

# Twickenham & Richmond Tribune



Photinia 'Red Robin', West Twickenham  
Photo by Berkley Driscoll

1<sup>st</sup> May 2026

T&RT

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# TickerTape - News in Brief

## Rugby at Twickenham Stadium

ARMY v NAVY, Saturday 2<sup>nd</sup> May

Men KO 14:00, Women KO 16:45.

Attendance: 50,000

Whitton, Rugby & London Roads estimated to close 12:00-14:00 & again from 15:30 – 18:00. Being a double header, these have the potential to vary slightly.

CPZ in place 11:00-23:00

## South Western Railway

Altered train services and buses replace trains between **Clapham Junction and Barnes Sunday 3 May**. The lines between Clapham Junction and Barnes will be closed on Sunday due to maintenance work. **Queenstown Road** station will be **closed all day**. Please use other nearby stations.

- **London Waterloo to Reading** services will be **revised** to depart **London Waterloo earlier** and will be diverted between **Clapham Junction and Twickenham**. These services will call additionally at **Wimbledon, Kingston and Strawberry Hill**.
- **London Waterloo to Windsor** services will be **revised**.  
An **hourly** service will be diverted between **Clapham Junction and Twickenham via Kingston** calling at all stations.  
An **hourly** service will start from **Barnes** calling at all stations.
- **London Waterloo to London Waterloo via Richmond and Wimbledon** services will be **revised** and will run between **Barnes and Kingston only**.
- **London Waterloo to Woking via Staines** services will be **revised** and will start from **Barnes**.
- The afternoon and evening **London Waterloo to Kingston via Hounslow** services will **not** run.
- **Buses** will run between **Clapham Junction and Barnes**.
- In the **morning and early afternoon**, a **revised** service will run between **Barnes and Twickenham via Richmond**.  
In the **afternoon and evening**, a **revised** service will run between **Barnes and Barnes via Hounslow**.



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darryl parkin

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# The Local Picture Postcard Page - Part 324

## Park Road – Hampton Hill

By Alan Winter

We walk up and down, or cycle or drive up our local streets on a fairly regular basis I would imagine. How many of us have time to think what the street we are on might have looked like over 100 years ago?

I have recently been asked if I had any old postcards of Park Road in Hampton Hill by a regular reader who lives there. A search through the files has dug up four postcards that all go back about 110 -120 years. This period before and during the First World War is known as the golden age of postcards.

Picture postcards were first allowable by the Post Office in 1894. They took off globally, quickly and in a massive way as it gave people the only cheap and fast method of communication throughout the world for the first time. Postcards cost about an old halfpenny to buy and a green



halfpenny stamp with either Queen Victoria's or her son Edward VII's head on the stamp and once written and addressed you would find a red post box and send it on its way. So, for an old penny you could communicate with anyone in the UK. A stamp to post your card abroad cost double the domestic rate and was one penny (1d).



It wasn't until after the first world war and then throughout the 20th Century that telephones, radio (wirelesses), TV's and computers were invented and then we reached the point of immediate communication. At this point postcards were used less and less, mostly for both

advertising and messages from the seaside during most people's annual holiday – "Dear Mum and Dad, Arrived safely and it is raining".

So back to the original question. These four postcards show Park Road as it was. Running between Uxbridge Road and Hampton Hill High Street (A311). The photographs were typical of the period before motor vehicles took over the roads. They tended to be on sale locally and were published in fairly small numbers before being sold at the local newsagents.

So, no cars, a few pedestrians and the odd horse and cart and absolutely no road markings as there were not any need for them. Many of the houses and trees are still there and of course so is the Church of St James which appears in a couple of them.



These postcards showing local roads are quite hard to find as a photographer/publisher would make more money by taking photos of bridges, rivers, parks and prominent buildings such as town halls, railway stations, schools and shopping centres.

If any of you have postcards of your roads that you might like featured in this column, then please contact me at [alanwinter192@hotmail.com](mailto:alanwinter192@hotmail.com) and we will see what we can come up with.

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# Running With the Rhinos

By Doug Goodman

The world record for covering the 26.2 miles of the Marathon was beaten last Sunday when Sebastian Sawa ran the distance in under two hours. Amongst the 59,800 participants in London were 37 running for the charity Save the Rhino. Seven in full Rhino costume included regular Rhino runner Chris Green who celebrated his 200<sup>th</sup> Marathon. This is the 34th year that Rhino costumes have been seen in London to raise funds to support the endangered animals in Africa and Asia. From the 2026 London Marathon over £100,000 was raised by the Rhino-runners.

Staff from Save the Rhino and volunteers were on hand in St. James' Park to welcome the runners with drinks, snacks and a massage to soothe aching bodies. Local residents Saffron Cawley from St. Margarets, Senior Marketing Manager for the charity and travel writer Doug Goodman from Twickenham were positioned near the finishing line. Both agreed that the event was incredibly enjoyable and a wonderful day for competitors and supporters.

Plans for the London 2027 Marathon include a two day event to give 100,000 people the chance to take part.



*At Rhino camp in St James' Park Doug Goodman and Saffron Cawley*



*Two runners in Rhino gear*



*Vast Crowds in London*



*Rhinos at Whipsnade*

For information on Save the Rhino visit [www.savetherhino.org](http://www.savetherhino.org)

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# Council Inefficiency is Damaging Core Services

By Derek Jones, Conservative Councillor Candidate for Hampton Ward



At Richmond Council's annual Budget meeting on 3 March, Cllr. Millard announced that he had budgeted to spend £15 million of our reserves in the current year alone. And that's on top of £11 million of "efficiencies" about which he would not divulge details. Significantly, the pledge to retain weekly bin collections disappeared from the latest Liberal Democrat manifesto. Will they move to fortnightly collections after the election?

At this rate, our reserves will be gone in three years. And, thanks to a poorly negotiated deal with central government, we will also have lost our grant. If Richmond Council were a business, it would be running out of cash and facing an unenviable choice between increased borrowing, selling off assets, or increasing charges. Or all three.

This, then, should be the time to fix our broken finances before we are hit by a new set of challenges; but I don't sense any concern on the part of our councillors, who appear to feel that the solution to the looming problem is to spend millions of spend millions of pounds

pedestrianising the centre of Richmond.

Meanwhile, the pavements elsewhere are getting worse. Many roads in my Hampton ward alone have not been resurfaced in 30 years. Dangerous trees that should have been pollarded or removed long ago still await attention, and the potholes are spreading and getting deeper. The Government has ranked our borough roads as “red” – the worst you can get.

Residents also tell me of their struggle to obtain support for children with special needs. And I regularly meet parents who are unable to find places at nearby secondary schools, so are faced with long and complex bus journeys or time-consuming school runs to distant locations. I thought we were trying to reduce traffic and stop children being driven to school?

Nobody would think that this is London’s most prosperous borough, or that we pay the highest Council Tax per capita in London (which has incidentally been increased by the maximum allowed for six years running). So, what’s the problem? Why are basic services deteriorating? Where is all the money going?

Well, let’s start with the Council’s own offices. Although the Council continues to withhold the details I asked for some 10 weeks ago (is there an election coming?!), I have found out that occupancy is a shocking 28%. The lights and heating are on, but nobody’s home. This is not a new problem: it’s a legacy of the COVID work-from-home period. But why has it taken five years for the Council to adapt to changed working practices? Those offices are a valuable (and costly) public resource. With hot-desking, the amount of office space could easily be reduced, enabling surplus space to be sub-let, sold, loaned to a charity, or used to house a business incubator. Or, dare I suggest, converted to residential use?

And then there’s the partially disused cricket pavilion in a Hampton park. The Friends of Carlisle Park asked the Council over four years ago if they could run a café from it, to generate revenue to help fund the park and reduce costs for the Council. It was an idea that was popular with the park’s many users. The Council said yes, and began various safety compliance works. But then they stopped again, so the pavilion still stands largely empty and disused four years on, and still generates no money.

I am sure there are many other examples of the Council wasting taxpayers’ money with such inefficiencies, and I would like to hear from any borough residents who know of similar situations ([derek4hampton@gmail.com](mailto:derek4hampton@gmail.com)). Meanwhile, though, this does help to explain why we pay more and more Council Tax and parking charges every year, and seem to get ever poorer services.

How can this Liberal Democrat-dominated Council hope to provide the borough’s basic services, when it constantly wastes the money it collects, both on daily inefficiency and pointless vanity projects?

7 May is coming. Maybe it’s time for a change?

# Letters

Dear Tribune,

## **The 'Safe' Streets of London.**

'Well done' to the Metropolitan Police officers who apprehended the knife attacker in Golders Green this week.

With my 17 years as a special constable in the Metropolitan Police, I know very well how dangerous someone with a knife is. These officers were extremely brave – the slightest touch with a knife can be death.

Also, 'Well done' to Commissioner Sir Mark Rowley for backing them and writing to the ignorant leader of the Green Party, Zack Polanski, who stupidly said afterwards that the officers were: *'repeatedly and violently kicking a mentally ill man in the head when he was already incapacitated by Taser.'*

He later apologised, saying: *'Everyone in leadership has a responsibility for lowering the temperature at a time of such tension, and I apologise for sharing a tweet in haste.'*

Too late! After that statement, and the anti-Semitic rants of two Green Party election candidates, I know whom I will NOT be voting for.

He should be made to go out on patrol with some of our officers and see what they have to face daily. A Taser or even a firearm is no guarantee of safety.

No police officer I've ever worked with wanted to inflict injury or violence on anyone but, in a life or death situation, force is sometimes necessary AND LEGAL. If there is any fault, it lies with the attacker.

Such attacks are reminiscent of Nazi Germany in the 1930s. As I said in a recent Tribune, it's now not safe to walk our streets.

The police officers, the local Jewish security group, and the ambulance driver who stopped to help, all did an extremely good job in lethal circumstances.

They all deserve awards for bravery.

Michael Jay  
Hampton.

# 149 dog chases and attacks highlight 'serious accidents waiting to happen' during deer birthing season

From The Royal Parks

The Royal Parks charity has recorded 149 incidents of 'dogs off lead' chasing and attacking deer in the last 28 months\*, warning visitors that they are putting themselves and others at risk of a serious injury, or worse.



The charity which manages London's eight Royal Parks says that dogs must be on leads during deer birthing season, from 1 May until 31 July in Richmond Park and Bushy Park.

The rule helps reduce the chance of protective deer being startled at close range; a situation that

can quickly turn into accidents causing serious injury to visitors, dogs, and deer.

There are 180 Volunteer Rangers operating across the two parks, engaging with visitors, and sharing information about the importance of keeping dogs on leads.

Deer are excellent mothers and highly protective of their young. They hide newborns in bracken and long grass to conceal them from dogs and other perceived predators. But while deer are instinctively frightened of dogs, mothers will overcome that fear if they believe their young are at risk, chasing or striking out.

The charity has recorded numerous serious incidents caused as a result of dogs chasing deer which include multiple herd stampedes triggered by dog chases, including one stampede that knocked a young boy on a bike; and a Dobermann chasing red deer across Chestnut Avenue, causing visitors to scatter.

Paul Richards, Park Manager, Richmond Park, said: *"During birthing season, an off-lead dog chasing a herd could turn a calm moment in the park into a critical encounter, within a heartbeat. A dog running ahead could panic a protective mother, triggering her to behave in an unpredictable and aggressive manner if she thinks her young are threatened, with incredibly serious consequences for people nearby. Please prevent avoidable accidents. Keep your dog close and on a lead. If you see deer ahead, slow down, pull back your dog and calmly create distance, taking a wider path around the deer. Don't be the accident waiting to happen. Ensure your visit is a day to remember, not an experience to forget."*

During this sensitive time for the deer, the safest option is not to walk your dog in either Richmond Park or Bushy Park. Owners who choose, at their own risk, to walk their dog in Richmond Park or Bushy Park during this season should be on high alert for female deer, avoid long grass and bracken and keep to wider paths.

Paul Richards adds: *"Please don't touch or move a newborn deer; its mother is likely to be nearby. If you're worried, the safest thing is to keep your distance and leave the area. Handling a young deer puts you at risk and could harm the animal."*



THE  
ROYAL  
PARKS

Photo © Cathy Cooper

# All this fuss about Flag Waving!

By Sue Weaver

I'm fairly patriotic, but I've never felt it necessary to wave the flag of St George, (although I have no objection to those that do) - and I must say that perhaps I have a certain right to do so.

My grandmother was a St George and if proof were needed, her brother was St George of Piccadilly, a famous shoe black in the 50s. Vivian De Gurr St George 1895-1979 had a long list of famous clients and knew all their secrets - and there was some talk that he might have been a spy. I was very young when I met him only once. I can't help wondering what he would have thought of the political flag-waving and nonsense that goes on around his old pitch.

I'm rather glad he didn't live to see what social media would have made of him!

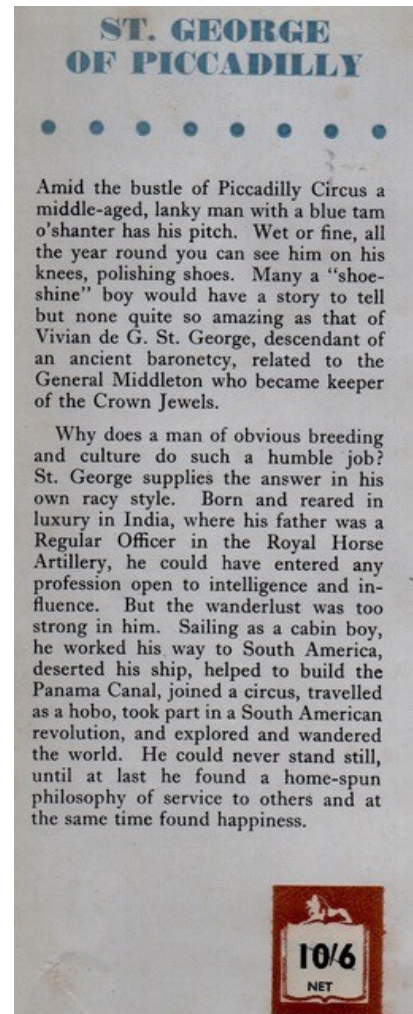


*With Best Wishes*  
*V de G St George*  
PICCADILLY CIRCUS LONDON

*He gave this signed post card to my mother!*



1953 book cover - 'St George of Piccadilly' (I wonder if Kiwi polishes gave him any sponsorship money for this!)



# Join the Mayor of Richmond upon Thames for her farewell tea party

From Mayor of Richmond upon Thames

Join the Mayor for afternoon tea in the beautiful surroundings of York House and gardens. All funds raised will go to the Mayor's charities Crossroads Care and Small Steps.

The event will take place on Sunday 17 May from 4 to 6pm at York House in Twickenham.

Tickets cost £20 and include a light finger buffet with hot and cold drinks. We will also have a bar, raffle and musical entertainment.



[Crossroads Care Richmond and Kingston upon Thames](#) provides specialist, high-quality bespoke home and community respite care and support services to unpaid carers and the people they care for, of all ages and disabilities, including behavioural, emotional and/or medical needs, as well as dementia, complex and palliative care.

[Small Steps](#) supports children aged from birth to 5 years who have cerebral palsy or other forms of motor impairment, syndromes or sensory impairment. They also provide a much-needed support network for parents and carers, whilst also helping them learn valuable skills to help their child.

[Book tickets for the farewell tea party](#)

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# Opportunities for new Trustees and Volunteers at Teddington's Elleray Centre

by Michael Hill, Elleray Community Association trustee



It is now almost 6 months since The Elleray Centre first opened its doors. During that time, as well as becoming the home of our social club, it has become the venue for a host of new activities and events for the community at large. These include several new health and fitness classes and activities for children, as well as meetings, children's parties, social events and a series of talks on a variety of subjects as diverse as Polish paper art and the secrets of Bushy Park! We get quite a few new room hire enquiries every week and several new classes are in the pipeline - but we still have availability during the summer holidays!

At the same time, the Elleray Social Club has gone from strength to strength with new members joining us every month (but we still have room for more!)

In short, it has been a very busy time!

We rely heavily on a band of volunteers to keep everything running smoothly. Without them, we simply would not be able to maintain and develop our range of services and we are now appealing for more volunteers to help us!

## **A new trustee/secretary**

Our secretary has recently had to retire and we are now looking for a new secretary with an interest in helping to shape the new Elleray Centre. As a trustee, they would also contribute to the governance and management of the charity as well as having the opportunity to participate in sub-groups considering specific aspects of our operations.

## **New trustees**

The centre and its social club for adults is managed by a board of trustees. Like many other charities, our trustees can only serve for a number of years before they retire. This ensures a steady injection of new ideas and fresh thinking. Over the next few months, we will need new trustees to replace those who have reached their maximum term. In particular, we would like to recruit trustees with experience or expertise in the specific areas of:

- Fundraising
- Event management and organisation

- Marketing and communications
- Property management
- Community engagement

But we welcome approaches from anyone who has an interest in providing services for older people and in helping to develop the new Centre into a place that everyone can use and enjoy!

If you are enthused by the idea of becoming a trustee, please contact our Chair, Douglas Chisholm, for an informal discussion to find out a little more. Email him at [chair@elleraycentre.org](mailto:chair@elleraycentre.org) or call the office to arrange a meeting.

### **Volunteers to keep things running smoothly in the office**

We always need volunteers to answer the phone, staff the reception desk and take on general administrative tasks. Please contact the Volunteer Co-ordinator at [avc@elleraycentre.org](mailto:avc@elleraycentre.org) or 020 8977 0549 for details!

### **Volunteers to help with our Social Club**

We also need volunteers to assist with activities at the social club. These include such things as helping to serve and clear away lunch, checking bingo cards, serving members their coffee and biscuits, helping retrieve errant golf balls during crazy golf or simply being on hand to help or chat to the members!

We also rely on volunteers to run some of our activities – so if you would be interested in taking on a book club, a reminiscence group, a general knowledge quiz or indeed anything else, just give us a call!

Volunteering is a great way to meet new people and doing it at The Ellera Centre it is always good fun as we are a very easy going and warm bunch of people!

So, if you can spend a few hours a week or even a few hours a month, do get in touch with our Volunteer Co-ordinator at [avc@elleraycentre.org](mailto:avc@elleraycentre.org) or call 020 8977 0549. She will be delighted to hear from you.

### **Richmond Volunteers Fair, May 20th**

We will be at this event for potential volunteers so come and talk to us there! It's from 2.00 – 6.00 pm at the Adult Community College, Parkshot, Richmond TW9 2RE. Further details at <https://richmondcvcs.org.uk/>

### **Take care of our social media!**

We also need a social media volunteer to help us keep in touch with the local community. So if you know your way around Facebook, Insta, Snapchat and the like and would enjoy the opportunity to spread the word about what is going on at the centre, we'd love to hear from you. We can supply you with images and content and leave it to you to give us a vibrant and engaging and social media presence. Maybe you're looking to polish up a CV or maybe you just love creating content. Either way, get in touch with our manager at [manager@elleraycentre.org](mailto:manager@elleraycentre.org) or call her on 020 8977 0549.



# Richmond Volunteer Fair

## Wednesday 20 May 2026

*Be Part of Something Bigger – Discover New Opportunities at the Richmond Volunteer Fair*

From Richmond CVS

Richmond's biggest celebration and showcase of local community action is back – to inspire and ignite your volunteering ambitions.

The Volunteer Fair will, once again, take place at Richmond and Hillcroft Adult Community College (RHACC) on Wednesday 20 May, from 2pm to 6pm. This hugely popular annual event always promises a vibrant atmosphere, a wide mix of great local causes, and exciting opportunities for individuals to get involved in and make a difference.

Come along to:

- meet dozens of inspiring charities doing incredible work locally
- find volunteering roles that suit your skills, passions, and availability
- get personalised advice, fresh ideas and a warm community welcome.

### Richmond Volunteer Fair

Wednesday 20 May 2026, 2pm - 6pm

RHACC, Parkshot, Richmond, TW9 2RE

Register for your free place at

[www.richmondcvs.org.uk](http://www.richmondcvs.org.uk)



scan me

Richmond Volunteer Service  
Registered charity number 1075259

Richmond CVS  
empower - enable - involve

Whether you're curious about volunteering for the first time or looking for a new challenge, you'll get to meet 50+ local charities and community groups under one roof. Have an informal chat with staff and current volunteers, discover a huge range of roles, and explore causes that matter to them – from health and wellbeing to nature conservation, arts and heritage, youth support, community initiatives, and specialist services.

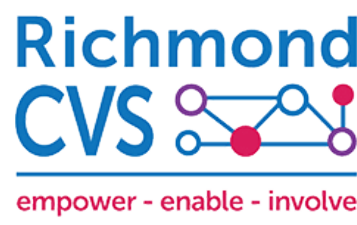
In a borough with 750+ registered charities, amongst the stallholders on the day, you might find organisations you weren't aware of and roles you hadn't considered. Volunteering in your community could be more flexible and rewarding than you think.

This free community event is organised by Richmond CVS, home of the Richmond Volunteer Service, which supports volunteer recruitment and promotes opportunities across the borough of Richmond upon Thames.

No pressure, no experience needed, just possibilities. Visit the Richmond Volunteer Fair and join a movement of people who want to give back – one hour, one skill, or one conversation at a time.

There's no charge for your ticket but advance registration is requested.

[Register now to visit the Richmond Volunteer Fair 2026.](http://www.richmondcvs.org.uk)



# The Future of Palewell Common

From EastSheenMatters

You can help to shape the future of Palewell Common

Palewell Common and Fields are a cherished part of our local landscape—an open, welcoming space where people of all ages can relax, play, connect with nature, and enjoy a sense of community. From dog walkers and families to sports groups and visitors seeking a moment of calm, the Common plays a vital role in everyday life. But like all valued community assets, it relies on active stewardship to ensure it continues to thrive.

That stewardship comes, in part, from the Friends of Palewell Common.

The Friends are a volunteer-led group dedicated to protecting, maintaining, and enhancing the Common and Fields for the benefit of everyone. Over the years, the Friends have supported conservation initiatives, worked closely with the borough of Richmond, helped improve facilities, and ensured that the voice of the community is heard when decisions about the space are made.

To continue this work effectively, they urgently need new committee members to join.

This is not just about filling roles—it's about bringing fresh energy, ideas, and perspectives into a group that genuinely makes a difference. Without new volunteers stepping forward, the ability of the Friends to operate, advocate, and organise will inevitably diminish. Quite simply, the future of the group depends on people in the community who care enough to get involved.

If you value Palewell Common and Fields as a place of freedom, recreation, and enjoyment, this is your opportunity to help shape its future.



© Friends of Palewell Common

Joining the committee does not require specialist expertise. What matters most is a willingness to contribute time, collaborate with others, and take an active interest in the wellbeing of the Common. Whether your strengths lie in organisation, communication, local knowledge, environmental interest, or simply a desire to give something back, there is a place for you.

If you have ever walked across the Common and thought about how it could be improved, or simply appreciated it as it is and wanted to ensure it stays that way, this is your moment to step forward.

The Friends would be delighted to hear from anyone interested in joining the committee or learning more about what is involved.

The Annual General Meeting will take place at **All Saints Church at 7:00pm on 16 June 2026**. Non-Members welcome. This is an ideal opportunity to come along, meet current members, understand the work they do, and explore how you might contribute. There is no obligation—just an open invitation to engage and find out more.

The strength of Palewell Common lies not just in its green spaces, but in the community that supports it. By becoming part of the Friends, you help ensure that this much-loved area continues to be protected and enhanced for current and future generations.

If you are keen to get involved actively, please get in touch by email ([office@palewellcommon.org.uk](mailto:office@palewellcommon.org.uk)) and / or attend the AGM.

# Bowls open days return this summer

From Richmond Council

Bowls season is back, and three local clubs are inviting adults and older children to join their upcoming open days. Come along and try out the summer sport in a friendly, welcoming environment.

Our Richmond Moves strategy encourages more active living, and bowls is a low-impact exercise that helps you stay active while meeting new people and building connections over a shared interest.

Equipment will be provided at all events - all you have to do is bring flat soled shoes.

## Teddington Bowls Club

The Friends of Grove Gardens and Teddington Bowls Club will be jointly hosting an open day on Monday 4 May from 1 to 5pm. Club members will be on hand to guide you through the game.



What's more, you can take part in the Bowls England Big Weekend at Teddington Bowls Club on Sunday 5 July from 11am to 4pm.

For more details, contact David on [davidwoodywoodall@gmail.com](mailto:davidwoodywoodall@gmail.com). Find out more about [Teddington Bowls Club](#).

## Strawberry Hill Bowls Club

This May, [Strawberry Hill Bowls Club](#)'s open days are taking place in the beautiful Radnor Gardens. Dates and times:

- Sunday 10 May: 11am to 4pm
- Monday 25 May: 11am to 4pm

For more details, contact the organisers at [strawberryhill.bowling@gmail.com](mailto:strawberryhill.bowling@gmail.com)

## Hampton Bowls Club

Come along to Hampton's popular bowls open days at Carlisle Park and enjoy a friendly introduction to the sport.

Dates and times:

- Saturday 23 May: 2 to 5pm
- Sunday 13 June: 11am to 4pm

For more information, visit [Hampton Bowls Club's](#) website, contact Kevin on 07578 159841 or email [hamptonbowlingclub@outlook.com](mailto:hamptonbowlingclub@outlook.com).

## Richmond Moves

Richmond Moves is our new vision for leisure, sport and physical activity, supporting a healthier borough for everyone.

A key commitment of the [Richmond Moves Strategy](#) and [Action Plan 2024-2029 \(Years 1 and 2\)](#) is the reopening and transformation of Active Hampton into new community wellbeing and physical activity hub.

Find out more about our [Leisure Strategy](#).

# Bushy Park buggy service

## A free mobility buggy service in Bushy Park for 2026

From The Royal Parks

A free buggy service is available to carry visitors in Bushy Park who need a lift due to mobility difficulties or simply tiredness.

From 1 May 2026, this service operates between the Diana car park and the Woodland Gardens. It runs from Wednesdays to Sundays, between 11am and 3pm. Blackboard notices placed at the pick-up



locations will indicate typical waiting times or changes to any day's schedule.

The Friends of Bushy and Home Parks are running the service for The Royal Parks. It is dependent on the availability of [volunteer](#) drivers. The service will not run on Mondays or Tuesdays, or on days of very bad weather.


The pick-up and set-down locations for the service are:


1. The old Police Box in [Diana car park](#), near the path to the ponds
2. The 'Crocodile Gate' into the [Woodland Gardens](#).


It is possible for visitors to hail the buggy for carriage along the route, if it is empty and desired by a tiring visitor.


Passengers will find the volunteer drivers are knowledgeable and able to answer questions, provide insights and guidance to visitors about the park.

### Important information on the buggy service:

 **Operating times**  
The service runs from Wednesdays to Sundays, between 11am and 3pm.

 **Buggy stop location**  
The first pick-up location is at the old Police Box in Diana car park, near the path to the ponds.

 **Buggy stop location**  
The second pick-up location is at the 'Crocodile Gate' into the Woodland Gardens.

 **Need a lift?**  
Available to tiring visitors or those with mobility difficulties. Visitors can hail the buggy along the route, if it is empty.

## The Third Monkey in Farnham

Farnham isn't that far to travel, especially with warmer days promised, and summer days out to start to plan. We stopped at **The Third Monkey** recently en route to a weekend in Dorset, and having enjoyed an amazing lunch, I can perfectly see why this is a place totally befitting the 'speak no evil' folklore of the third monkey.

The independently-owned, former Liberal club, opened last year, and is the latest project from chef Adam Fisher (ex Coworth Park and Pennyhill Park), so we figured he'd know a thing or two about Michelin quality food...we were right. This building, in central Farnham, has a gastropub on the ground floor, a more ambitious, design led restaurant upstairs and a roof terrace for sunny days, and we were lucky enough to visit on one of the rare sunny spring days we've enjoyed recently. The menu is built around ultra seasonal British produce, and it moves between refined smaller plates and bigger sharing dishes. There is also an excellent value set lunch on weekdays at £28 for two courses and £32 for three.



We settled ourselves in a corner of the terrace, enjoying the sunshine, and Annekatrina, the manager, took us through the menu. The set lunch was so tempting that we decided to switch around and choose one dish for each course from that and the other from the main menu. While I enjoyed a G&T (Monkey 47 of course) my husband was pleased to discover that Guinness 0.0 is on draught. But as it was such a warm day, he opted for the Heineken 0.0, also on draught.



My starter was from that day's set lunch: New Forest asparagus, confit egg yolk, elderflower hollandaise, feta, peas and broad beans. The asparagus was cooked al dente, and the sweet, fresh broad beans had been podded. There was a subtle sweetness and fragrance to the hollandaise from the elderflower and the inspired addition of cubes of feta added the perfect amount of saltiness. This was a beautifully presented dish, with a fine dining sophistication rarely found on a set lunch menu.

My husband chose the lychee marinated Chalk Stream trout, whipped wasabi cream, fennel & cucumber kimchi from the main menu. The fennel and cucumber were a match made in heaven for the beautiful local trout that had been wrapped in seaweed. The wasabi cream on top paired beautifully with the lychee confit and the whole ensemble was declared refreshingly delicious.



The assiette of Kentish lamb – cannon, shoulder scrumpet, sweetbreads, spiced lamb jam, courgette, and lovage - stood out to me from the main menu. It was another beautifully presented dish, worthy of some of the finest multi Michelin-starred restaurants I have been lucky enough to visit. The cannon, shoulder scrumpet and sweetbreads, were all so well executed, each bringing different textures while still working together cohesively. The spice-led lamb jam, courgette and lovage added another level of flavours, and structure. This really was a standout dish. Annekarina suggested a side of seasonal greens in brown butter, which paired beautifully.

The Wagyu beefburger, topped with sriracha mayonnaise and pickled red onion slices, served with hand cut beef dripping chips - from the set lunch - was a very generous portion, again stylishly served. It was thoroughly enjoyed, and the portion was so generous that the chips were almost redundant. But they were so deliciously spiced and crispy that I helped finish the last few. The only annoying thing was that the burger was served on a piece of waxed paper - a nod to more downmarket or American establishments perhaps - but we felt it didn't do justice to the quality of the dish.



Having enjoyed our first two courses so much, it seemed a shame not to investigate the desserts. Valrhona 64% Manjari Set Chocolate, Bailey's mousse, hazelnuts from the main menu was chosen by my husband, while I opted for the lemon and thyme cheesecake with honey ice cream from the set lunch.

As if we weren't already in for an overdose of sweetness, Annekatrina was naughty and also brought us a portion of the signature dessert. It was The Third Monkey sticky toffee pudding, salted caramel 'Baked Alaska' ice cream.

My 'cheesecake' was a deconstructed and very different version, but imbued with the same skill as the other dishes. It was delightfully citrus, palate cleansing and the lemony note of the thyme was a perfect pairing. The chocolate dessert was hoovered up very quickly, so I didn't manage to swipe a spoonful, but it was, apparently, very rich and indulgent.

We certainly didn't need anything else, especially something as rich as sticky toffee pudding, but having had a small taste of it, I can fully appreciate the restaurant's keenness for us to try it. Served on a massive plate, it was so luxurious and moist. It was in a lake of salted caramel, and had a topping of Italian meringue over the salted caramel ice cream, demonstrating playfulness and skill in the kitchen. It was incredibly rich and unctuous and needless to say, we weren't able to do it full justice.



The wine list is well composed, and I thoroughly enjoyed the glass of house Negroamaro, Il Pumo, San Marzano red with my lamb. Wines start at £32 a bottle and there are plenty available by the glass starting at £8.

A Sunday lunch menu with a very tempting range of choices, that aren't all roasts, is just £45 for two courses and £52 for three. The chef also caters well for vegetarians and pescatarians.

To summarise, we were blown away by the quality and value for money of The Third Monkey. I just wish Farnham was a little bit nearer.

GIBRALTAR

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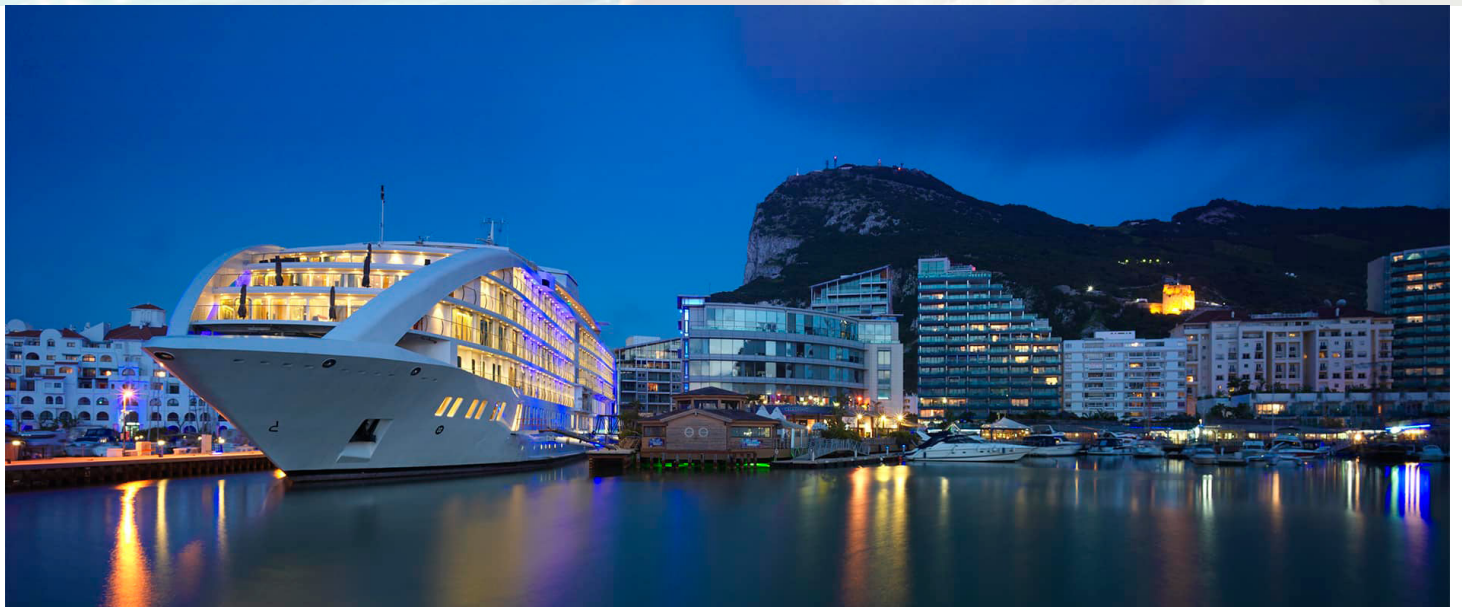
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### EXPERIENCE PACKAGE



# So Here`s to King Charles!!!! (and all things Scottish)

By Bruce Lyons

We should, this Bank Holiday, all be Toasting King Charles and Queen Camilla with (as long as you are of an age!) a Wee Dram, on their success with the removal of the 10% tariff on Whisk(e)y, and we for our part thought we precis what is on offer to Scotland and the Isles so you could enjoy your favourite Malt in patriotic surroundings, savouring your Scottish Experience.



St Hilda Adventures operate a small fleet of Tall Ships, Small Cruise Boats and converted Lifeboats on any number of Scottish Isle Itineraries of 5 - 9 days itineraries. Most dates sell out early, but I spotted some September dates available and a couple of June & July that were on request. P & O have a few UK departures, and sometimes HX Expeditions have sailings too. On the other hand, Fred Olsen on their "small" cruise vessels the Balmoral, Bolette and Borealis have 2026 & 2027 from various UK ports and different durations (from 5 to 9 days) as well as different Scottish Itineraries, so be sure to enquire early.



Self-guided walking trips are featured by Mac`s Adventures , who also feature the Iconic North Coast 500, often dubbed the Scottish Route 66, this starts and ends in Inverness in either direction with varied accommodations, perhaps on

a self-drive you could include a stay at Clashnessie Bay in Sutherland known for its micro climate - being on the Gulf Stream, but be warned many of the properties used on these road itineraries have a small number of rooms and can get booked out early.

Newmarket Holidays have an Iconic Escorted Scottish Highland Railway itinerary; there are 42 departures between May & October from some 9 UK departure points as well as being able to book without travel from £672. I noticed when checking, today, that many departures dates were still available.



The adventure companies; Explore, Exodus, Intrepid, G Adventures have biking, Hiking and more and the last G Adventures, list "Uncover Rugged Scotland". Finally, we have Shearings who have a diverse range of coach and stay put holidays (like the Edinburgh Royal Tattoo) to choose from.



So, there`s no excuse, Raise your Glasses to King Charles and Queen Camilla and well done "Off with the Tariffs"!!!

Pop down now to Crusader Travel and choose and you never know we might offer you a dram of your favourite malt.

58 Church St, Twickenham TW1 3NR  
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# Madama Butterfly

by Giacomo Puccini, libretto by Luigi Illica and Giuseppe Giacosa  
Ellen Kent Productions, Richmond Theatre and on tour until 15<sup>th</sup> May

It's 1904 in Nagasaki. Against a backdrop of a lovely Japanese house, surrounded by vibrant colourful flowers and blossom, all seems idyllic. But, for this tragic and iconic tale of devotion and betrayal, the floral setting is pure irony.

Ellen Kent directs *Madam Butterfly* in fine detail as part of her *Ellen Kent Farewell Tour*. After thirty years bringing well-known operas to audiences, many of whom would not have had the opportunity to see live opera, producer Ellen Kent has become almost a popular legend. This tour marks her retirement. The Orchestra of the Opera and Ballet Theatre Kyiv is conducted splendidly by Vasyly Vasilenko as her swan-song.



In the demanding soprano role of Cio-Cio San, the eponymous Madama Butterfly, Elena Dee performs with deep emotion. Pinkerton and Butterfly's love duet, *viene la sera*, is stunning and tenderly indicated as silhouettes behind the translucent doors. (The immaculate lighting design is by Valeriu Cucarschi.)



The handsome B F Pinkerton, a lieutenant in the US navy, played by assured tenor Oleksii Srebnytskyi and with the powerful baritone Iurie Gisca, as the American Consul Sharpness they make a striking duet.

The shrewd negotiator Goro, matchmaker and efficient businessman, is a delightful Ruslan Pacatovici. The maid, Suzuki, an effective conduit to the two Americans, is beautifully portrayed by Yelyzaveta Bielous. She does her best to bring comfort to the vulnerable and devoted Butterfly, abandoned by

her "husband", Pinkerton. Butterfly's heart-wrenching solo aria *un bel di* is a highlight of the opera, but the poignancy increases when the Consul visits with a letter and Butterfly's fate becomes tangibly felt.

Butterfly, considered to be divorced under Japanese law, is again marketable by Goro who comes with a replacement suitor, the rather sinister Prince Yamadori. Vitalie Cebotari, as Yamadorei, has great stage presence. Along with his entourage, including dog Akita, he is a natural scene stealer. But when Butterfly reveals her child, named Sorrow and sired by Pinkerton, events lead to their powerfully touching denouement.



The geisha women make a gentle entrance, and are vibrant in their traditional geisha dress, forming charming tableaux. All is hauntingly sung, notably the *Humming Chorus* that creates such an atmosphere as the plot reaches its climax. An incredible production.

Read Heather Moulson's review at [www.markaspen.com/2026/04/25/butterfly-ek26](http://www.markaspen.com/2026/04/25/butterfly-ek26)

Photography courtesy of Ellen Kent

# Private Lives

by Noël Coward

Reading Rep Productions at the Reading Rep Theatre until 9<sup>th</sup> May

This fizzing, gloriously overblown revival understands exactly where the comedy in Coward's classic lies. It embraces the play's "hysterical nonsense" with confidence, flair, and an appropriately bold sense of theatricality.

*Private Lives* is a play about incompatibility, and this production leans into that brilliantly. The exaggerated nuances of each character sharpen the sense that these are couples fundamentally ill-matched, reviving the play not as a polite period piece, but as a vibrant, larger-than-life comedy of romantic chaos.



Christopher Bonwell's Elyot and Amy Di Bartolomeo's Amanda are wonderfully matched in their ability to capture the dangerous attraction at the centre of the plot. They swing delightfully on the pendulum between infatuation and bickering, sometimes changing direction so quickly that the audience is left with comic whiplash! Bonwell gives Elyot a dry, knowing charm that makes his vanity and volatility all the more entertaining, while Di Bartolomeo's Amanda is all glamour, spark and commanding presence.

In contrast, Orla O'Sullivan's Sybil and Emile John's Victor are played as far softer and more soppy figures, which throws Amanda and Elyot's emotional violence into even sharper relief. They are comparatively weak, at least initially, but never so faintly drawn that they disappear into the background. O'Sullivan brings an appealing earnestness to Sybil, while

John gives Victor a stiffness and sincerity that work very well in counterpoint to the grander behaviour of the central pair.

Rose-Anna Nicholson as Louise, the grumpy housemaid, gives a sterling performance, grounding the mayhem with dry assurance and well-judged comic understatement. Even smaller moments land fully, as in some unexpected business with a baguette that earns one of the evening's biggest laughs.

The suitably grand set complements the melodramatic exchanges with elegance and gives the characters a world worthy of their extravagant behaviour, rooting the comedy in an atmosphere of luxury and performance.



The production's greatest strength is its command of comic rhythm. Its humour never feels forced or overly laboured. Every interruption, pause and eruption is calibrated to keep the audience in delighted anticipation. Director Matthew Forbes doesn't smooth away the ridiculousness of the play. Instead, it revels in it, and delights in its selfishness. His *Private Lives* feels generous, vivid and unapologetic, a sparkling evening of theatre.

Read Sam Martin's review at [www.markaspen.com/2026/04/21/private-lives-rr](http://www.markaspen.com/2026/04/21/private-lives-rr)

Photography by Pamela Wrath

# The Sweet Science of Bruising

by Joy Davidson

Questors at the Questors Studio, Ealing until 2<sup>nd</sup> May

Until the London 2012 Olympics women's boxing took a long while to be accepted. However, set in 1876 in London, *The Sweet Science of Bruising* takes us right back to its earliest days.

Four women take up boxing for very different reasons. Matilda Blackwell (in Leah Serens' well-judged performance) sees it as a way of escaping from prostitution and uncertainty; Violet Hunter (brightly played by Hannah Rosamund) as a way of funding herself through medical school, a profession then forbidden to women; Anna Lamb (a sympathetic Isabella Cottrell Kirby), so she could learn to fight back against controlling domestic abuse. Talented, if wild, Polly Stokes is the real fighter, born to box as an end in itself but also as a way of proving herself to the man she has grown up with and whom she counts as her brother. Fionna Gough, as Stokes, leads the boxers with a spirited and energetic performance, and an understated mischievous humour.



Lawrence McGrandles Jr mixes authority and vulnerability as ex-boxer Charlie Sharp, self-styled promoter, who is curious in seeing his women proteges take part in the 'science' of boxing.

Yet *The Sweet Science of Bruising* digs much deeper. Although ostensibly about female competitive boxing, it reminds us how little choice Victorian women had over their lives. It is about control, disempowerment and a search for identity.

Boxing is seen more as a spectacle rather than necessarily requiring any degree of sporting prowess. Injuries are inevitable and the 'fitness' of women to box is continually questioned: "See what happens if you don't keep the little ladies in check". Women fighting is seen as a mental disorder and the most shocking scene is the performance of a clitoridectomy as a way of 'curing' this.

The women step into the ring in corsets, bodices and hooped skirts, courtesy of Nel Wilson's colourful and authentic Victorian costumes. James Connor's score builds up the atmosphere of the tense calm before the fight, and fight director, Catherine Luff produces realistic and gritty boxing that feels spontaneous.

The inventive eye of director Becky Hartnup creates a visual and pacey show. There's an immersive feel and the ringside seats add to this, although not always universally popular among the audience!!



Read Alex Tustin's review at [www.markaspen.com/2026/04/29/sweet-science-bruising](http://www.markaspen.com/2026/04/29/sweet-science-bruising)

Photography by Carla Marker

# New Directors' Show

A Busy Weekend at the Mary Wallace Theatre - May 3<sup>rd</sup>- 4<sup>th</sup>

On Sunday 3<sup>rd</sup> and Monday 4<sup>th</sup> the Mary Wallace Theatre is staging a variety of drama-related events. Together with two plays presented by directors new to the RSS, we offer a Participatory Acting Workshop with accomplished director and teacher, Andy Smith, and a Panel Discussion on the pleasures and pitfalls of "Directing at the RSS".



May 3<sup>rd</sup> – 11.30am – "Earthworks" by T Morton-Smith. Directed by Eric Petrossian

- 1 pm – Acting workshop
- 6 pm – "Deathwatch" by Jean Genet. Directed by Ash O'Keefe



May 4<sup>th</sup> - 2 pm – "Deathwatch"

- 4 pm – Panel Discussion
- 6 pm – "Earthworks"

Tickets for "Deathwatch" and "Earthworks" are £5. Acting Workshop and Panel Discussion are free of charge. Tickets for all events are bookable at [www.richmondshakespeare.org.uk](http://www.richmondshakespeare.org.uk)

The Mary Wallace Theatre is on the Thames Embankment, close to the Barmy Arms.



# Happy 100th Birthday, Sir David Attenborough

## The voice of nature who inspires us all

From Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew

As we celebrate the 100th birthday of Sir David Attenborough, a global icon whose voice, vision, and lifelong dedication have transformed humanity's understanding of the natural world, Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew is calling on people to honour him by taking greater care of our plants and fungi. Sir David's global impact as a documentary maker and advocate for nature has inspired generations to love, appreciate and protect Earth's extraordinary biodiversity.

To mark this moment, 100 staff and volunteers from across Kew's three sites - Kew Gardens, Wakehurst and Madagascar - gathered to record their birthday message in front of Kew's iconic Palm House. From scientists to horticulturists, from volunteer guides to retail staff, their message was that we can all play a part in the future of our planet by becoming champions for nature.

Speaking at the event, Kew's Director, Richard Deverell said: *"Sir David's extraordinary storytelling has inspired millions to value the natural world. His work amplifies the importance of plants and underscores the urgency of Kew's mission to document, conserve and protect the world's plant and fungal diversity. It is a critical message at a critical moment in our planet's trajectory."*



*100 people from across Science, Horticulture, Learning and Visitor Operations gathered with Kew's Director, Richard Deverell and Chair of the Board of Trustees, Sir Andrew Steer, to sing Happy Birthday to their dear friend, former Trustee and neighbour.*

Sir David's longstanding association with Kew goes back to his early life when he used to visit Kew to find peace and tranquillity in nature. He then became a Trustee of the Gardens before going on to make several landmark documentaries including Kingdom of Plants and The Green Planet.

Sir David has also been instrumental in raising the profile of the extraordinary plant life of Madagascar, where Kew has a conservation centre. **Dr H el ene Ralimanana, Head of Operations at Kew Madagascar** said: *“It was a privilege to meet Sir David in 2017 when the President of Madagascar came to Kew. His influence on Madagascar’s plant conservation has shaped global awareness, attracted funding, and influenced policy. Planet Earth and The Green Planet brought Madagascar’s plant life, including baobabs, spiny forests, and rainforests to millions worldwide. By showcasing the island’s unique biodiversity and high levels of endemism, he fostered a deeper public understanding of its fragile ecosystems.”*



**Deverell added,** *“He has helped to greatly increase public awareness of the critical role botanic gardens play in safeguarding biodiversity. By championing science, horticulture and education, he has*

*strengthened global efforts to protect endangered species, restore ecosystems, and secure nature’s future for generations to come. We now call on everyone to celebrate his incredible legacy by becoming an advocate for nature.”*

### **What you can do to honour Sir David**

As we see a rising tide of global public concern and anger at the degradation of nature and the damage to our climate wrought by humanity, what better way is there to celebrate this milestone. Here are some easy ways to celebrate Sir David Attenborough’s birthday:

- **Plant for the Future:** Grow native trees and pollinator-friendly plants to support local biodiversity.
- **Protect Natural Habitats:** Volunteer with conservation groups or participate in habitat restoration projects.
- **Fund a Future Breakthrough:** Contribute towards scientific research that helps identify, protect, and restore endangered plant species and tell us this is in honour of Sir David Attenborough’s birthday.
- **Reduce Your Environmental Impact:** Embrace sustainable choices by reducing waste and lowering your carbon footprint.
- **Champion Plant Diversity:** Learn about endangered plant species and support their conservation.
- **Educate and Inspire Others:** Share Sir David’s documentaries and promote awareness of environmental issues.
- **Advocate for Change:** Support policies that protect forests, wetlands, and ecosystems worldwide.
- **Connect with Nature:** Visit green spaces to deepen your appreciation of the natural world.

Sir David’s enduring message is clear: humanity’s future depends on the health of the natural world. By protecting plants and fungi, we protect the ecosystems that sustain life on Earth.

Royal  
Botanic  
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# **SHEEN FOLK/BLUES FESTIVAL 2026**

**HOME GUARD MAY MUSIC FESTIVAL**

**SATURDAY 9th MAY**

**Papa George Band**

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**Open Air Event 1.00-7.00pm**

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**Drinks-Food-BBQ, Stalls, Raffle, Tombola**

# Richmond's young athletes shine at TCS Mini London Marathon

From Richmond Council

We are pleased to share Team Richmond's fantastic achievement at the recent TCS Mini London Marathon.

On Saturday 25 April, 43 athletes who live or go to school in Richmond upon Thames represented the borough in the mini marathon. The course began at Horse Guards Parade, looped around St James's Park, passed Buckingham Palace and finished on The Mall, the iconic end point of the London Marathon.

In the borough challenge section of the mini marathon, where we competed against other London boroughs, Team Richmond delivered a strong set of results across the age groups.

The girls under-14s won their age group with Laura finishing second and Eilidh ninth, and the boys under-18s placed third overall with Tom fourth and Ewan tenth.

Following these top results, Richmond's boys under-13s came sixth, the boys under-14s placed eighth, the boys under-16s also finished eighth with James taking seventh individually, and Harry placed tenth for boys under-12s.

Richmond's girls under-16s and under-18s came eleventh, and the girls under-12s finished twelfth.



Congratulations to all the young runners for their outstanding performances and dedication!

Find out more about the [TCS Mini London Marathon](#).

## Represent Team Richmond in the 2026 London Youth Games

Young people across the borough are being encouraged to sign up to represent Team Richmond in the 2026 London Youth Games, Europe's largest annual youth sporting event. Find out more about the [London Youth Games](#).

# Richmond Volunteer Fair

Wednesday 20 May 2026, 2pm - 6pm

RHACC, Parkshot, Richmond, TW9 2RE

Book your free ticket

- meet 50+ local charities
- chat to current volunteers
- get new volunteering ideas



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# St Mary's University

## St Mary's University sets out community-led model for new London School of Medicine

St Mary's University has outlined plans for a community-centred approach to medical education and training, following a roundtable discussion with local people, community and health partners aimed at shaping the curriculum and placement model for its new School of Medicine.

priorities as the programme develops.

Professor Sonia Kumar, Founding Executive Dean of Medicine at St Mary's University, said the approach is unique in the landscape of medical education in the UK.



*"This is a School with the local community at the heart of its teaching. The aim is to train doctors whose education reflects the priorities of the communities they will go on to serve."*

Professor Samira Ben Omar, Professor of Inclusive Practice and Lead for Inclusion and Communities at St Mary's, said the framework places lived experience at the centre of medical education.

The Twickenham-based institution launched its Social Accountability Framework on 29 April, which will guide how and where medical students are trained, with an emphasis on local health priorities and addressing health inequalities across south-west London.

*"This approach brings the voices of local people and communities into curriculum development right at the start of our journey, and we are committed to ensuring they remain a critical part of the conversation as the School of Medicine grows,"* she said.

The School's first cohort will start in September 2026 and will be based at the University's Twickenham campus. From Year 1 onwards, students will undertake placements across GP, hospital, and community settings, learning through delivering care to those most in need. The model has been designed to ensure that medical training reflects the wider societal factors that influence health outcomes, including housing, employment, biases, and access to health services.

The Social Accountability Framework roundtable brought together community organisations, NHS partners and people with lived experience to discuss what matters most to local populations, and how medical students should be prepared for learning in both community and clinical settings.

The framework has been developed through ongoing engagement with local communities and is intended to embed co-creation into the School of Medicine's long-term approach. Community members will continue to contribute to decisions on teaching, placement opportunities and

Community contributors at the event included Fatuma Favell-Clarke, a Parent and Carer, Trustee of SEND Parent Carers in Wandsworth, social worker and mental health professional at The Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea, and Roger Smith, chair of the Hounslow Respiratory Support Group.

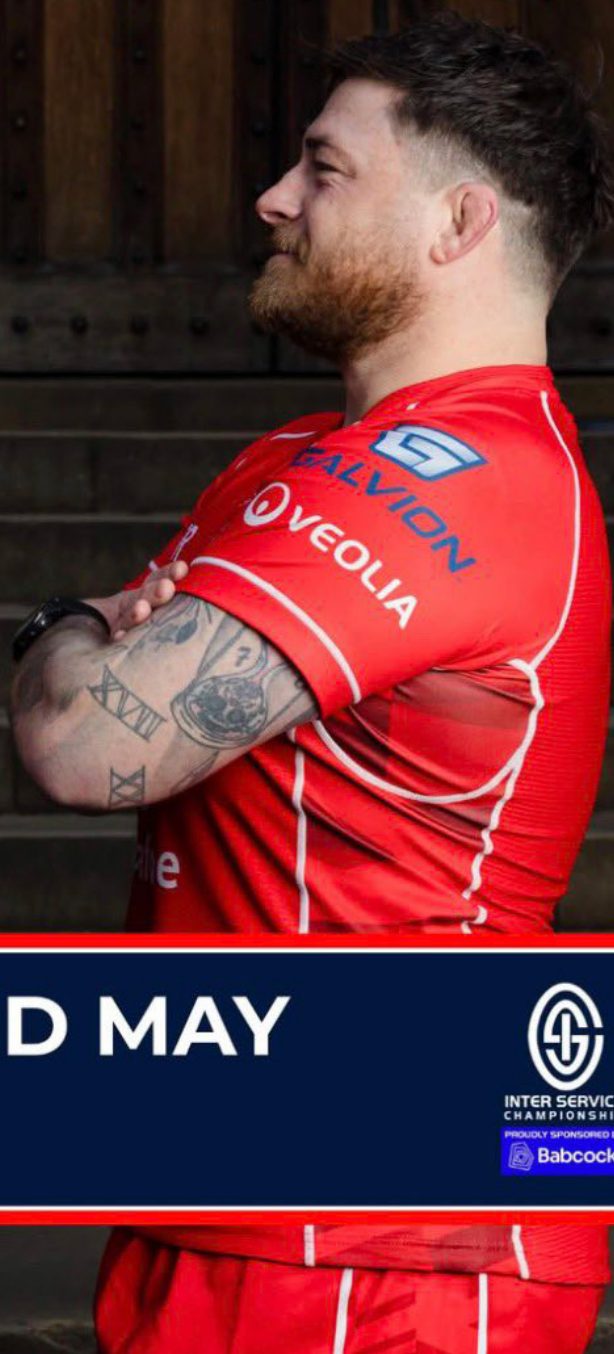


St Mary's  
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Twickenham  
London

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Discover the story of the  
Tower of London's own regiment

# ARMY NAVY



**SATURDAY 2ND MAY**  
**ALLIANZ STADIUM,**  
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# Former England international Rokoduguni adds star quality to Army v Navy

Now at Doncaster Knights, the wing will return to Allianz Stadium as part of the annual Army v Navy fixture.

When Army v Navy returns to Allianz Stadium this weekend, one of the standout names in the British Army squad will be a player with genuine England pedigree.

Semesa Rokoduguni, now plying his trade at Doncaster in Eborac Rugby, remains one of the most recognisable figures to have bridged Service rugby and the international game, bringing top-level experience to one of the biggest occasions in the rugby calendar.



Rokoduguni's story has always made him a natural fit for a fixture like this. A Lance Corporal in the Army and a four-cap England international, he is a player whose rugby journey has never been separate from his military one.

His experience at the highest level of the game, combined with his continued connection to Service rugby, gives this year's Army side added quality and an on-field connection to England Rugby.

That crossover is part of what makes his presence so compelling.

Rokoduguni is not simply a former England player appearing in an Inter Service match; he is someone whose career reflects the demands, pride and resilience that define both worlds.

His time in the Army has shaped his perspective, while his rise through the professional game showed the quality he could bring on the pitch, going on to score four tries in four England appearances after making his debut against New Zealand in 2014.

The agile wing scored twice against Fiji, the country of his birth, before crossing against Argentina during the 2017 Autumn Internationals. On his last appearance at Allianz Stadium in an England shirt, Rokoduguni went over for his final Test try against Samoa.

That proved to be his last Test cap, but the 38-year-old is still causing opposition defenders nightmares in the second division, chipping in with three tries this season.

For supporters heading to Allianz Stadium, the Rokoduguni connection gives this year's contest an added layer of interest. Army v Navy has always been more than just a rivalry, and Rokoduguni embodies exactly why. He brings proven quality, a strong connection to the fixture and a career that shows how deeply Service rugby remains woven into the wider story of England Rugby.

On Saturday 2 May, Rokoduguni will once again be part of one of the biggest occasions in military sport, and it is not too late for you to be part of the experience, with tickets still available [here](#) and hospitality packages also still available for purchase [here](#).



# Match Preview: Brentford v West Ham United

Written by Brentford Football Club

Brentford return to Gtech Community Stadium this Saturday for a London derby against West Ham United (3pm kick-off BST).

The Bees lost 2-1 to Manchester United in the Premier League on Monday night, while Nuno Espírito Santo's side beat Everton 2-1 last weekend with a late Callum Wilson goal at London Stadium.

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*: Brentford must convert control into goals

Brentford host relegation-threatened West Ham in another London derby this Saturday - looking to combine control with a clinical edge.

[The Bees put in an impressive all-round display at Old Trafford on Monday night](#), but were unable to translate performance (and 55 per cent possession) into points, as Michael Carrick's Red Devils emerged 2-1 winners.

In this context, it is worth digging deeper into Brentford's possession statistics this term. Under Keith Andrews, the west Londoners have turned in some outstanding defensive performances and shown a knack of winning games in which they have allowed their opponents to dominate the ball.

The Bees have done the double over Aston Villa this season in precisely this fashion. Dango



Ouattara scored match-winning goals in two 1-0 wins, despite the Villans dominating 76 per cent possession at the Gtech and enjoying 72 per cent of the ball at Villa Park - with Brentford down to 10 men for the entire second half.

October's thrilling 3-2 win over Liverpool was secured despite the Bees having a 34 per cent ball share, further highlighting how effective Andrews' side can be out of possession.

However, some of Brentford's most controlled performances this season have seen them struggle to convert possession into Premier League points.

Exhibit A, in this regard, is the 2-0 home defeat to Nottingham Forest at the turn of the year. The Bees recorded their highest possession share (66 per cent) of the 2025/26 campaign during that game, but were unable to breach a stubborn Forest defence that limited the Bees to just one shot on target.

Similarly, Brentford generated just 0.48 xG in their 2-0 away defeat at Crystal Palace last November - their attack blunted despite enjoying 64 per cent of the ball at Selhurst Park.

This Saturday's encounter is intriguing, therefore, given that only Burnley (41.6 per cent) have a lower average possession share than West Ham (42.1 per cent) in the Premier League this season.

Hammers head coach Nuno Espírito Santo led Nottingham Forest into Europe last season with a low-possession, counter-attacking brand of football and a fascinating tactical match-up awaits at the Gtech.

With Igor Thiago, Kevin Schade and Ouattara, Brentford boast one of the most complete attacking trios in the Premier League, but West Ham carry a threat of their own, with captain Jarrod Bowen on one wing, Crysencio Summerville on the other and Taty Castellanos leading the line.

How each side chooses to assert themselves - and feed their forwards - could prove crucial, and Brentford's 2-0 victory over the Hammers in Gameweek 8 may offer a blueprint.

Strikes from Thiago and Mathias Jensen earned Brentford a deserved victory that October night, as the Bees dominated 57 per cent possession and fired in 22 shots at goal.

If the Bees can replicate that level of performance, the points should follow.

## **Scout Report**

Dan Long, *Sky Sports*: Resurgent West Ham fighting for Premier League survival

When Brentford visited London Stadium in October, West Ham were in the mire.

They had already changed manager from Graham Potter to Nuno Espírito Santo, and [a 2-0 Bees win](#) - courtesy of goals from Igor Thiago and Mathias Jensen - was their sixth loss in the first eight games. They were already three points from safety, even at that early stage.

The Hammers lost 2-1 to Leeds in their next outing, but then appeared to turn a corner, with a 3-1 win over Newcastle and a 3-2 victory against Burnley. In both home games, they came from behind.

*“We will try to transform London Stadium into a very difficult stadium for our opponents,”* said Nuno after the first of those.

In reality, they lost four of the next five there and went 10 matches without a Premier League win.

*“We are concerned for the situation,”* Nuno admitted after the 3-0 defeat to Manchester City five days before Christmas.

On 3 January, he labelled a 3-0 defeat to former club Wolves *“embarrassing”* and *“not good enough,”* adding: *“I don’t recall one day that I felt so bad on a football pitch.”*

In the wake of a 2-1 defeat to Nottingham Forest on 6 January, however, he was bullish. *“It’s not over yet. We’ll keep on going,”* he said. In truth, he had no other alternative.

The latter result left West Ham seven points adrift of Forest in 17th. There was no getting away from the fact the Portuguese was under intense and mounting pressure.

Fortunately, the campaign was just about salvageable, as Nuno’s side have proved since. They have taken 22 points from the last 39 on offer and currently sit sixth in the form table over the last 10 games.

They balanced that resurgence with reaching the quarter-finals of the FA Cup for the first time in a decade, knocking out QPR, Burton and Brentford.

Three of their four away wins this term have come from 17 January onwards, but the home form has been crucial to the turnaround, just as Nuno had hoped it would be earlier in the season. At London Stadium, they are unbeaten in six and have conceded just four times in those games.

Still, they are not out of trouble yet.

With four games to play, West Ham sit two points above Tottenham, who currently occupy the final relegation spot.

It would have been the other way round had Callum Wilson - who looked set to leave the club in January - not scored a 92nd-minute winner last time out.

Opta Analyst’s latest predicted table gives them a 38.03 per cent chance of relegation, which is significantly lower than Tottenham’s, which currently stands at 58.72 per cent.

Should they continue as they have done since that 2-1 win over Spurs on 17 January, averaging

1.69 points per game, they will pick up 6.76 more points. Rounded up to seven, that would take them to 43 - and, in a 38-game season, no team has ever collected that many points and gone down.

But football is not as cut and dried as that, and West Ham are going to need to fight for their lives in the final weeks in order to avoid the drop.

## **In the Dugout**

Nuno Espírito Santo

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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



# Lime offers free rides across to help Londoners get to the Polls

From Lime and My Life My Say

[Lime](#), together with [My Life My Say](#), will offer free rides across London on Thursday 7 May to help people get to and from polling stations during this year's local elections.

In support of My Life My Say's "Give an X" campaign - a youth-led, non-partisan effort to get every young person registered and voting - Lime is once again bringing "Lime to the Polls" to London.

As in during the 2022 local elections, the initiative will see Lime provide riders with two free 15-minute journeys on Election Day across all London boroughs where Lime operates.



Local elections often see lower turnout than national votes, despite decisions made at borough level having a direct impact on day-to-day life - from housing and transport to local services. Turnout in the 2022 London borough elections was around [35.5% overall, significantly lower than recent general elections](#).

With participation remaining low, UK Parliament research highlights that some people are prevented from voting by ["logistical or bureaucratic barriers"](#) - underlining how practical obstacles, including travelling to the polling station, can limit participation.

The offer can be accessed by entering the code **VOTEUK2026** in the Lime app on the day (T&Cs apply).

**Alice Pleasant, Senior Public Affairs Manager at Lime, said:** *"We want to make it that bit easier for people to get to the polling station on 7 May. Local elections shape the things people deal with every day, and something as simple as getting there shouldn't be a barrier. If a free ride helps a few more people show up and have their say, that's a good thing."*

**Dan Lawes, Co-CEO, My Life My Say said:** *"Following our massive push to get young people onto the electoral roll for the 2026 elections, the 'Give an X' campaign is now focused on encouraging everyone to get out and use their vote. We're delighted to be working with Lime to offer free rides in boroughs across the capital, helping to remove the practical barriers that can often get in the way on polling day. We're calling on young Londoners to grab a bike on 7 May and make sure their voices are heard in these local elections."*

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