

Twickenham & Richmond **Tribune**



Blossom, St Mary's Church, Twickenham
Photo by Berkley Driscoll

6th March 2026

T&RT

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TickerTape - News in Brief

Richmon Police introduce Live Facial Recognition Technology

From Richmond Police

On Thursday 5th March 2026 we are deploying Live Facial Recognition Technology to crime hotspots in Richmond borough. The people we are seeking to locate at crime hotspots are set out in our policy, please read more [HERE](#).

Become a London Heartstarter in Kew

From Rotary Club of Kew Gardens

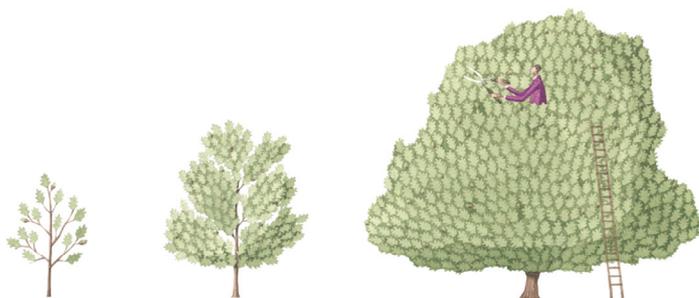
The London Heart Starters campaign is bringing more life-saving defibrillators to the city, in the areas where they are needed most. Join Rotary Club of Kew Gardens and London Ambulance Service on 9 April to learn how to save a life.

Despite the progress they have made, research by the Rotary Club of Kew Gardens found that 19 (of 35) defibrillators in Kew are not registered with The Circuit register for emergency services. It's also been established that the vast majority of defibrillators are not available 24/7, as they are located within premises with limited opening hours.

Together, we can change this. In a huge boon for the local area, Kew Community Trust has recently installed a new, publicly available, defibrillator on the wall of St Luke's Church.

On 9 April, the London Ambulance Service will teach you how to do CPR and use a defibrillator to help someone. Training will be provided in short, 15-minute bursts, where you will have the opportunity to learn, practice, and ask questions.

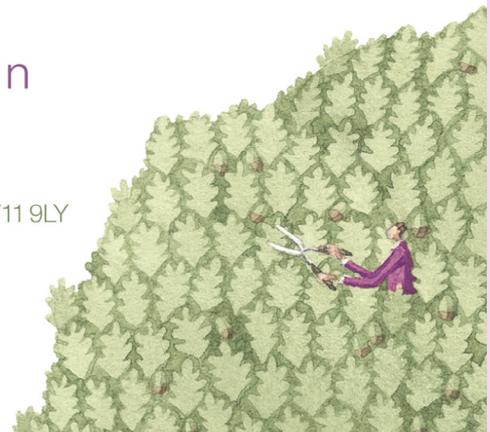
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The Tree Agency

The Local Picture Postcard Page - Part 316

Cole Park Or Cole Park Road?

By Alan Winter

It has been understood by collectors of old postcards for a long while that you can't always trust the titles printed on the front of the cards as they don't always match up with the photos themselves.

A classic example this week shows two postcards published by Young and Co. of Teddington in or just before 1910. The photographs were taken within minutes of each other on the same day showing one tram closer to the photographer than the other. The photographers reference numbers of TL11 and TL12 help to confirm that.

As a collector of old Twickenham Postcards, I was even more puzzled as I failed to find a Cole Park on the maps of that time but could find a residential road called Cole Park Road running parallel to London Road. Yet another puzzle as this Cole Park Road was purely residential and not wide enough to have tram lines laid for the trams of the time.

It was solved at the end when I was told that the area the trams are on was known as Cole Park in those days but in reality it was and still is called London Road. The postcards should have been titled London Road 116 years ago! (Thanks Howard Webb).



Postcard 3 this week is the only one I have of Cole Park Road which is still titled as Cole Park but is obviously a residential road too narrow for trams or buses. This card was posted in 1907.

I'll try to find something a little less complicated to write about next week!

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Meet The Artist

By Doug Goodman

Janice Gazetas, a Twickenham resident for over 40 years, has produced a beautiful range of cards featuring flowers and flower-decked local pubs.

Her cards are available from The Print Shop at 37 London Road in central Twickenham. Janice taught at Lady Eleanor Holles School before retiring and becoming a watercolour artist. She is a Fellow of the Society of Botanical Artists and has received many awards for her work. Janice's love of nature developed from time spent as a child exploring the countryside in Lincolnshire. She studied zoology and botany at university and took up painting in 2013.



Visit www.janicegazetas.art.

Riverside Project Faces Scrutiny as Audit Reveals Oversight Gaps

By James Knight

Richmond's Audit Committee examined governance across the council and the £67 million Twickenham Riverside project, where auditors found gaps in contractor oversight as the authority prepares to sign the main construction contract weeks before local elections

Richmond Council's Audit, Standards and Statutory Accounts Committee met in February to examine three matters that, though technical in appearance, go directly to the quality of governance in the borough: the council's internal audit programme, plans for councillor induction after the 2026 elections, and the findings of an internal audit into the Twickenham Riverside regeneration project.

The meeting was chaired by Green councillor Richard Bennett. Audit committees rarely cause political drama. Their role is quieter but equally important: to check whether the oversight systems that support public decision-making are functioning properly. However, behind the procedural language of audit reports lie questions that matter for public confidence, especially when large and controversial projects are involved.



Internal Audit: Quiet Corrections Rather Than Crisis

The committee initially examined progress against the council's internal audit plan. Officers reported that most completed audits had received what auditors call "reasonable assurance". In the language of public audit, this indicates that systems of governance and financial control are generally functioning as intended, although improvements are advised.

Throughout the programme, auditors identified a number of medium-priority recommendations to strengthen procurement controls, contract monitoring, and reporting practices. They found weaknesses in areas including procurement oversight, contract management, IT governance, and the monitoring of externally funded programmes such as public health grants. One review also uncovered gaps in the council's management of its vehicle fleet, including the absence of a single corporate policy governing vehicle use and unclear procedures for recording when staff take vehicles home. In several cases, officers were advised to strengthen documentation, ensure that supplier performance and contractual obligations are properly recorded, and improve the consistency of financial controls.

Preparing the Next Council

Members also considered the council's proposed induction programme for councillors following the next elections. The programme reflects the increasingly technical nature of modern local government. Newly elected councillors will receive training across a broad range of areas, including governance, safeguarding, planning law, financial oversight and standards in public life.

Alongside these core responsibilities, the programme also includes sessions on equality, diversity and inclusion, as well as broader guidance on conduct and culture within the council. Such training has become common across local government, reflecting broader shifts in public-sector practice over the past decade.

Supporters argue that these sessions help ensure councillors understand the social responsibilities that come with public office. Critics, however, often point out that the focus on certain themes can mirror the priorities and worldview of the current administration. In Richmond's case, the emphasis on equality and inclusion training aligns well with the political outlook of the Liberal Democrat administration that has governed the borough recently.

Yet behind politics lies a more practical reality. Councillors today operate within a complex web of legal duties and regulatory frameworks. Training programmes therefore play an essential role, ensuring that those elected to represent residents understand both the authority they possess and the responsibilities that come with it.

Twickenham Riverside: Reassuring Verdict, Uneasy Details

The most significant item before the committee was the internal audit review of the Twickenham Riverside regeneration project, a £67 million scheme designed to transform Twickenham waterfront after many years of delay and redesign. At first glance, the audit's conclusion seems reassuring. Auditors issued an overall judgement of "reasonable assurance," indicating that governance structures and financial monitoring arrangements are generally in place. The project is overseen by both a Project Board and a Sponsor Board, supported by regular reporting and risk registers. However, the detail of the audit reveals a more nuanced picture. While the oversight framework exists, the discipline needed to maintain it has not always been consistently applied.

Auditors found that reports presented to governance boards did not always include comprehensive details on project spending or risks, despite those bodies being responsible for oversight. In several cases, meetings with key consultants and contractors were not formally minuted, leading to an incomplete record of discussions and agreed actions. During the discussion, committee chair Cllr Richard Bennett noted that in several of his previous professional roles he would have been dismissed if meetings with contractors had taken place without formal minutes being recorded. In a project of this scale, the lack of proper documentation is more than a clerical oversight. It undermines the audit trail that allows decisions and responsibilities to be traced over time.

The audit also pointed out weaknesses in managing contract variations. Some changes were submitted informally via email rather than through the formal documentation usually required in major construction contracts. Officers assured the committee that procedures have since been strengthened. Most notably, the auditors observed that although the project's business case lists several expected benefits, there is no clear framework yet to track whether these benefits will actually be realised once the scheme is finished. Public projects are often justified by the promise of long-term gains. Without systematic monitoring, those promises risk becoming little more than aspirations recorded in committee papers.

During the meeting, councillors examined some of these issues. Councillor James Chard, whose ward includes the development site and who has previously been a prominent supporter of the scheme, asked officers to clarify who was responsible for ensuring that the audit recommendations would be implemented. In large projects, responsibility can easily become dispersed across boards,

consultants, and contractors unless it is clearly established. Officers informed the committee that all recommendations had been accepted and that improvements to reporting and governance arrangements were already in progress.

Contract Timing Raises Further Questions

One additional detail emerged during the discussion. Officers indicated that the main construction contract for the project is expected to be signed shortly after Easter. This timing places the decision just weeks before Richmond's local elections on 7 May. The formal pre-election period begins on 30 March with the publication of the Notice of Election.

While councils are not prohibited from making decisions during this period, Cabinet Office guidance advises caution when actions could bind an incoming administration or seem to pre-empt matters voters are about to decide.

Signing a major construction contract for a project that has long divided opinion so close to polling day is therefore highly unusual, particularly for a project that has been the subject of prolonged local debate and remains contentious. Supporters of the scheme argue that delaying the contract could cause uncertainty or additional costs. However, when governance arrangements have already required tightening, the case for proceeding with particular caution becomes stronger rather than weaker.

Oversight as Construction Approaches

The political makeup of the committee provides its own context. It consists of councillors from the Liberal Democrat and Green parties, which have run on a joint electoral ticket across several elections and collectively form the council's governing administration and opposition. The discussion during the meeting reflected this arrangement. Debate centred on governance and process rather than the broader political arguments surrounding the Riverside project itself.

The issue of contractor supervision is more than just a procedural matter. Public inquiries into major construction failures have consistently highlighted the need for strong client-side oversight. The inquiry led by Professor Andrew Cole into the DG One leisure centre in Dumfries concluded that councils relying on design-and-build procurement must maintain strict independent supervision of contractors and ensure that decisions, instructions, and design alterations are properly documented at every stage of construction. Compared to that standard, Richmond's arrangements seem comparatively light.

While the Riverside project depends on external consultants and a weekly inspection by a clerk of works, the audit revealed gaps in documentation and contractor reporting. These weaknesses may be administrative rather than structural, but they underline the importance of ensuring that independent scrutiny of construction activities is more than just an occasional formality.

The scheme has now entered its delivery phase after many years of planning and revision. At this stage, its success will depend less on architectural ambition and more on the quieter disciplines of project management: clear reporting, rigorous contract oversight, and transparent governance. The audit suggests that the necessary framework is in place.

The question now is whether it will be applied with sufficient discipline as construction begins. In large public projects it is rarely the absence of rules that causes difficulty. More often, it is the gradual erosion of attention to them.

One reason the coming weeks will matter particularly is that the council appears set to move from planning into construction just as the borough enters the final stretch before a local election. Decisions taken in that period will inevitably attract closer scrutiny than usual.

Images © Twickenham & Richmond Tribune



Save The Rifleman Revue

The Exchange Twickenham, 3rd March 2026

Photos by Berkley Driscoll





Richmond Council rejects the big affordable homes Petition

By John Edmonds

Until recently it seemed that the Richmond Council meeting due to be held on 3 March would be an exciting affair. Twickenham Labour Party was intending to present a large petition calling on the LibDem controlled Council to provide more affordable homes in the Borough. The Council's appalling record is one of the very worst in London, and the Council is on the defensive. At long last, it looked as if the sedate Council Chamber would host a real-life political debate.

But disappointment followed. The Council received the petition on 16 February and well over 2,000 had signed. A week later the Council announced its extraordinary decision. The petition was rejected. Why? Because the Council wanted at least a thousand of the signatures to be accompanied by a full postal address and only 745 had addresses attached.

Those of us collecting the signatures were indignant. We explained in a letter to the Leader of the Council that the absence of addresses was no oversight. We had avoided keeping lists of addresses to protect privacy and to minimise the chance of data misuse. Instead we had used a better method for identification. Every signatory had given their name and postcode. With a little research, every person signing the petition could be validated.

We told the Council that this demand for postal addresses was unnecessary and gave the impression that the Council was unwilling to listen to local people. But the Council would not relent. So our petition, representing the views of over 2,000 residents, was kept off the Agenda of the Council meeting.

The restriction was unreasonable and we could not allow Richmond Councillors to escape responsibility for their failure to provide more affordable homes. So we put down two important questions for the 3 March Council meeting.

We pointed out that the Council's housing policy was in a mess. Richmond Council had published one target for affordable houses to be built in the next two years but the LibDems, who control the Council, had leafleted the Borough with an entirely different, and higher, figure. So we asked: which is the real target? After a lengthy silence and some giggling in the Chamber, no clear answer was given.

We then asked the Council to organise a proper consultation with local people to establish the level of support for more affordable homes. After a long introduction, the Council representative eventually stated that the Council had a plan to convene a 'Housing Summit' in which local people would be involved. This was a great surprise to all those in the public gallery and, looking around the Chamber, it also seemed to come as a surprise to the rest of the Council. Nevertheless we are glad that our proposal for consultation has gained support and we trust that arrangements for the 'Summit' will be made very soon.

Meanwhile we will collect more names for the petition, and – as a gesture of goodwill - they will all have addresses included. At the time of writing we need only another 170 signatures to meet all the Council's requirements. The petition will then have to be discussed and the views of local residents will be heard, loud and clear, in the Chamber.

Our next Street Stall, with petition forms ready for signing, will be held on 10 March in Whitton beginning at 10am. Everyone who believes in building more affordable homes should come along and sign.



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Upon your Heart

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Directed by
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Historic Richmond May Fair Returns to Richmond Green on Saturday 9th May 10am - 5pm

From Richmond May Fair

The much-loved Richmond May Fair will return to Richmond Green on Saturday 9 May 2026, promising a vibrant day of community celebration, entertainment and family fun in one of London's most picturesque settings.

Oscars will be the Fair's Gold Sponsor with Be Richmond, the Business Improvement District for the town, sponsoring the free entertainment programme, St Catherine's School the Silver Sponsor and Ian Stroud of Pet People the Dog Show.



Stallholder applications opened on 1 January 2026, with strong early interest from both returning favourites and new exhibitors. Visitors can look forward to an expanded selection of artisan and charity stalls, a wide range of delicious food and drink, a traditional funfair, and the ever-popular Dog Show.

As always, the Fair will feature a varied programme of free live entertainment, with several exciting

new attractions announced for 2026. By popular demand, the world-famous Hammersmith Morris Men will perform throughout the day around the Green, bringing traditional music and dance to the heart of the Fair.

The Richmond May Fair has a history spanning more than 50 years, originating around St Mary Magdalene Church, where the church bells have traditionally rung to open the Fair each year. In 2026, the church will be supporting its fundraising campaign to replace the bells by bringing a mobile belfry to the Green. Visitors will have the rare opportunity to try their hand at bell ringing themselves.

The Richmond May Fair Committee encourages residents and visitors to follow the Fair's channels for the latest updates on charities, stallholders, entertainment and activities as plans for 2026 continue to unfold.

Pamela Fleming Chair of the May Fair Committee said:- *"We are excited to welcome you on May 9th to the best May Fair yet with plenty for everyone to enjoy. Great shopping, free entertainment all day, talking to our wonderful charities and meeting friends old and new. Huge thanks to our generous sponsors and fantastic volunteers, we couldn't put on the Fair without your support."*

www.richmondmayfair.co.uk



Saturday 9th May 2026 • 10am - 5pm

Make the most of your community with the Your Community Centre Guide

From Your Community Centres

Did you know that there is a network of vibrant community centres in Richmond Upon Thames? The ten centres are the heart of local communities, operated by energetic local charities and social enterprises and play a vital role in enhancing connectivity for all.

The [Your Community Centre Guide](#) is a comprehensive resource available both in print and online.

Within the guide you can explore your local centres, whether you're looking to learn new skills, join a group, be active, volunteer or hosting an event. You will be able to find out about your local community centres, how to make contact and the diverse array of activities and services on offer.

Spread the word with your friends, family and neighbours, encourage everyone to make the most of the community centres nestled in Richmond, Barnes, Teddington, East Twickenham, Hampton Hill, Kew, Hampton, Mortlake and Whitton.

Find out more about [local community centres in Richmond Upon Thames](#).

If you would like a copy, please drop in to the Visit Richmond kiosk at Richmond Station.



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Crane Park Island Nature Reserve

From Friends of the River Crane Environment

FORCE have been made aware that the lease under which London Wildlife Trust manage Crane Park Island as well as the tower, tool store and new café have been under review. We approached the council and they have put out a statement as below. FORCE will continue to engage with the council and the volunteers on the island to try and ensure that the facilities are maintained and ideally improved through this process.



“Crane Park Island Nature Reserve is a much-loved local green space, valued for its wildlife, natural beauty, and opportunities for the community to enjoy the outdoors. Richmond Council and the London Wildlife Trust are working together to put in place new arrangements for the ongoing management of this important site, following the end of the current lease.

Under the proposed arrangements, London Wildlife Trust will continue to manage Crane Park Island Nature Reserve, ensuring the protection and enhancement of its wildlife and habitats for the benefit of local residents and visitors.

As part of discussions to renew the lease, London Wildlife Trust has requested that the Shot Tower and the surrounding land are excluded from the new agreement. The Council will take on direct responsibility for these

areas and is putting arrangements in place to maintain public access to the toilets within the Shot Tower.

While London Wildlife Trust will no longer hold a lease for the Tool Shed, it will continue to use the building to store equipment for its volunteers, supporting ongoing conservation work on the island.

London Wildlife Trust’s change in lease arrangements also means it can no longer maintain its agreement with the much-loved Thirst Off All mobile café, which has become a favourite spot for visitors. The Council is now working directly with the café operator to establish a new agreement, aiming to ensure the café can continue serving park users.

These updates are designed to minimise disruption for visitors, volunteers, and partner organisations, while allowing the Council to consider longer-term options for the Shot Tower, Tool Shed, and surrounding land. The focus remains on supporting public access, community use, and the site’s vital nature conservation value. The council will engage stakeholders about longer-term options in the future, once current arrangements have had time to bed in”.

Image courtesy FORCE

Teddington RNLi Celebrates International Women's Day

From Teddington RNLi

Teddington RNLi celebrates its twenty women volunteers on International Women's Day. This means that women now account for a third of all members of the lifeboat station.

Roles undertaken are the same for all volunteers, whether men or women; operational crew, water safety experts, fundraisers and management disciplines.

The International Women's Day theme in 2026 is Give to Gain, encouraging a mindset of generosity and collaboration. Organisers say, 'Whether through donations, knowledge, resources, infrastructure, visibility, advocacy, education, training, mentoring, or time, contributing to women's advancement helps create a more supportive and interconnected world. Give to Gain emphasises the power of reciprocity and support. When women thrive, we all rise.'



Miranda Jagers, head of water safety and long-term member of the Teddington volunteer crew says, 'Teddington RNLi lifeboat station is a demonstration of how collaboration, shared knowledge and great support come together to create a true team spirit among all volunteers. Celebrating International Women's Day means celebrating the women of our lifeboat station and all of the volunteers who help save lives on our waterways and seas.'

On Saturday 28 February, five women from Teddington RNLi joined more than 60 women representing 25 South East stations of the Royal National Lifeboat Institution (RNLi) came together in Shoreham by Sea, West Sussex, for the inaugural RNLi Women in Search and Rescue (SAR) event.



Lifeboats

Sheen House and the Barnes Home Guard Club

From EastSheenMatters

Thursday 19 March 2026 8pm at All Saints Church

Richard White is giving a talk on Sheen House and the Barnes Home Guard Club to the Barnes and Mortlake History Society at All Saints Church East Sheen at 8.00pm. £5 for non-members.

The first Sheen House was built in 1617. It was said to have been rebuilt in 1786 but some doubt this date. It housed many eminent local residents during the 19th century, including French Royalty, bankers, politicians and philanthropists. From about 1830 to 1833 it was the home of the Prime Minister Earl Grey at the time of the Great Reform Bill, Poor Law and Abolition of Slavery.

Hear more about the Bicycle Polo Club and Sheen House Ltd.

The House was demolished in 1907 to be replaced by existing homes in Sheen Lane and the grounds extended to build Richmond Park Road, Muirdown Avenue and Shrewsbury Avenue. The coach houses still exist in the last mentioned road though substantially modified. They survived a demolition battle in 2002.

The Barnes Home Guard Club at 76a Richmond Park Road was founded in 1944 as a social club within the grounds of the former Sheen House for members of 'B' Company of the 27th County of London Battalion Home Guard. Its headquarters were then in the Larches in Sheen Lane. Today it is a thriving social club with some 800 members and provides a regular programme of entertainment open to members and non-members.



Next week at Richmond Council

On Tuesday, 10th March, the **Licensing Sub-Committee** will meet to discuss the opposed alcohol licence application for Jay's Food and Wine, 117 Nelson Road, Whitton (located in Whitton town centre). The meeting will commence at 2 pm and will be held virtually. Please click [HERE](#) for more details.

On Thursday, 12th March, the **Health and Wellbeing Board** will meet to discuss 1) Richmond Annual Director of Public Health Report, Healthy Schools Richmond It Takes A Village, 2) Joint Local Health & Wellbeing Strategy: Live Well Update, 3) South West London Mental Health Strategy Update, 4) Frailty. The meeting will commence at 1.30 pm at York House, Twickenham. Please click [HERE](#) for more details.

On Friday, 13th March, the **Licensing Sub-Committee** will meet to discuss the opposed alcohol licence application for Mirror Cafe, 4 Church Walk. The meeting will commence at 11 am and will be held virtually. Please click [HERE](#) for more details.

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

An unforgettable evening with rugby legend Mike Brown

From Momentum Children's Charity

England and Harlequins rugby legend, Mike Brown is teaming up with Momentum Children's Charity for an exclusive event on Friday 11 September.



Set against the scenic backdrop of The Richmond Golf Club, guests will enjoy a live interview with Mike Brown, two course dinner and drinks.

Throughout his illustrious career, Mike Brown clinched three Six Nations Championship titles with England and two Premiership titles with Harlequins. Attendees can look forward to hearing some truly unforgettable

stories from his time as a professional rugby player.

In addition to the interview with Mike Brown, there will be an exciting live auction, offering guests the chance to win some truly unforgettable prizes.

Talking about the event, former professional rugby player Mike Brown said: *"I have some unforgettable stories to share and memories from my career in professional rugby and I'm looking forward to what will be a brilliant evening. At a time when families are facing the unimaginable, Momentum provides practical help and compassionate emotional care, and I couldn't be prouder to stand behind the work they do."*

Sarah Woods, CEO at Momentum Children's Charity said: *"We are thrilled that Mike Brown is supporting Momentum. Rugby fans won't want to miss this event, where Mike offers an exclusive behind-the-scenes look into the world of rugby, with plenty of laughs along the way. This special evening, held during Childhood Cancer Awareness Month, will raise essential funds to help us continue providing vital support to families of seriously ill children when they need it most."*

Don't miss this exclusive one-off event. Tickets start from £125 per person, with discounted rates available for tables of 10. [Book now](#)

To find out more about the work of Momentum Children's Charity, please visit www.momentumcharity.org



Shepherd's Star's weekly drop-in support hub returns to Twickenham

From Shepherd's Star

The All-in-One Hub is reopening this March, offering free weekly drop-in support for local residents seeking practical advice, wellbeing support and connection.

Running every Friday from 11am to 1pm at Twickenham United Reformed Church, the Hub brings trusted local services together under one roof, making support easier to access in a welcoming, community-led setting.

Residents will be able to access support from:

- Citizens Advice Richmond - advice for local residents
- Jobcentre Plus - employment and benefits support
- RWCDAS - drug and alcohol support
- SPEAR - Homeless Health Link Service
- SEN Unity - wellbeing activities



The Hub is part of local charity, Shepherd's Star's weekly Good Friday community space, with community fridge, complimentary refreshments and a light lunch available. No appointment is needed, residents can simply drop in.

Richmond Cargo Collective event

From Cargo Collective

Think of it as a speed dating event between families who are thinking about buying a cargo bike and local families who have already taken the plunge.

You'll be able to test ride some different bikes and chat about how they are working out for families. Find out first hand the answers to common questions you might be thinking.

To join, simply come along with your kids for an after school chat, free cake and cargo bikes.

Event details:

Date: Friday 20 March

Time: Between 3.30 and 5.30pm

Location: Carlisle Park, Hampton



You can [find out more information about the event](#).

If you have any questions, email hello@joinourcargocollective.org.

This event is brought to you by your Richmond Cargo Collective and supported by Richmond Council and Solve the School Run.

Holy Trinity, Twickenham

Gardening Morning - This Saturday

Come and be part of the Holy Trinity gardening gang this term, as we continue to work on our exciting new planting scheme and preparing the grounds for the Spring. Gardening mornings run from 10.30am-12.30pm (please bring along gloves and tools if you have them) and will be taking place on the following dates:

- Saturday 7th March
- Saturday 18th April
- Saturday 9 May

Youth Group - This Sunday

Our next youth group session takes place this Sunday, 4.30-6pm. All those in Yrs 7-13 are very welcome to come along for friendly chat, games and food.

Foodbank Focus: March

Please do donate at the boxes outside the Vicarage if you are able.

[A list of items currently being requested by the local foodbank can be found by clicking here.](#)

Donations can be deposited in the foodbank tubs outside the vicarage, 7:00am to 8:00pm.

JAZZ MUSIC

AT

 HOLY TRINITY TWICKENHAM

THE GREEN CAFE

THURSDAY 26th MARCH 2026

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10.30am - Midday

OPEN TO ALL

- Fantastic music
- Hot and cold drinks
- Cakes and biscuits
- Friendly chat

Donations welcome



The Green Pop Up Café

The Café is open on Thursdays from 10.30am-12 noon. Come along for refreshments and a chat. Everyone welcome, please encourage anyone you know who would enjoy meeting up with others to come along on Thursdays too.

THE GREEN POP UP CAFE

THURSDAYS

10.30-12.00

The Green Room
Holy Trinity Twickenham
Twickenham Green
TW2 5TS

A community space where everyone is welcome to pop in for refreshments, friendly chat and activities

 HOLY TRINITY TWICKENHAM

Mother's Day Gift Ideas

Mothering Sunday falls on 15 March this year and the shops are already full of cards and gift ideas. Here are a few more from my recent research.

How about some really special tea? The very essence in my opinion of a good gift is to treat the person to something they'd like, but wouldn't justify buying for themselves. **TWG Tea's** collection - the largest in the world - numbers well over 1000 different single-estate, fine harvests and exclusive tea blends from every tea producing country. TWG Tea also offers limited edition teas and seasonal blend and the quality is really rather exceptional. There are tea boutiques in Leicester Square and Oxford Street, but you can see the full range on the website [here](#)



Short of being able to send her a bottle of the wonderful smell of freshly baked bread, you could arrange a home delivery of **The Bread Queen's** wonderful Finish at Home sourdough and other goodies. It's an effortless way for her to enjoy freshly baked real sourdough - by just popping it into the oven! The bread is made and pre-baked in an artisan bakery but finished off at home. There are no additives - it's just flour, salt and water. But check out the [website](#) as there

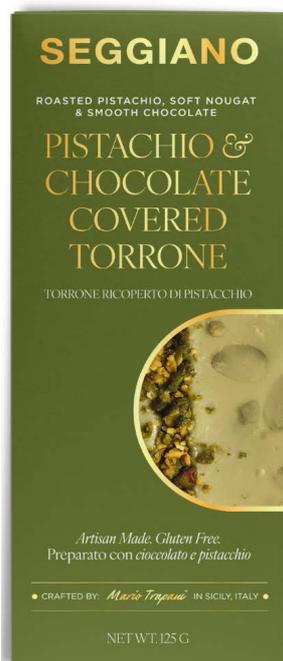
are also the most amazing biscuits and cinnamon buns. Select your products, add the recipient details and a personal message and they'll do the rest.

If she's a curry fan and you're not able to take her out for a meal, you could send her some of the sauces from [Gymkhana Fine Foods](#) - a range of restaurant-quality cooking sauces, marinades and chutneys from the two Michelin Star

restaurant, **Gymkhana**, designed to transform the Indian dining experience at home. The range has been created to offer the same flavours as in Gymkhana's restaurant. All Star Sauce Gift Box (RRP: £35.00), the Ultimate Gift Box (RRP: £60), the Gymkhana x Burleigh Signature Collection (RRP: £65.00).



Dubai chocolate is still big, and as well as lots of other goodies, Seggiano has the most deliciously indulgent treat for Mother's Day, **Seggiano's Pistachio & Chocolate Covered Torrone** is handmade in the Sicilian town of Giarratana, by a fourth-generation confectioner. This small-batch torrone brings together toasted almonds, 12% roasted pistachios, honey and whipped egg whites. Each bar is finished with a 20% coating of pistachio chocolate, resulting in a creamy, aromatic bite with just the right balance of sweetness and crunch. Buy online [here](#) at under £10 for a 125g bar.

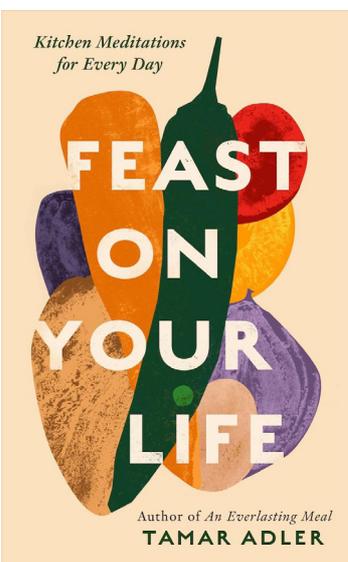


Appropriately named **Bonne Maman** has a lovely limited edition gift, the **Stacks of Love Gift Box** that is perfect for Mother's Day. The Gift Box contains six mini jars of preserves and spreads, spoons and a heart-shaped cutter. Each box includes special fruit flavours - *Pineapple & Passionfruit, Blueberry & Blackcurrant, Lemon & Yuzu, Orange & Mandarin* plus *Strawberry & Redcurrant* - alongside *Hazelnut Chocolate Spread*. Available from Waitrose at £8.50 rrp and online from bonnemaman.co.uk.



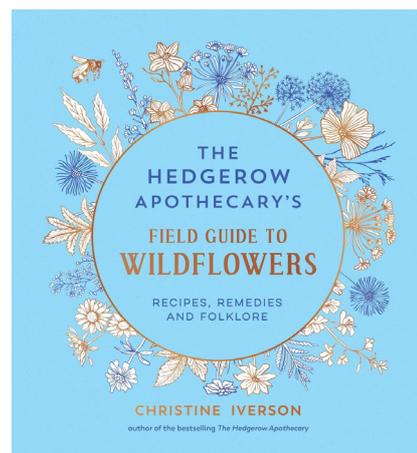
If you can't personally take her out to enjoy afternoon tea at one of the many places that are offering a Mother's Day special menu, then maybe treat to a lovely surprise hamper from **Hampers.com**. You could perhaps send her this timeless afternoon tea experience. It includes freshly baked scones with strawberry preserve and Cornish clotted cream, a keepsake tin of traditional English tea, lovely fruit cake and a host of other yummy sweet treats. A bottle of La Tenuta Sconta Prosecco adds a sparkling finishing touch to this lovely gift for £65. There are lots of other gift ideas too at hampers.com

They say that gin is 'Mother's ruin' but I beg to differ: I'm a mother and I love it! And a new discovery is **Hoxton Spirits**. As well as a dry gin, the company does a wonderful Tropical gin (with coconut and grapefruit notes) as well as a Pink gin (infused with rosehip and a whisper of hibiscus, nicer than the usual strong raspberry or strawberry flavours). Apparently flavoured spirits are now one of the fastest growing categories in the world and they can, I find, sometimes be rather 'hit and miss' but definitely not these. Around £35-40 for 70cl, 40% ABV and available from Amazon or direct from drinkhoxton.com



Any foodie mum will love this recently published book by award-winning American writer Tamar Adler: **Feast on Your Life**. Published by Swift Books, it's a literary devotional about the everyday activity of feeding ourselves and our loved ones. A former chef, this well known food writer offers 365 entries that remind us day by day of the essential pleasures that can be found in measuring rice, picking cherries, or sharing a meal with people you love. **Feast on Your Life** grew out of Adler's struggle with depression and her husband's suggestion that she document what delighted her, a mindfulness exercise that yielded immediate benefits. It will give any reader a whole year of mindful musings and is a delight. £18.99 for a lovely hardback.

The Hedgerow Apothecary's Field Guide to Wildflowers is a wonderful book by **Christine Iverson**, best-selling author of The Hedgerow Apothecary. It's a beautiful photographic spotter's guide to wild flowers, exploring their fascinating folklore and the rich history of them in our hedgerows, woodlands and meadows. Wildflowers are a crucial part of any thriving environment, and they have been part of the human story for thousands of years as medicine, food, decoration, symbolism and more. As well as letting you identify the flowers, there are recipes and other uses including tonics, ice cream and soothing balms. Published by Summersdale at £14.99 it's much nicer than a card, I think, and of course, you can inscribe it.



Whatever you decide to do, just cherish her.

GIBRALTAR

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- SUPERYACHT DELUXE ROOM AND BREAKFAST
BUFFET FOR 2
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EXPERIENCE PACKAGE



Would it be enough?

By Deep Patel

~Life through the eyes of a Twickenham shopkeeper~



It was a Friday afternoon at 3:20pm and the school across the road from my shop had just broken up for the weekend. Friday afternoons are always manic in my shop as Friday is “treat day” and hoards of excited children clamber through my shop door filling my narrow aisles with laughter, shouting and the vibrant energy that only children their age have. To be honest, it’s actually rather lovely and for fifteen minutes of madness on Friday afternoons, Meet & Deep Newsagents becomes a hub of joy, excitement and sweetie-magic and it seems like every child and their parents want to be a part of this enchanting sweetie-treaty festival each week. Everyone is just so happy...the children are happy as they hear those magic words from their parents that they waited all week to hear “choose whatever you like” pretty much! The parents also have a happy look on their faces, more because they don’t have the school run to worry about for the next two days, none the less, happiness is flowing through the aisles of Meet & Deep Newsagents more rampantly than the Thames at Teddington Lock. It’s a real joy and marvel to see, many of our friends who happen to be in the shop during that time on a Friday afternoon are always left gob-smacked when the fifteen-minute frenzy is over and the shop returns to normality. It’s a time and place to marvel and in some way experience the splendour and excitement of childhood innocence.

This past week, just before the main Friday afternoon “big rush” I noticed one young boy had somehow managed to get to my shop faster than all the other children. He must have sprinted or something. He ran straight to the chocolate shelf with a sparkle in his eyes and grin that he was finding difficult to hide. His eyes were big, wide and bright and a look of absolute joy showed on his face as he looked up and down the 6 shelves brimming with chocolate that were staring him in the face too. He then turned to me and said, “excuse me do you have anything here for 30p please?” and I felt very sad as there were no chocolate bars for that price. We mainly have chocolate bars that come with the price printed directly onto the wrappers by the manufacturers (we don’t choose the prices, they are the manufacturers prices). Despite this,

there were still no chocolate bars priced at 30p sadly. I thought to myself how do I break this news to this young boy who was probably so looking forward to a chocolate treat all week? One part of me thought that I should just give him a free chocolate bar? It wouldn't be a huge loss to me and would mean he stays happy I thought to myself. Then another part of me told me that if I did that, I may make him happy today, but I wouldn't be helping him in the long-term as I would be helping him to develop an expectation that a person could get things for free in this world, above and beyond their own means. He could lose the concept of "the value of money" in the long run? But if I didn't try to fulfil his wish of having his chocolate treat that he has been looking forward to all week, would I become responsible for breaking a child's dream? All these questions were playing on repeating over and over again in my mind as I tried to figure out what to do next.

From the corner of my eye I saw right on the end of the bottom shelf of chocolate bars a tiny lone mini chocolate bar, one meant for toddlers, just literally a couple of bites worth of chocolate in a tiny bar shape. It was 20p. I knew he was a bigger boy, and wouldn't really want that tiny toddler-sized treat, yet I wanted to offer something, so I showed him and told him that he could only really afford that tiny, mini toddler-sized treat chocolate bar. He stopped and stared at it, eyes fixated for a few seconds on my suggestion. I braced myself to next see the disappointment on his face as his wide, bright eyes that came into my shop, filled with hope and promise after a week of looking forward to a nice chocolate treat were about to lose their sparkle and drop and his smile previously filled with anticipation and excitement was about to turn into a frown from the reality of his inability to afford a bigger chocolate treat. He continued with his eyes fixed on the tiny, mini toddler-sized chocolate bar that I had suggested, marked with 20p on the label. Then he looked at me, shrugged his shoulders and said "Oh, I'll just take that then!" and gave me the biggest smile I had seen, his eyes lit up and grin suddenly turned up to full volume. He picked up the bar, paid for it and said "have a great weekend" as he left my shop. It was right then that I was reminded that sometimes it's not the amount, size or cost of something that we may want that matter as much as the feeling of having something... anything...just something that felt like something that we want, something that we like, and the feeling of getting that something could actually mean more, even more than getting the thing itself. Just the feeling, and within that feeling we could find contentment. How beautiful. It took that young boy to teach this old shopkeeper this, but it is thanks to the contentment he found that I will carry this teaching within me for the remainder of my days on this earth. For this...I thank him.

Remember...

"...It's not always how much you have that matters as much as how much it means..."

MY CREATURE-KINDNESS TIP OF THE WEEK...

Make use of high-frequency plug-in pest stopping plugs into each room, buy ones with good reviews online and follow the instructions, we stock them at Meet & Deep Newsagents here too, they work really well to keep ALL "pests" away, without harming any...good karma always!

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

Double Indemnity

by James M Cain, adaptation by Tom Holloway

Trafalgar Theatre Productions at Richmond Theatre until 7th March, then on tour until 9th May

Insurance salesmen don't immediately bring to mind the idea of suspense and high stakes, passion-fuelled murder carried out in great style, but the stage adaptation of *Double Indemnity* rises boldly to this challenge.

Ti Green's grey, industrial but indistinct set dominates. At times it seems to be a vast ventilation system, and its characters scurrying about in it the look of insects, or rats. It morphs into train stations, living rooms and offices, and together with Joshua Gadsby's stark lighting it is an appropriately film noir evocation of depression-era America where life is hard, familial relations are strained, and no allowances made.



Double Indemnity tells of Walter Huff and the irresistibly beautiful Phyllis Nirdlinger, and it is insurance salesman Huff who directly narrates the story. The two meet, fall in love, and plan to murder Phyllis' husband and claim the double indemnity payout from an insurance policy Huff has sold to him which will pay double for a train accident.

Huff, as played by Ciarán Owens is much more of a jaded salesman than anyone in the grip of uncontrollable passion. Similarly, Mischa Barton's Nirdlinger is icy cool and more intimidating corporate boss than femme fatale. They're not creating much spark, and seeing them as a couple overwhelmed by obsessive love is a bit of a stretch.

There is more to this work though. Huff is mentored at work by his immediate boss, Keyes who, in the gruff masculine way of a man of that era, probably views Huff as the son he may not have had. The pace picks up in the stand-out turn from

Martin Marquez as Keyes. With the attractive performance of Gillian Saker as the super-efficient secretary and Sophie Roberts as Nirdlinger's stepdaughter Lola, we move towards a full-on 3D performance.

There is much to recommend the idea of production though, which director Oscar Toeman imbues with a timelessness and a bit of depth. The question of what unhappy humans might do when they are under pressure is successfully clear and thought-provoking. The production looks great, with an impressive setting and strong supporting cast, but the core of the thing, the passion that should overwhelm it, is sadly missing.



Read Eleanor Lewis' review at www.markaspen.com/2026/03/06/dbl-indemnity

Photography by Manuel Harlan

Our Town

by Thornton Wilder

Welsh National Theatre at the Rose Theatre, Kingston until 28th March

It is magical when words, actors, movement, music, sound and lighting all fuse together to create theatre that completely enchants its audience. It's not simply that all the constituent parts work well, but that they combine together and reinforce each other, which makes it pleasurable impossible to locate where the magic lies.

Our Town finds something wonderful in the ordinary without making a fuss. The fragility and unpredictability of life is observed, but without preaching or sentimentality: the lad who wins a scholarship but is killed during World War One; the school sweethearts who get married but are both paralysed with fear before the wedding; the organist with 'a peck of troubles' although his reason for suicide is never disclosed.



This play makes more connections than Clapham Junction – both between individuals in this small town and between significant but barely regarded moments. Even Brecht would be impressed by the quantity of lightly worn intertextuality that illuminates rather than alienates. The set is the theatre, its stage manager the protagonist, directly addressing the audience. It could easily be mannered and self-conscious, but somehow it never is. It is less easy-going than it looks. Wilder insisted that *Our Town* "should be performed simply, dryly, and sincerely" and that is exactly what it gets here. A series of planks and a collection of chairs, inventively deployed, work our imaginations in a way that more lavish designs never would.

Michael Sheen completely inhabits the role of the Stage Manager without the need to inject extra charisma or expressiveness. Yasemin Ozdemir and Peter Devlin are a charming pair of young lovers in the other main roles, but there seems something wrong about naming anyone from this superb company, for the whole ensemble is working together, unobtrusively and harmoniously co-ordinated by director Francesca Goodridge.

Although transposed to Wales, the ambience remains small-town America, but with bit of Welsh colour added. This may be a hymn to the local, but it's simultaneously Welsh and American without jarring, showing its emphasis is on universal human experience everywhere.

I'm slightly embarrassed to be so gushing about *Our Town*, but it reminds me of the importance of appreciating the moment. As many people as possible should see this marvellous show.



Read Patrick Shorrocks' review at www.markaspen.com/2026/03/05/our-town

Photography by Helen Murray

Educating Rita

by Willy Russell

RRP at the Reading Rep Theatre until 21st March

Few modern plays capture the relationship between education, class and identity with the wit and warmth of *Educating Rita*. This vivid new production refreshes Russell's enduring two-hander with clarity and compassion, allowing its humour and humanity to shine while retaining its sharp social observations.



A working-class hairdresser enrolls in an Open University literature course and forms an unlikely partnership with her disillusioned tutor: a deceptively simple plot, yet what it encloses is much more complex – the struggle to belong, the fear of change, and the liberating potential of education. Director Annie Kershaw's production handles these themes with a thoughtful balance, never overstating the divide between Rita and Frank, but allowing the social and cultural contrasts between them to surface naturally through language, gesture and perspective.



The success of *Educating Rita*, however, always rests on the chemistry between its two performers, and here the pairing of Madelyn Smedley as Rita and Julius D'Silva as Frank proves a triumph. Smedley brings an immediate spark to the stage. Her Rita is lively, curious and refreshingly direct, delivered with impeccable comic timing and a warmth that makes her character's hunger for knowledge both charming and deeply moving.

Opposite her, D'Silva crafts a wonderfully layered Frank.

Initially weary and cynical, he presents a tutor who has lost his belief in the academic system. His dry wit lands with precision, and his interactions with Rita gradually reveal the vulnerability beneath Frank's sardonic exterior. What is most compelling about D'Silva's performance is the way Frank subtly begins to reawaken. As Rita's curiosity grows, so too does Frank's own sense of purpose, passion and possibility.



Together, Smedley and D'Silva form an engaging and dynamic partnership. Their exchanges crackle with humour, yet beneath the laughter lies a genuine emotional development that feels entirely believable.

Moreover, the play offers a quietly powerful reflection on education itself. Yet it never becomes cynical. Instead, *Educating Rita* remains life-affirming, celebrating the transformative potential of learning and the profound effect individuals can have on one another. This production captures that spirit beautifully. Witty, insightful and deeply human, and anchored by two finely judged performances and thoughtful direction, *Educating Rita* proves once again that the most meaningful education often takes place far beyond the pages of any book.

Read Sam Martin's review at www.markaspen.com/2026/03/04/ed-rita-rr

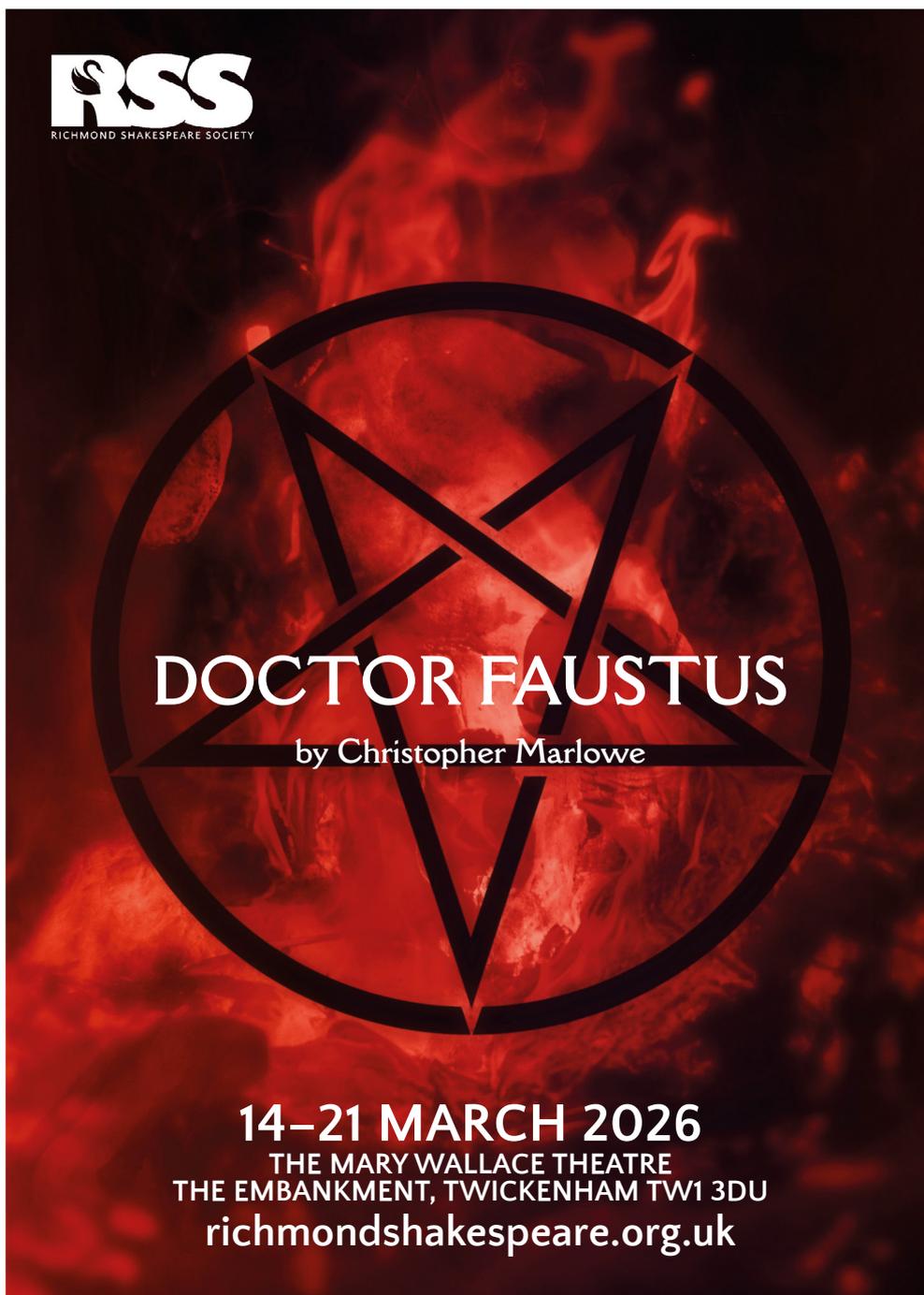
Photography by Harry Elletson

Doctor Faustus

at the Mary Wallace Theatre, March 14th-21st

From March 14th-21st the Richmond Shakespeare Society will be presenting Christopher Marlowe's dark Elizabethan masterpiece DOCTOR FAUSTUS. The Doctor, a renowned scholar and necromancer, summons a demon who offers him infinite power and knowledge, in return for which Faustus must sell his soul to Lucifer and suffer in Hell for all eternity!

One of the most powerful and spectacular dramas of the Elizabethan era, Marlowe's classic cautionary tale about making a deal with the Devil is sure to send shivers down your spine, and to pose the inescapable question - would you?



RSS
RICHMOND SHAKESPEARE SOCIETY

DOCTOR FAUSTUS
by Christopher Marlowe

14-21 MARCH 2026
THE MARY WALLACE THEATRE
THE EMBANKMENT, TWICKENHAM TW1 3DU
richmondshakespeare.org.uk

Booking now at www.richmondshakespeare.org.uk

No membership required.

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



HAMPTON CHORAL SOCIETY

In association with Arts Richmond, festival of phenomenal female composers, presents:

Grand Mass in Eflat Major Amy Beach

Saturday 21 March 2026, 7.30pm

Musical Director Emma Warren
with professional soloists & musicians

St James's Church, St James's Road,

Hampton Hill, TW12 1DQ



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

Charity Number 261788

Saving the planet, one sofa at a time...

From Richmond Furniture Scheme

Richmond Furniture Scheme are a local furniture reuse charity. We're the experts when it comes to fixing up furniture to ensure it finds a new loving home.

Our electric van whizzes around the borough collecting donated tables, sofas, lamps etc – everything you need to make your house a home. Some of the 8,000 plus items rehomed annually need a bit of TLC (tender, love and care) and our army of creative volunteers repair wonky wardrobes or tired tables to make them good as new, often better than before!

When asked about the importance of repairing items, Richmond Furniture Scheme CEO Simon Westgarth said: *“There are many great reasons for repairing and reusing stuff. These include the benefits to the environment from not using energy and generating CO2, not using precious resources and reducing the many miles from transporting items over great distances.*

“However, fixing something makes you feel good. The satisfaction in mending a wonky chair, repairing drawer runners and refurbishing a tired cabinet is huge and well worth celebrating.”

We have more than 100 dedicated volunteers working across our workshops and warehouse, repairing, cleaning, picking up and delivering furniture amongst many other tasks that help our charity run smoothly.

Our volunteers enjoy repairing and seeing the outcome of their work, one of our volunteers said: *“It's really gratifying to see a broken object fixed, made to look pretty and sold - often within the same day!”*

Another said: *“I enjoy the challenge of working with furniture that is in dire need of love.”*

A child's chair arrived in a sorry state, but was transformed with some smart upholstery and a dazzling lick of paint. It quickly found a happy buyer in a new home!



We ensure nothing goes to waste and our repairers get creative. From turning old bed slats into planters and offcuts of wood into gorgeous Christmas decorations – there’s no limit to creativity and innovation!

The impact of the work we do has a positive impact on the environment, with 126 tonnes of furniture diverted from landfill last year. As well as local residents donating furniture (which we collected for free across the borough), partnerships with [Townmead Reuse and Recycling Centre](#) and the council’s popular [Mega Skip Days](#) mean furniture destined for the tip is instead diverted to Richmond Furniture Scheme so it can be reused to be loved by another household or organisation.

We also sell refurbished appliances like washing machines and fridges which are thoroughly tested, cleaned and come with a guarantee. New bedframes and mattresses are also sold at competitive prices.

One of our customers said:

“I am very conscious about our planet and supporting the community is important. If I see furniture on the street I want someone to take it!”

Anyone can shop at the charity by visiting our [Twickenham warehouse](#) or using our [online shop](#). Discounts are available for people on low incomes.

Get inspired during Repair Week, 2 to 8 March, to do your own repairs or to learn more about repairing. We have great opportunities for training, work experience and volunteering with a friendly and welcoming team.

Our volunteers have commented about their experience working with Richmond Furniture Scheme:

“Feel that I have done something worthwhile as well as working beside nice people”

“I greatly enjoy working in a small team on the same day each week, I value some of the practical skills I’ve learned”

“Helps me maintain my woodworking skills and I’ve met some great people.”

If you’re looking to meet new people, use or refine your handy skills, [get in touch to see what opportunities we have available](#).

On selected Saturdays each month, we join the [Council’s Mega Skip Days](#) where Richmond residents can dispose of bulky items for free. Large skips are placed in different parts of the borough for a few hours at a time – this is also in partnership with [RHP](#).



St Mary's University

St Mary's University's Centre for the Art of Living and Dying Well awarded Joint Runner-Up for the Joanna Mugridge Prize

[The Centre for the Art of Living and Dying Well](#) at St Mary's University, together with the Royal Marsden, the Archdiocese of Birmingham, Lancaster University Medical School and Public Health Wales, has been awarded Joint Runner-Up for the prestigious Joanna Mugridge Prize at the [Marie Curie Research](#) into Practice Conference 2026. The award was formally announced during the opening conference session on Monday 23 February 2026.

Special recognition is also extended to the Community Advisory Group - whose members co-created this project - drawn from Birmingham's Hindu, Buddhist and Islamic communities.

and Sikh populations. Despite this diversity, these communities remain significantly underserved in end-of-life care.

Using community-based participatory research methods, the team established a Community Advisory Group and conducted focus groups with participants from Islamic, Hindu, Sikh, Judaism and Buddhism traditions, including faith leaders, community workers and faith members.

Why This Matters

All posters were reviewed by a mixed panel of experts, who were impressed by how accessible the poster was, with clear key information and a good balance of visuals. They also noted how much they valued the actionable recommendations for the future, showing how the work from your study can lead to meaningful change.

The poster was highly commended, reflecting the Centre and its collaborators' commitment to community-engaged research and to improving equity in end-of-life care for diverse faith communities.

[Maggie Doherty](#), Lead of the Centre for the Art of Living and Dying Well at St Mary's University said: *"Our greatest thanks go to the Community Advisory Group and those who participated in the focus groups - their wisdom and openness made this research what it is. We sincerely hope that the recommendations which emerged from these communities are taken up by healthcare services and faith organisations across the country, so that everyone - regardless of their background or belief - can access the compassionate end-of-life care they deserve. The research is now being extended to London in collaboration with the Royal Marsden Hospital."*

About the Joanna Mugridge Prize

The Joanna Mugridge Prize honours the memory of a dedicated Marie Curie Nurse who worked at the Marie Curie Hospice in Caterham. Awarded annually, the prize supports ongoing research education and development. As Joint Runner-Up, the Centre will receive up to £250 to support further impact activities or professional development.

Further information, visit <https://www.mariecurie.org.uk/research-and-policy/research/conference/joanna-mugridge-award>



The poster features a title, subtitle, and a list of aims and methods. It includes a QR code for the full report and a central illustration of diverse people. Key recommendations are highlighted in circular graphics. The poster also mentions the Sandwell Local Authority and the Interfaith Research Project. At the bottom, there are photos of community events and a footer with contact information and funding details.

The Award-Winning Poster

Ethnically Diverse Faith Perspectives on End-of-Life Care and Death Literacy: A Community-Based Participatory Research Project in Birmingham explored healthcare disparities affecting ethnic minority communities in Birmingham - one of Europe's most diverse cities, home to over 340,000 Muslims alongside significant Buddhist, Hindu, Jewish

International Women's Day: Meet Stable & Strong Fitness

From Stable & Strong Fitness

This International Women's Day, we're highlighting some of the local women running safe and welcoming sporting spaces, where women and girls can get active and improve their overall wellbeing. This time is Mortlake's Stable & Strong fitness studio!

[Stable & Strong](#) is a fitness studio focused on strength, pelvic floor, and community.

The studio is owned by Caragh, Katy and Lizzie who are all fitness and sport enthusiasts. They have seen first hand how life changes from teens through to peri-menopause, and the effect this can have on our bodies and minds. Caragh and Katy are both mums and understand the importance of strength, movement and pelvic health in everyday life.

Stable & Strong want to create a space where all women across every stage of life, fitness level and body shape are welcome and can feel safe, build confidence and become the strongest version of themselves physically and mentally.

Most of all they want to build a community; somewhere you can train, relax after and build relationships beyond the studio floor. Whatever your personal goal may be, they are there to support you. They believe life

should be full of balance, laughter and celebrating the process, not solely achieving perfection.

Like so many other women they have both faced pelvic floor issues and realised how difficult it was to find the right space to rebuild strength, move freely again and get back to doing the things they loved.

They have created this space because it is something they wished they had had access to over the years, and want to provide it to women at every stage of their own journeys.

Stable & Strong's IWD walk and talk

Find out more about Stable & Strong at their free International Women's Day walk and talk event this **Sunday 8 March**, open to all women. Enjoy a relaxed walk followed by coffee and cake at the studio, and a practical talk on simple pelvic floor exercise tips for every day life.

Optional donations are being taken to help raise funds for local women's charity Voices of Hope (Richmond Women's Hub). [Book tickets for the walk and talk event.](#)



Surbiton care home wins top award thanks to relatives' five-star reviews

From Royal Star & Garter

Glowing reviews from relatives whose loved ones are cared for at Royal Star & Garter in Surbiton have led to the veterans' charity winning a respected award.

The five-star feedback left on carehome.co.uk saw Royal Star & Garter named in the Top 20 Small Care Home Groups 2026.

The leading UK care home review website said the award for Royal Star & Garter demonstrated "excellence" and reassured families looking for care.

The charity provides loving, compassionate care and support to veterans and their families living with disability or dementia, from Homes in Solihull, Surbiton, High Wycombe and Worthing.

The Homes have dozens of reviews on carehome.co.uk praising and endorsing the care – including complex needs, dementia, palliative and wellbeing.

The daughter-in-law of a resident in Surbiton said in her five-star review: *"I'm impressed with the quality of care and the whole environment. Particularly, I would highlight the social activities, medical care and quality of food. The staff are uniformly pleasant and upbeat, and take a personal interest in the residents... We feel lucky to have found this residential home with its superior ethos."*

And a resident whose mum is at the same Home said: *"It was a big move for her to give up her independence and move into a care home, and it did take her some time to adjust, but now she is so happy that she made the move. The most valuable asset at Royal Star & Garter are their wonderful staff - their skills, service and interactions with residents is exemplary. The care at Royal Star & Garter far exceeded our expectations."*

A spokesperson for carehome.co.uk said: *"Awards like this don't just recognise excellence, they help reassure families searching for care that they are choosing a home they can trust. Once again, congratulations to Royal Star & Garter and its team on this outstanding accomplishment."*

Shirley Hall is Director of Care & Wellbeing at Royal Star & Garter. She said: *"We truly appreciate the trust people place in us when their loved ones come to Royal Star & Garter. It is heartening to see their many reviews praising the work we do, and the fact it comes from relatives makes it all the more special. It is testament to the incredible care delivered to our residents, and a wonderful reminder of why we do what we do."*

All Royal Star & Garter Homes have a dedicated Wellbeing Team and in-house physiotherapy rooms. The charity also provides services reaching into the community, including Lunch Clubs, Day Care and a national Telephone Friendship Service.

Royal Star & Garter in Surbiton is welcoming new residents. For more information on this, the other services it offers to the veterans community, or to work at the Home, go to www.starandgarter.org/surbiton



Top 20 Award SRB: Royal Star & Garter, Surbiton Deputy Home Manager Yasmin and Home Manager Helena, holding the Top 20 Award certificate with residents Maureen and Shirley



**Royal Star
& Garter**

Care with courage

England Team To Play Italy

England men's head coach Steve Borthwick has named his team to play Italy at Stadio Olimpico on Saturday 7 March (kick-off 4.40pm GMT, live on **ITV1**).

Maro Itoje will captain a side which features nine personnel changes from the starting XV that faced Ireland in the third round of the Guinness Men's Six Nations Championship, with Jamie George, Alex Coles, Guy Pepper, Ben Spencer, Fin Smith, Cadan Murley, Seb Atkinson, Tom Roebuck and Elliot Daly all coming into the team, while Tommy Freeman moves from the wing to centre.

No. 8 Ben Earl will win his 50th cap for England, having made his debut against Scotland in 2020.

"We're expecting a big test in Rome and it's one the players are really looking forward to," said Borthwick.

"We know the challenge Italy will bring at the Stadio Olimpico, and we've selected a team we believe will deliver the level of performance we're striving for."

On Earl's milestone, Borthwick added:

"To reach 50 caps for England speaks volumes about Ben's professionalism and the consistency of his performances. He's an important leader within this group, someone who drives standards and brings energy every day. It's a wonderful achievement and one he should be very proud of."

ITALY v ENGLAND

Saturday 7 March 2026

Stadio Olimpico

Kick-off: 4.40pm GMT

15. Elliot Daly (Saracens, 74 caps)
14. Tom Roebuck (Sale Sharks, 10 caps)
13. Tommy Freeman (Northampton Saints, 25 caps)
12. Seb Atkinson (Gloucester Rugby, 2 caps)
11. Cadan Murley (Harlequins, 4 caps)
10. Fin Smith (Northampton Saints, 14 caps)
9. Ben Spencer (Bath Rugby, 16 caps)

Replacements:

16. Luke Cowan-Dickie (Sale Sharks, 56 caps)
17. Bevan Rodd (Sale Sharks, 13 caps)
18. Trevor Davison (Northampton Saints, 6 caps)
19. Ollie Chessum (Leicester Tigers, 33 caps)

1. Ellis Genge (Bristol Bears, 78 caps) – vice-captain
2. Jamie George (Saracens, 108 caps) – vice-captain
3. Joe Heyes (Leicester Tigers, 20 caps)
4. Maro Itoje (Saracens, 100 caps) – captain
5. Alex Coles (Northampton Saints, 17 caps)
6. Guy Pepper (Bath Rugby, 10 caps)
7. Tom Curry (Sale Sharks, 68 caps)
8. Ben Earl (Saracens, 49 caps)

20. Sam Underhill (Bath Rugby, 48 caps)
21. Henry Pollock (Northampton Saints, 8 caps)
22. Jack van Poortvliet (Leicester Tigers, 22 caps)
23. Marcus Smith (Harlequins, 48 caps)



FA CUP West Ham v Brentford fc

By Ron Brand

A break from the Premier this week to contest the 5th Round of the FA Cup.

The 0 - 0 draw at Bournemouth is no disgrace and 7th in the Division on 44pts is frankly an outstanding performance. We told you not to mention Frank?

The West Ham result is difficult to predict. Brentford fc ambitions interesting to contemplate?

With a European spot in sight next season and the statue and financial rewards that brings, it must be tempting to rest and protect from injury some of the Senior players?

In my opinion Keith Andrews must be a candidate for Coach of the Season!

What has been achieved already is an impressive European Spot on the resources available at Brentford, Remarkable.

On the 14th Brentford host Wolves. Rock bottom on 16 pts Wolves should be a pushover, except Wolves just beat Liverpool 2- 1 at Molineux? Liverpool are in 6th in the Premiership, one position ahead of Brentford and 4pts better off.



Also one of the most successful clubs on the Planet?

A FA Cup run is always exciting for the Fans and getting to Wembley for the final a Wonderful day out.

A winning Run is also important for team and player confidence. Winning is a Great Habit to Acquire.

What to Do? The team selection will provide a clue.

Match Preview: West Ham United v Brentford

Written by Brentford Football Club

Brentford face West Ham United at London Stadium in the fifth round of the FA Cup on Monday night (7.30pm kick-off GMT), live on TNT Sports 1.

The Bees, aiming to progress to their first quarter-final of the competition since the 1988/89 season, have defeated Sheffield Wednesday and Macclesfield to reach this stage.

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*: How London Stadium win became blueprint for Bees' away successes

Premier League away specialists since the turn of the year, Brentford visit West Ham in the FA Cup on Monday with a place in the quarter-final up for grabs.

After safely negotiating their way past non-league giant-slayers Macclesfield in the fourth round of England's premier cup competition, the Bees travel across the capital with happy memories of their last trip east to London Stadium.

Keith Andrews' first-ever away Premier League win came against the Hammers last October, when goals from Igor Thiago and Mathias Jensen [earned Brentford a 2-0 victory](#) in what was also Nuno Espírito Santo's first home game in charge of the east London outfit.

In many ways, the Bees' performance that night set the standard for Andrews and his side away from Gtech Community Stadium. Brentford dominated nearly 60 per cent of possession and fired a season-high 22 shots in an emphatic display that also saw them hit the woodwork twice, while a deft Thiago chip was ruled out for offside.

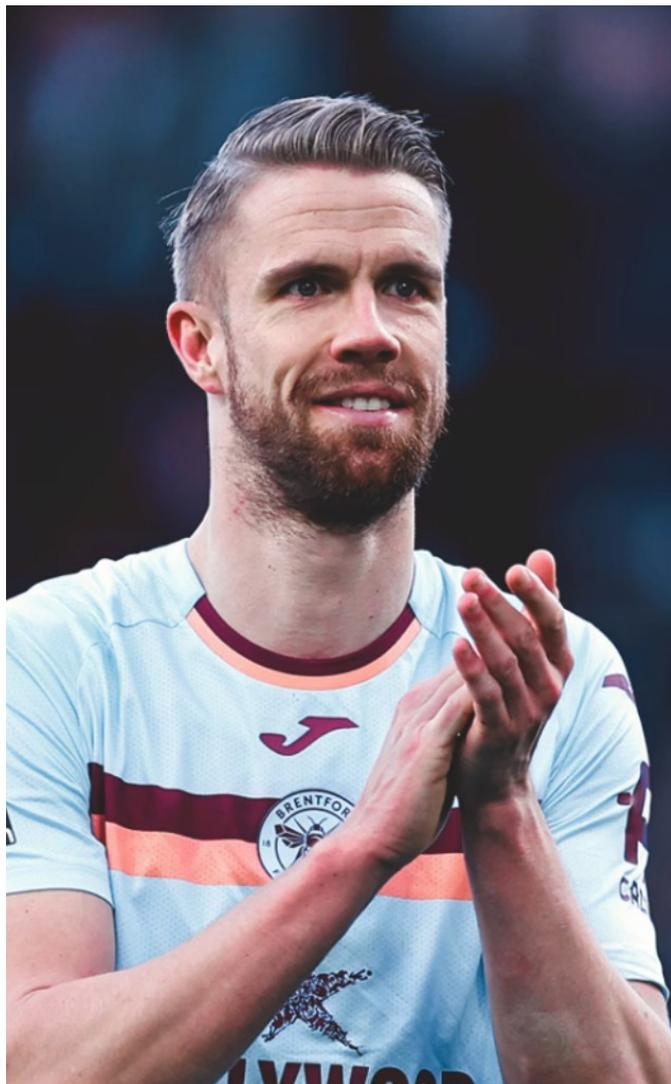
Much of Brentford's play flowed down their right flank that night, and [Michael Kayode](#) set a marker in terms of his attacking output.

Signed permanently from Fiorentina last summer, the Italian Under-21 international has established himself as one of the most athletic and progressive full-backs in the Premier League this season - and he posted some exceptional numbers in that victory over the Hammers.

Courtesy of a marauding display, Kayode became the first Brentford player ever to create six chances from open play in a Premier League match. His seven chances created overall also matched the record by an Italian player in Opta's records. Kayode and Sandro Tonali remain the standard-bearers for Italian creativity in this respect.

Those seven key passes remain the most by a defender in a 2025/26 Premier League game; only Manchester United's Bruno Fernandes (eight) has managed more in a single encounter.

While Brentford will again look to exploit Kayode's strengths on Monday, West Ham will hope a game-changing talent of their own can dictate proceedings down the same flank.



West Ham (45 per cent) may have concentrated more of their attacks down their right than any team in the top flight this season, but Crysencio Summerville has been electric down the left in recent months.

The Hammers' match-winner against League One side Burton Albion in the previous round, Summerville has scored seven goals across league and cup in 2026. Manchester City winger Antoine Semenyo and Chelsea forward João Pedro (both eight) are the only Premier League players to score more goals since the turn of the year.

Summerville combined with Jarrod Bowen to net a priceless winner for the Hammers midweek at Fulham, and Brentford will certainly need to be wary of the threat West Ham pose in wide areas.

When it comes to in-form wingers, however, there are few in better nick than the Bees' Dango Ouattara, who has [been nominated for the Premier League Player of the Month](#) after his two goals and two assists in February.

Andrews and Nuno may rotate their squads, but how their respective sides fare on the flanks is likely to shape the outcome on Monday night.

Scout Report

Dan Long, *Sky Sports*: The 'significant turnaround' at West Ham

Even though Nuno Espírito Santo arrived at West Ham just over a month into the 2025/26 season, he already had a firefighting job on his hands.

Under Graham Potter, the Hammers had lost four of their first five Premier League games. Ironically, their only win to that point had been against Nottingham Forest - who were then managed by Nuno.

They were second-bottom then and still there a month later, having picked up just one more point from a 1-1 draw away at Everton.

Following the 2-1 defeat to Leeds at Elland Road on 24 October, Nuno told Sky Sports: "We have to change. The players know, we know. The club knows there is still time. Time can also be a bad sign if we don't change immediately."



Back-to-back home wins for the first time since October 2024 followed, moving West Ham to within goal difference of safety. Yet it proved to be a false dawn. They did not win any of the next 10 league games, despite taking the lead in five of them.

One of the lowest moments came on 3 January, when the Hammers were beaten 3-0 by bottom club Wolves, who had not won a league game to that point. Nuno called that performance "embarrassing." He added: "I don't recall one day that I felt so bad on a football pitch like today."

Three days later, they met Forest in what was billed as a relegation six-pointer, and lost that one, too, leaving them seven points from safety.

The pressure was steadily ramping up, but it seems to have shocked them into action.

Since that day, they have played eight Premier League games and taken 14 points from them, as many as they had managed from the previous 21.

That upturn has been carried into the FA Cup, too, with extra-time wins over QPR and Burton earning a spot in the fifth round for the first time since 2022/23. A first quarter-final in a decade is potentially just 90 minutes away.

Six wins from the last 10 games in all competitions underline what has been a significant turnaround.

Opta Analyst's predicted final Premier League table still has West Ham finishing 18th, with the probability of that happening currently standing at 49.94 per cent.

But with Leeds, Nottingham Forest and Tottenham also in the mix, there remains a real opportunity across the final nine games to secure Premier League survival, which looked increasingly unlikely at the turn of the year.

In the Dugout

Nuno Espírito Santo

Once signed by José Mourinho during his time at Porto, Nuno Espírito Santo had a long career as a goalkeeper - though often played second fiddle - primarily spent in Portugal and Spain, with time in Russia at Dynamo Moscow during 2005 and 2006.

Nuno retired in 2010, after his second spell at Porto, but quickly went on to become a goalkeeper coach at Malaga and then Panathinaikos, working with his former manager Jesualdo Ferreira each time. He returned to Portugal to take on his first managerial role with Rio Ave in the summer of 2012 and remained at the club for two years.

He was then hired by Valencia, whom he guided to a fourth-place finish in La Liga in 2014/15, though he resigned less than four months into the following campaign after three defeats in their first five Champions League group matches, as well as five wins from the first 13 league matches, which left them languishing in ninth when he departed.

Porto decided to take a chance on their former player in 2016/17, yet he only saw out half of his two-year deal as the club opted to replace him the following summer after he failed to deliver silverware, despite losing only six of his 49 games in charge.

The 52-year-old is perhaps best known for the four years he spent at Wolves. He joined the club at the end of a chaotic 2016/17 campaign - during which they had three permanent managers - and led them to promotion out of the Championship at the first time of asking. In 2019/20, Wolves recorded their joint-highest Premier League finish (seventh) and their highest points tally (59), as well as reaching the quarter-final of the Europa League.

Having left Molineux by mutual consent in June 2021, Nuno went to Tottenham and started well with three-straight Premier League wins. Ultimately, he lasted only four months in the job, having followed up those victories with five defeats in the next seven.

He then spent 16 months in Saudi Arabia, guiding Al-Ittihad to the Saudi Pro League title and Saudi Super Cup, and returned to England just before Christmas 2023, having been dismissed little over a month earlier, to join Nottingham Forest.

In his first season at the City Ground, Nuno helped Forest retain their Premier League status by a margin of six points and in his one and only full season there, he guided the club to their highest finish since 1994/95 and Europe for the first time since 1995/96. He was sacked on 9 September, but signed a three-year deal at West Ham 18 days later.



LGA calls for urgent sentencing review as court fines for fly-tipping undercut council penalties

From the Local Government Association

The Local Government Association (LGA) is calling on the Government and the Sentencing Council to urgently review sentencing guidelines for fly-tipping, after new figures show that offenders prosecuted through the courts are often fined less than the penalties councils can issue directly.

Analysis of the latest fly-tipping data shows that the average court fine for fly-tipping is £539, which is £87 lower than the £626 average fixed penalty notice (FPN) councils can issue for the same offence. The LGA says this sentencing gap undermines deterrence, weakens enforcement, and leaves councils out of pocket after time-consuming and costly prosecutions.



Fly-tipping costs councils more than £19.3 million each year to clear up, with 1.26 million incidents recorded in England in 2024/25 alone. Councils are taking increasing enforcement action against offenders, but taking cases to court often requires lengthy investigations, high evidential thresholds and significant staff time.

Despite this, sentencing outcomes frequently fail to reflect the seriousness of the offence or the public cost involved.

In York, two offenders were each fined £300 by magistrates for waste offences, despite Fixed Penalty Notices of £600 and £1,000 being issued. In Wiltshire, a fly-tipper who failed to pay a £1,000 Fixed Penalty Notice was fined just £80 when the case was brought to court. In Chelmsford, two offenders were each fined £300 after being prosecuted for fly-tipping, lower than the £400 Fixed Penalty Notices they had received.

The LGA says sentencing guidelines are now out of step with the real impact of fly-tipping on communities, the environment and public finances, and that tougher penalties are needed to deter repeat and organised offenders.

Cllr Arooj Shah, Chair of the LGA Neighbourhoods Committee, said: *“Fly-tipping is criminal activity that blights communities and costs taxpayers millions of pounds every year.*

“Councils are working hard to investigate and prosecute offenders, but when court fines are lower than fixed penalties, it undermines enforcement and fails to act as a deterrent.

“Sentencing guidelines must be reviewed so that the punishment fits the crime and reflects both the harm caused and the significant work undertaken by enforcement officers.”

The LGA says stronger sentencing would also support the Government’s ambition to improve pride in place by protecting local environments and public spaces.



Spring Forecast 2026: The right economic plan for Britain

The Spring Forecast has shown that the government's economic plan to cut the cost of living, cut national debt and grow the economy, is the right one.

The Chancellor today set out how this government is building a stronger and more secure economy that makes every part of Britain better off. Through stability in the public finances, investment in infrastructure and reform to the economy, this government's economic plan is changing Britain for the better.



Cutting the cost of living

The OBR's forecast shows inflation, borrowing and debt interest are all falling while investment is rising. It now forecasts that inflation will return to target in the second half of this year – earlier than forecast in November – and delivering on the government's plan to ease pressure on households.

The decisions the Chancellor took at the last Budget to ease the cost of living, including reducing people's energy bills by £150 and freezing rail fares, are specifically expected to bring inflation down by 0.4ppt in 2026-27.

Easing the cost of living is the government's number one focus. That's why we are boosting the minimum wage for millions of workers, fully-funding 30 hours of free childcare, rolling out free breakfast clubs and helping family incomes by removing the two-child limit.

Cutting borrowing

The forecast shows borrowing is down by nearly £18 billion compared to the Autumn, with borrowing this year set to be the lowest in six years and falling below the G7 average for the first time in 22 years.

Already, we are expected to spend nearly £4bn less on debt interest next year than was forecast in the Autumn – money that can instead be spent on the things people rely on like our NHS and public transport.

The government is also reducing wasteful spending and driving efficiencies so that tax payer money can be spent wisely. This year was the lowest drawdown on the government's contingency pot for day-to-day spending in almost a decade, showing they are keeping public finances stable.

The forecast shows headroom to the stability rule has increased to almost £24 billion.

The Government's responsible approach to public spending means the Spring Forecast also reflects the recently announced £3.5bn of new funding for DfE in 2028-29 to support ambitious reforms to SEND. This includes over £1.8 billion in additional funding for Devolved governments through the Barnett formula.

Growing the economy

The OBR's forecast shows GDP per person is now set to grow more than was expected in the Budget – with growth of 5.6% over the Parliament. Despite the global uncertainty, Britain's economy remains strong – with faster growth than any other European country in the G7 in 2025.

The driving purpose of growing the economy is to make every part of Britain better off. The OBR has forecast that people will be over £1,000 a year better off after inflation, delivering on the government's priority to build an economy that makes working people better off.



HM Treasury

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