

Twickenham & Richmond Tribune



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RFU

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TickerTape - News in Brief

South Western Railway

Altered train services and buses replace trains in the **Wimbledon area Saturday 21 and Sunday 22 March**

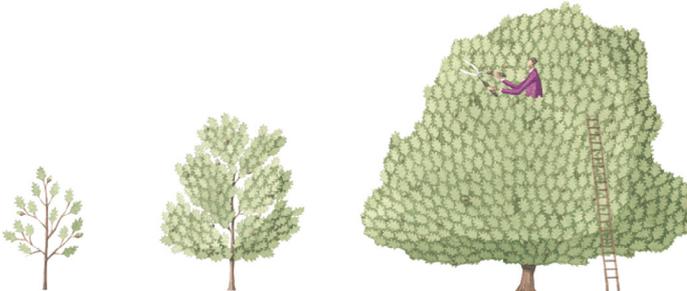
The lines in the **Wimbledon** area will be **closed all weekend** due to maintenance work.

Saturday

- **London Waterloo to Shepperton** services will be **revised** and will be diverted between **Clapham Junction and Kingston via Richmond**.
- **London Waterloo to London Waterloo via Wimbledon and Kingston** services will **not** run.
- **London Waterloo to Hampton Court** services will **not** run.
- **London Waterloo to Windsor** services will be **revised**.
- **Buses will run between:**
Clapham Junction and Chessington South via Wimbledon
Clapham Junction and Hampton Court via Surbiton

Sunday

- **London Waterloo to Shepperton** services will be **revised** and will be diverted between **Clapham Junction and Kingston via Richmond**.
- **London Waterloo to London Waterloo via Wimbledon and Kingston** services will **not** run.
- The afternoon and evening **London Waterloo to Kingston via Hounslow** services will **not** run.
- **London Waterloo to Hampton Court** services will **not** run.
- **Buses will run between:**
Clapham Junction and Hampton Court via Surbiton



The Tree Agency

The Tree Agency

darryl parkin

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The Local Picture Postcard Page - Part 318

Teddington Hospital Fete 1907

By Alan Winter

This week we can see 3 Teddington postcards that are 119 years old and that are quite unusual in that they were published with a particular date on the picture side showing a fund-raising fete for what was then called the Teddington and Hampton Wick Cottage Hospital.

This gives us an opportunity to look at the origins of the hospital.

On 10th July 1874 a group of residents met to discuss the establishment of a hospital for the reception and treatment of the sick and poor of Teddington. A second meeting was held on 27th July to discuss finding suitable premises for a cottage hospital. The host of the meeting was Thomas Chappell of the music publishing and piano manufacturing firm,



offered a pair of villas for the purpose - Elfin Villas in Elfin Grove. A public meeting was held on 7th August to drum up support for the hospital; some 150 people attended.

The buildings were adapted and the hospital was officially opened on 20th March 1875.

The hospital had four beds. Its income, other than subscriptions and donations, was raised by various activities, such as fetes, bazaars, concerts and plays. The



weekly cost of an in-patient was 5 shillings and 3 pence (26p). In-patients were charged one shilling (5p) a day towards their keep.

In 1907, which was the date of the postcards, there was both a fete on July and a march down the High Street which raised cash collections on what was called "Hospital Sunday". The postcards shown cover both events.

We will stay in Teddington for next week's postcard column when we shall take a look at the footbridge over the Thames.



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In memory of a doughty tree

By James Haydn

It is sad to see that the Borough Council's arboreal operatives have, in an exercise of regrettable 'green cleansing', removed the substantial stump of a Richmond tree that, in spite of its felling some years ago, refused to die.

Each spring, close to The Orange Tree pub, in a demonstration of deep-rooted resistance, green shoots would appear from the stump's gnarled bark and bush out, so that by mid-summer it would be displaying defiantly luxuriant green foliage, offering some localised shade, cooling and carbon-capture. It had become a symbol of resilience: a living, sprouting, flourishing metaphor for hope of recovery and renewal in the face of adversity.

While the miscreants who felled the sycamore in the gap in Hadrian's Wall contemplate their crime in one of His Majesty's prisons, and a public consultation is launched to seek ideas for how to use its remains to memorialise its meaning to many, the fate of the Richmond stump is not known. It has, most likely, been reduced to wood chips and sawdust, in its place a square of brown earth and two posts, between which one supposes a seedling or sapling will be planted. Good luck to it in that unpromising location, between a busy pavement and traffic heavy road.

The old has been sacrificed in favour of the new. No phoenix tree rises from its own ashes. Better the arboreal 'devil' you don't know, than the one that you do.



A316 Speed Cut Exposes Deeper Divide Over Safety and Fairness

By James Knight

There are moments in local politics when a technical change acquires a moral charge. The decision to reduce the A316 to 30 miles per hour might, on paper, sit comfortably within a wider programme of road safety reform. In practice, it has opened a more revealing divide, not only about transport policy, but about how we understand the balance between collective safety and individual judgement.



Transport for London's decision applies to the stretch between St Margaret's roundabout and Chalker's Corner, and has been supported in principle by Richmond Council as a contribution to improved safety. Yet the manner of its introduction, with minimal additional signage, has triggered a reaction that is as much cultural as it is practical.

A change felt before it was explained

Scroll through local discussions on the Nextdoor social media site, and a pattern quickly emerges. Trina de Silva, posting to neighbours, notes that "there are no warning signs for the change of speed limit... but please beware the new lower speed limit", capturing the unease of those who feel the shift has been made quietly rather than clearly.

Others go further. Andy Bickerstaff describes the arrangement as "almost spiteful designed to catch out perfectly safe drivers", while Elaine Samuels calls it "really annoying that there aren't more signs confirming this 30mph speed limit". In these responses, irritation gives way to something more pointed: a suspicion among some residents that the confusion may lead to increased enforcement and fines.

Lola R., reflecting on a recent journey, offers a similar account. "We counted one tiny new sign... people were flying past me at 40," she writes, before concluding that "TfL need proper signage... instead of this slowing down, speeding up money spinner". The language is telling. What begins as a practical complaint settles into a question of motive.

The safety argument, plainly stated

Transport for London has justified the change as part of a wider programme to reduce the number of people killed or seriously injured on London's roads, reflecting long-established evidence that even small reductions in speed can significantly improve survival rates in collisions.

Yet the conversation does not run in one direction. For every charge of opacity, there is a counterargument grounded in a different set of priorities. Corinne Butt, responding to suggestions that the change is unnecessary, puts it starkly: "better to get to your destination five minutes late than not getting there at all because you killed a pedestrian". Others echo the same sentiment, noting that even a modest reduction in speed can materially affect survival rates in collisions.

Susan Lee takes a longer view, pointing to the human cost behind statistics. Even a small number of serious injuries, she suggests, represents "families' lives changed hugely", and if lower speeds reduce that risk, the inconvenience to drivers must be weighed accordingly.

This is not the language of revenue or enforcement. It is the language of prevention.

Two instincts, one road

What is striking is not merely that residents disagree, but how neatly those disagreements fall into two recognisable camps.

On one side sits a communitarian instinct. It emphasises shared space, collective responsibility and the duty of public authorities to reduce harm, even where the risk is intermittent. The character of the road matters less than the principle that lower speeds, in aggregate, save lives.

On the other sits a more individualist outlook. This is not an argument against safety, but against what is perceived as disproportionate intervention. Here, drivers are understood as competent actors, capable of adjusting to conditions, and entitled to expect that rules reflect the reality of the road they are using. When limits appear arbitrary, or poorly signposted, trust begins to erode.

Between these positions lies a tension that no amount of signage alone can resolve.

The politics of consistency

It is here that the role of the council becomes more difficult to ignore. Richmond has, in recent years, pursued an extensive programme of 20-mile-per-hour limits on its own roads, defended firmly on grounds of safety and environmental responsibility. That case has been made with confidence, and often with moral clarity.

Yet in responding to the A316 change, the emphasis has shifted. Councillor Alexander Ehmann, chair of the borough's Transport and Air Quality Committee, has described the absence of additional signage as "simply outrageous", warning that without clearer measures, the effectiveness of the new limit may be undermined.

The concern itself is reasonable. But the contrast is notable. Where borough-led schemes have asked residents to adapt, TfL's scheme is met with calls for greater accommodation. Where clarity might have been assumed, it is now insisted upon. The principle, in other words, appears to shift depending on who is implementing it.

A charitable reading would point to the difference between a residential street and a dual carriageway. A less charitable one might see a degree of political convenience.

A small change, a larger question

What has unfolded over the past week is more than a dispute about miles per hour. It is a reminder that transport policy, however technical it appears, rests on deeper assumptions about authority, responsibility and trust. Decisions of this kind do not land in a vacuum. They are judged not only on their intent, but on how they are introduced, explained and experienced by those expected to follow them.

Residents are not merely reacting to a sign, or the absence of one. They are responding to a perceived imbalance between instruction and explanation, between principle and practice. When a change alters behaviour in a way that feels sudden or unclear, it is not simply the policy that is questioned, but the process behind it.

That imbalance matters, because the consequences are not trivial. A speeding penalty is not simply a £100 fine and three points. It can mean higher insurance premiums for years, points accumulating on a licence, and for some, a direct risk to their livelihood. Where the stakes are this high, clarity is not an optional extra or a matter of administrative detail. It is a basic obligation of those making the change.

If there is a lesson in the A316 debate, it is not that one side is wholly right and the other wholly wrong. It is that consistency matters, and so too does candour. Without both, even the most modest change ceases to feel like good governance and begins instead to feel imposed.

VisitEngland 

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13-22
March
2026

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With its breath taking views, rich history, and diverse activities we are the only London borough that spans across both sides of the River Thames with 21.5 miles of riverfront.

EnglishTourismWeek.org

Photography Competition at Marble Hill House

From Marble Hill House

To celebrate over 300 years of Marble Hill House, we're inviting you to take part in our brand-new Photography Competition.

Whether you're a keen photographer, a local walker with a phone, or one of our dedicated volunteers, this is your chance to capture the beauty and stories of Marble Hill through your lens.

Competition Categories

There are two competition categories: Marble Hill Gardens through the seasons and Marble Hill House.



Marble Hill Gardens (Seasons)

Four prizes for the best seasonal shots through Autumn, Winter, Spring and Summer



Marble Hill House

Capture the splendour of the House itself, inside or out.

Prizes

Winners in each category will receive a £20 gift voucher to spend in our gift shop, and Cream Tea for Two at the Marble Hill Café.

Winning entries will also be professionally printed and showcased onsite at Marble Hill.

When can I enter?

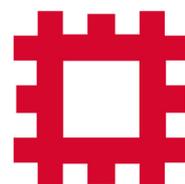
Category One: Marble Hill Gardens – Seasonal rounds

- **Spring 2026:** Opens 1 March – Closes 15 May 2026 – Winner announced 31 May 2026
- **Summer 2026:** Opens 1 June – Closes 15 August 2026 – Winner announced 31 August 2026

Category Two: Marble Hill House (interior & exterior)

- Opens 6 April 2026 and closes 31 July 2026
- Finalists announced 15 Aug 2026
- The winner will be announced in September 2026

See [HERE](#) for full details and how to enter.



ENGLISH
HERITAGE

Richmond's Transport Committee

Policy, Power and the Limits of Consent

By James Knight



Politics, at its most consequential, is rarely announced in grand declarations. More often, it proceeds by accumulation, a series of decisions, each reasonable in isolation, which together amount to a change in direction. The question is not whether any one measure can be justified, but whether the sum of them has been fully explained, and fully accepted.

Richmond's Transport and Air Quality Committee last week offered a clear example of this quieter form of politics. The meeting itself was orderly, even reassuring in tone. Reports were taken, recommendations approved, and the language of policy remained measured throughout. Yet beneath that composure lies a more substantive shift, one that reaches beyond transport and into a broader question about the role of the state in shaping everyday life.

The Lime decision, and the question of control

The decision to award a sole-provider contract for dockless e-bikes to Forest Bikes, and, in doing so, to remove Lime from the borough, is the most immediate expression of that shift. Lime's presence across London has been both visible and, at times, controversial. Its scale has enabled rapid expansion in cycling, even as its operational shortcomings have tested public patience when bikes block pavements or are misused.

Richmond's response has been to impose order through consolidation. A single operator, clearer rules, more direct accountability. There is a logic to this. But there is also a trade-off. A system governed more tightly is not necessarily a system that serves more broadly. It may be easier to regulate, but less adaptable, particularly where journeys extend beyond borough boundaries and depend on interoperability rather than containment.

During the meeting, Helen Edwards, one of the Conservative candidates for Barnes Ward, captured this tension, questioning whether the council was refining a functioning system or replacing it with something narrower. The response from the chair, Alexander Ehmann, was technically precise, focusing on procurement and delivery. The response addressed the mechanics, but not the substance.

That issue was made more concrete by a resident who described using Lime bikes as part of a regular journey into central London. The difficulty he identified was not abstract. If providers do not align, journeys become fragmented. The suggestion that riders might simply change bikes, as passengers change trains, carries a certain administrative neatness, but introduces a degree of practical friction that is easily underestimated. Rail travel operates within a unified system; dockless cycling does not. The consequence is not merely inconvenience, but cumulative burden: multiple subscriptions, uncertain interchange points, additional time spent locating and unlocking a second vehicle, and, not least, the risk that a journey may fail altogether at a geo-fenced boundary. At that point, what is framed

as a seamless transition becomes something rather less certain, with riders potentially left stranded, sometimes in unfamiliar or poorly lit locations, where questions of personal safety are no longer theoretical but immediate.

Tim Lennon of the London Cycling Campaign offered a broader caution. Cycling, he noted, depends on simplicity. Once that simplicity is compromised, behaviour does not always follow policy intent.

Set against this is the basis of the decision itself. Pricing formed the majority of the evaluation, and Forest's advantage lay primarily in cost rather than a decisive lead in quality. The council, in effect, has chosen the most economically advantageous option within a narrow margin of service difference. That is defensible. But it invites a question that cannot be entirely avoided: whether financial considerations have, in this instance, been allowed to outweigh the Liberal Democrats' stated environmental principles.

A strategy that seeks to shape behaviour

The Transport Strategy to 2040 provides the intellectual framework within which such decisions sit. It is a document of confidence and ambition, setting out a future in which the borough is less dependent on private cars and more oriented toward walking, cycling and public transport.

Yet this is not merely a matter of infrastructure. It is a matter of intent. The strategy does not simply anticipate change; it seeks to induce it. Pricing is to be used as a tool of behavioural adjustment. Parking charges are to be aligned, in some cases, with the cost of a return bus journey. Heavier and higher-emitting vehicles may face additional charges, an approach already described elsewhere as a "family car tax".

Such a proposition is not neutral. It rests on a particular view of the relationship between the individual and the state, one in which public authorities do not merely provide infrastructure, but actively seek to shape behaviour. For some, this is a necessary response to environmental and spatial constraints. For others, it represents an encroachment, a gradual narrowing of personal choice in the name of collective good.

That tension is not abstract. It is felt most acutely by those for whom the car is not a preference but a necessity, and for whom the accumulation of charges and restrictions appears less as encouragement and more as instruction. It is here that transport policy moves beyond engineering and into politics proper.

The unresolved economics of restraint

The strategy's ambition is accompanied by a quieter omission. It is explicitly not constrained by immediate funding considerations. The direction is clear. The means are less so. At the same time, the council remains dependent on revenue derived from motorists. Parking income continues to perform strongly. Charges are rising. Enforcement remains a significant source of funding.

This creates a structural tension. A system that depends on driving for income while seeking to reduce driving in practice must, at some point, reconcile those aims. If motorists continue to drive, they are asked to pay more. If they do not, the revenue base diminishes. Neither outcome is neutral. Both carry consequences. A council that still relies on motorists' money, even as it quietly plans for fewer motorists.

The question is not whether this tension exists. It is how, and when, it will be resolved.

Hampton Court and the limits of design

The Hampton Court Road scheme provides a more immediate example of how these broader principles encounter practical limits. A previous proposal failed to secure public support. The council

has returned with a revised, phased approach, approving design concepts and committing to further consultation.

At the centre of the proposal lies the floating bus stop, a design intended to improve safety by separating cyclists from buses. Yet in doing so, it introduces new complexities, particularly for pedestrians required to cross cycle lanes in order to board.

For some, this is a refinement. For others, it is a new source of risk.

The committee's discussion was measured, but necessarily incomplete. Design concepts were approved, but the underlying tension remains. Safety is not experienced uniformly. Improvements in one dimension can be perceived as regressions in another. These are not purely technical questions. They are questions of priority, and therefore of judgment.

Incremental change, cumulative effect

What binds these various strands together is not a single decision, but a pattern. School Streets, cycle infrastructure, parking policy, e bike provision, each is introduced on its own rationale, each justified in its own terms. Yet their effects accumulate.

A restriction here, a charge there, a reallocation of space elsewhere, together they begin to reshape how the borough functions. This incremental approach has its advantages. It avoids disruption. It allows adjustment. But it also carries a risk. When change is experienced as a series of small impositions rather than a clearly articulated direction, it can generate unease that is difficult to locate but easy to feel.

The lesson from elsewhere

This is not the first time such policies have been advanced in London. Nor is it the first time they have encountered resistance.

Efforts to increase charges on higher emitting vehicles, or to reshape road use through pricing and restriction, have in some cases produced a political response that was both sharp and decisive. Councils that moved too quickly, or without sufficient regard to local conditions, found that environmental ambition could be reframed as economic pressure.

Richmond's approach is more measured, more deliberate. But it operates within the same political landscape.

The boundary between guidance and imposition is not fixed. It is perceived. And perception, in politics, has consequences.

A direction set, a judgement pending

Richmond's transport policy is not without merit. It is thoughtful, serious, and aligned with broader environmental objectives. The desire to improve safety, reduce emissions and expand travel choice is widely shared.

But policy does not exist in abstraction. It is encountered in daily life, in the routines of commuting, shopping and family life. It is felt in cost as much as in principle. If change is experienced as proportionate and fair, it will endure. If it is experienced as prescriptive or as financially burdensome without corresponding benefit, it will not.

The committee has established a clear direction. Whether that confidence is reflected in approval remains a question that won't be settled within the committee room. It will be answered, in time, elsewhere at the ballot box.

Click [HERE](#) to access the committee papers and the webcast of the meeting.

Spring walking route through Richmond Park

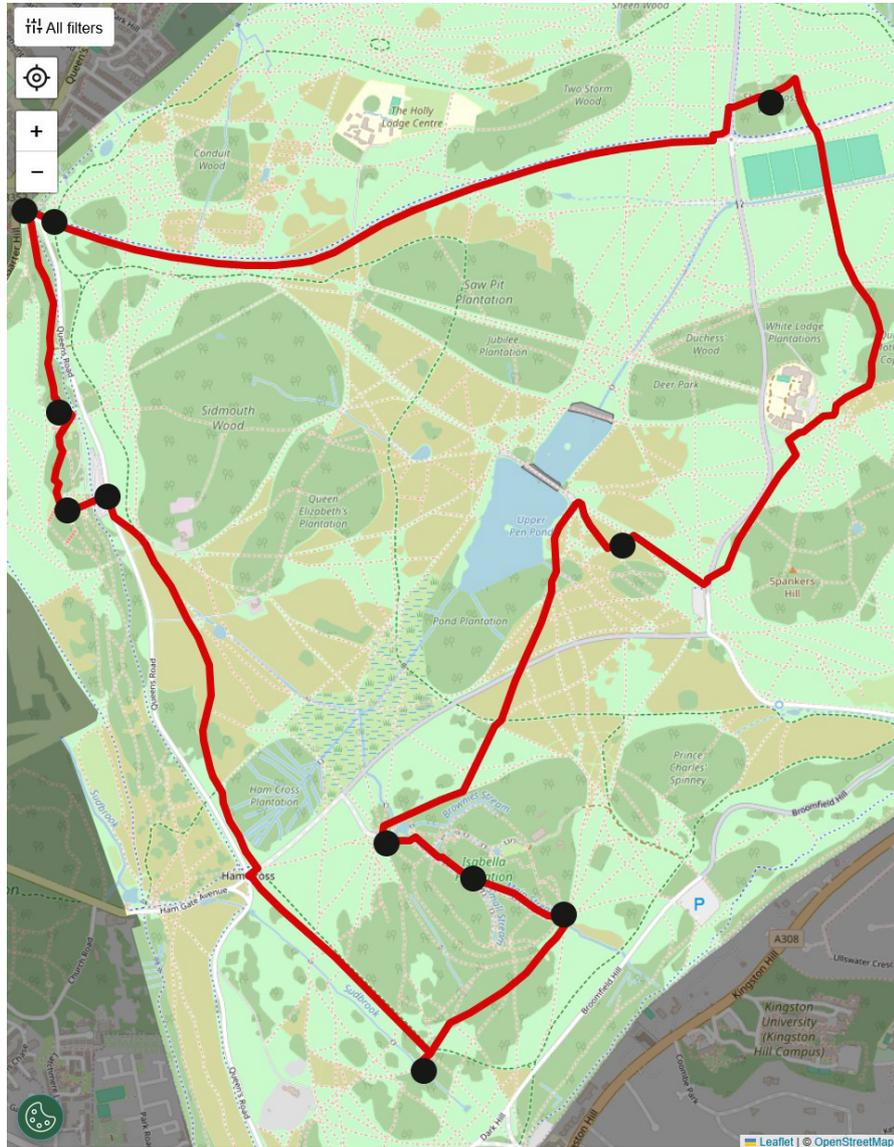
From The Royal Parks

Spring changes the feel of Richmond Park, bringing colour back to its wide grasslands, wooded slopes and sweeping views. This seasonal, self-guided walking route sends you through high vantage points, historic landscapes and quieter corners of the park, with each stop marked on the map below along with details on gates, toilets and cafés.

Route information

While the full route is shown on the map below, the key points are also listed here for your convenience. You can begin at whichever stop is closest to where you enter the park, and you can take the circuit in either direction at your own pace.

- **Richmond Gate:** a grand entrance opening directly onto expansive parkland, giving an immediate sense of the park's scale and scenery
- **King Henry's Mound:** a historic rise offering a protected view towards St Paul's Cathedral, framed by ancient trees and longdistance horizons
- **Pembroke Lodge:** a Georgian lodge with landscaped grounds and farreaching views across the Thames Valley, ideal for a pause
- **Dann's Pond:** a calm woodland pond where spring reflections and soft light create one of the park's quieter moments
- **Broomfield Hill Gate (to Isabella Plantation):** a gentle approach through shaded woodland paths leading towards the plantation's vibrant spring displays
- **Isabella Plantation:** a celebrated woodland garden known for its azaleas, rhododendrons and colourful spring borders surrounding still ponds and winding paths
- **King George V Plantation:** a peaceful stretch of mixed woodland offering a contrast to the park's open grassland, especially atmospheric throughout this season
- **Sheen Cross Wood:** an ancient woodland area with emerging spring growth and secluded paths that feel far removed from the city.



Distance: 6.62 miles
Duration: 3hrs 55mins at a relaxed pace
Elevation: Several slopes throughout

This map only shows information relevant to the **spring walking route**. You can find the [full Richmond Park map here](#).



Twickenham Tribune 488 – Green Party response

From Richmond & Twickenham Green Party

The people should never be the opposition

The Tribune is to be congratulated on being the only media outlet that follows Council proceedings with the interest it deserves and needs. However, the article by James Knight in Tribune edition 488 is misdirected and lacking in background information. The implication in the article is that the Opposition on Richmond Council has failed to hold the Liberal Democrat administration to account on key issues such as affordable housing provision. This is simply misleading and untrue. We have frequently brought up this Liberal Democrat administration's failure to ensure a sufficient supply of affordable housing in the borough. We have gone further than mere criticism: we have consistently provided suggestions and proposals, several of which have been adopted by the LibDems, including:

- Direct investment – after a 20-year absence - in our own housing stock;
- Feasibility studies on maximising housing on council owned sites – such as under-utilised buildings or car parks, now adopted for one of the key sites.
- More social rent homes in developments already underway, such as Twickenham Riverside.

Green councillors have also been instrumental in:

- Pushing the developer of the Stag Brewery site to offer an increase of affordable housing from 7 to 12% on this £800m site, the biggest in Richmond.
- Urging a fast-track process for affordable housing on major development sites;

Mr Knight is quite right to highlight the questions asked by the public at Full Council meetings – public participation in our democracy is absolutely vital in order to keep it alive – but we believe that the function of the Opposition is to go further than pointing out a problem. The Green Party in Opposition has done things differently: we've offered constructive criticism, provided a voice for residents when they are not being listened to, and persuaded the administration to be more ambitious in their aims. Indeed, it is the Opposition who have frequently encouraged members of the public to ask the very questions at Full Council that Mr Knight uses in support of his headline argument.

The Green Party in Opposition has also consistently challenged the Liberal Democrat administration when it has been sorely lacking in transparency: think of the Pools on the Park health suite removal, the Pensford Field lease debacle and the bizarre decision to remove the Teddington Cemetery allotments.

Mr Knight's article also rightly praised the questions asked by members of the public on disability issues but he forgot to point out the budget amendments (inspired by discussions with disabled residents) proposed by the Green Party to provide more blue badge bays in Council car parks and to install a "Changing Places" disabled toilet in Richmond town centre (proposals rejected out of hand by the Liberal Democrats). The Greens have also highlighted the discrepancy between the treatment of working age adults receiving social care, together with the high non-residential care contribution charges for those only on benefits.

Greens in the room also pushed the Liberal Democrats to consult on a new Transport Strategy for the borough, replacing one that was out of date and unworkable, given the large-scale developments planned for Richmond. Green Party councillors helped residents to bring a petition to the Council of over 1,400 signatures on tackling transport issues surrounding the new developments in Mortlake.

Other successes include tackling anti-social behaviour, initially downplayed by the Lib Dems, who failed to appreciate the blight on communities living with long-standing ASB issues; the reversal of cuts to youth and children's services; and helping those with unclaimed council tax discounts and exemptions get fair treatment – in this last case, urging the LibDems to be more proactive and avoid taking costly legal action against them.

If residents of Richmond borough want constructive politics for **people and the environment** that work to solve problems rather than scoring political points, whether in power or in opposition, they must vote Green at the upcoming elections. Despite being small in number, we have built a track record of achieving gains for the residents of Richmond: we've stood up for the most disadvantaged residents and we've pushed the Council to do better. While we've supported the positive direction of the Liberal Democrat administration, we've opposed its lack of transparency. We've earned the right to your vote.



Vision Zone Twickenham coming to ETNA

From ETNA Community Centre

ETNA Community Centre will play host to Vision Zone Twickenham on 9 April, a sight loss and blindness support open day.

Created by Optelec UK, the largest manufacturer in assistive technology, the day will be attended by many relevant local services such as:

- VISOR
- Richmond Carers Centre
- VICTA
- RNIB ECLO service
- Vocal Eyes
- Grey Matters Consultancy
- Synapptic



The day is free entry and there is no need to book.

All ages and all sight loss conditions are welcome, so please come along and find out about services, groups, try out the latest technology hands on, and more.

- **Date:** Thursday 9 April 2026
- **Time:** Doors open 11am to 2pm
- **Location:** ETNA Community Centre, 13 Rosslyn Road, Twickenham, TW1 2AR

For more information, call 0800 145 6115.

Richmond libraries nominated for Library of the Year Award

From Richmond Council

Richmond libraries were named as one of nine London finalists for the competitive Library of the Year category at the 2026 British Book Awards.

The recognition highlights our libraries' innovative approach to community engagement and our commitment to widening access to reading and cultural experiences.

The recognition includes our new initiatives introduced last year through Richmond Reads, including:

- Inspiring reading challenges for all ages
- A new partnership with The Crick Crack Club
- Bringing world-class storytelling into library spaces
- Opening libraries on closed days to host special locally connected events



Last year's [Richmond Reads](#) attracted many new audiences, with 53% of attendees attending a library event for the first time. This flagship annual celebration of storytelling was designed to inspire, connect, and engage our diverse communities. From bestselling authors to true stories, live performances to creative workshops, and digital read-along that offer a simple and welcoming way to join from home.

Get involved

Explore [what's on in our libraries](#).

Want to be the first to hear about new sessions, events, and services?

Sign up to our [library mailing list](#).

EVERY
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DISH+ RICE/ BREAD
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Twickenham

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020-88939291

Dear Tribune,

Rough Rides in Richmond.

The Lib Dems Spring newsletter has recently dropped through people's letterboxes, even more self-aggrandising than usual, probably due to the forthcoming elections on May 6.

It includes a statement by LibDem Councillor Alex Ehmann, Chair of the Transport and Air Quality Committee saying how good they are at maintaining our roads, similar to his message on the Lib Dems website:

"We have always believed the condition of roads and pavements are a top priority. That's why we don't just point at potholes - we fix them."

That's amazing seeing as how roads have just been rated by the Department for Transport, ranging from green (highest) through amber to red (lowest) measuring how well each local authority is maintaining its roads. Richmond Council has overall rating 'Amber' and condition scorecard 'Red'. That hardly seems a top priority.

www.gov.uk/government/publications/local-road-maintenance-ratings/local-road-maintenance-ratings-2025-to-2026

In fact, it took me 16 years of complaining to get them to fix the dangerous surface on my own road and it was only finally repaired due to the intervention of a Conservative councillor.

I have recently had to take the bus from Richmond to Hampton several times. On every occasion the bus has nearly been shaken to pieces due to the appalling condition of the main roads. I was also nearly shaken to pieces – so I will never use the buses again.

Similarly, the bus from Barnes, through East Sheen and Richmond to Twickenham are rattling through some of the worst roads. A neighbour with a recent hip replacement who has had to take the 493 bus from East Sheen to Kingston Hospital said that the pain was so bad from the shaking due to the dreadful road surfaces that she could hardly walk when she alighted and thought she would finish up in hospital again.

If the Council stopped wasting our money on making roads narrower and building road humps that make everyone bad-tempered, they could put that money into actually improving the roads and thus improving public transport. Never mind, our Councillors have awarded themselves a nice increase in personal allowances.

NO Council should think it's doing well by maintaining the roads and fixing potholes because that is their job and what they are paid to do. I don't constantly tell people how good I am as a pilot just because I've landed my 747 safely, because that's what I'm paid to do. In fact, I've flown through turbulence with less discomfort than riding the bus in Richmond. Maintenance costs for the buses must be astronomical; that means higher fares. Some cab drivers have told me they are considering giving up because the cost of damage to their cars is making earning their living impossible.

Should anyone wonder why I am writing to the Tribune instead of to the Council, it's because I have no wish to be subjected to one of their usual sarcastic, condescending replies. Hopefully, any public reply from the Council will be reasonably free of contempt.

Come 6th May, we will remember.....

Michael Jay
Hampton.

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

Green Party statement on move to Forest e-bikes in Richmond

From Richmond & Twickenham Green Party

The Green Opposition Group on Richmond Council is critical of the decision to move from one monopoly provider of e-bikes in the borough to another.

At the Transport and Air Quality Committee meeting on Monday 16 March, the Liberal Democrat Councillors voted as a block to kick out Lime and switch to Forest. Only Councillor Andrée Frieze, Leader of the Opposition, voted against it and spoke out in favour of having two operators.

Cllr Frieze says: *“Two e-bike companies provide more choice for residents, resilience against operator failure and better connectivity across the whole of London. Simply swapping one monopoly for another does not improve the service overall for Richmond residents.”*

“Further, I am concerned that the need to prop up Council funding in the face of massive cuts from Government played too great a decision in this vote. The concession that Forest will pay as a single operator is about 1.7 times more than having two operators. For Forest versus Lime as single operators, it is 2.25 times as much.”

The map shows the current situation for e-bike services across London. Once the new contracts are in place, residents will continue to be able to cycle via e-bikes into all the neighbouring boroughs with the addition of Kingston, which they are currently unable to. But, who knows what other boroughs will do in the future. Maybe Kingston will swap to Lime and then Richmond residents will go back to being restricted by ‘checkpoint Charlie’. Until a pan-London agreement is in place for the e-bike operators, Londoners will continue to be at the mercy of individual borough decisions over which operator(s) are appointed.

Boroughs and Operators



New charity project enables Richmond upon Thames residents to sponsor a tree

From Trees for Streets

Residents, businesses and community groups now have the power to bring more green to their streets. Trees for Streets, the national street tree sponsorship scheme, has arrived in Richmond upon Thames.

Co-founded by the national charity Trees for Cities and civic innovator Start with Local, Trees for Streets enables residents to sponsor a street or park tree, suggesting a location, via the project's website. Neighbours can even club together to add more trees to their streets via a crowdfunding platform, and businesses can sponsor the planting of new trees as a way to give back to their community.

Trees for Streets works in partnership with Richmond Council to plant the trees.

Sponsor a tree in three simple steps:

1. Visit www.treesforstreets.org/richmond to choose a location for a new tree, answer a few simple questions about it, and submit your sponsorship details. The rest is taken care of for you.
2. The council will survey the location to check for suitability.
3. If the location is suitable, a 2-3 metre tall tree will be planted the following planting season, between November and April.

Why are urban trees so important?

Alarming, tree cover in England is amongst the lowest in Europe*. This impacts resilience to the climate crisis, rising temperatures and increasingly severe weather.

Street trees act as natural air conditioners, providing shade on hot days and cooling the air through a process called evapotranspiration. They also help us cope with heavy rain and protect from flooding. Their roots absorb huge amounts of water, and their leaves and branches collect rainwater as it falls.

Street trees offer many benefits for our health and wellbeing too. They make us feel better, encourage exercise, and bring communities together. Plus, they make our neighbourhoods more beautiful and welcoming.

Carrie Hume, Programme Director, Trees for Streets, said: *"Trees breathe life into our towns and cities. They transform neighbourhoods, bringing much needed green to our doorsteps, support our mental and physical wellbeing and boost the biodiversity of our local environment. We are pleased to be working with Richmond Council to grow their urban forest, and look forward to empowering residents and businesses in creating greener, healthier communities."*

Councillor Julia Neden-Watts, Deputy Leader and Chair of the Environment, Sustainability, Culture and Sports Services Committee said: *"Planting trees not only makes the borough greener and more beautiful but also boosts biodiversity and helps us respond to the challenges of a changing climate – benefitting all residents. This new sponsorship scheme builds on the ambitions set out in the Trees for Richmond strategy and supports the significant progress we've already made across the borough. If you're able to, please consider sponsoring a street tree or a tree in a park, or simply help spread the word – together, we can all enjoy the benefits for years to come."*



The first music event at Teddington's new Elleray Centre

By Michael Hill, Elleray Trustee (and music lover)

On March 31st, the wonderful Matt Woosey will be performing in Teddington – the first stop on his UK tour. He'll bring a mix of funky rock and blues, sing along rock anthems and classic covers interlaced with a few stories and anecdotes. It will be an evening full of great music and, because he is a particularly engaging and entertaining character, it will also be great fun. No wonder that The Times described him as having "luminous originality and talent"!

Michael Hill, a trustee at the Elleray Community Association charity that manages the Centre said

"We really want a good crowd for this, our first music event. And because the promoter has agreed that our charity can retain all bar receipts, it will be something of a fundraiser for us. We have strict noise limitations, so the only way to enjoy this performance will be to buy a ticket and come along!"

Tickets are on sale now at www.wegotickets.com/event/693872

Why not bring a few friends and make up a party?



**An evening
with**
**Matt
Woosey**

Tuesday, March 31st
The Elleray Centre
North Lane
Teddington TW11 OHJ

An evening of rousing rock, blues and funky rhythms with some classic covers and a few great stories from this internationally acclaimed singer/guitarist.
Get a taste of what's in store on YouTube.
Support from local singer/songwriter Veronica D.
All bar proceeds donated to the Elleray Community Association charity.

Doors open: 6.00 pm Start time: 7.00 pm
Tickets £18 via the QR code £25 on the door
wegottickets.com/event/693872
mattwoosey.com veronicadmusic.com



Green Party statement on affordable housing in Richmond

From Richmond & Twickenham Green Party

The delivery of truly affordable housing is a contentious issue for Richmond Council. The current Liberal Democrat administration has the worst track record of building this type of housing across London.

Despite this, there has been a series of press releases from them celebrating ‘hundreds of affordable homes in the pipeline’. However, there is no way of verifying these figures because Richmond’s yearly statutory Authority’s Monitoring Report (AMR) is now two years out of date. Their definition of genuinely affordable homes also needs to be examined as it includes shared ownership homes, which are out of reach for the thousands of residents on the Council’s housing waiting list who need social rent homes.

This lack of up-to-date information makes it impossible to check the Liberal Democrats’ claims to discover how many new social rent homes have actually been completed. The reality is, thousands of residents on Richmond’s housing waiting list are waiting decades for a safe, secure home in the borough.

Mortlake and Barnes Common Councillor Niki Crookdake, says:

“One of my residents has been languishing in a damp and mouldy flat for over 26 years trying to move from a one-bedroom to a two-bedroom flat with her son, who is now a grown man. She was last shown a property in 2007. There there’s another family living in a severely cramped, unsuitable property with children aged eight to 19, whose medical conditions impacted by damp and mould. And they’re not the only family like that.

“Then, what about residents who need to be moved into supported accommodation with nowhere to go because housing associations – to save the cost of having a manager on site – have converted supported living accommodation into ‘independent living’? Or the numerous other cases where medical needs fall on deaf ears?”

The experience of residents demonstrates the slow progress by the Liberal Democrats over the last eight years, while they have been in charge. For example, the mere seven per cent of affordable homes on the STAG brewery site in Mortlake is the lowest level agreed in London. The Liberal Democrats need to adopt a more innovative approach and work with developers to increase the number of three-bedroom, social rent homes through direct investment and partnerships.



Piling begins at Twickenham Riverside, paving the way for construction

From Richmond Council

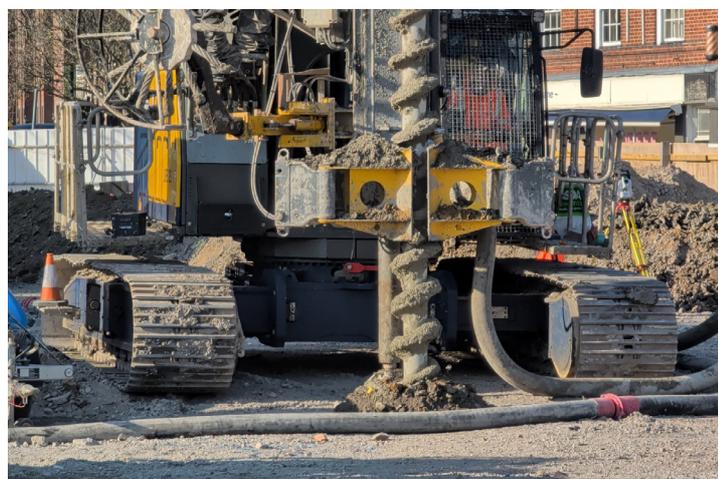
Work to lay the foundations of the much-anticipated Twickenham Riverside regeneration is beginning, as specialist piling works start on site this week – marking a major step forward in the transformation of the town’s waterfront.

Councillor Gareth Roberts, Leader of Richmond Council, said: *“We’re now moving firmly into the next phase of delivering a new riverside for Twickenham.*

“Residents have already seen big changes with the demolition works completed – and the start of piling means we’re now putting the foundations in place for the new public spaces, homes and riverside this scheme will deliver.”

Piling creates the deep structural supports needed for buildings and flood defences, and is expected to take around four weeks.

In preparation for the works, a large piling rig has been delivered to the site. Residents and visitors may notice increased activity as the machinery is installed and works begin.



Traffic marshals will oversee vehicle movements and deliveries will be carefully coordinated to minimise disruption in the surrounding streets. Monitoring equipment remains in place across the site to measure noise, dust and vibration in real-time throughout the works.

Councillor Jim Millard, Deputy Leader of Richmond Council and Lead Member for Finance, said: *“This project represents a major investment in Twickenham and our borough’s future.*

“While you might not always see the early construction work, it’s laying the groundwork for a thriving, welcoming new riverside that residents, businesses and visitors will enjoy for many years to come.”

The regeneration will create a new civic heart for the town centre, reconnecting Twickenham with the River Thames. The piling works follow the recent completion of demolition along King Street.

What’s coming:

- New public spaces including terraced lawns, gardens, children’s play areas and riverside seating
- 45 new homes – including 50% affordable housing – alongside new shops, café and community spaces
- Improved pedestrian connections between King Street, Wharf Lane, Water Lane and the riverside

Next week at Richmond Council

On Tuesday, 24th March, the **Environment, Sustainability, Culture, and Sports Committee** will meet to discuss (1) Culture Richmond delivery update, (2) Low waste working group report. The meeting will commence at 7 pm and will be held at York House. Please click [HERE](#) for more details.

On Thursday, 26th March, the **Education and Children Services Committee** will meet to discuss (1) a ward concern about the location of Thomas House School (2) Achieving for Children Budget which including measures to reduce cost of home to school transport and reducing spending on EHCP plans for SEND children (3) School test and exam results, (4) Post-16 education offer. The meeting will commence at 10 am and will be held at Brent Civic Centre, Wembley. 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](#).

We received an Award!!

Thai Upon Thames, East Twickenham

On Friday Thai Upon Thames - Community Cleans lead person Mark Hardy received a Mayors recognition award from Mayor Croft of Hounslow Borough. This is a huge honour for him and those working in the restaurant who have also done volunteering with us. This adds to our 3rd place in Richmond Business Awards 2025 – Environmental section and shortlisted for Richmond Council Business Contribution in the Community Award 24/25. We are mainly in Hounslow and Richmond Boroughs but we have also been to 5 other London Boroughs as well as Surrey, Dorset and Bucks!

Although our main task is litter picking, streets, roundabouts, parks, we have also done river cleaning and some conservation work too. On our own or with established groups like Friends of River Crane Environment, Habitats & Heritage, Friends of Thornbury Park etc.

At the end of last year we gave to local good causes dine in voucher for our restaurant, signed Chelsea shirts, tins full of change for cancer charities, plus £800 in donation payments, including to food and hygiene banks as well as conservation charities.

So why not come a pay a visit to a lovely Thai restaurant that is really giving back to the local communities and has brilliant reviews too!

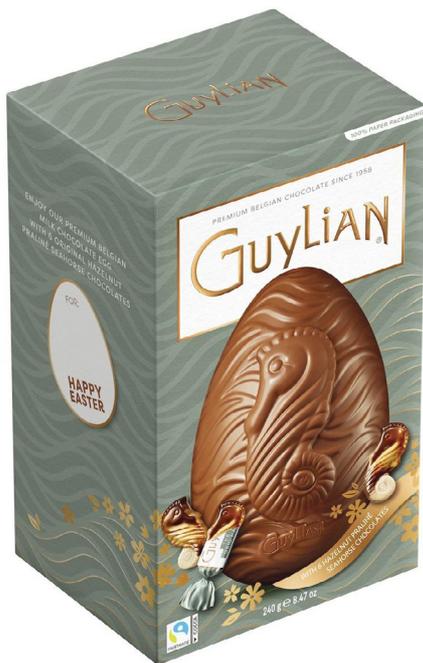


Hop To It - It's Easter Weekend Very Soon

With the recent cost of living increases, and the manufacturers need to cut costs, I'd like to give you a word of caution regarding your chocolate Easter egg shopping. There are a lot of well known brands that are now cutting back on ingredients and offering a very substandard product, basically one that is often made with all sorts of rubbish ingredients. The simple answer is to check the ingredients list on the product - sometimes the cheaper own label products are, in fact, far superior to the branded ones and have no 'nasties'. Here are a few Easter gift suggestions, but of course the supermarkets are also full of suggestions with a wide range of own label and branded products.

Generally, the darker the chocolate, the higher the cacao content. But as Easter is such a special occasion in our Christian calendar, it's worth splashing out a bit, and going for quality, rather than quantity.

Companies such as **Chococo** source the chocolate ethically, and don't use any plastic in the packaging. From £16.50 with Chococo, you are assured a fabulous chocolate Easter egg - and if you really want to splash out you can pay £50 for a giant 50/50 half 47% Colombia origin milk chocolate, and half 72% Ecuador origin dark chocolate, for the family to share. Have a look at the whole range [here](#)



If, like my daughter, you're a fan of those quirky shell-shaped chocolates, then look no further than this 240g **Guylian Seashells Egg**. Now available for a reduced price of £11 (from £14) the egg is embossed with the iconic seahorse and comes complete with six individually wrapped praline seahorse chocolates. Fairtrade cacao, natural ingredients and no palm oil, this is also in fully recyclable paper packaging. Available from major retailers include Waitrose, Ocado and Morrisons.



For youngsters, how about these cute Easter treats from London-based indie brand [Ask Mummy & Daddy](#). Known for creating gourmet confectionery with a playful twist I thought these pouches of 'carrots' and 'bunny poo' are a great gift for children or adults. Best of all,

every treat in the collection contains only natural flavourings, as well as being palm oil free and carbon neutral friendly, allowing you to indulge guilt-free and sustainably. Another great idea from **Ask Mummy & Daddy** is a jar of sweets that are ideal either as an Easter table centrepiece, or for popping into paper bags and hiding them in the garden for little ones to seek. Packed with speckled chocolate eggs, sour jellies, bunny-shaped mallows and more. £12.99/569g and both of the above are also available from Selfridges.





Tony's Chocolonely has this rather cute egg box of mini Belgian chocolate eggs filled with a range of flavours like milk chocolate almond honey nougat and dark chocolate almond sea salt. Excellent value at [£4.75](#) from **Waitrose, John Lewis** and **Ocado**. With a mission to make all chocolate production slave-free, the pack is unequally divided to illustrate inequality in the wider chocolate industry.

Marcolini stepped onto the catwalk, highlighting what goes on behind the scenes of the great fashion houses and the passionate labour of artisan chocolatiers. Every egg displays the details of meticulous workmanship: pleats, scissors, buttons,



tape measures, and thimbles. To splash out, consider **Œufs**



Couture: a genuine chocolate work of art, embellished with delicate haberdashery items made of solid chocolate. (from £29 to a highly indulgent £185). Or perhaps these sewing boxes, inspired by the workshops of the great fashion houses. They contain solid chocolates, a reinvented Easter surprise transformed into delicate haberdashery items (small buttons and

thimbles) in three shades of chocolate: dark, hazelnut milk and caramel white.



If you want to treat someone with a fabulous surprise, you could always send them a hamper packed with all sorts of Easter treats. I love this one from [hampers.com](#). It's **The Easter Egg Gift Box**, at £42: The centrepiece of this gift is a beautifully crafted honeycomb milk chocolate Easter egg from **Kernow Chocolate**. A family-run Cornish business, Kernow Chocolate one of Cornwall's largest and highly celebrated artisan chocolate makers. Hampers.com also includes a varied and interesting assortment of chocolates and sweet treats, from classic mini eggs, a millionaire slice to an indulgent mini chocolate loaf cake. There's something for all the family to enjoy over the Easter weekend. And it arrives hand-packed into a sturdy gift box, The full range of [Easter gift hampers](#) is online and there's still time to organise a special surprise treat.

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EXPERIENCE PACKAGE



The Deep Blue Sea

by Terence Rattigan

TTC at the Hampton Hill Theatre until 21st March

If you are seeking vintage Rattigan look no further than *The Deep Blue Sea*.

In the intimate setting of Hampton Hill's Coward Studio, the atmosphere is claustrophobic and unsettling. A faithful reproduction of 1950s post-war Britain, with floral curtains, cafe chairs and fringed standard lamps, it is set in a single day in a north-west London boarding house complete with landlady (Melanie Richardson) in obligatory headscarf and housecoat.



There have been a host of revivals in the West End and regional theatres. And what a line up of stellar performances over the last half century. From the première's Peggy Ashcroft to Tamsin Greig these are huge theatrical feet for Mia Skytte to fill as Hester. She does so faultlessly, conveying emotional depth as she sees her life crumble.



Hester has split from her husband High Court judge, Sir William Collyer. Richard Scott plays the pin-striped and comfortable Collyer buttoned up and smug. Yet, despite their impending divorce from Hester, he still holds a candle to her.

Hester has fallen for the dashing handsome test pilot Freddie. Their love-lust affair proves a dangerous liaison that takes a desperate toll on them both. A failed suicide attempt, a downward spiral into booze-fuelled depression, passionate and destructive emotions in equal measure conspire to make powerfully engaging drama.

A clergyman's daughter with the looks and style of an English rose, Hester paints pretty landscapes as an escape from repression, societal expectations and the unbearable burden of unrequited love. Josh Miller portrays a dashing and dangerous Freddie. Being behind with the rent, unemployed, and feeling his life stopped in 1940, Freddie seeks solace in golf and Scotch.



While the ill-starred lovers are the focus of Rattigan's powerfully tense play, other characters provide breadth to this production. Steve Taylor shines as the gruff Mr Miller, a struck-off doctor turned bookie's clerk, who makes the most of his one-off lines of dark humour. Despite underlying bleakness and disappointment there is lightness too, thanks to performances from nervous neighbours Philip (Hugo Allain) and Ann (Raphaella Simon), and blundering friend Jackie (Jasper Loxton).

Director Anna Piggott keeps this classic vintage play, first performed in 1952, in sharp relevant focus, in an arresting piece of compelling theatre.

Read Gill Martin's review at www.markaspen.com/2026/03/18/deep-blue-sea-ttc

Photography by Kim Harding

You Stupid Darkness!

by Sam Steiner

Putney Theatre Company at the Putney Arts Theatre Studio until 21st March

On night shift four volunteers answer desperate telephone calls as the world around them falls apart, the aftermath of apocalyptic disaster. The personal fallout is the crumbling of their own lives, as they grapple and struggle to stay strong.

A triumph for the Putney Theatre Company, *You Stupid Darkness* is well crafted, yet deeply disturbing, as we are drawn into an on-going battle with self-control.

The acting space of the Studio is small, but effectively used. The smoky atmosphere effectively enhances the ambiance of Rich Evans' lighting while Nick Wells' sound design takes us smoothly into this world. The chilling implication of gas masks on the hooks, the falling posters, and stagehands clad in anti-radiation garb, all make a powerful statement.



The premise of this grim setting occupied by strong characters brings buoyancy and humour, while speaking volumes about their own hopefulness against all the odds.

The opening scene is lively, as a work-experience boy Joey is initiated into their private hell. Whilst Joey is too young to share the other's despair, Matt Rimmington portrays the mixture his naivety with his gradual awakening.

The four actors craft the words of this intense piece with skill. Jessica Wallis as the lonely and fearful Angie, initially the office clown, brings us to the edge of hysteria (and back).

Katie Kelly creates a Frances who, staying positive whilst grasping at straws, copes admirably with her own personal issues.

There is poignant irony in Frances' pregnancy and the issue of bringing children into a world where everything else is dying, and Kelly's is a very intense and intelligent performance.

As Jon, Sam Moore gives a first impression of Jon being bitter and edgy, but his coal black humour is swiftly delivered, a laugh-or-cry presence with powerful force ... plus admirable trombone playing.

Sensitively and skilfully directed by Justin Hopper, all is very convincingly done, depicting individuals who, while desperately trying to hold on to their selves, stay sincere for those tragic incoming calls. One feels the agony of their patience and their positivity for a succession of complete strangers, while themselves teetering on despair.

You Stupid Darkness is a remarkable piece of theatre by a talented company.



Read Heather Moulson's review at www.markaspen.com/2026/03/19/stupid-darkness

Photography by Steve Lippitt

The Dawn of Reckoning

by Mark Bastin

MBA Productions at The White Bear, Kennington until 28th March

In *The Lure of the Two-Hander*, director Matthew Parker has written that this format enabled him to work *The Dawn of Reckoning* with his two actors to "...create something quite powerful and intense". He has certainly succeeded in this riveting production.

The intimate space is appropriate for the dynamics of this play, which is set in the resident's lounge of The Clevedon, Bayswater, a small hotel with an air of faded grandeur and tired décor. However, the chairs are comfortable and there is an honesty bar.



Ruth and Helena meet here by chance at 3am on a foggy January night. Helena, a successful paediatric neurosurgeon, and Ruth, a celebrated children's book illustrator, first met at university. We learn that these once inseparable best friends, who together navigated the frantic years of university, had been estranged for over a quarter century.

Helena is a no-nonsense, clear eyed Northern woman who does not suffer fools gladly. Professionally successful, having carved out an outstanding international career, Helena was once a sexually liberated "punk princess", whose driving ambition and hedonism had been shaped by a chip on her shoulder about succeeding in a different social and economic environment. In contrast, Ruth is an artistic, yet buttoned-up, woman from the Home Counties. In the escapades of university life, Ruth followed while Helena led. As Helena observed, Ruth was "compliant" ... until the day she became involved with Helena's husband, Anthony.

In these respective roles, Bryonie Pritchard and Jilly Bond give polished, subtly nuanced portrayals of two very different characters, forever bound together by their shared past. The dialogue moves naturalistically and convincingly.

Gradually, a guarded reconciliation emerges, as they reminisce about their wild student days, despite the severity of the rupture in their relationship. However, the reason for their alienation runs deeper than merely their relationship with the recently deceased Anthony.

The play's climax delivers a cathartic realisation that both have suffered, and that the way forward to emotional rehabilitation lies recognising that forgiveness and reconciliation are more powerful forces than ossified entrenched attitudes, schism and alienation.



The Dawn of Reckoning is a play about the powerful healing properties of the second chance, especially a second chance which arrives when and where it's least expected.

Read Harry Zimmerman's review at www.markaspen.com/2026/03/20/dawn-reckon

Photography by Rob Cheatley

Reading And Open Auditions for “Merry Wives of Windsor”

As the first stage of their preparations for their Summer Shakespeare production, the RSS are offering a reading of THE MERRY WIVES of WINDSOR on Monday evening, March 23rd at the Mary Wallace Theatre. All are welcome to join in, starting at 7.45pm. N.B. You do not need to be a member to read for a role.

Auditions for the production follow on Sunday the 29th close to Twickenham’s “Naked Ladies” fountain in York House gardens at 11am – and on the evening of Monday the 30th onstage at the Mary Wallace Theatre. Again, non-members are encouraged to read for a part in the production, which plays from July 13th - 18th.

MERRY WIVES is the latest in our annual Open Air shows which, for several years, have been performed in the delightful Fountain gardens. If you believe you are the ideal Falstaff - or if you’d like to play either Mistress Page or Ford - join us for the reading and auditions.

Further information about the production and the RSS at www.richmondshakespeare.org.uk

The Mary Wallace is situated on Twickenham’s Embankment, close to the Barmy Arms.

JOIN US

A vibrant, dynamic and welcoming amateur theatre company in the heart of Twickenham (south-west London), the RSS specialises in bringing the timeless works of Shakespeare to life, along with captivating performances from various genres. Whether you're a performer, a behind-the-scenes maestro, or a theatre lover, there are multiple opportunities to be involved. We believe in the power of inclusivity, fostering a warm and supportive environment.

richmondshakespeare.org.uk

THE MARY WALLACE THEATRE
THE EMBANKMENT, TWICKENHAM TW1 3DU

The Sunday Times Best Places to Live 2026

From The Sunday Times Best Places to Live

*Richmond named the overall Best Place to Live in London
Norwich, Norfolk named the best place to live in the UK*

Richmond has been named the best place to live in London in the annual Sunday Times Best Places to Live guide.



Richmond (Photo ©Berkley Driscoll)

The lucky folk of TW11 are spoilt for ways to enjoy a break from concrete and cars in this most serene corner of the capital. No wonder Richmond is regularly voted the happiest borough in London. They can stroll beside the river or patrol the magnificent 2,500-acre Royal Park. Richmond, with its picturesque green, feels like a small town in a big city. The high street is on the up after a spell in the doldrums and the restaurant scene has a new spring in its step.

Six other locations in London are included in the comprehensive guide. In total, 72 places across the UK were selected by The Sunday Times to showcase the best of Britain, with **Norwich, Norfolk** named the overall national winner. The guide is published online on Friday 20 March, with an abridged version appearing as a magazine supplement on Sunday 22nd.

The full list of London locations is:

- Richmond
- Bow
- Crouch End
- Fulham
- Plumstead
- Southwark (Bermondsey-Waterloo)
- Walthamstow

Please note: apart from the winner, the entries are not ranked but published in alphabetical order.

Helen Davies, editorial projects director and Best Places to Live editor, says: “This guide is a great opportunity to highlight the best places in Britain. It is full of places that show that our village, town and city centres can still be full of life, as well as places bursting with natural beauty, culture, connectivity and most importantly a sense of community.

Our expert team of judges visit every location on the list and talk to the locals to find out what they love about the place they live. These judges have travelled the length and breadth of the UK, from the Scottish Highlands to the Cornish coast, selecting the top towns and villages, suburbs and cities for the 2026 guide. One thing all our chosen locations have in common is that the people who live in them are proud to call them home.”

The Sunday Times’s expert judges have visited all the locations and assessed factors from schools to transport, broadband speeds and mobile signal to amenities, as well as access to high-quality green spaces and the health of the high street.

The chosen locations come in all shapes and sizes, from the best bits of big lively cities such as Leeds, Liverpool, Glasgow, Cardiff and London to the tiny, rural villages of the Vale of Eden in Cumbria and the Vale of Belvoir in the Midlands. The whole country is covered, from Falmouth and Penryn in west Cornwall to Braemar in the Scottish Highlands and Ballycastle in Northern Ireland.

There are more new entries than ever before in this year’s guide. As always, the judges looked for thriving locations with a strong sense of community rather than famous names with high house prices.

The guide has been sponsored by the mortgage lender Lloyds Banking Group for the first time this year, which has provided an average house price for each location.

*“For many, navigating the housing market can feel overwhelming,” says **Kate Townson, Lloyds relationship and customer development director.** “At Lloyds, our aim is to support all home buyers, including those taking their very first step onto the property ladder, with clear guidance, practical tools and tailored products that help them move forward with confidence and clarity.*

“Our partnership with The Sunday Times Best Places to Live aims to give trusted insight into communities across the UK, helping homebuyers to make confident, informed decisions about their future home,” Townson added.

Broadband speeds were provided by Thinkbroadband.com, the UK’s leading independent guide to broadband. We’ve also included mobile signal coverage, using network data from signalchecker.co.uk.

<https://www.thetimes.com/best-places-to-live>



THE SUNDAY TIMES

From Lockdown Hobby to Bespoke Celebration Cakes: The Story Behind Helens Bakes

From Helens Bakes

In the heart of Twickenham, a small baking business with big dreams is quietly becoming a go-to name for beautiful, bespoke celebration cakes. What began as a simple act of comfort during the uncertainty of the pandemic has grown into a flourishing creative venture – **Helens Bakes**.

Like many, Helen turned to baking during lockdown. What started as cakes for family and friends soon sparked something more. Encouraged by the people closest to her, she took a leap of faith and transformed her passion into a business – one built on creativity, quality and heartfelt joy.

With a professional background in marketing within the fashion and beauty industries, Helen brings a sharp design eye and a natural sense of style to every creation. Her cakes are not only delicious – they are visually striking, thoughtfully designed and deeply personal. Each one reflects her love of colour, texture and detail.



Although largely self-taught, Helen strengthened her skills with an intensive five-day introductory baking and decorating course at Fair Cake in Greenwich. The experience refined her technique, built her confidence and gave her the final push she needed to fully embrace her small cake business.

Today, Helens Bakes specialises in bespoke celebration cakes, cupcakes and sweet treats for all occasions across West London and beyond. Helen has developed a particular love for:

- Elegant edible flower cakes
- Fun and imaginative children's birthday cakes
- Romantic, beautifully styled wedding cakes



Her philosophy is simple: a cake should taste as good as it looks. Using high-quality ingredients, each bake is crafted with care, passion and precision. The result is a perfect balance of flavour and beauty – a centrepiece that brings people together and creates lasting memories.

"I love my job," Helen says. "There is nothing more rewarding than seeing someone's reaction when they collect their cake. My aim is always to create the prettiest bake that tastes amazing and brings real joy to the occasion."

As a proudly independent local business in Twickenham, Helens Bakes continues to grow through word of mouth, loyal customers and a genuine passion for celebration.

Website: www.helensbakes.com



Nutrition & Hydration Week: 'The food at Royal Star & Garter's a damn sight better than what I served to soldiers in Korea!'

From Royal Star & Garter

An Army veteran has recalled serving food to hundreds of soldiers when he served in Korea ahead of Nutrition & Hydration Week.

Bob Sewell, a resident at Royal Star & Garter in Surbiton, served in the Army Catering Corps.

He spoke about his experiences and the importance of a good and healthy diet ahead of Nutrition & Hydration Week, which is running from 16-22 March.

Royal Star & Garter is a charity which provides loving compassionate care to veterans and their families living with disability or dementia, from Homes in Solihull, Surbiton, High Wycombe and Worthing.

Bob served in the Army for six years from 1954. He had no culinary experience but *"was sent to training school for cooks"*. His first posting was with the Northampton Regiment, and he was sent to Korea where he cooked meals three times a day for 200 men. He recalled: *"Everyone says what terrible food it was in the Army, but we only had primitive gas stoves to use."* Bob went on to serve in Japan and Hong Kong and, after demobbing, worked as a chef at a hospital for children and young people with Down's syndrome. He said: *"The skills I learnt in the Army stayed with me and benefited me for the rest of my life."*



Nutrition & Hydration Week promotes the vital importance of food and drink in maintaining health, wellbeing and recovery, particularly within health and social care settings.

Bob has lived at Royal Star & Garter since 2022, and said he looks forward to mealtimes, where he sits with friends and enjoys breakfast, lunch and dinner. He said: *"I used to cook for many people, so I know how challenging it is. The food served at Royal Star & Garter is delicious and healthy and I dare say a damn sight better than the food I was serving to soldiers in Korea in the 1950s! But it's not just tasty, it's fresh and healthy and full of goodness."*

Royal Star & Garter Homes also host regular meetings between residents and chefs, where they can feedback on the food and discuss menus.

Shirley Hall is Director of Care & Wellbeing at Royal Star & Garter. She said: *"Food brings people together and plays an important role in the care we offer in all our Homes. A great deal of thought and care goes into the meals we provide. Eating and drinking healthily can maintain residents' physical strength, cognitive function and emotional wellbeing. It can prevent illnesses and reduce the use of medication. All this is crucial in the care for older adults."*

The Surbiton Home also hosts a Lunch Club, which aims to tackle loneliness and isolation in the Armed Forces community, and is open to veterans and partners of veterans living with disability, or early-stage dementia. The sessions consist of a two-hour visit with a two or three-course meal, conversation and support from staff, and usually cost £10.

Royal Star & Garter in Surbiton is welcoming new residents. For more information on this, Lunch Club or to work for the Home, go to www.starandgarter.org/surbiton



**Royal Star
& Garter**

Care with courage

St Mary's University

Sunshine, spirit, and strong performances at Varsity 2026

Under bright sunshine and clear skies, St Mary's University travelled as three-time defending champions to the campus of Brunel University for Varsity 2026 – the annual event once again showcased the very best of student sport, community spirit, and university pride.

football 2s (2–0).

However, Brunel began to build momentum with wins in basketball (85–45), women's athletics (9–2), and men's tennis (4–2), extending their lead as the day progressed to 13–6.



Rugby union was one of the standout contests of the day, with Brunel edging a dramatic 43–42 victory, and in powerlifting where St Mary's won 59.7–57.9.

St Mary's continued to compete with intensity until the final events, securing wins in women's football (4–0) and netball

The opening fixtures set the tone for the day, with results shared across both Universities. Brunel took an early lead in men's badminton (8–0), but St Mary's responded through women's badminton (5–3).

1s (37–27), alongside a strong performance from netball 2s earlier in the day (38–28).

Despite these efforts, Brunel secured the Varsity title with a final score of 15–9.

As the morning unfolded, Brunel secured wins in cricket (121–86) and men's football 3s (2–1), while St Mary's delivered impressive performances in men's hockey (4–1) and rugby league (34–24), bringing the overall score level at 3–3.

While the result marks the end of St Mary's three-year hold on the Varsity trophy, the day remained a powerful celebration of sport and community.

The afternoon saw a series of tightly contested fixtures as men's futsal (10–8), the dance showcase (316–301), and women's hockey (3–2) all narrowly went Brunel's way.

From athletes to supporters, the presence of the St Mary's community on Brunel's campus was felt throughout the day. The energy, encouragement, and pride shown across every fixture reflected the values at the heart of the university.

St Mary's continued to fight back, with strong victories in men's athletics (8–3) and men's



St Mary's
University
Twickenham
London

Care Home Congratulates 'Caring' Employee of The Month

Residents and staff at Lynde House Care Home in Twickenham applauded as Care Assistant, Subin Prajapati, was named 'Employee of the Month' for his kindness, patience, and genuine compassion. Subin truly makes a difference every single day, whether it's offering a comforting word, taking time to have a chat or simply bringing a smile to someone's face, he goes the extra mile every day to make sure all his residents have everything they need.

Subin was nominated for Employee of the Month by resident's family Dr. Christine Pounder, who felt he really deserved extra recognition for the amazing work he does every day.

Subin was congratulated by the home's Senior General Manager, Alison McIntosh, for the achievement and was presented with a £25 voucher as a special thank you.

Alison McIntosh, Senior General Manager at Lynde House said: *"I'm delighted to have such a caring and talented carer working as part of our team and I hope this 'Employee of the Month' award goes some way towards showing how much we value Subin's hard work. Our residents are at the heart of everything we do, and it's carers like Subin who make Lynde House really feel like home."*

Subin Prajapati commented: *"It is so lovely to be named Employee of the Month and to have recognition for doing a job I love. I am part of a fantastic team at Lynde House, we all pull together and support each other. It is wonderful to work alongside such lovely colleagues and a privilege to care for our fantastic residents."*



Volunteer & Service Manager vacancy

If you have experience working with volunteers, service users, and community-based services, this could be the role for you.

Hampton & Hampton Hill Voluntary Care is seeking a Volunteer & Service Manager to play a pivotal role in developing and managing our services and volunteer programmes at Greenwood Community Centre. The role combines strategic oversight with hands-on operational management, supporting both outreach services and the day-to-day running of the Centre.

The post is offered on a full-time basis (37.5 hours per week), ideally worked Tuesday to Saturday, with some flexibility for the right candidate. Occasional evenings may also be required.

This is an exciting opportunity to shape community-led services, support volunteers, and help strengthen a well-established local charity focused on reducing loneliness and isolation.

For full details and to apply, please visit:

<https://greenwoodcommunity.org.uk/news-updates/>



Teddington school children become 'hygiene heroes' fighting for girl's education

From Tearfund

For World Water Day (22nd March), Toilet Twinning is highlighting how schools in London and around the UK can help girls reach their full potential. More than 400 million children globally don't have access to a toilet at school* and this can affect girls more acutely. Girls often miss school because they have nowhere private to change their sanitary wear.

Toilet Twinning is working to tackle this issue by supporting communities and schools to build clean, safe toilets, and providing education on handwashing and menstrual health. This is a mission that UK schools are getting behind, raising vital funds to twin their own school toilets and learn about global water and sanitation issues. Toilet Twinning is launching a new 'Schools Resource'. The resource helps classes explore the vital role of WASH (water, sanitation and hygiene) around the world, offering a handwashing guide, trivia quiz, and lots of fun ways to fundraise, amongst other activities.

A primary school in London recently raised nearly £1000 by getting pupils involved in the Toilet Twinning initiative through awareness raising and fundraising activities.

Helen Sinclair and Jo Hamblett, Sustainability Leads at St Mary's and St Peter's CE Primary School, Teddington said: *"Children who were part of the 'Eco Warriors', a group of 36 students across key stages, began brainstorming ways to raise money for this worthy cause. Pupils designed posters to raise awareness of the campaign. They also fundraised by holding a mufti day, and collecting money after the school's Nativity play and carol concert. It truly felt like a whole-school effort. Thanks to the enthusiasm and generosity of our school community, the children were extremely proud to have raised a total of £942.85."*

In South Sudan, girls are missing out on education due to lack of access to a safe toilet. Girls like Ritah (16). For a long time there was only one 'toilet' at her school, a hole in the ground without solid walls or a proper lockable door. One day, Ritah went to change her sanitary pad and realised a boy from her class was watching her. Ritah said *"He saw me, so I stopped. He ran away to tell his friends, and they started laughing. I was very embarrassed. I left school that day and never returned until an improved latrine for girls was constructed."*

Through our local partners, Toilet Twinning and Tearfund constructed single-sex latrines in schools and camps for internally displaced people in Central Equatoria, South Sudan.

Ritah continued, *"We, the girls in this school, are very happy. This is a big change from the first pit latrine to having our own separate washrooms with water and shelter."*

A Year 5 pupil from St Mary's and St Peter's said: *"Supporting Toilet Twinning made me feel warm inside because it helped our school understand that people in different countries need help to have proper toilets. It also reminded me to be grateful for the things we have. I really enjoyed voting for the photo that would go on our certificates because everyone got to share their opinion. I feel proud of what we have achieved together."*

Stuart Lee, Tearfund's Director of Global Fundraising and Communications said *"Projects like this one in South Sudan bring lasting change in the lives of individuals and communities, allowing girls like Ritah to have the future they deserve. I'm so excited that our new resource will help more schools, like St. Mary's and St. Peter's, become 'hygiene heroes' and play a vital part in ensuring girls in some of the world's poorest communities can stay in school and many others have access to a safe and clean space to go to the loo."*



Some of the Eco Warriors group with their teacher Jo Hamblett, from St Mary's and St Peter's CE Primary School, Teddington
Photo Credit: Madeleine Gordon/Tearfund

Guinness Women's Six Nations Squad Announcement

Red Roses head coach John Mitchell has named a 38-player squad for the 2026 Guinness Women's Six Nations.



Megan Jones will captain the side, supported by vice-captains Amy Cokayne and Alex Matthews. The squad - made up of 22 forwards and 16 backs - has a combined 1,143 international caps and includes 25 Rugby World Cup winners.

Seven players are uncapped at senior international level: Christiana Balogun, Millie David, Haineala Lutui, Annabel Meta, Sarah Parry, Demelza Short and Jodie Verghese.

"It's great to be back together, ready to earn the right again following the Rugby World Cup," Mitchell said. The impact of the tournament across the country has been outstanding, and it's reflected in the incredible ticket sales - not just for our matches at Allianz Stadium and Ashton Gate, but across the Six Nations as a whole. As Red Roses, what comes next is a fresh start. The Six Nations is hugely important to us, and we know success in this competition has to be earned every time. We're excited by the energy the younger players will bring into the squad, and alongside our experienced players. What is important to me is to stay open-minded about player combinations and I will observe how people compete against each other and deal with that type of pressure. It's just down to who is going to take the handbrake off, attack it, and expresses themselves in our game."

The squad will assemble at the England Rugby Performance Centre at Pennyhill Park on Monday 23 March to begin preparations for the tournament.

The Red Roses open their campaign against Ireland at Allianz Stadium on Saturday 11 April, with more than 67,000 tickets already sold – a tournament record - and the top tier open for the first time for a Women's Six Nations game. Their second home fixture will see them face Wales at Ashton Gate in Bristol, where a record home crowd away from Allianz Stadium has already been confirmed. crowd away from Allianz Stadium has already been con-firmed.

Tickets remain on sale for both matches priced from £20 for adults and £5 for juniors and can be purchased at englandrugby.com/tickets.

Red Roses Guinness Women's Six Nations Squad.

Forwards (22)

Christiana Balogun (Bristol Bears, uncapped)
Sarah Bern (Bristol Bears, 79 caps)
Hannah Botterman (Bristol Bears, 62 caps)
Abi Burton (Trailfinders Women, 4 caps)
May Campbell (Saracens, 5 caps)
Mackenzie Carson (Gloucester-Hartpury, 23 caps)
Kelsey Clifford (Saracens, 21 caps)
Amy Cokayne (Sale Sharks, 89 caps) – vice captain
Maddie Feaunati (Exeter Chiefs, 23 caps)
Liz Hanlon (Harlequins, 1 cap)
Daisy Hibbert-Jones (Loughborough Lightning, 1 cap)

Lilli Ives Campion (Loughborough Lightning, 5 caps)
Sadia Kabeya (Loughborough Lightning, 28 caps)
Haineala Lutui (Loughborough Lightning, uncapped)
Alex Matthews (Gloucester-Hartpury, 81 caps) – vice captain
Annabel Meta (Trailfinders Women, uncapped)
Maud Muir (Gloucester-Hartpury, 48 caps)
Marlie Packer (Saracens, 112 caps)
Connie Powell (Harlequins, 19 caps)
Demelza Short (Bristol Bears, uncapped)
Morwenna Talling (Sale Sharks, 28 caps)
Jodie Verghese (Saracens, uncapped)

Backs (16)

Holly Aitchison (Sale Sharks, 44 caps)
Jess Breach (Saracens, 53 caps)
Millie David (Bristol Bears, uncapped)
Zoe Harrison (Saracens, 65 caps)
Tatyana Heard (Gloucester-Hartpury, 36 caps)
Natasha Hunt (Gloucester-Hartpury, 88 caps)
Megan Jones (Trailfinders Women, 33 caps) – captain
Ellie Kildunne (Harlequins, 57 caps)

Claudia Moloney-MacDonald (Exeter Chiefs, 36 caps)
Lucy Packer (Harlequins, 38 caps)
Sarah Parry (Harlequins, uncapped)
Flo Robinson (Exeter Chiefs, 1 cap)
Helena Rowland (Loughborough Lightning, 46 caps)
Emma Sing (Gloucester-Hartpury, 13 caps)
Mia Venner (Gloucester-Hartpury, 2 caps)
Bo Westcombe-Evans (Loughborough Lightning, 2 caps)

Unavailable for selection: Lark Atkin-Davies, Rosie Galligan, Cath O'Donnell, Jade Shekells, Zoe Stratford, Abbie Ward, Ella Wyrwas

Megan Jones has been named captain of the Red Roses for 2026

A lynchpin of the England squad, the 29-year-old replaces 2025 Women's Rugby World Cup-winning captain Zoe Stratford, who is expecting her first child.

"Firstly, I'm really excited for Zoe and wish her and Strats every happiness on their news," Jones said.

"It's a huge honour to have been named captain of the Red Roses. Mitch and I have built a strong relationship over the past three years and it's a great feeling to have his trust to lead the group along with a tight leadership team.

"I'm buzzing to get back in camp with the girls for the Six Nations. I'll just be the same old Meg and know I'll have great support from Zoe, the leaders and the whole squad."

Jones steps up from her vice-captaincy role following a stellar 2025, which saw her help secure a Six Nations Grand Slam and a Rugby World Cup winners' medal, as well as earning a place on the World Player of the Year shortlist.

She made her England debut aged just 18 in 2015 before going on to become a two-time Olympian with Great Britain.

Starting 12 of the Red Roses' 13 matches in 2025, the centre has also proved influential in Premiership Women's Rugby, making seven appearances in Trailfinders Women's pursuit of a top-four finish.

Jones will be supported by vice-captains Amy Cokayne and Alex Matthews, both of whom have earned more than 80 caps for England.

Head coach John Mitchell said:

"Meg reflects our values; her personality, capabilities and leadership are hugely valuable to the Red Roses squad. She brings an infectious energy that lifts those around her and has had a huge influence on our culture and connections over the past three years.

Not only is Meg highly respected, but she also consistently produces high-level performances and leads by example every time she takes to the field."



Match Preview: Leeds United v Brentford

Written by Brentford Football Club

Brentford take on Leeds United at Elland Road in the Premier League on Saturday (8pm kick-off GMT), live on *Sky Sports*.

The Bees have won five of their last seven away league games, but travel to Yorkshire to face a difficult test under the lights against Daniel Farke's side.

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*: Set-pieces could prove decisive on Saturday night

Brentford and Leeds' respective penalty records this season will be under the spotlight.

Keith Andrews' side have had the mixed fortune of being awarded the most penalties (eight) in the top flight this term, while also having more spot-kicks (seven) given against them.

Penalty specialist Caoimhín Kelleher's prowess between the sticks has meant that only four of the seven penalties the Bees have conceded have been converted. The Irish stopper excelled in duels from 12 yards during his time at Liverpool, and his uncanny knack for reading penalty takers' intentions means he is currently the only goalkeeper to save multiple spot-kicks in the top tier this season.

Leeds, meanwhile, have suffered more goals from penalties than any team in the division. All six of the penalties conceded by the Whites have rippled the back of the net - and Brentford striker Igor Thiago will be hoping to add to the league-high six penalties he has already plundered this season.

With eight games of the season remaining, both sides have plenty on the line. Currently 15th in the table, Daniel Farke's side will aim to buffer the three-point cushion that separates them from the relegation spots, while their visitors from west London will look to seize the day and cut the four-point gap to the Champions League places.

Only Arsenal (25), Manchester United (24) and Manchester City (21) have won more points than Brentford (19) since the turn of the year, and their excellent form in 2026 has been forged on the road. However, 22 of Leeds' 32 Premier League points (69 per cent) have been won on their own patch - and they will hope to harness the support of a vociferous Elland Road this weekend.

Talk of penalties is timely in the wake of Leeds' 0-0 draw at Crystal Palace last time out. The visitors won their sixth spot-kick of the season at Selhurst Park, but Dominic Calvert-Lewin was left with his head in his hands after dragging his effort wide of the target.



Calvert-Lewin will be fresh in the memories of Brentford fans after his header in the 1-1 draw in the reverse fixture at the Gtech prior to Christmas. The former Everton striker is one of only two English players to hit double figures for Premier League goals this season, along with Brighton's Danny Welbeck (10 apiece).

Leeds' missed penalty against the Eagles stemmed from a corner, and their data this season underlines just how important set-pieces are to the Yorkshire club. With 13 goals from corners, free-kicks and throws this season, no team has scored a higher percentage of their Premier League goals from set-pieces (35 per cent).

Brentford are at the other end of the spectrum in terms of their reliance on set-piece goals: only Manchester City (12 per cent) have netted a lower percentage of their goals from dead balls (excluding penalties) than the Bees (17 per cent).

It is wise to expect the unexpected at this stage of the season, but both sides' numbers suggest a direct and physical encounter lies in store.

Brentford rank first in the Premier League for long balls per game (57), with Leeds (54) not far behind, while both sides also sit in the top five for aerial duels won.

Another shared trait is their preference for central shooting positions, with Brentford (77 per cent) and Leeds (74 per cent) heavily favouring efforts from the middle of the opposition box.

In this context, it would be no surprise if a high-pressure moment from 12 yards proved central to the outcome.

Scout Report

Dan Long, Sky Sports: Leeds one of the hardest teams to beat in the league

For the first three months of 2025/26, it looked like Leeds' season was heading in one direction.

They lost six of their seven Premier League games throughout October and November and thus sank into the relegation zone. But, during the final defeat in that run - away at Manchester City - came a turning point.

Clearly feeling the pressure after seeing his side 2-0 down, Daniel Farke switched to a 3-5-2 formation at half-time. By 68 minutes, it was 2-2, thanks to goals from Dominic Calvert-Lewin and Lukas Nmecha. Phil Foden still managed to win it for City in the 91st minute, but the new approach had worked.

Since then, Leeds have become one of the hardest teams in the league to beat.

The first two games after the visit to the Etihad were both at home, against Chelsea and Liverpool. They won the first 3-1, then came from 2-0 down to draw 3-3 in the second. Over the course of the next eight, they lost only once - and that was only courtesy of a 102nd-minute winner from Harvey Barnes at Newcastle.

The change in fortunes, from a defensive perspective, is plain to see. In the first 13, Leeds were conceding goals at a rate of 1.92 per game, a figure that has now dropped significantly to 1.35 across the most recent 17.

The thing keeping them in the battle for survival is scoring at the other end.

They are currently on a three-game drought and Calvert-Lewin, who was so good in front of goal in December, has only two goals in his last 11 Premier League games. He missed a penalty in last weekend's draw against Crystal Palace, too.

There has been no such trouble in the FA Cup, though. Granted, Farke's side have only faced Championship opposition - Derby, Birmingham and Norwich - but they have scored seven goals so far. That has helped book them an FA Cup quarter-final - for the first time since 2002/03 - against West Ham United in early April.

While being just one game away from a Wembley semi-final is a distraction - and a very nice one at that - the job at hand, the bread and butter of the Premier League, is more important.

The fixture list could have been harsher - to finish, it's Manchester United, Wolves, Bournemouth, Burnley, Tottenham, Brighton and West Ham - but Leeds still need to get the job done. The points required from here will be hard-earned.

With the survival battle reaching a critical point and a huge FA Cup tie to play, the end of the season could well be one for the Leeds United history books.

In the Dugout

Daniel Farke

Before venturing into coaching, Daniel Farke forged a career as a striker in Germany's lower leagues. A prolific frontman in his day, he had three spells at SV Lippstadt, who are based in western Germany, close to his hometown Steinhausen.

After hanging his boots up, Farke became Lippstadt manager in 2009 and guided his team to back-to-back promotions from the sixth tier to the fourth.

Farke stayed at Stadion Am Bruchbaum for six years in all until, in November 2015, he took the job at Borussia Dortmund II, who were also in the fourth tier of German football. In his first season, they finished fourth and in his second, they finished second, nine points behind champions Viktoria Köln. When his contract was not renewed, Farke took the opportunity to move abroad for the first time and sign a two-year deal at Norwich City.

He remained at Carrow Road for just shy of four-and-a-half years, managing 208 games in all competitions and leading the Canaries to the Championship title in both 2018/19 and 2020/21. Norwich took just five points from their opening 11 Premier League games in 2021/22, however, and he was sacked in November 2021, less than four months after signing a new four-year contract.

Two months later, in January 2022, Farke signed a two-and-a-half-year deal at Russian side Krasnodar. Yet he never once managed a game and left in March, less than a fortnight after the Russian invasion of Ukraine. He subsequently returned to Germany to take over at Borussia Mönchengladbach, but was sacked just one season into a three-year contract with Die Fohlen.

Since 4 July 2023, Farke has been Leeds manager and is approaching his 150th game in charge of the club he is under contract with until the summer of 2027.



Parkinson's UK and the British Gymnastics Foundation Launch Love to Move training offer

From Parkinson's UK

A new partnership between Parkinson's UK and the British Gymnastics Foundation is looking to train more instructors to deliver their innovative Love to Move programme.

What is Love to Move?

Love to Move is the UK's largest seated exercise programme designed specifically for participants living with Parkinson's, dementia or lower mobility levels and offers an opportunity to enjoy movement in a safe, relaxed and social way.

The British Gymnastics Foundation are aiming for 46,000 people to be supported by the programme and participating regularly by 2031.



Based on the basic principles of gymnastics, sessions are designed to improve flexibility, coordination and balance, as well emotional well-being and social connection.

Love to Move was developed and tested in care homes and with community groups and now British Gymnastics Foundation are training instructors across the country to give access to more people living with long term health conditions.

Love to Move training sessions will be available in selected areas of England, including:

- Gloucestershire
- Devon
- Herefordshire
- Worcestershire
- South London

The aim of the new partnership is to train more instructors to deliver the Love to Move classes and in turn to help more people live well with long term health conditions, such as Parkinson's or Dementia.

No previous experience of being an exercise coach or instructor is needed and anyone interested in becoming a Love to Move instructor should complete an expression of interest form:https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSdTZmKN4U5JcWLnwbcvj-FOBzIz9c_DfXEm87Dz8tX-7Xdxbg/viewform

Community groups and local organisations can also learn how to instruct or deliver a Love to Move session by contacting the [British Gymnastics Foundation](#).

Love to Move is shown to have some of the following benefits for people living with Parkinson's:

- Improved balance and coordination
- Better strength, flexibility and mobility
- Improved sense of wellbeing and mindfulness
- Better memory and cognitive skills
- Greater social interaction
- Improved speech and communications skills

Anna Castiaux, Physical Activity Programme Lead at Parkinson's UK, said:

"I am delighted that Parkinson's UK has been able to agree this partnership with the British Gymnastics Foundation as it will offer more opportunities for people living with Parkinson's to access supportive seated exercise classes in 2026.

"Love to Move has been shown to have many benefits for a person's physical and mental wellbeing and it can be a very accessible and adaptable way to live well with a long term health condition.

"I would encourage anyone living with Parkinson's, as well as their relatives and carers, to try one of the new Love to Move sessions in their area and see how the seated exercise classes could help them."

Louise Roberts, Head of Programmes at British Gymnastics Foundation, said:

"We are thrilled to have agreed a partnership with Parkinson's UK, as we know our Love to Move programme can make a positive difference to the lives of people living with Parkinson's. This partnership will enable us to train more deliverers, raise awareness of the benefits, and support more people across the UK."

To register for a Love to Move Deliverer course, complete the expression of interest form: https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSdTZmKN4U5JcWLnwbcvj-FOBzJZ9c_DfXEm87Dz8tX-7Xdxbg/viewform

For more information about the Love to Move programme and how you can get involved, contact Louise Roberts on theteam@britishgymnasticsfoundation.org



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