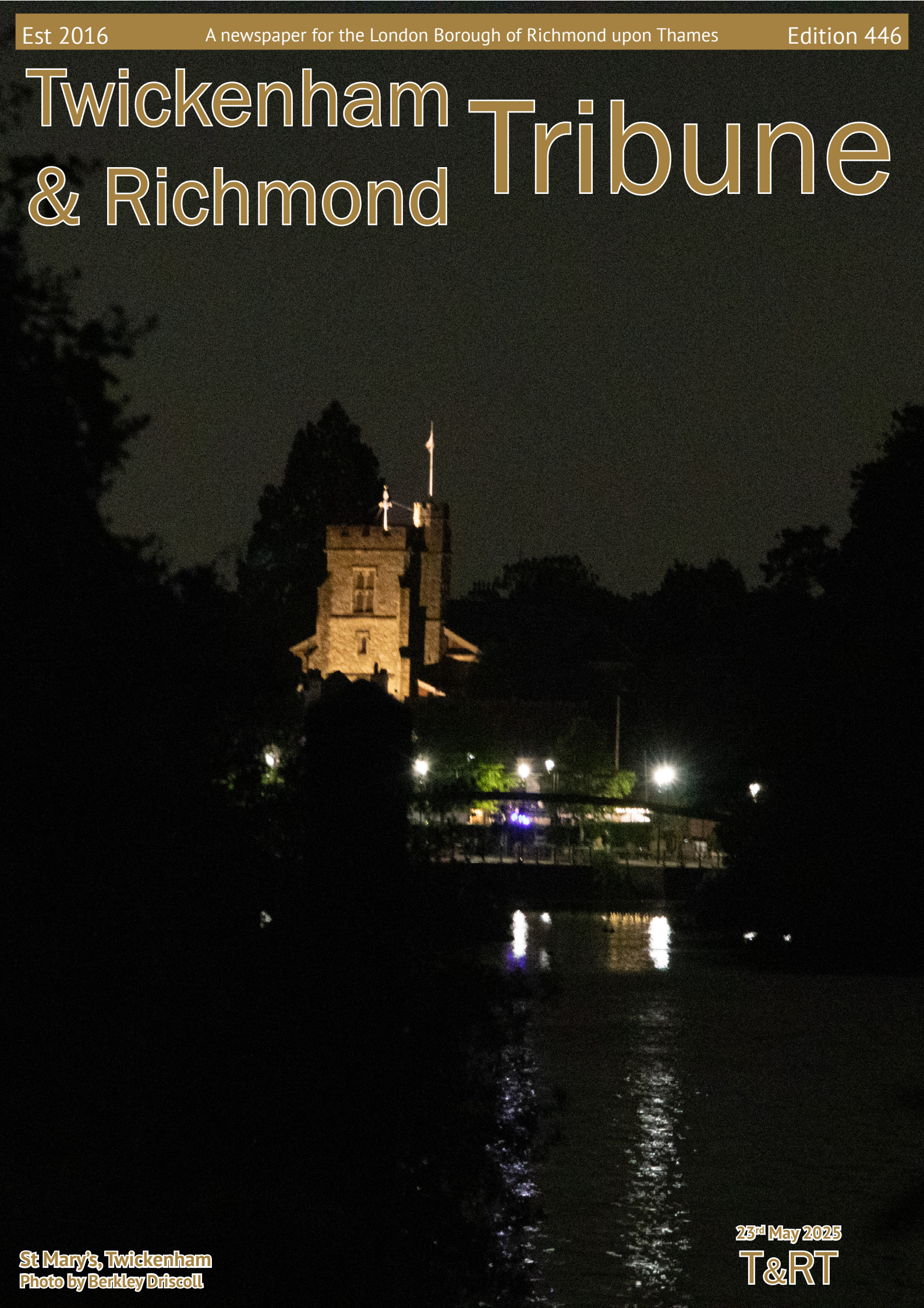


# Twickenham & Richmond Tribune





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# TickerTape - News in Brief

## Advance warning of Thames Water works on Kingston Road

From Richmond Council

Thames Water will be carrying out essential remedial works following sewer repairs outside **227 Kingston Road in the Teddington and Hampton Wick area from Tuesday 27 to Thursday 29 May.**

Works will take place from 8am on Tuesday 27 May until 8pm on Thursday 29 May.

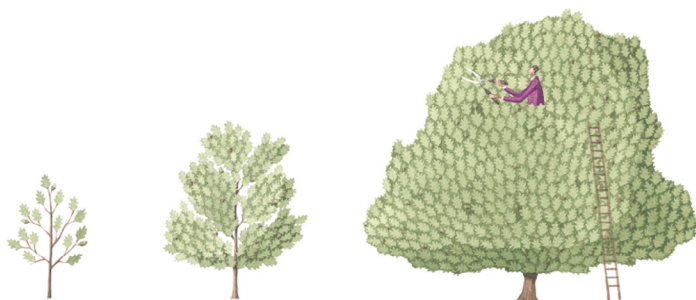
During the works, Kingston Road will be closed in both directions near Holmesdale Road, a local diversion will be in place.

Bus routes 281 and 285 towards Hounslow or Heathrow Central, from Horse Fair at Hampton Wick High Street, left Hampton Court Road, right Church Grove, ahead Park Road, ahead Sandy Lane, ahead Park Road, left The Causeway, left Broad Street to normal line of route.

Bus routes 281 and 285 towards Kingston, from Broad Street at Park Road, right (2nd exit) Park Road, ahead Sandy Lane, ahead Park Road, ahead Church Grove, left Hampton Court Road, right Horse Fair to normal line of route.

There will be no disruption to wastewater or drinking water during the works.

If you have any questions about the works, you can contact Thames Water on 0800 316 9800 (select option 2) quoting reference: SA-1998028.



The Tree Agency

darryl parkin

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*The Tree Agency*

Dear Tribune Readers,

## Postcard Page

My thanks to those of you who kindly took the trouble to contact me after the announcement a couple of weeks ago that my Local Postcard column was no longer going to be featured in the Tribune on a weekly basis.

I just wanted to clarify that I haven't resigned or even been sacked! It is simply that I am finding it very difficult to unearth postcards of places in our local Borough of Richmond that haven't already been featured in the column at some point over the last nine years or so.

A few of you suggested that we might re-run the 300 columns from the first one so that the column could continue for a few years yet. A very creative suggestion but each of the 300 columns is already available to you. All you need do is access the Tribune's [Archive](#) which is printed in **Red** on the email covering page that you receive with each week's edition. All editions going back to the very first one in 2016 are available.

My columns featured from edition 6 in 2016 through to edition 205 in 2020. After a break, they began again in issue 345 in 2023 through to issue 444 a couple of weeks ago.

The Tribune's editors, Teresa and Berkley have agreed that we can re-introduce the column on an occasional basis once I have found some more picture postcards of the area to write about.

With that in mind if any of you have any old postcards lying around that you no longer want, I would be very keen to see them. Picture postcards first made an appearance in 1894 so that's 130 odd years ago. There must be old albums and accumulations of postcards gathering dust in garden sheds, garages or under a bed all over the Borough. I'm pleased to pay cash for anything of interest.

You can find me on email [alanwinter192@hotmail.com](mailto:alanwinter192@hotmail.com) and I can also be found at the next West London Postcard Fair which takes place at the Baptist Church in Church Road at Teddington on Saturday 14<sup>th</sup> June between 10.00 and 4.00. My tables will be at the bottom of the hall by the stage.

Thanks and regards

Alan Winter  
Twickenham



Dear Editor,

## Kew cycle lane

Most people who lived in and represented a borough like Richmond which happens to have the good fortune of having a facility of global significance and of beauty like Kew Gardens would be hugely proud of it, and would support it in any way they could. It is of incalculable importance to visitors as a place of learning and beauty, as well as doing very important research, and contributing hugely to environmental work for the future of all of us.

At a recent meeting I attended at the gardens I heard of the fall in visitor numbers which has impacted it greatly. The person I conversed with explained that this was as a direct result of the cycle lane which the Council *without any prior consultation or warning* had placed along the main road which has prevented coach trips, school outings etc. from having easy parking and access to the Gardens.

Furthermore, I learned that the Director of Kew asked merely for a couple of drop off parking places near the main entrance to be retained so coaches could unload - a totally reasonable request. However this request was turned down flat - and who by? Why the very Cllr. Ehmann himself. The man who pathetically uses a race card if ever criticised or challenged it would appear from last week's correspondence. This man is more interested in littering our streets with abandoned Lime bikes than in supporting a jewel in the crown of Richmond that is Kew Gardens. He is apparently a rude and unpleasant man to deal with and should not be in a position of unchallenged power. Indeed he seems to be actively working against anything that would make the Borough a better place to live in.

And yes, there is no democracy in this borough and no free press aside from the Tribune so the Council can get away with awarding themselves increases in "expenses" while the rest of us have to put up with a declining environment of appalling pavements, roads and lighting making the Borough a shadow of its previous self. Anyone who has had a walk along George Street can see the filth and rubbish everywhere. This Council takes its voters for granted and so ignores so-called consultations and responds high-handedly to residents' very reasonable concerns.

Kate - Richmond resident  
(Name and address supplied)

# Planning Approval for Dukes Education's new Kneller Hall School

From Dukes Education

Dukes Education is delighted that the planning application has been approved to redevelop Kneller Hall into a premium site for what will be the largest campus of any senior school in South West London. The long-awaited decision by the Council of the London Borough of Richmond upon Thames means that the work to transform Kneller Hall will begin this autumn.



Kneller Hall



Principal of Radnor House School, Amy Cavilla and Head of Radnor House School, Stephen Carrington

Kneller Hall is Dukes Education's first purpose-built school in the UK and the scale of the site will provide a unique educational experience. New facilities for sport, performing arts and outdoor learning will offer opportunities for students to pursue their interests and develop their skills, while new science laboratories, design and technology classrooms, Forest School and Nature Reserve will add breadth and depth to the pupils' day-to-day experience. Over half the campus is designated as Metropolitan Open Land, which means it must be retained as green space for the pupils to explore and enjoy.

Speaking about the decision, Founder and Chairman of Dukes Education, Aatif Hassan, said: *"We are incredibly excited that the work on Kneller Hall can begin in earnest now. It is a privilege to be able to develop this historic building - such a well-loved landmark in the Whitton and Twickenham area - and to build on its educational heritage, first as a training school for teachers and then as the Royal Military School of Music. The school and its grounds will be great for families in the local area, and we look forward to creating deeper links with the community. I would like to thank our parents, students, staff and the local community for their patience during the planning process."*

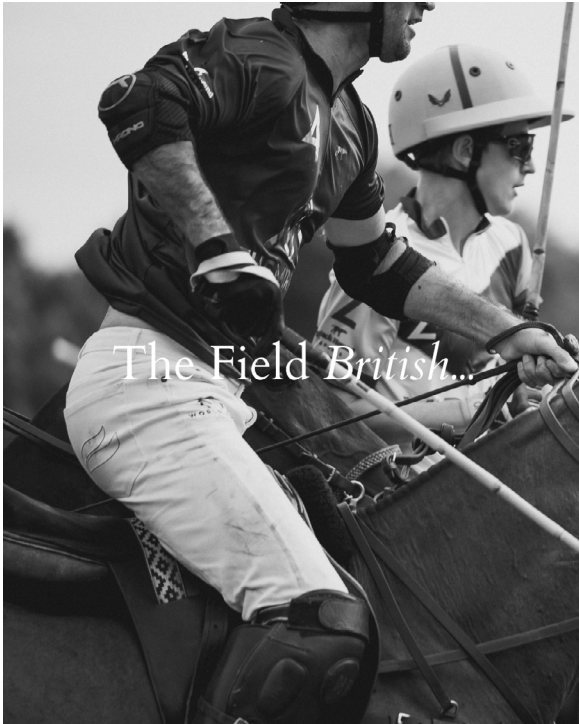
Principal of Kneller Hall School, Amy Cavilla, said: *"I am thrilled that this ambitious project now has the green light. Kneller Hall will provide students with a modern education in a historic setting and will put air under the wings of the successful foundations that have been laid at Radnor House School. We promote a values-based approach that puts kindness and compassion high on the agenda and use encouragement rather than pressure to achieve success. Our priority now is to proceed with our plans as efficiently as possible so that we are ready to move into our new home in Kneller Hall in September 2027."*





# Ham Polo Club - The Independence Cup

Ham Polo Club, is London's last remaining Polo Club, proudly founded in 1926, has confirmed its biggest event on this season's calendar as **The Independence Cup**, unfolding over two-action packed days of polo fun and festivities (July 4-5, 2025).



This polo fixture is the first of its kind, a brand-new event full of British style and American spirit. Teams will be travelling in from the USA to play against our London lineup. It will be the party of the summer, anchored by our headline match "The Jacks v Stripes" on July 4th.

Event attendees will enjoy a unique take on the 4th of July celebration, beginning with the Corporate Day on **Friday 4th July**. From 12:30pm to 3:00pm, there will be an exclusive focus on hosting corporate groups and business leaders, who will enjoy an elevated hospitality experience with premium dining, networking opportunities, and pitch-side views of the international polo match, where top-tier teams from the USA take on UK professionals. Throughout the match, live commentary will be guiding guests through the rules, strategies, and excitement of the game, ensuring everyone can fully engage with and appreciate the sport, regardless of whether you're a polo enthusiast or not.



From 3:00pm onwards, the event opens to the public and the atmosphere shifts into full celebration mode with Ham Polo Club's iconic Friday Night Polo Party. A high-energy evening filled with music, drinks, dancing, and a live DJ. These vibrant social nights are a much-loved tradition at Ham Polo Club, taking place monthly throughout the season, and this 4th of July edition promises to be the most memorable yet.

Jumping into the weekend, **Saturday 5th July**, kicks off with a fun-filled, family-friendly daytime experience at Ham Polo Club, perfect for all ages. Gates open from 11am and

families can enjoy pony rides, children's entertainment, face painting, and more all set against the thrilling backdrop of live polo matches that will keep you on the edge of your seat throughout the day.

The grounds will come alive with vibrant performing arts, acoustic music sets, country flags flying high, and a boutique shopping village filled with artisan goods and curated brands. Guests will be able to relax with a drink in hand from one of our pop-up bars or Champagne stations, and savour delicious eats from a variety of American BBQ food stalls.



As the sun sets, the energy will shift and the atmosphere transforms into a high-energy summer party. With live music, DJs, and dancing into the night, the evening is tailor-made for the festival-loving crowd, looking for something unique, stylish, and full of summer spirit.

**Board Member of Ham Polo Club, Howard Davis** said: *Building on Ham's long standing connection with the US Polo Club of Newport Rhode Island where international matches UK-US were played for many years prior, our special polo relationship continues that tradition as the 'Union Jacks v Stars & Stripes' will showcase our polo fellowship from both sides of the pond for a fantastic Independence weekend on the banks of the Thames in Richmond!*

**Polo Player & Board Member of Ham Polo Club, Benjie Davis** said: *This stunning new two day event is not just a highlight of the summer social calendar, it is also an extravaganza of international club polo. Ham will take on four visiting American clubs over two days in a never before seen line up of sporting action. This festival has everything; luxury hospitality, high adrenaline sport and glamour all at Ham Polo Club, the most beautiful location for polo in the UK.*

*The Independence Cup is set to be the ultimate summer party you won't want to miss. It's not just about polo; it's about celebrating in style and creating new summer traditions. Whether you're a polo enthusiast, social butterfly, or simply after an unforgettable day out, this is the event of the season. The only question is; will you be cheering for Team USA or backing the UK from the sidelines?*

Tickets to the event are on sale and selling fast so make sure you don't miss out.

Find out more at <https://www.hampoloclub.com/4th-of-july>

Book now on Eventbrite - [Friday](#) & [Saturday](#)





# 20mph and the Rise of Moral Rule When Liberalism Turns Inward

By James Knight

Cllr Gareth Roberts, Leader of Richmond Council and self-styled saviour of London's streets, is once again lecturing local residents in moral absolutes rather than engaging with legitimate concerns. His recent article in this week's *Evening Standard* trumpets the supposed success of 20mph zones with the zeal of a convert, using emotional manipulation and selective statistics to shut down all debate.

Let's be clear: we all want safer streets. But what Roberts offers is neither a balanced nor honest conversation. It's political theatre. His piece relies on emotional blackmail, invoking the spectre of dead children to portray anyone with doubts as selfish or heartless. "If that child gets home from school at all," he warns ominously, as though disagreeing with blanket speed limits is akin to endorsing road death.

This is a textbook use of **pathos**, appealing to emotion rather than reason. Roberts doesn't merely argue his case; he moralises it. To oppose his policy is not just to be wrong; it is to be immoral.

He also employs **false dichotomies**; you either support 20mph limits, or you side with dangerous driving. Yet life, governance, and transport policy are rarely so black and white. In fact, many residents, including car users, would welcome reasonable speed limits near schools, hospitals, and busy high streets. What they reject, quite rightly, is the one-size-fits-all approach that treats a congested town centre the same as a quiet suburban cul-de-sac.

If this sounds familiar, it should. It's exactly the argument made in Wales, where the Labour-led government imposed a default 20mph limit across residential areas, triggering a backlash so large that over 460,000 people signed a petition to repeal it, marking the largest in Welsh political history. Why? Because ordinary people, not just "selfish drivers", felt unheard, overruled, and inconvenienced by a policy that damaged livelihoods and lengthened journeys without proportionate benefits.

Roberts claims the data now "vindicates" Richmond's policy, pointing to recent TfL statistics that show reductions in accidents. However, he overlooks the wider picture. There remains no conclusive evidence that blanket 20mph zones reduce overall casualty figures more effectively





than targeted enforcement in high-risk areas. Additionally, the TfL figures, while promising, cover only limited sites with enforcement and do not represent the borough-wide picture he presumes.

Worse still, the 20mph policy is failing the test of public consent. It is visibly unpopular. Residents are confused, frustrated, and increasingly resentful of how it's enforced. Even police forces are showing signs of reluctance to support blanket 20mph enforcement, recognising the growing public backlash. When drivers are fined for going 24mph down Sixth Cross Road, while shoplifters and antisocial behaviour remain unchallenged, it sends a corrosive message: that the law is more interested in punishing ordinary motorists

than in protecting communities. This breakdown in trust between the public and the police is genuine, and it's escalating.

And yet, his tone is triumphant. He speaks not as a humble public servant open to scrutiny, but as a crusader declaring victory, even if the battlefield was never his to begin with. Perhaps most troubling is how modern liberalism, once the champion of individual freedom, now seeks to impose its worldview with moralistic certainty. Roberts doesn't debate—he condemns. Like Mill's educated elite or Cowling's ruling class, today's liberals no longer persuade; they instruct. Challenge their policies, and you're not merely mistaken—you're morally suspect. In this post-democratic age, public consent is optional; deference is required.

In Richmond upon Thames, we deserve better than that. We deserve leadership that **listens**, that understands that effective road safety isn't about slogans or score-settling, but **data, balance, and common sense**. And we certainly deserve policies shaped by our communities, not imposed on them with a sanctimonious smile and a headline in the *Standard*.

## Next week at Richmond Council

On Tuesday, 27<sup>th</sup> May, the **Licensing Sub-Committee** will convene to discuss the opposed licence application for Clouded Connection, 8 Broad Street, Teddington. The online meeting will begin at 7 p.m.

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](#)



# Holy Trinity News

## 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. Thank you to those who have already volunteered to help prior to the event and on the day, you should by now have received details of the plan for the day. If you are free on Monday, please do pop in for sandwiches, cakes and refreshments - you can also lend a helping hand with any tasks as needed.

## Eco Church - "Get on your bike"

You've heard the phrase "Get on your bike"!! Well, as part of our Eco Church programme, we are keen to promote cycling as much as we can. There are several plans in the pipeline and one of them is cycle racks. Do you cycle to church, or would you if you could? Would you find a small cycle rack useful? Where is the best place to put it. Please let us know your thoughts. Email [ecochurch@htchurch.org](mailto:ecochurch@htchurch.org).

## Gardening Social

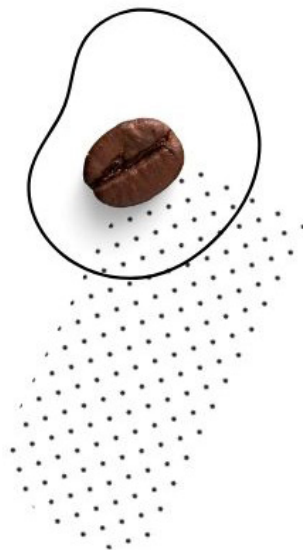
The final gardening morning for this term will take place on Saturday 28 June. Gardening mornings run from 10.30am-12.30pm (please bring along gloves and tools if you have them).

# 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

# Concerts, culture and community: Richmond to host major European twinning celebration this June

From Richmond Council

Richmond upon Thames will celebrate a major milestone in its international relationships from 6 to 8 June, as it hosts a Twinning Reaffirmation Weekend to mark 65 years of friendship with Fontainebleau in France and Konstanz in Germany.

The celebration, rooted in decades of cooperation and exchange, will bring together residents, schools and community groups for more than 50 events across the borough – from joint concerts, school twinning activities and sporting fixtures to exhibitions, heritage tours and informal gatherings – all designed to reflect the depth and diversity of Richmond upon Thames' international links.

Councillor Gareth Roberts, Leader of Richmond Council, said:

*"Town twinning is far more than symbolic – it's practical, personal and profoundly important. It strengthens shared learning between communities, creates opportunities for young people, and connects our borough to a wider global story of collaboration, peace and friendship."*

*"This summer's reaffirmation weekend will be a visible and vibrant celebration of everything we've achieved together – and everything we're still building."*

While this June's Twinning Reaffirmation Weekend reaffirms the formal commitment between the councils, it also celebrates the many grassroots connections that have flourished over the years. The bond between Richmond, Fontainebleau and Konstanz extends far beyond official exchanges – with local chess and bridge groups, polo and tennis clubs, and schools all maintaining deep, long-standing relationships with their counterparts abroad.

Events will be taking place across the borough – from Orleans House Gallery to local schools and public spaces. Highlights include:

- Civic ceremonies with official delegations from France and Germany
- Performances by local schools and youth groups
- Joint concerts, exhibitions and cultural exchanges with international guests
- Community showcases led by clubs, societies and residents who have built lasting ties with their European counterparts

*"Twinning is about building connections, bringing together towns and cities from different countries to share ideas, celebrate culture and support one another,"* added Councillor Roberts. *"Richmond's ties with Fontainebleau and Konstanz, both established in the 1950s, are among the longest-standing and most active partnerships in London."*

Earlier this month, Councillor Roberts visited Konstanz as a guest of the city's Mayor, a trip generously funded by the City of Konstanz, reinforcing the ties first established between the towns in the aftermath of World War II. That visit included exchanges on youth engagement, environmental policy and civic planning, underscoring the ongoing value of international partnerships in addressing shared challenges.

Richmond's twinning programme continues to evolve, with the June celebrations acting as a springboard for deeper collaboration in areas such as education, arts, sustainability and community wellbeing.

The Twinning Reaffirmation Weekend is just the start, with further twinning-related events taking place across the summer.





# Lime Bike Pics of the Week

A selection of Cllr. Ehmann's Lime bikes scattered across our pavements





# Kneller Hall School Plans Approved

By James Knight

Plans to convert the former Royal Military School of Music at Kneller Hall into a large private secondary school that had encountered opposition from residents of Whitton, were approved by Richmond's Planning Committee this week.

The application, put forward by Radnor House School and the Dukes Education Group, aims to restore and repurpose the historic Grade II-listed Kneller Hall to accommodate over 1,000 pupils aged 11 to 18. The new institution, to be known as Kneller Hall School, will function as an independent, fee-paying day school with annual tuition fees of £22,290. The proposal includes new classrooms, a sports hall with a swimming pool, a 3G all-weather pitch, and a forest school. The school is anticipated to attract pupils from across London and beyond.

Planning officers characterised the proposal as “broadly compliant” with policy and praised the restoration of the listed buildings, arguing that “very special circumstances” justified the harm caused to Metropolitan Open Land and local biodiversity. The report acknowledged that some elements of the Council's own planning brief for the site, including the delivery of a new public park, had been omitted, but insisted that the overall scheme remained in the public interest.

At the Planning Committee meeting, residents and local councillors expressed their concerns. The school's transport plans were deemed unrealistic, with campaigners warning that the area, already burdened by Turing House School and Twickenham Stadium, could not cope with the additional traffic. Mr Keats, a local speaker, stated that the proposals would exacerbate congestion, jeopardise road safety, and undermine the borough's own policy to reduce car use and promote walking and cycling. He urged councillors to impose stricter controls, including new controlled parking zones, a more effective bus strategy, and safer crossings.

While the school's headteacher, Ms Kavila, promised a green travel plan and emphasised the school's community involvement, critics pointed out that the proposed Community Use Agreement is limited in scope and would not guarantee meaningful public access to facilities. They argued that sports clubs might benefit, but ordinary residents, who were once promised a freely accessible public park, are being left out.

Councillor Jo Humphreys, representing local ward councillors, expressed cautious support for the concept of a school but voiced concerns regarding the proposed access point at Whitton Dene, which she claimed was excessively narrow and unsafe. She also advocated for a more robust, enforceable community use agreement and stricter planning conditions to mitigate traffic, noise, and disruption.

There was also frustration regarding the use of outdated 2013 travel data in the school's transport assessment, as well as the lack of detail on how students would actually reach the site. Critics argued that the application failed to demonstrate how it would mitigate car-dependency, especially since most students would come from outside the borough.

The application itself has taken over two years to reach this stage – a delay that reflects a broader trend in Richmond, where applicants often encounter lengthy waits and costly uncertainty. Developers, charities, and residents alike have expressed concerns that inefficiency within the borough's planning department not only drives up costs but also erodes confidence in the system.

Despite these concerns, councillors voted to approve the application, subject to the completion of a legal agreement. With that obstacle now remaining, residents are left wondering whether the promises of public space and local benefit have once again been quietly traded away – and whether Whitton is, yet again, paying the price.





# Next stage of enabling works begins on Twickenham Riverside regeneration

From Richmond Council

The next stage of preparatory works is set to begin for the much-anticipated regeneration of Twickenham Riverside, marking an important step forward for the project. The scheme – which supports Richmond Council's wider regeneration ambitions and aligns with London's Growth Plan – aims to deliver new homes, improved access to the river, and greener, more welcoming public spaces shaped by community input.

Leader of Richmond Council, Councillor Gareth Roberts, said the start of this next stage marks a major step towards realising a bold community vision for the site and surrounding area. *"Twickenham's riverside has been underutilised for far too long. These early works lay the groundwork for reconnecting our town with the river, creating accessible public spaces, and supporting a vibrant community hub."*

## What's happening now

This next stage of enabling works includes:

- **Site hoardings and fencing:** Securing the site perimeter to ensure public safety
- **Temporary flood defences:** Protecting the area from flood risk during construction
- **Asbestos removal and strip-out works:** Clearing and preparing existing structures in preparation for demolition
- **Ground investigations and local utility diversions:** Undertaking essential surveys to inform and support the construction phase, and diverting high-voltage electric cables to enable their removal from the site.



*"This is a key milestone – with this next stage of enabling works, we're now firmly moving from planning into delivery. Residents will start to see real changes taking place, and we'll keep the community updated as we progress,"* said Councillor Roberts.

Planned features of the Twickenham Riverside scheme include:

- **New public spaces:** Landscaped areas with native planting, terraced lawns, pétanque pitches, tiered seating and a new play area with a treehouse and climbing wall
- **Better connections:** A widened, pedestrian-friendly Water Lane linking the town centre with the river
- **New homes and businesses:** Two new buildings on Water Lane and Wharf Lane providing shops, restaurants and offices at ground level, with 45 residential units above
- **Pedestrianised embankment:** Changes to parking between Water Lane and Wharf Lane (except for Eel Pie Island residents) to prioritise pedestrians and cyclists
- **Active river use:** A new boat storage facility and pontoon to support river-based activities

The Council recognises there will be some disruption during this phase, including changes to car parking in the immediate area. We are working closely with residents, businesses and partners to keep people informed and to minimise impacts wherever possible. Councillor Roberts added: *"This is a milestone for our borough. I acknowledge the disruption these works will cause and want to thank residents for their patience. The end result – a renewed heart for Twickenham – will be well worth it."*

# EU Flag-Waving on the Rates

## Richmond's £75k 'Twinning' Blowout Under Fire

By James Knight

A taxpayer-funded civic celebration in Richmond upon Thames, pitched as a cultural reaffirmation of European friendships, is facing mounting criticism for crossing the line into partisan political messaging.

The borough's Liberal Democrat administration has committed up to £75,000 to stage "Reaffirmation 2025," a three-day event this May that will host delegates from Fontainebleau (France) and Konstanz (Germany), celebrating decades-old town twinning arrangements. As part of the celebrations, the council has placed over a thousand flags across the borough.

Recipients of civic grants for the event include local schools, music groups, and the Richmond in Europe Association, a body that has repeatedly posted anti-Brexit and pro-'Rejoin the EU' content on its social media channels. While the Council insists the event is a benign exercise in "shared values" and community spirit, critics contend that it is increasingly indistinguishable from a taxpayer-funded rally for pro-EU sentiment.

### The EU Anthem, and a Murky Message

Concerns arose when the European Union anthem, Beethoven's *Ode to Joy*, was played during events preceding the reaffirmation weekend, including the unveiling of information panels detailing the history of the programme and a European mural at the A316 underpass in Twickenham. At all these events, the EU flag was displayed disproportionately.

"That was not a neutral act," said Mark from St Margarets, "It was designed to provoke. If they'd played the national anthem of France or Germany, fair enough. But playing the anthem of a political union we voted to leave sends a very deliberate message."

That message may have been on full display behind closed doors as well.

### EU Flag with "Rejoin" in Mayor's Parlour

On 12 March 2025, the Richmond in Europe Association was hosted in the Mayor's Parlour at York House for a planning meeting with senior councillors and civic officers. A [photograph](#) from





the meeting, publicly shared on social media, shows attendees gathered beneath a European Union flag bearing the word “Rejoin” emblazoned across its centre in bold black letters.

“The image speaks for itself,” said a former council officer. “To have that flag in the Mayor’s Parlour, inside a publicly owned civic building, at an official meeting with councillors present, is a direct breach of political neutrality.”

Under the Local Authority Publicity Code, Section 16, councils must not use public funds “to mount publicity campaigns whose primary purpose is to persuade the public to hold a particular view on a question of policy.” Critics say that repeated promotion of EU symbolism and ‘Rejoin’ messaging, particularly at publicly funded events, appears to break the code.

### **Not the First Time Town Twinning Sparks Fury**

Town twinning schemes have long courted controversy. In 2009, Doncaster’s elected mayor cut ties with five twin cities, describing the practice as “a complete waste of money.” In 2011, Bishop’s Stortford voted to withdraw from twinning entirely, citing concerns over cost and irrelevance.

The same frustrations are now being voiced in Richmond. “We’ve got crumbling pavements, and the homeless sent to temporary accommodation miles from home, and now we’re paying thousands for speeches, snacks and concerts for visiting dignitaries,” said one Heathfield pensioner. John from Twickenham said: “The council claims it hasn’t got enough money for social care, but how many other £75ks are being spent on their pet projects?” Brian, a pensioner from Teddington, said: “It’s outrageous. The council had scaled down assistance for pensioners this winter, claiming a lack of funds, but they found money for this extravagance.” Whilst James from Hampton said, “This isn’t twinning. It’s taxpayer-funded nostalgia for a political project we voted to leave.”

### **A Question of Priorities and Accountability**

As preparations for Reaffirmation 2025 continue, residents are left questioning not just the symbolism of the event, but the broader priorities of their council. At a time when frontline services are being cut or scaled back, the use of tens of thousands of pounds in public funds for flag installations, musical performances, and receptions involving overtly political imagery has struck many as tone-deaf.

What began as a symbolic reaffirmation of cultural ties is, in the eyes of many, becoming a lightning rod for deeper frustrations about how public money is spent and who the councils really represents. “This isn’t about France or Germany,” said Sarah from Richmond. “It’s about local politicians trying to reopen the Brexit divisions for their own political gain.”

Whether Reaffirmation 2025 breaches the letter of the Local Authority Publicity Code may ultimately be a matter for the Monitoring Officer and the council auditors. But in the court of public opinion, the verdict is already forming: a community divided, a council under scrutiny, and a celebration many now view not as civic unity, but as civic overreach.

## May Food and Drink News

Summer has shown us its face, but as I write this it's cool and raining. I'm sure sunny days are on their way again, and here are some lovely products for you to enjoy.

First of all, I've been enjoying some award-winning fermented, unpasteurised, live ferments, made with only natural ingredients. They are from **The Cultured Collective** and are really delicious. This **Fennel, Apple and Dill Sauerkraut** (£4.50/235g) is particularly good in a cheese sandwich and the Original Kimchi (£4.75/250g) is a tasty addition to so many meals. The founder, Nicola Peters, started selling from a stall in London markets and the brand has since grown with listings in Ocado, Sainsburys, Whole Foods Market, Planet Organic and many independent stores across the UK. "Fermented foods have played a big part in my own health journey, and I'm delighted that our biggest listings to-date will result in many



more people incorporating fermented foods into their diet." she says. There are a number of different flavours so check Sainsburys and Ocado for these particular two, but there are [others](#) as well to try.



I've discovered a deliciously porcine new flavour of rather splendid crisps: seasoned crisp aficionados **Made for Drink** have joined forces with iconic pork scratchings purveyor **Mr Trotter**. The result is a great sidekick for any beer, cold white wine or G&T. Various flavours from Made for Drink are already available at Waitrose, Ocado and Amazon, but for this one, you'll have to trust me and buy online from [madefordrink.com](http://madefordrink.com).

For a sweet snack that might be small in size, but is really big on flavour and deliciousness, check out the new **Bonne Maman Tartelettes**: crispy mini tarts, filled with tasty fruit or caramel compote. Available in three varieties – zesty Citron, fruity Framboise and indulgent Chocolate Caramel – they offer an easy little moment of pleasure - perfect with a morning cup of coffee, teatime break, or in a packed lunch. Made using the finest ingredients, Tartelettes are crafted from a traditional French recipe, giving a crisp pastry base, and they're individually wrapped. Available in packs of nine from Sainsbury's stores and online from Ocado at £2.00rrp.



I'm always keen to eat more vegetables, but not ultra processed food, so when I had the chance to try new **Veg'chop**, I jumped at it. It's from [Oh So Wholesome](#) - a brand helping us eat more plants, in easy ways. Made only from real, wholefoods, it contains 10 plants in every bite, from ingredients we know, and with no hidden nasties. Not only is it a low ultra-processed food, but it's super high in protein and fibre, and an easy ingredient for so many dishes. Just launched in two tasty flavours: Original and Mexican, Veg'chop is packed with pulses, seeds and vegetables, delivering a rich, savoury taste with a slightly nutty flavour at its core. It's a super versatile ingredient that can be chopped into curries, stirred through sauces, added to pasta sauces or pizza and served in salads and sandwiches. £3 for a 250g pack it's available from Tesco.





If, like me, you're a fan of a good cocktail, but rarely summon up the energy to make one, these ready to drink cans from **The Drinks Bureau** offer seriously tasty cocktails in cans and party boxes. Made with premium ingredients - vegan and allergen free - the award-winning cocktails taste like bar-made drinks - without the faff! RTD 150ml 10% abv cans, retail at £15 for a 4-pack. Available in Spicy Margarita, Passionfruit Martini and Espresso Martini, each also comes as a party box of 10 servings retailing at £30 each. The latest additions to the collection are no & low alcoholic cans: Shirley Temple - a non-alcoholic treat and Dirty Shirley - 5% abv. [The Drinks Bureau](https://www.thedrinksbureau.com), [Notonthehighstreet.com](https://www.notonthehighstreet.com) and [Amazon](https://www.amazon.com).

Having pioneered sparkling wines in cans, first launched in 2018, **The Uncommon's** first ever still wine collection - a white and rosé affectionately known as **Clarence and Penelope** - is now available nationwide via Ocado. Made in Kent, using the very finest English grapes, carefully crafted and overflowing with local character, these wines are perfect for spontaneous sunshine moments. Clarence is a crisp Pinot Blanc & Bacchus at 11% ABV, fresh with a burst of elderflower and a glint of gooseberry. Penelope is a pale English Rosé Pinot Noir also at 11%. It's dry, fruity and packed with notes of strawberry and a hint of raspberry. With sustainability at its core, The Uncommon's vineyard is regeneratively farmed and its range of easy-drinking English wines have the lowest carbon footprint of any wine in the country. All served in attractively illustrated, recyclable aluminium cans. £5.95 per 250ml can at [ocado.com](https://www.ocado.com) Also available in 4 x 250ml (£26) and 8 x 250ml (£48) on [wearetheuncommon.co.uk](https://www.wearetheuncommon.co.uk)



I know we tend to think of Cava when we see the name **Codorníu**, and the history of Codorníu is closely linked to the production of cava, but the company has also been involved in the production of still wines for many years. In fact, the Codorníu family has been producing still wines in Spain since the 16th Century, long before the first bottle of cava was produced. Perfect for those chillier days that we are still having, despite the recent heatwave, this organic **Tempranillo from Codorníu** showcases fresh aromas of red berries, subtle cocoa, and spicy notes from oak aging. Its balanced profile and smooth finish make it an excellent match for tapas, pasta dishes, or perhaps a steak, hopefully cooked on that barbecue! **Codorníu Tempranillo Organic Red** - £10.50 from Ocado.

And finally, when the sun has got its hat on, how about this idea: a sparkling rosé float? Take a glass of this rather wonderful **Louis Couturier Crémant de Bordeaux Rosé** (£10 Tesco). The wine has delicate bubbles and aromas of red fruits, and is delicious on its own of course. For a change, try serving it in a chilled flute with a spoonful of frozen sorbet. Strawberry sorbet is recommended as it will bring out the citrus notes... resulting in a delicious sparkling float.



Cheers.



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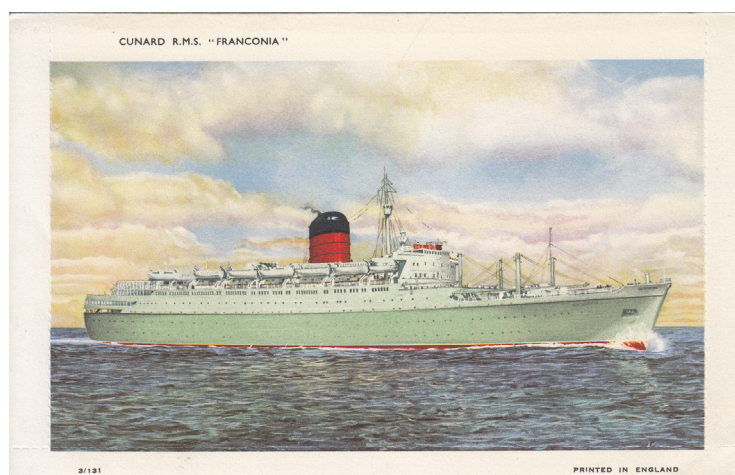
# The Cunard 185<sup>th</sup> Anniversary

Teresa Read

Cunard's 185<sup>th</sup> anniversary takes place on 27 May 2025. Festivities are planned to begin on 26 May, when Cunard's newest ship, Queen Anne, arrives in the Mersey. *"Her Royal Highness, The Princess Royal, will lead Cunard's much-anticipated 185th anniversary celebrations in Liverpool on the 27th, as the luxury cruise line marks 185 years of maritime heritage."* (Cunard)

My father-in-law, Captain Phillips Almond Read, DSC, RD, RNR, was at sea on Cunard ships for most of his working life; he sailed on MV Georgic, RMS Samaria, RMS Mauretania, RMS Caronia, RMS Franconia, and RMS Queen Mary.

During the Second World War years Captain Read served as an Allied Warship Commander on the Royal Navy Defence and Security Committee and the Royal Naval Reserve (RNR).



Left: Captain Phillips Almond Read, DSC, RD, RNR  
Centre: Newspaper article  
Above: RMS Franconia

At the age of 57 Captain Read dived overboard the Cunard passenger ship Franconia to repair a leak; he was under water for 55 minutes with only five minutes of air supply left in his diving equipment when he resurfaced.

The Franconia, a 22,000-ton passenger ship, was on its way to Madeira when the leak started in the stern gland propeller on the way to Tangiers on Christmas Eve. There was little chance of rescue as religious holidays were underway at the time.

Captain Read, who was under water for 55 minutes, told newspaper reporters that he did not think he was too old to go down *"It all depends on how old you feel and at 57 I still feel a young man. I was the only person on board qualified to do the job."*

On arrival in Tangiers Captain Read and the ship's senior mechanic carried out further work on the stern gland propellor, and the Franconia arrived at its destination on time.

WorldInfozone: Atlantic Ocean <https://worldinfozone.com/oceans.php?country=Atlantic&type=facts>



The Cunard 185th Anniversary - cont.  
Teresa Read



RMS Queen Mary





ABSTRACT OF THE LOG OF THE CUNARD STEAM-SHIP COMPANY LIMITED  
**R.M.S. "QUEEN MARY"**  
Captain F. G. Watts, R.D., R.N.R.  
SOUTHAMPTON TO CHERBOURG AND NEW YORK


Date (1962)	Distance	Latitude	Longitude	Weather, etc.
Thurs., Sept. 13		N.	W.	At 1134 BST (1034 GMT) left berth, Southampton
" " "				At 1327 BST (1227 GMT) Nab Tower abeam—Dep.
" " "				At 1610 FT (1510 GMT) C.H. 1 buoy abeam—
" " "				Depart Cherbourg
Friday .. 14	483	49.53	14.02	At 1942 FT (1842 GMT) C.H. 1 buoy abeam—
Saturday .. 15	719	48.04	32.07	Arrival Cherbourg
Sunday .. 16	720	43.40	48.08	Moderate E.S.E. to Southerly breeze; slight sea; low swell
Monday .. 17	729	41.12	64.08	Light variable breezes; slight sea; low swell
Tuesday .. 18	442	to Ambrose	Chan. L.V.	Strong variable breezes; moderate sea and swell
" " "				Light Westerly breezes; slight sea; low swell
Total	3,093	nautical miles		At 0536 EDT (0936 GMT) ACLV abeam—Arrival
				At 0858 EDT (1258 GMT) alongside Pier 90, N.Y.

PASSAGE — 4 days, 14 hours, 54 minutes  
REDUCED SPEED (for arrival) — 18 hours, 19 minutes  
AVERAGE SPEED — 27.89 knots

RMS Queen Elizabeth

RMS Queen Mary

RMS Queen Mary Log



R.M.S. "Queen Elizabeth"

Juices: Apple - Tomato - Sauerkraut - Pineapple

**HORS D'ŒUVRES**  
Chilled Honeydew Melon  
Smoked Scotch Salmon with Capers  
Chilled Crab Flake Cocktail  
Oignons à la Grecque  
Portugaise Sardines  
Cod Ross, Ravignone  
Filets d'Andouille  
Olives: Green - Ripe - Californian

**SOUP**  
Consommé Montmorency  
COLD: Consommé en Gelée  
Cream of Asparagus

**FISH**  
Poached Fillets of Brill, Café de Paris  
Grilled Silver Hake Steak, Mirabelle  
Fried Fillets of Lemon Sole, Tartare Sauce

**ENTREES**  
Boned Sirloin of Beef Piqué, London House  
Pigeon en Cocotte, Paysanne  
Braised Smoked Ox Tongue, Florentine, Sauce Oporto

**SPECIALITY**  
Scallopi Imbotti  
Very thin escalope of Veal, seasoned and sprinkled with grated Parmesan Cheese, covered with a slice of ham and topped with an additional escalope of Veal. Diced in whipped egg and bread crumbs and cooked in butter. Cured with sliced mushrooms cooked in red wine with chopped shallots, garlic and parsley. Served and garnished with sautéed potatoes and shallots.

**JOINT**  
Roast Leg and Shoulder of English Lamb, Mint Sauce

**GRILL (to order)**  
Entrecôte Steak, Mushrooms  
Barbecued Ham Slice with Glazed Peaches  
Split Veal Kidney en Brochette

**RELVE**  
Roast Chicken, farci, Chipolata Sauce, Game Chips

**DINNER**

**SUGGESTED MENU**  
Jus de Tomate Frappé  
Consommé Montmorency  
Filet de Barbeue Poché, Café de Paris  
Poulet Rôti à l'Anglaise  
Haricots Verts  
Soufflé Clementine  
Dessert  
Café

**VEGETABLES**  
Garden Peas  
French Beans  
Rizotto Piemontaise  
Carrots, Vichy  
Golden Corn Sauté au Beurre

**POTATOES**  
Boiled New  
Delmonico  
Château  
French Fried

**COLD BUFFET**  
Roast Ribs of Beef, Horseradish  
Baked Ham  
Jellied Veal  
Calantine of Turkey  
Fresh Braten  
Roast Duckling, Apple Sauce  
Rolled Ox Tongue

**SALADS**  
Hearts of Lettuce  
Coleslaw  
Waldorf  
Sliced Tomato  
Mixed Bowl  
Fresh Fruit

**DRESSINGS**  
French  
Cream  
Tzatziki  
Roquefort

**SWEETS**  
Soufflé Clementine  
Pineapple Cheese Cake  
Fresh Strawberries with Cream  
Petits Fours  
Banana Split Sundae  
Pear Belle-Hélène

**ICE CREAM**  
Vanilla  
Pistachio  
Pineapple  
Hot Chocolate Sauce  
Burnt Almond

**SHERBET**  
Raspberry  
Lemon

**SAVOIRES**  
Welsh Rarebit  
Croûte Ivanhoe

**FRESH FRUIT**  
Apples  
Oranges  
Grapes  
Pears  
Pineapples  
Bananas  
Dates  
Almonds  
Raisins  
Figs  
Assorted Cheeses  
Tea (Hot or Iced)  
Coffee (Hot or Iced)

Your individual selection of wine may be purchased from our comprehensive Wine List.  
The Chef invites you to give him an opportunity to prepare your own favourite dish—whether it be a specialty of American, European or Eastern cuisine. He merely asks that you give the Head Waiter sufficient notice to enable your order to be prepared to perfection.  
The Head Waiter will also gladly offer suggestions and advice on dishes to suit your personal taste and if you are on a restricted or special diet, to see that your requirements are met.  
Specialty foods for infants are available for ready service on request.

RMS Queen Elizabeth - Dinner Menu, Thursday 8th July 1965



# Would you take the baby away?

By Deep Patel

~ Life Through the Eyes of a Twickenham Shopkeeper ~



What would you do if you saw a young infant abandoned on the street? I would hope all of us reading this would pick up the infant and take him to safety (of course, this is Twickenham after all...the safest and nicest place in the world) ...taking the infant to safety would obviously be the right thing to do...so what would you do if it was a young fledgling bird?...

You may (or may not) know that as well as being a shopkeeper (some say the most handsome shopkeeper in Twickenham) I am also a senior coordinator for several wildlife rescue charities (you may have come into my shop on Hampton road to buy something and realised that at the same time as serving you, I am jabbering on the phone to someone about picking up an injured pigeon from their garden...that will be me attempting to save a life by multi-tasking in selling you a chocolate bar as well as telling a person what to do if they have an injured pigeon in their garden).

Back to the question I started this article with...if you see a fledgling/infant/juvenile bird looking abandoned in your garden or local park, how many people reading this article right now would attempt to help the fledgling bird by taking it indoors in a box or by taking the bird to the vets for help?

Well...over the past week, it has happened twice when customers have come into my shop holding a small, ventilated cardboard box telling me they “saved” a fledgling bird. Well before you contain a young fledgling, the advice given by London Wildlife Protection and Wildlife Aid is to watch from some distance very quietly to firstly see if the so called “abandoned” bird is actually being looked after and called by the fledgling’s parents (who are often nearby watching the fledgling).

If you have seen that the bird is totally alone after you have observed for around 15 minutes, and no parent birds seem to be attending (you can usually use the,) then you can throw a cardboard box with holes in it over the bird and gently scoop the bird in (like getting a spider in a cup but on a larger scale!). Once you have done so, take the fledgling bird to a local

wildlife centre (not a vet as vets often simply have to euthanize and put to sleep as they don't have the facility to rehab these poor birds). The general rule is, if the fledgling bird looks healthy and other birds (parent birds) are calling to it...leave the fledgling there as most birds spend their first few days on the ground unable to yet fly but learning to do so, guarded and fed by their parents...but if there is immediate danger (a cat or main road next to the fledgling) you can relocate to a safe place very near to where found and watch to make sure the parents are looking after the baby bird well. If the fledgling bird has however been attacked by a predator, please contain him and take to a wildlife centre to get further help.

Did you know that if a cat attacks a bird or mouse, even if the bird looks well; cat claws and fangs harbour a specific bacteria that enter a bird even via a tiny scratch that you may not see under their feathers that causes an infection after 6-12 hours or so and kills the bird... taking to a wildlife centre means the bird will be given life-saving antibiotics and be saved in time. Hence never release cat attacked mice/birds without first getting a wildlife centre to administer antibiotics and assess the situation This is essential...because if we try our best... God does the rest...

Here are two of the nearest Wildlife centres to Twickenham and Richmond should they ever be needed by you or anyone else you know:

Wildlife Aid in Leatherhead KT22 0AL  
Call: 01372 360 404 (they cover all animals)

London Wildlife Protection (they have centres all around London and further out)  
Call: 07909 795 064 (they only cover just birds)

***Remember...***

***“Try your best...God does the rest”***

#### CREATURE-KINDNESS TIP OF THE WEEK:

##### GOT FLIES?

Don't waste your money on fly sprays...that will only mask the problem and is bad for us too... instead get to the root of the problem and remove any uneaten dog/cat food soon after your pet has eaten it, keep food covered up or stored in airtight containers, keep bin lids both outdoors and indoors firmly closed at all times and sprinkle talcum powder in your kitchen bin every few days to keep it dry and mask the smell of rotting foods that flies are attracted to lay their eggs in...always choose a kind way...you will get blessings in your life and have good karma too! Share this tip!

For more tips, email: [InsectLoversUnite@gmail.com](mailto:InsectLoversUnite@gmail.com) or join my Facebook group: “INSECT LOVERS UNITE”. Thank you!



## Calamity Jane

by Music by Sammy Fain, lyrics by Paul Francis Webster

Jamie Wilson Productions and Watermill Theatre at the New Wimbledon Theatre and on tour until 27<sup>th</sup> September

Although based on the 1953 film with Doris Day, this production of *Calamity Jane* feels fresh with infectious energy. It's one of the oldest stories of them all: old friends who are sparring partners discover that their feelings go beyond friendship. Its connection with the real-life figures of Calamity Jane and Wild Bill Hickok is minimal. Set in a Wild West without any native Americans, it makes *Oklahoma* feel like a work of searing realism. Not that anyone will care in a production as charming as this one.



The lack of strict reality is enhanced by Matthew Wright's set, which retains the stage within a stage for the whole piece. This effectively enables slick scenic transitions, supported by Tim Mitchell's lighting, including an ingenious use of a piano as a stagecoach. Many of the singers play their own instruments – a hallmark of Watermill Theatre productions.

Director Nick Winston's revival works well, with gags that enhance rather than overwhelm. Winston, along with Megan Louch, is also responsible for the choreography, which impresses with its leaping hoe-downs to life-enhancing and joyous effect.

The chemistry between Carrie Hope Fletcher's Calamity and Vinny Cole's Bill Hickok is fitful, but they both deliver in their own way. Hope Fletcher has a wonderfully clear voice and brings a charmingly hoydenish quality to the role, even if *Secret Love* doesn't quite achieve the emotional weight that Doris Day achieved.



*Secret Love* may be a classic lesbian anthem, but all seems homely rather than transgressive. Two women set up house together extolling the virtues of a woman's touch. Francis Fryer (Samuel Holmes) complains that he was called after the girl his mother wanted, and attempts drag, disastrously and hilariously, when the advertised female singer fails to show up. A bearded (but not very Wild) Bill Hickok wears a dress for the sheer hell of it in one scene. Calamity Jane herself is at one point mistaken for a man, although I don't think there is any doubt about which loo she would use.

Read Patrick Shorrock's review at [www.markaspen.com/2025/05/14/calamity-jane](http://www.markaspen.com/2025/05/14/calamity-jane)

Photography by Mark Senior

## Boudica

by Tristan Bernays

Questors Productions at the Judi Dench Playhouse, Ealing

Everyone knows Queen Boadicea, if only from her scythed war chariot, impressively seen in the Victorian statue at the foot of Westminster Bridge: a redoubtable British queen quite literally cutting the ground from under the Roman soldiers daring to invade her East Anglian kingdom.

Bernays' play retells the history of Boudica, as her name is written in contemporary texts, Queen of the Iceni and her struggle to regain her kingdom after the death in AD61 of her husband King Prasutagus. Boudica's claim as Queen is summarily quashed by the Romans. She is abused, beaten, scourged, and banished from her own kingdom. Her two daughters are sexually violated, ravished by Roman soldiers. The adamant Boudica, though, is a force to be reckoned with, and she is determined to avenge these atrocities.



Director [David Emmet](#)'s muscular production builds a well-rounded three dimensional exposé of the personalities involved, centring on the eponymous Queen. The action is fast, frenzied and frenetic, and very physical.

The Playhouse's vomitorium stage provides room for all the wild choreographed movement. A back-lit cyclorama presents a bold and luminescent backdrop. The soundscape underlines the action with a sense of foreboding.

[Hannah Victory](#) is a commanding presence, portraying the dignity and nobility of Queen Boudica, in a controlled performance as a self-assured and resilient woman, an iron lady. Yet, she is a woman whose vulnerability is as a mother, drawn by her relationship with her daughters. [Sophie George](#) presents the elder sister Blodwynn as growing even more resolute, keen to be an up-there-and-at-'em warrior, whereas her younger sister Alonna has doubts, concerned about the fruitless violence. Kerala McGrail acutely expresses the princess' unease.

[David Hovatter](#)'s supercilious Gaius Suetonius, is haughtily contemptuous of the British as a people. Indeed, the portrayal of the British kings veers close to that of lager louts. Badvoc, played with gusto by [David Erdos](#), for example, comes across as a pugnacious neanderthal. However, [Antony Curran](#) suitably underplays King Cunobeline as circumspect and realistic.

The significance of Queen Boudica in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century has been touted as being about Brexit (!!) or, with more justification, as a feminist icon. Importantly though, *Boudica* makes more real that statue near Westminster Bridge, by retelling a half-known story with great energy and gutsy robustness.



Read Honette Troland's review at [www.markaspen.com/2025/05/13/boudica](http://www.markaspen.com/2025/05/13/boudica)

Photography by Carla Marker



# The Great Gatsby

by Ben Clare based on the novel by F. Scott Fitzgerald

Teddington Theatre Club at the Hampton Hill Theatre until 24<sup>th</sup> May

We not only roar into the Roaring Twenties, but tear into the Roaring Twenties in a most unusual adaptation of Fitzgerald's acclaimed, and much adapted, novel. Ben Clare's new and innovative take tears up the plot of the novel and reassembles it as a fictional dramatic documentary involving its eponymous Jay Gatsby.

Nick Carraway becomes a narrator, who travels with us from the American Dream and on into the relationships between the main personae of Fitzgerald's novel. We move through a melee of characters and tumbling action. The production begins with a return to the early 1920's in a magnificent dance sequence by a very talented group of young dancers: their routines throughout are stunning. Indeed the choreography (by Emma Knight) throughout is such as is rarely seen on the amateur stage and is undoubtedly the main show-stopper.



Once the opening chorus is over, we approach the actual drama, as related by Carraway. Carraway is a Yale University graduate who moves from New York to pursue a career in bonds, and he recounts the events two years later, via a series of cross-chronological flashbacks. Jasper Loxton, in this role, steers us through the entire evening's entertainment, in a fine and authoritative performance. His strength of character stays throughout, and is the production's greatest success.

Jay Gatsby is a self-made millionaire who, in his youth, courts the young Daisy, throwing parties to impress her and to show her off to others. Ellie Armstrong gives a steady and moving Daisy.

However, Daisy later marries the quick tempered Tom Buchanan. That marriage is much of a sham and Tom subsequently acquires a mistress, Myrtle Wilson. Josh Clarke puts across well the arrogance and impetuosity of Tom. Alex Farley excels as George Wilson, the husband of Myrtle, who is killed in a car accident. Wilson's grief is most movingly played.

Gatsby, played by Ian Kinane is a difficult character to react to and even like. Gatsby's scenes with Daisy, with whom he re-establishes contact, are the only times we feel at home with him. He is an enigmatic, isolated person, the lone wolf away from the others. In this respect, Kinane gives an impressive and believable performance.

*The Great Gatsby* is an ambitious, far-reaching and original creation. Director Ben Clare has soared the heights in what is achievable in small-scale staging, with a production that, in spite of its convoluted approach, is imaginative, energetic and hugely enjoyable.



Read Ralph Stanhope's review at [www.markaspen.com/2025/05/22/gatsby](http://www.markaspen.com/2025/05/22/gatsby)

Photography by Steve Sitton





# HAMPTON CHORAL SOCIETY

Saturday 21 June 2025, 7.30pm

Songs and Sonnets  
*George Shearing*

Feel the Spirit  
*John Rutter*

Five Mystical Songs  
*Ralph Vaughan Williams*

Musical Director Emma Warren  
with professional soloists & musicians

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

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

Charity Number 261788



# Bella the Blind Street Dog

By Alison Jee

I first met Jo Brown, Bella's owner, when playing tennis in Richmond.



She and her partner brought Bella with them while they played tennis and, not surprisingly, we started chatting about Bella. It's not every day that you encounter a totally blind dog, let alone one with such an interesting and uplifting story...

Now Jo has written a book about Bella – **Bella, the journey of A Blind Street Dog** – and it's ghost written on behalf of Bella. It really is a delightful read.

Jo has lived in Mortlake for 20 years. A sport scientist, working with children and young people, helping them become more active, she's a lifelong keen squash player who plays competitively and was capped for England.

She tells me about adopting Bella: *"I had a cat called Jonny. He died age 16 from a short illness. Jonny and I were so close. I regarded myself as a 'cat person' and knew very little about dogs, although I love all animals. These days with YouTube and social media you get more information – visually – about the tough life many cats and dogs experience.*

*Anyway, Jonny's death was profoundly moving and difficult. My partner and I both felt that we couldn't just get another cat. Grief takes everyone differently, but I knew that I needed to wait. But the house was so empty without an animal life in it. It was tough coming home; it was as if the house was grieving.*

*One day, Bella's picture 'appeared' on my partner's phone. I didn't know about the charity Soi Dog, and I still don't know how I ended up looking at a picture of Bella – that's social media for you! But the moment I saw her I had this odd thought, 'that's my dog.'*

*I knew Bella was blind. She was young and had been rescued from the street.*

*I was thinking, 'maybe we could give this dog a home.' She was only around one year old so why should she spend her whole life in the sanctuary? Most people want sighted dogs and her chances of adoption were not great, in spite of being so young and healthy.*

*It went from there. In fact, when we contacted the charity in Thailand about adopting her, they said there had been a mistake. Her photo should have been withdrawn as people in Germany were going to adopt her. It was devastating news, even though we didn't know Bella. It felt wrong. And then 2 weeks later I got a message; 'Bella is back on; the adoption fell through.'*  
*So it was destiny.*

*Perhaps knowing not much about dogs was an advantage. We didn't overthink it. Bella comes from generations of street dogs. They live aside society – some street dogs have quite good lives, some not. The big dangers are infection and the cruelty from humans. But some people look after the street dogs giving them food.*

*As a street dog, Bella had never been in a house before! The charity warned us that street dogs often arrive at their new home and want to sleep outside – that's normal to them! Even today it's not that warm but Bella is asleep outside.*

*There were so many things she had to adapt to, not just as a blind dog but as a street dog now living the life of a domestic English dog.*

*People here have been wonderful. Bella's blindness touches a nerve in people; we see tremendous compassion and interest in her. Once I was banging on each step in turn as Bella was coming downstairs (only 3 steps) in a coffee shop and people around were crying! It's very moving to see how people respond to her.*

*Small children burst into tears and covered their eyes when they realized Bella was blind. So many people ask her story – i must have told it over a thousand times. We have seen the best of human nature in people's interest and response to her.*

*Bella is very much a street dog. You can take the dog out of the street, but you can't take the street out of the dog – we can see that toughness that was needed to survive. I admire that. I admire her courage and her determination. She has no self-pity and doesn't regard herself as special needs. She is very inspirational.*

## **How does a street dog come from the streets of Phuket to Richmond on Thames?**

**It was a story that needed to be told!**

Jo has now written a delightful book on behalf of Bella – more information is [here](#)  
And you can meet Bella and find out more about her story on the link [here](#)





Welcomes you to our...

# OPEN DAY



2025

**SUNDAY**

**29TH JUNE**

**11AM - 3PM**

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Visiting Times for the Public: Sun 12 - 4pm and Wed & Fri 8-11pm.  
More information: [www.twickenhamyc.co.uk](http://www.twickenhamyc.co.uk)



# St Mary's University

## Free Toolkit for Schools to Teach Ecology

A free teaching toolkit for lessons on the Catholic Church's approach to ecology has been re-launched by St Mary's University, Twickenham, ahead of Laudato Si' Week from 24-31 May.



A free teaching toolkit for lessons on the Catholic Church's approach to ecology has been re-launched by St Mary's University, Twickenham, ahead of Laudato Si' Week from 24-31 May.

The Laudato Si' Champions Project at St Mary's University, a workstream from the [Guardians of Creation Project](#), is providing a ready-made, six-lesson [toolkit](#) which gives all educators everything they need to explore the intersection of Catholicism and ecology with students of all ages.

At the heart of the toolkit is the concept of integral ecology, developed by Pope Francis in 2015 in his encyclical *Laudato Si'*. Pope Francis refers to the idea that human activity and the natural world are deeply connected, and that, consequently, care for creation and care for humanity are inseparable.

The toolkit includes:

- Six presentations and worksheets.
- Guidance for teachers.
- Student workbook.
- Key terms sheet.
- A certificate for students.

The resources have been successfully trialled in a variety of settings - from twelve 30-minute sessions in a weekly eco-committee at lunchtime to three two-hour sessions in timetabled Religious Education lessons. [Download the toolkit](#)

### Proven Impact on Students

The toolkit was developed following a one-year pilot programme of teaching and learning delivered to 225 students in Catholic schools in the Diocese of Salford, and was refined both pedagogically and theologically, with the help of the project's advisory board.

A 2022 survey showed that 67% of Catholic secondary school students had not previously heard of *Laudato Si'*. The results showed a significant improvement in student understanding of the Catholic Church teaching on ecology (98%) after engaging with the toolkit, as well as:

- An increased sense of responsibility to care for creation increased from 44% to 76%
- Confidence in understanding of climate change rose from 42% to 80%
- Students conveyed a stronger conviction that their actions contributed to addressing climate change.

The Laudato Si' Champions toolkit has been designed to align with the requirements of the Catholic Schools Inspectorate's National Framework and the guidance of the Religious Education Directory.

Laudato Si' Champions is a workstream of the Guardians of Creation Project – an interdisciplinary research programme between the Diocese of Salford and St Mary's University to investigate paths for sustainable and ecologically sensitive change in the Catholic Church.

[The toolkit](#) is available on our website, or email the Guardians of Creation Team on [gocp@stmarys.ac.uk](mailto:gocp@stmarys.ac.uk)

*"Addressing the climate crisis is one of young people's top priorities. The Laudato Si' Champions toolkit speaks directly to students' ecological concerns, enabling teachers to educate and empower their pupils with the help of Catholic Social Teaching."*

Dr Jakub Kowalewski, Senior Laudato Si' Research Fellow, St Mary's University, Twickenham

*"This evidence-based approach to helping young people make the connection between their own agency and the environment will be instrumental in their building of hope and resilience around the ecological crisis."*

Dr Roland Daw, Research Lead, The Guardians of Creation Project, St Mary's University, Twickenham

*"We were delighted to be involved in the Laudato Si Champions project, working closely with St. Mary's University and our pilot schools. I have seen first-hand the impact the resources have had on schools and have heard from students directly on the positive experience they had."*

Dr Emma Gardner, Head of Environment, Diocese of Salford

*"The cross-curricular opportunities for children to study and learn about the global climate crisis and its consequences are abundant and critical to the future health and efficacy of the planet. The adaptability of the resources for children with learning needs and children with English as an additional language make this programme accessible for all."*

Dr Louise McGowan, Headmistress, St Claudine's Catholic School for Girls, London



St Mary's  
University  
Twickenham  
London



# A-Level Philosophy and History Students Visit Westminster Abbey

From Richmond College

In late April, our A-Level Philosophy, Ethics and Religion students, along with A-Level History students, had the opportunity to visit the historic Westminster Abbey in central London.

Students were invited to attend a private tour of the Abbey, guided by the fantastic Lou, who brought the Abbey's significance and history to life. During the tour, students encountered the tombs of monarchs and some of the most influential figures in intellectual history, including Charles Darwin and Stephen Hawking.

The visit deepened students' understanding of key philosophical and historical ideas, including exploring the relationship between science and religion. Students were able to bring context to some of the deep questions explored in class – Is there a higher power? Is there such a thing as the afterlife? Does science conflict with religion?

See what our philosophers thought of the trip:



Jessica:

*"I enjoyed the fact that we were able to access spaces within the Abbey that others wouldn't be able to, and so we were able to see a lot of historical places and learn a lot of facts about them. I particularly liked touching the oldest door in England and learning about sacred geometry. I also thought that being able to see really old rooms and places that monks once were was an amazing experience. Our tour guide was also lovely and answered any questions I had, which deepened my understanding of history and the cathedral itself. The cathedral was also very beautiful!"*

Thurrayia:

*"I personally found the trip to Westminster Abbey very fun, it felt like a huge help with understanding more about the study of Christianity, because actually looking at the art in person helped me to understand and learn more about its importance and significance in depicting Christian ideas. Also, the church was pretty, so it was fun to walk around and look at it."*

Jasmine:

*"I really enjoyed Westminster Abbey; it was a very interesting trip. I particularly enjoyed seeing what the patterns meant in Christianity. I learnt a lot of new facts, and what was cool was seeing parts of it that other visitors did not have the privilege of. It also gave me a greater understanding of philosophy that I can use to help my studies."*

[Check out our course options and apply for September 2025 here.](#)



**Richmond upon  
Thames College**

# Join Shepherd's Star for a free six-week programme

From Shepherd's Star

Looking to make your summer meaningful? Register now to learn new skills, boost your confidence, improve your wellbeing, and reconnect with the community.

Local charity [Shepherd's Star](#) is hosting a socially engaging personal development programme running one day per week, over six weeks. Offering a supportive, inclusive and low-pressure learning environment, the Explore programme is designed to encourage adults who are unemployed, on a low income, suffering from mental ill health, and/or experiencing social exclusion to try new things!

The free Explore programme will feature complementary meals and a diverse range of workshops and activities, including money management, personal empowerment, health and wellbeing, gardening, cooking, baking, and DIY.



To date, 81% of Explore participants have progressed onto further volunteering, study, apprenticeship, and work opportunities. Explore can help you take the next step.

- **Dates:** Tuesdays 11 June to 16 July 2025
- **Time:** 10am to 3pm
- **Location:** United Reformed Church, First Cross Rd, Twickenham, TW2 5QA

[Register for the Explore programme.](#)





# Decorated soldier named as new Chair of veterans' charity

Richard Williams MC has been named as the new Chair of veterans' charity Royal Star & Garter. He succeeds Major General (Ret'd) Tim Tyler CB, who reaches the end of his term of office in July, after a decade as Chair. The former Welsh Guardsman, who has been sitting on the Royal Star & Garter Board of Governors as Chair Designate since January this year, said *"It is a privilege to support former members of the Armed Forces through our charity's important work."*



Tim Tyler has played an instrumental role in the growth of the charity, supporting the development of the newest Home in High Wycombe, championing the recent merger with Care for Veterans and helping to steer the charity through the many challenges of the coronavirus pandemic. Royal Star & Garter provides loving, compassionate care to veterans and their partners living with disability or dementia. The charity has care homes in Solihull, Surbiton, High Wycombe and Worthing, with wider services reaching out into the community and nationwide.

Richard's appointment as Chair follows an extensive recruitment process. He will focus on developing the charity's strategy for the next decade with a focus on reaching more veterans and their families across the country.

Richard was commissioned into the Welsh Guards in 1986 and returned to the Army after university. He went on to a number of training and command roles and served in many theatres throughout a varied operational career. While serving under the United Nations in Cambodia in the early 1990s, Richard was involved in multiple operations to enable the emerging peace process. As a team medic he helped save the lives of more than 100 civilians, combatants and UN personnel. His role observing and reporting on the fighting brought him into regular contact with the notorious Khmer Rouge guerillas, at one stage being captured and held hostage by them. He was awarded the Military Cross for gallantry for his actions in Cambodia.

In 1997, following the death of Diana, Princess of Wales, he led the bearer party of eight Welsh Guardsmen during her state funeral.

Richard left the Army as a Major in 1999 and went on to work at the Cabinet Office and in senior executive roles in insurance and international banking. He has been a trustee of veterans' and youth development charities for over twenty years and volunteers as an Ambulance Service First Responder in the South West. He is married to Sarah and is the father to two grown-up daughters.

Regarding his appointment as Chair, Richard commented: "This is a time of significant change at Royal Star & Garter and I am excited to bring to its Governing Body my experience in overseeing and managing the challenges, risks and opportunities that such change presents. Tim leaves the charity in great shape and as trustees we must continue to build on our strengths and challenge ourselves and the leadership team to be better and do more to reach the veteran community. As a veteran myself, I am thrilled to be involved in our charity's important work to support the Armed Forces family and to look for ways to contribute more to it."

Andy Cole OBE, Chief Executive at Royal Star & Garter, said: *"It is our privilege to welcome Richard into the Royal Star & Garter family as our new Chair. He joins us as we are expanding our reach following a recent merger, helping more veterans and their families than ever before. His experience, knowledge and support will help us continue to provide outstanding care to this country's Armed Forces community."*

Royal Star & Garter is welcoming new residents into its Homes. For more information on this, its other services or to work for the charity, go to [www.starandgarter.org](http://www.starandgarter.org)



# England's 2026 Guinness Men's Six Nations fixtures announced

England's fixtures for the 2026 Six Nations have been confirmed, with two home games at Allianz Stadium.

England will open their 2026 Guinness Men's Six Nations by hosting [Wales](#) at Allianz Stadium on Saturday 7 February.

The team then travel to [Scotland](#) the following Saturday looking to retain the Calcutta Cup, before welcoming [Ireland](#) for their final home match of the tournament on Saturday 21 February.

Steve Borthwick's side will return to action after the fallow week with a trip to Rome to face [Italy](#) on Saturday 7 March.

They will then end their campaign away to reigning champions

[France](#) in what will be the final game of the tournament on Saturday 14 March.



2026 sees the introduction of first ever dedicated men's and women's rugby calendars, aligning the international and domestic game. Within the changes to the calendar, the number of fallow weeks in the Six Nations will reduce from two to one.

The 2026 U20 Six Nations will mirror the Men's Six Nations set of fixtures, with the U20 Championship taking place on the same weekends as the Elite Men's tournament. Fixture dates, kick off times and venues will be confirmed in due course.

## England's 2026 Six Nations fixtures

- England v Wales – Saturday 7 February – 16:40
- Scotland v England – Saturday 14 February – 16:40
- England v Ireland – Saturday 21 February – 14:10
- Italy v England – Saturday 7 March – 16:40
- France v England – Saturday 14 March – 20:10





# Match Preview: Wolves v Brentford

Written by Brentford Football Club

**Analysis, team news, match officials and more. Here's everything you need to know ahead of Brentford's final game of the Premier League season against Wolverhampton Wanderers at Molineux on Sunday (4pm kick-off BST)**

Brentford will close their 2024/25 Premier League campaign against Wolverhampton Wanderers at Molineux on Sunday (4pm kick-off BST).

The Bees are pursuing a second top-half finish in the last three years against a Wolves side who currently sit 14th in the table.

Analysis, team news, match officials and more. Here's everything you need to know ahead of the final game of the season.



## Pre-match Analysis

Stephen Gillett, *Playmaker Stats*: The impact of Wolves' Brazilian duo

Two Premier League Manager of the Season nominees clash this Sunday at Molineux as Vítor Pereira and Thomas Frank aim to inspire their respective sides to victory on the final match week of the 2024/25 campaign.

Named alongside Liverpool's Arne Slot, Newcastle's Eddie Howe and Nottingham Forest's Nuno Espírito Santo on the shortlist for the prestigious annual award, Pereira and Frank have excelled this term albeit in different circumstances.

The well-travelled Pereira took his first-ever Premier League job back in December, when he succeeded Gary O'Neil in the Wolves dugout; the Midlands side were stranded in 19th place at the time with just nine points from their opening 16 games.

Wanderers won two games straight off the bat under Pereira, against Leicester City and Manchester United, and Wolves actually rank joint-ninth for Premier League points won (32) since the former Porto, Olympiakos, Fenerbahçe and Corinthians boss took charge.

No team in the top flight has managed to string together a longer winning streak than Wolves' six-game purple patch back in March and April, after which Pereira scooped the Premier League's Manager of the Month award.

The Portuguese has instilled discipline and defensive solidity, while also squeezing goals out

of his two talented forwards Matheus Cunha (15G) and Jørgen Strand Larsen (14G), the former out-performing his expected goals by more (+ 6.74 xG) than any player in the Premier League this season and Norwegian hotshot Larsen boasting the best shot-on-target percentage (60.4) in the division.

However, it is the Old Gold's midfield pairing of Brazilians João Gomes and André that has arguably played an even greater part in Wolves turning the tide under Pereira.



His move to Wolves on last summer's deadline day largely went under the radar, but former Fluminense dynamo André has quickly established himself as one of the most assured holding players in the top flight and the 23-year-old currently has a better pass completion percentage (92.9) than any midfielder to play 2,000+ Premier League minutes this season.

André's influence has been compounded by how well he dovetails with compatriot Gomes, who ranks fifth in the top flight for tackles won (108) this season, and the pair's technical proficiency and workrate has helped Wolves develop a more measured and secure approach using Pereira's preferred 3-4-2-1 formation.

That said, Gomes ranks third in the top tier for fouls conceded this season - with 68 - and only Bournemouth (506) have had more free-kicks awarded against them this term than Wolves (473); a statistic Brentford head coach Frank will no doubt look to exploit given his side's set-piece expertise.

On the subject of dead-balls, it is worth noting that Wolves are the only team in the Premier League yet to be awarded a penalty this season - and no club has conceded more spot-kicks than the Midlands outfit (nine, though two were saved).

[In search of a 20th Premier League goal of the season \(as is his strike partner Yoane Wissa!\)](#), Bees penalty specialist Bryan Mbeumo will no doubt be hoping for another opportunity from 12 yards after his first-ever Premier League miss last Sunday at home to Fulham.

A fascinating tussle lies in store and, though they need results to go their way, Brentford fans will no doubt hope the Bees' dream scenario of an eighth-place finish and a Europa Conference League spot unfolds on the final day.

## Scout Report

Dan Long, Sky Sports: Wolves can step things up next season

There is no denying Wolves had among the most challenging starts to the Premier League this season.



They knew it would be hard in June, when the fixtures were released. The prospect of facing Arsenal, Chelsea, Newcastle, Aston Villa, Liverpool and Man City across the first eight games was daunting.

And it proved to pan out pretty much exactly as they would have, begrudgingly, imagined; they took one point from the first eight - and it was 11 games before they picked up their first win.

Gary O'Neil had been rewarded with a new four-year contract in the summer, so the club would not be tempted into a knee-jerk sacking at that point.

But when they dropped to second bottom again, after a run of four-straight defeats between 30 November and 14 December, they decided to cut their losses.

Four days after O'Neil's exit, Wolves brought in Vítor Pereira as his successor. The Portuguese - who joined from Saudi Pro League side Al-Shabab - had been linked with the Everton job on several occasions in the past, but a move to Merseyside had never materialised.

The new manager bounce was in full flow as Wolves beat Leicester and Manchester United, then drew with Tottenham, in his first three games. However, another four-match losing streak had some feeling as though they were back to square one.

*"It will be a long way, a tough way, but with this tactical quality and spirit, I am sure that we will be in the Premier League next season,"* Pereira said after his side bounced back with a 2-0 win at home to Aston Villa on 1 February.

At the start of March, things started to click for him. Wolves drew 1-1 with Everton on 8 March, then - seemingly from nowhere - went on a six-game winning streak. It was the first time they had done so in the top flight of English football in 55 years.

By 5 April, they had all-but secured safety for another year, moving 12 points clear of the relegation zone with a 2-1 win at Ipswich.

*"We have quality in the squad,"* said Pereira after the 1-0 win at Old Trafford on 20 April, which mathematically put relegation out of the equation.

*"When we arrived, the confidence was not at a high level. We started to give them confidence, a tactical plan and the results help to build something. We are building something good for the future."*

There will have been no objections to the 56-year-old winning Premier League Manager of the Month award after a perfect April - but the fabled curse that often comes with it has not been kind, with Wolves going on to suffer three defeats on the trot ahead of the final day.

But Pereira has guided Wolves away from real danger in his first six months in England, though, and with plenty of credit in the bank as a result, he should be given the chance to help step things up in 2025/26.

## In the Dugout

Vítor Pereira

Vítor Pereira had a 10-year playing career as a midfielder in the lower leagues of his native Portugal, but hung his boots up at the age of just 28 in 1996 and ventured into youth coaching, first at Padroense, then at Porto.



In 2004, he took on his first role at senior level with Sanjoanense, before two years at Espinho and another two at Santa Clara, with a brief return to Porto in between.

In the summer of 2010, he went back to Porto for a third time, this time to work as assistant to André Villas-Boas - and when his fellow Portuguese left for Chelsea one year later, Pereira

stepped up to become head coach in his own right.

He spent two seasons at Estadio do Dragao, during which time he led the club to two Primeira Liga titles and two Portuguese Super Cups.

Despite reports he was a potential replacement for the outgoing David Moyes at Everton in the summer of 2013, he instead joined Al-Ahli, but left for Olympiacos halfway through a two-year deal.

He lasted just six months there, but oversaw a Super League and Greek Cup double during that time.

Then came spells at Fenerbahçe and 1860 Munich, before he departed for Chinese Super League outfit Shanghai SIPG, where, ironically, he replaced former colleague Villas-Boas.

After three years in China, Pereira briefly returned to Fenerbahçe, before he went to Brazil to manage Corinthians, then Flamengo, before going back to Saudi Arabia to take charge of Al-Shabab.

But six days before Christmas last year, he made the long-awaited move to England when he signed an 18-month deal to replace Gary O'Neil at Wolves.





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