

Twickenham & Richmond Tribune



Richmond Theatre at night
Photo by Berkley Driscoll

23rd January 2026

T&RT

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SWR

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Editors: Teresa Read, Berkley Driscoll

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TickerTape - News in Brief

Further grit giveaway to help residents prepare for future cold snaps

From Richmond Council

To assist residents in dealing with the next cold snap, we are once again offering free rock salt to help keep our pavements clear. This is on top of our existing winter gritting service which kept the borough moving safely during the recent sub-zero temperatures.

To ensure residents are prepared for any further icy weather, we will be running an additional free rock salt giveaway later this month.

Local residents can collect up to 25kg of rock salt from our depot on Langhorn Drive, Twickenham, on **Thursday 29 and Friday 30 January, between 9am and 3pm.**

As the depot is a secure site, residents will need to sign in at the gate reception. Please ensure you bring photo ID and proof of address to collect your supply.

Find out more about our [winter gritting service](#) including our Winter Service Plan and precautionary gritting routes.



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
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www.thetreeagency.co.uk

The Tree Agency

The Local Picture Postcard Page - Part 311

Prewett & Sons Dairy - Hampton Hill

By Alan Winter

A walk down Hampton Hill High Street takes you past a variety of shops, independent traders and hospitality businesses covering cafes, restaurants and pubs.

Past notable firms included J. Prewett's & Sons dairies with its shop at the southern end of High Street which is now built on and converted to housing.

In 1903 a tram service was installed between Stanley Road and Hampton Court which enabled the area to develop quickly, with buildings being demolished to widen the road.



I recently picked up a few very old postcards featuring J. Prewett's Dairy of Hampton Hill and a little research shows us what a necessary addition to the High Street it was between the years of 1870.

In 1870, James and Sally Prewett sold their farm in Gloucestershire and set up a dairy in what was then called New Hampton at 55 High Street and an area behind the main building in what is now The Mews. Sally's sister Louisa was married to Edward Roberts and they bought the dairy in High Street Teddington in 1874, that had been established since 1819. This



business later evolved into Jobs Dairy. Prewett's original dairy at 55, Hampton Hill High Street still bears the dairy's name and is now divided into flats.

Prewett's dairy farm in Hampton Hill supplied all these early businesses. Both butter and cheese were made in both dairies. Some of the Prewett's employees were housed in the dairy's own houses in Holly Road, Hampton Hill.



The four postcards are titled and thus are fairly self-explanatory. We start with a hand delivery sign written cart. Move on to the dairy itself and then the cowshed ending up with the cleansing department. Other than the postcards shown there doesn't seem to be many other images of the dairy so it just shows how important postcards in the early part of the 20th century were when it came to recording images of the period.



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Finance, Policy and Resources Committee

By James Knight



The Finance, Policy and Resources Committee met on Thursday 15th February to consider procurement, cost of living support, corporate performance, and Richmond's contribution to London Councils. The decisions themselves were routine. What mattered was the pattern beneath them: a style of governance that prioritises management over contest, reassurance over reform, and internal coherence over political friction.

Procurement and contracts: managerial confidence, limited interrogation

The Committee approved the Annual Contracts Report and Procurement Update, agreeing the forward plan for contracts due for renewal between June 2027 and June 2028, including those classified as sensitive. Introducing the report, Mark Glaister, Assistant Director of Procurement, outlined the Council's sensitivity framework, the integration of climate considerations, and the routine inclusion of social value criteria in procurement decisions.

Discussion focused heavily on process. Members asked how rising global costs were being managed, how smaller suppliers would cope with reporting requirements, and how politically sensitive contracts were routed between committees. Councillor James Chard pressed for clearer committee triage where procurement strategy overlaps with wider policy areas, particularly transport. Officers agreed to amend future reports.

What was largely absent was sustained examination of outcomes. Officers acknowledged that social value delivery relies primarily on reputational pressure rather than enforceable sanction. There was little discussion of what happens when commitments are not met, or of the trade offs between social value requirements, cost inflation, and best value obligations. The report was approved without amendment.

Cost of living support: mitigation elevated, structure avoided

The Cost of Living Support Update marked the transition from emergency response to what officers described as a longer term anti poverty approach. Bethany Pepper, Programme Manager for the Cost of Living Programme, confirmed that the £4.5 million emergency funding reserve established in 2022 had now been fully allocated, with a small remainder retained for evaluation. She outlined a wide range of interventions delivered since the programme began,

including advice roadshows, benefit take up campaigns, data matching, and the Financial Resilience Navigators pilot.

It was made clear, both in the paper and in discussion, that the majority of funding for this work over several years has come from central government, primarily through successive tranches of the Household Support Fund. Officers also confirmed that the replacement Crisis and Resilience Fund will represent a reduction of around 21 per cent in funding.

Despite this, discussion focused on continuation and embedding rather than evaluation or ownership. While officers indicated that fuller assessment, including external academic input, would follow in 2026, the Committee was asked to agree future direction in advance of that evidence.

Housing costs were repeatedly identified by officers as a central driver of income stress in Richmond, particularly on an after housing costs basis. Yet there was little political examination of why those pressures are so acute in one of the wealthiest boroughs in the country, or how local policy choices contribute to them.

That omission is not incidental. Under Liberal Democrat control, Richmond has consistently delivered among the weakest affordable housing outcomes in London. The expansion of a standing mitigation apparatus therefore sits alongside a persistent reluctance to confront housing supply constraints upstream.

Corporate Plan performance: reassurance and its limits

The Richmond Corporate Plan mid year performance report presented a uniformly positive picture. Officers confirmed that all key performance indicators with targets were rated green and that no areas of underperformance had been identified.

Councillor James Chard offered the most substantive challenge of the evening, warning that a dashboard in which all indicators remain green risks ceasing to function as a tool of scrutiny at all. If everything is green, he argued, it may be the indicators rather than performance that are failing. An officer responded that the RAG system was “not an absolute version of the truth”, describing it instead as a prompt for discussion.

The exchange revealed the governing logic at work. The Corporate Plan flows directly from the administration’s manifesto, and the dashboard is the mechanism through which political ambition is translated into managerial form. Once ambition is rendered as indicators and ratings, debate shifts away from whether goals are sufficient and towards whether systems are functioning smoothly.

This dynamic was visible elsewhere in the report. Although still rated green, performance on paying invoices on time has slipped, with 84 per cent paid within target against a target of 85 per cent. The target itself quietly accepts that a significant minority of invoices will be late, a tolerance that may appear technical at committee level but carries real consequences for smaller suppliers and voluntary organisations.

Despite these signals, the Committee did not recommend any area for deeper scrutiny by the

Policy and Performance Review Board. The report was noted.

London Councils subscription: consensus without tension

The Committee approved Richmond's £145,491 contribution to the London Councils Boroughs Grant Scheme for 2026–27. Members supported continued participation in pan London funding arrangements for homelessness and domestic abuse, while noting the importance of monitoring outcomes. The item was agreed without dissent.

Managerialism and the politics of no politics

Taken together, the meeting revealed a governing style that presents itself as calm, technical, and non ideological. The Liberal Democrat administration does not frame its approach as political in the traditional sense. Instead, it offers a politics of reassurance: programmes over principles, frameworks over conflict, delivery over debate. To many residents, this can feel like an absence of politics altogether.

That impression is misleading. What is on display is a familiar form of liberal left managerialism, rooted in Third Way politics. Political ambition is quickly translated into plans, strategies, dashboards, and performance frameworks. Once that translation occurs, the space for contest narrows. Questions of direction are replaced by questions of execution. Disagreement is absorbed into process.

This model attracts criticism from both left and right. On the Labour left, the charge is that post hoc mitigation, however well intentioned, risks normalising inequality by managing its symptoms rather than reforming the structures that produce it. On the Conservative side, the critique is different but convergent: that institutions become proficient at administering consequences while avoiding the harder task of confronting supply, incentives, and long term affordability, particularly in housing.

Richmond illustrates this convergence clearly. It is one of the wealthiest boroughs in the country, yet it sustains an increasingly permanent anti poverty infrastructure while continuing to under deliver on affordable housing. These facts are rarely examined together, yet one helps explain the other.

What makes this governing approach resilient is that it rarely feels political. Decisions are framed as technical or inevitable. Responsibility is diffused across frameworks and funding streams, many of them national. Conflict is displaced by management. But this too is a choice. A council that consistently prioritises mitigation over supply, reassurance over reform, and dashboards over debate is making a political judgment about where disagreement should and should not occur.



The question for residents is not whether this model is orderly or efficient. It is whether, in the face of persistent housing pressure and growing reliance on mitigation, a politics that presents itself as “no politics” is equal to the challenges the borough now faces.

Watch The Birdie

By Doug Goodman

This weekend from 23rd to 25th RSPB is running its Big Garden Bird Watch when hundreds of thousands of households will spend one hour counting the birds visiting their garden. Last year 600,000 people took part and counted nine million birds thus helping The RSPB to measure the increase in or loss of species.



Twickenham garden where many species of birds were photographed. Tame foxes and squirrels make regular visits but sadly hedgehogs have not been spotted for many years.

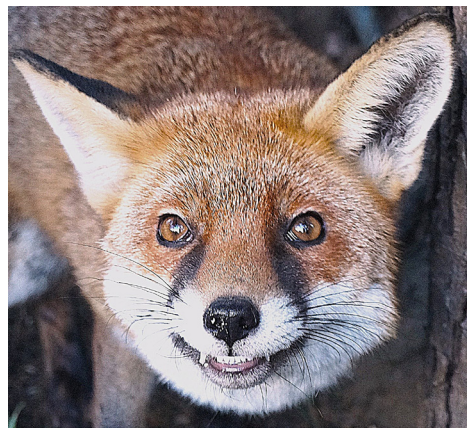
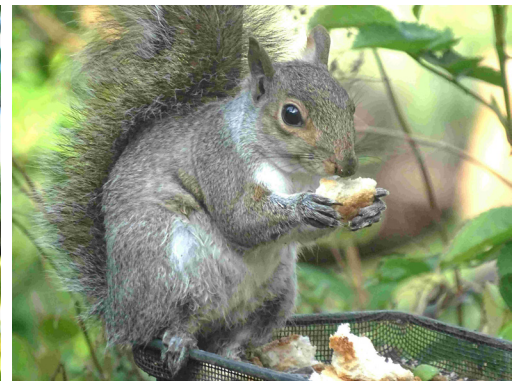


In 2025 the most observed birds were the house sparrow at 1.2 million; the blue tit at 946,000; the wood pigeon at 895,000. The house sparrow population has decreased by 60% since the first bird watch in 1979 and in the past 60 years we have lost 38 million birds.





In one Twickenham garden 22 varieties of wild birds along with foxes, squirrels, toads and bats were observed. As David Attenborough said in his recent series on the UK, 'there's no place like home for spotting wildlife'.



The Big Garden Bird Watch is the world's biggest garden wild life survey and its results are so valuable. You can still take part in the survey today and tomorrow, Sunday.

Results can be submitted on- line before February 22nd on www.rspb.org.uk/birdwatch.

The future of Allianz Stadium

From the RFU

Allianz Stadium has been the home of England Rugby for over a century, becoming a cornerstone of the sport and a highlight for fans each year.

As the governing body for rugby union in England, the Rugby Football Union (RFU) reinvests all profits into the game to support its growth at every level. Like all businesses though, we face financial challenges, which ultimately impact our ability to sustain rugby's growth. With Allianz Stadium generating around 85% of our revenue, maximising and investing in this key asset is essential.

To address this, we've developed a vision to enhance the stadium as a world-class venue for sport and entertainment, and in turn generate more income all while becoming a valued local asset.

Residents' Drop-In Event – 27 January

In November 2025 the RFU conducted a comprehensive survey to understand how we can continue to improve our matchday operations for the benefit of our closest neighbours.

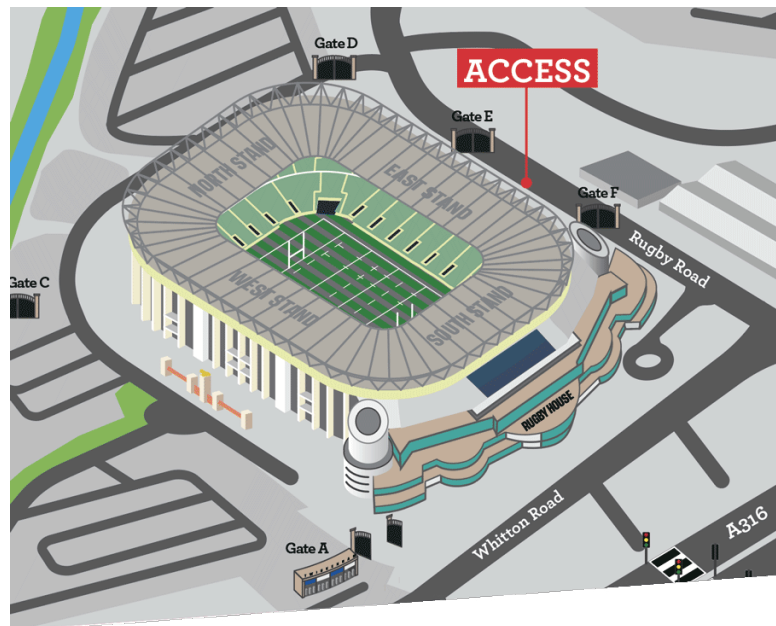
We would now like to invite you to a drop-in event on **Tuesday 27 January**, where you can view and discuss the findings from the audit and speak directly with the RFU team about what we heard and what happens next.

- Date: Tuesday 27 January
- Time: 5pm – 8pm (drop in at any time)
- Location: Clubhouse Bar & Kitchen, Level 4, East Stand, Allianz Stadium
- Access: Please enter via the gates between Gate E and Gate F

We know matchdays and events have a real impact on those who live nearby, and we are committed to continually improving how we manage them and being the best neighbour we can be.

More information [HERE](#)

If you're not able to meet us in person, you will be able to view the audit findings and related materials on our website from 27 January.



Government Cancels New School, Leaving Richmond Council's School Place Planning in Crisis

By James Knight



Richmond Council confirmed this week that the Department for Education has cancelled the proposed Livingstone Academy West London, a decision taken by the Secretary of State for Education, Bridget Phillipson MP. The move scraps the long-planned secondary school intended to serve Mortlake and the eastern half of the borough, and leaves the Council exposed after years of policy and funding assumptions that relied almost entirely on the school going ahead.

The Council has responded by warning of worsening pressure on school places and announcing its intention to appeal the decision. In a strongly worded statement, Councillor Gareth Roberts, the Leader of the Council, described the decision as “deeply disappointing”, arguing that demand for secondary places in the east of the borough already exceeds supply and that this is “not a future risk – it is happening now.”

What is striking is that the Leader has, over many years, gone to considerable lengths to defend the free school model at Mortlake, while being a fierce critic of residents and campaigners who questioned its deliverability or warned of the risks of relying on a single scheme.

How we got here

The case for a new secondary school in Mortlake has been embedded in Richmond Council policy for well over a decade. The Council's School Place Planning Strategy repeatedly identified a need for additional secondary capacity in the eastern half of the borough, citing rising demand, shrinking catchment areas and the physical limits of existing schools.

That need became closely linked to the Stag Brewery redevelopment, where a large housing scheme was expected to deliver a new free school as part of the wider regeneration of the site. Livingstone

Academy, sponsored by the Aspirations Academies Trust, emerged as the assumed solution. Its delivery was tied to planning obligations and treated as integral to the development proceeding.

From that point on, the Council's planning documents largely took Livingstone Academy as a given. Forecast demand was treated as already accounted for. Alternative approaches, particularly the expansion of existing secondary schools, were progressively deprioritised in both policy and funding terms. Crucially, this assumption shaped not just planning policy but the Council's financial strategy as well.

The Council's response to the cancellation

In its statement responding to the Department for Education's decision, the Council says that Livingstone Academy would have addressed a "clear and longstanding shortfall" in secondary places. Councillor Roberts argues that the school would have provided "much-needed capacity and real choice for families," particularly in the context of planned housing growth, and insists that decisions about school places must "reflect the realities communities are facing on the ground."

Much of this may be true. Councillor Julia Cambridge, Chair of the Education and Children's Services Committee, reinforces the point, saying that expecting pupils to attend schools outside the borough is "not a realistic or fair solution," particularly given ongoing transport constraints, and that families want children to attend school close to home.

But the Council's response presents the situation as a stark binary choice: either the free school is reinstated, or the borough faces an unavoidable failure to meet its statutory duties. What is missing is any acknowledgement that the funding landscape underpinning the Council's own strategy has fundamentally changed now that Livingstone Academy has been removed from the system, and how it triggers new funding.

The misleading omission

For a long time, the Council has argued that expanding existing secondary schools is not a realistic option because it lacks access to capital funding. This claim appears repeatedly in the School Place Planning Strategy, particularly when dismissing expansion at schools such as Christ's, Grey Court and Richmond Park Academy.

What is rarely explained is that this lack of capital was not a fixed or inevitable constraint. It flowed directly from the Council's own assumption that the required places would be delivered through the free school programme.

Under Department for Education rules, local authorities do not receive Basic Need capital funding for pupil places that are already being provided through a planned free school. In practical terms, the need for secondary places in the east of the borough was treated as already funded because Livingstone Academy was in the pipeline. As a result, that same need was excluded from the calculations used to determine the Council's Basic Need allocations.

Now that the free school has been cancelled, that assumption no longer holds.

The underlying demand for places does not disappear. It re-enters the Basic Need funding system and should be reflected in capital allocations in future years. This does not guarantee a sudden influx of funding, nor does it mean that school expansion would be quick or straightforward. But it does mean the Council can no longer state, without qualification, that no capital route exists to expand existing schools.

By failing to explain this change, the Council's public response gives residents the impression that the loss of Livingstone Academy leaves no alternatives at all. That is misleading by omission.

With the free school now removed from the equation, it is no longer possible to dismiss those concerns as theoretical. The collapse of the chosen delivery model invites a reassessment of the warnings that were raised at the time, and how they were treated.

A warning the council failed to heed

It is also notable that this is precisely the route long argued for by Mortlake Brewery community campaigners. For years, resident groups opposed to the development maintained that expanding existing secondary schools, funded through the Basic Need mechanism, was a more robust and deliverable way of meeting local demand. Rather than engaging seriously with that argument, the Council frequently portrayed those groups as opponents of school provision altogether.

In public statements on social media during 2023 and 2024, Councillor Roberts repeatedly described opponents of the Mortlake scheme as "NIMBYs", explicitly linking their objections to resistance to a new secondary school at the site. Those remarks reinforced a narrative in which alternative delivery models were dismissed as obstruction, rather than examined as substantive proposals for meeting demand.

The cancellation of Livingstone Academy suggests that the dispute was never about whether additional school places were needed, but about which delivery model carried the least risk. What is missing from the Council's response is any reflection on whether those residents were, at least on this point, raising a legitimate concern about resilience, value for money and deliverability.

Why this matters

This is not a technical quibble. It goes to the heart of whether the Council has a credible and transparent strategy for meeting its statutory duty to provide sufficient school places.

At present, the Council is placing all its weight on an appeal to ministers to reverse a decision that was itself driven by concerns about deliverability, cost and risk. There is no published contingency plan, no updated assessment of funding options and no public reassessment of school expansion in light of the changed circumstances.

The Council will no doubt argue that Basic Need funding is uncertain and may be insufficient to meet the scale of demand. That may well be true. But uncertainty is not the same as non-existence. The funding route now exists in a way it did not before, and parents and councillors alike are entitled to an honest explanation of how it will be considered.

If Livingstone Academy does not return, the Council will be expected to demonstrate how it intends to use the tools that are available to it. That responsibility does not rest with abstract institutions, but with **Cllr Julia Cambridge** the Cabinet Member for Education and Children's Services, who is charged with advising councillors on capacity, funding routes and risk.

The loss of Livingstone Academy is a serious setback. But so is the continued presentation of a funding position that no longer reflects reality. If the Council wants to retain public confidence, it needs to be clear about what has changed, what options now exist, and why it believes some of them may still be unworkable. Anything less risks turning a difficult policy challenge into an avoidable failure of transparency and planning. The question councillors must now answer is not simply whether they oppose the government's decision, but why residents were not told that an alternative funding route has reopened.

Never Forget

By Doug Goodman

On January 27th 1945 the liberation of Auschwitz concentration camp in Poland was carried out by Russian troops. For the first time the full horror of Nazi extermination policy was revealed to the world. To Auschwitz, (Oswiecim in Polish), it is estimated that 1.3 million Jews, political opponents, Gypsies and others the Nazis wanted to wipe out were transported from all over Europe. Over a million of those imprisoned in one of the largest and most notorious camps perished between 1941 and the end of the Second World War.



To Auschwitz



French Liberation Stamp



Auschwitz Camp Today

Auschwitz is about 50 kms from Krakow and can be visited on an organised excursion. A day away from the lively atmosphere of the old city of Krakow seeing the twin camps of Auschwitz and Birkenau is a chilling reminder of what happened within living memory.



Death at the End of the Line



Entrance to Birkenau Camp

Every year on January 27 International Holocaust Day remembers the six million people murdered by the Nazis as well as those who suffered in Cambodia, Rwanda, Bosnia and other countries. On Tuesday we should remember them.



Kettner Concerts in Twickenham



MILDA DAUNORAITE

a piano recital

THE FORERUNNERS

Beethoven

Bagatelles Opus 33

Schubert

"Wanderer" Fantasy

Poulenc

Improvisations

Ravel

Valses Nobles et Sentimentales

Messian

Regard de l'Esprit de Joie from Vingt
Regards sur l'Enfant Jésus



Saturday, 24 January 2026, 6.00 pm

Doors open at 5.30 and the concert will be followed by a complimentary drinks reception

Milda Daunoraite is blazing a trail following her acclaimed Wigmore Hall debut recital in 2025, critics praising her scintillating playing, sheer enjoyment and exhilaration of her 'joie de vivre'. The young Lithuanian pianist and final year student at the Royal Academy of Music is presenting a varied and engaging programme for Kettner Concerts in Twickenham.

St Mary's Church
Twickenham
Church Street TW1 3NJ



Tickets: £20
(£10 for students and under 18s)
kettnerconcerts.co.uk
Book tickets on Eventbrite.co.uk
or scan the qr code

Dead ringers – the mystery is solved

Andrew Harvey, Richmond bell ringer

The mystery of murdered bell ringers is soon to be solved at St Mary Magdalene church, Richmond. One after another, ringers end up as dead ringers - and that calls for the investigative genius of Detective Chief Inspector Barnaby, familiar as John Nettles from the ITV series *Midsomer Murders*.

As part of their fund raising for a new set of bells, the Richmond ringers are showing the episode *Ring Out Your Dead* at a gala film night on February 6th.



Surrey bell ringer John Harrison will be there to reveal some of the secrets of the filming and how he taught the actors to ring church bells.

Canapes and sparkling wine are included in the £20 ticket price.

www.zeffy.com/en-gb/ticketing/movie-night-68

King Street Demolition Complete

By Michael Jones



Demolition of the former buildings on King Street is now complete, being another milestone for the commercial-led redevelopment of the former Twickenham Riverside site. Long before the most recent retail uses, the King Street frontage was substantially redeveloped in 1964, when permission was granted to replace the King's Head Hotel with a modernised scheme incorporating a replacement public house and a supermarket.

In later decades, the site continued to evolve. Many residents will remember the King Street units housing a McDonald's, later replaced by Superdrug, while the replacement public house on the corner was turned into an Abbey National building society branch in 1986 and subsequently became Santander.

The present clearance marks another stage in a redevelopment process that has stretched on for more than a decade and remains divisive locally. A previous scheme for Twickenham Riverside was approved in 2018 and was expected to be complete by now. That proposal was presented as broadly cost-neutral. Following a change in political control, it was cancelled at the last minute by the Liberal Democrat administration and replaced with a larger scheme.

Since then, the financial profile has worsened considerably. The net cost of the current project has risen from a projected £11 million to over £30 million, reflecting design changes alongside construction inflation. While the council prefers to describe this expenditure as an investment, in practical terms it represents a substantial projected loss, dependent on assumptions about future sales values.

Views now diverge sharply on whether pressing ahead is justified. Some argue that continuing with the scheme places a considerable financial risk on the borough, particularly at a time when house prices in London are falling, and construction costs remain elevated. From this perspective, any shortfall in sales values would widen what is already a significant loss. Others take a different view.

After years of delay, redesign and political dispute, they argue that the risk is worth taking to finally complete the redevelopment and bring a long-running project to an end, even if that means accepting a much higher cost than originally envisaged.



Photos ©Twickenham & Richmond Tribune

Brave the Skywalk with Skylarks at the Tottenham Hotspur Stadium

From Skylarks, Twickenham

On Saturday 14 March at 12.30pm, join Skylarks for the Dare Skywalk at the Tottenham Hotspur Stadium. Get ready to rise above your limits and make a real difference to support life-changing therapies, inclusive activities and essential family support.

Step 46.8 metres above the pitch and walk across the iconic glass walkway, take in breath-taking views of London, and even get up close to the iconic golden cockerel - all safely guided by professional instructors.

Bringing your friends, family or colleagues to cheer you on every step you take helps raise vital funds for children and young people with additional needs.

Your courage and determination will support life-changing therapies, inclusive activities, and essential family support.

Registration costs £40 with a fundraising target of £150. Kids go free.

Minimum height is 1.2 metres and minimum age is eight years old (under 18s must be accompanied by adults).

[Register online](#)



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Twickenham**

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A large pile of musical equipment, including several electric guitars (one red, one black), a Marshall amplifier, various guitar pedals, and vinyl records, arranged on a light-colored floor. The word "Brentford" is written in large white letters at the top.

BRENTFORD

**WITH ALIX ANTHONY
& Friends**

**LIVE at THE BEEHIVE
SUNDAY JAM
8:30 PM**

Next week at Richmond Council

On Tuesday, 27th January, the **Full Council** will meet for the last time before the local elections in May. On the agenda are (1) public questions, (2) member questions, (3) The Richmond Adult Carers' and Young Carers' Charter 2026, (4) opposition priority business "How will Council achieve its stated goal of a net zero borough by 2043", (5) amendments to the constitution, and (6) motions. The meeting will commence at 7 pm at York House, Twickenham. Please click [HERE](#) for more details.

On Thursday morning, 29th January, the **Licensing Sub-Committee** will meet to discuss the opposed application for The Mirror Café, 4 Church Court, Richmond, TW9 1JL. The meeting will commence at 11 am and be held virtually. Please click [HERE](#) for more details.

On Thursday evening, 29th January, the **Education and Children Services Committee** will meet to discuss (1) the admission arrangements for community schools 2027/28, (2) the directorate budget report 2026/27, (3) the schools budget 2026/27, (4) schools' capital maintenance programme 2026/27, (5) the quarterly budget monitoring report, and (6) the Richmond corporate plan 2025/26 mid-year performance report. The meeting will commence at 7 pm at York House, Twickenham. Please click [HERE](#) for more details.

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

House fire – Twickenham

From London Fire Brigade

Four fire engines and around 25 firefighters tackled a house fire on Marlow Crescent in Twickenham on Tuesday.

Part of the first floor of a semi-detached house was damaged by fire. There were no reports of any injuries.

The fire is believed to have been accidental and caused by an iron left unattended.

A London Fire Brigade spokesperson said: *"It's really important that you always check irons and other appliances are turned off and unplugged when not in use, unless they're designed to be left on, like your fridge or freezer."*

"Keep clutter to a minimum on your work surfaces especially near irons, toasters and hobs as they can accidentally switch them on or catch fire."

The Brigade's Control Officers were called at 11:05 and sent crews from Heston and Richmond fire stations to the scene. The fire was under control by 11:50.



January Food and Drink News

January is the month when we start our good intentions: whether it's to lose weight, drink less, or just be more mindful of our overall health.

Peanut butter is packed with protein, and as long as you choose a brand that isn't packed with sugar and UPFs, you're onto a really good breakfast or snack choice. Enjoy it spread on slices of apple or on a cracker or slice of toast. Rather strangely perhaps, I enjoy a lunchtime snack of a wholemeal pitta, toasted, then spread on one of the insides with peanut butter and the other with Marmite or Vegemite, then packed with slices of cucumber. Trust me, it's delicious. **Whole Earth's** latest innovation is **100% Nuts Peanut Butter**, available in Smooth and Crunchy. Made with just one ingredient, roasted Argentinian peanuts, this new range delivers pure, natural flavour with no additives, making it a delicious source of protein and fibre. Available in selected Waitrose stores at £4 for a 340g jar.



Instant soups can be very hit or miss, and can contain all sorts of nasty ingredients. At long last I've found a good range - [Soul Kitchen](#). It believes Britain's hard working, busy people shouldn't have to sacrifice nutrition. These are three-minute soups that are genuinely good for you and proof that healthy doesn't mean compromise on flavour. Made with real vegetables, clean ingredients, the soups deliver 10x more real veg than other instant soups

on the shelf. £20 for a pack of 12 soups - I'd suggest trying the variety pack.

Frozen pizza can be disappointing unless you know what to look for. Here's a new range - **Suprema** - from **Dr. Oetker**, of Neapolitan-style frozen pizza that brings artisanal quality to home dining, straight from the freezer. Its unique sourdough recipe was crafted by Dr. Oetker's dough-masters, after a trip to Naples visiting some of the best pizzaiolos. Each pizza is baked over a 400°C hot stone, delivering an irregular, airy and crisp crust that's perfectly charred – a true pizzeria taste. Topped with quality ingredients including Emilia Romagna passata, and other Italian-inspired ingredients, suprema is available in three flavours; La Margherita, La Calabria and La Romana. Available from Tesco, Asda and Ocado at around £5.



There has recently been a considerable amount of media coverage recommending full fat rather than fat-free dairy products, and **Tom Parker Creamery** has brought milk back to its natural best with the launch of **Unhomogenised Whole Milk**. Rich, creamy, and minimally processed, it's just like the milkman used to deliver: whole milk in its purest form, sourced



from **free-range West Country farms** within 40 miles of the Somerset creamery. Unlike most supermarket milk, this hasn't been homogenised, so the cream rises naturally to the top, as nature intended. Simply shake the bottle or scoop the cream for a little indulgence in your morning coffee or on your breakfast cereal. Part of a growing movement towards natural, less processed foods, Tom Parker Creamery's Unhomogenised Whole Milk takes a 'less is more' approach with products that are closer to nature. Available from Tesco and Ocado in a 750ml glass bottle for around £2.

It's that time of year when we crave warming, comfort food, and dishes like Bangers 'n' Mash or Toad in the Hole. The quality of the sausages used for these dishes can make or mar the finished dish, so a good banger is of prime importance. So how about one that started its professional business life being sold in the car park of the Stoop in Twickenham? Yes, it's true, and **The Jolly Hog** is now a family-run, high welfare meat business known for its great tasting British sausages and bacon. All The Jolly Hog's products come from British, outdoor bred, RSPCA assured farms, ensuring high animal welfare standards. Proper Porkers are perfectly balanced with sage and made from high quality pork shoulder and belly, with 84% pork. They're widely available now in most major supermarkets, and well worth looking out for.



It's Seville Orange season, and if you don't have time to make your own marmalade, here's a good alternative. **La Vieja Fábrica** takes pride in crafting its marmalade in the heart of Seville. Meaning 'The Old Factory', the name reflects the time-honoured recipes and techniques, preserved over the years, to produce marmalade that's rich in tradition and flavour. Each jar is packed with Seville oranges, (the cherished symbol of Seville). The prized bitter oranges are renowned for their punchy distinctive taste and signature thick skin. Don't just spread it on your toast; try including in a range of recipes, including savoury. There are four tasty marmalade products: Seville Orange Fine Cut; Seville Orange Thick Cut; Seville Orange No Peel and Seville Orange St Clements. La Vieja Fábrica is available in Tesco, Waitrose, Morrisons, and Ocado.



And last, but by no means least, Regular readers will know that I'm rather partial to a good gin, and here's my latest find: **Cotswolds Dry Gin**. It's distilled with a blend of nine carefully considered botanicals. The Head Distiller uses over ten times the average amount of botanicals used by most premium gins. And because the gin is non-chill filtered, the oils are retained in the gin, which causes a pearlescent cloud to appear when ice or tonic is added, creating the unique 'Cloudy G&T'. It's seriously good, and also performs stonkingly well in a dry martini. Around £38.50 for 70 cl ABV: 46% Available from: Sainsbury's, Waitrose & Partners, Majestic, Oddbins, Laithwaites, Harvey Nichols, Selfridges and Fortnum & Mason and online www.cotswoldsdistillery.com and www.amazon.co.uk



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Greenland Here We Come

By Bruce Lyons

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It all matters in the end...

By Deep Patel

~Life through the eyes of a Twickenham shopkeeper ~

The early morning sun kissing my tired worn out face when I open my shop shutters early in the morning was the feeling I remember most when I think of mornings during the warmer months...it was beautiful...not a soul in sight...no cars on the road in front...no aircraft in the sky above...just my tired face and the warming sun trying to bring me back to life for the day ahead. Now I open my shop to pitch black darkness, the wind blowing about my hair with the rain beating down on my still tired worn out face (I must get to bed earlier). Something that I've noticed during these rainy dark mornings is the pavement outside my shop is often somewhat randomly scattered with what looks like wriggling twigs. Well that is what I thought they were at first...but they were worms...somehow stranded on the pavement...and also slugs and snails...it was like an early morning party for the soft succulents of Hampton road Twickenham (I should emphasise that I am of course referring to the slugs, snails and worms and not to my neighbours or customers...they are far from soft and succulent).

I genuinely thought to myself that as they were enjoying a bit of rain, I should just let them be. It was right then that I saw two city commuters on their way to work running for the bus and stepping on the little guys and (unknowingly) ending their lives. I felt terrible. I didn't feel right leaving them to be trodden on...I mean they are only trying to live like the rest of us right? They probably have family, youngsters at home even too? It was right then that I remembered reading about a study published by the University of Belfast whereby they found that snails were not only capable of feeling pain, but also of experiencing emotion too. Then I felt even worse. Feel bad about using the salt now don't you (so you should).

Don't get me wrong, I love sitting behind my counter and selling cola and chocolate just as much as the next shopkeeper does, but it occurred to me that if I want to make the world a better place, I really can...I can do it through carrying out random acts of kindness, one at a time...even saving a dear worm counts...the universe witnesses...the universe knows...and the universe remembers...and then one day...for all the slugs, snails and worms you stopped to pick up (using a nearby leaf and move across a wall to safety so they were not trodden on)...when you need help...or perhaps someone in your family...the universe delivers it...like a bank account with interest...the key is to carry out these actions without expectation of self-gain...the universe knows and will deliver itself...not necessarily when you want it to, but maybe more when you need it the most...trust me...it always delivers in the end...the key is not to expect...

A life is still a life...and all lives matter right? So nowadays when I open my shop, I still have my equally as tired and worn out face (I still don't go to bed early enough...some things never change) but what has changed is my immediate morning routine...Now when I open the shutters of the shop early at the crack of dawn, the first thing I do before the bus stop gets busy with the heavy foot traffic of the commuters rushing into the city is I walk up the street with my mobile phone torch in one hand and a leaf in the other, picking up snails, slugs and worms off the pavement and placing over a wall to safety from being trodden on...it's so satisfying and such a positive way to start a day off...in the joy of others lies our own...in the service of others abides our own...it's all good karma. Do unto others as you would like done unto yourself right? We never know when we may need someone to "pick us up" and move us to safety (both physically and metaphorically). My customers

have started to do the same and they say that they have definitely had good karma since. Although many say “I picked up a slug and moved him off the pavement using my phone torch and a nearby leaf to stop others stepping on him...now will you sell me the winning lottery ticket please?”...I say sure...just pick the winning numbers and I will sell it to you! In reality, the universe will remember...and as I always say...you never know when any of the small acts of kindness towards the little life-forms around us that you do will come back to make a big change in your own life...not necessarily when you want it...but certainly when you need it the most...the key is not to expect it and perform the acts of kindness as a matter of duty and service to the world rather than as a means of accruing the karma back...just act...do not worry about the fruits of your actions...they will come themselves naturally...what goes around really does come around...maybe not today...maybe not tomorrow...but definitely one day...and that will be when you need it most.

Keep being kind Twickenham, it's simple...the universe will be kind back.
Until next week, have a happy week, save a life and stay dry X



Remember...

“Remember the universe remembers every act no matter how small...focus on the action not on the fruits...the fruits will come themselves...”

CREATURE-KINDNESS TIP:

DO YOU HAVE A BIRD BATH?

Remember to empty it out daily and wash it as there are currently some bird illnesses that pass from bird to bird easily and usually it's via the shared water baths that they drink from, so wash and clean yours daily to avoid the spread of bird related sicknesses that can transfer via the water from the sick birds to the healthy ones.

For ANY specific tip to stop any “pest” or insect KINDLY (for good karma/blessings), email me: thedeepatel@gmail.com or join my new Facebook group: “Insect Lovers Unite”.



Loyalties

by John Galsworthy

Questors at the Judi Dench Playhouse, Ealing until 31st January

Loyalties is more than a drawing-room drama. A thoughtful exposition of the tensions produced by the social norms in the Nineteenth Century, still evident today, it is a courageous choice when anti-Semitism in particular is once more in the forefront of societal and political discourse. But we should be glad the choice has been made. *Loyalties* is a beautifully constructed play, dealing with some tough subjects, and Francis Lloyd's direction delivers an enjoyable evening.

Ferdinand de Levis is attending a country house weekend in the home of Charles and Adela Winsor, including attending the races at Newmarket. That night, money from the sale of a horse is stolen from



his room. The most likely thief is a fellow guest, Ronald Dancy, officer and gentleman; an embarrassing dilemma for a host on any occasion. But there are special circumstances here. De Levis is a wealthy businessman, not part of the local gentry. The difference between him and his house party hosts is immediately exposed. They worry about good form and don't want a fuss. He demands the police are called and assumes that, as an outsider, it is his Jewishness that is causing the reluctance of his hosts.

What seems a straightforward story is far from so. Each and every scene contains an unexpected development. But at its heart the play is dealing with conflicting loyalties, and underlying prejudice.

Should the county set protect one of own, even if a thief? And De Levis and Dancy are members of

the same club. And when a lawyer is faced with a moral dilemma, what wins, the client or the law? And the prejudice: is De Levis a bit too precious about his race? How much should he believe their protestations of affection for Jews? But you can't ignore the prejudice.

Some very skilful set changes are enhanced by the fascinating newsreel scenes and photos projected behind the set.

This is very much an ensemble piece with some super cameos. Particularly enjoyable are Alexander Upton's very modern Margaret Orme, Mark Redup's Inspector Dede, Howard Shepherdson's Jacob Twisden and John Dobson as Gilman, but it's a difficult choice to pick out a few from a talented cast.



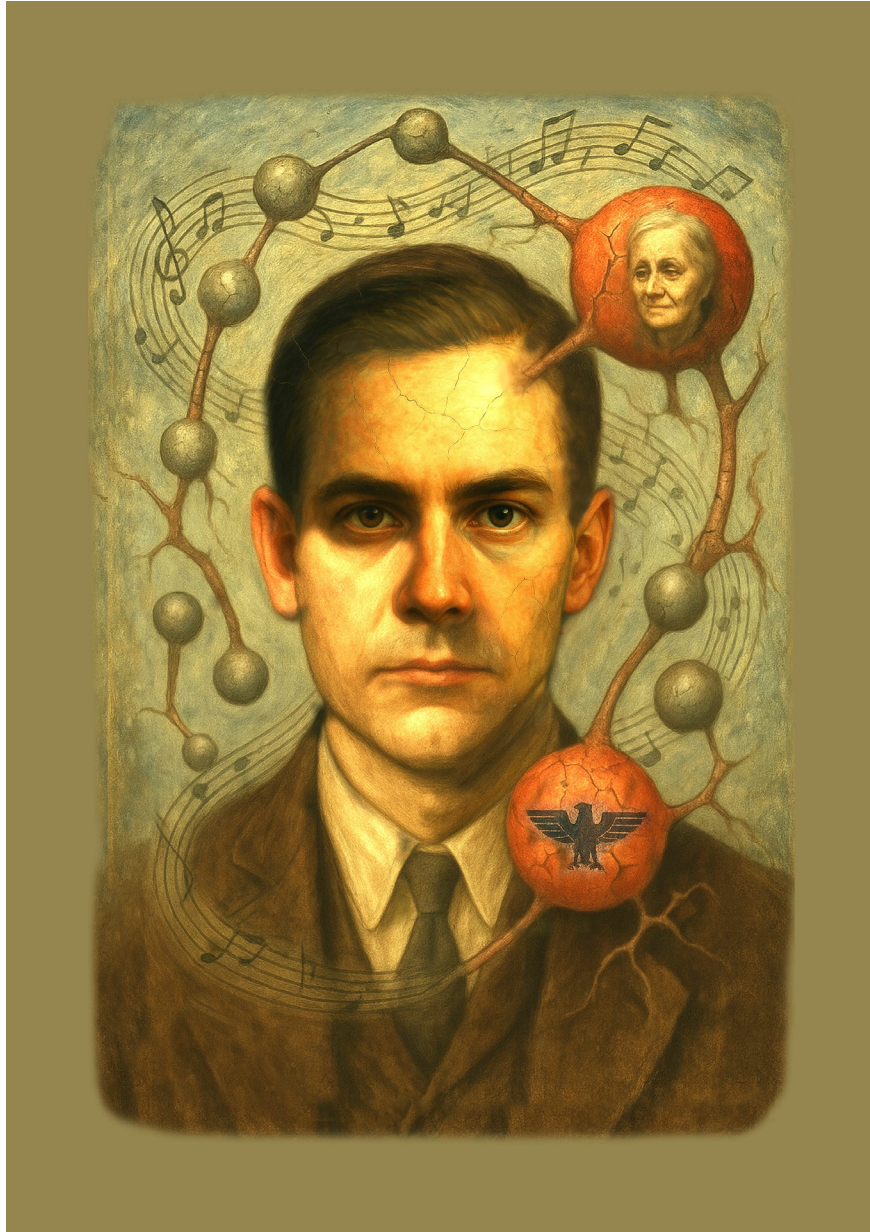
Read Polly Davies' review at www.markaspen.com/2026/01/23/loyalties

Photography by Jane Arnold-Forster

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Fennies Marks International Day Of Education By Highlighting The Transformative Role of Early Years Learning

From Fennies, Twickenham

International Day of Education places a global spotlight on the importance of equitable learning. Fennies Nurseries is using the occasion to highlight how Early Years education shapes children's future experiences and builds strong foundations for lifelong learning.

Early childhood is a period of accelerated development for language, communication, social awareness and independent thinking. This is also a time when children form lasting attitudes toward learning. Fennies nurture those opportunities through environments that encourage exploration, positive relationships that create confident young people and meaningful experiences which help children feel capable and ready for the future.



"Blending child-led exploration with purposeful guidance, the curriculum celebrates imagination, critical thinking, emotional intelligence and STEM-inspired discovery." says Eleanor Richfield, Head of Education at Fennies, "It empowers children to communicate confidently and adapt to change, supporting them to enjoy the short-term whilst developing the lifelong skills they need to thrive in the long-term."

Central to Fennies' approach is the belief that Early Years education must be purposeful, child-led and deeply responsive. Practitioners plan experiences that stimulate thinking as well as introducing new skills and support emotional security in varied ways. This aligns with the ethos behind International Day of Education which champions inclusive approaches that empower learners and open pathways to future success.

Fennies invests in practitioner development, enrichment opportunities for children and ongoing innovation in pedagogy. These priorities aim to give children access to learning that strengthens resilience, builds independence and opens their imagination. Fennies has also continued to enhance collaboration across its nurseries which ensures consistency in approach and a shared commitment to high-quality experiences for every child.

Speaking about the significance of the day, the organisation hopes that greater recognition of the Early Years sector will encourage more families, educators, policymakers and communities to engage with and support this crucial stage of childhood. International Day of Education serves as a reminder that nurturing learning during a child's earliest years has lasting impact and deserves ongoing investment and appreciation.

For more information about Fennies' Early Years approach, visit www.fennies.com/curriculum-pedagogy



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Age UK London launches open letter urging London Councils to protect the Freedom Pass

Age UK London has launched an open letter calling on London Councils, the local government association representing councils in the capital, to rule out moves that could lead to future cuts to the Older Persons' Freedom Pass.

This follows recent reports that the scheme could be subject to review. Age UK London are calling for all Londoners to [co-sign the letter](#).

In early January it was revealed that London Councils were considering a review of the Freedom Pass – a concession that provides Londoners over State Pension age (66) with free travel across the capital on weekends and after 9am on weekdays. The news caused widespread concern among older Londoners, many of whom rely on the pass as a vital lifeline.

On 14 January, the London Councils Labour Group announced that they would block any review, a position supported by Mayor Sir Sadiq Khan. While this intervention has reduced the immediate threat, Age UK London warns that the possibility of a future review remains very real – particularly once council elections have taken place.

“Older Londoners are deeply anxious about the prospect of losing or seeing cuts to their Freedom Pass,” said John McGeachy, Campaigns Manager, Age UK London. “Although the review has been halted for now, the issue is unlikely to disappear. We expect the Freedom Pass to remain under scrutiny, and we are determined to ensure that older people’s voices are heard loud and clear. This is not just about older people now; it’s future generations too.”

The open letter, addressed to the Chief Operating Officer and the London Councils Leadership Committee, sets out the essential role the Freedom Pass plays in the lives of older Londoners. It highlights how the pass enables people to care for family members, volunteer in their communities, support local high streets, attend medical appointments, and maintain active, independent lives.

The letter also warns that any cuts – whether to operating hours or to the transport modes covered – would disproportionately affect older Londoners on low incomes. London has the highest rate of pensioner poverty in the UK, and many older residents do not own a car. For them, the Freedom Pass is not a luxury but a necessity.

Age UK London stresses that reducing access to public transport risks increasing social isolation, worsening health outcomes, and pushing some older people back into car use - with consequences for congestion and the environment.

“Older Londoners have contributed to the Freedom Pass through decades of taxation. They value it enormously, and they deserve to have it protected,” continued John McGeachy. “Cutting the Freedom Pass would be a backwards step that makes life harder for thousands of people.”



Members of the public can add their name [here](#).

Borthwick names 36-player Guinness Six Nations training squad

England men's head coach Steve Borthwick has named a 36-player training squad for the forthcoming 2026 Guinness Men's Six Nations Championship, which begins on Saturday 7 February when England face Wales at Allianz Stadium, Twickenham (kick-off 4.40pm GMT, live on ITV1).

Maro Itoje has been named captain of the squad, which comprises 20 forwards and 16 backs. The group will gather at the England Rugby Performance Centre, Pennyhill Park, on Tuesday 27 January for a day's training before travelling to Girona to continue preparations. There are three uncapped players named in the squad: Greg Fisilau (Exeter Chiefs), Vilikesa Sela (Bath Rugby), and Emmanuel Iyogun (Northampton Saints).

"We've picked a squad with a good balance of experience, leadership and exciting potential," said Borthwick. "The margins in the Guinness Six Nations are incredibly fine so our aim over the coming days is to come together quickly, prepare thoroughly, and make sure we're ready to perform. If we prepare well and keep demanding the highest levels from one another, it puts us in the strongest possible position when the Championship begins."

Following the clash with Wales, England will face Scotland at Murrayfield Stadium on Saturday 14 February (kick-off 4.40pm GMT), before taking on Ireland at Allianz Stadium on Saturday 21 February (kick-off 4.10pm GMT).

England then travel to Rome to face Italy on Saturday 7 March (kick-off 4.40pm GMT), with their final match of the Championship taking place in Paris against France on Saturday 14 March (kick-off 8.10pm GMT).

All England matches will be shown live on ITV1.

England's 36-player training squad

Forwards:

Ollie Chessum (Leicester Tigers, 30 caps)
Arthur Clark (Gloucester Rugby, 1 cap)
Alex Coles (Northampton Saints, 14 caps)
Luke Cowan-Dickie (Sale Sharks, 53 caps)
Chandler Cunningham-South (Harlequins, 20 caps)
Tom Curry (Sale Sharks, 65 caps)
Theo Dan (Saracens, 20 caps)
Trevor Davison (Northampton Saints, 3 caps)
Ben Earl (Saracens, 46 caps)
Greg Fisilau (Exeter Chiefs, uncapped)

Ellis Genge (Bristol Bears, 75 caps)
Jamie George (Saracens, 105 caps)
Joe Heyes (Leicester Tigers, 17 caps)
Maro Itoje (Saracens, 97 caps) – captain
Emmanuel Iyogun (Northampton Saints, uncapped)
Guy Pepper (Bath Rugby, 7 caps)
Henry Pollock (Northampton Saints, 5 caps)
Bevan Rodd (Sale Sharks, 10 caps)
Vilikesa Sela (Bath Rugby, uncapped)
Sam Underhill (Bath Rugby, 45 caps)

Backs:

Henry Arundell (Bath Rugby, 11 caps)
Seb Atkinson (Gloucester Rugby, 2 caps)
Elliot Daly (Saracens, 74 caps)
Fraser Dingwall (Northampton Saints, 7 caps)
Immanuel Feyi-Waboso (Exeter Chiefs, 13 caps)
George Ford (Sale Sharks, 105 caps)
Tommy Freeman (Northampton Saints, 22 caps)
George Furbank (Northampton Saints, 14 caps)

Alex Mitchell (Northampton Saints, 27 caps)
Cadan Murley (Harlequins, 4 caps)
Max Ojomoh (Bath Rugby, 2 caps)
Henry Slade (Exeter Chiefs, 74 caps)
Marcus Smith (Harlequins, 46 caps)
Ben Spencer (Bath Rugby, 14 caps)
Freddie Steward (Leicester Tigers, 41 caps)
Jack van Poortvliet (Leicester Tigers, 21 caps)

Rehabilitation in Girona: Fin Baxter (Harlequins), Ben Curry (Sale Sharks), Ollie Lawrence (Bath Rugby), Tom Roebeck (Sale Sharks), Fin Smith (Northampton Saints)

Not considered for selection: Oscar Beard (Harlequins), Charlie Ewels (Bath Rugby), Curtis Langdon (Northampton Saints), George Martin (Leicester Tigers), Asher Opoku-Fordjour (Sale Sharks), Adam Radwan (Leicester Tigers), Will Stuart (Bath Rugby).



Sara Cox MBE announces international rugby retirement

Rugby union's most capped female referee (51 caps) has announced her retirement from the international game following a hugely successful professional career that has inspired countless female match officials to pick up the whistle.

Sara was a pioneer for female match officials as the world's first professional female referee when centrally contracted by the RFU in 2016 and was awarded an MBE for services to rugby in 2023 in recognition of her trailblazing efforts within the sport.



She retires having officiated at the home Women's Rugby World Cup 2025, her fifth World Cup and third in the middle (2021 played in 2022 and 2017) after acting as an assistant referee in 2010 and 2014. In the 2025 tournament, while refereeing Japan v Spain, Cox became the first woman to referee 50 Test matches.

Her international career has also seen her referee in two Olympics: 2016 Olympics in Rio de Janeiro, followed by Tokyo where she refereed the gold medal match. She has also refereed at the Commonwealth Games, Guinness Six Nations, WXV and numerous other international Test matches.

Sara Cox said: *"I feel very privileged to have officiated at the highest level of the global game for over a decade. Rugby has given me amazing experiences but after the high of a home World Cup, now feels like the right time to hang up my international boots and spend some time on other interests while continuing to give my all to the club game."*

"I'd like to thank everyone who has supported my career, I wouldn't be where I am without the amazing team around me and a group of fantastic colleagues both in England and when travelling around the world."

"But most of all I'd like to thank my friends and family – particularly my mum who has always been my biggest supporter. Being able to referee a game in Exeter, my hometown, during last summer's World Cup was a moment of real pride and amazing to do so in front of people who've championed me in my career but not always been able to travel to the far-flung places I've worked."

"I look forward to continuing to referee in our domestic leagues and hopefully continuing to encourage other women to see match officiating as a role for them."

Bill Sweeney, RFU CEO, said: *"Sara has been a true pioneer for match officials and an inspiration to so many. Her professionalism, resilience and passion for the game have broken barriers and demonstrated the path to top level match officiating for women across the world. She deserves huge plaudits for everything she's achieved in her international career, and we are delighted that she will be continuing to contribute to the English game."*

Paul Hull, RFU Head of Professional Game Match Officials, added: *"Sara's contribution to refereeing has been exceptional. She has shown that talent and determination can take you to the very top and her legacy will be felt for generations."*



Brentford welcome Notts Forest to the Gtech

By Ron Brand and Contribution from Graham Martin

2026 has started well for the Bees.

A draw with Frank and Spurs at the Gtech on Jan 1st, followed by wins against Everton and Sunderland in the Premiership. Beating Sheffield Wednesday in the F.A. Cup to progress to the 4th Round adds up to a solid start to the 2nd half of the Season.

The setback at Chelsea, a team expected to be competing for the Title, even then Brentford created by far the most chances and on that basis should have won. As in life, if you don't take your opportunities you will fail to fulfil your promise! In that respect I have always considered sport to be a shortened version of life.

Sometimes disappointing but Let's Move On.

What follows is interesting, Sean Dyche has done well at Forest, laying 17th in the Premiership but competing and winning in Europe, Sunday they face the Bees sitting at the dizzy heights of 7th, having just left a Position two places higher.

The Bees should be looking at the possibility of European football next year, relegation a fear of the past. It should be an interesting fixture?

Following Forest Brentford face Villa, Newcastle and Arsenal. **There are No Easy Games in the Premiership!**

I am confident that Keith Andrews will have his Squad ready for the next Challenge, assured that the Structure, Planning and Philosophy that has seen the Bees do so well this season will continue to produce the Right Results.

Supporting a Premiership team ain't ever easy.

All you can hope for is that the players 'Leave it All on the Pitch!'

The Brentford players have been doing that this season.

Let Jude and the Fans Take a sad song and make it better!



Match Preview: Brentford v Nottingham Forest

Written by Brentford Football Club

Brentford face Nottingham Forest at Gtech Community Stadium in the Premier League on Sunday (2pm kick-off GMT).

The Bees return to the Gtech having lost just one game in TW8 this term. Forest will visit west London after a trip to face Portuguese side Braga in the Europa League on Thursday night.

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

Pre-match Analysis

Stephen Gillett, *Playmaker Stats*: The numbers point to dramatic finish on Sunday

Sean Dyche's Nottingham Forest are on the hunt for an attacking X-factor ahead of Sunday's Premier League meeting with Brentford at Gtech Community Stadium.

Forest's hectic fixture list is a consequence of their superb 2024/25 campaign, which saw them flirt with the Champions League places before they eventually finished seventh in the top flight.

Last term, under Nuno Espírito Santo, Forest combined defensive steel with pacy, counter-attacking football, which brought seven goals on the break. They were also formidable from set-pieces, scoring more Premier League goals (17) from dead-ball situations than any other team.

Spearheading Forest's attack was New Zealand international Chris Wood, who finished behind only Mohamed Salah (29), Alexander Isak (23) and Erling Haaland (22) in the Premier League goal charts. The striker hit 20 of Forest's 58 goals in total (34 per cent) - no player in the division scored a higher share of their team's goals.

Success brings a different set of challenges, however, and two managerial changes coupled with Wood picking up a serious knee injury have defined a more turbulent 2025/26 campaign. Now under head coach Dyche, Forest's struggles to find the net persist.

Only Wolves (15) have scored fewer Premier League goals this term than Forest. Morgan Gibbs-White (five) is their top scorer, while Callum Hudson-Odoi (three) is the only other player to outscore Wood (two) despite the Kiwi's extended absence. They're also one of only two teams - Manchester United, the other - yet to score a top-flight goal via a substitute.

Forest's low attacking output isn't down to a lack of volume. They rank inside the top 10 for shots taken (266), although a third of those (98) have come from outside the box. Quality chance creation has proved elusive, and the Reds' crossing numbers tell a story.



According to Opta, Forest have swung in 415 crosses this season - the most in the Premier League - but have the third-lowest cross success rate in the division (18.3 per cent, 76 accurate). Brentford, by comparison, have attempted far fewer crosses (256) but have a higher completion rate (23.4 per cent, 60 accurate).

The last 15 minutes on Sunday could be pivotal, with Brentford hoping to maintain their knack of stinging opponents late in games.

This season, [Keith Andrews](#)' side have scored 13 goals after the 75th minute - six of them in added time. Forest, meanwhile, head to west London having conceded a league-high 12 Premier League goals in the same period.

Andrews, however, will know his Brentford side can ill afford to start in the manner they did in their [3-1 defeat to Forest on the opening day of the season](#). Three goals down at half-time that day, the Irishman will be determined to show what he and his side are capable of after that game in August.

Scout Report

Dan Long, *Sky Sports*: Forest face defining run of fixtures

In hindsight, it was a sensible move from bookmakers to offer similar prices for Nottingham Forest to finish in the top six or to get relegated back to the Championship before the season started.

Initially, the former looked more feasible; they were only one point away from completing that in 2024/25. In reality, right now, Forest are flirting with the possibility of the latter, with just a five-point cushion between themselves and West Ham in 18th.

But that tells you little, especially when you consider that Chris Wood - scorer of 20 Premier League goals in 2024/25 - has been absent since October due to a knee injury.

It is the managerial situation that has often been headline news, though.

Nuno Espírito Santo was given a new three-year contract in June for his role in a quite incredible season for Forest, yet only three games into the new Premier League season, he was sacked. In the weeks leading up to the decision, he said his relationship with co-owner Evangelos Marinakis was *"not the same"* and *"not so good as it was."*

The next day, 9 September, Ange Postecoglou was appointed as his replacement. The Australian's stock was reasonably high after he guided Tottenham to Europa League glory and he was handed a two-year contract for a swift return to management.

"We now must take the right step to compete with the very best and challenge for trophies. Ange has the credentials and the track record to do this," said Marinakis in a statement posted on the club's official website.

Within six weeks - 39 days, to be exact - he, too, was gone. Postecoglou took charge of eight games, of which Forest drew two and lost six. His ill-fated spell at the City Ground represents the second-shortest Premier League reign in history and the shortest reign in Forest's history.

Then came former Forest youth player Sean Dyche, who has been in charge for just over three months now. Five of Forest's six league wins have come under him, as well as all their victories in the Europa League.

That competition is where they have been able to forget their troubles at home; they are even priced at 9/1 to bring home the trophy.

But, as [Sarah Clapson says in *Hot off the Press*](#), surviving in the Premier League has to be the priority, and right now, they are among the favourites to be relegated. Taking four points from the last two, against West Ham and Arsenal, should provide some inspiration and belief that they are capable of more than their league position suggests.

With that in mind, the upcoming run of games, against Brentford, Crystal Palace, Leeds and Wolves, will likely be key to how their season ultimately concludes - and whether they will secure a fifth-straight Premier League season.

In the Dugout

Sean Dyche

After a 17-year playing career ended at Northampton in 2007, Sean Dyche immediately stepped into the world of coaching by working as Under-18s coach at former club Watford, who he had played for between 2002 and 2005.

Two years later, Malky Mackay - who, incidentally, joined the Hornets as a player the summer Dyche left - was appointed manager, with Dyche promoted to become his assistant.

Over the next two seasons, the pair guided Watford to 16th and 14th-place finishes in the Championship and, in the summer of 2011, Mackay left to take over at Cardiff, which led to Dyche stepping up to take on the role on a permanent basis in his place.

He led the club to 11th in 2011/12 - their highest finish in four seasons - but the Pozzo family took over and, in a statement, said they “*recognised Sean’s impeccable conduct, representing the Hornets with honour and dignity at all times,*” before they quickly ousted him in favour of Gianfranco Zola.

Dyche was only out of work for a matter of months, though. Eddie Howe left Burnley to return to Bournemouth in October 2012, and he was installed as Howe’s successor on a two-and-a-half-year contract.

However, he ended up remaining at Turf Moor for seven years more than his initial contract length, guiding the Clarets to promotion to the Premier League as runners-up in 2013/14 and as Championship winners in 2015/16. His side finished seventh in the top flight in 2017/18, which saw them qualify for European football for the first time in over half a century.

In April 2022, with the threat of relegation increasing, Dyche was dismissed by Burnley - who dropped into the Championship after a defeat to Newcastle United on the final day - and, in January 2023, he was appointed manager of Everton on a two-and-a-half-year contract.

He managed 84 games for the Toffees, before being sacked on 9 January 2025 and, after just over nine months out of work, on 21 October, replaced Ange Postecoglou at Nottingham Forest. His contract at the City Ground runs until the summer of 2027.



Three quarters of retailers at South Western Railway stations are now independent businesses

Independent businesses now make up three quarters of retailers at South Western Railway (SWR) stations, as the number of these small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) grows across the network. While many stations still boast recognisable brands, such as a recently opened branch of Pret a Manger at Richmond station, independent retailers have seen the highest growth over the past five years.



There are 60 additional active businesses since the end of the pandemic, as SWR has sought to relet premises as customer numbers have recovered, for commercial or community use. Many of these retailers are coffee shops, bakeries and other eateries, providing a convenient range of food and drink options for customers on the go. Of the 243 active retailers at SWR stations, 179 are independent SMEs, supporting hundreds of local jobs in London and the South of England, and generating tens of millions of pounds of revenue.

Lauryn Turner, whose new coffee shop, The Bean Stop, opened at Hook station in Hampshire on Saturday 10 January, said that she *“wanted to create a place that feels like more than just a coffee stop – somewhere people can enjoy great products and great service. Hook station felt like the perfect location to make that happen.”*

The latest additions to the SWR network also include:

- Alfie's Burgers & Brownies at Tolworth station in Greater London has quickly become a local favourite. It features hearty comfort food, served from early morning to late evening.
- Salisbury station now boasts a Gourmet Coffee Bar, offering speciality coffees, artisan sandwiches, and seasonal salads from morning until late evening every day.
- Café Destino, with its range of hot and cold drinks, pastries and snacks is now open inside Winchester station.
- Sereen's is a new coffee outlet open seven days a week for artisan coffees, teas, and pastries at Isleworth station in South West London.

Mobile coffee operators have opened at New Milton and Southampton Central stations in Hampshire and Christchurch in Dorset, while Fleet station in Hampshire is now home to a mobile florist every Wednesday and Thursday.

As of the start of 2026, there are 13 further retail units available, from Wimbledon to the Isle of Wight, with more opportunities for independent businesses on the SWR network. The expansion of independent retailers ensures that stations are not only transport hubs, but also thriving commercial and community spaces, often sitting at or near the centre of local areas.

Peter Williams, Customer and Commercial Director at South Western Railway said: *“The encouraging growth of independent small and medium-sized enterprises across the network provides our customers with an even wider range of food, drink and other products to choose from. “These businesses also add local character and charm to our stations, while offering a familiar smile and a great service.”*

Ian Chalmers, Principal Surveyor at Amey PCI, acting for South Western Railway, added: *“We're delighted to have supported these fantastic businesses in joining the South Western Railway network. Each new opening adds real value for passengers and local communities, creating vibrant spaces that make stations more than just a place to travel through. With even more openings planned this winter, and in the spring, it's an exciting time to be part of this transformation.”*

These figures do not include some larger stations served by SWR but co-managed with Network Rail, such as London Waterloo and Clapham Junction. Research by WPI Economics suggests that, across Britain, railway customers contribute £9 billion to independent businesses every year, and over £23 billion to high streets.

South Western
 **Railway**

Expert teams to scrutinise public service inefficiencies and waste

Wasteful duplication in government will be rooted out under a new programme of sweeping reviews into how services are funded. Reviews, drawing in expertise from across the public and private sector, will be launched into four key areas – bringing healthcare out of hospitals, homelessness, the provision of youth services and the management and maintenance of public sector assets.

The reviews will also draw in expertise from across the public and private sector. Out-of-classroom youth provision, which clocks in at a bill of over £1 billion a year, for the government – will be reviewed to make a fragmented system spread across multiple departments and local government for each young person more efficient and effective.

Chief Secretary to the Treasury James Murray said: *“These reviews will scrutinise government programmes to ensure they improve people’s lives while rooting out wasteful spend from the public sector. We have a duty to taxpayers to make sure every pound of their money works as hard in government as the people who earn it.”*

Similarly, work will investigate how departments take a more preventive approach to tackling homelessness – with over three quarters of government expenditure on homelessness going to temporary accommodation. People sleeping rough can go on to use public services more than the average individual, at a cost of around £14,000 per person. Building on the cross-government work already ongoing, the review will identify how these public services such as the NHS can work better together to cut inefficient spending.

As healthcare has become increasingly centred around hospitals, community, primary care, mental health, social care and local services have been left working in silos – driving inefficiency and making the system harder for patients to navigate. The healthcare review will highlight these challenges and establish better how the government can deliver the shift of healthcare back to communities in a sustainable way across the NHS.

The last Spending Review increased long-term investment in public sector assets – delivering at least £10 billion a year for health, education and justice infrastructure by 2034-35 and £24 billion between 2026-27 and 2029-30 to maintain and improve motorways and local roads.

The maintenance review will build on these long-term settlements, ensuring that departments and Ministers have the information they need to make effective investment decisions at future Spending Reviews. This is a new way of working between departments and the Treasury. Previously, departments have worked on their own to find the best solutions and spending plans to issues they face, with this new approach breaking down government silos and joining up work to find the best cost-effect solutions for the public.

The Chief Secretary to the Treasury will lead the reviews, working with relevant Secretaries of State and Ministers as they identify wasteful spending in their departments and make recommendations to improve value for money in these areas. These recommendations will inform the next Spending Review, which will take place in 2027.

The Government has already made demonstrable progress in saving the taxpayer money. At last year’s Spending Review, plans were published that will deliver nearly £14 billion of technical efficiencies by 2028-29 for the taxpayer. At last year’s Budget, the government then announced a further £2.8 billion of efficiencies and savings in 2028-29, which will rise to £4.9 billion in 2030-31.



HM Treasury

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