

Twickenham & Richmond Tribune



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TickerTape - News in Brief

Rugby at Twickenham Stadium

ENGLAND v AUSTRALIA

Saturday 1st November, KO 15:10.

Whitton, London & Rugby Roads close 13:10-15:10 and again from 16:40-19:10.

CPZ will operate 11:00-23:00.

Shuttle buses will run from Richmond.

Please note there is no Piccadilly Line at Hounslow so Twickenham may be busier than normal.



The Tree Agency

darryl parkin

The Treehouse
25 King Edwards Grove
Teddington, Middlesex TW11 9LY
Telephone 020 8274 0107
Mobile 07960 123580
Fax 020 8274 0119
info@thetreeagency.co.uk
www.thetreeagency.co.uk



The Tree Agency

The Local Picture Postcard Page - Part 303

Hampton Road Between First and Second Cross Road

By Alan Winter

We had a look last week at the Strawberry Hill Garage which sat between First Cross Road and Second Cross Road. I was subsequently sent several comments about the small parades of shops that were in that stretch of Hampton Road and the newish flats now on the corner of First Cross Road. Thought I would attempt to tidy it all up a bit this week.

Let's have a look at the original postcard that we started with and was kindly sent in by Stanley Stanley with his comments.

"This picture postcard (courtesy of local architect and historian, the late Anthony Beckles Willson) shows the Hampton Road frontage at numbers 8-14 and the original house is still clearly discernible. The name 'Strawberry Hill Garage' dates the picture at around 1930.



These buildings were later demolished, being replaced by a car showroom. The Hampton Road frontage was rebuilt as an Esso service station in the mid-1960's.

The service station closed in 1994 and after a period during which the buildings gradually became derelict, St George plc erected the 14-flat development, Grace Court, in 1996. The name Grace Court alludes to the fact that W.G.Grace occasionally took part in in charity cricket matches on Twickenham Green"

Text courtesy of Tony Bryer.



Our second photo this week is an up to date photo of Grace Court on the corner of First Cross Road. With thanks to Rhona Ferrugia.

We can now record some of the memories that our local residents had of the shops between First and Second Cross Roads. These are very impressive as some go back 60 years or so and some of these shops have not been there for many of those years.

Anita Woodcock – “For the life of me, I can’t remember his name, but a descendant of W G Grace lived for a short while, at the top of Norcutt Road. He was the spitting image of his ancestor and used to drink with my Father. When he wanted his wife, he would bellow out ‘wifey’. They had a young son, this was all c.1980’s. I can’t find a definitive Twickenham connection but there obviously was one.”

Angie Boon - Middlesex Chronicle - Friday 11 April 1969. Image © Reach PLC. Image created courtesy of THE BRITISH LIBRARY BOARD. 1969 advert for Houdaille who owned and operated the Esso Garage.

**THE
HOUDAILLE
CO. LTD.**
(Est. Over 50 Years)
**8-14 HAMPTON ROAD,
TWICKENHAM
(THE ESSO STATION)
Telephone TW1 1281**

Katy Selwyn – Smith - There were 3 sweet shops between 1st & 2nd cross rd. One next to the butchers, Rainbirds between the bakers and shop next to the Prince Albert, and one on the corner of Walpole Rd called Hazel’s. Hazel who ran the sweet shop was also a dancing teacher. I lived at 52 Hampton Rd.

Robert Danny “My mum used to shop at that butchers in the 1950-1960s

and my dad rented a lock up garage behind the petrol station in Hampton Road which was known as the Houdaille if I remember correctly. Someone named Dan was the manager in those days.”

The above comments have all been reproduced from The Twickenham and Teddington History Facebook Group where they have all appeared very recently.

As we reach Second Cross we can take a look at our last photo this week It is of 36 Hampton Road on the corner of Second Cross Road. (Photo Courtesy of Rhona Ferrugia) I invite you to compare the building with the original photo of Strawberry Hill Garage. Both buildings were clearly built to the same style (check roof and windows), but they were a hundred yards or so apart with shops and the Prince Albert pub in the middle.



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Bells to Ring Out Even Brighter

From Jonathan Williams

At St Mary's Hampton the set of eight bells hung for change ringing date back to the building of the current church in 1831. They were cast as a complete set and have been continually used to call people to worship for nearly 200 years. The names of key people at the time the church was built, including the churchwardens, are cast into the tenor, the heaviest bell. The art of change ringing is particular to the UK, with only a few towers with bells mounted for this ancient practice existing abroad.

In the local area, in addition to St Mary's Hampton, only St Mary's and All Hallows in Twickenham have bells hung for change ringing. Otherwise, it is necessary to go further afield to Sunbury, Richmond or Kingston. Bell ringing is an important part of our heritage and bells do not run smoothly for ever without some maintenance. The last significant maintenance at St Mary's Hampton was carried out in 1951, over 70 years ago, when the bells were removed from the tower, tuned and replaced with new fittings. The time has come to repeat this work and fortunately there are still specialist contractors available in the UK for this kind of project.



Over the past five years, St Mary's has been raising the money necessary to carry out the work. The estimated cost is approximately £100,000 and we are pleased to have come close to this figure through a combination of local fundraising and a grant from the Bell Restoration Fund of the Middlesex County Association of Church Bell Ringers.

However, we still have a gap to fill and so this weekend (Saturday 1st November at 6:30pm), the church is staging an evening of meditative songs, piano solos and poetry readings. The listener will be taken on a journey through different genres, texts and presentations. Artists include tenor Jonathan Williams, who sings with the BBC Symphony Chorus; Kate Ledger, an internationally acclaimed concert pianist based in Yorkshire; and local writer and actor Keith Wait.

The concert is free to attend, with a retiring collection in aid of the bell restoration project.

ST MARY'S CHURCH, THAMES STREET, HAMPTON, TW12 2EB

Buses R68, 111 and 216 stop outside. By rail, Hampton Station is 5 minutes walk.

Image © Dnwinterburn

Renters' Rights Act:

Good Intentions, Poor Delivery

By Jonathan Hulley, Conservative Parliamentary Spokesperson for Twickenham

Labour and the Liberal Democrats have introduced the Renters' Rights Act as a historic milestone for tenants. It removes what were once known as "no fault" evictions under Section 21 and replaces them with a broader range of grounds for possession.

The stated aim is for a fairer and more secure rental market. However, the deeper question is whether a law created with good intentions will succeed in practice. For many landlords and tenants, the outcome may differ significantly from what its creators in Westminster have envisaged.



A System Overloaded Before It Begins

Under the new legislation, landlords must demonstrate a specific legal reason before they can reclaim their property. Acceptable grounds include rent arrears, anti-social behaviour, serious breaches of tenancy, or the necessity to sell or to move back into the property. There is also a provision that allows student landlords to recover their properties at the end of an academic year, ensuring continuous turnover in student housing.

In practice, every eviction now requires a full court hearing. The simpler and quicker Section 21 process, which was previously managed on paper, has now disappeared. The civil courts, already under pressure, are expected to handle an even greater volume of complex and contested cases.

Currently, the average possession case takes over thirty weeks to resolve. The introduction of extra hearings, stricter evidential requirements, and new rights to challenge decisions will extend the process even further. Lawyers and judges have warned that unless court infrastructure and staffing are increased, the system could collapse under its own weight.

One solicitor, Sarah Mitchell from Justice for Renters, has said that "*without adequate resources, access to justice becomes a privilege rather than a right.*" It serves as a warning that extends beyond housing law. When the government enacts sweeping reforms without adequately preparing the systems to carry them out, both landlords and tenants are left facing uncertainty.

Fairness Requires Competence, Not Just Good Intentions

This is where the difference in political philosophy becomes evident. The Labour and Liberal Democrat instinct is always to legislate first and consider delivery later. They believe that fairness can be achieved simply by expanding the list of rules and prohibitions. Yet, without the

competence to enforce those rules or the realism to understand how the system operates in practice, fairness becomes an illusion.

Conservatives hold a different perspective. We believe in a property-owning democracy where both tenants and landlords have clear rights and responsibilities. The law should protect the vulnerable while also preserving the confidence of those who invest in and maintain homes. This balance is essential for ensuring a healthy housing supply and stable communities.

The Renters' Rights Act, however, risks disrupting the balance in the wrong way. Many small landlords, who make up a large part of the market in areas like Twickenham, may decide to exit the sector altogether. The result will be fewer rental properties and higher rents for those who stay. Even worse, the withdrawal of good, responsible landlords could create conditions that Britain last saw in the 1970s, when heavy regulation pushed much of the private rental market underground.

During that period, many properties were left unmaintained or fell into disrepair because owners could not afford to invest. In some areas of London, racketeers and slum landlords filled the void, while honest property owners were pushed out of the market altogether.

We should not be so naïve as to believe that history cannot repeat itself. When regulation becomes too burdensome and the government assumes it can legislate trust into existence, the result is often flawed. The law may have good intentions, but it tends to reward the unscrupulous and penalise the responsible.

The Need for a Realistic Approach

The government's pledge of "court readiness" has so far been insufficient. Digital systems remain obsolete, and staff shortages continue to increase. The risk is that Parliament has established a legal framework that looks impressive on paper but fails in practice.

A Conservative approach would have been more cautious. It would have ensured that reforms to tenancy law were accompanied by investment in court infrastructure and clear guidance for both tenants and landlords. It would have focused on steady, achievable change rather than headline-grabbing announcements.

Fairness in housing cannot be achieved through slogans or sweeping decrees. It depends on trust, partnership, and a justice system that works efficiently for everyone. The Renters' Rights Act, while well intentioned, risks undermining all three.

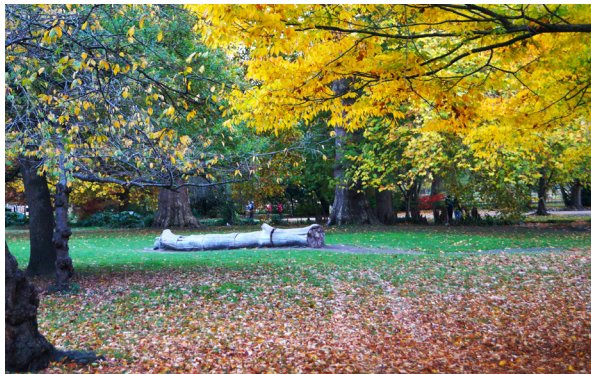
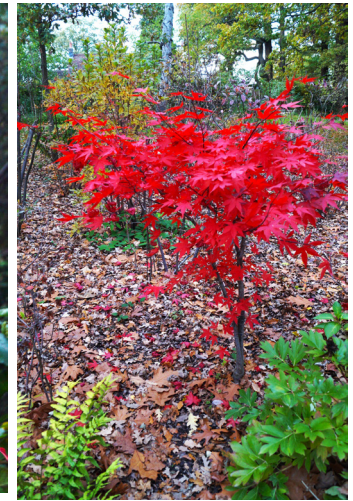
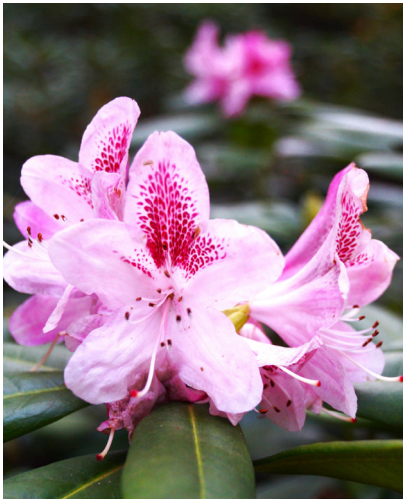
If this legislation is to succeed, ministers must return to fundamental principles: protect those in need, support those who provide homes, and ensure that the courts are properly equipped to uphold the law. Anything less will leave the country with a housing policy that promises fairness but results in frustration.

Ultimately, the lesson is clear. Compassion in politics must be paired with competence. Without it, good intentions cannot replace effective governance.

Autumn Colours

Pictures and words by Doug Goodman

We are so fortunate in Twickenham having two large parks within easy reach. Richmond and Bushey Parks are a delight in every season but in Autumn, as the leaves on the trees change colour, the sights are magnificent.



Dear Tribune,

Nice Work If You Can Get It!

How disappointing it was to read in last week's Tribune that Twickenham Member of Parliament, Munira Wilson, has accepted hospitality worth £1,190 from Allwyn Entertainment Ltd and complimentary membership of the National Liberal Club.

Such behaviour completely undermines the reputation and good name of any member of parliament or official in the same way that Keir Starmer's acceptance of gifts has even though they may be in accordance with parliamentary rules.

One day, when I was a pilot with BOAC (now British Airways), our chief steward came into the flight deck with envelopes of money for all the crew which were tips from a Middle-Eastern ruler who was a passenger. These were not small tips, but considerable amounts amounting to thousands of pounds.

I sent it back unopened with my compliments and a polite message of refusal. The chief steward was amazed that I did so and said that the donator would be offended and, in any case, was so rich that the money meant nothing to him.

I replied that I was the one who was offended because I was doing a professional job with professional pride for which I received a professional salary and that any such tip or gift would undermine my position and authority. Even more insulting was the fact that giving me something that meant nothing to him meant that I, too, meant nothing to him.

A simple personal word of thanks would have been more than enough – just as we get from most of our passengers.

The same applies to members of parliament.

I have contacted her about this but am yet to receive a reply.

MPs should never accept gifts except personal ones from friends and family for birthdays, etc.

They should choose: Give it to charity or, best of all, refuse.

Michael Jay
Hampton

Richmond-Based Business Warns EPR Scheme Creating 'Unfair Market' as Glass Sales Plunge £400,000

From Food4Media

One Water sells spring water in a variety of formats to supermarkets, wholesale and catering and the travel sector, and is the official water partner of Brentford FC. With each product sold, a donation is made to The One Foundation to fund clean water projects around the world. Their glass range was widely used in hospitality venues in the UK, however the new regulations have given One Water no option but to increase glass product prices and this has meant that customers have been dropping in their droves.



One Water's founder Duncan Goose believes that the EPR bill was broadly in line with expectations after months of preparation, but criticised the surprise addition of a 4% impairment charge to cover debts from non-compliant businesses, as well as an additional scheme administration fee, despite having already paid to register with the Environment Agency.

The firm said the financial impact of EPR has forced a review of operating costs. While it has ruled out cutting support to its charity partner, The One Foundation, it must now consider reducing its use of glass packaging and recovering some costs through customer price increases. Thus far, the firm has been hit by £400,000 in lost sales, mostly through hotels, bars and restaurants.

Duncan Goose says,

"We have had to review our operating costs, and we're adamant that we won't cut support to our charity partner, The One Foundation. We will have to rethink what we do with our glass packaging going forward, and monitor our price increases - we've already had to increase the costs. Larger companies may be better equipped to absorb these costs, but we're competing against brands that have not yet registered or submitted data, creating a highly distorted and unfair market. We need better levels of enforcement - beyond a reporting hotline and an impairment charge, there is not much more being done to ensure that we have a level playing field here."

Under previous rules, customers covered 48% of waste management fees.

Duncan Goose wants the UK to rethink how it looks at Deposit Return Schemes (DRS) once more.

"Including glass within DRS would remove a major distortion. Drinks containers included within the future DRS scheme are exempt from EPR, which incentivises a switch from glass to plastic on cost grounds - undermining sustainability goals. EPR in its current form places a disproportionate burden on responsible, compliant businesses, while allowing non-compliance to distort the market. Effective enforcement and a more coherent national strategy could ensure the scheme achieves its intended environmental goals without penalising those who are playing by the rules."





You, Us, Me

An evening of meditative songs,
piano solos and readings from the
18th Century to the present day.

JONATHAN WILLIAMS: *Tenor*

KATE LEDGER: *Piano*

KEITH WAIT: *Reader*

St Mary's Church
SATURDAY
1 NOVEMBER
6.30pm

Refreshments from 6pm

This concert is free to
attend with a retiring
collection in aid of the
Bells Restoration Project

Thames Street, Hampton TW12 2EB

Claret Press to launch speaker series beginning 6 November in Twickenham

South London publisher Claret Press will launch their Conversations No One Else is Having speaker series on 6 November, 2025 at the ETNA Community Centre in Twickenham. The event marks the first in a series of four events set to take place in South London throughout the month of November.



Navigating digital storms: parenting in the online age with Douglas Kruger



After Afghanistan: the truth behind saving animals from war with Pen Farthing



Eco-sabotage, climate & survival with Harry Whitehead

Author and TEDx speaker Douglas Kruger will lead a discussion on parents' technology-related fears and hopes for their kids in the online age under the title 'Navigating digital storms: parenting in the online age'.

Designed to provide an opportunity for open-minded, in-person community, the speaker series aims to host dynamic conversations on pressing issues which have otherwise not been thoughtfully discussed in an age of political polarization and cancel culture. The series is set to bring in speakers with a variety of backgrounds – authors, ex-marines, researchers and non-profit organizations from, and beyond, London.

On Monday, 20 November, former Royal Marine Commando Pen Farthing will lead a discussion on war, animals and truth, providing anecdotes from his journey rescuing animals and people from war zones.

A can't-miss partnership between eco-thriller author Harry Whitehead and non-profit environmental organization Greenpeace will close out the series on 28 November with a discussion on blowing up oil rigs and 'transformative' solutions that may combat eco-crisis-related overwhelm. Both events will be held at the ETNA Community Centre.

Learn more at <https://entertainingideas.wixsite.com/conversations>

Cost Pressures Drive Design Downgrades to Twickenham Riverside Scheme

By Michael Jones

Richmond Council's flagship Twickenham Riverside redevelopment is already changing before it begins, as increasing costs lead to a round of "value engineering" that reduces both materials and ambition. A planning statement submitted by consultants WSP on behalf of Kier Construction confirms that "construction costs exceeded the available budget," prompting what it calls a process of design revision; a phrase that suggests refinement but, in reality, means replacing quality with affordability.

The revised application, lodged under Section 73 of the Town and Country Planning Act, seeks approval for a series of changes to the scheme initially approved in December 2022. These involve alterations to window and balcony sizes, the use of more affordable finishes instead of high-quality ones, and a relaxation of the project's environmental and daylight standards. Collectively, they mark a notable shift away from the architectural ambition previously envisioned for the borough's most iconic civic site.

Site clearance has now begun, with hoardings and preparatory works visible along Water Lane, though, to the paper's knowledge, the main design & build construction contract has yet to be signed.

Council Optimism

Council leaders, however, have adopted an optimistic tone regarding progress so far. In a statement marking the beginning of demolition and clearance in September 2025, Council Leader Gareth Roberts said the project was "turning long-held ambition into reality," describing it as a "bold scheme, with the community's interests at its core." Deputy Leader Jim Millard added that the works were "laying the foundations for new homes, public spaces, and a revitalised riverside that better connects Twickenham town centre with the Thames."

The Council highlighted visible progress on site, including clearance of retail units, comprehensive surveys, and the preservation of heritage features such as the WWI Triptych and Diamond Jubilee Gardens artwork. Officials emphasised that 95 per cent of demolition materials will be recycled or reused, with real-time monitoring in place to control dust, noise, and vibration. The scheme, they said, will deliver 45 new homes, including affordable housing, along with new public areas featuring terraced lawns, play spaces, and river access. The Council maintains that these works mark steady progress toward completion, with the main construction phase due to begin next year.

Balconies removed, windows reduced, and tarmac replaces stone

One of the more noticeable changes is the removal of inset balconies on the Water Lane building, which will now be replaced by rooflights aimed at simplifying the structure and slightly improving energy efficiency. On both main riverside blocks, window openings will be narrowed and shortened to meet updated efficiency standards. Although technically justified, this will lead to darker interiors and façades that appear flatter, more monotonous, and less expressive than those originally approved.

In the public realm, the retreat is even more evident. Sections of natural stone paving, once for the carriageway, are to be replaced with buff-coloured asphalt, a polite euphemism for tarmac, chosen, according to the planning statement, "to reduce carbon impact and lower maintenance burden." The justification carries the tone of virtue, but the real reason is cost-cutting: a cheaper surface, less durable and certainly less distinguished. Timber balcony rails are now brushed steel; brick copings become concrete; and what was once conceived as an architectural gesture to permanence risks taking

on the tone of economy.

The concern is justified. Kier also conducted value engineering on the Twickenham Station development, where many residents and local architects criticised the final scheme for its poor detailing and lack of coherence. That experience has left a lasting unease about the contractor's approach to cost control and design quality. Such substitutions might go unnoticed on an anonymous urban site, but Twickenham Riverside is located within a designated Conservation Area, where attention to detail and authentic materials are essential. Here, the quality of stone, brick, and metal is not just decorative but crucial to preserving and enhancing character. Reducing that palette in pursuit of cost savings risks undermining not only a scheme but a place, turning a riverside intended for civic renewal into something that resembles an exercise in municipal compromise.

Daylight levels still below national standards

The latest statement confirms that daylight performance across the scheme remains below the national benchmark. Of all habitable rooms, 87 per cent meet or exceed the recommended levels, leaving roughly one in eight homes without adequate daylighting. The developer attributes this to smaller window openings required under the new Building Regulations, but for residents, the distinction is academic. Less daylight is less daylight, and those living in social and affordable homes will feel the loss most keenly. It follows a familiar hierarchy of design: when standards are tightened, it is rarely the private apartments that fall into shadow first.

The effect is a development that appears to protect the Council's budget more diligently than its tenants' wellbeing; a quiet illustration of a Liberal Democrat administration fluent in the language of compassion but reluctant to fund its practice. Their concern is polished rather than profound, calibrated for the sensibilities of the middle-class voter rather than the circumstances of the social tenant. The rhetoric remains humane, the tone reassuring, yet the light fades all the same; a borough where empathy is plentiful, but daylight costs extra.

"Value engineering is simply a label for cutting costs"

The revisions have prompted concern among residents and local professionals who have followed the scheme through its long history of consultation. In a formal objection, architect and Fellow of the Royal Society for Public Health Martin Habell described "value engineering" as "a convenient label for cutting the cost of a proposal by changes once the project has been secured." Contractors, he noted, "price for risk" and should have anticipated inflationary pressures when bidding for the work in 2022.

Mr Habell, who has been involved in discussions on the riverside site "for several decades," warned that the amendments "fundamentally undermine the ethos and ambitions of a publicly owned site." His question, whether these substitutions will weather gracefully or decay towards a "sink estate," speaks not of hostility but of experience.

Loss of a mature tree

The planning statement also admits that a mature hornbeam tree, labelled T37, was accidentally felled during preparatory works, despite being marked for retention. The incident has been described as "regrettable," and a revised planting plan now promises an 11 per cent biodiversity net gain by increasing the number of trees from 49 to 62.

However, the arithmetic overstates the reality. Most of these new trees will be planted in confined tree pits or cellular containers and will rely on artificial irrigation. This method limits root growth and reduces resilience as the climate warms. What may seem like a minor technical detail is actually crucial: without sufficient soil volume, the trees will never develop into the shade-providing, heat-moderating canopy that the scheme's visuals suggest. It is the kind of strategy that highlights the gap

between presentation and reality, a landscape designed for the planning brochure rather than the warming century ahead.

Second Tier Environmental Standards

The revised energy strategy now indicates that the development will aim for a “BREEAM Very Good” rating rather than the “Excellent” standard previously promised, a retreat that will not sit comfortably with the borough’s Green Party, which has long been vocal in its campaigns for higher environmental standards. The Council insists that the change reflects technical constraints rather than a waning ambition. Yet, the symbolism is hard to ignore: a flagship scheme, presented as a model of civic sustainability, now content to occupy the second tier of environmental performance.

It is, in short, a curious moment for the self-styled green borough of London. Richmond upon Thames finds itself explaining why “Very Good” must suffice for a “flagship” development, and in doing so, reveals a quietly two-tier system of virtue; one in which the Council demands excellence from private builders yet fails to hold itself to the same standard.”

Transparency and consultation questioned

The Council’s claim that no new public consultation was necessary has faced criticism. Officers maintain that the alterations are “relatively minor,” yet the overall picture suggests otherwise. Mr. Habell asserts that “every detail on the approved scheme was subject to the public’s intense scrutiny” and that these revisions should also be scrutinised openly - figuratively, if not literally. The technical drawings, he notes, are so poorly annotated that the changes are “impossible to judge precisely.”

A flagship project at a crossroads

Twickenham Riverside was meant to resolve a civic puzzle: how to restore a sense of public ownership to a site that had become a symbol of delay. Instead, it risks becoming a study in misplaced ambition, a scheme conceived in pursuit of spectacle rather than sustainability, and now paying the price for design decisions that ignored cost and performance at the outset.

Councillor Gareth Roberts and the Liberal Democrat leadership may insist that the essentials remain intact: the promenade, the housing, the view to the river. Yet beneath the presentation lies an uncomfortable irony. The project grows more expensive even as its quality declines, the outcome of a process that confused architectural showmanship with civic substance. The borough is not building cheaply; it is building expensively without discernment.

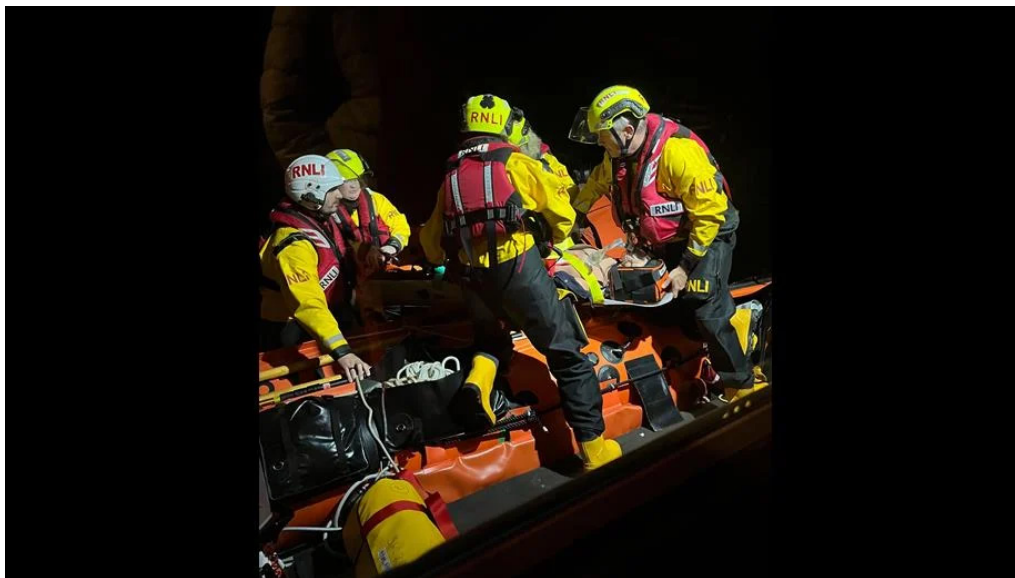
For social tenants, the lesson is already visible in the narrowing windows and dimmer rooms; for the Council, it is a warning that vision without discipline leads not to excellence but to waste. What happens now on the riverside will decide more than the future of one site. It will show whether Richmond still understands that good design begins not with the image of success, but with the careful reconciliation of means and ends – the point where civic ambition meets public responsibility.

You can view the planning application [HERE](#)

Teddington RNLI Carries Out Training Exercise with Turks Launches

From Teddington RNLI

Teddington RNLI volunteer crews train every week but on October 21st training took place with the crew of the Richmond Royale, one of Turks Launches passenger boats.



A scenario was developed to test the skills of RNLI and Turks Launches crews and ensure that they were up to date on casualty care. The fictional incident involved a passenger suffering a medical emergency on the Richmond Royale which had experienced engine failure downstream of Kingston. As a result, both Teddington RNLI lifeboats were called out to assist the casualty and the crew of the passenger boat.

A wide range of skills of RNLI volunteers were called upon to assess and treat a fictional passenger who was suffering a cardiac arrest, before evacuating them to a waiting ambulance using a PS1 collapsible stretcher.

Members of the Teddington RNLI lifeboat station were recruited to play the parts of bystanders, passengers and a friend of the passengers, ensuring that all of the RNLI crew members were fully put through their paces and their expertise in caring for casualties was brought to the fore.

The PS1 stretcher was specifically developed for use in the inflatable 'D Class' lifeboats used by Teddington RNLI by fellow Tower lifeboat station crew, Paul Savage OBE. Previously Clinical Lead for the RNLI, he recognised the need for a roll-up stretcher that could be stored and accessed easily on a small open boat.

Matt Allchurch, Lifeboat Operations Manager at Teddington RNLI said, *'regular training exercises ensure that our volunteer crew's skills are up to date and at their very best. Working with other river users and partners is vital in being ready for all eventualities that could arise on the river. Particular thanks go to Nick Tudor, general manager of Turks Launches and his skilled crew.'*

Photo: RNLI/Teddington



Lifeboats

RICHMOND'S

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AT RICHMOND ATHLETIC GROUND

SUNDAY 2ND NOVEMBER 2025



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When Compassion Outruns Competence

Violence Against Women and Girls Strategy 2025–28

By Michael Jones

It was launched with solemn words and glossy design: pages of good intentions, diagrams and moral resolve. Richmond Council's new *Violence Against Women and Girls Strategy 2025–28* arrives dressed in the language of urgency. Yet, it is hard to escape the feeling that the borough's Liberal Democrat leadership is more interested in appearances than outcomes.

Richmond likes to see itself as one of London's most civilised corners: prosperous, green and safe. Statistically, it is the safest borough in the capital. Yet the council now speaks as though its streets were gripped by menace. The tone is one of crisis, the style bureaucratic piety.

The foreword by Councillor Gareth Roberts assures residents that “everyone has a part to play.” There are references to “intersectionality,” “trauma-informed practice” and “lived experience.” It has all the latest buzzwords, but lacks a credible plan.

Safety as Feeling, Not Fact

The document begins with a contradiction. Richmond is one of the safest boroughs in London, yet the council insists that too many women and girls “feel unsafe.” The distinction between fear and fact is never explored. Instead of asking why confidence is low, the report borrows national statistics and repackages them as local concern.

What is missing is data that actually belong to Richmond. The council's own needs assessment concedes that “localised data is very limited,” relying instead on national figures to fill the gaps. There are no baselines, no targets and no timetable. It is not clear whether violence here is rising or falling, nor how often perpetrators are prosecuted. The strategy sets out “priority actions,” but they are lists of activity rather than measures of success.

This vagueness is not accidental. The administration's instinct, like in so many areas, is to demonstrate effort rather than achievement. Richmond celebrates its White Ribbon status, its membership of the Mayor's Night Safety Charter, its accreditation from the Domestic Abuse Housing Alliance; all badges of civic virtue, but none with measurable effect. The council's preferred currency is symbolism.

The Politics of Inclusion

That same instinct for posture over principle is most evident in its handling of single-sex services. In 2021 and again in 2023, the High Court ruled that councils may and, where safeguarding requires it, must provide women-only refuges under the Equality Act. Richmond's strategy makes no mention of those rulings.

During the debate on the document, Green Party councillor Caroline Wren urged that trans women should be “explicitly recognised as women” within the policy. The Liberal Democrat leadership nodded approval. The result is a policy that blurs the distinction between sex and gender and leaves refuge providers to guess where the law begins and council policy ends.

If a service excludes biological males in the interests of safeguarding, is it acting lawfully or in breach of local equality policy? The strategy does not say. The council's equality assessment goes further, treating trans women as part of the female victim category but without addressing the practical or legal implications. It is an omission that may please activists but leaves frontline workers exposed to confusion and potential litigation.

A serious administration would have acknowledged the law, affirmed that sex-based protection is legitimate and necessary, and given guidance to the charities it funds. Richmond's has done none of those things. The silence is not caution but conviction – a decision to place ideology before clarity.

Partnership Without Accountability

"Working with partners" appears on almost every page. It sounds collaborative until one looks for responsibility. The police, the courts, and the housing department are not given measurable targets. The VAWG Strategic Delivery Group, which should monitor progress, is presented as a talking shop, not a body of record. There are no performance indicators, no costings, and no public reporting. This is the Liberal Democrats' governing style in miniature: a politics of intent rather than delivery. It is governance by sentiment.

A Borough That Mistakes Kindness for Competence

The tragedy of Richmond's plan is not that it lacks compassion but that it confuses compassion with competence. The document identifies the problem eloquently enough, yet cannot say what success would look like, who will be accountable, or what delivery will cost. It reads like a speech rather than a plan – warm in tone, empty in structure.

Other boroughs have begun to publish dashboards of data and police performance so that progress can be tested. Richmond, by contrast, prefers to rehearse its values. There are pledges, partnerships and slogans, but little sense of direction. The moral vocabulary is rich; the administrative grammar is missing.

This is a council that has learned how to sound good rather than to do good. Its strategy soothes rather than safeguards; earnest, resource-hungry and curiously hollow. A borough that prides itself on conscience has written a document that flatters its decency but does not defend its citizens. Richmond deserves a government capable of evidence as well as empathy, and a leader who understands that virtue is no substitute for delivery.

Towpath reopening confirmed following major repair works

From Richmond Council

Residents will soon be able to enjoy the Thames towpath between Richmond Lock and Kew Gardens again, with the official reopening set for Saturday 8 November, weather and river conditions permitting – marking a major milestone in restoring this popular riverside route.

The towpath is now in its final stages of restoration, with crews completing essential works to strengthen and protect the riverbank. The new date follows a short delay caused by challenging tidal and ground conditions, which required additional piling and reinforcement to ensure the long-term stability of the path.

Councillor Alexander Ehmann, Chair of Richmond Council's Transport and Air Quality Committee, said: *"This has been one of the most technically demanding riverbank repairs we've undertaken – and our teams and partners have shown tremendous skill and persistence in managing these complex conditions."*

"The short delay ensures we deliver a safe, high-quality repair that will stand up to the tidal Thames for many years to come. We thank residents for their patience and look forward to welcoming them back to this much-loved route from next weekend."

The improvement works include reinstating the culvert and causeway – designed to safely overtop first during high tides, helping to reduce erosion elsewhere along the towpath

and direct water towards the newly reinforced section. The project also delivers new safety and ecological features that make the path stronger, greener, and more enjoyable for everyone who walks, cycles, or runs along the Thames.



Alongside the main repair, teams have also carried out additional improvements along the wider towpath between Richmond Lock and the breach site – clearing blocked culverts and stabilising sections of the path. These works are part of a wider effort to care for and futureproof the borough's riverside, ensuring it remains safe and accessible.

Join the reopening

Residents are warmly invited to a short reopening event at 10am on Saturday 8 November, near the Richmond Lock end of the towpath, to celebrate the completion of the works and the return of this popular route.

Bake It At Home: Tasty Home Delivery Companies

I'm going to let you in on a secret: I've discovered a way to obtain the most amazing sourdough bread and also some great tasting sourdough pizzas and pizza dough. These are from two different companies at opposite ends of the UK, but they are both delivering superb products, made with 'proper' ingredients, direct to our door. Good sourdough bread is a labour of love and the sourdough cognoscenti have tended either to bake it themselves, or they choose their bakeries very carefully. These will be bakeries that make a good sourdough, ones with natural ingredients and none of those 'nasties' that often sneak into some of the bigger brands. That's where **The Bread Queen** comes in: you can now have partially baked sourdough loaves delivered to your home. These loaves just need finishing in your oven, or you can pop them into the freezer to bake off when needed. Each loaf is baked almost to perfection, then wrapped up and despatched. More information about how the bakery works can be found [here](#). Recently launched, **The Bread Queen** is in fact part of a well established business that's been supplying top hotels and institutions like the Houses of Parliament for many years so you can be assured of the quality.



Sourdough is better for you - it's more easily digested and less likely to cause gluten intolerance - you can read Bread Queen founder Birgit's notes on this [here](#). Of course, real sourdough takes several days to make, so your order will need some time before it gets shipped to you. Every order is baked to order - the bakery doesn't keep stock. There are specific processing days and shipping days (more info on the website). Many people are choosing to take out a subscription as it saves money and also takes the hassle out of shopping. There's free shipping on your first order over £25 with the newsletter sign up, and you can always share an order with neighbours - a great way of trying out the quality of the bread.

And now to the sourdough pizzas: A YouGov poll revealed that 65 percent of us prefer staying in at this time of year. And understandably, many of us are keen to forgo the expense and inconsistency of restaurant deliveries, but won't settle for soggy crusts or bland sauces. Help is at hand: **East Pizzas** has now arranged for us to be able to enjoy really delicious top-class sourdough pizzas from its Edinburgh restaurant. The restaurant has launched a home delivery system for its 72-hour-proved range of sourdough [pizza bases](#), [dough balls](#) and a [topped pre-made range of pizzas](#). Made with just three simple ingredients - flour, water and salt - a light and flavour-packed foundation for any homemade pizza, the bases are 'blank canvases' ready-to-top, and dough balls are ready to stretch and shape.



The pre-made pizzas come in ten flavour options all topped with high-quality ingredients.

Vegan options are also available. These pizzas are a generous size too and seriously good. The website eastpizzas.com also has helpful tutorial videos for making your own pizzas. There's free UK delivery too, for orders over £25.

All these sourdough products (bread and pizzas) stay fresh for up to three or four days in the fridge or three months in the freezer, so you can always have quality sourdough loaves, pizza bases, dough balls or ready-made pizzas to hand.

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Love. Nourish. Eat!

At Richmond Wellness Centre - 50 Hill Rise

By Lyndsay Kenwright

Completing the nurturing cocoon of calm that 50 Hill Rise provides - Nourish Cafe is born! Indulge in a world of nourishing food, coffees, matcha, seasonal food and home baked treats.

Quality ingredients and delightful flavours is the driver to create wholesome options for patrons, serving artisan coffees, organic matcha, home baked treats, hearty breakfast options to delicious soups, cold pressed juices, bowls.



This is all down to London based Natural Chef - Anu Lal. Passionate about cooking with seasonal ingredients, Anu focuses on vibrant flavours and nourishing recipes for both the body and soul.

Anu draws inspiration from foods that are natural and unprocessed, creating mainly plant-led nutrient dense recipes. I was lucky enough to try the seasonal soup and the depth of flavour was amazing! It was so light, I was able to take a yoga class shortly after. My body lapped up the nourishment and it was easily digested! I really felt nurtured.

As a Natural Chef, Anu creates and prepares delicious meals that focus on nutritional value; minimally processed, seasonal and sustainable foods are her core values.

I asked Anu about her background as a qualified natural chef from the College of Naturopathic Medicine.



"I've been a creative and enthusiastic home cook for years, my cooking style is strongly influenced by my traditional Indian roots, years of travel and living in a culturally diverse city like London."



"My mother was my biggest inspiration in the kitchen - which truly was the heart of our home. I grew up in a predominantly vegetarian environment and my mother was an incredible cook. I have some wonderful childhood memories, watching and observing my mum work her magic, using fresh seasonal produce and combining them with fragrant spices to create the most nourishing and delicious meals for family and friends. With a huge passion and love for cooking, my main focus is on the quality of food that I create, it's source and provenance."

Photos: Charlotte Krag

Lost And Found

Doug Goodman Is Glad He Went To Specsavers.

It was when I returned to the cruise boat on the River Rhone near Avignon from an excursion to The Pont du Gard that I realised I had lost one of my hearing aid earpieces. Too late to go back to search for it and little chance of spotting such a tiny object dropped on stone and gravel paths. Needless to say the travel insurance didn't cover items like contact lenses and hearing aids. So there was only one solution: return to Specsavers in Twickenham to request a new one to be made.



Lost

The technician explained what had happened: someone at Pont du Gard, probably a hearing aid wearer, had spotted my lost item and, knowing its importance and value, had handed it in to their nearest shop. It was identified and passed to a head office in Lyon from where it was despatched to the manufacturer's head office in The Netherlands.



Pont du Gard



Found

In turn they discovered that the item had been made for Specsavers in the UK to whom it was sent. The final leg of the journey for the tiny object was from Specsavers' HQ to their Twickenham branch where records showed that the earpiece was one of a pair made for me.

So, through a French person's thoughtfulness and a company's efficiency the story had a happy ending.

Shopkeeping... Spiders... & Halloween...

By Deep Patel

~ Life Through the Eyes of a Twickenham Shopkeeper ~

So Halloween is here again (it literally seems like it was only a few months ago to me?!). What do we do at Meet & Deep Newsagents you may wonder? Well, if you are local...you should definitely pop into my shop next halloween...there will be no tricks, but certainly a treat involving a rarity regarding my mother and father who have run the shop for nearly 40 years. On Halloween my parents will ditch their usual shopkeeper attire in favour of something a little bit more spooooooky...if you happen to be popping into my shop on Halloween evening for a pint of milk or a loaf of bread you may be forgiven to accidentally think that you have walked into a scene from Harry Potter...they like to go all out and wear full Halloween outfits...it started with a couple of silly masks a few years back and now every year, their choices of outfits seem to get scarier and scarier...in fact last year, without realising it, my parents actually genuinely made little children coming into the shop scared due to the clothes my parents were wearing...on sight of my parents behind the counter, one little girl even started to cry (no joke) and literally ran straight towards the door after my mother sprang out from behind the counter for an open arm hug exclaiming "Happy Halloween!" (she meant well, for those of you who know my mother, you will know she always means well). Here is a photo of them and I'm not going to lie, my mother has a lovely smile, but in this photo...even I was scared of her...and my dad's mask also freaked me out...just saying!



(Shashi (father) and Pallu (mother).



Me (Deep) and my brother (Meet)

My parents like to encourage all the local children to come into our shop and "trick or treat" ... they think it's lovely and they give free sweets from the shop to the children that come (pop by this year if you are around...you don't have to be a kid...adult trick or treaters are welcome too.)

Myself and my brother are often forced to “join in with the Halloween spirit” by my mother and father...we don’t get as “into it” as much as my parents do, we draw the line at masks and then too we usually just take them off after wearing them for five minutes (just to serve our parents desire to have a halloweeny vibe in our shop). In any case, even when we take the masks off, most people STILL think we are “dressed up for Halloween” and I think it’s the hair and beard maybe?

Another thing about Halloween is that it also coincides with the peak of the UK “spider season”...when male spiders start coming into our homes looking for luuuurve (to find a mate!). No wonder they are associated with being “creepy” as their main season of becoming more visible is at the same time as Halloween, maybe that is why so many people fear spiders potentially?

I always say please don’t kill spiders, it’s bad karma...but if you want to keep them away, I am a firm believer in choosing a kind way rather than poison...de-clutter your rooms...remove all boxes as spiders love hiding places! Get rid of damp...use dehumidifiers as spiders like humidity...mix 30 drops of pure essential peppermint oil into a cup of water and then into a spray bottle and spray all corners of your house and areas where you don’t want spiders. Spray regularly to keep them away. This also stops moths and most insects...using peppermint oil neat in areas will stop ants without harming them. If you really want to go to town, spiders dislike the colour blue...so paint your rooms blue!

As a shop keeper in Twickenham, I often get customers coming in for pesticides, mouse poison, glue traps, sticky moth tape, slug pellets, etc but I always give them one of my leaflets instead that has all the kind and natural ways to stop insects without harming them...some people say why do you care, they are bugs? I say if we want to make the world a better place, start with the smallest of things...be kind...not only will you get back good karma, you will also be putting a little bit more compassion out there in a world that needs it right now...Happy Good-karma-spider Halloween Twickenham!

Remember...

“Put on the pointy black hat...cover your face in fake blood and just get into the spirit of it...life’s too short to be boring...”

MY CREATURE-KINDNESS TIP

STOP FOXES KINDLY... (GOOD KARMA):

Sprinkle chilli powder onto soil if they are digging up there and 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...

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

A Midsummer Night's Dream

by Benjamin Britten, libretto with Peter Pears after William Shakespeare
Glyndebourne Productions at Glyndebourne Festival Theatre

Out of the darkness a moon appeared above the stage, revealing a misty magical forest, bathed in an eerie purple glow, swaying with the opening cello glissandi, the sounds of another world entirely: the fairy world of Oberon and Titania. Peter Hall's enchanted forest is immersive and it still casts its spell forty years on. The most striking feature of Lynne Hockney's revival was the absence of the usual slapstick, replaced by restraint and sensitivity, creating a sense of enthrallment. I was utterly captivated.



Joshua Bloom's metamorphosis into an ass became a soft, endearing animal with ears and fur you wanted to stroke. Bloom's sonorously warm baritone, elegant movement and flashes of shyness made his a glorious reinterpretation of Bottom. Titania's temporary infatuation with this gentle creature felt logical, sweet and entirely plausible. The Mechanicals struck a perfect balance of understatement and sincerity. The *Pyramus and Thisbe* scene was genuinely funny, helped by an easy ensemble rhythm. The lovers delivered a cohesive, emotionally charged quartet. Their Act Three ensemble came alive through dramatic conviction, their lines alternately overlapping and blending balancing the competition. The pint-sized boy elves added to the magic. Their movement was agile and their appearance uncanny, but their spoken delivery was often shouted rather than shaped, until a pure floating treble redeemed the imbalance with sudden magic.

Under Kerrie Baigent, the Glyndebourne Sinfonia played with luminous precision. The cellos became the fairy world itself. Flutes and celesta glistened, harp rippled like moonlight on water. Baigent's pacing was flexible but never indulgent; the orchestra breathed with the singers, the fairy textures weightless yet exact.

Nils Wanderer's Oberon was a study in poise and control. His countertenor glowed with unearthly calm; vibrato was sparingly used, his tone pointing inward in suspended *messa di voce* phrases that seemed to breathe. His timbre shifted like light through leaves. Jennifer France's Tytania matched brilliance with clarity, her agile coloratura precise yet playful. Together they embodied the uneasy marriage of power and seduction at the opera's heart.

Here beauty and ugliness, love and control, illusion and reality continually blur. Beneath the glitter runs unease. This careful revival shows how reinterpreting Britten through softness and subtext restores the opera's enchantment.



Read Susan Furnell's review at www.markaspen.com/2025/10/13/midsummer-dream-glynd

Photography by Tristram Kenton © Glyndebourne Productions Ltd.

Hindle Wakes

by Stanley Houghton
 Questors at the Studio, Ealing

It emerges that young Fanny Hawthorn has spent the bank holiday weekend not in Blackpool, but in Llandudno with the son of the local mill owner. This being 1912, her father Christopher goes to confront Nathaniel Jeffcote with the news of their children's dalliance and to insist that his son does the decent thing and marry Fanny. The trouble is, Alan is already engaged to Beatrice, daughter of Nat's friend and fellow mill owner, Sir Timothy Farrar. This premise fuels this humorous drama, as all the characters involved have slightly different perspectives on the situation. The class system is the elephant in the room, although more overt is its examination of the double standards with which the behaviour of young men and young women are judged.

James Gooden drives the play's pace in an affecting performance as Nat, alternating between authoritarian ogre and exasperated but caring father and husband. Clare Cooper's Mrs Jeffcote is



suspicious of Fanny's motives, suspecting she has deliberately ensnared her son to advance herself socially. Daniel Thompson gives a charming performance as Alan Jeffcote, the somewhat coddled heir to Daisy Bank Mill. Alan initially comes over as somewhat feckless, before later coming into his own as he explains his actions and feelings.

Christopher and Mrs Hawthorn are played with great gusto by Anthony Curran and Fiona Partington, both despairing over their daughter Fanny's behaviour. Katie Russell gives a great performance as Fanny, a thoroughly modern girl hemmed in by the expectations of others. Initially taciturn, Fanny steals the show whenever she is persuaded, or provoked, into speaking her mind.

In a broader comic performance from Adam Kimmel, Sir Timothy's more flexible approach to moral questions sets up an enjoyable change of dramatic direction. As Beatrice Farrar, the fiancée Alan has betrayed, Maria Thorpe makes the most of a comparatively short scene. Everyone is on her side as the wronged party, but Thorpe elevates this further as Beatrice visibly tussles with her conflicting emotions towards Alan.

Bethany Nias's set features an impressive amount of period furniture to ground us within the world of Hindle.

Clare Stopford directs the play at a brisk pace, and it pauses only for laughter. *Hindle Wakes* contains much that is unexpected, entertaining, yet still remains relevant.



Read Andrew Lawston's review at www.markaspen.com/2025/10/18/hindle-wakes

Photography by Kanako Hata

Private Lives

by Noël Coward

Octagon Theatre, Mercury Theatre, and RTK at The Rose Theatre, Kingston, then on tour until 8th November

In this innovative take on *Private Lives*, the essence of the plot, two couples on their honeymoon at the seaside who unexpectedly run into the last person in the world they would wish to see, remains. Director Tanuja Amarasuriya's treatment turns a lightweight witty play into a much more meaningful drama of bad choices, and disappointment.

The comedy is still there but if anything, under-played, the oft quoted "very flat Norfolk" line, appropriately falls a bit flat, though there are some lovely comedic moments remaining;



not least the physical comedy as the couples came to terms with the consequences of their actions when they meet in Paris.

The sumptuous Art Deco designs by Amy Jane Cook are period perfect, but the delivery is very 21st Century. This gives the production a disturbing dissonance. What might have been acceptable in the 1930s is more unsettling when not delivered with traditional Cowardesque clipped voices. The diverse casting is also calculated to bring a further discordant note.

Pepter Lunkuse's is every bit the very forward-thinking sophisticated Amanda. It would not be difficult to see this Elyot Chirag Benedict-Lobo's delightful Elyot being a very welcome guest amongst the wealthy ex-pat roués at the Gymkhana club in Poona. But both are convincing as the fast living, pleasure-seeking spoilt couple who were unhappy together but couldn't live apart. The nice play on their safe words, "Solomon Issacs", is nearly, but not quite enough, to keep them together.

Some contrasts built into this production are a little hard-edged. It's difficult to imagine either couple in the first scene being on honeymoon. Both might have been somewhat marriages of convenience, but their body language don't even make it as friends, more like strangers. So it is less surprising than it might have been to see either marriage collapse as spectacularly as it does.

Sade Malone's beautifully fluffy Sibyl, and Ashley Gerlach's suitably old-school stiff Victor, make it easy to see why they are both deserted by the irresponsible but fun Amanda and Elyot.

A little more nuance as they matched and rematched before parting could have added to the fun. I did end up feeling very sorry for them all.

Read Polly Davies' review at www.markaspen.com/2025/10/16/private-lives-rtk

Photography by Pamela Raith



Arsenic and Old Lace

by Joseph Kesselring

Teddington Theatre Club at the Hampton Hill Theatre until 25th October

Arsenic and Old Lace may be an old pot-boiler, but this revival of the 1941 classic black comedy is full of fun and entertaining energy. It still delivers a wicked mix of comedy, farce and spoof horror, served with wit and dark humour, plus a splash of home-made wine.

The Brewster family has an unfortunate habit of murdering people. Murder seems built into their DNA. The count of dead bodies reaches a staggering 24 ... at least!



As an act of charity, two elderly sisters poison lonely old men with generous glasses of their elderberry wine, spiced with a dash of arsenic. Three nephews complicate their "benevolence". Teddy buries the bodies in the basement. Theatre critic Mortimer stumbles on their cache of a dozen. On the run from a global killing spree, Jonathan arrives with his assistant Dr. Einstein, having claimed another dozen victims.



Director John Gilbert balances comedy with the macabre. With constant fluid movement, he teases out the humour from the farcical chaos. Wes Henderson Roe adds authenticity with his two-level design of a cluttered 1940's Brooklyn home.

The doyens of the Brewster family, the charming but murderous sisters, are played by Sue Bell and Anthea Barter, who capture the delicate balance between sweet and sinister. As the hapless theatre critic Mortimer Brewster, Matt Tester has frantic energy

and on-the-button timing.

A scar-faced David Hannigan, in the larger-than-life role of the psychopathic cigar-chomping Jonathan Brewster, relishes the comedy, adding Frankenstein contortions. Hannigan captures the comedy while resisting the temptation to overplay.

John Mortley's sinister Dr. Einstein, a mysterious alcoholic plastic surgeon, generates many laughs with well-judged reactions and timing. However, the show is nearly stolen by David Webb's Officer O'Hara, a character more interested in pestering Mortimer to read his play than with official police duties. Well-observed character acting comes from Dave Dadswell as the Reverend Harper and Gondwana Pietsch as his perky effervescent daughter Elaine, Mortimer's love interest. Playing the thanklessly ludicrous part of Teddy Brewster is Graham Schafer, as a delightfully certifiable man who is clearly delusional.



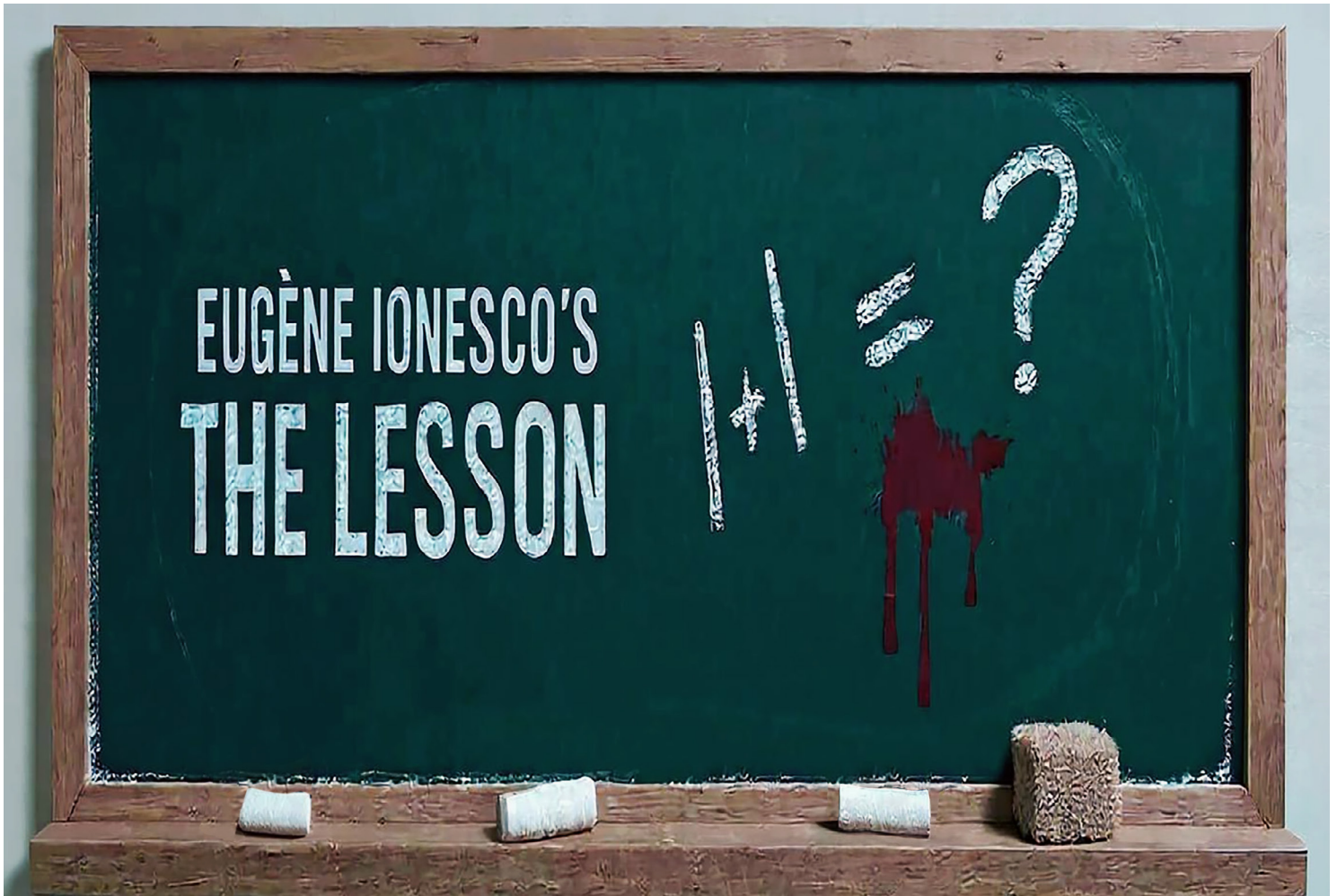
Octogenarian *Arsenic*, an old play surviving on life support, is resuscitated in this production. Dated? Probably. Corny? Possibly. Implausible? Completely. Entertaining? Entirely.

Read Steve Mackrell's review at www.markaspen.com/2025/10/22/arsenic-lace-ttc

Photography by Sarah J Carter

Ionesco's **THE LESSON**. A New Director's Piece at the Mary Wallace Theatre November 7th & 8th at 7.45pm

Each season we at the Richmond Shakespeare Society create the opportunity for a director new to us to direct a short play prior to being added to our permanent list of directors. Friday and Saturday, November 7th and 8th are this season's New Director's slot when RSS member Stephan Mirre presents his directorial debut, *The Lesson* by Eugene Ionesco.



This intense one-act three-hander is perhaps the best-known example of the “Theatre of the Absurd”, a post-war experimental movement which encompassed such playwrights as Beckett, Apollinaire and Pirandello and works like *Rhinoceros*, *The Bald Primadonna*, *Waiting for Godot*, *Six Characters in Search of an Author* and *The Fire Raisers*.

All are welcome (ie you do not have to be an RSS member) with tickets at the door for £6 and performances at 7.45pm

A rare opportunity to see an iconic play in intimate and welcoming surroundings.

Further information at www.richmondshakespeare.org.uk



Stagecoach Twickenham Student Evangeline to star in International Crime Thriller!

Evangeline from Stagecoach Twickenham has been cast in the new international thriller series *Juvenile Inspektor: The Shadow Over Jõhvi*.

Filming in Estonia, sixteen year old Evangeline got to work with her first international film crew which has proved to be an exceptionally inspiring experience for this young performer. Set in the late Soviet era in the small town of Jõhvi, near the Russia/Estonia border, *Juvenile Inspektor* follows a young inspector uncovering dark secrets in a community under pressure.



Evangeline playing the role of Vika in *Juvenile Inspektor*



Evangeline on set with the Inspektor

Evangeline loved the exciting new challenge of filming abroad and stepping out of her comfort zone: *'I am so thrilled to deepen my acting experience. My time on-set has given me exposure to international filming, multilingual crews, and acting challenges of a professional film set that are far beyond my usual classes at Stagecoach. I love it!'*

Principal Sarah Chitty is over the moon that one of her students gets to experience this wonderful opportunity: *'The fact that Evangeline is combining her Stagecoach training with this exciting overseas shoot makes it a standout story of a young performer whose local training is launching into international opportunity.'*

'Stagecoach Twickenham has provided Evangeline with a nurturing, creative environment where she has been able to build confidence, stage skills and performance experience combining singing, acting and dance. It's the kind of place that sees young performers as individuals, encourages them to stretch beyond just hobby level, and gives them the practical performance skills that allow them to step into professional opportunities like this. The strong support network, the encouragement to go for auditions, and the confidence-building environment are what make Stagecoach truly special for her and all our students'

With a network of over 60,000 students and more than 3,000 extra-curricular Performing Arts Schools worldwide, Stagecoach aims to make a difference in its students' lives by teaching Creative Courage for Life and many children have gone on to study and work in Performing Arts from blockbuster films to countless roles in local theatre productions.

For more information about Stagecoach Twickenham, please visit their website at <http://www.stagecoach.co.uk/twickenham>



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Armed Forces Personnel and Veterans Offered Free Entry to London Immersive Poppy Field as Frameless Joins Forces with The Royal British Legion

The UK's largest immersive art experience FRAMELESS has partnered with the Royal British Legion (RBL) to create a special poppy themed commemoration during the Remembrance period.



This year, the Royal British Legion's Poppy Appeal was launched at FRAMELESS, where Armed Forces veterans supported by the RBL gathered amid a spectacular immersive poppy field.

During the weekend of Remembrance, from Saturday 8th November to Armistice Day on Tuesday 11th November, visitors to FRAMELESS will be able to step into this stunning poppy-themed immersive gallery themselves, accompanied by a powerful and emotive soundscape, providing a moment of reflection, as the nation comes together to honour the service and sacrifice of British and Commonwealth armed forces.

Through its partnership with the RBL, UK serving military and veterans will be given free access to FRAMELESS from 8th – 11th November, with limited tickets available which must be booked in advance online at frameless.com. As well as the immersive poppy field they will enjoy access to all four of FRAMELESS' permanent galleries.

UK serving military and veterans should book their complimentary ticket online in advance at frameless.com. On arrival at the venue, ID verification will also be required by presentation of a valid MOD90 card, Veteran's ID card, Defence Discount Card or MoD certificate of eligibility. Accompanying friends and family may buy tickets online.

FRAMELESS is proudly supporting the RBL's Poppy Appeal 2025 and volunteers will be fundraising at the venue over the Remembrance weekend.

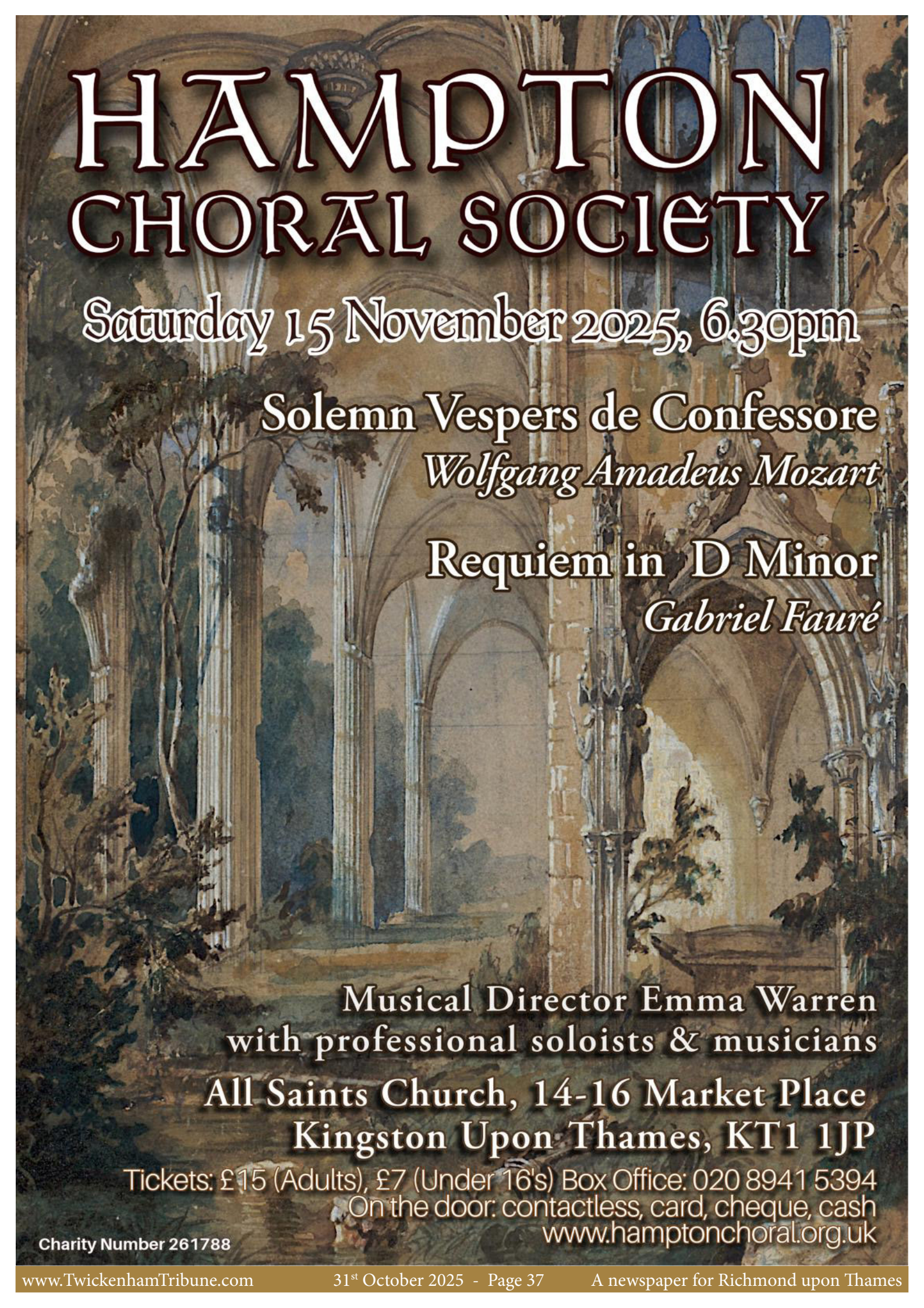
Alongside raising funds to support the Armed Forces community, the nation is encouraged to wear a poppy to send a personal message of thanks to those who serve.

Lucy Inskip, Director of the Royal British Legion's Poppy Appeal, said: 'Donating to the Poppy Appeal and wearing a poppy raises vital funds for the RBL to continue its work supporting the Armed Forces community and helps bring the nation together during Remembrance. FRAMELESS has created a stunning poppy experience to help us launch this year's Appeal, so we would encourage everyone to visit and see for themselves this spectacular immersive landscape.'

Richard Relton, CEO, FRAMELESS, said: "We are honoured to partner with the Royal British Legion to commemorate this year's Remembrance period. Through this emotional immersive experience, audiences will be offered a unique space for connection, allowing them to pause, reflect and honour those who serve and have served."

For more information about the immersive poppy field at FRAMELESS and ticketing visit frameless.com/remembrance-weekend-at-frameless
To find out more about the RBL visit rbl.org.uk

FRAMELESS®



HAMPTON CHORAL SOCIETY

Saturday 15 November 2025, 6.30pm

Solemn Vespers de Confessore
Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart

Requiem in D Minor
Gabriel Fauré

Musical Director Emma Warren
with professional soloists & musicians

All Saints Church, 14-16 Market Place
Kingston Upon Thames, KT1 1JP

Tickets: £15 (Adults), £7 (Under 16's) Box Office: 020 8941 5394

On the door: contactless, card, cheque, cash

www.hamptonchoral.org.uk

Charity Number 261788

St Mary's University

St Mary's VS Royal Artillery: Remembrance Rugby Match



St Mary's University, London, will host a special double-header remembrance rugby event against the Royal Artillery, known as the Gunners, on Wednesday 5 November. The matches are open to the public and will take place on the University's campus.

The day will begin with a Remembrance Service, featuring readings, a military performance of the Last Post, a two-minute silence, and songs made famous by Dame Vera Lynn. Following the service, both the men's and women's teams will take to the field:

- Women's match: 12pm
- Men's match: 2pm

Players will be led out by a military bagpiper, introduced by attending VIPs, and will stand for the National Anthem before play begins. After each match, the winning team will be awarded the Remembrance Trophy.

The events honour Remembrance together, with St Mary's celebrating its 175th anniversary and aims to strengthen ties

between the university community and the Armed Forces. It follows a [joint training session earlier this autumn](#), where the Gunners and St Mary's student players shared a day of fitness and resilience training using the University's sport facilities.

The Royal Artillery – nicknamed the Gunners – play a key role in the British Army, providing surveillance and firepower support on operations worldwide. Their rugby programme reflects the same values of discipline, teamwork and resilience.

Celebrating its 175th anniversary, St Mary's is internationally recognised for its sporting excellence and has produced graduates who have gone on to represent their county at the highest level, including England rugby internationals, Ellie Kildunne, Jess Breach, Rosie Galligan and Abi Burton, who were [crowned this year's Rugby World Cup Champions](#).



St Mary's
University
Twickenham
London

England Team To Play Australia

England men's head coach Steve Borthwick has named his team to play Australia at Allianz Stadium on Saturday 1 November (kick-off 3.10pm, live on TNT Sports).



England's opening fixture of the 2025 Quilter Nations Series sees Maro Itoje named as captain with Ellis Genge, George Ford and Jamie George supporting as vice-captains.

The match marks a significant milestone for Luke Cowan-Dickie, who is set to win his 50th England cap from the bench, having made his debut against France in 2015.

It will also be the first England Test appearance at Allianz Stadium, Twickenham for Guy Pepper and Henry Pollock.

"We're excited to begin our Quilter Nations Series campaign against Australia and to test ourselves against a strong, in-form side," said Borthwick.

"Australia have had four months together, so it'll be a great challenge for us first up. We've worked hard with the time we've had, and the players can't wait to play in front of a passionate home crowd.

"It's another opportunity for us to take a step forward as a team."

On Cowan-Dickie's 50-cap milestone, Borthwick added:

"Luke is a fierce competitor who gives absolutely everything every time he pulls on an England shirt. Reaching 50 caps is a reflection of his consistency, resilience and commitment to the team over many years. We couldn't be prouder of his achievement."

England's clash with the Wallabies is followed by home fixtures at Allianz Stadium, Twickenham, against Fiji, New Zealand and Argentina.

ENGLAND v AUSTRALIA

Saturday 1 November 2025 - Kick-off: 3.10pm

Allianz Stadium, Twickenham

- | | |
|--|---|
| 15. Freddie Steward (Leicester Tigers, 38 caps) | 1. Fin Baxter (Harlequins, 14 caps) |
| 14. Tom Roebuck (Sale Sharks, 6 caps) | 2. Jamie George (Saracens, 102 caps) – vice-captain |
| 13. Tommy Freeman (Northampton Saints, 20 caps) | 3. Joe Heyes (Leicester Tigers, 14 caps) |
| 12. Fraser Dingwall (Northampton Saints, 4 caps) | 4. Maro Itoje (Saracens, 93 caps) – captain |
| 11. Immanuel Feyi-Waboso (Exeter Chiefs, 9 caps) | 5. Ollie Chessum (Leicester Tigers, 28 caps) |
| 10. George Ford (Sale Sharks, 102 caps) – vice-captain | 6. Guy Pepper (Bath Rugby, 3 caps) |
| 9. Alex Mitchell (Northampton Saints, 23 caps) | 7. Sam Underhill (Bath Rugby, 42 caps) |
| | 8. Ben Earl (Saracens, 42 caps) |

Replacements:

- | | |
|---|---|
| 16. Luke Cowan-Dickie (Sale Sharks, 49 caps) | 20. Tom Curry (Sale Sharks, 61 caps) |
| 17. Ellis Genge (Bristol Bears, 71 caps) – vice-captain | 21. Henry Pollock (Northampton Saints, 1 cap) |
| 18. Will Stuart (Bath Rugby, 50 caps) | 22. Ben Spencer (Bath Rugby, 10 caps) |
| 19. Alex Coles (Northampton Saints, 10 caps) | 23. Fin Smith (Northampton Saints, 11 caps) |

Match Preview: Crystal Palace v Brentford

Written by Brentford Football Club

Brentford face Crystal Palace at Selhurst Park in the Premier League on Saturday afternoon (3pm kick-off GMT).

The Bees booked their place in the Carabao Cup quarter-finals with a 5-0 midweek victory at Grimsby Town, while this weekend's hosts also progressed to the final eight of the competition with a 3-0 win against Liverpool at Anfield.

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

Pre-match analysis

Stephen Gillett, *Playmaker Stats*: Brentford and Palace 'cut from the same cloth'

Just 14 miles separate Selhurst Park and Gtech Community Stadium, and Brentford visit Crystal Palace this Saturday with the two sides shoulder-to-shoulder in the Premier League.

The Eagles sit 10th with 13 points, one place above the Bees on goal difference, and Oliver Glasner has moulded Palace into one of the most direct and effective sides in the Premier League.

One of five clubs still unbeaten at home this season, Palace top Opta's 'direct speed' charts - which measure how quickly teams move the ball forward. Their ability to transition fast and hurt opponents has become a hallmark of their development under Austrian mastermind Glasner.

The Eagles' momentous FA Cup final win over Manchester City in May was, in many ways, 'textbook Palace'. Set up in a mid-block, the south Londoners snapped into challenges in midfield and picked their moments to spring forward.

Palace's Wembley winner saw them traverse the length of the pitch in just five passes - rampaging full-back Daniel Muñoz's cross buried by Eberechi Eze to clinch the first major trophy in the club's history.

Eze flew the Eagles' nest in the summer - but Palace's system remains the same, and it will be interesting to see how Brentford head coach Keith Andrews sets up tactically in SE25.

Buoyed by impressive victories over West Ham, Liverpool and Grimsby since the international break, the Bees are in fantastic form and they share clear personality traits with Palace.

Ranked 19th in the Premier League for average possession (40%), no team has played a higher percentage of their passes forward than Brentford (38%) - and Palace (35.9%) are cut from the same cloth.



Possession for possession's sake is not in either Brentford or Palace's DNA, and the numbers back it up. Brentford (52) have strung together the fewest passing sequences of 10+ passes in the Premier League in 2025/26, while Crystal Palace (62) rank 18th.

Instead, both sides focus on targeting areas where they can hurt opponents and, notably, only Brentford (0.17) have a higher xG-per-shot value than Palace (0.16) this term.

Last season, Saturday's teams ranked among the Premier League's top five for goals from corners, free-kicks, and throw-ins - and, on the evidence so far this season, neither side has lost their set-piece smarts.

"To press or not to press?" - that may be the fundamental question for Brentford this weekend.

Palace are compact and competitive in the middle third of the pitch. Tyrick Mitchell, Daichi Kamada and Muñoz all rank among the Premier League's top 10 for tackles won per 90 minutes, but the Eagles' pressing data indicates they are unlikely to engage their opponents high up the pitch.

The Bees, in contrast, rank seventh in the Premier League for high turnovers - with no player in the division winning more tackles in the attacking third than [Kevin Schade](#) (7) this term.

Should Brentford - who have already scored four goals via counter attacks this term - invite Palace onto them? Should the Bees temper their urge to press high themselves? These are, quite literally, pressing questions.

Scout report

Dan Long, *Sky Sports*: Can Palace balance European and domestic football?

Crystal Palace are currently enjoying one of the best, most fruitful periods in their entire 120-year history.

Look back at 2023/24. As well as setting a new record Premier League points total (49), they matched their highest finish (10th) and scored more goals than ever before (57).

That was the first season in 10 without talisman Wilfried Zaha - but also the one where Jean-Philippe Mateta finally showed his talents. The French striker scored 19 goals in all competitions, which was the most of any Palace player since Glenn Murray netted 31 in 2012/13.

The 2024/25 campaign was the first in four without Michael Olise, who had scored or assisted 41 goals in 90 appearances since a move from Reading in the summer of 2021. Some might have had fears that would have a knock-on effect, but Palace blew them out of the water.

And that was despite Oliver Glasner's side flirting with the relegation zone a little too intensely before Christmas. In fact, it took until 15 January for them to reach the five-win mark.

An upturn in fortunes followed, and coincided with the FA Cup run of dreams. The Eagles - who were runners-up in 2015/16, quarter-finalists in 2018/19 and semi-finalists in 2021/22 - beat Stockport, Doncaster, Millwall, Fulham and Aston Villa on the way to the final, where Eberechi Eze's 16th-minute strike secured a 1-0 win over Manchester City and the club's first major piece of silverware.

They finished 12th in the league - the lowest in three seasons - but still managed to set a new points total along the way of 53.

Eze was sold to Arsenal in the summer and, you've guessed it - as had been the case with the Zaha and Olise exits - Palace have not struggled.

They lifted the Community Shield on 10 August after a penalty shoot-out win over Liverpool, reached the Conference League league phase after beating Fredrikstad in the play-off round, and have already been as high as third in the Premier League after going six unbeaten at the start of the campaign.

Glasner's side are three without a win in the league since then, but only a 93rd-minute goal from Jack Grealish saw them lose 2-1 at Everton. They then came from 2-0 and 3-2 down to hold Bournemouth to a thrilling 3-3 draw, before Eze's strike against his former club secured a 1-0 win for Arsenal at the Emirates last time out.

As with any side new to Europe, the question is whether Palace will be able to balance challenging on one extra front without sacrificing their domestic form, or if the extra workload brought by at least six more games will push the squad's depth and resilience to its limit.

The compelling story of their recent success suggests it is more likely to be the former.

In the Dugout

Oliver Glasner

Barring a short loan spell at LASK in the 2003/04 season, Oliver Glasner spent his entire 19-year playing career at SV Ried in his native Austria, from 1992 to 2011, where he holds the record for the most appearances made for the club, with 572 in all competitions.

During his time at SV Ried, he won the Austria Cup in 1998 and 2011, as well as helping the club achieve promotion to the Austrian Bundesliga in 1994/95 and a decade later in 2004/05.

In August 2011, he suffered a brain haemorrhage and, after an operation, was advised to end his playing career at the age of 36. After his enforced retirement, Glasner spent two years as assistant to Roger Schmidt at Red Bull Salzburg.

When Schmidt later left for Bayer Leverkusen, Glasner made his return to SV Ried. During his one and only season in charge, the club secured a fourth-straight sixth-place finish. Next was a return to LASK. Glasner spent four seasons at Raiffeisen Arena and enjoyed plenty of success.

The club finished second in the second tier in his first season and were promoted as champions in 2016/17. Back in the top flight, they then finished fourth, before finishing second in 2018/19 - their highest finish since winning the Staatsliga in 1965.

Glasner then moved across the border to Wolfsburg in July 2019 and, two years later, joined Eintracht Frankfurt. He could not guide the German club to any higher than seventh in his two seasons in charge, though he did mastermind the Europa League triumph in 2021/22, where Frankfurt beat Barcelona, West Ham and Rangers on their way to glory.

He departed Frankfurt in the summer of 2023 and joined Crystal Palace as Roy Hodgson's successor in February 2024, signing a contract until the summer of 2025/26, which is still yet to be extended.



New mural at London Waterloo celebrates 200 years of railway romance

South Western Railway (SWR) and Network Rail launched a new mural at London Waterloo on Friday (24 October) as a lasting commemoration for Railway 200 at Britain's largest station.

'200 Years of Romance' was created by artist Patricio Forrester, the founder of Artmongers, who are known for their work composing public murals.

To create the mural, colleagues at SWR and Network Rail submitted images that they felt represented the best of the railway, while local rail community groups were also asked to contribute.

The unique contributions include:

- A cake celebrating Brockenhurst station's 178th birthday this year
- A fond farewell to the Island Line's 1938 London Underground trains, which were retired in 2021
- Queen Elizabeth II's visit to Salisbury station during her Diamond Jubilee in 2012
- A moment of pride from London Waterloo's 175th anniversary celebrations in 2023



Stuart Meek (above, middle), SWR's Chief Operating Officer, unveiled the mural alongside artist Patricio Forrester and Mike Lamport.

Mike (above, right) - a historian, member of the Railway 200 Steering Group, and former railwayman - can trace a family connection to London Waterloo as far back as the 1850s. Mike's great grandfather, Matthew, worked as guard with the London & South Railway. The family connection continues as Mike's son Andrew works as a guard at SWR today.

Patricio (above, left) took inspiration by travelling on the SWR network, visiting stations, including London Waterloo.

Artist and founder of Artmongers, Patricio Forrester, said:

The three aspects integral to the design of the mural were Monumental, Industrial, Perspective. The joining of two tracks, the vanishing point on the platform as the train passes through the station. London Waterloo is monumental and industrious just like a cathedral. This gave me the idea to showcase the photos as stained glass, the photos have been designed to look translucent to let the light through, much like stained glass.

The mural can be found near Exit 3 and is made up of approximately 40 images. Around 200 people were involved in compiling the collection, documenting special moments connected to rail, including those who work and volunteer on the railway, as well as local groups.

Speaking on behalf of South Western Railway and Network Rail, Paula Aldridge, Community Rail Manager at South Western Railway, said:

Waterloo's new mural showcases so many special moments. It shows how important the railway is to people, but also how the railway's 200-year history is all about people.

The artwork has given this part of the station a new lease of life and sits proudly in the busy heart of London, for all to see.

**South Western
Railway**

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