

Twickenham & Richmond Tribune



Contents

TickerTape

Rugby at Twickenham Stadium

The Tree Agency

9th Anniversary of the Twickenham & Richmond Tribune

The Local Picture Postcard Page - Twickenham Park

Crusader Travel

Twickenham Remembers

Sir Vincent Cable Becomes Freeman of Richmond

Solemn Vespers de Confessore

Inside Richmond's Transport Committee: Congestion, Cargo Bikes and Civic Consensus

Handel: Alexander's Feast

Richmond May Fair Charities Fund

Dare to walk on fire for Skylarks this November

Free electrical repair training in Richmond

Sir Vincent Cable: A Career in Review

Sir David Suchet CBE in Conversation

Next Week at Richmond Council

Twickers Foodie: November Food and Drink News

Twickers Foodie: Olive Oil - Liquid Gold

Gibraltar Rocks Package

Can an apple change the world?

Mark Aspen Review: The Deep Blue Sea

Mark Aspen Review: Breaking the Rules

Mark Aspen Review: Lightning Beneath the Waves

Mark Aspen Review: Hedda

THE GHOST TRAIN at the Mary Wallace

Community Choir Concert

Twickenham food waste technology firm secures investment to scale across UK and Europe

Scott's Richmond Brings Alpine Magic To London's Riverside

Remembrance: Surbiton veterans at Royal Star & Garter pay their respects

Chelsea FC Foundation Coaching Students Complete Goalball School Leaders Award

Winter Nets

England Team To Play New Zealand At Allianz Stadium

Brentford 3 Newcastle United 1

SWR support vulnerable young people around London Waterloo station

London Councils welcomes Secretary of State's comments on fiscal devolution

TwickerSeal

Alan Winter

Doug Goodman

James Knight

Hampton Choral Society

James Knight

Richmond Opera

Richmond May Fair

Skylarks

Action West London

James Knight

The Richmond Society

Alison Jee

Alison Jee

Sunborn

Deep Patel

Mark Aspen

Eleanor Marsh

Andrew Lawston

Eleanor Lewis

Richmond Shakespeare Society

Princess Alice Hospice

Limetrack

Scott's Richmond

Royal Star & Garter

St Mary's University

Teddington Cricket Club

RFU

Brentford Football Club

South Western Railway

London Councils

Editors: Teresa Read, Berkley Driscoll

[CONTACT](#)

[DONATE](#)

[ADVERTISE](#)

RG. I. PR. A. AJ. SS. I. ST. SF. I. PR. . . .
200.8 1/2 66.92 3/4 20.99 16 1/8 76

TickerTape - News in Brief

Rugby at Twickenham Stadium

ENGLAND v NEW ZEALAND

Saturday 15th November

KO 15:10.

Attendance: 82,000

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

CPZ in operation from 11:00-23:00.

Shuttle buses will run to the stadium from Old Deer Park and Hounslow East tube station

See RFU Home Turf on [Twitter](#) for updates



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

TwickerSeal and his chums gathered to celebrate the 9th Anniversary of the Twickenham & Richmond Tribune.

[Edition 0001](#) was published on Friday 11th November 2016 by Teresa Read and Berkley Driscoll, and has been published every week since.



The Local Picture Postcard Page - Part 304

Twickenham Park

By Alan Winter

This is an area of the LBRUT borough that has remained relatively unchanged during the lifetime of nearly all our readers. I have often been asked exactly where it is now and what its more recent history has been. We can go back to 1227 when the land was granted to Richard of Cornwall and at that point became the estate of Twickenham Park which sits by the Thames between Twickenham, Isleworth and Richmond.

The first postcard this week shows a painting of Twickenham Park House from Walford's *Greater London* (1883) after W. Angus (1795).

My job in The Tribune has always been to show the LBRUT area as portrayed by picture postcards since they were first published in 1894. As far as Twickenham Park is concerned I can do no better than show you a couple of postcards from the three "pleasure" or "ornamental" grounds that were laid out in the St Margarets Trust Grounds by the Conservative

Land Society who had acquired Twickenham Park from the Earl of Kilmorey in 1853. These grounds or Gardens still exist

today and are known as The River Grounds beside the Thames, The Lake Grounds formed around the lake and the Avenue Grounds that sit in the triangle formed by The Avenue, St Peters Road and St Georges Road in St Margarets.

Fortunately for all interested in the Twickenham Park area, a detailed book titled "The Gardens and People of Twickenham Park" covering the whole area from 800 years ago into more recent times has just been published following much research from the author, local resident Andrew J.T. George. This excellent 152 page book is available from the author at: <https://www.andrewgeorgeblog.com/post/the-gardens-and-people-of-twickenham-park>

Alternatively you can order from the *Open Book* in Richmond or the [publisher](#). If ordering from the author's website the postage and packing inside the UK is free. If you require overseas postage please contact andrew@ajtgc.co.uk (will charge at cost).

I am sure that the Twickenham Park Estate and its history can be opened up to one and all within the pages of Andrew's book and that we can appreciate the major role that it has played in this area for many hundreds of years.

The Gardens and People of Twickenham Park



Andrew J.T. George



CrusaderTravel

020 8744 0474

crusadertravel.com

Escapology Experts

info@crusadertravel.com



Your friendly local Travel Agency
established in Twickenham since 1966

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



Twickenham Remembers

By Doug Goodman

Last Sunday, November 9th, the annual Service of Remembrance was held in Radnor Gardens.



Sir Vincent Cable Becomes Freeman of Richmond

By James Knight

The Council Chamber at York House exuded an air of smooth ceremony last week as Sir Vince Cable, the former MP for Twickenham and ex-Leader of the Liberal Democrats, was awarded the Freedom of the Borough of Richmond upon Thames. The special meeting, held on Armistice Day, was attended solely by Liberal Democrat and Green councillors, the only two parties currently represented on the council and who have a longstanding electoral pact. With other party members absent, the atmosphere remained orderly, warm, and entirely uncontested.



Photo ©Berkley Driscoll

A Ceremony Framed by Admiration

Proceedings began with an unusually expansive prayer from the Mayor's Chaplain, praising Cable's "intelligence and integrity" and mentioning his decades-long support for local charities, including SPEAR, Crossroads Care, Off the Record, and the Marlborough Centre. The Chaplain's language, which urged "wise government" and the importance of public service, set a reverent tone that continued throughout the evening.

Council Leader Gareth Roberts proposed the formal resolution. His speech combined biography, party folklore, and local affection, recalling Cable's years as MP, his Cabinet role, and snippets

from past election campaigns. There were references to Cable's pop-cultural turn on *Strictly Come Dancing*, his personal interventions on casework, and the "bring back Vince" sentiment that circulated after his 2015 defeat. The tone was warm and smooth, the kind of admiration that naturally arises when a council chamber is filled with the honouree's allies.

A Green Seconding Speech with an Old Story

Seconding the motion, a Green councillor shared a more pointed recollection. She described campaigning with Cable during the 2016 Richmond Park by-election, recalling him knocking doors in "soaking-wet shoes" in a concerted effort to help unseat Zac Goldsmith. Said with humour, it nonetheless brought a past contest into a civic occasion, hinting at the political memories that still energise the borough's leadership.

The motion passed unanimously without amendment, unsurprising in a chamber where every seat belongs to the Liberal Democrats and Green Party.

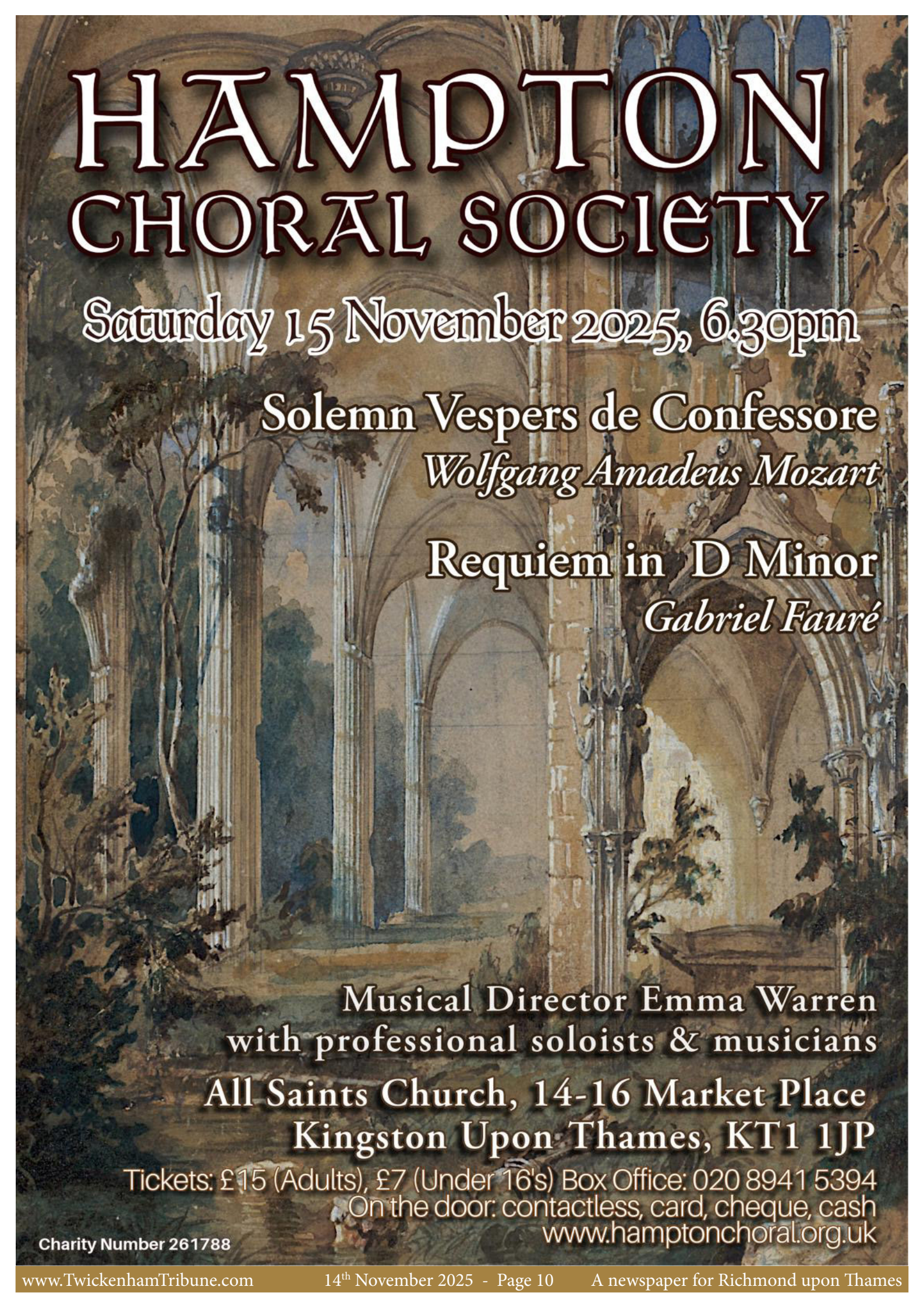
Cable's Acceptance: Warm, Anecdotal, and Quietly Barbed

Cable's speech was characteristic: gently humorous, subtly academic, and full of anecdotes. He thanked councillors for the honour, reminisced about arriving in the borough "for the schools, trains and trees" in the 1970s, and paid tribute to his late wife Olympia. He lightly joked about the privileges of being a Freeman of the City of London – such as the often-mentioned right to herd sheep across London Bridge – and engaged the room with a storyteller's ease.

Yet threaded through the charm were several flashes of old political memory. Cable revisited his early years in Glasgow local government, where he encountered the Labour left; then shifted to Richmond's own political past, recalling the Twickenham Labour Party's far-left "revolutionary committee" once debating whether to seize York House during an imagined workers' uprising. He spoke of the National Front's former base in the borough, and of debating a youthful Nigel Farage warning of a "Fourth Reich" – anecdotes delivered with a smile, but unmistakably framing old opponents as unreasonable, extreme, or faintly eccentric. As he spoke, it was easy to forget that Cable was once at the centre of decisions that defined the early 2010s, particularly during the austerity period, a chapter that still colours perceptions of his career even as he now stands as an elder statesman in a local civic chamber.

Cable closed with a note of gratitude and a reference to his ongoing project documenting the lives of Twickenham's past parliamentarians. The reverence shown in the chamber suggested a party still deeply shaped by Cable's political instincts, selective about scrutiny, confident in presentation, and sometimes unwilling to confront uncomfortable truths."

You can watch the ceremony [HERE](#)



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

Inside Richmond's Transport Committee:

Congestion, Cargo Bikes and Civic Consensus

By James Knight

The November meeting of Richmond Council's Transport and Air Quality Committee unfolded in typically orderly fashion. Chaired by Councillor Alexander Ehmann, the session covered a range of transport issues from pedestrian safety and cargo bikes to funding bids and the borough's latest financial position. Over the course of one hour and thirty-seven minutes, councillors and officers discussed how to make Richmond's streets "safer, cleaner and more inclusive." There were no votes against any of the reports, and no formal dissent.

Pedestrian Priority Pilot Project

The committee began with the *Pedestrian Priority Pilot Project* – a scheme to identify and improve key pedestrian routes outside town centres. Two streets have been chosen for the first round: The Terrace in Barnes and Hampton Road in Twickenham. Introducing the paper, transport officer Jesse Handler explained that the goal was to target "limited funds to deliver the most cost-effective pedestrian benefits on the most important pedestrian streets." The focus, he said, was on "quick win" measures such as new benches, tree planting, drainage, and removing obstacles from pavements.

Councillor Jonathan Cardy asked about why the pedestrian route over Teddington Lock was missing. Handler admitted this was "a limitation of the data," adding that the model relied on "street segments" used by cars rather than footpaths, but that local input would help refine the picture. Councillor James Chard offered a more philosophical defence of the process. "You get the most out of it," he said, "not by purely relying on the data but by overlaying that human knowledge." The chair agreed, describing the project as "genuinely the class-leading best that's been done by any local authority." He added, "Does it have weaknesses? Undoubtedly, but we're trying to focus on where we need to prioritise resources."

The discussion shifted to the practical aspects of benches, greenery, and accessibility. Councillor Michael Butlin suggested that seats should have "backs and arms" so older residents can use them. No doubt referring to the new backless benches recently installed in King Street, Twickenham. Officer David Tidley confirmed that was the intention: "We certainly expect benches to be ones with backs and arms and not perches, which might look good but are not usable by many members of the community."

Green councillor Andrée Frieze welcomed the project and said it aligned with London's wider *Healthy Streets* targets. "It's a human-scale attempt to improve things for people literally on the street," she said, adding that the scheme would help move the borough towards the Mayor's goal of 80 per cent of journeys made by walking, cycling or public transport.

Cargo Bike Review

The second major item was the Cargo Bike Programme Review, presented by officer Raphael Younger. He told the committee that Richmond's "Our Bike" community scheme now had around 600 users who had completed 1,500 hires, with plans to add five more cargo bikes next year. About 70 per cent of trips, he said, had replaced car journeys.

Chair Cllr Ehmann said cargo bikes were "still at quite an early adoption stage," but that the council wanted to "normalise their use and expose people to their amenity." He shared his own experience: "I'm a working, busy father, and the cargo bike has played a critical role in my ability to perform that role better." The mood was warm and supportive, though not without caveats. Councillor Fleming asked about safety: "What would you say to parents who are worried about using the cargo bike for their children?" Ehmann replied that such concerns were natural but that "the main risk is not yours – it's the behaviour of other road users." He added: "You might feel safer in a metallic structure, but there are negative impacts in relation to public health for your children too. It's not for everyone, but I really

encourage people to try it.”

Councillor Butlin suggested more engagement with local businesses: “If we want businesses to use cargo bikes, let’s talk to them. Consult them.” Officers agreed to explore the idea. In closing, the chair praised officers for “building a sense of community” around cargo-bike users and described the borough’s work as “leading the way in London.”

TfL Funding and Budgets

Later in the meeting, councillors approved the borough’s Transport for London funding submission for 2026–27. Head of Transport Strategy David Tidley said the Local Implementation Plan funding had “reduced quite significantly in real terms,” but that the council continued to invest its own resources in local schemes. There was also a financial report showing a £316,000 underspend this year, largely due to higher-than-expected parking income. Finance officer Alex Moylan said the figure reflected “a small increase in the volume and average transaction value across the Council’s car parks.” Councillor James Chard noted that “a parking underspend can mean different things – sometimes more economic activity, sometimes more cars,” and asked how behaviour was being tracked. The question was framed analytically, but its drift was clear: in Richmond’s transport debates, increased car use is rarely seen as a sign of economic life, and more often as a problem to be managed. Officers promised further analysis.

An efficient meeting - and a revealing one

What was notable was not what was said, but what was missing. Earlier this year TomTom’s Traffic Index ranked Richmond upon Thames as the most congested borough in London, yet congestion was barely mentioned. The debate focused on a cargo-bike scheme serving a few hundred users, not on the thousands who spend hours each week in slow-moving traffic. That contrast highlights a wider issue. For many residents, particularly those on lower incomes or working in trades, cars and vans are not lifestyle choices but necessities. The committee’s tone – professional, confident, quietly moral – suggests a borough whose leadership sees environmental goals as the overriding priority, even when the economic needs of motorists and businesses remain unresolved. For many Lib Dem voters who value balanced decision-making, the lack of challenge in the committee room will raise quiet concerns.

None of this diminishes the council’s good intentions or the skill of its officers. But it does illustrate how easily consensus can harden into assumption. With every councillor in the chamber drawn from the same Liberal Democrat–Green alliance, debate has become confirmation. The council’s liberal idealism risks, at times, shading into something more patrician: well-meaning, data-led, but faintly removed from everyday experience.

That consensus, however, may not last much longer. The local elections in May 2026 could reshape the conversation. The Green Party, buoyed by national polling and strong local organisation, is aiming to overtake the Liberal Democrats as the dominant force on the council – a shift that could make policy on walking and cycling even more assertive. At the same time, if the Conservatives regain a foothold in the chamber, they are likely to bring sharper scrutiny on issues such as parking, road maintenance and congestion hotspots around Hampton Hill and Twickenham.

In short, the calm unanimity of Richmond’s committees may soon give way to something more animated – and perhaps, for many residents, more representative and better governance as policies might actually be tested rather than just applauded. As congestion deepens and political winds change, the borough may yet rediscover the value of disagreement.

HANDEL

ALEXANDER'S FEAST

"A Secular
Oratorio"

November
Sat 15th 19:00

St MARY'S
University Chapel
Twickenham
TW1 4SX

TICKETS £17, UNDER 18s £8.50

0333 666 3366

ticketsource.co.uk/richmondopera

Richmond
OPERA

Charity #1127803

Richmond May Fair Charities Fund

From Richmond May Fair

When the new Richmond May Fair Committee revived the Fair in 2023, our ambition was to bring the community all the “fun of the Fair” that generations have enjoyed since 1970, and, in the longer term, to generate enough income to support local charities with small awards.

The Committee is thrilled to have achieved this in just three years. It wouldn't have been possible without the generosity of our sponsors Be Richmond, who have supported all three Fairs, and this year, Oscars. We are also immensely grateful for additional sponsorship from St Catherine's School, Cinnamon Bazaar, Digme Fitness, Drop-in Ltd, Third Space, and Pet People.



The Richmond May Fair Charities Fund was open to charities operating within the borough and benefiting people in the Richmond Town and Hill area. The Fund received over thirty applications, and we are delighted to have made small grants to nineteen of them – though we only wish we'd had the funds to support them all. The successful applications cover a wide range of community, health,

and environmental projects.

Next year's Fair will take place on Saturday 9th May, and we look forward to seeing you all there for a wonderful day of entertainment, shopping, delicious food and drink, and the hugely popular Dog Show.

SPEAR

"On behalf of everyone at SPEAR, thank you and all the committee members for your generous contribution of £2,000 to our work. Your kindness is a lifeline for individuals in South West London facing the harsh realities of homelessness".

Ruils Independent Living

"We are delighted to have been chosen by the May Fair to receive a grant. We will be able to recruit and train some new befrienders as a result and reach out to some isolated local people who are currently on our waiting list for befriending".

Vineyard Community & Richmond Food Bank

"Thank you, this is a brilliant direct help for those attending our services this year in meeting such basic foundational needs for them, really appreciate it".



Dare to walk on fire for Skylarks this November

From Skylarks

On Saturday 29 November, join local charity Skylarks for an unforgettable evening of determination, fun, and community spirit at their firewalk challenge.

Take on the ultimate test of willpower, feel the rush and celebrate your achievement while raising vital funds for children and young people with additional needs and disabilities.

For younger supporters, there's something special too: a Lego Walk Challenge! It's a brilliant way for children to get involved and show that courage comes in all sizes.

Every step you take will help Skylarks continue providing life-changing therapies, activities, and support for families across the community.

Take the challenge and help children with additional needs shine brighter than ever!

Find out more about the [Skylarks firewalking challenge](#).



Free electrical repair training in Richmond

From Action West London

Action West London (AWL) is launching a new 'Electrical Fixing' training workshop on 11 December 2025 aimed at equipping unemployed individuals with valuable, hands-on repair skills.

The initiative will also tackle the growing issue of electronic waste by encouraging the donation and reuse of small electrical items.

The project is designed to be a 'win-win' for the community. Donations of unwanted but fixable small electrical items - such as kettles, toasters and lamps - will be used as training materials for the participants. Once repaired, these items will be given to local charities to benefit those in need.

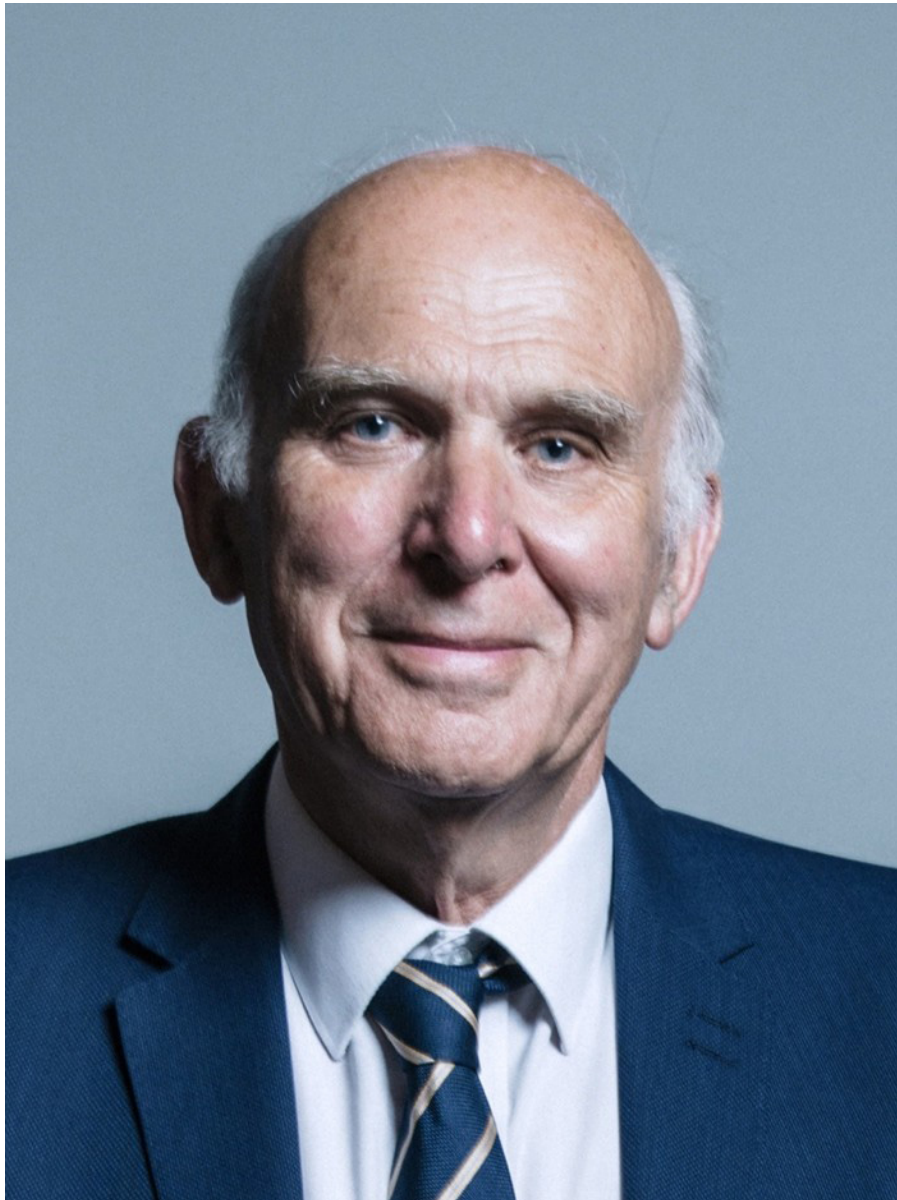


The free half-day, in-person workshops will be led by expert fixers from organisations like the Fixing Factory. Participants will gain practical skills in troubleshooting, repair and identifying salvageable items. The program will also offer a Level 1 certification in repair and PAT testing, a qualification that can significantly boost employment prospects.

[Register for a session](#)

Sir Vincent Cable: A Career in Review

By James Knight



Public honours soften the memory of politics. They encourage us to enjoy the civility of the moment and overlook the rough edges of a long career. Sir Vince Cable's recent elevation to Freeman of the Borough of Richmond upon Thames was no exception. In a chamber filled solely with Liberal Democrat and Green councillors – allies in an electoral pact that now shapes the borough – warmth was plentiful and dissent entirely absent. But once the applause ends, it is the duty of any thoughtful observer to look again and compare the familiar claims of greatness with the more complex truths of the man's long public life.

Cable's public story has always begun with an anecdote about his upbringing. In one version – frequently used in speeches – he describes his childhood home as divided between “a socialist mother and a conservative father”, an early political debate from which he developed his instinct for moderation. However, in his autobiography, he subtly adopts another version: both parents, Len and Edith, were “working-class Conservatives”. The contradiction is not scandalous, but it is typical. Cable tweaks his backstory to fit the moment, favouring whichever version better supports the argument he wishes to make. It is a small detail, but revealing – the earliest indication of a lifelong tendency to shift emphasis rather than stick to a fixed line.

This flexibility first surfaced at university, where he joined both the Labour and Liberal Parties simultaneously, convinced they were “saying the same thing in different language”. He even tried to merge the two student groups, prompting predictable outrage. The episode is often seen as a sign of broad-mindedness; it can also be interpreted as the early stage of a political chameleon. In the years that followed, Cable moved within Labour circles, served as a Labour councillor in Glasgow, worked for the Labour government, and advised both John Smith and Gordon Brown. However, the affinity never quite took hold. He drifted into the SDP when it suited him, and then into the Liberal Democrats after the merger into the rump of the old Liberal Party.

Synthesis, Realignment and the Making of a Liberal Democrat Elder

His later role in *The Orange Book* – the 2004 manifesto that guided the Liberal Democrats towards market-friendly economic liberalism – marked another decisive shift. Cable was part of the intellectual bridge that made the 2010 coalition with the Conservatives not only possible but almost inevitable. Yet as the modern Liberal Democrats moved away from that experiment and repositioned themselves to Labour’s left on civil liberties, immigration, and constitutional issues, Cable moved once again with scarcely a ripple of discomfort. His supporters call this adaptability. His critics note that he is remarkably at ease changing stories, positions, and parties, as long as the language of reason accompanies the shift.

Nowhere is this more clear than in his handling of the financial crisis. Cable has been sanctified as the prophet who predicted the calamity of 2008. It is true he warned about household debt; many did. But the popular myth obscures his successive reversals. He opposed quantitative easing, then supported it. He resisted fiscal stimulus, then embraced it. He championed central bank independence, then called for a firmer ministerial grip. He was less a Cassandra than a clever observer adapting to events that constantly surpassed his predictions.

His stance on Brexit followed a similar pattern. Cable initially declared that a second referendum would be “undemocratic” and “disrespectful.” As the Liberal Democrats found a political lifeline in opposing Brexit, his position changed. Soon he was advocating exactly the mechanism he had previously rejected. It was a change of heart clothed as prudence, but it showed the same signs of narrative convenience that have marked him since his student days.

The contradictions run even deeper. Before re-entering frontline politics, Cable was chief economist at Shell during the period when Ken Saro-Wiwa and the Ogoni Nine were executed in 1995. Amnesty International and others accused the Nigerian military regime – with whom Cable met – of serious abuses linked to Shell’s activities. When asked whether he had joined the company before or after those executions, Cable was curiously evasive. This has led to a persistent charge from human rights activists: that one cannot claim to be a “moral economist” while avoiding clear answers on one of the century’s most notorious human-rights scandals.

From Coalition to Controversy

In government, too, the dissonances increased. As Business Secretary, Cable oversaw the tripling of tuition fees, despite having personally signed a pledge to oppose such increases. His defence, that the reforms were progressive – was technically competent but politically empty. Royal Mail’s undervalued privatisation, dismissed by union critics as the act of a “pseudo-progressive”, left taxpayers short-changed and institutional investors wealthier. For much of

the left, his complicity in delivering austerity is the unhealed wound – the moment Cable ceased to be a progressive figure in any meaningful sense. In May 2014, he was involved in the Lord Oakeshott polling affair, where covert internal polling was commissioned to undermine Nick Clegg and pave the way for a Cable leadership. His official denial, followed by a partial admission, cast a faint but clear doubt over his consistency and how he abandoned old allies with such ease.

Even within the constituency he served for twenty years, misjudgement left its mark. For nine months, unshredded casework – some involving vulnerable constituents – was left in clear sacks outside his office. The Information Commissioner intervened. Cable apologised and subtly blamed his staff. However, the lapse conflicted with the image of administrative seriousness he had built.

His leadership of the Liberal Democrats, when it finally came, arrived by default. He inherited the role unopposed after Tim Farron's resignation, as senior figures declined to stand. The BBC described him as a caretaker, tasked with steadying the ship rather than setting a course. That judgement was fair. His leadership neither redefined the party nor resolved its internal contradictions; it merely prolonged an interlude between phases of ideological repositioning.

Recently, the controversies deepened. Cable appeared on the Kremlin-linked broadcaster RT on the day Russia invaded Ukraine, a move criticised by his successor Sir Ed Davey as “entirely wrong”. His comments on China, where he advised caution in the language used about abuses in Xinjiang, prompted the Young Liberals to call for not only a retraction but also a reassessment of his role within the party. For a former leader to be so openly criticised by his own youth wing highlights how much the party has evolved – and how out of touch Cable has become with its current instincts.

Virtue, Variation and the Question of Judgement

And yet, to present Cable merely as a vessel of inconsistencies would be unfair. He is courteous, diligent, and widely liked locally. His service to Twickenham was sincere. He supported local charities with genuine commitment. But these virtues, as admirable as they are, do not erase the recurring pattern throughout his public life: the shifting narrative about his origins; the changing allegiance between Labour, the SDP, and the Liberals; the evolving economic positions; the inconsistent Brexit principles; and the fluctuating explanations for the scandals that surrounded him.

The ceremony at York House encouraged residents to see a grander version of Vince Cable: the sage of Twickenham, the voice of reason, the moral economist. However, a closer look at the historical record shows something more modest and mixed – a man of ability but also of compromise, whose reputation shone brightest when the circle around him was small. Ultimately, it is not his intellect that raises doubts, but the long trail of changed stories and shifting beliefs that accompanied him throughout his political career.

History will document his contributions. It will also note the inconsistencies. And it is in that balance – admiration tempered by scrutiny – that Sir Vince Cable will ultimately be judged.

Image: Vincent Cable ©House of Commons/Chris McAndrew

Sir David Suchet CBE in Conversation

From The Richmond Society

Join us for a special evening with the legendary actor who brought Agatha Christie's Hercule Poirot to life on our screens.



Photo by Robin Sinha

Sir David Suchet CBE will be interviewed about his extraordinary career, his many iconic roles and his interests, including his work with the Terence Rattigan Society and the River Thames Boat Project.

Copies of his latest book, 'Travels with Agatha Christie', which he'll be happy to sign, will be available to purchase at the event.

Thursday 27 November, 8pm (doors open at 7.30pm with drinks available)
Duke Street Church, Richmond TW9 1DH

Free for Richmond Society members in person and online. Members will be e-mailed a Zoom link shortly before the meeting. Non-members may attend in person for £7, or join the Society at www.richmondsociety.org.uk

Reserve your tickets [HERE](#)

Next Week at Richmond Council

On Monday, 17th November, the **Adult Social Services, Health and Housing Committee** will meet to discuss 1) Richmond Housing Partnership social housing improvement plan, 2) Richmond Intermediate Housing Policy Statement update, 3) introducing a domestic abuse policy for Richmond's housing services, 4) Q2 monitoring report, 5) locally commissioned public health services to support health and wellbeing contract direct award, 6) care technology procurement in adult social care, 7) Richmond dementia strategy, Richmond care homes contract award, and 8) joint health overview and scrutiny committee update. The meeting commences at 7 pm at York House, Twickenham.

For more details, click [HERE](#)

On Tuesday morning, 18th November, the **North West London Joint Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee** will meet to discuss 1) dentist commissioning and children's dental health, 2) the future of place-based partnerships delivering health and care services, and 3) special school nursing and an update on SEN provision. The meeting starts at 10 am, The Auditorium - Harrow Council Hub, Kenmore Avenue, Harrow, HA3 8LU.

For more details, click [HERE](#)

Tuesday evening, 11th November, the **Environment, Sustainability, Culture and Sports Committee** will meet to discuss 1) approval of the draft West London waste plan for public consultation, 2) busking code of conduct, 3) fees for leisure services, and 4) Q2 monitoring report. The meeting commences at 7 pm, at York House, Twickenham.

For more details, click [HERE](#)

On Thursday, 20th November, the **Finance, Policy and Resources Committee** will discuss 1) Richmond Community Fund round 6, 2) corporate complaints for 2024/25, 3) infrastructure funding statement 2024/25, 4) Fair Funding Review 2.0, 5) management and collection of debts, 6) Q2 monitoring report, and 7) additional budget requests.

For more 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](#)

November Food and Drink News



Ginsters, famed for pasties, has just launched **Ginsters Pastry Toastie**, ready in just four minutes straight from the toaster. Great for home workers, but also ideal for those offices with a toaster to hand. Designed to keep the fillings in and toasters clean, they are available in three flavours: Smoked Ham & Cheddar; Tomato, Basil & Mozzarella and Chicken, Pesto & Mozzarella. Made with 100% British meat they are available from Tesco at £2.50 per toastie, much cheaper and more warming than a sandwich.

When it comes to choosing honey, one needs to be sure of the quality and origins and we love **Louisa's Honey**. The honeys are collected in tightly selected areas, far from possible forms of pollution and environmental contamination. They only work with bee farmers who use traditional, natural treatments and methods, and bees are treated with respect (never treated with unnatural products or chemicals). I'm delighted to report that those folk at **Ocado** have seen sense, and are now stocking it. Multi award winning (including numerous Great Taste stars), in total the company's Italian range of honey consists of eight varieties of flavours: seven unique flavours, which are pure, natural and not infused: Bosco, Coriander, Lime, Chestnut, Citrus, Cherry and Acacia. Plus a speciality infusion, which is pure Acacia honey infused with natural root ginger. Bosco is our favourite and it's one of the rarest and most complex honeys in the world. Quality like this comes at a price, of course, and the generously filled 400g jars are £24.95 at [Ocado](https://www.ocado.com) but definitely worth it. More info and shopping at louisas-honey.com



With a view to the forthcoming festive season, Häagen-Dazs has reintroduced two truly scrumptious limited edition nutty flavours: **Pistachio & Cream** returns, plus a return of **Peanut Butter Crunch**. Perfect for squirrelling away for a festive treat, these are available from all major supermarkets from £5.75. Pistachio & Cream combines

rich buttery roasted pistachios with an ice cream base and caramelised pistachio and almond pieces scattered throughout each spoonful. Peanut Butter Crunch is sweet & salty with the ice cream containing peanuts, gently roasted then ground into a smooth base. Ripples of thick nutty sauce run through, with crunchy peanut pieces adding texture.

Back in 2015, Matt & Hayley Hunt had one mission: shake up snacking. Protein was booming, but choices were bland, boring, and full of nonsense. So they rolled up their sleeves and started making protein balls that tasted as good



as they were good for you. More than 30 million bags later, **The Protein Ball Co** is still rolling strong. Twelve flavours, four ranges, and one clear promise: snacks that fuel your body without sacrificing flavour. **The Protein Ball Co** follows a minimally processed mantra using everyday larder based ingredients (dates, peanut butter...) and by prioritising rolled bites over bars Protein Ball also taps into the growing 'grazing' agenda, where we eat less, but more often. Do check out the range for high protein, high fibre, low sugar and also a plant-based variety. For further information and to buy visit theproteinballco.com



Korean food has enjoyed a massive growth recently and I was pleased to discover a fabulous range of Korean sauces, ketchup and glazes/stir fry sachets. It's a cult Irish brand called **Chimac**. Inspired by Korea's love affair with fried chicken, Chimac combines our obsession with bold punchy flavours. Vegan, flexitarian, or full-blown meat lover, whatever your preference, Chimac's range will shake up your meals and add a real flavour punch. This Dublin-based brand

offers a range of Korean Hot Sauces, BBQ Sauces and Marinades for adding a little bit of heat, spice and all things nice to your kitchen creations! **Korean Stir Fry Marinade**: a punchy, umami-packed blend of gochujang, garlic, ginger and soy that brings instant depth to just about anything you can toss in a pan. There's the **Sriracha Caramel Glaze**, a sweet-heat balance of fiery sriracha with sticky caramel. Finally, the **Korean BBQ Wings Marinade**: rich, smoky, and sticky with soy, garlic, sesame, and a touch of



sweetness. There are selection boxes available from John Lewis, Sous Chef, selected fine food stores and Amazon and of course the whole range can be bought directly from chimac.ie

If you, or a member of your family, has the misfortune to be gluten intolerant, it can be very difficult for lovers of pasta and pizza in particular. This is where **White Rabbit** comes in... The gluten-free Italian food brand has recently added three new frozen products to its range. There's a Chicken and Chorizo pizza, Prosciutto Ham and mushroom pizza and some Sourdough dough balls which come with a garlic and herb

butter. While pizza is still the main product focus, the company has also perfected the art of producing Italian-inspired dishes that the gluten intolerant are often missing, including yummy desserts. As with the rest of the range, the brand prides itself on creating delicious, no compromise Italian dishes to the masses. We've been particularly impressed with the pastas that are widely available too.



The team behind Gold Notting Hill has just opened



a new restaurant in Richmond called **Tower House**.

Located in the mid-19th-century clock tower on the riverside and accessible from the start of Richmond Bridge, Tower House promises to be a relaxed and intimate modern Mediterranean riverside restaurant and bar. Executive Chef Theo Hill's menu has a focus on open-fire cooking and seasonality. Tower House's clock tower pays homage to Osborne House, Queen Victoria's Isle of Wight residence. Inside Tower House, guests will find heirloom collectables and objets,

Outside, the elevated Riverside Garden will, no doubt, be very popular in warmer weather. Tower House will be taking bookings from December but is currently open for walk-ins.

Make a diary note folks, next month the historic gardens of Henry VIII's former home are again to be transformed into a food lover's paradise for the highly festive **Hampton Court Palace Festive Fayre (5th – 7th & 12th – 14th December)**. Now celebrating its 10th year, the Hampton Court Palace Festive Fayre showcases artisan and boutique food and drink businesses, alongside independent retailers brimming with gift inspiration.



Visitors can browse high-quality ingredients to elevate winter feasts, including Hot Star Honey, Hebridean Charcuterie, Atrangi Chutneys, Asilia Salt, Orcadian Fudge, The Glorious Mess Meringues, Cambridge Artisan Cheese and more. Merrymakers can indulge in festive delights such as gooey brownies and custard drenched crumble, and sample exceptional drink brands including Great Drams Whisky, Portuguese Vinhos and Rosemullion Distillery. There are also street food stalls, and seasonal drinks to enjoy, plus live music on the East Front bandstand, and horse and cart rides through the grounds. Visitors can step inside to discover Henry VIII's atmospheric kitchens with demonstrations of Tudor cookery. Entry to the Hampton Court Palace Festive Fayre is included with palace admission tickets, and Historic Royal Palaces members also go free. For further information and tickets visit: <https://www.hrpfestivals.com>



Olive Oil – Liquid Gold

It's not that long ago that people here in the UK had to buy olive oil at the chemist, in a tiny bottle, with a view to sorting out ear ache! But people in the Mediterranean have appreciated it and used it for thousands of years. It's believed Greece was the first home of the olive tree and indeed, inscribed earthenware tablets from Crete that date back to 2500 BC are the oldest known references to olive oil and ancient physicians, philosophers referred to its curative properties. The Greeks considered the olive tree to be a symbol of peace, wisdom and triumph - Olympians were crowned with an olive wreath and it's thought that by the 5th Century BC the Greeks were producing so much olive oil that it became a major export.



We are now realising that this liquid gold has health benefits as well as tasting delicious. In fact the European Union allows health claims to be made for extra virgin olive oils containing 250ml/kg or more of polyphenols. The benefit is usually taken to be “towards the prevention of coronary heart disease” from consumption of 20g of these oils every day. But chemical components, such as polyphenols, that contribute to the health benefits of olive oil can also change the balance of the tasting experience. If you want to find out more about olive oil, then [Judy Ridgway](#), a doyenne of the olive oil scene, has an excellent website that not only takes you through the various oils, but gives in depth information and is a veritable olive oil treasure trove.

If you like olive oil, you'll know that different oils can be very different in flavour, just like wines. However, unlike wine, very little information is usually given on the label, so you need to rely on your own tastebuds as the guide. Colour is not a guide for olive oil - some with a strong green colour do have a 'green or grassy' flavour but others just don't. By the same token, pale yellow oils can be sweet and mild but also very peppery. Add to this the fact that good quality oils tend to be packed in dark coloured glass bottles or metal cans to protect them from the light and it's even more difficult.

Here are a few olive oils that I've tried recently and would recommend:



Little Olive Oil is a new Albanian extra virgin olive oil (EVOO) that was recently launched in the UK. While Greece, Spain, and Italy dominate the EVOO market, Albania remains a hidden gem in the affordable, yet quality, EVOO sector. The country's Mediterranean microclimate and fertile soils produce olives with remarkable character, offering peppery, smooth, balanced flavours that stand out. Little Olive Oil sources its olives from small, family-owned groves in Albania. Groves that follow a long- standing tradition where families harvest their olives and take them to trusted local mills, keeping what they need and selling the rest. Little Olive Oil's launch collection features three distinct EVOOs, each reflecting the richness of Albania's land and its olive-growing tradition. **Kalinjos Pure** is produced from early-harvest Kalinjos olives, often called the *queen of olives*, delivering a beautifully balanced flavour with gentle bitterness and subtle pepperiness. **Koroneiki Superior**, made from 100% Koroneiki olives,

presents a bright, grassy profile with a smooth, gentle finish, ideal for everyday use. **Trio Select** combines **Koroneiki, Frantoio, and Leccino** olives to create a mild, silky oil with a delicate bitterness, perfect for those who prefer a softer, more nuanced flavour. From £20 for 500ml you can choose between 100% recycled aluminium or recyclable glass packaging. There are plans afoot to provide refillable packaging aimed at further supporting the eco-conscious among us. littleoliveoil.co.uk

Good Phats tells us that it's a company on a mission to make health a tasty pursuit: "Fat. It wasn't always a priority in our house. In fact we used to (like almost everyone out there) think it was the enemy - low fat yoghurt anyone? We were led to believe that it was the reason for the increase in the poor metabolic health of the world. How wrong were we." It also states: "We search high and low and work with the finest farmers and fat lovers you can find. We choose fats that simply put, do good. We say yes to olive and avocado oil because it's high in oleic acid that promotes good health, and no to seed oils that are high in linoleic acid that doesn't." The website is a treasure trove of oils: Spanish and Italian and in containers that allow you to squeeze, pour or spray. Available also from Ocado with prices from £14.95 for 750ml of Spanish EVOO and £15 for 500ml of Italian in squeezey, glass or clever 200ml spray cans of Spanish (£6.50) that I find are ideal for using with the air fryer. goodphats.com



Citizens of Soil is not only available in supermarkets (Waitrose, Ocado and others) but you can also have it delivered through your letterbox. Don't worry, it's not messy! In recent years, we've seen letterbox flowers, chocolate, dishwasher tablets and now letterbox olive oil in ecofriendly pouches. Extra virgin, to be exact. Citizens of Soil makes sure all its olive oil is "high polyphenol", with 250mg or more per kilo, and even makes some batches with triple that amount, to make sure they're still high after being bottled for a year. Where Citizens of Soil really stands out, though, is the amount of information it gives for each of its oils. When buying online, you can see specific varieties of olive used, when and where the olives were harvested and how quickly they were milled afterwards. Citizens of Soil removes guesswork by describing key flavours and

food partners. It also grades its oils for fruitiness, pepperiness and bitterness from 'mellow' to 'intense', helping compare varieties and offering recipe inspiration. According to Citizens of Soil, its pouches produce 15 times less carbon than its bottles. Once a pouch is empty, just send it back for free recycling.

And there's no need to keep reordering your extra virgin olive oil as you can [subscribe](#). You can pause, skip or cancel it anytime, and switch the frequency to suit your usage. At just £15 a month, it's a healthy and different subscription, and makes a lovely present. But do have a look at the website if you're serious about your oils, the company also has a section of award-winning Extra Rare oils from £35 for 500ml.



sunborn
GIBRALTAR
YACHT HOTEL RESORT



GIBRALTAR ROCKS PACKAGE

STAY ON THE ONLY PURPOSEFULLY BUILT 5 STAR FLOATING YACHT
HOTEL IN THE WORLD AND EXPERIENCE A BRITISH TERRITORY
IN THE MEDITERRANEAN!

2 nights in a Superyacht Deluxe Room

Substantial breakfast buffet including Full English Breakfast

Bubbly Afternoon Tea for 2 guests on the top deck

Discover Gibraltar's Top Attractions with Gibraltar Pass

Price £489.00 per package for 2 guests
(plus £3 per person / day tourism tax)



GibraltarPASS



BOOK NOW | WWW.SUNBORNGIBRALTAR.COM | RES@SUNBORNGIBRALTAR.COM

Can an apple change the world?

By Deep Patel

~ Through the eyes of a Twickenham Shopkeeper ~



Customers often say to me that there is never a dull moment in my shop, they are right, but every now and again there is a moment where something happens that makes me think how sometimes something that is small to me can mean something big to someone else. It was late afternoon and the shop was fairly quite...I was stocking the shelves in preparation for the evening, when I heard a little voice at the door saying "an apple, an apple". In came a little girl, probably around 4 years old, wearing a princess outfit complete with tiara and pearls. The little girl circled the shop looking at every shelf whilst her parents followed her around the shop. The parents kept pointing at items I sold that little girls usually love such as comics, sweets, ice creams, extra strong mints (yes there is actually a little girl who frequently visits and only ever chooses to buy extra strong mints!) ...but the little girl who was with her parents refused to pursue any of her parents suggestions and kept saying "an apple". It was at that moment I began to wonder if she was looking for an apple (yes I am a genius). We usually do sell apples, but we did not have a delivery that week.

I kept thinking to myself...this little girl...dressed as a princess complete with crown had an entire shop to choose ANYTHING she desired from the premium candies, to ice creams galore and all she wanted was an apple? I was so impressed...I suddenly remembered that I had packed a little red apple for my own lunch that day and kept it in the fridge. I stopped the girl before she could leave and said "are you looking for an apple?"...she looked up to me as if I was a giant (I am not tall, she was just very small) and she nodded and said "yes please mr shop man". She melted my heart and I gave her the apple and told her it was my present to her...she smiled at me as if I had given her a diamond. Her face lit up completely...it was just an apple...but to her...at that moment...it was everything that she desired.

So I didn't get my "five a day" that day (as if I ever do?) but I got something I considered much better...the contentment of knowing I made a little girl very happy...as she left the shop and walked up the road munching on the apple, she kept looking back and smiling at me...her parents were so grateful and couldn't believe I gave her my apple without wanting any payment. It was just an apple, but it made so many people happy. So if you have the opportunity this coming week...as a random act of kindness, give someone an apple...you never know how happy it may make them...of course the flip side is that they may think you are a little odd perhaps...but who cares?...life is too short to go around worrying about what others may think of you, particularly when you have only good intent in your heart...be brave and know that in doing so, you will be helping to change the world...one random act of kindness at a time...because remember, it's the little things that end up mattering in the end and a small change can help promote a bigger change...be the reason someone smiles today...I just was and it feels great.

Remember...

***"If you see someone that needs something more than you do...give it to them
and change the world...one random act of kindness at a time..."***

MY CREATURE-KINDNESS TIP OF THE WEEK:

STOP FLIES WITHOUT KILLING!

Light citronella candles or burn a few drops of essential citronella oil in a diffuser to stop them coming...you will get blessings in your life or have good karma for choosing a kind way too! For ANY specific tip to stop any "pest" or insect KINDLY (for good karma/blessings), email me:

thedeepatel@gmail.com or join my Instagram/Facebook: Insect Lovers Unite

The Deep Blue Sea

by Terence Rattigan

Putney Theatre Company at the Putney Arts Theatre until 15th November

The title tells it all. Hester Collyer is marooned between the devil and the deep blue sea. She has walked away from her stifling marriage to Sir William Collyer, a High Court judge, to live with ex-RAF pilot Freddie Page, in what begins as a passionate, intimate and exciting new life.

In an exquisite example of skilfully honed acting and direction, Roger Beaumont wisely keeps Rattigan's setting of time, place, and action over a single day in 1952. Pacing is surgically precise, characterisation is scrupulously studied, and all the actors fully inhabit their roles. None of the characters is heroic, they are human beings wrestling with their flaws and aspirations. On Beaumont's painstakingly detailed set, the chaise-longue is tatty, the gas meter rusty, the wallpaper musty.



This is essentially Hester's story and Sarah Sharpe is remarkable. Balanced and controlled, she gives an outstanding performance of a woman whose fierce emotions are repressed, and whose fulfilment can never be achieved.

Hester has tried to gas herself, but the meter has run out of money. She is discovered unconscious by the landlady, Mrs Elton. Carole Stewart is priceless, creating an unmistakably recognisable character who doesn't like to gossip; but, well, you know. She calls for the enigmatic Mr Miller, who's better than the local GP, and he doesn't charge five guineas. Why was he gaoled? Why struck off the medical register? Tim Iredale excels in his deadpan delivery and subtly expressive gestures that underline the observant intelligence of one who has seen all yet can still remain pragmatic.

Pip Nixon plays Sir William with gravitas, but stiff and buttoned-up. In contrast, the unsympathetic maverick Freddie Page is an adrenaline junkie. The high risk life of a wartime fighter pilot fired him with excitement, but now he has swapped alcohol for adrenaline. Daniel Jonusas plays Freddie with biting delivery as a cruel streak emerges. Shockingly, he leaves a shilling for the meter on the mantelpiece when he leaves.

The Deep Blue Sea is often seen as a coded reference to Rattigan's proclivities, but there is much more to it. It sharply observes human motivations and reactions. The text is crammed with perceptive aphorisms. Actions are left tantalisingly hanging. We can only guess Hester's future. She has experienced the devil and now sets sail on a deep blue sea.



Read Mark Aspen's review at www.markaspen.com/2025/11/14/deep-blue-sea-ptc

Photography by Steve Lippitt

Breaking the Rules

by Clare Norburn

The Telling at St Mary Magdalene Church, Richmond and on tour until 28th November

It was a full house that eagerly awaited the start of The Telling's performance of Clare Norburn's *Breaking the Rules*. Norburn cleverly interlinks music and drama in all of her biographical plays, often introducing her audience to little known music in the process and has quite a cult following.

Breaking the Rules tells the story of Carlo Gesualdo, 17th century nobleman and, most importantly for Norburn, a composer. Gesualdo had an eventful but tragic life. It included murdering his first wife and her lover, beating his second wife and witnessing the death of his mother at the age of seven. We meet him on the last day of his life, a tortured wreck who for several years has employed a servant whose sole duty is to whip his master. Gesualdo is now forced to come to terms with his own inevitable demise.



Somehow, despite, or perhaps because of all of, this drama, scandal and violence Gesualdo composed incredibly beautiful choral music. This music, along with pieces by his contemporaries, is performed by The Mancunium Consort and is, quite simply, absolutely exquisite. Director Nicholas Renton ensures that music and drama are interwoven throughout the piece, with the singers being fully part of the action.

Gesualdo himself is played by the charismatic John Sackville who, as well as demonstrating anguish, guilt and pure misery is often quite terrifying. Sackville is not served well by the acoustics in the historic Richmond church, and at times the text is totally lost, but there are enough moments of clarity for the storytelling to come across.

At the beginning of the evening we were promised something "magical"; and The Telling delivered thanks to the perfect blend of creative, atmospheric lighting, precise direction, a strong lead performance and perfectly selected and performed music. [Now on tour](#), the Richmond outing of *Breaking the Rules* certainly was a magical evening indeed.



Read Eleanor Marsh's review at www.markaspen.com/2025/11/09/break-rules

Photography by Robert Piwko

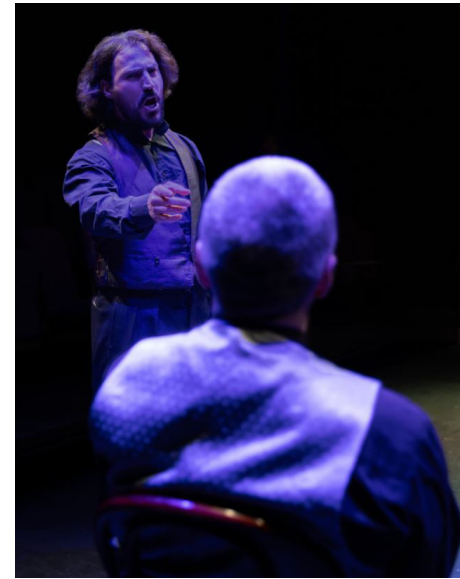
Lightning Beneath the Waves

by David Hovatter and Company

Questors Theatre at the Questors Studio, Ealing, until 15th November

Advances in technology have made our world feel smaller, whilst still highlighting the huge distances between us. In mid-19th century, the telegraph enabled almost instantaneous communications between Europe and America. *Lightning Beneath the Waves* brings out the human story behind this global undertaking, as it follows the initially doomed efforts to lay the first trans-Atlantic cable, before switching focus to Brunel's SS Great Eastern that finally accomplished the mammoth task of laying tons of copper cable under thousands of miles of Atlantic Ocean.

With just a few wooden chairs and Brunel's magnificent stovepipe hat, the ensemble company tell the story in a devised piece of physical theatre, music and narration.



Falko's evocative choreographed movement depicts back-breaking manual labour. The first act opens with mimed pickaxes breaking ground, as American workers lay cable across Newfoundland, while the second act opens on the Wirral with mimed sledgehammers as British workers break up the SS Great Eastern.



Marcus Boel gives a committed performance as British inventor Frederick Gisbourne. Initially attempting to lay a cable between Newfoundland, his efforts are thwarted by lack of funds. Then, close to bankruptcy, he travels to New York to seek investment from Craig Nightingale's imposing Cyrus Field.

The first act builds to jubilation when, after facing numerous setbacks, the first cable seems completed. Bells ring, parades march, and Tiffany sells copper cable jewellery. But there is a sting in the tail, and the second half shifts focus to United Kingdom shipyards. Jerome Joseph Kennedy makes a dramatic entrance as Isambard Kingdom Brunel, when the world's largest ship, his Great Eastern, is refitted to carry tons of cable.

The ensemble of Mari Anton, Claire Campbell, Sunita Chana, Ania Choroszczynska, Ioana Feneru, Kate Kasampali, Falko, and Ellen Softley work with huge enthusiasm throughout, narrating, singing or through movement, to convey the story through groups and crowds. We see the ship's difficult launch into the Thames, and graphic grisly depictions of fatal accidents on board.

The script is wordy, often poetic, but the performance is slick and tightly directed by Hovatter, segueing seamlessly between spoken sections, movement, and music.

The on-stage band delivers a huge sound, challenging actors to match. Songs and choreography have great energy and further elevate this unlikely tale into an evening of great theatrical entertainment.



Read Andrew Lawston's review at www.markaspen.com/2025/11/09/lightning-waves

Photography by Robert Vass

Hedda

by Tanika Gupta, inspired by Henrik Ibsen's *Hedda Gabler*
The Orange Tree Theatre, Richmond until 22nd November

Ibsen's *Hedda Gabler*, written in 1891, in which a strong clever woman is trapped within the social constraints of the time, does not easily translate into today's world. Unhappily married women now have options. It does, however, adapt to different issues. *Hedda* is set in 1948, just after the Partition of India and reflects a different trap, that of having to conceal one's racial identity when both glittering career and social status depend on it.



Stars of the Hollywood golden age, Merle Oberon, Vivien Leigh, Boris Karloff, who had partially Asian origins were obliged to conceal their roots to comply with the Hays Code, which stated what could and could not be shown on screen. Amongst many other requirements was one forbidding miscegenation.



Retired film star Hedda Gabler and her director husband George have visitors to their Chelsea home, including George's upright and reliable aunt Julia (Caroline Harker) whose appearances bookend the action.

Playwright Leonard, a wartime flying ace who grew up with Hedda, has written a drama based on the struggles of a mixed race woman. George and producer John Brack think it is exceptional and want to make it into a film. Leonard, played with calculated fragility by Jake Mann, is in thrall to alcohol, and may easily reveal his inspiration. Whilst events take a little while to fall into place, once there all works well and the plot fits neatly into Ibsen's original structure.

Pearl Chanda gives Hedda a brooding froideur, an unpredictability which is mesmerising but makes her ultimate ruthless cruelty still shocking. Hedda's manipulative and entirely self-centred character remains the same as the original.



Hedda's maid Shona (a quiet, intimidating performance by Rina Fatania with a razor sharp flash of wit) is a particularly unnerving presence. The other characters provide a vignette of British postwar society. They will all muddle through and eventually progress, but there will be casualties on the way. Hedda cannot avoid being one of them.

Simon Kenny's design, a white carpeted, minimally furnished square is ideal. An elegant, three sided frame, gently lit, stands across the square, a diagonal proscenium arch, to emphasise that we are all on show.

Hedda is an interesting and successful reinterpretation, fascinating in itself, but also for the skill with which it has been adapted.

Read Eleanor Lewis's review at www.markaspen.com/2025/10/28/hedda

Photography by Helen Murray

THE GHOST TRAIN

at the Mary Wallace

In 1925, jobbing actor, Arthur Ridley (to be known, many years later, as Private Godfrey in DAD's ARMY) tried his hand at writing a play to supplement his income. He subsequently wrote more than 30 plays but it is that first, THE GHOST TRAIN, that has endured. It ran in the West End for 665 performances and has seldom been out of professional and amateur repertoires ever since.



THE GHOST TRAIN (Revised)

by Arnold Ridley

Adapted by Jocelyn & Nicolas Ridley

6-13 DECEMBER 2025

THE MARY WALLACE THEATRE
THE EMBANKMENT, TWICKENHAM TW1 3DU
richmondshakespeare.org.uk

Now, the Mary Wallace Theatre is pleased to honour the play's Centenary with performances running from December 6th to 13th.

Inspired by Ridley's forced stopover in a deserted railway station in Gloucestershire, the play presents a mixed group of passengers, stranded overnight in a Cornish station. Tensions rise among the group, only to be heightened when the legend of a ghost train, due to appear that very night, is told, wherein it is prophesied that to look upon the ghost train will bring certain death.

After entertaining and thrilling audiences for one hundred years, this ever-fresh comedy-thriller still has the power to amuse and enthrall. A Christmas treat for all the family.

Booking at www.richmondshakespeare.org.uk

Find the Mary Wallace Theatre on Twickenham's Embankment, close to the Barmy Arms.



Princess Alice Hospice Community Choir Christmas Concert



Monday
8 December
at 7:30pm

Join us for a festive evening of song
featuring Christmas favourites.

Tickets are £12 with wine and mince pie
included.

Tickets available online or on the door at
St Christopher's Church, Claygate Lane,
Hinchley Wood, Esher, KT10 0AQ



Scan or visit
pah.org.uk/xmaschoir
to find out more!

pah.org.uk



© 2025 Princess Alice Hospice. Registered charity no. 1010930 and a company limited by guarantee in England and Wales no. 1599796

Princess Alice
Hospice

Twickenham food waste technology firm secures investment to scale across UK and Europe

From Limetrack

Limetrack, the London-based food waste technology company that helps businesses cut costs, reduce carbon and meet regulatory requirements through its patented 'SMART Bin', announces it has successfully raised over £1.3 million to fund its next growth phase.

Co-founded in 2021 by serial entrepreneur, Andy King, and software engineer Cord Schneider to address a UK food waste market worth £160 million and a European market estimated at £1 billion, Limetrack has developed and patented an Internet-of-Things (IoT)-enabled food waste bin that automatically weighs and reports waste and carbon emissions. This helps businesses to reduce waste, cut costs and meet strict new Simpler Recycling laws which came into force in the UK in March 2025 for businesses with over 10 employees. Smaller businesses will be mandated under the same rules from April 2027.



Limetrack customers already include multiple NHS Trusts, independent schools, office blocks, restaurants, hotels and care homes, as well as all the major UK waste management firms. In addition, multinational corporations including Sky and global hospitality company Convene are introducing Limetrack's SMART bins across multiple sites. Trials are also in discussion with a large number of other major UK businesses, including Heathrow and a national fast-food chain.

The new funds were raised through a combination of a £1 million loan from Government-sponsored Innovate UK and £320,000 in equity from backers including waste industry corporates, an impact VC fund and angel investors. The funds will be used to scale the production and deployment of Limetrack's next-generation SMART bins, enabling the business to fulfil existing orders and pre-orders, with a pipeline of over 5,700 units for 2026.

The investment will specifically target the development of a high-volume design, aiming to increase manufacturing from SMART 20 bins a week to 250 SMART bins a week within the next 10 - 12 months. This will require platform enhancements, including advancing Limetrack's intellectual property portfolio, supporting harmonised UK and EU certification and high-volume production tooling, while funding team expansion across engineering, operations and customer delivery to support rapid rollouts.

Andy King, Co-founder and CEO of Limetrack, commented:

"We are delighted to have secured the funding to scale Limetrack up to meet the needs of UK organisations facing multiple pressures to reduce cost and measure food waste.

A big thank you to all our investors. Their backing will allow us to move much faster - manufacturing at scale, deepening integration and delivering the frictionless, trustworthy data our rapidly growing customer base requires. We aim to make food waste measurement effortless so that businesses can report with confidence, while cutting costs and carbon emissions. With 10.7 million tonnes of food wasted each year in the UK there is a huge opportunity, and the recent introduction of Simpler Recycling legislation means there is a legal necessity for most businesses, as well as an economic incentive. DEFRA projects 2.2 million UK sites will be affected in 2025, growing to 6.2 million by 2027.

It's been a brilliant journey so far, but we're only just getting started. Of the 1.7 million UK and 10.3 million European commercial sites suitable for Limetrack's SMART Bins, fewer than 40% currently use any form of food waste bin, providing a significant further market.

Our immediate focus is on scaling across the UK before expanding into Europe in 2027."

Scott's Richmond Brings Alpine Magic To London's Riverside

From Scott's Richmond

November 2025: As winter settles over Richmond, a touch of Alpine magic drifts into Scott's Richmond, transforming the iconic restaurant into a glittering festive escape. Guests are invited to experience Alpine Season at Scott's Richmond, in partnership with Nyetimber and The Lakes Distillery – a celebration of timeless elegance, refined comfort, and the spirit of the slopes.

Sparkling lights, evergreen garlands, and twinkling décor envelop the restaurant in festive warmth, while the gentle hum of laughter and clinking glasses fills the air. Outside, the winter terrace is reimagined as a cosy Alpine hideaway, complete with heaters, fairy lights, and sweeping views across the Thames – a riverside retreat where every moment feels like a holiday worth savouring. And, throughout November and December, every Wednesday evening, a live Motown trio will perform throughout dinner, adding a festive soundtrack to your winter escape.

At the heart of the experience lies Scott's renowned seafood and seasonal excellence, complemented by a curated selection of festive menus and celebratory serves. Guests can enjoy The Lakes festive cocktails, including a Nutcracker Highball, combining The Lakes Classic Gin, Campari, cherry, Nyetimber Classic Cuvee, and Fever Tree Grape & Apricot Soda (£15), and Christmapolitan, featuring The Lakes Vodka, Grand Marnier, cranberry, rosemary, cinnamon, and lime (£15).



The celebration continues with a Festive Set Menu (£36 for two courses or £42 for three), showcasing seasonal highlights including starters such as 'Prawn and avocado cocktail, cucumber, gem lettuce and Marie Rose sauce' and 'Pork, partridge and pistachio terrine with pickled walnut ketchup and toasted sourdough'. Main courses feature the likes of 'Fillet of cod, confit fennel and saffron potatoes, bouillabaisse sauce' and a traditional 'Roast Devonshire chicken, sage and onion stuffed thigh, confit potato, cranberry and thyme jus'. For dessert, guests can tuck into 'Sticky toffee pudding with Drambuie ice cream' and a 'Mince pie ice cream coupe with vanilla shortbread'. For a sparkling start, guests can toast the season with an optional Nyetimber Classic Cuvee aperitif (£20).

This Christmas, Scott's Richmond invites guests to raise a glass to the festive season – where Alpine charm meets British refinement on the banks of the Thames.

For bookings and to explore the full Alpine Season experience, visit:

<https://scotts-richmond.com/christmas-at-scotts/>

Remembrance: Surbiton veterans at Royal Star & Garter pay their respects

From Royal Star & Garter

Veterans from Royal Star & Garter in Surbiton have marked Remembrance.

Two residents from the Home attended the National Service of Remembrance and marched past The Cenotaph on Remembrance Sunday 9 November. The Home then held its own service on Armistice Day, Tuesday 11 November.



Royal Star & Garter is a charity which provides loving, compassionate care and support for veterans and their families, living with disability or dementia, through its Homes in Solihull, Surbiton, High Wycombe and Worthing. It also provides services reaching into the community, including Lunch Clubs, Day Care and a national Telephone Friendship Service.

The Surbiton Home hosted several events in the run-up to Remembrance, including poppy-based arts and crafts activities.



The Armistice Day service featured a two-minute silence, the Last Post played by trumpeter Vic Gilder, while Air Force veterans Vera and Michael gave readings. Army veteran Michael raised the Union Flag outside the Home. Afterwards, residents reminisced over tea, cakes and music.

Royal Star & Garter in Surbiton is welcoming new residents.

For more information on this, its other services or to work at the Home, go to: www.starandgarter.org/surbiton



**Royal Star
& Garter**

Care with courage

St Mary's University

Chelsea FC Foundation Coaching Students Complete Goalball School Leaders Award



St Mary's University, London students on the Chelsea Football Club Foundation Coaching and Development degree have successfully completed their [Goalball School Leaders Award](#). The Goalball School Leaders Award is a coaching qualification developed in partnership with the [Youth Sport Trust](#).

This achievement means that students on the [Chelsea FC Foundation course](#) are now qualified to deliver introductory sessions and tournaments in schools, which is a fantastic milestone in their development.

Speaking on this achievement Lecturer in Football Development and Coaching Becky Shubber-Barton said, *"The students had an incredible opportunity to gain their Goalball School Leaders Award yesterday. Not only are they now qualified coaches, but they also expanded their knowledge of a new sport, strengthened their leadership skills, and*

enhanced their confidence in delivering sessions. This experience also fostered inclusivity by introducing them to a sport designed for visually impaired participants, helping them appreciate the importance of accessible and inclusive physical activity. The course was well-organised, engaging, and we are really grateful to Stephen Newey for leading the day."

The Chelsea Football Club Foundation Coaching and Development Degree allows students to develop an in-depth understanding of the football industry, with learning taking place at multiple locations, including St Mary's University, Stamford Bridge, and the Chelsea FC Training Ground in Cobham.

[Find out more about the course.](#)



St Mary's
University
Twickenham
London

Teddington Cricket Club

Delighted to announce our Winter Net dates have been confirmed for our junior sections and women's teams.

We will be returning to the fantastic venue at St Mary's University where the winter programme will run for 11 weeks from the 11th January.

New players are very welcome and are encouraged to join us, ahead of what promises to be a truly memorable summer.

For full details please visit the [website](http://www.teddingtoncc.co.uk) and book your place now.

A promotional poster for Teddington Cricket Club's Winter Nets. The background is a photograph of an indoor cricket facility with green artificial turf and white safety netting. On the left, a young boy in a green shirt and red shorts is in a batting stance, holding a cricket bat. In the center, large white text reads 'TEDDINGTON CC WINTER NETS NEW PLAYERS WELCOME'. In the bottom right, a group of seven young women in green and white cricket uniforms are posing around a cricket scoreboard. The scoreboard shows 'TOTAL 323', 'WICKETS 2', and '255'. A small club crest is in the top left corner.

TEDDINGTON CC
WINTER NETS
NEW PLAYERS WELCOME

JUNIORS & WOMEN

- Starts Sunday 11th January
- At St Mary's University, TW1
- 11 Weeks
- 12.15pm-5.00pm
- Sessions for girls, boys and women
- Hardball and Softball

TOTAL 323
WICKETS 2
255

For full details and to book your place please visit our website.



www.teddingtoncc.co.uk



pavilion@teddingtoncc.co.uk

England Team To Play New Zealand At Allianz Stadium

England men's head coach Steve Borthwick has named his team to play New Zealand at Allianz Stadium on Saturday 15 November (kick-off 3.10pm, live on TNT Sports).

Maro Itoje is named as captain for England's third fixture of the 2025 Quilter Nations Series, supported by Jamie George and George Ford as vice-captains.

There are seven changes to the starting XV that beat Fiji 38-18 last weekend with Itoje, Ford, George, Freddie Steward, Tom Roebuck, Fin Baxter and Sam Underhill all coming into the lineup.

"I'm pleased with the progress we are making," said Borthwick.

"Without doubt, New Zealand are one of the best teams in the world and facing them is always a special challenge."

"Playing in front of a packed-out Allianz Stadium means a huge amount to the players. The support we've had throughout this series has been outstanding, and we want it loud again on Saturday."

England round off their Quilter Nations Series campaign next weekend when they take on Argentina at Allianz Stadium, Twickenham.

ENGLAND v NEW ZEALAND
Saturday 15 November 2025
Allianz Stadium, Twickenham,
Kick-off: 3.10pm

- 15. Freddie Steward (Leicester Tigers, 39 caps)
- 14. Tom Roebuck (Sale Sharks, 7 caps)
- 13. Ollie Lawrence (Bath Rugby, 36 caps)
- 12. Fraser Dingwall (Northampton Saints, 6 caps)
- 11. Immanuel Feyi-Waboso (Exeter Chiefs, 11 caps)
- 10. George Ford (Sale Sharks, 103 caps) – vice-captain
- 9. Alex Mitchell (Northampton Saints, 25 caps)

- 1. Fin Baxter (Harlequins, 16 caps)
- 2. Jamie George (Saracens, 104 caps) – vice-captain
- 3. Joe Heyes (Leicester Tigers, 16 caps)
- 4. Maro Itoje (Saracens, 95 caps) – captain
- 5. Alex Coles (Northampton Saints, 12 caps)
- 6. Guy Pepper (Bath Rugby, 5 caps)
- 7. Sam Underhill (Bath Rugby, 43 caps)
- 8. Ben Earl (Saracens, 44 caps)

Replacements:

- 16. Luke Cowan-Dickie (Sale Sharks, 51 caps)
- 17. Ellis Genge (Bristol Bears, 73 caps) – vice-captain
- 18. Will Stuart (Bath Rugby, 51 caps)
- 19. Chandler Cunningham-South (Harlequins, 19 caps)
- 20. Tom Curry (Sale Sharks, 63 caps)
- 21. Henry Pollock (Northampton Saints, 3 caps)
- 22. Ben Spencer (Bath Rugby, 12 caps)
- 23. Marcus Smith (Harlequins, 45 caps)



Brentford 3 Newcastle United 1

Thiago brace secures Bees victory before international break

Written by Brentford Football Club

Three second-half Brentford goals see the Bees win 3-1 against Newcastle United in the Premier League at Gtech Community Stadium on Sunday; Harvey Barnes gave the visitors the lead, before Kevin Schade equalised after half-time; Igor Thiago netted a penalty, before completing his brace in stoppage-time; Keith Andrews: "It was thoroughly deserved, it was an outstanding performance"

Three second-half Brentford goals secured a 3-1 win for the Bees against Newcastle United in the Premier League at Gtech Community Stadium on Sunday.

Harvey Barnes gave the visitors the lead, before Kevin Schade equalised after half-time. The west Londoners believed they should've been awarded a penalty after Dan Burn fouled Dango Ouattara inside the box, but it wasn't given; Burn did then foul Ouattara for a penalty 10 minutes later, which Igor Thiago converted. The Brazilian striker then completed his brace in stoppage-time.

[Keith Andrews](#) made one change to the Brentford starting XI with [Aaron Hickey](#) replacing [Kristoffer Ajer](#) at left-back, with the Scotland international making his first Bees start since the [1-0 defeat to Manchester City in west London at the start of October](#).

The first real chance of the game came after 17 minutes, when Brentford were wondering how a goal-mouth scramble didn't end up in the back of the net.

A [Mikkel Damsgaard](#) free-kick alluded everyone inside the penalty area and was saved by Nick Pope, before Thiago and [Nathan Collins](#) both attempted to poke the ball towards goal, but were denied by half-clearances.

Hickey then tried his luck with a ball across goal from inside the penalty area, which was deflected and saved again by Pope, before it was scrambled away by his Newcastle team-mates. Barnes gave Newcastle the lead on 28 minutes, when the winger picked up a loose ball inside the area and, after a couple of dummies, he fired the ball low and hard into the back of the Brentford net.

The Bees were close to equalising just five minutes later, when a [Michael Kayode](#) long throw was poorly punched away by Pope and fell to Hickey just outside the area. The full-back fired a half-volley towards goal, before his goal-bound effort struck a Newcastle defender and deflected wide.

The Magpies defended a multitude of set-pieces well to maintain their lead heading into half-time, heading away and clearing numerous long throws and corners the west Londoners chucked into the penalty area.

Brentford started the second period well, with [Yehor Yarmoliuk](#) forcing a save out of Pope less than a minute into the half. Damsgaard progressed the ball into the final third, before laying it wide to his midfield team-mate inside the box; the Ukrainian fizzed an effort towards goal, but it was stopped well by the feet of the Newcastle keeper.



And the hosts' pressure paid off on 56 minutes, when a Kayode long throw was missed by Pope and flicked back into a dangerous position by Newcastle defender Sven Botman, with Schade there to head home from close range.

The Bees thought they should've been awarded a penalty just after the hour mark, when Ouattara appeared to be tripped by Burn inside the box. However, referee Stuart Attwell decided to book the winger for diving and, even after a VAR check, the spot-kick wasn't given.

Andrews' side had all the momentum and Thiago would've had a Goal of the Season contender, if it wasn't for the fingertips of Pope. The ball looped up towards the centre-forward, who was 25 yards out, and he crashed a volley towards goal, which was tipped over the bar by Newcastle's no.1.

After the non-award of a foul from Burn on Ouattara for a penalty 10 minutes previously, this time, one was given. A sensational pass from Thiago over the top found the Burkina Faso international, and he poked the ball away from the defender as he tried to clear, which meant Ouattara was wiped out just inside the 18-yard box.

Thiago coolly dispatched the penalty past substitute Aaron Ramsdale, who came on just before the penalty, for his seventh Premier League goal of the season.

Substitute [Rico Henry](#) made a phenomenal block to keep the Bees ahead. Lewis Hall travelled down the left-hand side and sent a cross into a dangerous position towards Anthony Elanga. However, Henry - who was called up to the Jamaica squad for the first time this week - slid in at the critical moment to prevent a certain goal.

Thiago made sure of the victory in stoppage-time, when a slide tackle by Malick Thiaw went into the path of the striker and finished smartly past Ramsdale.

[Sepp van den Berg](#) was so close to his first Brentford goal in the 98th minute, but for a good Ramsdale stop inside the six-yard box.

Brentford (4-3-3): Kelleher; Kayode, van den Berg, Collins, Hickey (Henry 70); Henderson, Yarmoliuk (Janelt 84), Damsgaard (Jensen 84); Ouattara (Nelson 90+1), Thiago, Schade

Subs not used: Valdimarsson, Pinnock, Onyeka, Carvalho, Lewis-Potter

Newcastle (4-3-3): Pope (Ramsdale 77); Trippier, Thiaw, Botman, Burn; Tonali (Willock 77), Guimaraes, Joelinton (Ramsey 24); Murphy (Elanga 77), Barnes (Hall 77), Woltemade

Subs not used: Schar, Lascelles, Krafth, Miley

Andrews: Our second-half performance was through the roof

Brentford head coach Keith Andrews talked through his side's performance in the 3-1 victory.

"It was thoroughly deserved, it was an outstanding performance," Andrews said. "We maybe edged the first half without creating too many clear-cut opportunities - I would say we looked the more likely. Half-time, going a goal down, I just wanted us to remain calm and focus on what we talked about before the game. There were a couple of tweaks on how we could improve things... I thought we were outstanding in the second half, and our performance levels went through the roof."

Schade reveals key to victory after 'bad' first half

Kevin Schade gave his thoughts on the Bees' win over Newcastle on Sunday.

"It was a tough first half, but a good second half. In the end, I think the win was deserved," he stated. "We just had to get the basics right after half-time. They played much better at the start because we were playing so badly! We didn't change any structure or tactics, we just had to get those basics right."

On his goal, he added: *"It was a throw-in and I just made sure I got the second ball, and headed it!"*



South Western Railway and partners support vulnerable young people around London Waterloo station through pilot scheme

From South Western Railway



South Western Railway (SWR) is supporting a pioneering new initiative to help safeguard and support vulnerable young people in and around London Waterloo – one of the UK's busiest railway stations.

Working in partnership with SWR and leading children's charity Railway Children, South Bank BID has launched a 12-month Youth Outreach Pilot Scheme, aimed at identifying and supporting young people under 18 who may be experiencing homelessness, family breakdown, criminal or sexual exploitation, or other situations leaving them vulnerable, at risk or in need of help.

Funded through SWR's Customer and Community Improvement Fund and South Bank BID, the pilot will employ a dedicated Railway Children Youth Outreach Worker based at Waterloo Station. This specialist role will proactively build trust with young people, connect them to appropriate services, and engage local partners to strengthen community awareness and response.

A key focus of the project will be education and collaboration. The Youth Outreach Worker will lead awareness sessions with rail and station colleagues, the British Transport Police, and employees from bars, restaurants, and shops in London Waterloo station - helping them to identify and respond to vulnerable young people in need of support.

By offering early, compassionate intervention, the scheme also seeks to reduce the risk of young people being drawn into unsafe or harmful situations, helping to intercept potential criminal behaviour and address the underlying issues that lead to it.

They will also engage local schools, colleges, community groups and youth organisations, as well as Lambeth's Youth Engagement Service, to raise awareness of the challenges faced by young people and create a joined-up approach to supporting and protecting young people.

The pilot scheme will run for 12 months, with the aim of establishing best practice for how transport hubs and local communities can work together to protect and empower young people in need of support.



Peter Williams, South Western Railway's Customer and Commercial Director said:
"London Waterloo is the biggest station on our network, with over 260,000 people travelling through every day. We are proud to support this project through our Customer and Communities Improvement Fund and play our part in making our stations a safer and more supportive environment for everyone – especially vulnerable young people. By working with South Bank BID and Railway Children, we're helping to ensure that our stations can offer support where it is needed most"

Alex Valenzuela – Director of Place at South Bank BID said
"Partnership working is at the heart of what we do, and this initiative is a great example of how collaboration can bring real change. By working alongside Railway Children, South Western Railway, British Transport Police, Lambeth Council, and other local partners, we're helping to create a safer, more supportive South Bank and Waterloo - one where vulnerable young people are recognised, protected, and given the help they need."

Gaynor Little, Railway Children's UK Programme Manager said
*"We are really grateful for the opportunity to expand our UK provision with this new role based at London Waterloo. Within the first few weeks of the role, we have already been able to directly support vulnerable young people found missing and at risk, working with British Transport Police to return them home to safety.
"By working with Train Operating Companies, BTP and the wider rail community, we can help raise awareness of vulnerable young people on the rail network and help change common misconceptions. It's important that anyone who spots a vulnerable young person knows to contact BTP on 61016, who then work with our teams to provide the required support."*

London Councils welcomes Secretary of State's comments on fiscal devolution

London Councils has welcomed comments from the Communities Secretary in which he expressed support for devolving more financial powers over revenue raising to local authorities.

Speaking at the Housing, Communities and Local Government Committee on Tuesday 11 November, Steve Reed MP said he has “always been an advocate of devolution”, including “fiscal devolution”, and that ahead of the upcoming Budget he has made the case to the Treasury for devolving powers to councils.

London Councils has repeatedly called for a broader range of local revenue-raising powers. Boroughs in the capital face a worsening financial crisis, with London Councils recently warning of a [£1 billion funding shortfall this year](#) and half of boroughs potentially requiring emergency financial support by 2028 to avoid bankruptcy.

The cross-party group says the local government finance system is broken and that boroughs' current dependence on council tax and grants from central government cannot sustain budgets and local services.

The introduction of an overnight (tourism) levy is a key priority for London Councils, with boroughs and the Greater London Authority retaining the proceeds for investment in local services to mitigate the impacts of tourism and drive growth. Estimates suggest this levy, when applied to hotels and short-term lets, could raise between £100m and £500m per year in the capital.

Cllr Claire Holland, Chair of London Councils, said: “We welcome the Secretary of State's support for devolving more revenue-raising powers to the local level.

“Everyone knows the local government finance system is broken. Boroughs are almost entirely reliant on council tax and central government funding streams, with very limited ability to shape our own financial destiny. This does not work well for anybody. More than a decade of structural underfunding has undermined our ability to sustain local services and make faster progress on priorities such as building affordable homes and generating economic growth.

“Boroughs need far more financial autonomy, in line with the powers and resources available to local government in other countries. An overnight accommodation levy – jointly administered by boroughs and the Mayor – would be one example of this. This could help provide boroughs with resources they need to ensure local services are equipped to manage the impacts of tourism and invest in growth.

“The upcoming Budget is an opportunity for action. Empowering councils with new financial powers is crucial for addressing the current funding crisis and for enabling us to invest locally in growth-boosting measures.”

London Councils was part of the London Finance Commission, which in [2017 concluded](#) that the government should work together with boroughs and the GLA to develop the potential operation of a tourism levy.

Additional fiscal devolution proposals from London Councils include 100% business rates growth retention; devolution of Vehicle Excise Duty and the new Growth and Skills Levy; and assignment of a share of national taxes such as income tax and VAT. These measures would also give boroughs a strong direct incentive to drive growth in their local economies.



Donate

A small donation will help to keep the Tribune online

CLICK [HERE](#) for a one-off donation

or

CLICK [HERE](#) for a monthly donation

The Tribune is published weekly by members of our community who stepped up at the time when some local newspapers closed or changed style and content. Local community journalists and contributors living in our Borough play an important role in producing the Tribune but like any newspaper the Tribune has essential fixed costs.

Supporting the Tribune with a small donation will help you to keep local news and views alive; support is very much appreciated.

We would like to say "Thank You" to all those who support the Twickenham & Richmond Tribune; your support is very much appreciated.

Thousands read The Twickenham & Richmond Tribune

If you are reading this you could be advertising your business with The Twickenham & Richmond Tribune. Community rates are available

Contact: advertise@TwickenhamTribune.com

View ad details at www.TwickenhamTribune.com/advertise

Contact

contact@TwickenhamTribune.com
letters@TwickenhamTribune.com
advertise@TwickenhamTribune.com



Published by:

Twickenham & Richmond Tribune (in association with World InfoZone Limited)

Registered in England & Wales

Reg No 10549345

The Twickenham Tribune is registered with the ICO under the Data Protection Act, Reg No ZA224725

©Twickenham & Richmond Tribune. All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be used or reproduced without the permission of Twickenham & Richmond Tribune. While we take reasonable efforts, this online newspaper cannot be held responsible for the accuracy or reliability of information. The views and opinions in these pages do not necessarily represent those of The Twickenham & Richmond Tribune.

[Terms & Conditions](#)