

Twickenham & Richmond Tribune



The Strawberry Moon over Strawberry Hill
Photo by Berkley Driscoll

3rd July 2026

T&RT



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TickerTape - News in Brief

South Western Railway

Altered train services and buses replace trains between Teddington and Shepperton **Saturday 4 and Sunday 5 July**

The lines between **Teddington and Shepperton** will be **closed all weekend** due to maintenance work.

Saturday

- **London Waterloo to Shepperton** services will terminate at **Hampton Wick**.
- Passengers should travel on the **London Waterloo to London Waterloo via Kingston** services to **Teddington**.
- **Buses** will run between **Teddington and Shepperton**.

Sunday

- **London Waterloo to Shepperton** services will be diverted after **Teddington** and will terminate at **Twickenham**. These services will call additionally at **Strawberry Hill**.
- The afternoon and evening **London Waterloo to Kingston via Hounslow** services will terminate at **Hounslow**.
- **Buses** will run between **Teddington and Shepperton**.



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darryl parkin

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The Local Picture Postcard Page - Part 333

By Alan Winter

The Avenue Baptist Church – St. Margarets

The Avenue Baptist Church in St Margarets (East Twickenham), opened in 1881 as the St Margarets area in East Twickenham was being developed for housing.

In 1888, a number of members left the church to establish what is now known as the Amyand Park Church in Amyand Park Road.



Though the Avenue Baptist Church prospered for several decades, it fell on difficult times in the early 1920's and membership dwindled to about 33 members.

Our first postcard shows the church in about 1908 and the second was published just as the original church was shutting down.

By the 1920s, the site was required for the A316 road expansion, now a major feeder of the M3 motorway to central London. Trustees relocated funds to rebuild in Whitton, establishing the Whitton Baptist Church St Margarets Memorial, featuring foundation stones laid on October 20, 1934.

In 1935 the new church in Whitton was opened at 27 Hounslow Road. It is a member of the London Baptist Association. The original St Margarets location is now completely gone.



The church's halls were opened in September 1968 on the site of an old tennis court. They replaced two previous halls, one of which was destroyed in a fire in 1966, and the other on a site which is now part of the church's car park.

Our final image is a photo taken in 1964 showing the brickwork of the original entrance arch in Whitton.



Letters

Dear Editor

Twickenham Riverside

In your last three editions, you have carried an excellent article by James Knight about the process leading to the Riverside development and two letters - all prompted by the Council's continuing refrain that the Twickenham Riverside Trust's opposition some three years ago to its proposals had sought to delay the scheme and contributed to "unnecessary costs for taxpayers".

The article and last week's letter pointed - rightly - to the Trust's duty as a charity to take the position and action that it did in opposing the compulsory purchase order relating to its lease on the Diamond Jubilee Gardens, in what the trustees considered to be the best interest of the community. The first letter drew attention to the burgeoning (to date, near doubling) of the cost of the scheme while its quality has diminished.

As one of those to whom the Council's remarks were aimed at the time, I think it is worth pointing out three further aspects of the debate which are under-reported. First, the Council was acting in direct contravention and defiance of the then current town plan, whose intention for the future was to extend the Diamond Jubilee Gardens into a larger park on the riverside, not build on them. Second, that central direction was only circumvented through an exception gained by ticking a whole range of boxes, which related more to process and management than to the point of principle. Third, much of the delay was caused by reworking by the Council of its plans.

All water under the EPI bridge now, of course, and we wait to see the outcome.

Yours etc

Mark Brownrigg
Twickenham TW1

Balsam hunt and water quality testing

From Habitats & Heritage

Want to learn more about your local river? Join Habitats & Heritage and Thames Landscape Strategy in picking invasive balsam and testing water quality.

Learn how to identify one of the UK's most prolific invasive plants and help protect our native plants, improve habitats for wildlife, and keep our historic Thames healthy and resilient.

- **Date:** Sunday 26 July 2026
- **Time:** 10am to 12 noon
- **Location:** Buccleuch Gardens, 85 Petersham Road

Please wear long sleeve tops and bottoms as well as sturdy shoes. Also bring water, sun cream and a hat.

There will be quite a bit of walking, bending and standing. RSVP on [Eventbrite](#).



Richmond's Transport Strategy Offers Choice, But Only on the Council's Terms

By Michael Jones



A strategy wrapped in agreeable language

Richmond Council's Transport Strategy 2040 arrives in the familiar idiom of contemporary local government, presenting itself as a programme of cleaner air, safer streets, better connectivity, more reliable public transport and a borough in which residents may move with greater ease.

Much of this is unobjectionable, and some of it is plainly overdue. Few residents would quarrel with better maintained pavements, step-free stations, safer junctions, improved bus reliability, or a transport network less dependent on ageing infrastructure and institutions beyond the borough's direct control. A serious council should, after all, seek to improve the practical conditions of everyday movement.

Yet the document's deeper significance lies not in its aspirations, but in the philosophy that sits beneath them. This is not merely a strategy for improving transport choices. It is a strategy for managing behaviour, one in which the council's preferred forms of movement are elevated,

while car use is gradually recast as something to be justified, narrowed and, where possible, priced out of habit.

When choice becomes permission

That is the point at which the language of choice begins to dissolve into the politics of permission.

The council says private cars and vans will remain part of the borough's future, but its direction is clear: car journeys are to become increasingly acceptable only where alternatives are deemed impractical. The important word is "deemed". For a planner, a journey may look feasible because a bus route exists, or because a cycle corridor appears on a map. For a parent moving from school to work, then back to school, swimming lessons, a tutor or an elderly relative, the calculation is rather less elegant.

Public transport is well-suited to the simple return journey. Family life, shift work and caring responsibilities are rarely so obliging. A journey may be possible in the abstract, while remaining wholly impractical in the world of bags, children, weather, timetables, personal safety and time pressure.

The direction is measurable as well as rhetorical. Richmond's Local Plan transport evidence forecasts 30,700 fewer daily car and motorcycle trips between 2019 and 2041 under TfL's Hybrid Forecast, a fall of 14 per cent, the largest percentage reduction listed for any London borough. The strategy therefore sits within a wider programme not simply of improving alternatives, but of planning for fewer car journeys.

The equality argument that forgets real lives

This is where the strategy's language of equality becomes vulnerable to its own contradictions. It correctly says that mobility is a precondition of independence and opportunity. But for many older residents, disabled people, carers, tradespeople, shift workers and families with young children, independence is not produced by a slogan about modal shift. It is produced by the ability to make the journey life actually requires.

There is also a class blind spot here. The professional commuter travelling into central London often has the cleanest narrative: a walk to the station, a train into town, perhaps a laptop opened before Waterloo. Many lower and middle-income workers do not move through the borough in such a way. Care workers, cleaners, shop staff, teaching assistants, delivery drivers and tradespeople are more likely to make orbital, early-morning, late-night or multi-site journeys, precisely the journeys outer London public transport often serves least well.

Richmond's own strategy recognises that areas such as Ham, Hampton and Heathfield have weaker public transport and fewer realistic alternatives to private car use. Yet the policy mood remains one of reduction before replacement, welcoming mobility in principle, while narrowing it in practice.

A high street contradiction

The same contradiction applies to the borough's high streets. The council says transport must support town centres and economic vitality, but Richmond, Twickenham and Teddington do

not compete in a vacuum. If parking becomes more expensive, access becomes more awkward and car journeys become morally suspect, shoppers will not wait patiently for the council's preferred future to arrive. They will go to Kingston, shop online, or choose somewhere easier.

Motorists are too often treated as a nuisance when they drive and a revenue stream when they park, which is an unusual way to sustain local commerce.

Political choices, not neutral planning

Nor is this simply a neutral officer exercise. Cllr Alexander Ehmann may be the public face of Richmond's transport agenda, but the wider responsibility rests with Cllr Gareth Roberts, the Liberal Democrat leader of the council, whose administration has chosen this political direction.

The wider London context makes the trajectory clearer. In March 2024, The Times reported that Sadiq Khan had previously told the London Assembly his team was working on a smart road-user-charging scheme that could consider not only vehicle age, emissions and time of day, but also **“whether there is alternative public transport near to you.”**

That phrase is revealing. It suggests a future in which public authorities do not simply charge for congestion or pollution, but assess the legitimacy of a journey. They decide whether nearby public transport should suffice. They decide whether, if a resident still drives, that resident should pay more.

Outer London is not inner London with trees

Richmond does need better transport, and it would be foolish to pretend otherwise. It needs safer roads, accessible stations, reliable buses and serious investment in infrastructure that has too often been allowed to age without sufficient renewal.

But a borough cannot be planned as though it were inner London with more trees. Outer London residents make outer London journeys, many of which remain stubbornly resistant to committee-room optimism.

The test of this strategy is not whether it sounds modern, progressive or ambitious. It is whether it expands practical freedom for the people who live here. Gareth Roberts' administration says it wants to give residents a choice. It should begin by trusting them to make their own journeys, rather than making daily life harder, dearer and more dependent on the permission of the Town Hall.

The strategy can be read [HERE](#)

Mayor of Richmond upon Thames invites residents to charity launch reception

From the Mayor of Richmond upon Thames

Residents are invited to join the Mayor of Richmond upon Thames, Councillor Nancy Baldwin, for a special charity launch reception at the historic Asgill House on Richmond Riverside on Sunday 5 July 2026.

The afternoon reception will mark the launch of the Mayor's fundraising year in support of her chosen charities for 2026/27, Cocoon Care After Care and Skylarks.

The event offers guests the chance to enjoy the beautiful surroundings of one of Richmond's most picturesque venues while supporting two local organisations that make a significant difference to the lives of children, young people and families.



Tickets cost £20 and include a light finger buffet and a complimentary drink on arrival. Guests will also be able to take part in a charity raffle, helping to raise vital funds for the Mayor's charities.

Mayor of Richmond upon Thames, Councillor Nancy Baldwin, said: *"I am excited to invite residents, community groups and local supporters to join me for the launch of my mayoral fundraising year. This reception is an opportunity to come together, enjoy a wonderful afternoon in a beautiful setting and support two fantastic charities that do such important work in our community. I look forward to welcoming guests to Asgill House and raising funds for Cocoon Care After Care and Skylarks throughout the year ahead."*

[Cocoon Care After Care](#) supports care-experienced young people as they move into independent adulthood, while [Skylarks](#) provides support and opportunities for children and young people with disabilities and additional needs, and their families.

The launch reception is the first of several events the Mayor will host throughout the year to raise funds for her chosen charities.

Event details:

- **Date:** Sunday 5 July 2026
- **Time:** 4pm to 6pm
- **Location:** Asgill House, Old Palace Lane, Richmond, TW9 1PQ
- **Price:** £20, all proceeds will go to the Mayor's charities

[Book tickets](#)

Get ready for Team England's National Sports Weekend in Richmond

From GLL (Greenwich Leisure Limited)

Come and join GLL in partnership with Team England across Richmond for a weekend filled with free sports and fun family activities for everyone to enjoy, on 18 and 19 July 2026.

Ready to unleash your sporting spirit? Members and non-member can jump in and experience the excitement of Commonwealth Games-inspired sports and activities. Book your spot in advance to enjoy a whole range of activities, including padel and pickleball; basketball, swimming and athletics.

Whether you're trying something completely new or rediscovering a sport you love, there's plenty of fun waiting for all ages and abilities.



At Teddington Pools and Fitness Centre and Pools on the Park, there will be a wide range of free activities, taster sessions and family-friendly experiences designed to help you get active and try something new.

Whether you're a regular gym-goer or visiting for the first time, there's something for everyone to enjoy.

Across the weekend, you can:

- Try a variety of free fitness classes
- Take part in swimming sessions
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- Enjoy fun activities for all ages

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Catch Shakespeare's Merry Wives in York House Gardens

From Richmond Shakespeare Society

From 13-18 July, the Richmond Shakespeare Society's annual open-air show returns to York House Gardens.

This year's show is *The Merry Wives of Windsor*, the monumental Sir John Falstaff's sally into pure comedy after the trials and turmoil of Henry the Fifth's wars.

Hard-up and looking for an easy billet, the fat knight sets his sights on a likely pair of Windsor's merry wives. But it is Sir John's misfortune that these sharp-witted women have plans of their own, and what follows is a riot of portly romance, midsummer mischief and riotous comedy.



Bring the family, a rug and a picnic to York House fabulous Fountain Gardens in Twickenham and experience a fabulous evening of outdoor Shakespeare - and Falstaff - at their very best.

<https://www.richmondshakespeare.org.uk/Shows/merrywives26>

Latest Hammersmith Bridge update shows a ‘poverty of ambition’, says Transport Chair

From Richmond Council

Councillor Alexander Ehmann, Richmond Council’s Deputy Leader and Chair of the Transport and Air Quality Committee, has criticised Hammersmith and Fulham Council’s recommendation to limit their bid for funding to measures that will keep Hammersmith Bridge open only for pedestrians, cyclists and river traffic.

Following the latest update on plans for a ‘phased’ reopening of the bridge, Cllr Ehmann said: *“This proposal is not good enough and shows a poverty of ambition.”*

“After years of full or partial closure, it is hugely disappointing to see Hammersmith and Fulham Council row back on fuller refurbishment that would enable public transport connectivity.”

“The needs of residents who cannot walk or cycle over Hammersmith Bridge are not being properly considered. Residents have told us that they are restless to see buses and blue light services using the bridge again.”

“Maintaining the bridge with its present uses, is simply not good enough.”

“This Council will continue to make the case for a ‘Better Bridge’ for our residents.”

Read more on [Hammersmith and Fulham Council’s committee website](#)





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Sticks 'n' Sushi

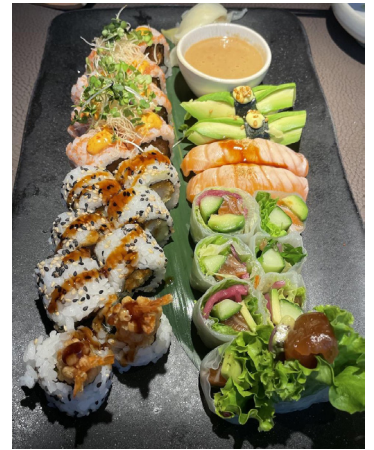
As someone who is a great fan of sushi, I was delighted to hear that the Danish-Japanese company **Sticks 'n' Sushi** had taken the corner site in the old Dickens & Jones/House of Fraser building in Richmond's, George Street. It is an odd combination of cultures, but one that certainly works here in the UK. The company was established nearly 15 years ago in Wimbledon and goes from strength to strength. It has a great knack of finding top locations in places like Battersea Power Station and central Kingston...and of course Richmond.

It was **International Sushi Day** last month, which prompted me to check out the Richmond site. My pal Annabelle and I braved public transport on a record-breakingly hot day to meet there for dinner. Luckily the restaurant has aircon, but even that seemed to be struggling slightly in the heat. We had a table by the window, the perfect place for sitting in a cool environment to watch the hot and sweaty world go by, struggling in the heat.

Enjoying a jug of sparkling water to refresh ourselves, we decided to try one of the set menus to save us the decision making process. We chose **Perfect Day** (£45 per head for minimum of two people)

It started with edamame beans served with salt and lemon, which were much to be expected, but still a good start. The other 'starters' were tuna tartare bites with avocado, sesame, miso, yuzu and spring onion served on tiny flat breads that held their crispness beautifully. They were so tasty. We also had some rather spectacular looking mushroom croquettes served with a Danish cheese, miso aioli and dusted with truffle. They were served piping hot and really were delicious.

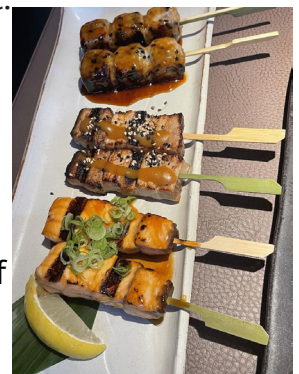
Then came a glorious platter, laden with neatly laid out sushi and various dips. The range included Nigiri with salmon, avocado, plus ebi maki with tempura shrimp, and a spicy tuna maki. It was an impressive display and we thoroughly enjoyed the range it offered.



Finally came the sticks. We'd been looking forward to these, but unfortunately some of these were rather disappointing. The Buta Yaki pork was good, but the Shake Teriyaki salmon one had a strange, rather bitter note that neither of us liked. The Tsukune chicken meatballs with teriyaki were great, but very salty indeed. Annabelle has a stronger salt tolerance than me but I struggled to finish mine, despite trying to convince myself that the salt was good for us in this extreme heat.

The set menus are a great introduction to the Sticks 'n' Sushi concept, especially if you're rather indecisive, like me. There are some eight different ones available, starting from just £26 per person.

We had a bottle of house South African white wine with our meal. It was a Chenin Blanc, Wild Garden, Cape Coast at £31, the starting price for wines by the bottle. There are wines by the glass from £7.50, cocktails from £12 and a good selection of beers and ciders, including an alcohol free Japanese beer. And, of course, there's a really impressive range of saki, by the glass or bottle.



June Food and Drink News

I know it's just July, but June was a busy month, so here are some fabulous new products I discovered for you last month.

The folk at Bertolli, famed for its olive oil spreads, have launched a delicious new spread -with **Butter and Olive Oil**. It's a delicious blend of just four ingredients: dairy butter (57%), olive oil (23%), a splash of water and a pinch of salt (no seed oils like many other brands). It has been specifically developed to deliver a rich, creamy texture with a smooth buttery flavour, making it a versatile ingredient for cooking, baking and spreading. It's really good and ideal for this hot weather as it spreads straight from the fridge. Available from Tesco at £4.50 for a 400g tub.



If, like me, you love the flavour of matcha, then check out these: Forest Feast and PerfectTed have joined forces to launch **Matcha Chocolate Almonds**. This is a new indulgent snack that provides the perfect mid-afternoon pick me up. They are enrobed whole roasted almonds in a Belgian white chocolate coating, blended with PerfectTed's high quality matcha. **Forest Feast's new Matcha Chocolate Almonds** are available in Sainsbury's, Tesco and online at forestfeast.com RRP £3.95 (120g) / £1.45 (40g). Be warned though, as they are so deliciously moreish.

Little Rick makes hemp-powered CBD drinks that taste good and help you wind down after work, spark your creativity or just elevate a night with friends. Available in four flavours: Raspberry Coconut (rich coconut creaminess with a raspberry kick); Mint & Lime (more citrus, more chill – a mojito-inspired calm with bite and freshness); Raspberry Lemonade (a sharper raspberry bite with citrus sparkle – built for a juicy, heady calm) and Piña (a stronger wave of pineapple sweetness and island vibes, wrapped in a smooth, chill finish.) Available from Brewery Market in Church Street, Twickers online at littlerick.co.uk and I'd suggest trying the 12 can mixed pack, to decide on your favourite.



Curry Smugglers is a range of Desi snacks, featuring bold, spicy South Asian flavours. They draw inspiration from the street food culture and are presented in unique beer can packaging. Each is carefully seasoned and provides a fresh take on traditional snacks. Bombay Mix, Masala Corn, Pakora and Chakli were launched by 1st generation British Asians, Steve & Ruby. The name celebrates Steve's



mum, who was caught red-handed bringing spices into 1970s Britain, when HP Sauce was considered spicy. Top ingredients, Kent-based production and 100% recyclable, planet-friendly aluminium beer cans make them a fun addition to the pre curry supper or picnic. Try the four-can mixed case for just under £10 from currysmugglers.co



Those clever people at **Bonne Maman** have come up with another great idea: **Petits Biscuits**. The range is available in **Framboise Sésame** and **Chocolat Caramel**. Petits Biscuits Framboise Sésame are a moreish biscuit, combining the subtle texture and flavour of lightly toasted sesame seeds (for a satisfying crunch) with a soft and fruity raspberry filling. Perfect with a cup of tea or as a little afternoon treat, each bag contains approximately 13 biscuits. Petits Biscuits Chocolat Caramel offers indulgent melting caramel topped with a layer of crunchy milk chocolate and sprinkled with little nougatine pieces, in a crisp and buttery pastry case. Each bag contains approximately 11

biscuits. These irresistible little treats are available in Waitrose at £2.25 per 150g bag and are perfect for picnics or packed lunches...and those who, like me, are trying to lose weight but enjoy a sweet indulgence.

Talking of sweet indulgences, don't forget chocolate. And **Divine**, the only chocolate brand co-owned by farmers, has new-look packaging featuring colourful, premium designs celebrating the many hands and hearts that go into making each bar. If you're a dark chocolate lover, this special **Dark Chocolate Lover's bundle** is perfect for you (and maybe you could bring yourself to share it? 😊). It comprises seven chocolate bars from the Divine range: 70% Dark; 70% Dark with Raspberries; 70% Dark with Ginger & Orange; 60% Dark with Pink Himalayan Salt; 70% Dark with Mint Crisp; Dark with Hazelnut Truffle and 68% Dark with Fruit & Nut. It will take you on a taste journey and even comes with a leaflet with tasting notes for you to savour every flavour and bite. £29.99 from divinechocolate.com



It will take you on a taste journey and even comes with a leaflet with tasting notes for you to savour every flavour and bite. £29.99 from divinechocolate.com



This summer I'm really missing my regular trips to Spain and one of my favourite Spanish wines is available in the Tesco Finest range: **Viñas del Rey Albariño**. It won a silver medal last year in the International Wine Challenge, so you know it's fabulous. It's an elegant wine, with aromas of apricot, honeysuckle and notes of fresh grapefruit and mandarin. £12 a bottle.

Still on Spanish favourites, I tried my first sparkling Rioja recently...and it was fab. **Allegro Sparkling Rioja** is a lively, fruit-forward sparkling wine that brings a fresh, contemporary twist to the traditional Rioja. It's vibrant and refreshing, bursting with stone fruit and citrus, as well as notes of toasted brioche. It's an ideal partner for Spanish tapas and fresh grilled seafood, and also a fantastic go-to at celebratory moments. It's normally great value at £12 a bottle, but it's currently on offer in **Tesco** at just £10 for Clubcard holders. My advice: stock up now.



The award-winning Australian wine brand **Calabria** has just landed in **Asda** with the launch of **Bélena Rosé** (60% Pinot Grigio, 25% Viognier, 15% mixed reds) and **Bélena Pinot Grigio** (100% Pinot Grigio). With impressive accolades already to its name, the cut-glass bottles are fresh, bright, and effortlessly elegant. Named in homage to second-generation leaders Bill and Lena Calabria, Bélena represents the couple's spirit, grace and tenacity. This partnership remains at the heart of the Calabria family's craft and values. Both wines are available in-store at Asda and online *now* at £15 a bottle.

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The Buzzword This Week Is: TOTALITY

By Bruce Lyons

So, I thought I would explain a little about what makes the **Eclipse of the Century** so special.



The 2027 total solar eclipse in Luxor offers an exceptionally long totality (over six minutes) because of a perfect celestial alignment.

The Moon will be near its closest point to Earth (*perigee*), making it appear unusually large in the sky, while the Earth will be near its farthest point from the Sun (*aphelion*), making the Sun appear slightly smaller.

Luxor is also located almost directly on the centreline of the eclipse path, where the Moon's shadow moves at its slowest across the Earth.

Because of this rare alignment, the eclipse on **2 August 2027** will produce approximately **6 minutes and 22 seconds of totality** in Luxor. This is more than double the duration of most total solar eclipses, making it the longest inland totality on Earth since 1991 and the longest until 2114.

Additionally, because of the time of year and the eclipse path, Luxor offers near-perfect, virtually cloudless conditions for optimum viewing.

If you are thinking about planning a trip for this extraordinary celestial event, let me know.

I can help you explore the options and secure your place for the **"Eclipse of the Century"**

I have trips up the Nile with stops in Luxor for the totality, and some of these are combined with stays in Cairo and visits to the **NEM (New Egyptian Museum)**, the Pyramids, and much more.



For those looking for a shorter eclipse experience, with totality of up to **2 minutes and 25 seconds**, we have a **6-night special programme** with **Professor Thomas Hockey**, a renowned authority on eclipses who lectures at Iowa University on celestial matters. There will be guided walks, stargazing (it is a new moon, and the desert sky is wonderfully clear), and this can all be combined with a stay at **Roots**, a small Red Sea desert beach resort (at Quesir) with a fabulous reef (ask for details).

There are also **4-night and 10-night escorted tours** to Algeria with **Andy King**, an English authority on celestial matters, as well as an adventure trip to Saudi Arabia.

For those who prefer to travel by sea, I have details of at least **four Mediterranean cruises**, with various embarkation points (including two in the UK) and a range of cruise durations.

Time is running out, as flights are now beginning to come into range. At present there is still availability on most of these trips, and itineraries are available from Crusader. Much of this is also featured in our window display, which we have been putting together over the past few weeks.

If you want to follow the Sun, now is the time...

Or you can ask us to **Send You To The Moon!**

Crusader Travel, 58 Church Street, Twickenham TW1 3NR - 020 8744 0474

bruce@crusadertravel.com www.crusadertravel.com





La Bohème

by Giacomo Puccini, libretto by Luigi Illica and Giuseppe Giacosa
The Grange Festival at The Grange, Alresford until 11th July

La Bohème may have an impressionist feel, but French director David Geselson's production does not reference Monet, or Pissarro. Instead Delacroix, Goya and even Twickenham's own Turner, are dragooned in to make a different impression. Puccini's tear-jerking tragedy is about the folly of youth, and the strength of love and friendship. Why shoe-horn in an irrelevant political message? Happily, though, it is decidedly more than redeemed by superlative vocal and instrumental music.



American tenor Luke Norvell is immediately impressive as the penniless poet, Rodolfo. He has a captivating freshness, and his tenderness to Mimì is touchingly palpable. As Mimì, Chilean soprano Isabela Díaz sings with a sweetness that is imbued with emotion. We know that Mimì is terminally ill and will never see the spring again.



Designer, Lisa Navarro creates some scenes behind a gauze, which chimes well with the impressionist feel of the piece, and works best outside the country inn at a winter's dawn. With falling snow, it's really cold, and one can feel the bleakness of Mimì's desperation.

In contrast Café Momus jumps with life. It is a chorus cornucopia. They bubble and teem with spirit(s), augmented by local children drawn by Parpignol, the colourful toy seller.

Here the companions first meet Mimì, while artist Marcello clashes with his one-time love Musetta. Patrick Dow portrays Marcello as initially cynical, but becoming the emotional lynchpin of the group. Soprano Rhian Lois portrays a sassy Musetta, first seen spitting and spiteful, bored with being the kept woman of Alcindoro. She makes quite an impact in Café Momus, with *Quando me'n vo*, Musetta basking in her seductive power to wind the wealthy Alcindoro round her finger.

As Alcindoro, and the libidinous landlord Benoît, is bass-baritone William Dazeley, firing up the embers of passion of the randy geriatrics.

Baritone Dan D'Souza has great fun as Schaunard, who rescues the chums' Christmas Eve fast with wine, food and bonhomie, recounting how his musical skills comforted a dying parrot, a tall tale totally ignored.

Philosopher Colline has a generosity of heart, and bass Jamie Woollard gives a moving *vecchia zimarra*, where Colline decides to pawn his overcoat for medicine for dying Mimì.

At the story's tragic denouement candles reappear, only to be gently snuffed out as the notes fade and her life slips away.



Read Mark Aspen's review at www.markaspen.com/2026/06/15/boheme-gf

Photography by Richard Hubert Smith



Malory Towers

by Emma Rice, adapted from Enid Blyton

Emma Rice Company at Richmond Theatre, until 4th July, then on tour until 2nd August

As a stage re-working of Enid Blyton's well-loved series of books set in a girl's boarding school, *Malory Towers* deserves more from a review than "I say, *Malory Towers* is a hoot!". It is funny, musically impressive, and moving, without being sentimental.

The books followed the adventures of a group of girls throughout their years at Malory Towers, but this adaptation, although set in their first year, just after World War Two, takes storylines from all of them.

Seven girls meet in their dorm on their first day and begin to bond, discovering personalities, largely enjoying differences. There is an exception, the bully Gwendoline, whose sole purpose apparently is ruining everyone's life, particularly shy and timid Mary-Lou's.



Aside from the gently authoritative voice of Dame Sheila Hancock as headmistress Miss Grayling, this is an ensemble piece, but each stock character lives and breathes.

And in the hands of Anna Soden, the vindictive, miserable Gwendoline ultimately becomes sympathetic, a damaged child in need of her Malory Towers family.

The skill in the many musical interludes is impressive, including a beautiful version of *Mr Sandman*.

Musical Director Stephanie Hockley achieves wonders with close harmonies, and her charismatic performance as French pupil Irene Dupont, on piano accompaniment duties, is a treat.

Lez Brotherston's set morphs from dorm to classroom, to French bar, swimming pool or cliff edge. As an endearing part of the whole, it incorporates puppetry and animation by Sarah and Lyndie Wright.

Although WW2 moves into history, this production doesn't shy away from the damage done, not only to those who went to war, but to those who had to live with them afterwards. The red paint-spattered set for the girls' end-of-term play symbolises the carnage their parents had to deal with. There is a moving programme note by director Emma Rice about her mother and the privations which that generation of women overcame as they grew up: the generation of the girls of Malory Towers.

Absolutely wizard production! (Oops, sorry!)

Read Eleanor Lewis's review at www.markaspen.com/2026/07/02/malory-towers

Photography by Steve Tanner



Archduke

by Rajiv Joseph

The Royal Court and Brian and Dayna Lee at the Royal Court Theatre, Chelsea until 25th July

In June 1914, Archduke Franz Ferdinand, heir to the Austro-Hungarian throne, and his wife, Duchess of Hohenberg, were assassinated, shot at close range while being driven through Sarajevo. It triggered a series of events which culminated in World War One.

Princip and other nationalist-anarchist Bosnian Serbs, although making mistakes that nearly botched their attempts, succeeded in their murderous mission. However, what might have happened if they hadn't succeeded? *Archduke* offers an evaluation of "what if", an exploration of the forces playing on the minds of three young men, with their own personal tribulations at a time of wide political foment.



Two teenagers, Gavrilo and Nedeljko, meet in a disused warehouse. Consumptive and penniless, they discuss suicide until Trifko arrives with the prospect of allying with "Apis", a man steeped in the Serbian nationalist cause, who recruits young men to further his own aims and ambitions.

Stanley Morgan, Chris Walley and Abraham Popoola, as the would-be assassins, deliver nuanced performances. They bicker, argue, fight yet become closer as they find a shared bond in their ambitions, hopes and fears. There is a restless energy, laced with anxiety and a desire to experience life. There is humour, some very dark indeed, powerfully juxtaposed with an exquisite sadness. What have they got to lose? Why not become immortal?

Marc Wootton, as Apis, is a compelling, mercurial character, oscillating between ruthless political conviction, and paternalistic pity for the boys he is sending to Sarajevo. Apis' bubbling unpredictability adds tension, humour and menace in equal measure.

Janice Connolly's Sladjana is a warm maternal figure, but this takes her into edgier waters when she appears with the necessities for the boys' journey. Yet, her sardonic humour is never far from the surface.

As the train rattles towards Sarajevo, there is a deep piquancy to their discussions. Is the lure of glorious martyrdom stronger than the potential opportunities in this life? The boys have second thoughts. But is the die already cast?



Archduke raises deep questions via an inventive dark comedy, which is consistently entertaining, sometimes captivating and occasionally achingly poignant.

At the end of the play, Gavrilo muses, "Maybe the world don't have to end. We can just get off the train ... It would be nice to be forgotten."

Read Harry Zimmerman's review at www.markaspen.com/2026/06/27/archduke

Photography by Helen Murray

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Musical Director - Emma Warren

Accompanist - Pam Kent and professional soloist

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

Charity Number 261788

July 17th: A fund-raising LINE DANCING night at The Ellera Centre

by Michael Hill, Trustee of Ellera Community Association

On July 17th, The Ellera Centre and Park Lane Stables are joining forces to hold this special fund-raising event. The host will be Paul, and he'll be providing instruction for all levels.

A bar and food will be available to help you keep your energy levels up and dance the evening away!

So, whether you're an experienced line dancer or an absolute beginner, come along and enjoy an evening where the energy will flow and the fun won't stop.

This wonderful community event is raising funds for two great local charities - The Ellera Centre and its Social Club and Park Lane Stables the award-winning Riding for the Disabled Association centre.

Doors open at 6.45 pm and the event draws to a close at 9.45 pm.

Tickets at £10 plus a modest booking fee are only available at [eventbrite.com](https://www.eventbrite.com) - search for line dancing at the Ellera centre or go to

<https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/line-dancing-night-at-the-ellera-centre-tickets-1992343566239>



Ellera Community Association and Park Lane Stables proudly presents



Line Dancing Night

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Celebrating Student Success at Our Annual Awards Evening



Richmond upon Thames College (RuTC) proudly celebrated the achievements, dedication and talent of its students at the annual Student Awards Evening on Wednesday 1 July 2026, bringing together students, families, staff and special guests for an inspiring occasion.

Hosted by Principal Gavin Hughes, the event recognised outstanding student accomplishments from across the College, with 23 awards presented across all subject areas.

The celebration was attended by the Mayor of Richmond, Councillor Nancy Baldwin, and the Leader of Richmond upon Thames Council, Councillor Gareth Roberts, who joined the College in recognising the achievements of this year's award winners.

Guests were also inspired by a keynote speech from young Entrepreneur and Activist, Joana Baptista, who shared her experiences and offered words of encouragement to students as they prepare for the next stage of their education, training and careers.

One of the evening's most prestigious accolades, Student of the Year, was awarded to Dance student, Jemima Baker, who was recognised for her exceptional achievements, making her a deserving recipient of the College's highest honour.

Jemima is now heading off to Urdang City St George's, University of London to continue pursuing her passion of dance.

She commented: *"I feel really proud; this is a big achievement for me! It shows how much my teachers and the staff at the College believe in me and are there to support students. Studying at RuTC have helped me secure a place at my dream university, Urdang at City St George's. I am now excited to see where a career in the performing arts will take me."*



The Greatest Contribution to College Life award was presented to Charlie Quelch, in recognition of the significant impact he has made within the College community.

The achievements of academic students were also celebrated during the evening, with A-Level student, Emilia Trocin collecting an award before progressing to Cardiff University to study Architecture in September.

Throughout the evening, guests enjoyed a variety of student performances, including dance, music and spoken word, showcasing the exceptional talent and creativity.

Congratulations to all award winners, nominees and students whose hard work and determination continue to make RuTC a vibrant, inclusive and supportive place to learn.



Local Athletes Celebrated at Richmond's First GLL Sport Foundation Awards Evening

Talented athletes from across Richmond upon Thames were celebrated at the borough's first GLL Sport Foundation (GSF) Awards Evening, held this week at the iconic Twickenham Stoop.



The event brought together more than 70 guests, including 26 supported athletes along with their families, coaches, club representatives and local partners, in a special evening recognising the achievements and aspirations of Richmond's sporting community.

This year, 49 athletes from Richmond are receiving £36,290 in financial and training support through the GSF, highlighting the strength and diversity of sport across the borough.

The awards programme supports athletes across a wide range of disciplines, including athletics, swimming, hockey, rowing and triathlon, with recipients ranging from emerging young talent to international competitors.

A highlight of the event was a live athlete Q&A session with Team GB Hockey Olympic bronze medallists Fiona Crackles and Sarah Robertson, who shared insights into their journeys and future ambitions.

Councillor Julia Neden-Watts, Chair of the Environment, Sustainability, Culture and Sports

Committee helped present *the awards alongside GLL representatives.*

Councillor Julia Neden-Watts said: "It was a great privilege to celebrate so many talented athletes from across Richmond upon Thames and to hear more about the dedication, ambition, and resilience behind their sporting journeys.

"The GLL Sport Foundation plays a crucial role in helping our athletes access the support they need to train, compete, and continue progressing. It can make a meaningful difference at a crucial stage in their development.

"Richmond has a proud and thriving sporting community, and it is inspiring to see athletes of all ages and disciplines representing the borough with such determination. I look forward to following their progress and achievements."

Many of this year's athletes receive no other form of funding, underlining the vital role the GSF programme plays in helping individuals meet the growing costs of training, equipment and competition.

Now in its 18th year, the GSF is the UK's largest independent athlete support programme, having contributed nearly £20 million and supported almost 35,000 athletes nationwide.

Richmond's Partnership Manager, Oliver Stacey said:

"GLL is a successful worker-owned cooperative and charitable social enterprise that has brought growing impact to public services and local communities over 33 years of successful operation. Our GLL Sport Foundation remains central to our remit to widen and deepen opportunities available to talented young athletes and build a legacy through sport.

Thanks to the generosity of our sponsors and our own purposed business model we are delighted to announce a record 3,234 athletes will benefit from the programme this year. I want to wish them every success and we look forward to seeing them in competition here and abroad in years to come."

Athletes themselves spoke about the impact of the support. Olympian Fiona Crackles highlighted how it helps her prepare for future international competition, while rising basketball player Ava Fom described the award as an *"important step towards achieving her dream of competing at the highest level."*

The GSF Annual Report will be released shortly. For more information visit www.gllsportfoundation.org

The GLL Sport Foundation's Patron is Sally Gunnell, OBE and partners involved in the programme include SportsAid, SportsAid Wales, Mary Peters Trust, sponsors from GLL's supply chain and Richmond Council.



Richmond win Stunning Silver in London Youth Games 2026 Aquathlon

The 2026 London Youth Games Aquathlon Competition delivered an incredible day of sportsmanship and competition on 28th June 2026, as 400 young people from across London came together at London Aquatics Centre for a chance to compete against their peers.



Facing stiff competition from young athletes representing boroughs across the capital, Richmond finished the day in second spot to earn the overall silver medal, with their athletes representing their borough with pride and passion throughout the day.

Participants representing 30 London boroughs showcased exceptional determination and commitment across their swim followed by a run, competing to complete the races in the fastest time possible.

The winning boroughs of the LYG Aquathlon competition:

- 1st: Havering
- 2nd: Richmond
- 3rd: Lewisham

Like many sports within the London Youth Games programme, LYG's competitions have long provided the initial platform for many young stars to forge successful careers, with alumni including the likes of Alex Yee, who took part in London Youth Games for Lewisham and went on to become the most successful Olympic triathlete ever, with two Olympic golds, a silver and a bronze. He was also the first Brit to win both the Olympics and the World Championships in the same year (in 2024).

At a time when an alarming 44% of young people aged 11–18 regularly feel lonely (Youth Matters: State of the Nation Summary Report), the London Youth Games serves as a crucial social lifeline, bringing thousands of young people together to build lasting friendships and connection.

The Games remain dedicated to ensuring that every young person in London has access to inclusive and empowering sporting and physical activity experiences. The 2026 Aquathlon Competition highlighted the power of sport to build confidence, resilience, and community.

The event was brilliantly supported by the Borough Team Organisers, Team Managers, parents and volunteers, whose support ensured a memorable experience for all involved.

The London Youth Games Foundation supports more than 10,000 young people across London each year, delivering opportunities across 37 sports for all 32 boroughs & the City of London. Please show your support to the Games by following us on Instagram @ldnyouthgames or donating here:

[Countdown to 50 Years of London Youth Games Foundation](#)



The Selwyn Richmond Recognised in Tripadvisor's Top 10% of Hotels Worldwide

In boutique hospitality, it is often the smallest details that leave the biggest impression. A warm welcome, thoughtful service and a memorable stay have helped The Selwyn Richmond earn a Tripadvisor Travellers' Choice Award 2026, placing the hotel among the top 10% of hospitality businesses worldwide.

The prestigious award celebrates businesses that consistently deliver exceptional experiences, with winners determined entirely by authentic reviews and ratings shared by travellers on Tripadvisor over the past 12 months. Unlike many industry awards, Travellers' Choice recognition is based solely on genuine guest feedback, making it one of the travel industry's most respected accolades.

The Selwyn is one of four hotels within the Countrywide Hotels portfolio to receive a Tripadvisor Travellers' Choice Award in 2026, reflecting the group's continued commitment to delivering outstanding hospitality across its collection of hotels.

Nestled in the heart of Richmond upon Thames, The Selwyn has earned a loyal following by offering something refreshingly personal. Combining the character of a beautifully restored townhouse with contemporary comfort, the boutique hotel provides an elegant retreat just moments from Richmond Station, the River Thames and Richmond Park. Whether guests are visiting for business, a weekend escape or to explore one of London's most desirable neighbourhoods, The Selwyn has become known for its warm hospitality and genuine attention to detail.

The award reflects a continued commitment to creating memorable guest experiences. From carefully considered improvements throughout the hotel to a focus on personalised service, every aspect of the guest journey has been designed to make visitors feel welcomed, relaxed and at home from the moment they arrive.

Richard Sidaway, General Manager of The Selwyn Richmond, said: *"We are absolutely delighted to receive the Tripadvisor Travellers' Choice Award for 2026. To know this recognition comes directly from the people who have chosen to stay with us makes it especially meaningful. Boutique hospitality is all about people, and this award is a reflection of our incredible team. Their warmth, professionalism and genuine care for every guest are what make The Selwyn such a special place to stay. We are incredibly proud of the relationships they build with our guests and the personal touches they bring to every visit. We have continued to invest thoughtfully in the hotel, ensuring we enhance the comfort and experience we offer while preserving the unique character that makes The Selwyn so distinctive. Our philosophy has always been simple: treat every guest as an individual and create an experience that feels welcoming, effortless and memorable. I would like to thank everyone who has stayed with us and taken the time to leave a review. Your feedback means so much to us, and we look forward to welcoming you back to The Selwyn, whether you are returning for another visit or discovering us for the very first time."*

As one of Richmond's most distinctive boutique hotels, The Selwyn continues to attract guests looking for a more personal way to experience London. From peaceful weekend escapes and business stays to memorable city breaks, the hotel combines elegant surroundings with attentive service to create an experience that guests return to time and time again.

As the world's largest travel guidance platform, Tripadvisor uses reviews and ratings from millions of travellers to identify businesses that consistently exceed guest expectations. Travellers' Choice winners represent the top 10% of listings worldwide and are recognised for their commitment to hospitality excellence.

Located in the heart of Richmond upon Thames, The Selwyn is a stylish boutique hotel offering elegant accommodation, personalised hospitality and an exceptional location just moments from Richmond Station, the River Thames and Richmond Park. Blending the character of a historic townhouse with contemporary comfort, The Selwyn provides the perfect base for business travellers, leisure guests and those looking to explore one of London's most charming neighbourhoods.

For further information about the hotel please visit www.countrywidehotels.co.uk



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CHRISTIAN IACHINI

CEO & FOUNDER, XPONENTIAL7



DATE

Thursday
**09 JULY
2026**



TIME

7:00 PM
(Networking from 6:00 PM)



VENUE

The Lensbury Club
Broom Rd, Teddington
TW11 9NU, UK



AUDIENCE

Rotarians, business leaders,
professionals & guests
Places are limited

— **WHAT YOU WILL DISCOVER** —



The mindset shift from casual to power AI user



Real-world tools, trends and practical use cases



Live demo, case study & insider insights



Actionable strategies to work smarter with AI

**25-30
MINUTES**
INSPIRING
PRACTICAL
TRANSFORMATIVE

— **KEY HIGHLIGHTS** —

- ✓ Hot AI topics with a light twist
- ✓ AI user behaviour & real data
- ✓ Top tools & live demo (Sesame AI)
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- ✓ Tips, resources & Q&A



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England v Mexico

By Ron Brand

What do we conclude so far on England's progress through the Group Stage of the World Cup and the Round of 32?

As far as Brentford are concerned the only player to make an appearance so far is Jordon Henderson.

My thoughts, (a) England were expected to get through the Group Stage, (b) They have seen, there are 'No Easy Games'. (c) Teams adopting an All-out Defence strategy are difficult to break down with the current squad.

I feared that would be the case when Thomas Tuchel made the decision to leave some of our most creative players at home. I speak of course of Trent Alexander-Arnold, Phil Foden and particularly Cole Palmer.

At top level you need a number of attacking strategies to break down defences. We saw with Ghana who sat back and said, we will not move you break us down! England on paper a far superior team failed, and we witnessed a 0-0 result. Why was not Ivan Toney given a chance?



I believe we will see similar situations later in the tournament for different reasons when England meet the Top teams. Playing against Top Teams with Top Players Goals will come either from a defensive mistake or a piece of individual brilliance? It is at that time you need a Cole Palmer or Phil Foden to Step Up.

So far Harry Kane has provided the magic and Goals. Let us hope he can continue to be there when things get tough and provide the magic we will need? I would like to see some alternatives?

So thoughts so far. England have done what was necessary without Setting the World alight.

Workman like, hardly Brilliant!

Argentina and Spain await in the Semi Finals and France in the Final if we can navigate the thin atmosphere and Mexico at the Aztec Stadium to make the Quarter Finals?

We will see?

England Team To Play South Africa

England men's head coach Steve Borthwick has named his team to face South Africa on Saturday 4 July at Ellis Park, Johannesburg (kick-off 4.40pm BST).

Jamie George captains the side, with Ollie Chessum and Ellis Genge serving as vice-captains. The match marks England's opening fixture in the inaugural Nations Championship, with matches against Fiji and Argentina to follow in the coming weeks.

"Playing South Africa at Ellis Park is one of the great Tests in world rugby and an opportunity we're excited to embrace," said Borthwick.

"We've prepared well since we arrived here last week and I sense a real excitement within the squad to get our Nations Championship campaign underway."

Following the match in Johannesburg, England return for an 'away' fixture against Fiji at Everton's Hill Dickinson Stadium in Liverpool before travelling to Argentina to face Los Pumas at Estadio Único Madre de Ciudades, Santiago del Estero in Round 3.

All Nations Championship matches will be broadcast live on ITV Sport.

SOUTH AFRICA v ENGLAND

Saturday 4 July 2026

Ellis Park, Johannesburg

Kick-off: 4.40pm BST

- | | |
|--|---|
| 15. George Furbank (Harlequins, 14 caps) | 1. Ellis Genge (Bristol Bears, 80 caps) – vice-captain |
| 14. Immanuel Feyi-Waboso (Exeter Chiefs, 13 caps) | 2. Jamie George (Saracens, 110 caps) – captain |
| 13. Tommy Freeman (Northampton Saints, 27 caps) | 3. Joe Heyes (Leicester Tigers, 22 caps) |
| 12. Seb Atkinson (Gloucester Rugby, 4 caps) | 4. Alex Coles (Northampton Saints, 19 caps) |
| 11. Cadan Murley (Harlequins, 6 caps) | 5. George Martin (Saracens, 21 caps) |
| 10. Fin Smith (Northampton Saints, 16 caps) | 6. Ollie Chessum (Leicester Tigers, 35 caps) vice-captain |
| 9. Jack van Poortvliet (Leicester Tigers, 24 caps) | 7. Tom Curry (Sale Sharks, 68 caps) |
| | 8. Ben Earl (Saracens, 51 caps) |
| Replacements: | |
| 16. Luke Cowan-Dickie (Sale Sharks, 58 caps) | 20. Guy Pepper (Bath Rugby, 12 caps) |
| 17. Beno Obano (Bath Rugby, 4 caps) | 21. Henry Pollock (Northampton Saints, 10 caps) |
| 18. Asher Opoku-Fordjour (Sale Sharks, 6 caps) | 22. Alex Mitchell (Northampton Saints, 30 caps) |
| 19. Charlie Ewels (Bath Rugby, 34 caps) | 23. Marcus Smith (Harlequins, 50 caps) |



Kayode signs new long-term Brentford contract

Written by Brentford Football Club

Michael Kayode has signed a new long-term contract at Brentford. The right-back's new deal runs until the summer of 2032, with a club option of a further year.

[Kayode](#), who was [nominated for the Premier League Young Player of the Season award](#) following an impressive 2025/26 campaign, has made 56 appearances across all competitions for the Bees since joining from Serie A side Fiorentina – initially on loan - in January 2025.

Brentford head coach Keith Andrews said: *“Michael had an amazing season last year.*

“He epitomised everything good that we do. His development and evolution has been really, really impressive.

“Michael’s someone that we love working with every single day, who comes in with such an enthusiastic demeanour, and is a joy to be around and to coach.

“We’re absolutely delighted that he wants to stay because we love having him here, and this new contract is absolutely deserved.”

Kayode started his youth career at Juventus, where he remained for seven years until 2018.

After leaving the Italian giants, he played for Serie D side Gozzano and, during the 2020/21 season, the defender scored two goals and provided two assists in 34 matches as a 16-year-old, helping them gain promotion to Serie C.

The now-21-year-old joined Fiorentina after that impressive campaign and was first integrated into their youth team. His Serie A debut came in a 4-1 away victory over Genoa in 2023 and, by the end of the season, he had become a regular in the first team.

Kayode went on to play 49 times for Fiorentina - including in a run to the UEFA Conference League final in 2024 - before [moving to west London](#).

During his first half-season in TW8, the Italy Under-21s international made 12 appearances, with his Brentford debut coming shortly after joining, as a substitute in a clash against Tottenham Hotspur at Gtech Community Stadium.

Kayode started the final six games of the 2024/25 campaign and, after [the transfer was made permanent that summer](#), established himself as a regular throughout 2025/26, playing a pivotal role as the Bees secured a ninth-placed finish.

He missed just one Premier League match last term, leaving him one game shy of a half-century of appearances in the English top flight.

The athletic full-back's first Brentford goal - an emphatic header against Wolves at the Gtech - came in March, while he also featured a further seven times across the FA Cup and Carabao Cup in 2025/26.



Public consultation: Concerts at Gtech Community Stadium

Written by Brentford Football Club

Brentford Football Club is exploring the possibility of hosting up to six live music events each year at Gtech Community Stadium.

The concerts would be held over weekends in the summer months, when the pitch isn't being used for football.

We have a strong track record of managing attendees safely at the Gtech, and would apply that same experience, expertise, and operational planning to a small number of concerts each year.

The concerts would make use of the existing stadium, with no building works or permanent changes required. They will require permission from Hounslow Council, and we will agree limits on timings and noise, as well as clear plans for transport, stewards, toilets and litter.

At the Gtech, we have the opportunity to introduce a professionally managed, medium-scale concert destination for west London, bringing new cultural experiences to the local area, supporting local shops, restaurants, and hospitality businesses, and attracting new visitors to Brentford.

The club is holding two public drop-in events for its neighbours, supporters and the wider community to find out more about our proposal to host concerts at the Gtech. Come along to meet the project team and ask any questions you might have. These are taking place on:

- **Saturday 18 July 2026, 10am - 1pm** at Brentford FC Community Sports Trust, 1a Thomas Layton Way, London TW8 0SB
- **Monday 20 July 2026, 5pm - 8pm** at Clayton Hotel Chiswick, 626 Chiswick High Road, Chiswick, London W4 5RY

Can't make the events?

Brentford's exhibition materials and feedback survey will be published on the club website from Saturday 18 July.

Contact us

You can contact the project team by emailing bfcconsultation@thisislca.com.



Metallica go even bigger in their call for fans to help boost blood stocks ahead of their London gigs this weekend

Metallica has become the latest b(r)and to pledge its support to NHS Blood and Transplant's Emergency LOW-GOS campaign – with a major campaign activation ahead of the metal legends' sold-out London Stadium shows this weekend.

Concertgoing fans on Friday and Sunday (3 & 5 July) watched on as the band's iconic logo was splashed across the eight huge 'tower' screens synonymous with the band's worldwide M72 tour – only to slowly drain of colour in a striking reminder of the blood shortages currently impacting the NHS following recent hot weather. This urgent call to donate, which also appeared across London Stadium's giant external LED screen, was accompanied by a QR code directing fans to book a blood donation appointment.

The [Emergency LOW-GOS campaign](#), which was created by Havas London, launched on World Sickle Cell Day (19 June) – with initial partners including The Independent, English Heritage, Marvel, HSBC UK and Westfield lending their (famously red) logos to highlight sickle cell blood stock shortage.



With blood stocks having dropped even further following recent hot weather, this new, Metallica-backed activation sees donors – particularly those with O negative, B negative and Ro subtype blood as well as platelet donors - urged to come forward and fill available appointments heading into the summer.

It comes off the back of a [first-of-its-kind collaboration](#) between NHS Blood and Transplant and Metallica ahead of the band's UK tour dates – with

Metallica and its charity All Within My Hands donating special limited-edition merchandise, including T-shirts and guitar picks, to give away to people attending a booked blood donation appointment between 26 June and 3 July.

The need for blood, platelets and plasma is constant. With a shelf life of just 35 days for blood, and 7 days for platelets, NHS Blood and Transplant must continuously welcome new donors and inspire existing donors to return. In England alone, over 5,000 blood donations are needed every day to support trauma patients, people undergoing cancer treatment, mums and babies during childbirth, and those living with longterm conditions such as sickle cell disease.

Mark Chambers, Director of Donor Experience for NHS Blood and Transplant, says:

“Metallica’s global reach gives us an incredible opportunity to connect with new audiences right across the country. Every donation can save up to three lives, and we urgently need more people to book appointments and become regular donors. Right now, we particularly need more O negative, B negative and Ro donors – but every blood type is vital. We’re asking fans to roll up their sleeves and be part of something bigger than the show.”

Dan Cole, Executive Creative Director at Havas London says: *“Metallica’s logo is one of the most iconic in the world. So we thought it was a big ask to get them to lend it to Emergency Low-gos. They didn’t just say yes – they also lent us their incredible artwork and their stage screens too. When it comes to getting the nation to donate, the band obviously agree that Nothing Else Matters. Legends.*



A spokesperson for Metallica, says: *“Wherever we go on tour, we want to give something meaningful back to the communities that welcome us. We’ve seen how working with blood services around the world can raise awareness and support patients, and we’re excited to bring that same energy to the UK. As we close out the European leg of the M72 World Tour, we’re asking fans to step up and support those who rely on donated blood every day.”*

Giving blood takes around an hour, and a single donation can help save up to three lives. Whether you attended one of Metallica’s UK shows or were simply inspired by the campaign, now is the perfect time to make a real difference.

Visit www.blood.co.uk or the NHS Give Blood app to register and book an appointment today.

NHS
Blood and Transplant

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