

# Twickenham & Richmond Tribune



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# TickerTape - News in Brief

## South Western Railway

Altered train services and buses replace trains in the **Richmond** area **Sunday 21 June**

The lines in the **Richmond** area will be **closed all day** due to maintenance work.

- **London Waterloo to Reading** services will be diverted between **Barnes and Feltham** and will call additionally at **Barnes**.
- **London Waterloo to Windsor** services will be **revised**. These services will be diverted between **Barnes and Feltham** and will make additional stops.
- **Buses** will run between **Barnes and Feltham via Richmond**.
- The afternoon and evening **London Waterloo to Kingston via Hounslow** services will **not** run.
- **London Waterloo to London Waterloo via Richmond and Wimbledon** services will start from **Shepperton**.
- **Buses** will run between **Barnes and Teddington via Richmond**.



**The Tree Agency**

darryl parkin

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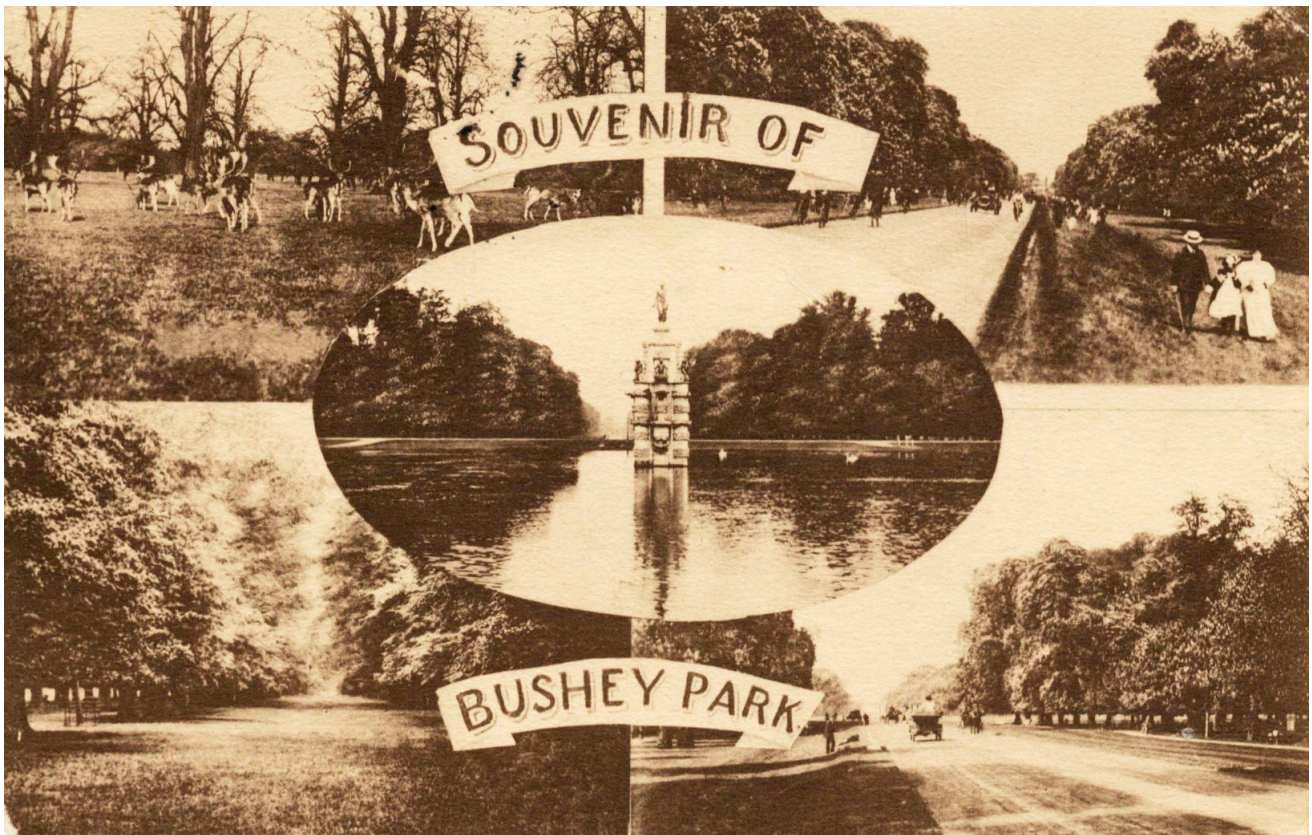
# The Local Picture Postcard Page - Part 331

## Bushey Park Or Bushy Park?

By Alan Winter

Postcard publishers are not immune from making mistakes on the titles of their cards. Here is a classic example of a wrongly spelt name that continued for over 50 years as far as I can tell.

First a bit of history. Bushy Park in our London Borough of Richmond upon Thames is the second largest of London's Parks at 1,100 acres. It sits between Richmond Park which is the largest at 2,500 acres and Home Park which is also known as Hampton Court Park and covers some 700 acres.



The origins of the modern, expansive park unfolded in a few key stages: It originally referred to a specific 180-acre hunting ground which Henry VIII added to his "Upper Park" in 1537.

- **1604:** The name "Bushy Park" was officially recorded for the first time, likely due to the hawthorn bushes planted to protect navy-destined oak saplings.
- **1620:** Present boundaries for the distinct park sections (Hare Warren, Middle Park, and Bushy Park) were finalised.
- **1713:** The distinct boundaries between the separate parks broke down, and the entire area north of Hampton Court Palace became collectively known as Bushy Park.

Bushy Park is famous for its 1,000-year history, herds of free-roaming red and fallow deer, as well as the iconic Diana Fountain.

Move to 1894 and we see the arrival of picture postcards which soon became the largest and quickest form of distance communication at a cheap rate in the world. Postcards became a

valuable additional income for photographers, stationers, newsagents and publishers.

In rushing to get new images of the local area out for sale quickly there was often the odd spelling mistake made at the publishers. The additional “E” cropped up quite frequently to the point where both *Bushey* and *Bushy* were used by different publishers at different times. We seem to have got through that period now and Bushy Park it is.



So, today's column shows a few postcards of Bushy Park titled by what we know to have been the incorrect spelling when published. They date from between about 1900 to the 1950's until the spelling of Bushy Park seems to have finally been recognised as the correct one.

Hope you haven't found this too boring, but I think it does correct a bit of our local history that found itself misspelt for some years.



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# Faith schools enter the ring in Richmond's primary school shake-up

By James Knight

Faith schools have been drawn into the centre of Richmond's looming primary school reorganisation, after Liberal Democrat councillors themselves raised questions about how Catholic, Church of England, academy and community schools will be treated as falling rolls force the borough towards difficult choices.



The issue surfaced at Richmond's Education and Children's Services Committee, where officers set out the scale of the challenge facing local primary schools. The council has not yet named schools for closure or merger. But it has now opened a process that could lead to reduced admission numbers, federations, partnerships, mergers and potentially a series of school closures.

## Empty desks, hard choices

Ian Dodds, the Executive Director of Children's Services, told councillors that school-place planning was now "extremely challenging", with Richmond hit by a falling birth rate and families moving away from the borough. The result, he said, was "a significant surplus of school places", well above the five to ten per cent level recommended by the Department for Education. The figures are stark. Across Richmond's primary schools there are around 3,000 surplus places, a 17 per cent surplus against capacity. In Reception, the position is sharper still: 1,026 empty places, or a 34 per cent surplus.

That is not a minor adjustment. Sixteen primary schools have already been identified through a sustainability assessment because of concerns about their longer-term financial viability. Dodds said future action could range from "further permanent reductions in admission numbers" to "new partnerships or federations" or "more significant school organisation options".

For parents, governors and teachers, that language matters. A reduced PAN can begin the slow shrinking of a school. A federation can change its leadership and identity. A merger can erase one school into another. Closure is the word no council wants to use too early, but it is plainly within the logic of the review. With 16 schools already identified for sustainability discussions, Richmond may be looking not at a single painful decision, but many.

## Faith schools enter the debate

What was striking was not merely the scale of the review, but how quickly faith schools entered the discussion. The review may have begun as a technical exercise in school-place planning, but the committee discussion showed how quickly it could become a political contest.

Councillor Jo Humphreys raised the practical and political problem at the heart of the process. The council has a duty to plan school places across the whole borough, but it does not have the same

power over every type of school. Community schools sit more directly within the council's reach. Academies do not. Faith schools involve diocesan authorities and their own governance structures.

Humphreys asked what would happen if the council's strategic analysis suggested that change was needed at a faith school or trust school, but the relevant partner resisted. Her concern was that other schools could then become "a little bit of a sacrificial lamb in order to keep the faith schools and the trusts going". She added that every school should be judged by the same criteria.

It was a revealing intervention. In a politically balanced council, such a question might have sounded like cross-party scrutiny. In Richmond, now effectively a one-party Liberal Democrat authority, it carries a sharper edge. The question of faith schools was raised from inside the governing political family.

Officers did not dismiss the issue. Dodds accepted that it was "more challenging" when schools were not community schools, because different designations gave the council different levels of authority. Academies, he said, were schools over which the council had "no powers to direct at all". Paul Cook, the officer leading the school organisation work, made the same point in institutional terms: the council has the statutory sufficiency duty, but does not have the power to bring forward proposals for every category of school.

There lies the tension. Richmond is responsible for the whole school system, but it does not fully control the whole school system.

### **A Liberal inheritance**

This is where the politics becomes more than administrative. British Liberalism has long contained a sceptical strand towards denominational education, shaped in part by the Nonconformist conscience: Methodists, Baptists, Congregationalists, Unitarians, Quakers and others who stood outside the established Church of England and were wary of religious privilege in public life.

Education was one of the great battlegrounds. The totemic dispute was the 1902 Education Act, which allowed public money to support voluntary denominational schools. For Conservatives and church authorities, it brought order and funding to the school system. For Liberals and Nonconformists, it forced ratepayers to support schools controlled by churches to which they did not belong. The resulting passive resistance campaign turned school funding into a moral dispute about conscience, taxation and religious privilege.

Modern Liberal Democrats speak a different language. They talk about fair admissions, inclusivity, equal access and parental choice. But the inheritance is still recognisable: a preference for publicly funded education to be common, civic and open, rather than shaped by religious identity. That does not mean this review is designed to target faith schools. It does explain why faith schools become politically charged whenever school places, public money, admissions and buildings are discussed.

### **Richmond has been here before**

Richmond has local history on this question. The controversy over St Richard Reynolds Catholic College was never simply a planning or property argument. For supporters, it was about meeting a clear demand for Catholic education in the borough. For opponents, it raised questions about whether a publicly backed school site should be used for a school with a Catholic ethos and faith-based admissions.

That argument left a political memory. It showed how quickly school-place planning in Richmond can become a wider dispute about religion, politics, inclusion, public assets and who gets to shape a child's education. It was not a replay of the old "Rome on the rates" anger that followed the 1902 Education Act, but there was an echo of the same anxiety: should public resources support schools shaped by religious authority and denominational identity?

The danger is that modern Liberals are still fighting the 1902 match, only in different language. Not

“Rome on the rates”, but fairness, inclusion and access. Not school boards and church control, but admissions, public assets and denominational identity.

The present review is different. It is driven by falling rolls, not by the creation of a new school. But the underlying fault line is familiar. Once schools are named, the argument will not be only about numbers. It risks becoming a duel between political and religious belief: the Liberal suspicion of denominational schooling on one side, and the conviction of faith communities that education is not merely a public service, but part of a child’s moral and spiritual formation, on the other.

### **The Church pushes back**

The Church was clearly alert to the implication. Esther Mirrielees, a Church representative, pushed back against the idea that faith schools would be a problem in the review. She said the relevant diocesan boards were already working on falling rolls and had closed schools in other boroughs.

That matters. It shows that faith-school bodies are not outside the pressures facing London education. Catholic and Anglican schools are not immune from falling rolls, nor should they be treated as though they are. But it also shows how sensitive the issue already is. The moment faith schools were mentioned, the representative of the churches felt the need to respond.

Councillor Michael Butlin then underlined the local stakes. He noted that South Twickenham has only faith schools or an academy, adding that when it came to “sacrificial lambs” he would be “fighting my corner.”

The timing of that declaration was revealing. Before any schools had been named, and before residents had seen the review’s practical consequences, one councillor had already made clear which corner he occupied. Councillor Butlin’s phrase mattered because it exposed the coming contest. Before the review had even reached consultation, councillors were already thinking in terms of corners, loyalties and defence.

That was a warning flare. This will not remain an officer-led exercise once individual schools are named. Ward councillors, parents and governors will quickly see it as a struggle over local identity, educational choice and the kind of schools Richmond believes should survive.

### **A review without an opposition**

There is a further political problem. Richmond is now, in practical terms, a one-party council. Scrutiny takes place largely inside the Liberal Democrat group, not across a genuinely competitive chamber. That makes transparency more important, not less.

The council will insist that this process is about numbers, not ideology. In part, that is true. Falling rolls are real. Empty desks mean falling budgets. A good school can still become financially fragile if too few children are coming through the gates.

But politics enters the ring the moment choices have to be made. Which schools are protected? Which are asked to merge? Which reduce their intake? Which buildings are retained, repurposed or vacated? And, most sensitively, how will Catholic, Anglican, academy and community schools be judged against one another?

The test is not whether faith schools are spared, but whether they are treated openly, consistently and without prejudice.

If Richmond Council wants this review to command trust, it must do more than referee the contest from the centre of the ring. It must show that every school type is being judged by the same rules, that no school is being protected by status, and that no faith school is being asked to take a blow because of old political discomfort with denominational education.

# Letters

Dear Editor,

## Twickenham Riverside

For those people fairly new to the area and unaware of the 40 year old trials and tribulations of the redevelopment of Twickenham Riverside, a recent summing up of the last 8 years might be helpful.

In 2018 the Conservative administration's planning department recommended for approval the plans that had been drawn up over many years for the old swimming pool site. (The Environment Agency's flood defence wall had now been revised in accordance with their specifications). The newly developed and extremely popular Diamond Jubilee Gardens, with its playground, small cafe, and large mature trees had been retained. Buildings to the east of the site would be flats, shops and cafés, and there would be an underground car park. This development would have been built several years ago by now.

In May 2018 the Conservative Council was replaced by a LibDem Council and in June 2018 the Council withdrew the planning application, saying that they believed that they could do better.

A competition with a build guide price of £25 - £35million was announced in 2019 and the public was invited to comment on 5 different designs shortlisted by a panel which then chose the winning one - the one presented by Hopkins Architects with its light and airy Wharf Lane building and its winter garden, preferred by the public.

Since then this building has morphed into a more brutalist style building with private luxury flats above and yet another pub on the ground floor; all the mature trees have gone that backed the site and gave shade in the summer (in fact every single one of the trees on the site including the Embankment have gone apart from 2 still beside Eel Pie Island bridge); the Water Lane road surface of "cobblestones" to reflect that of Church Street has gone and the road is now to be tarmacked; gone too are the wooden-topped steps down from the gardens to embankment for the public to sit on - the steps will remain but will now simply be concrete.

But most telling of all is that the words "Twickenham Riverside" with their award winning design has been airbrushed completely out of the Hopkins Architects own website – gone without a single mention of their involvement. I don't blame them for not wishing to be linked to this dumbed down version of their dream.

And the cost? It has jumped from the original £25 - £35million to an astonishing £67million, and still rising, with the latest costs still to be unveiled.

Best wishes,  
Sue Hamilton-Miller  
Twickenham



# The future of Richmond town centre

From The Richmond Society

The future of Richmond town centre will be debated by councillors on June 22nd. The borough has set itself the target of being “a leading global destination for investment and innovation” by 2036, and to help this the council wants to implement a vision for the town centre - which will provide, in their words, “more diverse offers that will retain footfall and enhance day-to-day experiences”.

The paper being put to the Finance Policy & Resources committee seeks to launch four key projects:

- \*public realm improvements in Whittaker Square and Avenue
- \*the 'transformation' of George Street
- \*a play area on Little Green
- \*wayfinding for the town centre

The estimated £820k cost of these projects [in the case of George Street, the detailed modelling] will be met from the initial budget of £1.5m.

You can read the detail here in item 6: <https://cabnet.richmond.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx...>

The Richmond Society will be scrutinising the proposals one by one as they emerge - and we will be seeking, as usual, to represent the views of our members and the wider community. Do let us know any early thoughts, and we will be returning to these subjects frequently both in our online posts and in public events.



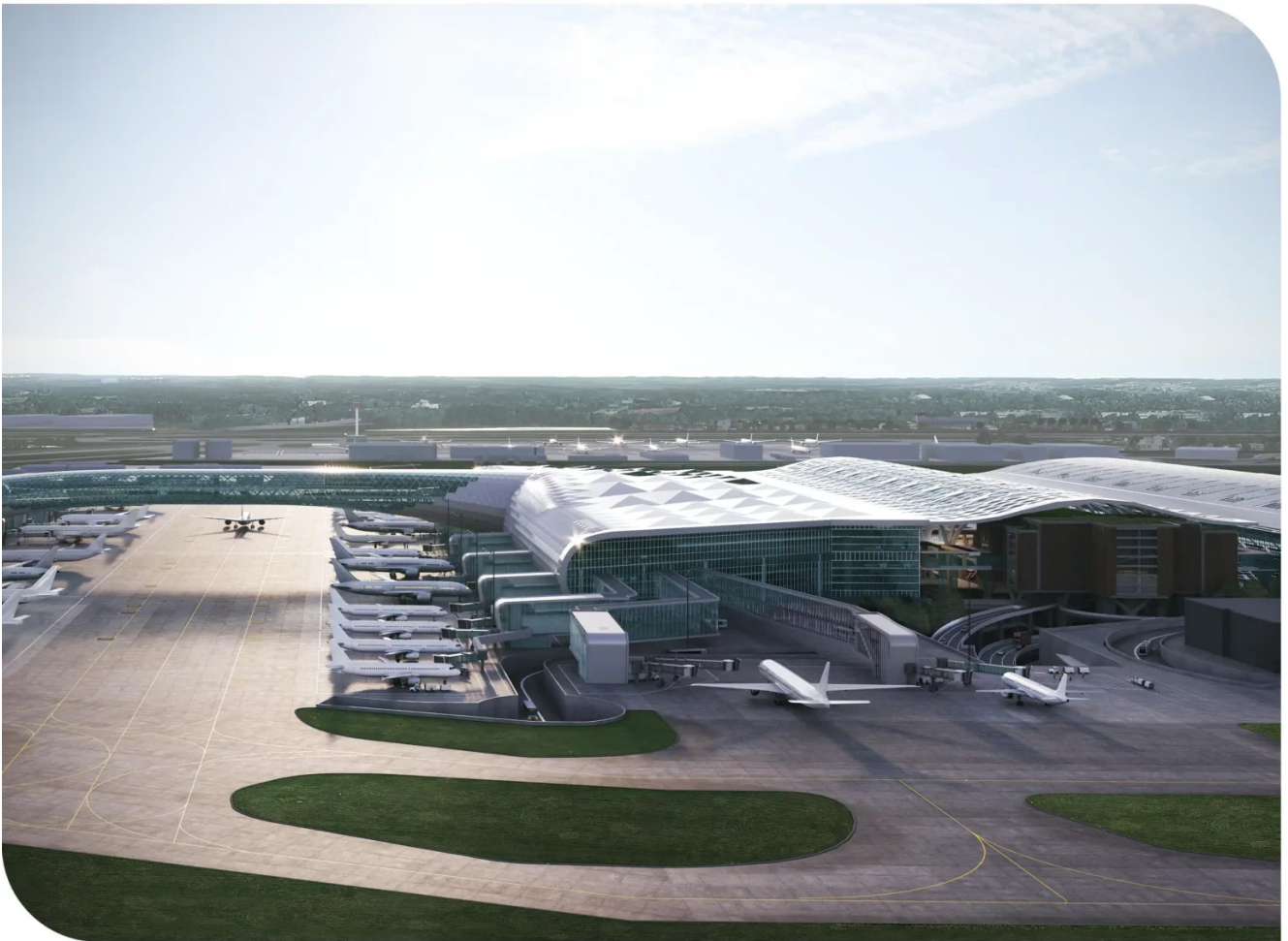
# Heathrow West Limited launches consultation on its proposed Heathrow Airport expansion

From Heathrow West

Community meetings are happening in June and July to allow residents and local businesses to input their views on Heathrow West Limited's (HWL) plans for Heathrow expansion as an alternative to Heathrow Airport Limited's own plans

HWL's cost-effective, phased proposal does not put the new runway across the M25 and in turn delivers new capacity, better passenger service and economic benefits faster while reducing construction disruption for Heathrow communities

HWL intends to submit a Development Consent Order (DCO) application in late-2027 which is the planning mechanism being used by the Government to advance expansion at the airport



## HWL's Proposed Scheme

The Heathrow West proposal is centered on an initial 2,400m runway with a world-leading Terminal 6.

The proposed runway would be located between the existing M25 motorway and M4 Spur, avoiding building over both. This initial 2,400m runway would deliver additional airport capacity by 2035, meeting Government's timeline. The runway could be extended in the future if needed with minimal disruption to airport operations.

Phasing the runway not only provides much needed capacity sooner but is also less disruptive because it avoids more expensive, time-consuming infrastructure challenges, including moving the M25.

The new Terminal 6, to be located west of Terminal 5, has been designed to manage up to 40-million passengers each year. Careful planning has minimised land use and protected the Green Belt wherever possible, reflecting a commitment to balancing growth with environmental and community considerations.

## **Community and Stakeholder engagement**

HWL intends to submit a DCO application in late 2027. As part of the DCO pre-application process, HWL is consulting residents, businesses and other stakeholders. The first round of community engagement includes seven in-person community meetings where attendees can meet the Heathrow West team, find out about the proposal and provide early feedback to inform the designs as they are further developed.

These meetings will be followed by additional consultation later this year and in spring 2027, where HWL will seek input on more detailed designs to support the DCO submission.

June and July 2026 meeting dates and locations can be found [here](#).

More information about the proposal, how to submit feedback online and how to sign-up to stay informed is available [here](#).

HWL is a wholly owned subsidiary of the Arora Group. The Arora Group established HWL to deliver airport expansion that is practical affordable and focused on the needs of local communities, passengers, airlines and the wider UK economy.

The Arora Group is a significant Heathrow employer with 92 percent of employees living in Hounslow, Hillingdon, Sperling, Ealing, Buckinghamshire and Slough. The Group is recognised for its approach to hospitality and commitment to consistently high customer service. This philosophy underpins its vision for Heathrow West.

### **Surinder Arora, Founder and Chairman of the Arora Group, said:**

“Heathrow West represents a significant step forward. It’s a deliverable plan that accelerates expansion, manages risk, and maintains a sharp focus on affordability and operational excellence. But more than that, it is an opportunity to introduce competition at Heathrow, to strengthen the UK’s position in the world, and to turbocharge the UK’s economic growth at a time when it is desperately needed.”

“As we move towards submitting a Development Consent Order in late 2027, we are committed to meaningful consultation with local communities, businesses and stakeholders. This is an important first stage of that process and we encourage as many people as possible to come to our events, find out more about the project and let us know what they think.”



# Ready to give your walks a purpose? Try the newly-launched Box Walks

From Box Walks

Box Walks is a new initiative using cleaned-up old phone boxes for a nature walk, with information at each phone box about a different aspect of climate change and sustainability.

Box Walks brings our sleepy, red phone boxes out of retirement and uses them as destination points on nature-based walks, which foster community and promote environmental action.

Find a red phone box to start walking with purpose and see how you can supercharge your environmental efforts in your home and neighbourhood.



After many months of negotiations and preparations, Box Walks launched on Saturday 13 June 2026 at Richmond Green, outside the Prince's Head pub, with Chair of our Environment, Sustainability, Culture and Sports Committee, Cllr Julia Neden-Watts cutting the ribbon.

These are a great activity for residents and visitors especially in the warmer weather. People can simply scan the QR code on a phone box and download the app which has the map and information.

If you have any questions, contact [emma@boxwalks.com](mailto:emma@boxwalks.com).

A promotional advertisement for Regal Spice Twickenham. The background features a plate of food decorated with pine branches, a star-shaped garnish, and a dark round object. The text is as follows:

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# Labour's SEND Reforms Leave Richmond Parents Facing Uncertainty

by James Knight



Richmond parents of children with special educational needs and disabilities face a period of uncertainty as Labour's national SEND reforms move towards implementation, despite warnings over workforce shortages, unclear guidance, fragile parental confidence and unresolved routes of challenge.

At the Education and Children's Services Committee, councillors considered Richmond's draft SEND reform plan, which had to be submitted to the Department for Education by 19 June. The reforms promise earlier intervention, greater inclusion in mainstream schools, a tiered support system, digitised plans and standardised packages for children who need specialist provision. On paper, much of that sounds sensible. Few parents would object to earlier help, and few teachers would oppose better support in mainstream classrooms. But the discussion exposed a familiar gap between Whitehall ambition and local delivery.

Ian Dodds, the Executive Director of Children's Services, was frank about the limitations. The timetable had been tight, and although the council had engaged with partners, parents and carers, it had "not been able to co-produce the plan in the way that we would have liked". Officer Clare O'Connor, speaking from the parent-carer perspective, reinforced the point. Engagement with parents had been "very limited", she said, and "that needs to be the context that the plan needs to be viewed in".

## **A plan before the answers**

That is not a minor procedural flaw. In SEND, process is substance. Parents who have fought for assessments, EHCPs, therapy or a suitable school placement know that the route through the system can determine whether a child receives help early or whether a family reaches crisis point. A reform built around confidence and inclusion is already weakened if parents feel it is being designed at speed, before they have been properly heard.

The difficulty for Richmond's Liberal Democrats is that the weaknesses were not hidden. Officers and parent representatives put them plainly before the committee. What was less visible was any appetite to turn those warnings into a political challenge to Labour.

## **Inclusion needs more than slogans**

The central ambition of the reforms is to make mainstream schools more inclusive. That is a worthy aim, but inclusion cannot be delivered by language alone. Councillor Jo Humphreys raised the practical question that many parents will recognise: what happens when schools are expected to support children with complex needs but lack the physical space to do so?

Dodds accepted that “physical space in some buildings is challenging”. Parent representatives also warned that specialist hubs could become segregation spaces where children with more complex needs cannot meaningfully access wider school life. Inclusion can be liberating when it is properly funded, staffed and designed. It can be damaging when it becomes a polite word for pushing more need into mainstream schools without the resources to meet it.

### **The specialists do not exist**

The strongest warning came on workforce. Dodds said the new model would require educational psychologists, speech and language therapists, specialist teachers and occupational therapists. But there is a national shortage of those professionals. His judgement was blunt: “There is no way we will recruit all the professionals we need in that timescale,” he said. “Quite simply, they don’t exist.”

That should have been the moment when local scrutiny became political scrutiny. A national reform that depends on professionals who cannot be recruited is not simply difficult to implement. It is a policy being sent into local government without the means to deliver it. Ministers can change frameworks and rename tiers of support, but if the specialists are not there, the burden falls on councils, schools and parents.

### **Parents fear weaker challenge**

The second major concern was accountability. O’Connor said parent carers were worried about “changes to rights and entitlements” and especially about dispute resolution sitting more within schools. Humphreys immediately saw the danger. When parents have an ordinary dispute with a school, they can quickly find there is nowhere meaningful to go beyond the headteacher and governors. If SEND disputes move further into that space, families may feel more exposed, not less.

Dodds said mediation and tribunal routes would still exist, as far as he understood. But he also acknowledged that the full details are not yet clear, adding that there was an “irony” in councils writing plans around proposals that are not final. That should worry parents. A system already short of trust is being asked to absorb reform before families know exactly where power, responsibility and challenge will sit.

### **The politics left unsaid**

To their credit, Richmond’s councillors asked serious questions. They raised physical space, staffing, parental confidence, communication, dispute resolution and health-service capacity. Officers and parent representatives were unusually candid about the risks. But what was missing was a sustained challenge to Labour. The committee treated the reforms largely as an implementation problem, not as a political choice by a Government asking councils to deliver change before the conditions are in place.

That silence is revealing. Richmond’s Liberal Democrats appear more comfortable managing the consequences of Labour policy than openly criticising it. Perhaps that is the price of holding together a wider progressive coalition. But parents are entitled to expect councillors to challenge any government, of any party, when reforms risk making an already strained system harder to navigate.

That may be good electoral management. It is less convincing as scrutiny. A one-party council needs more than concern. It needs the confidence to say when national reform is arriving too quickly, with too little detail and too little certainty about the workforce and funding needed to make it work.

SEND reform should not become another grand national promise that lands as a local burden. Richmond parents need clarity on rights, proper independent routes of challenge, honest answers on staffing, and proof that mainstream inclusion will be funded rather than merely asserted.

For families, the question is simple: will these reforms make it easier to get help for their children, or harder to know who is responsible when things go wrong?



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# Bubble show aims to bring joy across generations and raise money for charity

From Brighter Together

Local award-winning charity, Brighter Together, have been selected to participate in The Big Give Small Charity Week from 22 to 29 June, where all public donations will be match funded.

To raise funds, Brighter Together will host a 45-minute bubble show to bring generations together with smiles, laughter and plenty of bubbles. Entertainer, Mr Magic Bubbles, will put on a magical show full of bubble tricks and wonder that will delight all ages.

- **Date:** Friday 26 June 2026
- **Time:** 4 to 5pm
- **Location:** The Turks Head, Winchester Road, TW1 1LF

All funds raised from the event will help bring a care home and nursery school together for a year-long intergenerational project. There will also be a raffle, with prizes generously donated from local businesses.

[Book your tickets](#)



# LibDem's "Careful with Money" Claim Meets Reality

By James Knight



During the local election campaign, Richmond's Liberal Democrat leader Gareth Roberts told residents his administration had delivered "eight years of careful, caring leadership" and had shown it was "careful with money".

Within weeks, that neat campaign claim was being tested in the less forgiving surroundings of the committee room. Councillors on the Environment, Sustainability, Culture and Sports Committee were presented with an £884,000 overspend across services within the committee's remit. The largest single pressure came from Building Control, where a £234,000 budget had turned into an outturn of £616,000.

## The costly habit of agency staff

The official explanation was predictable: new demands under the Building Safety Act, a national shortage of qualified staff, market pressures, recruitment problems and reliance on contractor resource. Some of that will undoubtedly be true. Specialist building control staff are hard to recruit, and Richmond is not alone in facing those pressures. But the most revealing moment came when Councillor James Chard asked whether the overspend pointed to a wider problem with recruitment, retention and agency staff.

Paul Chadwick, Richmond Council's Executive Director of Resident Services, gave a strikingly candid answer. Agency staff, he said, can be necessary and useful, but the council needed to be more precise about when and why they are used. Then came the line that should concern every taxpayer: "***Sometimes we just fall into agency being perhaps a lazy approach on occasion.***"

## A warning light for taxpayers

That phrase cuts through the careful language of the papers. The written report points to external pressure, but the spoken admission hints at something more uncomfortable: an internal habit that may be costing residents money. No one should pretend all agency use is wasteful, nor should anyone suggest the Building Control problem is entirely of Richmond's making. But when one of the council's most senior officers says agency staffing can become "perhaps a lazy approach", councillors should not simply nod and move on.

The question is now unavoidable: how much of Richmond's overspending is genuinely unavoidable, and how much reflects weak workforce planning that has been allowed to drift?

## Careful stewardship requires more than slogans

This matters because the Liberal Democrats asked voters to trust them as careful custodians of public money. Yet the first weeks after the election brought an overspend, a major pressure in Building Control, expensive temporary labour and a senior officer's admission that agency use can become a lazy default. That does not prove wholesale financial mismanagement, but it does puncture the campaign gloss. Careful leadership is not measured by what politicians say in election videos. It is measured by what happens when budgets are missed, costs rise and uncomfortable truths emerge under questioning.

If Richmond's leadership wants to claim it is "careful with money", it must now show that agency staffing is being gripped, not allowed to become a costly habit.



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# Richmond Town Centre – Police Response to Large Gathering

From Metropolitan Police

On Monday 15<sup>th</sup> June, officers responded to a large gathering of approximately 250–300 young people at Richmond Green linked to end of GCSE “Leavers’ Day” celebrations.

Safer Neighbourhood Team (SNT) officers had been deployed to the Green in advance, anticipating an increased number of youths in the area. While the majority were enjoying the evening responsibly, officers were called at around 9:30pm to reports of disorder involving fireworks being thrown and a crowd forming around police.



As the situation escalated, additional officers attended and a dispersal order under Section 35 was authorised to prevent further anti-social behaviour and ensure public safety. Officers worked in a coordinated way to move the group away from Richmond Green towards Duke Street and Richmond Station. During this time, some individuals continued to throw fireworks and other items, causing disruption and concern for nearby residents.

Specialist resources, including police dog units, were deployed, and British Transport Police supported activity at Richmond Station. By approximately 10:45pm, the group had been safely dispersed and the area was brought back under control. Two arrests were made on suspicion of assault on police officers.

We appreciate that incidents of this nature can be worrying for local residents. Please be reassured that officers acted quickly, proportionately, and with public safety as the priority throughout.

Additional policing resources are already in place across Richmond for the next two days to support further planned gatherings and minimise disruption to the community.

Thank you for your continued support. If you have any concerns or information, please speak to your local Safer Neighbourhood Team or contact us.



**METROPOLITAN  
POLICE**

# Tug of War on Church Street!

From Church Street, Twickenham

Get ready for a day of strength, strategy, and community spirit as we bring you the Tug of War Extravaganza on Church Street this summer! Join us on Friday, 26th June, for an unforgettable event that promises to be filled with excitement and camaraderie. We're calling on all local businesses, associations, schools, and charities to enter a team and show off their tugging prowess outside The Eel Pie Pub and opposite Brewery Market.

## Event Details

Date: Friday, 26th June

Location: Church Street, outside The Eel Pie Pub and opposite Brewery Market

Team Entry Deadline: 19th June

Contact: To enter a team, please email Jon at [eelpie.twickenham@hall-woodhouse.co.uk](mailto:eelpie.twickenham@hall-woodhouse.co.uk)

It's free to enter a team, but any donations are greatly appreciated and will go towards maintaining the historical charm of Church Street. And there's more – the winning team will receive a fantastic prize!

A huge thanks to the Church Street Association of Traders for putting on events like this for the community and to the traders that donate to the association. Your support and dedication help keep our community vibrant and lively.

So gather your team, flex those muscles, and get ready for a day of fun and fierce competition. Whether you're pulling for glory or cheering from the sidelines, this is an event you won't want to miss.

Mark your calendars, assemble your team, and let's make this Tug of War Extravaganza a day to remember. We look forward to seeing you there!



# Is Gareth Roberts Pricing Shoppers out of Richmond?

By Michael Jones



Cllr Gareth Roberts has led Richmond Council since 2018. That makes the latest town-centre papers more than a technical planning exercise. They are a test of his administration's priorities: is Richmond being revived for shoppers and businesses, or reshaped around an anti-car doctrine that risks sending trade elsewhere?

There is, as ever, a familiar polish to the council's language. The papers speak of cleaner air, healthier streets, welcoming public spaces, cultural activity and a more attractive high street. Much of this sounds perfectly reasonable. Few residents would object to better pavements, improved public spaces or a more pleasant George Street. But beneath the language sits a harder question. Has the Roberts administration become so committed to reducing private car use that it risks weakening the economic health of the town centre it claims it wants to save?

## **George Street becomes the next test**

Next Monday, the Finance, Policy and Resources Committee is being asked to support further work on Richmond Town Centre's "Activating Our Vision" programme. At the centre of that agenda is the proposed transformation of George Street, with around £200,000 earmarked for traffic modelling and options analysis on greater pedestrianisation.

There is a legitimate case for examining George Street. The council's papers say a high proportion of traffic entering Richmond town centre is merely passing through without stopping for goods or services. They also point to poor air quality, bus delays and a pedestrian environment that falls short of what Richmond should offer. No serious critic needs to pretend that the current layout is ideal.

But acknowledging a problem is not the same as accepting the council's diagnosis. Richmond's town centre has struggled to recover fully from the pandemic, and the council itself says it must adapt to changing shopping habits. That should lead Cllr Roberts and his administration to ask a wider question. Have their own parking and access policies contributed to the

weakness they now want to solve?

### **Parking is part of the retail offer**

For years, Richmond has made car use steadily more expensive and less convenient. Parking charges have risen, discounts for electric vehicles have been phased out in parking and CPZ permits, and transport policy increasingly treats the motorist as a problem to be managed rather than a customer to be retained.

The comparison with Kingston is uncomfortable. A three-hour stay at Paradise Road, one of Richmond's most central car parks, costs £9.80. At Kingston's Bentall Centre, with more than 700 spaces and a much stronger retail offer, the same stay costs £5.50. Richmond is therefore charging roughly 78 per cent more for a typical shopping visit, despite having lost much of its mainstream clothing offer since the closure of House of Fraser.

For four hours, Paradise Road costs £12.45, compared with £7.25 at Bentalls. Even Old Deer Park, less central than Paradise Road, charges £8.80 for three hours and £11.65 for four hours. For a family coming into Richmond for shopping, lunch, the riverside, the cinema or the theatre, these charges are not incidental. They form part of the decision about whether to come at all.

Councils often talk about parking as though it were merely a transport issue. For a town centre, it is also part of the retail offer. Price, convenience and confidence matter. If visitors expect high parking costs, a thinner retail choice and a political culture increasingly sceptical of drivers, Richmond begins to lose the contest before the shopping trip has even started.

### **Public transport is not the only alternative**

The Roberts administration will no doubt argue that higher parking charges and reduced car access encourage public transport, walking and cycling. That may sound plausible in a committee paper, but town centres do not operate in isolation. A family choosing where to shop or spend an afternoon is not deciding between driving to Richmond and taking the bus to Richmond in a controlled experiment. It may be choosing between Richmond, Kingston, Chiswick, Wimbledon, Westfield, Staines or staying at home and shopping online.



If Richmond becomes expensive and awkward to access by car while Kingston offers cheaper short-stay parking and a stronger retail draw, the result may not be a virtuous shift to public transport. It may simply be more people driving to Kingston. That is the flaw in much anti-car urban policy. It assumes that people will change mode, when many will simply change destination.

That distinction is crucial. Richmond does not exist in a vacuum. It competes for shoppers, diners, workers and leisure visitors. If Cllr Roberts prices or designs those visitors out of Richmond, their spending will not disappear. It will move.

## **The economic cost of getting it wrong**

This is not just a matter of convenience for motorists. A weaker town centre means fewer customers, lower turnover, more empty units and fewer jobs. Retail and hospitality provide part-time work, entry-level work, flexible work and opportunities for young people. If Richmond becomes less attractive as a destination, the consequences will not be confined to traffic flows or air-quality charts. They will be felt in tills, payrolls and vacancies.

The council's own equality assessment recognises that changes to movement, access and parking can disproportionately affect older residents, disabled people, carers and those with limited flexibility in how they travel. These are not marginal concerns. They go to the heart of what a town centre is for. Richmond serves more than those who can arrive easily on foot, by bicycle or by train.

None of this means George Street should remain unchanged. There may be merit in better seating, planting, wayfinding and public space, provided the evidence shows that the scheme helps businesses, protects access, avoids pushing traffic into residential streets and does not worsen pressure on the A316.

## **Revival or ideology?**

The danger is that Cllr Roberts' administration begins with the policy it wants and then builds the economic case around it. Pedestrianisation can work in the right place, with the right retail offer, the right access arrangements and the right supporting infrastructure. But it can also fail if it is imposed as an article of faith rather than tested against how people actually behave.

This is where the wider pattern matters. At the Environment, Sustainability, Culture and Sports Committee, the council's climate agenda pointed firmly towards reducing reliance on private cars. Walking, cycling, cargo bikes, e-bikes, School Streets, freight consolidation and anti-idling enforcement all form part of the programme. Electric vehicles are treated not as the central answer, but as a secondary accommodation where alternatives to car use are not yet viable.

That distinction is revealing. If the purpose were simply to reduce emissions, cleaner vehicles would be encouraged. Yet under the Roberts administration, electric vehicle discounts in parking charges and CPZ permits have been phased out. The message is not merely that petrol and diesel vehicles are being discouraged. It is that private car use itself is being made steadily less attractive.

Cllr Roberts and his colleagues have become adept at wrapping restrictions in benign language. What sounds like public realm improvement may also mean reduced access. What is presented as climate policy may also be a charge on convenience. What is described as town-centre renewal may, if mishandled, accelerate the drift of shoppers and spending elsewhere.

Before councillors spend more public money modelling a less car-friendly George Street, they should ask whether the council's own parking and access policies have already weakened the town centre it now says it wants to save. Richmond needs revival, not just activation. Its businesses need customers, not concepts. Many residents will not abandon the car. They may simply abandon Richmond.

## Feta: You Can't Get Better

Is feta cheese something that you only tend to enjoy when on holiday in Greece? If so, I have some advice for you...enjoy it more often! I've always been a fan of feta, and tend to include it in many of my everyday recipes, so when I had the chance to join an educational trip to the mountainous region of Achaia, Greece I was thrilled and felt honoured to be invited. And what an inspirational and educational trip it was.

We were hosted by **PDO Feta** and the **Agricultural Dairy Cooperative of Kalavryta**. The Kalavryta area is known for its rich history, natural beauty, and cultural significance, it offers visitors an escape into a scenic landscape filled with forests, rivers, and majestic mountains. As someone who has enjoyed many holidays in the Greek islands, this area was a revelation, and I was amazed to discover that Kalavryta is also a popular ski resort. The town has a mixed history: it's deeply tied to both the heroic Greek War of Independence and tragic events of World War II. These moments have shaped the town's identity and left lasting marks on its cultural heritage. It was at the **Monastery of Agia Lavra** on March 25, 1821, that **Bishop Germanos** raised the flag of revolution, marking the official start of Greece's fight for independence from the Ottoman Empire. Kalavryta also carries a heavy burden of memory from the events of World War II. On **December 13, 1943**, the town became the scene of one of the most tragic massacres during the Nazi occupation. In retaliation for resistance activity, German forces executed nearly all the male population of Kalavryta and burned the town to the ground. The massacre left deep scars on the community, but the resilience of the survivors is honoured through the **Kalavryta Holocaust Museum** and the **Monument of the Fallen**.

But the main focus of the trip was feta. Though the name feta is of 17th century origin and refers to the cutting of the cheese, it appears in far more ancient literature. A primitive form of feta is even mentioned in the Odyssey, where the hero Odysseus takes the cheese made by the cyclops Polyphemus whilst escaping from his cave. Today, feta is the flagship of Greece's geographical indications and accounts for roughly 10% of Greek food exports, a testament to its outstanding international reputation.



According to PDO Feta its traditional production methods are linked directly to the specific climatic conditions of Greece. With its steep mountainsides and hot and dry climate, there was little land suitable for widespread cattle rearing. Instead, the Greek people turned to hardy sheep and goats that could thrive in these difficult conditions.



Though this might have made life hard in the past, it has given us contemporary consumers cause to celebrate. This is because the particular flavours of feta are only possible when sheep and goats are grazed on the unique flora of Greece. There are over 6000 different species of plants growing in the country, of which 15% are unique, a far higher proportion than many geographically larger nations. This biodiversity, when combined with traditional production methods, is a key reason for why true feta can only be made in Greece.

And so on the first morning, at 'crack of sparrow' we found ourselves at the livestock farm owned by a member of the cooperative, **Andreas Karamouzis**. Here we saw the sheep and goats lining up to be, and being, milked. **PDO Feta** has to have a milk ratio of 70/30 sheep/goat and Andreas told us that each sheep gives some 700 kg of milk each year. (In Greece they tend to use kg instead of litres for fluids, so you'll find wine and water in restaurants being offered by the kilo). The livestock was obviously keen to be milked, and they're also given food to chomp on while their milking takes place.



Andreas's smallholding - with 200 animals - is just one of some 1200 that supply the cooperative with milk. In return, they are provided with machinery and other subsidised equipment. The cooperative is over 60 years old, and also manufactures its own feedstuff for the animals that's sold to members at a reduced price. This not only helps the members, but ensures consistency of food quality, and hence the milk quality. The animals are milked twice each day and the milk is collected every day, frozen, and taken to the factory. There are strict regulations regarding the milk, such as not including any that is from an animal on antibiotics or other medication. It was clear to us that Andreas loves his livestock - we visited the pens (which allow free access to the open areas) and there were lots of gorgeous young kids and lambs that frolicked around and helped themselves to food from the storage area.

This farm was a smaller milk producer, and later we visited a much larger set up, owned by another cooperative member, brothers **Andreas and Kostas Pavlopoulos**. Their farm was nestled on the hillside of a beautiful glacial plateau, surrounded by mountains that have some 2,000 different herbs. The herds are escorted back for milking along the side road and kept in check by a number of sheepdogs that are bred by the farmers. As well as herding the animals, the dogs also ensure that snakes, wolves and other predators are kept away from the flock.

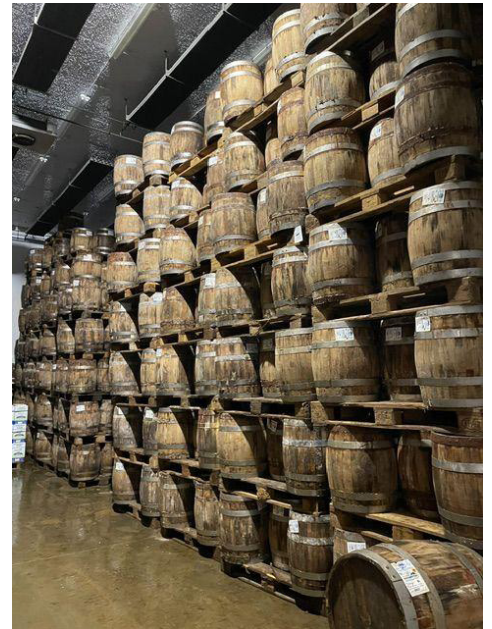
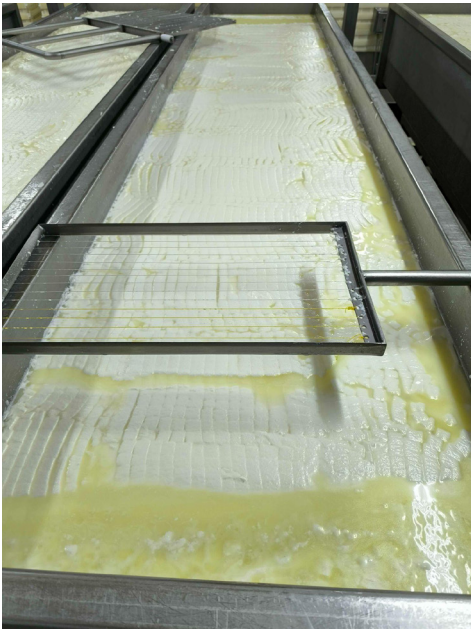


This farm had some five times more animals than the earlier one, hence more sophisticated equipment that sped up the milking process. After the visit we adjourned to the local restaurant “Sperchos” owned by the Pavlopoulos family, where we enjoyed a lovely dinner that also included their home produced wine and meats.

A visit to the production unit of the cooperative showed us that many strict regulations are enforced to ensure the quality and hygiene of the milk used in the process. On arrival, the milk is checked carefully and then pasteurised. A special culture and rennet are added and it's transferred to tanks. Here the curds are separated from the whey and pressed into moulds.



Traditionally these moulds have a large number of small holes, and no pressure is applied during the straining process. Once it has been removed from the moulds, the cheese is sliced and the surface is covered in a coarse-grained salt. During this stage, microorganisms develop on the surface of the curd which contribute to the flavours of feta. The ripening of the cheese takes place in two stages. In the initial phase, brine is added and the containers are placed in chambers under strictly controlled temperature conditions.



Salt is added as a preservative and flavour enhancer. The feta has to be matured for two months, and the barrel-aged feta for at least three to six months. The oak barrels literally towered above us in the maturation area. Some 30 tonnes of feta is produced by this cooperative every day for ten months of the year (July and August are left for maintenance and the breeding programme of the livestock).

Barrel-aged feta is cut into wedges, whereas the standard feta is in blocks. At the cooperative headquarters we tasted different types of feta, with the barrel-aged definitely having the edge with deeper flavour.



But as I found out on my trip, all PDO Feta is really delicious, and I would urge you to explore using more feta in your everyday recipes. It's the true taste of a Greek summer, of course, in the ubiquitous traditional Greek salad, but there is a whole world of other uses that I will soon share with you with some recipes.

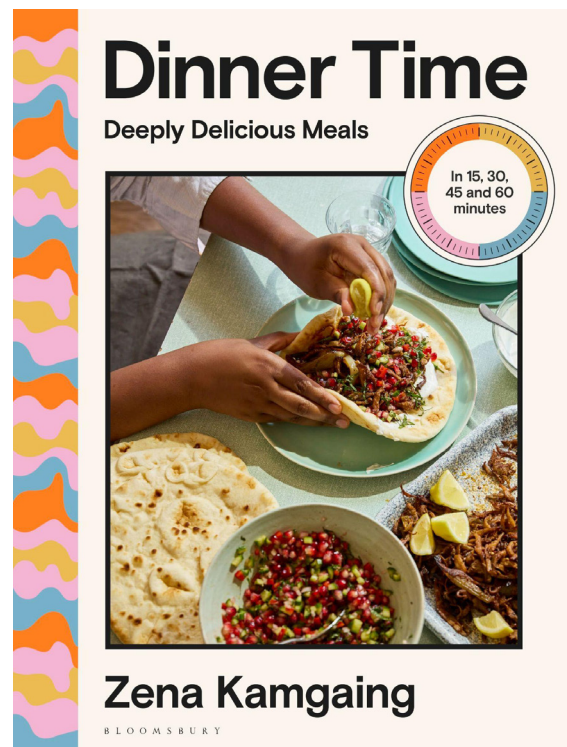
## Dinner Time: Deeply Delicious Meals

Zena Kamgaing is a passionate recipe creator with a highly engaged global audience (over 1 million followers across TikTok and Instagram, plus 500,000 monthly readers of her blog). **DINNER TIME** - published by **Bloomsbury Publishing** earlier this month - is her debut cookbook and is packed with vibrant, affordable and easy to recreate recipes. One of the things I love about the book (as well as the recipes of course) is the way it's split into time zones for creating the recipes: 15, 30, 45 or 60 minutes. There's a meal for any time of the day, quick midweek pick-me-ups as well as roasts, stews, ragus and curries...taken to the next level. It's a lovely hardback book, at £22 with photography by Yuki Sugiura. Here are some recipes to give you a flavour of what's in store if you buy the book.

### **CURRY BUTTER PRAWNS 15 Mins (Serves 4)**

*"Rich, buttery and outrageously delicious, this is the kind of dish that makes weeknight cooking feel effortless. Juicy prawns are tossed in a velvety sauce spiked with curry spices, garlic and the deep sweetness of tomato purée. It's indulgent, easy and perfect with rice, crusty bread or simply on its own. Hosting a dinner party? Use **head-on, shelled king prawns** for extra flavour and a show-stopping presentation!"*

- 60g butter
  - 30g double-concentrate tomato purée
  - 1 tsp curry powder (mild, medium or hot)
  - 2 garlic cloves, finely grated or minced
  - 500g deveined raw king prawns, tail on
  - 60ml boiling water
  - 1 small handful of fresh coriander, leaves and stems roughly chopped
  - Lemon wedges, to serve (optional)
1. Heat a large frying pan over a medium heat. Add the butter and cook, stirring occasionally, until it just begins to foam and brown (2–3 minutes). You'll notice the sound shift from loud bubbling to a quiet sizzle.
  2. Add the tomato purée and cook, stirring frequently, until it begins to darken (2–3 minutes).
  3. Add the curry powder and garlic and cook, stirring constantly, for 1 minute, then add the prawns and toss them to coat them in the sauce. Pour in the boiling



- water, stir and cover the pan. Let the prawns steam until cooked through (4–5 minutes).
4. Remove the pan from the heat and stir in the coriander. Transfer the prawns to a shallow bowl and serve immediately, with some lemon wedges on the side, if you like.

## **'NDUJA CONFIT TOMATOES WITH WHIPPED RICOTTA 60 mins or more (Serves 4)**

*"I love slow-roasting cherry tomatoes. They soften, burst and slowly collapse into a thick, sticky sauce that's sweet, sharp and savoury all at once. Here, we take things a step further by confiting them – cooking them low and slow in plenty of olive oil spiked with 'nduja, which brings heat, depth and a little funk (the good kind!). I like to pile the whole thing over whipped ricotta and serve it with crusty bread, but it's just as – if not more – delicious stirred through pasta."*

- 75ml extra-virgin olive oil
- 80g 'nduja
- 500g sweet, ripe cherry tomatoes
- 6 garlic cloves, peeled
- 1 tsp sugar
- 1 small handful of fresh basil leaves, half thinly sliced,
- half left whole (small ones if possible)
- 250g ricotta
- Crusty bread, or pasta, to serve

1. Heat your oven to 180°C/160°C fan.
2. Add the olive oil and 'nduja to a cold, large frying pan or sauté pan – ideally one that's ovenproof, but if not, you can transfer the tomato mixture to a roasting dish later.
3. Set the pan over a medium heat. As it warms, the 'nduja will start to melt. Use a wooden spoon to break it up and stir it into the oil to create a punchy red paste.
4. Add the cherry tomatoes, garlic and sugar. Season with salt and pepper, then toss everything together so the tomatoes are well coated in the spicy oil. If your pan isn't ovenproof, tip it all into a roasting dish.
5. Roast for 35–45 minutes, or until the tomatoes are blistered, juicy and bubbling. Stir through the sliced basil and leave it all to cool slightly.
6. In a bowl, whisk the ricotta until smooth, then season with a little salt and whisk again. Spread the ricotta on to a serving plate, then spoon the confit tomatoes and garlicky 'nduja oil over the top.
7. Finish with whole basil leaves and serve with crusty bread for mopping, or stirred through your favourite pasta for something more substantial.



*Extract taken from Dinner Time by Zena Kamgaing (Bloomsbury Publishing, Hardback, £22).  
Photography © Yuki Sugiura.*

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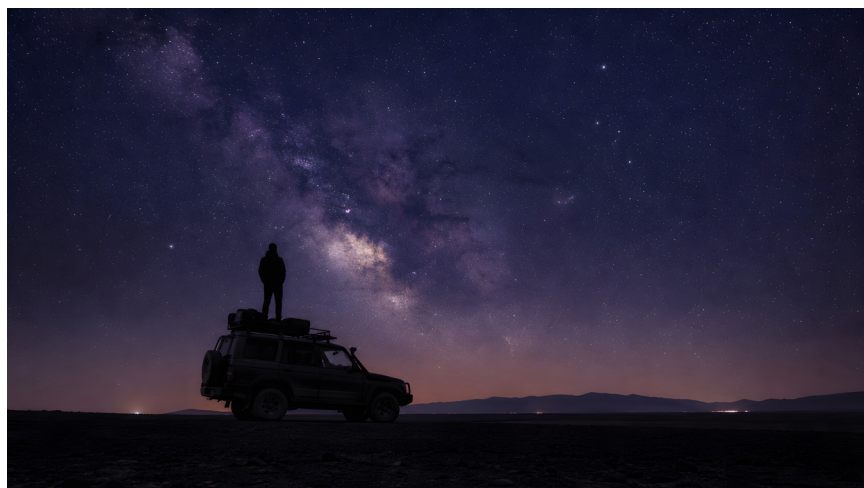
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# Cosmic Corner

By Bruce Lyons

Tell you the truth , last week I had no idea what I had started, true I was curious about Elon and SpaceX and then my Friends in the Egyptian Eastern Desert in the Red Sea , but I had no idea that 2027 is being talked about as being the Eclipse of the Century. Apart from my friends, special week at their small resort I see there are others in that area, most with an expert on hand- though I must say that the Rots week is, till now the most attractive and the least expensive. That said I see that Jules Verne has two small groups in Algeria, and the Adventure companies have theirs to Egypt and Tunisia.



Stargazing is also becoming more and more popular and the Deserts are the best as they have clear skies, best to time your visit with a new moon \_ which, by the way, is the case for August 2nd, 2027.

Some Cruise companies are featuring the Eclipse, but it won't be as strong a feature as these small groups, however as interest is growing I'm devoting one

of my Windows with Cards featuring these trips as well as excursions you can plan to include in your USA holidays. There is a lot to be seen at the Kennedy Space Centre (Florida); Space Centre Houston, the Space & Rocket Centre in Huntsville Alabama; NASA Glenn visitor Centre in Cleveland Ohio and the NASA Amies Experience in Oakland, California.

In Europe we have the one and only Hadron Collider at CERN - you can't visit it and anyway it's underground in a 27 Kalm tunnel but students interested in Dark Matter can join group tours. Many will remember Stephen Hawkings and the Black Holes.



Want to know more come on down - not before Wednesday as I won't have my window up till then, though you can always stop by and say hello.

Bruce @ Crusader Travel

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## The Marriage of Figaro

by Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart, libretto by Lorenzo Da Ponte

Wild Arts at Layer Marney Tower, Essex, then on national tour until 27<sup>th</sup> September

It is a clear recognition of the quality of Wild Arts productions, that such a new opera company was chosen by one of opera's superstars for her stage directing debut. Danielle de Niese's career has spanned the world's greatest opera houses for over three decades, and she was a teenager when she made her debut at the Met, in *The Marriage of Figaro*. She brings verve and energy to forge a pure triumph, as intelligent and probing as it is engaging and entertaining. Although the opera is a satirical farce, here are genuine human emotions, intensified in the intimate acting space, where the audience is almost part of the Almaviva household.



Orlando Jopling has worked his brilliant legerdemain to arrange the opera for just ten instruments, and makes every one of them a character in its own right.

Jopling and de Niese's witty translation sparkles with life. It can be quite earthy: as Count Almaviva contemplates his situation as, "well, this is a bloody shit-show!", the audience sits-up. Yet the sharp comedy does not erode the intensity or beauty of the work. Instead it is a foil that sets it off.

Ellie Neate fully inhabits the part of Susanna, the Countess's chambermaid and confidante, and sings with sparkling fluidity.

Her Susanna is intelligent and knowing, breezy and feisty. Jack Sandison excels as Figaro, and wows with the lustre of his full and resonant bass-baritone.

Elinor Rolfe Johnson's troubled Countess is infused with emotion. Her *Porgi amor* is truly touching.

Count Almaviva is played by Wild Arts stalwart, Timothy Nelson, who approaches the role with commanding stage presence and rich stentorian baritone.

For pageboy Cherubino, puberty brings a tsunami of testosterone, and he has every female is in his sights. Abbie Ward's clear mezzo has a steely timbre, as her edgy Cherubino is more peril than pest.

"You have to go beyond the well trodden path", says de Niese and, in her *Marriage of Figaro*, we have believable three-dimensional characters, and we see the deepest of pathos and the broadest of comedy. It is an intelligent and well-studied exposition of life, yet it is such great fun.



Read Mark Aspen's review at [www.markaspen.com/2026/06/09/marriage-figaro-wa](http://www.markaspen.com/2026/06/09/marriage-figaro-wa)

Photography by Lucy Toms

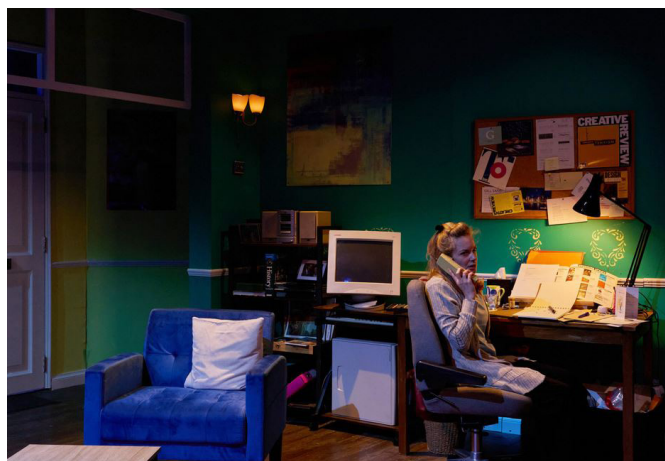


## Dead Guilty

by Richard Harris

Take Note Theatre at the Tabard Theatre, Chiswick until 27<sup>th</sup> June

Freelance graphic designer Julia has recently been in a car crash, after her employer John Haddrell suffered a fatal heart attack at the wheel. Convalescing, she's visited by Gary, her "Daily Male", a young man who cleans and gardens for her; and by Anne, her counsellor. In pain and depressed, Julia wants to be left alone, but Haddrell's widow visits her to help process her bereavement. When the two women strike up an unlikely friendship, Gary becomes jealous and defensive. Peculiar events build as it becomes clear that they all harbour secrets. One of them is not what they seem.



Richard Harris's thriller is intricately crafted, and elevated by a superb cast. As Julia, Charlotte Hunter's compelling portrayal is of an independent woman who resents having to rely on others. Hunter pulls off the demanding task of portraying a character who has to smile politely while seething inside.

Freddie Webster gives a terrifyingly proficient performance as Gary, turning on a sixpence from the cheerful chappie with a clear crush on his employer, to a much darker, possessive, and troubling character. Anne is played by Julia Faulkner with great delicacy. A consummate professional who clearly truly cares about her patients, Anne appears to relish Julia's deflections and verbal jousting. The widowed Margaret Haddrell is a former nurse, obsessed with flowers. Felicity Duncan portrays the widest emotional range, from grieving widow to attentive best friend, with flashes of real anger at the unexpected loss of her beloved husband.

Director Nick Bromley keeps the action moving at pace, his main flourishes being swells of ominous music to draw attention to significant events; events whose significance the characters seem to ignore.

The set designed by Rob Miles and lit by Nat Green is a detailed evocation of a mid-90s living room and home office, full of computer monitors and answerphones. A flower garden is glimpsed through the French window.



Some less naturalistic plot elements creep in as the drama accelerates, and there are few tidy, neat answers to the characters' quirks, though many of them are strongly implied. *Dead Guilty* is a gripping thriller, frequently funny, and full of fascinating and complex characters, which keeps us guessing until the very end.

Read Andrew Lawston's review at [www.markaspen.com/2026/06/12/dead-guilty](http://www.markaspen.com/2026/06/12/dead-guilty)

Photography by Felix Hall Close

# Rosencrantz and Guildenstern Are Dead

by Tom Stoppard

Putney Theatre Company at the Putney Arts Theatre Studio until 20th June

Emotions fly at us in this iconic piece. Tragedy, humour and profound words are all thoughtfully brought to life, as scenes from the plot of Shakespeare's *Hamlet* are cleverly woven into the action.

The edgy use of sound, including Saint-Saëns haunting *Danse Macabre*, designed by Owen Thomas James, and Richard Evans and Teni Gomez's sensitive lighting create an expectant atmosphere. Setting Tom Stoppard's absurdist tragicomedy in an avenue offers promise, and indeed the bare stage is brought to life by strong performances.

Lonje Kalanda, playing Rosencrantz, is matched by Rob Ryan's strong performance as Guildenstern, as our 'heroes' banter while they toss a coin and debate on laws of probability.



Nathan Chatelier's Hamlet is hapless and endearing, and Anastasia Babich's Ophelia is nicely tragic. Ian Cooke's Claudius and Edward Ogilvie's Polonius are both strong and likeable. Julia Blyth creates a grand and sweeping presence playing Gertrude.

The Player makes a vibrant entrance and he is totally mesmerising. His accompanying Tragedians enhance the scene. It is a great performance by Eric Petrossian as The Player, and we look forward to seeing more of him. Relaxed, yet authoritative with his Tragedians, Petrossian's Player makes a worthy use of the space. The Tragedians excel in their bloodbath performances, and make a terrific entrance in the second Act as stowaways on the ship, where there is a very clever

use of the cargo. A clever touch is with the only male Tragedian, Finton McCluskey, being cast in female roles. With fellow Tragedians, Emma Buckley, Kelsey Norris, Eve Newton, Rebecca Fallon and Nora Holman they make up the highly watchable team of earnest thespians. Their smooth choreography is by Lyndall Brown and their intricate costumes form part of the play's wardrobe design by Lexa Kirity, Alexa Adam and Simon Crump.

A striking ending has corpses strewn all over the stage and Rosencrantz and Guildenstern bewildered at their own execution. Co-directed by Will Hunter and Rob Wallis, Putney's *Rosencrantz and Guildenstern Are Dead* is a studied and intelligent exposition of this complex piece.



Read Heather Moulson's review at [www.markaspen.com/2026/06/17/rosen-guild-dead-ptc](http://www.markaspen.com/2026/06/17/rosen-guild-dead-ptc)

Photography by Colin Rogal



*Concordia*  *voices*

**Saturday 20<sup>th</sup> June 2026 7.30pm**  
**St Mary's Church, Twickenham, TW1 3NJ**

**Iain Farrington**

**Then Sing We All**  
**A JAZZ Cantata**

**Will Todd: Jazz Missa Brevis**

**Bob Chilcott: Jazz Folk Songs**

**Conductor: Jack Apperley**

**Accompanist: Paul Ayres**

**Double Bass: Guy Dempsey**

# Hampton Choral Society

*Presents*

## Songs from Stage and Screen

### Opera Choruses

Verdi - Chorus of the Hebrew Slaves  
Bizet - Carmen - 'Habenera' and 'Les Voici'  
Purcell - Dido's Lament and Final Chorus

### Film Favourites

Mozart - Lacrimosa  
Orff - Carmina Burana - O Fortuna  
Handel - Zadok the Priest  
Enya - May it Be  
Mitchell - Both Sides Now

### Musical Hits

Andrew Lloyd Webber - Concert Celebration  
Rodgers and Hammerstein - You'll Never Walk Alone  
Rodgers and Hammerstein - Climb Every Mountain  
Arlen - Somewhere Over the Rainbow  
Mancini - Moon River

*and more .....*

**Saturday 4 July 2026, 7.30pm**

*Musical Director - Emma Warren*

*Accompanist - Pam Kent and professional soloist*

All Saint's Church, The Avenue, Hampton, TW12 3RG



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

Charity Number 261788

# The Royal Parks launches weekly charity lottery to support nature

From The Royal Parks

The Royal Parks charity has launched [The Royal Parks Nature Lottery](#), a new weekly charity lottery designed to raise funds for wildlife, trees and green spaces across London's Royal Parks.

Participants can enter for as little as £1 per week for the chance to win a top prize of £25,000 in weekly draws held every Friday. Additional prizes include £1,000, £25, and five entries into the next draw.

Funds raised through the lottery will support the care and protection of more than 170,000 trees and shrubs, and 7,000 species of wildlife across 5,000 acres of parkland managed by The Royal Parks charity.

Players can enter online by selecting the number of entries they would like and choosing to pay by Direct Debit or debit card. Once registered, entrants receive unique six-digit lottery numbers and are automatically entered into future weekly draws.

Pablo Gonzalez, Head of Fundraising, The Royal Parks, said:

*"The Royal Parks are some of London's most cherished green spaces, but protecting nature across 5,000 acres of parkland requires significant ongoing investment. It costs around £75 million each year to manage and maintain the parks, and support from the public plays a vital role in helping us care for wildlife, trees and habitats."*

*"The Royal Parks' Nature Lottery offers people a new way to get involved, with every ticket helping to protect and enhance these special places for future generations. We're excited to launch an initiative that not only raises vital funds for nature but also gives participants the chance to win amazing prizes."*



THE MULBERRY CENTRE'S

25<sup>TH</sup>

Anniversary

GALA BALL

Join us for an unforgettable evening, celebrating 25 years of supporting people affected by cancer.

📅 SATURDAY 26<sup>TH</sup> SEPTEMBER 2026

📍 THE CLAYTON HOTEL, CHISWICK, W4 5RY

🕒 6.30PM - 1.00AM (*Carriages at 1am*)

🎩 DRESS CODE: BLACK TIE



**TICKETS £89**

INCLUDES A WELCOME DRINK, THREE-COURSE DINNER, LIVE ENTERTAINMENT, CHARITY RAFFLE AND GRAND AUCTION.

*Together, we can continue to make a difference for the next 25 years and beyond.*

**Mulberry**  
Cancer Support



Year Anniversary

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# Thames Path 30th Anniversary Relay

From Thames Landscape Strategy

In celebration of the Thames Path's 30th anniversary, and in collaboration with Drinkable Thames, a month long relay is taking place from the source in the Cotswolds to Woolwich, passing through Richmond.

Thames Landscape Strategy is delighted to be hosting two sections along the Arcadian Thames—a stretch defined by its rich historic landscapes, biodiverse riverbanks and vibrant riverside communities.

Join us to experience this remarkable landscape at walking pace: from quiet riverside meadows and historic parklands to bustling urban stretches, each step reveals a different story of the Thames. Whether you are a seasoned walker, a nature enthusiast, or simply keen to spend time by the river, we'd love you to be part of it.

You don't need to commit to the whole walk—you're very welcome to join for a short section, hop on and off along the route, or simply come for a highlight stop or break point. Every step shared helps celebrate this special anniversary.

## Tuesday 23rd June - Walton-on-Thames to Kingston

Event details:

- Start point: Walton-on-Thames- Felix Road Rec Ground (W3W///ranged.pencil.river)
- End point: Kingston-upon-Thames - Outside The Boaters Inn (W3W///slide.jars.alone)

Timings:

- 10 am: Meet for tea and coffee at Felix Road Rec Ground
- 10:30: Set off
- 11:45: Morning break at Hurst park
- 12:30: Lunch break around Hampton Court
- 15:00: Finish the walk at the Boaters Inn in Canbury Gardens

## Wednesday 24th June - Kingston-upon-Thames to Kew Bridge

Event details:

- Start point: Kingston-upon-Thames - Outside The Boaters Inn (W3W///slide.jars.alone)
- End point: Kew Bridge - just East of Kew Bridge in green space (W3W///scouts.noted.think)

Timings:

- 09:30: Meet for tea and coffee at the Boaters Inn
- 10:30: Set off
- 11:00: Arrive at YMCA Hawkers Centre to talk about newly achieved bathing status
- 13:00: Lunch in Richmond
- 15:15: Arrive at Kew Bridge
- 15:30: Celebratory drink at the pub in Kew

## More information

This is a chance to connect with the river, meet others who care about its future, and celebrate the Thames as a living landscape - shaped by nature, history and the communities alongside it.

If you have any questions, [learn more on the National Trail website](https://www.thamespath.org.uk) or contact: [alex@habitatsandheritage.org.uk](mailto:alex@habitatsandheritage.org.uk).



The St. Michael Steiner School

# MIDSUMMER FAIR

## & Open Day

BBQ & Salads

Coffee & Cake

Games, Crafts  
& Tombola

Henna &  
Fairy Garden

Raffle &  
Silent Auction

Books and lots more...

Tours for prospective families  
from 11am to 1pm

## Come & Join us...

## Sunday 5<sup>th</sup> July 11.00 - 4.00pm

The St Michael Steiner School  
Park Road, Hanworth Park, TW13 6PN

The St Michael Steiner School is a registered charity, no 1094960

[stmichaelsteiner.hounslow.sch.uk](http://stmichaelsteiner.hounslow.sch.uk)



# SUMMER SOLSTICE YOGA



Friends of Twickenham Green and The Hare and the Moon invite you to  
Come and celebrate the Solstice on Twickenham Green, with a special  
free outdoor yoga class..

This Solstice yoga class will be held outside on Twickenham Green on  
**Sunday June 21st at 8am**

Full details and information for how to register can be found on:  
**[www.thehareandthemoon.co.uk](http://www.thehareandthemoon.co.uk)**  
Booking required as spaces are limited.

The Hare and the Moon will also be running a full programme of other  
solstice events on the day.

**Bring your own mat  
and join us!**

**FREE**

**21<sup>ST</sup> JUNE  
8AM**



**SCAN TO  
FIND OUT  
MORE ...**



# Elleray Social Club: Forming new friendships later in life

From The Elleray Centre and Elleray Social Club

Growing older can bring more time to relax, fewer daily pressures and the chance to spend more time enjoying hobbies and family. Yet for some, it also brings a quieter, less welcome visitor – social isolation and loneliness.

This can creep in gradually, often unnoticed at first, until suddenly the days seem longer and emptier and the phone seldom rings.

This is a story about just such a person, who we'll call Mary Parsons. Her story is typical of that of many of Elleray Social Club's members - you probably know or know of someone just like her.

Married with two children, Mary lived with her husband John in a quiet street in Teddington. When she was younger, she and John used to enjoy evenings out by themselves or with friends and they often visited their children, both of whom lived relatively close by. But as the years went by, her children's work took them far away and many of her friends also moved out of the area to be closer to their own families.

Going out became more of an effort and she and her husband spent more and more time alone at home watching television, reading and reminiscing about the holidays and other good times they had enjoyed together.

When her John died, she suddenly found herself very much alone. She had got completely out of the habit of making new friends. The very thought of joining clubs or taking part in classes or social activities where the other participants would be complete strangers was daunting.

She knew that she should make efforts to cultivate new friendships but didn't know where to begin and kept putting it off. That was when one of her neighbours, concerned that she was becoming more and more isolated, told her about Elleray Social Club at the Elleray Centre in Teddington.



In fact, this neighbour not only told her about the club, but telephoned the office and explained that she would like to take Mary there and help her settle in to a new social environment. When they both arrived, the club manager had arranged for someone to meet them, show them round, explain what was going on and, most importantly introduce Mary to some of the members.

After a few visits, Mary began to feel more comfortable and gained the confidence to make her own way to the centre and forge new friendships. She particularly enjoys the singing and line dancing sessions and usually has lunch on the days that these activities take place. Her life, which had become rather lonely and boring, was, at a stroke, reinvigorated. Now, Mary is one of the Elleray Social Club's most enthusiastic members and is a completely different person!

So, if you know someone that you feel would benefit from meeting new friends and engaging in activities and games that reawaken their zest for life, please tell them about Elleray Social Club. Encourage them to come along and see what they can offer, or even come along with them. Call a manager and explain the situation and she will lay on an especially welcoming reception for you both.

At the end of last year the social club moved in the magnificent new Elleray Centre in the heart of Teddington and it's warm, comfortable and very welcoming. Every weekday there is a range of activities, games and quizzes to help keep members fit, healthy and entertained and serve a nourishing home cooked lunch. There are regular trips to local attractions and there's also a professional hair salon and a visiting chiropodist. Truly, there is never a dull moment!



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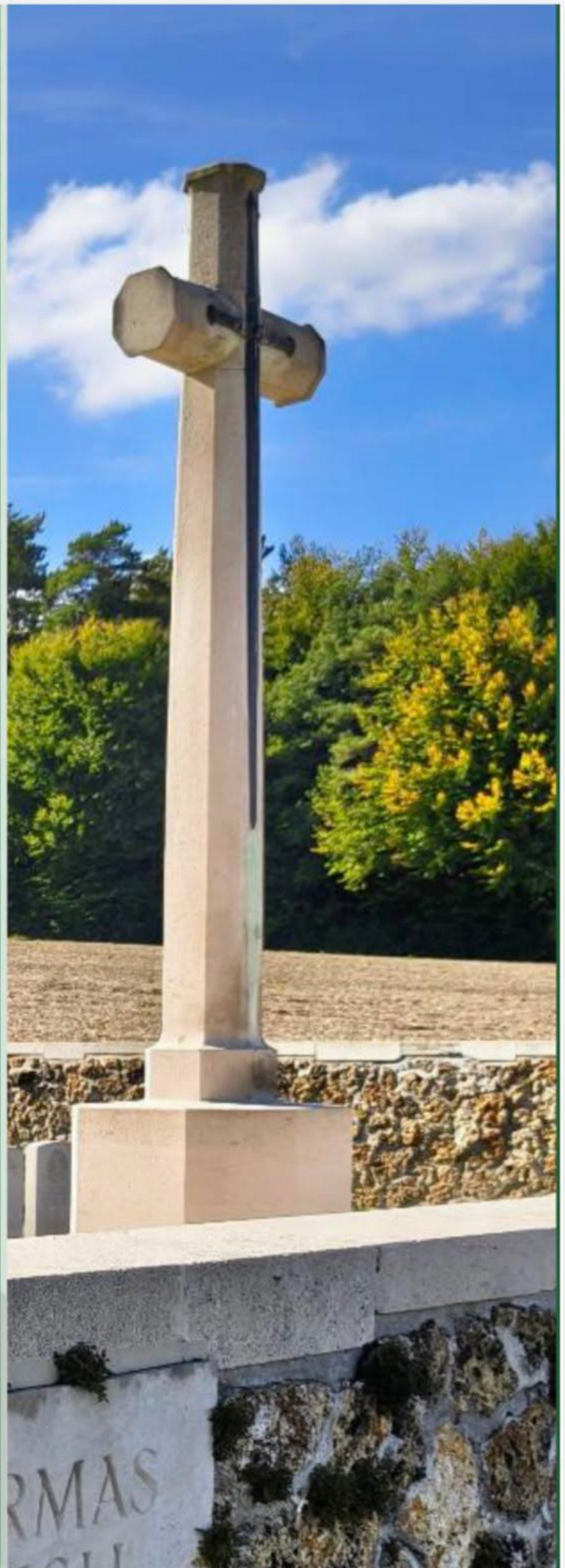
On the following dates:

Thursday 2<sup>nd</sup> of July 2026 2PM

Find out more and book your  
free place at

[www.cwgc.org/tours](http://www.cwgc.org/tours)

or scan the QR code below



# E-bike operator Forest marks official Richmond launch with local activation, curated guide and giveaways

From Forest Bikes

To celebrate Forest becoming Richmond's sole shared e-bike operator, the company has created a **Guide to Richmond** - a special guide which champions the must-visit spots across the borough, curated by the Forest team, and based on their first-hand experiences.

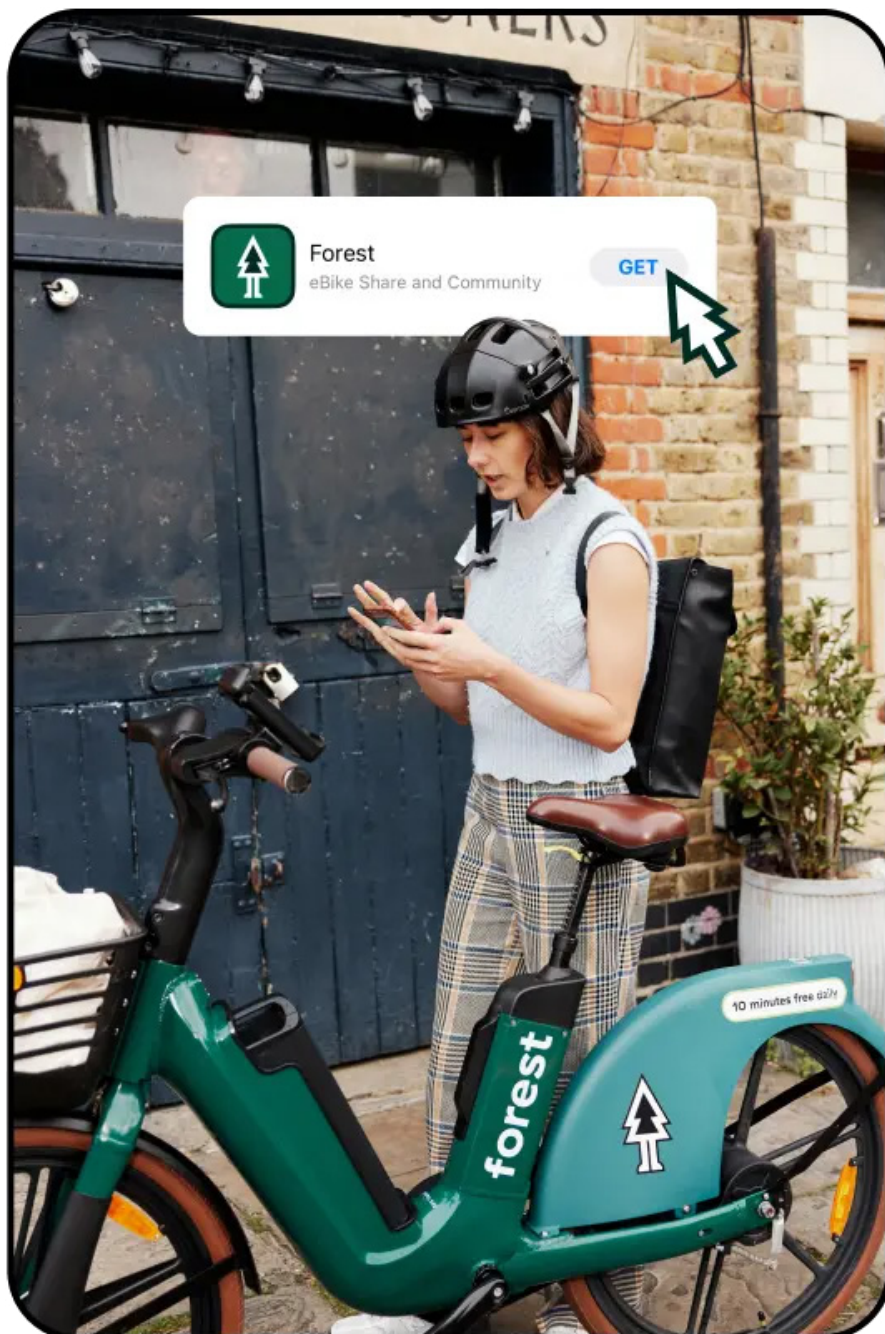
The new guide is designed to give both Richmond locals and visitors the opportunity to discover the best of the borough's hidden gems, while encouraging them to discover how Forest can support affordable, sustainable travel across the borough. It includes:

- A cycling map of Richmond, featuring recommended bike parking locations.
- A curated selection of the Forest team's favourite local spots across the borough - such as **Redwood Grove in Kew Gardens, local coffee shop Long Black on Richmond Hill, and the recently opened Yard Sauna.**
- Two 60-minute ride codes to redeem with a chosen friend.

Members of the Forest team will be outside **Richmond Station from 10am to 2pm on Saturday** to distribute the guide to locals, as well as gift limited edition merchandise. As part of their official launch in Richmond, Forest is also running a range of exclusive offers for riders in Richmond, including:

- For all of June, Forest is offering 30 ride minutes for £1 on every Forest ride that starts in Richmond.
- An exclusive £13.99 monthly bundle for Richmond residents, providing 400 ride minutes, equivalent to just 3.5p per minute.

Forest's official expansion into Richmond reaffirms its position as London's fastest-growing shared e-bike operator, now operating in 19 boroughs and serving more than 1.5 million customers across the Capital.



# Huge Numbers of New Young People Introduced to Rugby Union This Year

More than a quarter of a million young people have been introduced to rugby union over the past year, marking a major boost for the grassroots game and signalling strong future growth.

The surge spans state schools, colleges, and youth organisations including Scouts and Guides, and comes in a landmark year for the sport, capped by the Red Roses lifting the Women's Rugby World Cup at Allianz Stadium.

This growth reflects a coordinated effort across the game - powered by tens of thousands of volunteers, supported by clubs, schools, and partner organisations - to open up rugby to new and more diverse audiences.

## Major investment driving long-term growth

The RFU has committed £120 million over four years to 2030 to strengthen the community game, with a clear focus on:

- Bringing more young people into rugby
- Keeping players in the sport for longer
- Supporting the clubs and volunteers at its heart

Steve Grainger, RFU Executive Director for the Community Game, said:

*"This is about securing the future of rugby. We want more young people coming into the game and staying in it and making sure rugby reflects the communities it serves."*

The RFU is already making progress towards its target of 50,000 additional players by 2030, with almost 300,000 players now active in clubs nationwide.

## Opening up rugby to a new generation

A standout success has been the rapid expansion of rugby in state education and youth groups, driven by T1 Rugby, a non-contact, inclusive format designed to make the game accessible to all.

The numbers include:

- More than 186,000 young people introduced to rugby in schools and colleges this year
- Around 1,100 schools introduced T1 Rugby this year (building on 1,800 the previous year)
- 60 School Rugby Managers now in place, rising to 100 in the next two years
- More than 1,000 primary schools equipped through the Allianz Kick Start programme

The RFU has also extended its reach beyond schools with 66,000 young people engaged through Scouts and Guides, where nearly half of participants are girls and over 250 clubs are

now formally linked with local Scout and Guide groups.

Together, these initiatives are creating a clear pathway from first experience to club rugby, helping convert interest into long-term participation.

### **Women's and girls' rugby accelerating**

The women's game is also experiencing record growth, fueled by sustained investment and the impact of the Rugby World Cup:

The numbers include:

- 49% growth in age-grade girls' registrations over four years
- 76% of clubs report rising girls' participation
- 40% of clubs report growth in adult women's rugby following the World Cup
- Over 2,100 women's RFU league matches played this season, the highest ever

Programmes such as **Girls Activity Days** are also helping attract new players by combining rugby with social and community experiences in a welcoming environment.

Off the pitch, the RFU is investing in the quality and consistency of coaching, particularly in the critical 14–18 age group where dropout risk is highest.

- 90 clubs engaged in the 14-18 coach development programme
- 300 coaches of these groups supported through mentoring and training
- Evidence of improved player enjoyment, skills, and retention

This focus is helping ensure that more young players stay in the game.

Recognising the importance of visibility as well as participation, the RFU recently launched a dedicated [@CommunityRugby](https://www.instagram.com/CommunityRugby) Instagram channel to showcase stories from across the country.

Bill Sweeney, CEO of the RFU said:

*“On behalf of everyone at England Rugby I want to say thank you to the tens of thousands of volunteers who give their time, energy and commitment week in, week out, to keep community rugby thriving across the country.*

*“It's important that we continue to grow the community game for the future. With sustained investment, strong partnerships, and record engagement, the foundations are being laid for a bigger, more inclusive, and more resilient game in the years ahead.”*



# Brentford's 2026/27 Premier League fixtures: The key dates

Written by Brentford Football Club



Opening day, derby dates, festive football and the final run-in - Brentford's 2026/27 Premier League fixtures are confirmed.

The Bees begin the season at home to Tottenham Hotspur and end the campaign with a trip to Chelsea.

Take a look at some of the standout dates from the season ahead.

## First game of the season

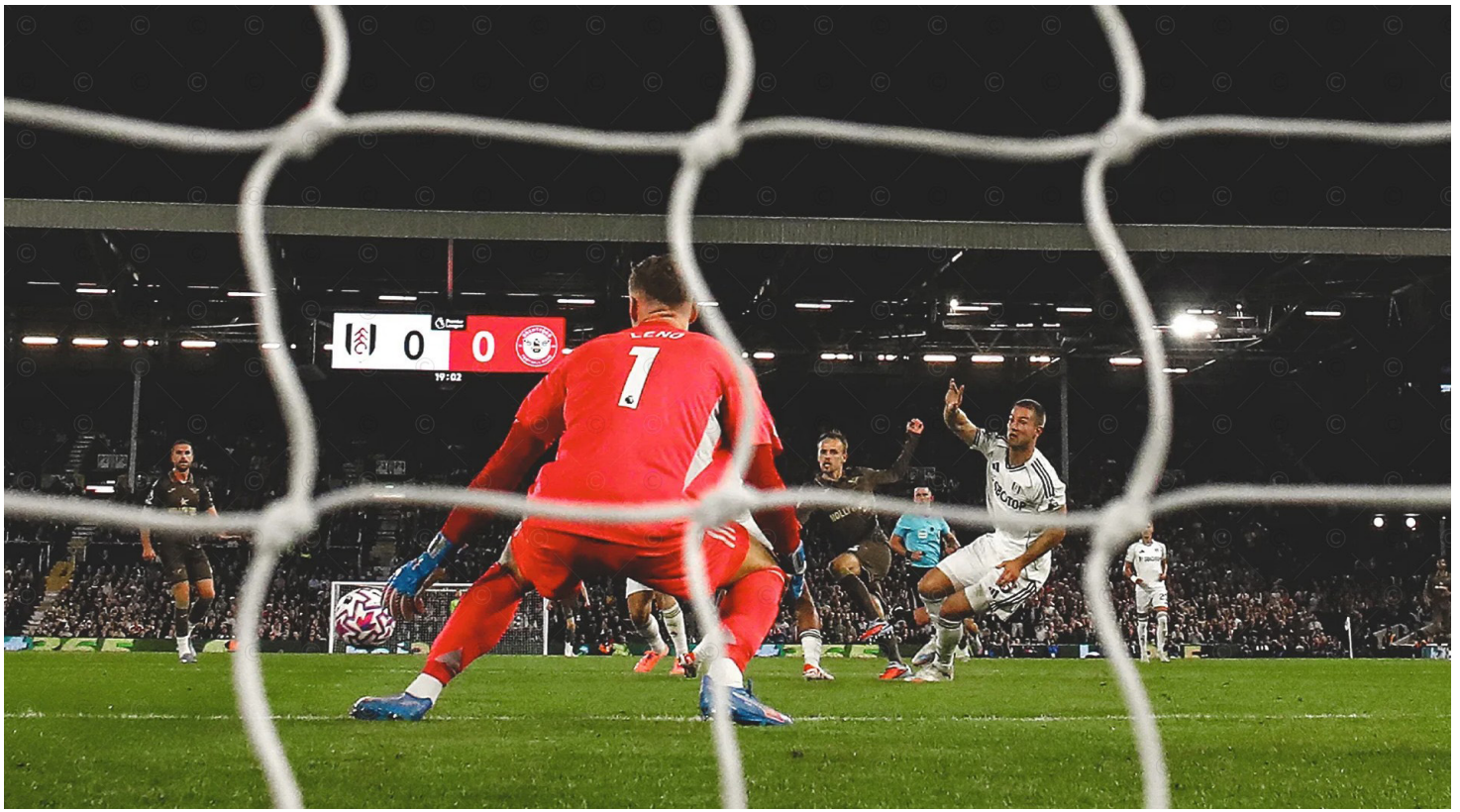
### Saturday 22 August – Tottenham Hotspur (H)

Tottenham Hotspur are the visitors to Gtech Community Stadium on the opening day. This game ended in a goalless draw [last term](#).

## West London derbies

- Saturday 19 September – Chelsea (H)
- Saturday 12 December – Fulham (A)
- Saturday 24 April – Fulham (H)
- Sunday 30 May – Chelsea (A)

Bees fans won't have to wait long for the first west London derby, as Keith Andrews' side take on Chelsea at the Gtech on Saturday 19 September.



A late equaliser from Fábio Carvalho secured a point for Brentford in [a 2-2 draw](#) in the corresponding fixture last season.

The Bees' first meeting with Fulham comes at Craven Cottage on Saturday 12 December.

### **Festive fixtures**

- Saturday 19 December – Newcastle United (H)
- Saturday 26 December – Ipswich Town (A)
- Wednesday 30 December – Coventry City (A)
- Saturday 2 January – Crystal Palace (H)

Brentford face newly promoted Ipswich Town on Boxing Day.

Kevin Schade headed in the only goal of the game to earn the Bees a victory on [their last visit to Portman Road](#) in May 2025.

The first fixture of 2027 sees the Bees host Crystal Palace.

### **Final game of the season**

- Sunday 30 May – Chelsea (A)

Brentford end their 2026/27 Premier League campaign with a short trip to Chelsea.

A happy hunting ground in recent seasons, the Bees have won three of their last five fixtures at Stamford Bridge.

[Add Brentford's 2026/27 fixtures to your calendar](#)



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