surge in protest activity—principally linked to Extinction Rebellion and now Palestinian solidarity movements over Gaza—requiring the redeployment of more than 51,000 officers under Operation Brocks. This process of “abstraction,” whereby local officers are withdrawn from their communities to police central London, has left boroughs such as Richmond notably exposed, with visible reductions in neighbourhood patrols and crime prevention capacity.

The report calls on the Government to address these pressures by increasing the National and International Capital Cities (NICC) grant, which supports the Met’s unique role in policing London. The grant, the committee argues, must be annually uprated to reflect inflation and the capital’s escalating public order demands.

Yet funding alone will not resolve the legal and operational tensions inherent in protest policing. Recent laws designed to curb disruptive protests—granting police greater powers to impose conditions and limit serious disruption—have ignited fierce debate. The Liberal Democrats, in concert with rights groups such as Liberty, have opposed these measures, arguing that they risk infringing on fundamental democratic freedoms. From their perspective, the ability to protest—even disruptively—is a vital mechanism for holding governments to account, particularly on existential issues like climate change.

Twickenham’s Liberal Democrat MP, Munira Wilson, has been among those resisting further restrictions on protest. Her husband, Cllr Michael Wilson, is a declared member of Liberty, which has spearheaded opposition to the government’s protest laws. The couple’s alignment with this position underscores the Liberal Democrats’ broader stance: protecting civil liberties even at the expense of operational flexibility for police.

But herein lies a political tension. Local Liberal Democrat leaders, including Cllr Roberts, have been vocal in criticising police abstractions and their impact on neighbourhood policing in areas like Richmond. Yet they continue to oppose the very legislative tools designed to reduce the scale and frequency of the disruptive protests that necessitate these abstractions in the first place.

The London Assembly’s cross-party report strikes a measured balance, recognising the imperative to protect both public safety and the right to protest. However, the Liberal Democrats’ position remains equivocal. If they are serious about safeguarding community policing in boroughs like Richmond, they must reconcile their defence of civil liberties with the practical realities of maintaining order in a city increasingly shaped by protest. Londoners deserve both: the right to peaceful dissent and the reassurance of well-resourced, effective policing and for protests not to be unduly disruptive. The challenge for politicians is to stop pretending these priorities are mutually exclusive.

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





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[interservicerugbychampionship.co.uk](https://interservicerugbychampionship.co.uk)



## Festival Fun Is on Its Way!

With the weather improving now, and the summer vibes are in abundance. Festival fun is on the horizon, so here are a few worth saving the dates for...

### Feel Good Festival (16-18 May) Hampton Court Palace

New for 2025, the Hampton Court Palace Feel Good Festival is a celebration of joy, bringing together the mind, body and soul for one weekend within the gardens and grounds of one of the UK's historic royal palaces. Today, more than ever, people want to do what makes them feel good, search for that spark of joy, a calming moment to retreat, or a new mindset to conquer life's challenges. Through hands-on workshops, guided practices, drop-in clinics with leaders in their fields - and of course food, drink and shopping - it plans to ditch the dull and help you feel the best version of yourself. For more info and tickets: [Feel Good Festival | What's On](#)



### Foodies Festival (24-26 May) Syon Park

The UK's biggest touring celebrity food and music festival series returns to Syon Park London with a high profile line-up and new features! It will be serving up a star-studded line-up of celebrity and award-winning chefs, and chart-topping music stars. Known as 'Gastro-Glastonbury', this three-day event will feature live cooking demonstrations from TV celebrities and chefs drawn from the ranks of MasterChef, Great British Bake Off and Great British Menu, plus many of the region's



most-highly acclaimed Michelin and award-winning chefs. Celebrity chef and television personality **Atul Kochhar**, Great British Menu 2024 banquet winner **Ben Palmer**, MasterChef champions **Thomas Frake** and **Dhruv Baker** and finalist **Anurag Aggarwal**, MasterChef: The Professionals champion **Alex Webb** and 2024 stars to name just a few. Music headliners include: **Scouting For Girls**, **The Wanted 2.0** with founding members **Max George** and **Siva Kaneswaren** and **Pixie Lott**. More info and tickets available on the link [here](#), and you can use the code **OFFER30** for 30% off tickets

### Pub in the Park (30 May - 1 June) Gunnersbury Park

This festival, curated by Tom Kerridge, has moved venues this year, but still has a great line up. Michelin-starred chefs, award-winning restaurants, and the hot new talent leading the charge in pub cuisine join **The Butchers Tap & Grill**, **The Grazing Goat**, **The Tamil Prince**, **The Bull & Last** and **Duck & Rice**. The opening night on Friday will





see the Battle of BritPop with Blur2 and Noasis, plus Chris Moyles is bringing his 90s Hangover DJ Set. Pub in the Park is a tribute to the best of the Great British Pub, where delicious food, fantastic drinks, and unforgettable live music come together for guests to experience the ultimate cutting-edge of gastropub cuisine. Delicious gourmet food and drink experiences will be available across all four festivals (other venues are **Marlow** (15-18/5) **Reigate** (11-13/6) and **St Albans** (5-7/9). These include **Fire Pit Masterclasses**, exclusive **Q&A's** from the chefs, demonstrations in **The Miele Kitchen Studio**, independent producers plus much more. Delicious drinks will be on offer across the festival including English winemaker **Chapel Down** as the sparkling wine sponsor. [www.pubintheparkuk.com](http://www.pubintheparkuk.com)

### **Taste of London (18-22 June) Regent's Park**

This year's event introduces brand new restaurants alongside returning favourites, special masterclasses, cooking demos, markets, bars and more. There are some great new additions for 2025. Appearing for the first time are Pan-Pacific fusion **Los Mochis** and **Akira Back** at **The Mandarin Oriental** and from The Shard, Asian restaurant **TĪNG**. There's also the return of some of Taste of London's much-loved restaurants. There will be premium cuts of meat from **Le Petit Beefbar**, grills from The Shard restaurant **Oblix** and the return of Harrods' Chinese restaurant **Chai Wu** and one of London's favourite robatayaki restaurants, **Roka**. Bringing back a host of masterclasses and interactive experiences, guests can also watch world-class chefs in action, enjoy hands-on cooking experiences, and sharpen their skills at live demos. All this, set to the ultimate summer soundtrack with DJs, live entertainment, and unbeatable festival vibes. Advance tickets are now available. Visit [tasteoflondon.com](http://tasteoflondon.com) to secure your ticket. Plus, sign up for Taste of London's newsletter to be the first to hear about the newest additions on restaurant partners and exclusive offers.



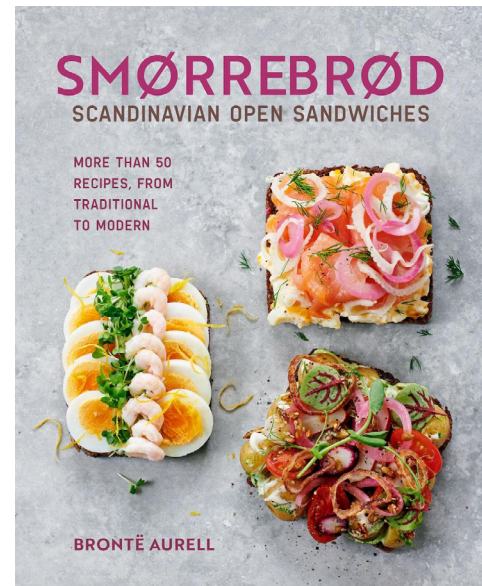
### **Marzamemi (5-6 July) Old Deer Park, Richmond**

Coming to Richmond this year after its debut last year at Syon, Marzamemi is a celebration of Italian delights. With iconic pasta dishes by **Pasta Evangelists**, calamari & octopus salads by **Cotto Festivals**, freshly shucked oysters by **The Oyster Society**, pizza by **Napoli on the Road**, deep fried Crescentine by **Indegno** and arancini by **Arancino of Sicily**. Plus granita and Gelato by **Sicilian Pride**, mouth-watering pasta by **Crazy For Pasta**, authentic Italian coffee and sweet treats, including Sicilian cannoli and cassatine, by **Etna Coffee** and many more. Bringing a taste of the Amalfi Coast to Marzamemi, **Malfy Gin** cocktails, including Limoncello Spritz, Gin & Tonics and Negroni Bianco's. Marzamemi's founder **Emily Ceraudo** says "I am so proud to bring Marzamemi to my home of Richmond. The festival is a celebration of my Italian culture, and I'm excited to show my local community the beauty of the island through food, drink, fashion, music and more. I look forward to bringing a slice of Sicily to London for years to come." Ticket prices will begin at £24.50 per adult and £9.50 per child, with SUPER! VIP tickets starting from £49.50. For more information and to purchase tickets now visit [www.marzamemi.co.uk](http://www.marzamemi.co.uk).



## Smørrebrød – Scandinavian Open Sandwiches

I really love Scandi food, and I'm lucky enough to have a Swedish friend who's a fabulous cook, and has introduced us to lots of lovely Scandi dishes. I've also visited Helsinki at the height of crayfish season - something I'd thoroughly recommend. One of my favourite London haunts is **Scandi Kitchen**, a treasure trove of Scandi food tucked away in Fitzrovia. The same folk have this week opened another cafe and deli outlet in Victoria and I can't wait to visit it. And to cap it all, a fabulous cookbook was published last month by Ryland Peters & Small: **Smørrebrød by Brontë Aurell**. Brontë is the owner of Scandi Kitchen, and has 16 years experience of supplying the most amazing open sandwiches to customers, so she knows her Scandi food! At £16.99 for a hardback with lovely photos by Peter Cassidy, it has over 50 recipes for Scandinavian open sandwiches - from the traditional to modern.



The book uncovers the secret to making delicious open sandwiches and easily whipping up a light and healthy lunch or snack. It provides all you need to know to create amazing open sandwiches and it will inspire you to try new flavours at home. It also includes a brief history of Scandinavian open sandwiches and lots of invaluable hints and tips.

Perfectly timed for a long weekend, here are a few recipes to tempt you to buy a copy of the book.

### SOMMER KYLLING (SUMMER CHICKEN) MAKES 2

*“When asparagus is in season, this one is just the ticket. The basil works so well with both the creamy chicken and the asparagus.”*

- salted butter, for spreading
- 2 slices of dark rye bread, or 4 smaller slices
- 6–8 spears asparagus
- 4 tablespoons mayonnaise
- ½–1 teaspoon Dijon mustard, to taste
- 2 tablespoons chopped chives
- 3 tablespoons chopped basil
- 200 g cooked chicken, chopped (leftovers from the Sunday roast work great)
- 1 just-ripe avocado, halved and stoned
- a few salad leaves
- a few thin slices of cucumber
- 1–2 radishes, thinly sliced
- salt and freshly ground black pepper
- micro herbs, to garnish



1. Butter the bread and set aside.
2. Blanch the asparagus in boiling water for 2 minutes, then plunge into cold water to stop the cooking process.
3. Mix the mayonnaise, mustard, chives and basil together, then season with salt and pepper.
4. Set aside 2 whole asparagus spears, then cut the rest into bite-sized pieces and add to the dressing. Add the chicken and stir. Check the seasoning again.
5. Using a spoon, scoop out the avocado in whole pieces and slice each half thinly. Add half a sliced avocado to each piece of buttered bread, then add the salad leaves and top with the chicken mixture.
6. Arrange the cucumber and radish slices on top, then garnish with micro herbs

**TIP** The chicken mixture also works really well as a filling for closed sandwiches.



## **SPEKESKINKE MED FERSKEN (AIR-CURED HAM WITH PEACHES) MAKES 2**

*"In Norway, spekeskinke – similar to air-cured ham – is often served on open sandwiches, especially around 17th May, which is Norway's national day. I love pairing it with classics such as peaches or pears and bitter leaves. Any air-dried ham (such as Parma ham) is fine, so whatever you can get hold of will work. I love whipping the Brie and spreading it on – it goes nice and fluffy. However, if you can't be bothered, just add it in nice slices."*

- 1 x 200-g piece of Brie, chilled
- salted butter, for spreading
- 2 slices of crusty white bread, toasted if you like
- 1 peach, stoned and cut into 8 slices
- 6–8 walnuts halves, lightly crushed
- 1 teaspoon honey
- a few rocket leaves
- 6 slices air-dried ham
- salt and freshly ground black pepper
- pea shoots, to garnish

1. First, cut the rind off the Brie – it must be chilled when you do this, or it is impossible. Cut the Brie into pieces and then leave to come to room temperature. Whip it for 4–5 minutes with a whisk until it is nice and fluffy.
2. Butter the bread and set aside.
3. Griddle the peach slices on a ridged griddle pan, then set aside.
4. Toast the walnuts in the same hot pan until lightly toasted, then turn off the heat and add a dash of honey – just enough to coat. Season lightly.
5. Spread the whipped cheese on the buttered bread, then add some rocket leaves. Arrange the ham and peaches across the bread, then add the toasted honey walnuts. Season and garnish with pea shoots.



## **BLÅ OST MED FIGEN OG HONNING (BLUE CHEESE WITH FIGS & HONEY) MAKES 2**

*"Cheese on open sandwiches can sometimes look a bit boring, so I do like to jazz things up with some textures and garnish. One of the most popular combinations in Sweden at Christmas is to eat blue cheese on ginger biscuits (it is delicious) – so I've added some broken ginger biscuits as crunch here."*

- butter, for spreading
- 2 slices of rye bread, or 4 smaller slices
- 30 g walnut halves
- 1 teaspoon honey
- 100 g blue cheese of your choice (creamy Danish Blue works well here)
- a few salad leaves (a sweeter leaf works against the blue cheese)
- ½ pear, thinly sliced
- 1 fig, quartered
- 1–3 Swedish-style ginger thin biscuits, to taste
- micro herbs, to garnish.
- Butter the bread and set aside.



1. Lightly crush the walnuts, then toast them in a frying pan. Turn off the heat and add the honey. Stir to coat the nuts, then leave to cool.
2. Neatly slice the blue cheese and arrange on the bread. Arrange the leaves on top, along with the thinly sliced pear and fig quarters.
3. Add the honey nuts, then break the ginger thins and arrange them on top for a rustic look. Garnish with a few micro herbs.

**Smørrebrød by Bronte Aurell, published by Ryland Peters & Small (£16.99)**

**Photography by Peter Cassidy © Ryland Peters & Small**

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# In The News

## Unrest Continues in the USA – May Day Protests

Teresa Read

During the last two weeks the Tribune has reported demonstrations taking place throughout the USA; every state and Washington DC.

It was recently divulged on X (formerly Twitter) that President Donald Trump has asked the United States Secretary of Defence to determine how the military can be used in Domestic Law Enforcement.

However, using the Armed Forces against public protests in the USA could violate the 1878 law to keep Armed Forces out of domestic law enforcement; the Posse Comitatus Act ensures that military focus is on national defence and not domestic law enforcement.

May Day protests have shown that there is a significant proportion of the US population which does not agree with the current administration led by President Donald Trump. Bernie Sanders, the US Senator for Vermont, said *“we as Americans, will not accept oligarchy. We will not accept authoritarianism in any way”*.

Protests mentioned on X this week include those in Atlanta, Chicago, Minnesota, New York City, Philadelphia, Phoenix, and Washington DC.

The New York Times reported on the situation with the headline “Trump Policies Draw Outrage at May Day Protests Across the US.”



Despite, the protests throughout the country, news headlines announce that the US army is planning a military parade with 6,600 soldiers on 14 June 2025 to celebrate the US Army's 250th anniversary, and Trump's 79th birthday.



# Ant-ticipation...

By Deep Patel

~ Through the Eyes of a Twickenham Shopkeeper ~



May is a time of year I am in great anticipation...or ANT-ticipation... Genuinely...the amount of people asking me if I sell ant-killer in my shop this past week has been one of the highest of all time...they may seem annoying but worth noting that they have been on this planet for over 165 million years, even when dinosaurs existed. Did you know that each time you reach for the ant powder it actually makes their tiny stomachs explode... those of you who think using natural diatomaceous earth is any better...think again...it cuts up their little bodies until they die. Yeah I get it...they are annoying but they are only looking for food for their babies...I mean is that such a bad thing? Is it a crime worth killing for? They are not intentionally trying to harm us, they are only trying to live, like we all are on this planet. Is death a fair punishment for the crime of being hungry? Would we kill a human for being hungry? I feel the pain of my customers still...no one wants ants in their home...but must we really kill?

White vinegar, talcum powder and essential peppermint or Olbas oil is all you need... Sprinkle baby powder or white vinegar where they come and they will STOP without you needing to poison or hurt their little souls. You will have good karma for choosing a kind way...win-win! Olbas or essential peppermint oil also works great, but keep it away from pets as they may find this irritates them! If you have many in the house gently sweep them using the brush very lightly so as to avoid crushing their little bodies and quickly place it outside and then immediately seal the areas they were coming from with baby powder, white vinegar, Olbas oil, peppermint or essential rosemary oil and reapply regularly (or as needed). If you need to stop them outdoors, sprinkle finely ground rosemary powder where they come...it works! Like all good things in life... the enjoyment is doubled when shared... so don't keep these tips to yourself...share them to as many people as you can and feel the good-karma come back to you!

For more tips or specific KIND WAYS to stop all "pests" for good karma, please email me on [InsectLoversUnite@gmail.com](mailto:InsectLoversUnite@gmail.com) or through my Facebook page:

"INSECT LOVERS UNITE"

You will get good karma for being kind...

**Remember...**

***"Size is irrelevant...a life is a life...all lives matter..."***

## **MY CREATURE-KINDNESS TIP OF THE WEEK...**

### **STOP FOXES KINDLY (GOOD KARMA):**

Place empty bowls filled with white vinegar around places where you don't want them to come...they will go without you having to harm them...use humane mouse & rat traps and release them back out in parkland areas. Use electronic plug-in deterrents with good reviews around your house to stop them coming (the smell of white vinegar also stops ants kindly).

For ANY specific tip to stop any "pest" or insect KINDLY (for good karma/blessings), email me:

[InsectLoversUnite@gmail.com](mailto:InsectLoversUnite@gmail.com) or join my Facebook page: **"INSECT LOVERS UNITE"**



## Orfeo

by Claudio Monteverdi, libretto by Alessandro Striggio  
Richmond Opera at Normansfield Theatre, Teddington

The Orpheus and Eurydice myth is a popular subject for opera, with its dramatic possibilities in a heart-broken newly-wed husband's attempt to bring his dead bride from Hades. It drips with emotional juice, which opera loves, and it's all about the power of music.

Monteverdi's 1607 *Orfeo* has the distinction of being oldest known opera that is still performed. It has a direct simplicity and great charm, and it is particularly appropriate in Normansfield's beautifully preserved Victorian theatre.



Director and designer, [Patricia Gómez](#)'s modern costumes have a folksy feel, while the painted canvas backdrops evoke Thracian woods. They form a foil for the skills of the performers of the named female roles: [Naomi Kilby](#), who makes an exhilarating Muse of Music; the engaging Pastorelle, Lois Heslop and Victoria Kunesch; and bubbly soprano [Claire Doran](#) as Ninfa. [Ruth Vanni](#) excels as Sylvia, her creamy mezzo totally moving as she comes with a "heart full of anguish" with news that the newly-wed Euridice has been fatally bitten by a snake.

Changing mood, [Simon Pike](#)'s vivid lighting design for Hades makes quite an impact. Its entrance is guarded by [John Rolt](#)'s gravelly bass ferryman Caronte. Orfeo charms him, and the Chorus's inscrutable array of skulls, with his lyre, to reach the Underworld. Here, Plutone reigns (Llewellyn St David with great presence). Orfeo has an ally in Proserpina, Queen of Hades ([Catriona Murray](#), who sings with sweetness and precision). John Hall, a confident crisp tenor, has a refined cameo as Apollo, Orfeo's father, who has endowed him with his peerless musical skills.

[Erin Holmes](#) lives the part Euridice (even when dead) and sings elegantly and with delicacy, portraying a young woman clearly in love. [Hugh Benson](#) sings with text-book accuracy, but his static style lacks real passion to put fire into the role of Orfeo.

Musical director, [Lindsay Bramley](#) brings skilled period musicians, including baroque cornetti, double harp, and theorbos, celebrating Monteverdi's embellishments while maintaining a punchy pace with consummate musicality.

The message is about the power of music and the ineffable power of love, but one takes away from this *Orfeo* that it is also about trust. It culminates in Orfeo not trusting Plutone's bargain, in that final look back that loses him his beloved for ever.



Read Mark Aspen's review at [www.markaspen.com/2025/04/27/orfeo](http://www.markaspen.com/2025/04/27/orfeo)

Photography by Jonathan Lo



## Hotel Elsinore

by Susanna Hamnett

Plant[UnLtd] at the Riverside Studios, Hammersmith until 3<sup>rd</sup> May

Art imitates life in this poignant exploration of family dynamics seen through the lens of Shakespeare's *Hamlet*.

Venerable actor Henry Elder has recently died, but his family's lives have become subsumed by his one-man production of *Hamlet*, his final fixation. His dying wish was to be part of the annual Shakespeare Festival in Elsinore. So, together an urn of his ashes, to which they talk as if he were still alive, they arrive at a rundown hotel in the Danish town known for Hamlet's castle. It's 2.00am, but the (clearly disorganised) director of the festival suddenly rings to ask that they perform the play the following morning.



What follows is the family's panicked attempt to rehearse something akin to *Hamlet* in a few hours time. But without their patriarchal leader it is doomed to fail.

The family's struggles echo Hamlet's own. The son has lost his father, but is angry that he ignored him for his own obsessions. The highly-strung widow has always wanted to play Gertrude, but was overshadowed and driven to drink by her blinkered compulsive husband. The daughter, referencing Ophelia, has drowned in lost love.

As *Hotel Elsinore* progresses, the analogies between this directionless family and Hamlet's world are progressively revealed. However, whilst this concept is intelligent and thoughtful, it tells little about interrelationships within the Elder family, and the play edges more towards a cleverly abridged version of *Hamlet*.

With much breaking the fourth wall, and imaginative use of basic iron hotel bedframes to represent a set of *Hamlet*, it avoids becoming merely a procession of the familiar speeches. The short performance is very pacey, but could have a little more time breathe and reflect.

Actors move seamlessly amongst their many roles. Writer Susanna Hamnett's performance as the manic, longing Gertrude, is well judged; Joshua MacGregor gives a confident, honest performance as Henry Jr, trying hard to bring his family together and assuage the death of his father; Lily MacGregor, who is primarily a dancer, brings a nice blend of fragility and diffidence to Olivia-Ophelia.

A journey to life after grief, *Hotel Elsinore* is an exploration of Shakespeare's text and its reflection in modern life, played with agility and grace. It readily elicits discussion, always the hallmark of a good play.

Read Claire Alexander's review at [www.markaspen.com/2025/04/26/hotel-elsinore](http://www.markaspen.com/2025/04/26/hotel-elsinore)

Photography by Ben Wulf



# Blithe Spirit

by Noël Coward

Putney Theatre Company at the Putney Arts Theatre until 3<sup>rd</sup> May

The genius of *Blithe Spirit* is that totally improbable happenings come to seem perfectly normal as the plot unfolds, and here's a sparkling production reset from the 1940s to the 1970s, complete with a nostalgic smokey whiff of Gauloise drifting from Perry Kitchen's fusion set. [Tom Sainsbury](#)'s pacey direction keeps the story lively and thoroughly enjoyable.

Happily married Charles and Ruth Condomine are planning a special dinner party. To help Charles prepare for his next



novel with some background research they have invited a medium to hold a séance after dinner. Their dinner guests share the couple's scepticism about the séance, but are happy to join a trendy diversion.

[Ian Wainwright](#)'s urbane Dr Bradman, and Emily Fellows as his delightfully irritating wife, are the perfect foil to the wildly eccentric Madame Arcati, who arrives on a bicycle, keen to share her supernatural skills. After dinner, [Sarah Perkins](#) comes into her own with Madame Arcati's mystic wonders, throwing herself into a serious knock-out trance ... .. and eventually conjuring up the ghost of Charles' dead wife Elvira.

As the only one who can see and hear her, Charles is horrified. Daniel Jonusas doesn't overplay Charles. He is the essence of sophistication, but gradually his character becomes progressively confused, angry, and then pleased when confronted with a woman he had loved and lost to death. Over time he visibly softens when responding to Elvira's coquettish nature.

Kirsten Millar's Ruth also changes when confronted with this unnatural rival. Initially the ultra grown-up, proudly poo-pooing "love's young dream," she is thrown off course by this apparition that she cannot see. She's puzzled, then hurt, then angry that her husband is enjoying having his ghostly but vivacious first wife around. And why wouldn't he; Katie Kelly's elvish Elvira is a dream. Death and some ghoulish make up has, if anything, enhanced her charm. Young and flirty, she floats about the stage causing mischief wherever she lands.

Madame Arcati is out of her depth. Then a naughty spirit is found to inhabit [Nicole Pavlou](#)'s energetic servant, Edith. A spectacular finish is needed and we get one, leaving just the William Morris cushions and the lava lamp.



Read Polly Davies' review at [www.markaspen.com/2025/05/01/blithe-spirit-ptc](http://www.markaspen.com/2025/05/01/blithe-spirit-ptc)

Photography by Steve Lippett





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# St Mary's University

The School of Liberal and Creative Arts at St Mary's University, Twickenham, welcomed over 1,300 attendees to its second annual Festival of Creativity

This year's successful festival featured 30 events over two weeks, which showcased the creative talents of students and staff across music, drama, film, debate, literature, academic talks, and more.

The events were hosted across multiple venues, including the University's own [The 1850](#) – a regular space for performances. This year also saw the first partnership with [Kingston College](#), while continuing to collaborate with [OSO Arts Centre](#) and [West Thames College](#).

*Kafka-esque* which attracted more than 350. Other highlights included *Escaping Vesuvius*, screenings in The Loft, the Open Mic Night, and The Big Debate.

The final attendance figure of 1,303 does not include audiences from the three research days by the University's [Faculty of Education, Theology and the Arts](#) - meaning total engagement was even higher.



Festival Curator and Academic, [Mark Griffin](#) said, "I am thrilled to see another great turnout at St Mary's Festival of Creativity. The work produced by students and academics highlights the talent we have in the University's community. It's great that we continue to build relationships with partner venues - and how our own campus facilities support showcasing the talent we have here to the wider public. I look forward to seeing the Festival grow year after year."

Among the most popular events were the student-led drama productions, with *She Is To Remain Quiet* drawing over 320 attendees, and

Launched in 2024 by St Mary's School of Liberal and Creative Arts, the Festival offers a platform for students and staff to showcase both creative and academic work, and has quickly become a favoured tradition.

The University continues to expand its creative and liberal arts provision through degree programmes in [Acting, Film, Liberal Arts, and Creative and Professional Writing](#), and remains focused on preparing students for careers across the creative industries.



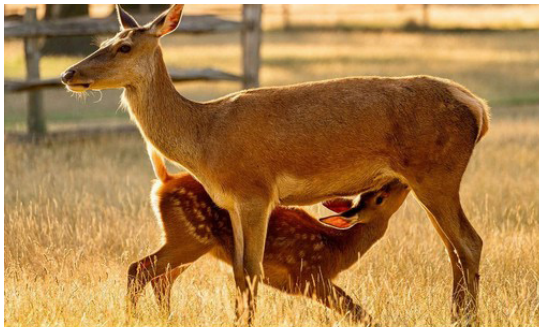
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# Keep dogs on leads during deer birthing season, warns Royal Parks' film

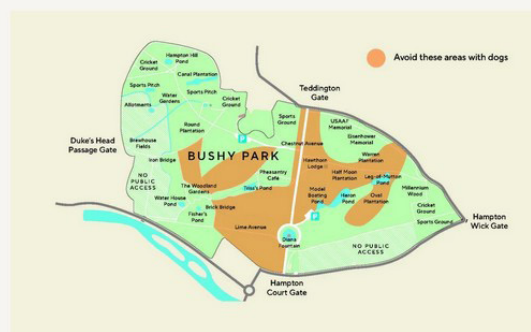
[The Royal Parks charity](#) has released a short film reminding people of the vulnerability of does and hinds and their babies during deer birthing season.

The [VIDEO](#), filmed in Bushy Park, tells visitors that 'dogs on leads' is mandatory from 1 May until the 31 July, to ensure the [safety](#) of deer, visitors and their dogs.

Viewers are reminded that mothers are highly protective of their young. Mothers hide their babies in bracken and long grass to conceal them from dogs and other perceived predators. And while deer are instinctively frightened of dogs, mothers will overcome this fear if they believe their young are at risk.



Phil Edwards, Park Manager, Bushy Park said: "I've often heard owners say, 'but my dog wouldn't hurt a fly', yet the truth is that no owner can ever be 100 percent sure how their pet might respond to a frightened deer.



*"If a mother feels spooked when she is protecting her babies, even if the dog is at a distance and not acting provocatively, there's a good chance she will give chase and attack. This could quickly escalate to an extremely dangerous situation for anyone nearby, which could*

Dog walkers should avoid the orange areas during deer birthing season

*be terrifying to witness and could lead to a really awful accident with serious injuries."*

During this sensitive time for the deer, park officials say that the safest option is not to walk your dog in either Richmond Park or Bushy Park. Owners who choose, at their own risk, to walk their dog in Richmond and Bushy Parks during this season must have their dog on a lead, and for their own safety should also be on high alert for female deer.

Phil adds: "Please respect female deer and give them privacy and space. Avoid long grass and bracken where newly born deer could be concealed and stick to the perimeter of the park in case they need to escape. Please never handle newborn deer, under any circumstance. If you spot a young deer on its own, please rest assured that its mother will be grazing nearby and will return to her newborn soon. It might feel helpful to attend to a newborn if it seems to have been abandoned, but sadly any contact could do a lot of harm. Mothers have been known to reject their new offspring if they've detected a human scent."

The Royal Parks charity is currently creating a dedicated deer sanctuary in Bushy Park, within the Warren Plantation, which will be completed by autumn 2025. The sanctuary will provide a quiet refuge for deer and to support a thriving ecosystem, new canopy trees will be planted to provide shade and shelter for the deer and to improve the park's biodiversity. The enhanced tree cover will also support birds, insects, and small mammals, improve soil health, and contribute to a richer, more diverse ecosystem. In order to protect the deer, this space will not be accessible to visitors or their pets.



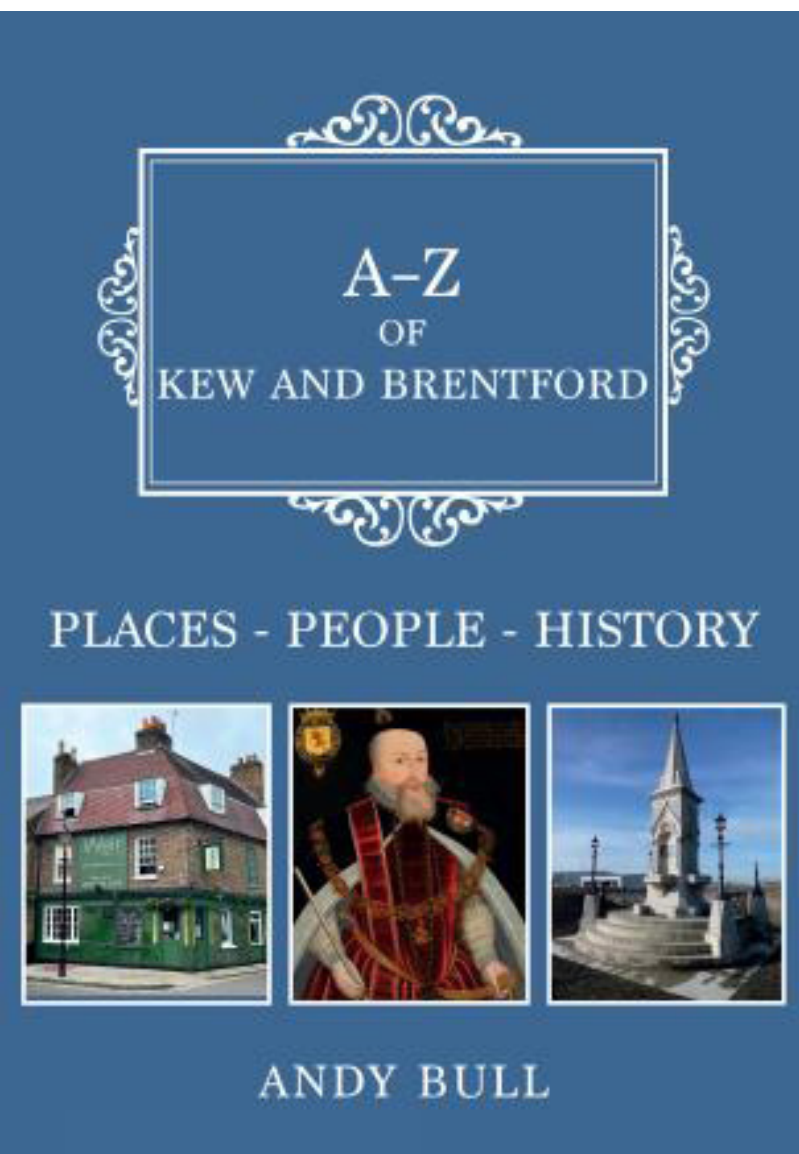


# A-Z of Kew and Brentford Places-People-History

Andy Bull

*Explore the West London towns of Kew and Brentford in this fully illustrated A-Z guide to their history, people and places.*

Kew and Brentford are not so much separated by the River Thames as connected through it. The ford here was the first point on the tidal stretch of the great river that could easily be crossed on foot – meant many travellers have passed through down the centuries, perhaps the most famous being Julius Caesar. Kew has strong royal links and in 1759 Princess Augusta founded Kew Gardens, now known officially as the Royal Botanical Gardens. Today Kew is also famous for the National Archives. Kew and Brentford also have a rich industrial history, from pharmaceutical giants Beechams (and today GlaxoSmithKline) to aircraft manufacturers Sopwith and Handley Page and motor vehicle manufacturers Dodge and Chrysler.



In A-Z of Kew and Brentford Andy Bull reveals the history behind these towns, their streets and buildings, industries and the people connected with them. Alongside the famous historical connections, are included some unusual characters, tucked away places and unique events that are less well-known. Readers will discover tales of painters drawn to this area, the manufacture of Brompton folding bicycles in a railway arch and a notorious Victorian murderer among many other fascinating facts in this A-Z tour of Kew and Brentford's history. It is fully illustrated with photography and will appeal to all those with an interest in these historic West London towns.

## The Author

Andy Bull is a freelance writer, having worked previously as a journalist and editor on newspapers and magazines and other media. He has been researching British pilgrimage routes for a number of years and has published two guidebooks: Pilgrim Pathways and London to Walsingham Camino.

He is a trustee of the Confraternity of St James, works closely with the British Pilgrimage Trust, and leads regular pilgrimage walks and gives talks to church, historical and other groups. He has written several books on local history, mountain biking, travel and journalism and other topics.

# Richmond man runs marathon in memory of mum-in-law lost to brain cancer

A dad-of-two from London has run the TCS London Marathon to help find a cure for the disease that took his mother-in-law's life. Tom Garnett, 41, from Richmond, completed the iconic 26.2 mile race in three hours and 20 minutes on Sunday 27 April to raise money for the charity [Brain Tumour Research](#). He ran in memory of Moira Henson who died from a [glioblastoma](#) in March 2022.

Tom, dad to Margaux and Arabella, said: *"It was hugely traumatic because Moira was diagnosed during Covid and she lived in France, so we had an awful year of going back and forth to France, barely being able to see her but when we did we cherished those moments. Running the London Marathon was an amazing experience, I really enjoyed the first 12 miles but the rest was traumatic! It was one of the hardest things I've ever done but I was really happy with my time."*



Moira had lived in the Dordogne region of south west France for 16 years when she was diagnosed with a glioblastoma - a highly aggressive brain tumour with a devastatingly short prognosis of 12-18 months – in January 2021. She underwent surgery, radiotherapy and chemotherapy but died 14 months later, aged 61.

Tom's wife, Jenny, who ran the London Marathon in her mum's memory last year, said: *"Mum's diagnosis and passing was the hardest thing we've ever been through. It's just an awful disease and takes away so much. I don't think you can prepare anyone for the devastation a glioblastoma leaves in its path. In the end, Mum was completely trapped in her body unable to communicate. She was unable to speak or write because it completely shut down that part of her brain. When I ran the London Marathon last year it was so emotional because Mum was my biggest cheerleader. Being here again today, this time to support Tom, has brought back all of the emotions but I'm very proud of him and we've raised a lot of money to help fund research into brain tumours. I really hope the money we've raised will help somebody else in the future. I don't want other families to have to go through the same thing we did, and I hope that better, kinder treatments can be found."*

Brain tumours kill more children and adults under the age of 40 than any other cancer, but only 1% of the national spend on cancer research has been allocated to brain tumours since records began in 2002.

Carol Robertson, national events manager for Brain Tumour Research, said: *"With one in three of us knowing someone affected by a brain tumour, Moira's story is, sadly, not unique. Brain tumours kill more men under 70 than prostate cancer, more women under 35 than breast cancer and more children than leukaemia. We're determined to change that, but we can't do it alone. We're really grateful to Tom and Jenny for both running the London Marathon and raising so much money to support our vital research. Together we will find a cure."*

Brain Tumour Research funds sustainable research at dedicated centres in the UK. It also campaigns for the Government and larger cancer charities to invest more in research into brain tumours in order to speed up new treatments for patients and, ultimately, to find a cure. The charity is the driving force behind the call for a national annual spend of £35 million in order to improve survival rates and patient outcomes in line with other cancers such as breast cancer and leukaemia.



**Brain Tumour  
Research**



# VE Day 80: Veterans recall the end of war in Europe

WWII veterans at Royal Star & Garter care homes have been remembering Victory in Europe (VE) Day, 80 years ago. They recalled celebrations and festivities which took place on 8 May 1945, following Nazi Germany's unconditional surrender to Allied forces in WWII, and the end of fighting in Europe. Some also paid tribute to sacrifices made by those who served during the war, and reflected on the difficulties which continued after VE Day.

Royal Star & Garter provides loving, compassionate care to veterans and their partners living with disability or dementia, from Homes in Solihull, Surbiton, High Wycombe, and now in Worthing, having recently merged with the military charity Care for Veterans. The charity also has services reaching into the community, including Day Care, Lunch Club and a free-to-use Telephone Friendship Service.

Those sharing memories of the momentous day live at Royal Star & Garter's Homes, or use its other services.

Among those remembering VE Day was Amy, who [celebrated her 100<sup>th</sup> birthday earlier this year](#), and was in



the Women's Auxiliary Air Force (WAAF) during WWII. The veteran, who lives at the charity's Surbiton Home, signed up as a 17-year-old in 1942, and was a barrage balloon operator, before becoming a plotter at a station near Hastings. She was there on D-Day in 1944, and again for VE Day the following year. She said: "I was stationed in Hastings and we went on a victory parade. I remember it distinctly, it was jolly good. But I thought about the people that had lost so much. I was there when we sent people across to

Normandy [for the D-Day landings], so of course we thought about all the people who were no longer with us."

Bill had joined the RAF in 1943, aged just 15, and was serving at RAF Halton in May 1945. Now a resident at the charity's Home in Solihull, he said: "It was fairly obvious we were getting close to it [Nazi surrender] the day before. That evening a group of WAAFs came up to our wing and there was dancing in the barracks' square. That was highly unusual because the barracks' square was holy ground that you didn't go on, and we weren't supposed to associate with women! The following morning they announced we had the day off and we could do what we like. Myself and a couple of friends went to Wycombe and we spent VE Day there. By the time my celebrations had ended the last bus had left for Halton, so I stayed the night, with a couple of RAF friends, at my mother's, who lived nearby. The joyous nature of that day is hard to describe, it's was an absolutely splendid occasion. But I was just a young lad, I didn't dwell on what had been achieved or what had been lost. We had other thoughts."

It was also a special moment for Bill's father, Jack. He had served in the trenches during WWI, and was injured in the Somme. During WWII he joined the Home Guard as soon as it was formed. Bill recalled: "He did more than his bit for his country over the two World Wars."

For Richard, who lives at the High Wycombe Home, the relief in the air was palpable. He was just 12 at the time, and went on to enjoy a long and distinguished career as a pilot in the RAF. He was in Hazelmere on VE Day, and said: "We were still at war with Japan, but as far as the war in Europe was concerned, it was exciting and interesting [that it was over]. There were a lot of street parties – they had long tables and lots of people on all of them. I can remember it quite clearly, it was a great time actually. There was a tremendous amount of relief that war had finished."



Margaret, from Royal Star & Garter in Solihull, was in Birmingham and aged 13. Now 93, she said: "It was fantastic. There were street parties everywhere. I remember all the tables in the streets. Wives and mums used to go around the street collecting coppers (loose change) towards the street parties. I remember my mum going round all the houses collecting money for the party. It was so exciting!"

Other residents also remembered celebrations and festivities. Solihull resident Sue was at teacher training college in Cheltenham. Just 18 at the time, Sue said: "They put out bread and sandwich filling and we had the day off, everybody did what they wanted. We went into town, there was jollifications and flags were going up and church bells were ringing and there was more or less a street party. It was a gloriously sunny day in Cheltenham. Everybody was rejoicing."

Bob was nearly 10 and at school in Tolworth, south west London, on VE Day. Now a resident at the Surbiton Home, he said: "I was going to school and people were putting up flags. An old man said to me 'it's all finished now, you can have celebrations tomorrow'. They were putting up bunting, US flags and Union Jacks, all down the road. I put some flags around my aunt's oak tree. I remember the VE Day parades, they were memories I will never forget. We had special lunches at school. We were allowed to dress up, there were parties in the playground. It was unforgettable."

For RAF veteran Michael, who also lives at Royal Star & Garter in Surbiton, VE Day not only brought peace in Europe, but his father back from war. Michael was aged seven at the time, and explained: "We were living near Bury St Edmunds and went there because there were parties going on all over the place. You could see these trails in the sky, all these planes buzzing about. Everyone seemed to be happy and everyone seemed to know everyone else. There was much shaking of hands and hugs and laughter and there seemed to be quite a lot of things to eat – up to then there wasn't much!" A short while after, his father, who had been serving in the RAF, returned home. Michael continued: "He had been building runways on the Shetland Islands for some time. We saw him very occasionally... then one day he came back with a funny suit on. It was a demob suit, it didn't seem to fit him, but we were glad that he was back."



Despite being just six at the time, Pat, who went on to serve in the Women's Royal Army Corps, has vivid memories of VE Day. She uses Royal Star & Garter's Telephone Friendship Service, and also comes to the Solihull Home for Day Care and short breaks. She said: "I was living in Bournemouth and we had a street party, I remember the flags and tables all the way down the streets. We played games and someone was playing a piano that had

been rolled out of one of the houses. But only the children ate, the mums, and few dads that were about, stood behind us. I offered my mum some food but she refused it. I was too young to realise but things must have been really tight. And I was also told Daddy would be home soon. He'd joined the Army just after I was born, and was in the Royal Artillery in North Africa."

Mary, a resident in Surbiton, said while VE Day brought peace in Europe, hardships would continue for a long time to come: "There was great jubilation," she said, "but rationing and shortages lasted for several years after that. But at least we could all sleep safely in our beds and our menfolk were home from fighting in the war."

For Stan in Solihull, VE Day was memorable for another reason for the Army veteran. He was 13 and in Birmingham, and said: "We were in the swimming baths when someone came in and said, 'The war's over'. We all ran out, we never even dried ourselves!" The next day Stan cut short his celebrations after feeling unwell. He said: "In the afternoon I felt terrible, so I went in and lay down on the settee. My dad fetched a doctor and I was taken to hospital, I had diphtheria! I was delirious for a few days, and I spent 12 weeks in hospital. So I only caught the first half-day of celebrations for VE Day!"

Royal Star & Garter is welcoming new residents into its Homes. For more information on this, the other services it offers to the veterans community, or to work for the charity, go to

[www.starandgarter.org](http://www.starandgarter.org)



**Royal Star  
& Garter**

Care with courage



# Red Roses selected in Six Nations' Team of the Championship

After a stellar campaign where the Red Roses beat France 43-42 and won the Grand Slam for the third consecutive year, four England players have been named in the Team of the Championship.

Following a fan vote that saw over 12,000 votes cast, Sarah Bern, Abbie Ward, Megan Jones and Abby Dow were among the players to make the final 15. The TOC is made up of players from England, Ireland, Scotland, France and Italy.

## Team of the Championship

Silvia Turani (Italy)  
Neve Jones (Ireland)  
Sarah Bern (England)  
Abbie Ward (England)  
Manae Feleu (France)  
Aoife Wafer (Ireland)  
Evie Gallagher (Scotland)

Teani Feleu (France)  
Pauline Bourdon Sansus (France)  
Helen Nelson (Scotland)  
Aura Muzzo (Italy)  
Aoife Dalton (Ireland)  
Megan Jones (England)  
Abby Dow (England)  
Morgane Bourgeois (France)



## Player of the Championship nominees

Voting is open for player OTC until 6 May.

- Aoife Wafer - IRELAND
- Manae Feleu - FRANCE
- Evie Gallagher - SCOTLAND
- Abby Dow - ENGLAND

Dow not only finished the Six Nations as top try scorer, but is also top for the most metres carried (608.8) and metres gained (452.9). She also had 12 line breaks, three more than any other player in the tournament.

Vote [HERE](#)



# Match Preview: Brentford v Manchester United

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 Manchester United at Gtech Community Stadium on Sunday (2pm kick-off GMT)

Brentford welcome Manchester United to Gtech Community Stadium on Sunday in their penultimate home fixture of the Premier League season (2pm kick-off GMT).

Kevin Schade and Yoane Wissa were on target as the Bees earned an impressive 2-0 victory at Nottingham Forest on Thursday, while United beat Athletic Bilbao 3-0 in the first leg of their Europa League semi-final.

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

## Pre-Match Analysis

Richard Cole, Playmaker Stats: Brentford must prevent Fernandes from creating chances at the Gtech

Brentford will be looking to take advantage of Manchester United's Europa League focus when the Red Devils visit the Gtech on Sunday.

Despite the Bees enjoying that big [4-0 win over United early in the 2022/23 season](#), results have generally gone against Thomas Frank's team in previous meetings.

United have won five of the seven between the two in the Premier League with one other ending in a draw – although considering some of the performances, the west London side perhaps deserve a better record.

This will be a perfect opportunity to tip the scales back in Brentford's favour considering that United have made it clear where their priorities lie for the rest of the season.

Ruben Amorim's outfit will be back from a 3-0 Europa League semi-final win over Athletic Bilbao with one eye on getting the job done at Old Trafford next week.

Indeed, United are like two different teams depending on the competition. In 34 league games, they've scored 39 goals compared to the 31 goals they've netted in just 13 Europa League games where they remain the only team undefeated in European competition this season.

With United's forward line misfiring in the league, the danger for Brentford this weekend will likely come from one man: Bruno Fernandes.

Fernandes is United's top Premier League goalscorer this season with eight goals while also having assisted nine in the league, which ranks him joint sixth.

Over all competitions, Fernandes has 35 goal involvements (19 goals, 16 assists) which is his second-best season for the club behind the 2020/21 campaign (28 goals, 18 assists - 46 goal involvements).





And while Fernandes has had to take on much of the goal-scoring burden it will be important for Brentford to prevent him from creating.

The 30-year-old has made 84 key passes in the league this season which ranks him first in the Premier League and also first in the top five European leagues. Similarly, his 27 through balls see him ranked first domestically and second in Europe.

Through balls are a big source of his creation but should he be forced out wide then Brentford need to be aware that Fernandes is also third for crosses this season (172 in total).

All of this adds up to 169 shot-creating actions in the Premier League, second behind only Cole Palmer. The fact that these don't translate to him appearing in the top 10 for goal-creating actions tells its own story. One man who is up there for that though is Amad Diallo, who returned from injury on Thursday night. Only Bukayo Saka ranks higher for goal-creating actions per 90 (1.36) than Amad (0.9).

But of course, Brentford will want to think about going forward. Only four Premier League players have made more errors that have led to an opposition goal than goalkeeper André Onana international (three in total).

The Bees are also strong at set-pieces and they'll be facing a team that has conceded 13 times from those situations this season, only Southampton (18) and Wolverhampton Wanderers (19) have fared worse.

### Scout Report

Dan Long, *Sky Sports*: Europa League offers United a chance to salvage something from a forgettable season

Most thought last season was a struggle for Manchester United, when FA Cup glory was, arguably, the only high point in a campaign that ended with their lowest-ever Premier League finish in eighth.

You can guarantee they would snap your hand off to be in a similar position this time around. With four games left to play, United are sat in 14th on 39 points.

From a very early stage, it was clear this was not going to be a straightforward season for United. By the end of October, they had picked up 11 points from their first nine matches and were sat down in 14th, having not scored in four of those games.

Erik ten Hag's future had been the topic of much speculation already, but the final nail in the Dutchman's coffin was a 2-1 defeat to West Ham United on 27 October.

*"At this moment, the luck is definitely not on our side,"* he said afterwards. The next day, he was sacked after 17 months in the job.

Club legend Ruud van Nistelrooy took the reins in the interim, overseeing a 1-1 draw with Chelsea and a 3-0 win over Leicester in the Premier League, and an emphatic 5-2 victory over the Foxes in the Carabao Cup, as well as a Europa League win over PAOK.

Ruben Amorim replaced ten Hag on 11 November. The former Portugal international had put Sporting CP on the path to defending their Primeira Liga title and reportedly wanted to join the club in the summer, but United wanted him to take over immediately - and the job of a lifetime would not wait for him.

As Tyrone Marshall told us, there has been little improvement in the outlook for United over the six-month period since.

There was the very public exiling of Marcus Rashford, who Amorim said did not have the attitude of someone "giving the maximum every day."

Then there was the miserable December, where the Red Devils lost five of their seven Premier League games - drawing a blank in four of those - and the Carabao Cup quarter-final exit at Tottenham Hotspur.

They have not risen above 12th in 2025 so far, having picked up just 17 of the 45 points on offer in that time.

After the 3-1 loss to Brighton on 19 January, Amorim made his feelings clear. *"We are the worst team, maybe in the history of Manchester United,"* he said. *"I know you want headlines, but I am saying that because we have to acknowledge that and to change that."*

The sole source of hope has been in the Europa League, where they went unbeaten in 12 games on a run to the semi-final. United face Athletic Bilbao for a place in the final.

To reach that stage, they completed the most remarkable comeback against Lyon, battling back to win 5-4 in extra-time, having been 2-0 up after 45 minutes.

The trip to west London comes in the middle of the two semi-final legs, where they have a final chance to salvage something from a season they will otherwise want to forget about as quickly as possible.

### **In the Dugout**

Ruben Amorim

Lisbon-born Ruben Amorim started out in the academy of Benfica as a youngster, but was released as a 17-year-old, without having found a way to the first team.

He then moved on to Belenenses, in the same city, and made his senior debut against Alverca in the Primeira Liga in December 2003.

Over the next four-and-a-half seasons, he played more than 100 games for O Belem, and progressed through the age groups for Portugal, earning the first of 10 U21s caps.

When his contract expired there, he signed a four-year deal to return to Benfica in 2008, where he was a regular for the first two seasons.

During his nine years there - which included two spells on loan at Braga and one at Al-Wakrah in Qatar - he was part of the squads that won three league titles, one Portuguese Cup, five Portuguese League Cups and one Portuguese Super Cup.

He also progressed to the senior Portugal team during that time and earned 14 caps between 2010 and 2014 - and was part of the squads for both the South Africa and Brazil World Cups.

Amorim retired at the age of 32 in April 2017 and started in management the following season with Casa Pia in the Portuguese third tier until January 2019.

He then returned to Braga to take charge of the B team, then the first team, but moved on to Sporting CP in March 2020.

In his second season, Sporting won the Primeira Liga for the first time in two decades and completed a double by lifting the Portuguese League Cup, a trophy they retained in 2021/22.

Spearheaded by Viktor Gyökeres, Amorim's side won the league title again in 2023/24, and they were top when he left to replace Erik ten Hag at Manchester United in November.

The 40-year-old's contract at Old Trafford runs until the summer of 2027.





# Inspiring Young Londoners recognised at City Hall awards ceremony

The winners of the inaugural [London Youth Achievement Awards](#) have tonight been announced at a ceremony at City Hall.

Hosted by the London Assembly and the London Youth Assembly, the awards recognise the huge impact made by young people in the capital.

## The winners are:

### **Best Initiative Award:** *Big-Chill Out*, Lamar Big Jackson

*Lamar's Big-Chill Out initiative gives boys experiencing isolation and boredom – and who may be at risk of exposure to crime – a space to express themselves and have meaningful conversations in a supportive environment.*

### **Greener London Award:** Gabriella Kathrine Brown

*Croydon Youth Assembly chair Gabriella has organised regular litter picks and collaborated with organisations including Stanley Arts and Kew Gardens to raise awareness of environmental issues.*

### **Community Safety Award:** Isabella Tanner, Co-chair of Merton Youth Parliament

*Isabella has worked to try to create trust and break down barriers between the Met Police and young people in Merton. Isabella worked with the Met on a workshop to show young people the challenges officers face and coordinated an event at AFC Wimbledon where young people acted as Superintendent for a day.*

### **Inclusion and Diversity Award:** *Strength in Difference*, J Grange

*J's Strength in Difference initiative raises awareness of neurodiversity in the Borough of Waltham Forest. He works with schools, businesses, charities and others to enhance their understanding of neurodiversity.*

### **Outstanding Achievement Award:** Maryjane Jenkin

*Following a family tragedy, Maryjane set out to raise money for Cancer Research through a sponsored walk – despite the additional challenges of a mobility impairment, and with exams to revise for. Maryjane's perseverance helped her to complete her fundraising walk and successfully complete her exams.*

### **Young Carer Award:** Anton Oduneye

*Anton offers his time as a volunteer to support new Year 7 students at his former school – mentoring, providing support with attendance, and carrying out more “invaluable” work, in the words of his former teacher. Anton continues to work in the Borough of Barking and Dagenham and will be helping to organise events including the Young People's Safety Summit.*

**Young Leader Award: Mohammed Asraf**

*Mohammed organised a pop-up food bank at Featherstone Sports Centre in Southall to give away food, household necessities and toys just before Christmas. Mohammed is already busy planning further pop-up events, learning lessons from his Christmas event to provide even greater support to his community in future.*

**Young Media Champion Award: Nandini Patel**

*Nandini built an online space where young girls could learn henna techniques and explore media as a means of self-expression. She also actively participated in local community events, offering free henna sessions while teaching girls how to share their talents online.*

Committees made up of Assembly Members and London Youth Assembly Members worked together to shortlist nominations and make the final decisions on winning nominations.

**Chair of the London Assembly, Andrew Boff AM, said:**

*"I am delighted to have been able to recognise the achievements of some of London's brilliant young people tonight, and to have thanked them for what they do.*

*"As we start our celebration of the 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary year of the London Assembly, I am reminded that these young people provide not only a bright future for London – but the leadership and the change that we need right now.*

*"The Assembly is hugely grateful for the work of the London Youth Assembly in making tonight's celebrations such a huge success, and for all they do in making young Londoners' voices heard at City Hall."*

**Chair of the London Youth Assembly, Ashan Khehra, said:**

*"Choosing tonight's winners was no easy task, with so many hugely impressive nominations to choose from, and my thanks go to all of our nominees – and to those who took time to nominate a young person making a difference in their community.*

*"In every corner of London, young people are uplifting, building and changing our great city – but far too often their hard work goes unnoticed.*

*"The London Youth Assembly is proud to have played its part in changing that tonight, and thanks the London Assembly for all its help in highlighting the best of what young people do for London."*

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