

Twickenham & Richmond Tribune



Contents

Editors: Teresa Read, Berkley Driscoll

TickerTape	
Three men have pleaded guilty following an investigation into a smash and grab robbery at a jewellery shop in Richmond in January	Metropolitan Police
The Tree Agency	
The Local Picture Postcard Page - Crown Road Twickenham – A Snapshot	Alan Winter
Crusader Travel	
St Margarets Station Sign Goes Under the Hammer	Michael Jones
Have your say on Heathrow's expansion plans	Richmond Council
St Margarets Fair	
Twickenham Riverside Is Rising, But the Argument Has Not Gone Away	James Knight
Letters	
Barnes Fair	
Richmond Council Admits Major Weaknesses in Risk Control	James Knight
Help build the story: join the 3rd Act drama group	The 3rd Act
Regal Spice Twickenham	
Thames Water's (TW) misleading promotions attract growing resentment to its TDRA abstraction proposal	Mike Pemberton, SOLAR
Henry VIII's Joust	Hampton Court Palace
Twickenham Riverside Audit Raises Questions Over Controls and Claimed Benefits	James Knight
Crusader Travel	
Give your items a second life at this month's Twickenham Repair Café	Twickenham Repair Café
Job opportunities at The Ellera Centre in Teddington	The Ellera Centre
Twickers Foodie: The South African Cook Book	Alison Jee
Twickers Foodie: Toddler Time	Alison Jee
Gibraltar Sunborn - Dive Adventure	Sunborn Gibraltar
Summer Holiday Bliss as Opposed to Blues!!!!	Bruce Lyons
Mark Aspen Review: Giulio Cesare	Mark Aspen
Falstaff Among The "Naked Ladies"	Richmond Shakespeare Society
Brindisa to host riverside celebration for Galicia Day	Brindisa Tapas Richmond
Outstanding National Student Survey 2026 Performance Reflects Positive Student Feedback	St Mary's University
New NHS community art programme announced for Richmond's Barnes Hospital	South West London and St George's Mental Health NHS Trust
Local Dementia Care Worker Wins National Award for Outstanding Compassion & Innovation	Right at Home
Small Steps Welcomes Hungarian Ambassador Following Prestigious International Recognition	Small Steps
Richmond win Silver at London Youth Games 2026 Girls Basketball	London Youth Games
England Team To Play Fiji at Hill Dickinson Stadium	RFU
Ajer: Norway taking Brentford mentality into England quarter-final	Brentford Football Club
Richmond upon Thames is the best place in London to dine alfresco	White Stores

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TickerTape - News in Brief

Three men have pleaded guilty following an investigation into a smash and grab robbery at a jewellery shop in Richmond in January.

From the Metropolitan Police

Deniz Mehmet, 28 (04.10.97), of Elham Drive, Basildon pleaded guilty to conspiracy to rob at Kingston Crown Court on Friday, 10 July.

Two other men – Robert Clarke, 50 (06.08.75) of Lever Lane, Rochford and Lee Ramsey, 46 (28.05.79) of Hastingwood Road, Harlow – pleaded guilty to the same offence at the same court on Friday, 22 May.

All three men were remanded in custody and will be sentenced on Friday, 24 July.

A video of the robbery was widely shared online. It showed the men smashing the window of the jewellers with a sledgehammer before reaching in to grab jewels worth £225,000 and making off.

Officers immediately launched an investigation, arresting two of the men on Tuesday, 31 March and the third on Wednesday, 8 April – all at addresses in Essex.

Detective Superintendent Dan Mitchell, from the Met's Flying Squad, said: "Robberies of this kind cause real concern for residents and businesses in the communities that are targeted. It's they who feel the immediate impact.

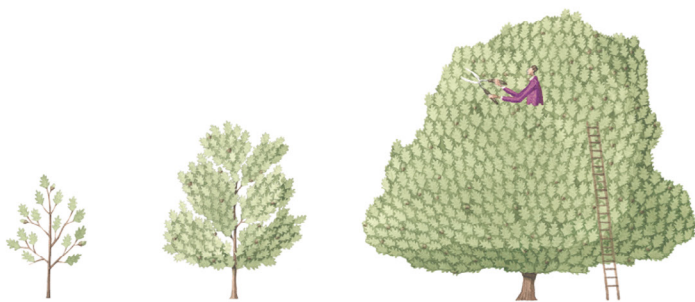
"These guilty pleas mark a significant step in what has been a detailed and determined investigation. I hope they demonstrate our commitment to tackling smashandgrab robberies in London by going after those involved, wherever they are.

"The groups responsible should be under no illusion – we will pursue you relentlessly and hold you to account."

An investigation was launched immediately following the incident which took place in Paved Court, Richmond on Saturday, 31 January.

Specialist officers carried out an extensive review of CCTV footage, alongside forensic analysis and the recovery of a vehicle believed to be linked to the robbery. This painstaking work led to the identification of the three suspects – who were arrested on suspicion of conspiracy to commit robbery. The Met remains committed to tackling issues that have a real impact on businesses and communities – including ram raids.

Across London, neighbourhood crime dropped by 15.6 per cent in the last financial year – that's equivalent to more than 40,000 fewer offences. This was largely driven by reductions in theft from person (-21.4 per cent), vehicle crime (-13.9 per cent) and personal robbery (-13 per cent).



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The Tree Agency

The Local Picture Postcard Page - Part 334

By Alan Winter

Crown Road Twickenham – A Snapshot

One of the Boroughs finest roads for shopping and eating in the Borough. Many Independent shops as well as two very good pubs at both ends in the Crown and the St Margarets Tavern. St Margarets station at the Northern end and Marble Hill Park and the river Thames to the South provide the boundaries for what is one of my favourite areas of Twickenham. Mind you, I was lucky enough to grow up in Orleans Road and go to both Orleans Infants and St Stephens schools as a child.

The road has appeared on postcards for over 120 years now and these postcards provide a snapshot of the diversity of businesses and retailers over the years.

Our first postcard shows the newsagent, sweet and tobacconist shop which is still there on the corner of Richmond Road and Crown Road opposite the Crown public House. In the 1960's and 70's it was owned and run by Cyril



and Doris Duffell. Cyril was well known in the area as both a football referee and for forming and helping to form the Richmond Youth League. Moormead FC and Athenians FC were two

strong and successful St Margarets teams that Cyril helped to establish. I was a paper boy for him in the early 1960s and played football for both of his teams in my teenage years. He also had a large cellar under the shop in which we played table tennis.



As we walk north along Crown Road we come to Baronsfield Motors at Number 47 on the right on the corner of Baronsfield Road. This second postcard shows Hartington Road opposite where Orleans Infants school was.

A little further up on postcard number 3 we see some of the shops on the left as we walk towards the Railway Station. This postcard dates from before the second world war and shows a fine window display at the grocers at number 12.



The last postcard was photographed at the top end of the road where the St Margarets Hotel (as was) still stands today although somewhere along the line it had a name change to The St Margarets Tavern. Crown road is to the right of the pub as it runs towards the south.



In my younger years I also played football for a team called Thames Dynamos that based itself in the St Margarets Hotel and played in the West Middlesex League on Sundays while I played for Kew Association in the Southern Amateur League on Saturdays.

I also played in the darts teams of both the Crown and the St Margaret Hotel in the 60s and 70s and one evening a few of my team mates and I were practicing darts in the then public bar of the "Maggies" as we called it when Ringo Starr and Richard Harris walked in having finished a day's filming at the Twickenham Studios opposite the pub. They put their names up to take chinks as was the custom if you wanted to play and we all had a good evening's darts and beer together.

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St Margarets Station Sign Goes Under the Hammer

By Michael Jones



Image © G.W. Railwayana Auctions, see link below

A piece of St Margarets railway history has appeared for sale, with a Southern Railway enamel “target” station sign listed by G.W. Railwayana Auctions.

The green and white sign, carrying the name **ST MARGARETS**, is described as coming from the former London and South Western Railway station between Twickenham and Richmond. Measuring 36 inches long, it is said to be in very good ex-station condition, with one small chip to the face. With an estimate of £400, it is not just a curiosity, but a collectable item in its own right.

For many local residents, St Margarets station is simply part of daily life: the familiar stop between Richmond and Twickenham on the line into Waterloo. But the station has a longer history than many realise.

St Margarets station opened on 2 October 1876, although the railway line through the area had already been established for years. That timing matters, because the station helped turn St Margarets from a quieter riverside and semi-rural area into a proper commuter suburb. With a direct link into London, the surrounding streets became much more attractive to people who wanted to live outside the centre while still travelling easily to work.

In that sense, the railway did not just serve St Margarets. It helped create the St Margarets we know today. The growth of Victorian and Edwardian housing, the development of local shops and the emergence of a distinct village identity were all helped by the station and the daily movement of passengers through it.

The sign itself dates from a later chapter in railway history. The Southern Railway was created in 1923, following the “Grouping” of Britain’s many private railway companies into four large regional companies. It brought together the London and South Western Railway, the London, Brighton and South Coast Railway, and the South Eastern and Chatham Railway. The Southern Railway continued until nationalisation, when it became part of British Railways in 1948.

Southern Railway “target” signs are now among the most recognisable pieces of railwayana. Their design was simple but effective: bold station names set into a strong green and white enamel form, intended to be clear, durable and instantly recognisable to passengers. They were

built for public use, not decoration, but that is part of their appeal today.

There is a strong collecting market for these signs. G.W. Railwayana's own auction results for London Transport and Southern Railway target signs show more than 500 listed items, with an average price of **£933** and a highest recorded price of **£5,300**. In that context, a £400 estimate for a St Margarets sign shows how objects once taken for granted on station platforms have become sought-after pieces of local and railway history.

There is also a striking contrast between the quality of the old sign and the rather tired appearance of St Margarets station today. The station remains well used, but at present it can look a little neglected. The enamel sign is a reminder of an age when railway companies took pride not only in running trains, but in the visual identity of their stations.

That is part of the charm of this sale. A sign like this is not just railway memorabilia. It is a small surviving piece of St Margarets' identity: a reminder of the era when railway companies branded their stations with durable signs intended to be read by generations of passengers.

The station remains busy. Passenger numbers fell sharply during the Covid period, but have recovered strongly, rising from around 281,000 recorded entries and exits in 2020-21 to just over one million in 2024-25.

Whether the sign ends up with a specialist collector or someone with a personal connection to St Margarets, it shows how everyday local objects can become historical artefacts. What once helped commuters find their way home is now a piece of south-west London history in its own right.

You can view the item by following the link [HERE](#)

Have your say on Heathrow's expansion plans

From Richmond Council

Share your opinion on a third runway at Heathrow Airport.

We're still firmly opposing any expansion to Heathrow, but want to come together with residents to hear what you have to say and discuss the government's ongoing consultation.

Join us from 7.30-9.30pm on 23 July either at York House or online. Find out more and register [HERE](#)





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Twickenham Riverside Is Rising, But the Argument Has Not Gone Away

By James Knight

Richmond Council plainly knows that Twickenham Riverside still carries a public relations problem. That is why, as the scheme begins to rise above ground, the language around it has shifted from controversy to construction, from compulsory purchase to community engagement, from what was lost to what is now being built.

This week, a classic reputation management exercise has taken place. Nearby residents and local businesses were invited on a behind the scenes tour of the worksite by Richmond Council and Kier Construction, giving them a closer look at one of the borough's most significant regeneration projects.

The council is entitled to point to visible progress. Much of the difficult work below ground has now been completed, the river wall and riverside steps are taking shape, and parts of the new building are beginning to rise. After years in which Twickenham Riverside existed largely in drawings, consultation boards and argument, it is now becoming a physical fact.

A scheme taking shape

For supporters, this is the beginning of a long-promised reconnection between Twickenham town centre and the Thames. The project is due to provide new public spaces, improved riverside access, commercial units, 45 new homes including affordable housing, children's play facilities, terraced lawns, seating, pétanque pitches and a new riverside events space.

John Bolton, Regional Director at Kier Construction, said the company felt "privileged" to be working with Richmond Council on "one of the most significant investments in Twickenham town centre for a generation". He said the scheme would provide homes, retail space and public green space for residents and visitors for many years to come.

Councillor Gareth Roberts, Leader of Richmond Council, said there was "real momentum on site", while stressing the importance of keeping residents and businesses informed as the project moves forward. He acknowledged that schemes of this kind bring "disruption as well as excitement" and said the council wanted the development to be delivered "with the community, not simply for the community."

Rewriting History

That phrase deserves rather more scrutiny than the council may have intended.

For many residents, Twickenham Riverside was not experienced as a shared act of local consent. It was a bitterly contested redevelopment, advanced through a compulsory purchase process against the interests of the Twickenham Riverside Trust, which held Diamond Jubilee Gardens on a long lease. The gardens were not a forgotten scrap of municipal land. They were a valued public open space, protected by a local trust and cherished by many who believed the riverside should remain more modest, open and rooted in its existing character.



Photo ©Berkley Driscoll

That distinction matters. Consultation is not the same as consent, and legal authority is not the same as civic agreement. A council may be entitled to use its statutory powers, and Richmond ultimately secured the legal basis it needed. But the language of community partnership cannot quite erase the fact that compulsion, not consensus, was required to deliver the scheme.

Nor was the dispute always conducted in a spirit of calm respect. Trustees and opponents of the development came under sharp public criticism from Liberal Democrat councillors, including the leader himself. Many residents felt that principled objections were too easily treated as obstruction. That left a residue of mistrust which no site tour, however well organised, can entirely remove.

The vulnerable were pushed out

The loss of Café Sunshine deserves separate notice because it exposes one of the harder questions beneath the language of regeneration. This was not simply a small riverside café, but a place that provided training, routine and employment opportunities for people with learning disabilities. Its closure meant those disabled workers were made redundant. In social policy terms, a modest but valuable piece of civic infrastructure was removed.

Redevelopment is usually best at displaying its gains: new paving, new buildings, new commercial units, public spaces and polished artists' impressions. Its losses are often quieter and more human. Café Sunshine makes those losses visible. People whose work gave them dignity, structure and belonging appear to have been displaced by a scheme whose future commercial spaces are more likely to suit conventional market operators.

That is the uncomfortable truth at the heart of the scheme. The Liberal Democrats often speak the language of fairness, inclusion and community life. Yet this redevelopment has seen disabled workers lose their jobs and a café created to support vulnerable people disappear. Whatever the promised benefits of the new riverside, real harm has been done to people who had little power to resist it.

Parking and the town centre

Nor have traders been wholly reassured. The loss of convenient riverside car parking has caused disquiet among some local businesses and town centre users, who fear that making it harder to stop close to the river will weaken rather than strengthen Twickenham's economy.

The council's answer is that a better public realm will bring more people in, creating a destination rather than a car park beside the Thames. That may yet prove true. But it remains an argument, not a settled fact.

The test still to come

The council and Kier say they will continue to hold engagement events and provide updates to nearby residents and businesses as construction progresses. That is welcome, but it cannot settle the deeper question. Twickenham Riverside has created winners and losers, and no amount of careful messaging should obscure that fact.

The winners may yet be numerous: future residents, new businesses, visitors, and those who believe the town will benefit from a more polished riverside. If the finished scheme is attractive, well used and genuinely public, it may in time win over some of those who doubted it.

But the losers are already visible. The Twickenham Riverside Trust lost its long-standing role over Diamond Jubilee Gardens. Traders lost convenient parking. Residents who opposed the scheme lost an argument they believed mattered deeply to the character of the town. And among those worst off are the former staff of Café Sunshine, who lost not an abstract planning dispute, but work, routine, dignity and belonging.

That is the moral test of the redevelopment. Not whether it looks impressive in photographs, nor whether it can be described as progress, but whether the place that emerges is worthy of what was sacrificed to build it.

For now, Twickenham Riverside is taking shape. The harder task is to ensure that those who lost most are not quietly written out of the story.

Letters

Dear Tribune,

Anyone for Saki?

After reading last week's Tribune article by Alison Jee about Richmond's Sticks 'n' Sushi restaurant, I felt compelled to clarify a few points about Japanese food which might be of use to readers.

May I first explain that I have spent most of my life deeply immersed in Japanese culture and hold senior positions in two Japanese traditions both of which are classified by the Japanese government as *Mukei Bunka Zai*, namely 'Intangible Cultural Assets of Japan'.

The first is *Sōma Noma Oji*, dating from the 10th century, in which I hold the samurai rank of Group Commander, a truly unique position for a non-Japanese person, and the second is Japan's premier martial tradition, *Tenshin Shoden Katori Shintō Ryū*, a true combat school founded in the 15th century.

I speak, read, and write Japanese and regularly demonstrate, and lecture on, many aspects of Japanese culture including food, particularly the classical martial arts to institutions such as the Royal Armouries, The Tower of London, Eton College, Oxford University, The Japan Society, Keio University, Tōkyō, et al, and have been the specialist guest speaker on Japanese culture for a number of cruises around Japan including aboard Cunard's *Queen Elizabeth 2*.

I have also received a commendation from the cultural attaché of the Embassy of Japan in London for my protection of Japanese culture.

I have visited Japan nearly 400 times for work, study, training, teaching and travel. Although not a professional chef, living in Japan as a Japanese person has taught me much about the food especially as all my family and friends are Japanese, some of whom run sushi restaurants and other types of Japanese restaurants in Japan.

It is extremely rare to find real Japanese restaurants in the UK. A few offer the real thing but they are expensive and certainly not found on every high street. There are numerous reasons for this. The genuine ingredients are practically impossible to obtain, as are staff and, in any case, few Westerners know the proper taste and are thus unable to discern good from bad. This particularly applies to mass-produced sushi which is, by UK law, refrigerated, something which a Japanese chef would never do as it ruins the rice. In Japan, it takes a sushi chef around two years even to learn how to cook the rice, an item of veneration in Japan. The boom in cheap, fast-food sushi outlets has given a completely false impression of Japanese food and done it a great disservice. The lack-lustre offerings in these places is in sharp contrast to the jewel-like sparkle of real sushi. I never visit them nor do my Japanese friends.

Some time ago I was invited by friends to a fashionable Japanese restaurant in London. The

food was as disappointing as the service so I sent it back and wrote a long letter of complaint. I received a phone call from the non-Japanese (!) manager who, incredibly, told me that it was not actually a Japanese restaurant at all in spite of the menus being in English and Japanese, presumably to impress their naïve customers.

Out of curiosity, and to be fair, I have actually eaten in Sticks 'n' Sushi and found some of the food very tasty. But one must assume it is 'Fusion' because many of the Western items mentioned, such as mushroom croquettes with Danish cheese, miso aioli, flat bread, etc., are unheard of in true Japanese restaurants. Nor does Japanese food have 'Starters'. To my mind, and to Japanese friends, 'Fusion' never works because it is neither one thing nor the other and, although some sushi ingredients are actually cooked, no sushi restaurant in Japan ever serves *tempura* or *tsukune* because these are totally different foods requiring specialised skills.

Of course, Alison Jee's comments that some of the food was too salty or not to her taste may be perfectly valid as that is personal opinion, although some Japanese food is meant to be salty. But Western wine with Japanese food? Grapes and rice do not go well together. Japanese food has taken hundreds of years to perfect and can take many years of training to master, even for Japanese people. It is a true culinary treasure which should not be tampered with.

Furthermore, in spite of the many, mostly silly, TV programs about Japan, I have rarely seen a Westerner who knows how to even hold, let alone use properly, '*hashi*', the Japanese word for what they mistakenly call chopsticks. (Japanese *hashi* and Chinese chopsticks are different). Another error is the constant mispronunciation of the word '*sushi*' as '*Sue-she*', an abomination offensive to the ear and similar to calling the Tribune: '*Try Bunny*'.

So I feel bound to say that although the misuse of the word '*saki*' is a common error usually mispronounced as '*Sar-key*', it is absolute proof that the writer does not know Japanese food. The correct transliteration of the Japanese word into English word is '*sake*'. The word '*saki*' has numerous completely different meanings none of which are any form of alcohol.

Reviews should be written by people who understand what they are describing and such serious errors can but cast doubt on their veracity.

Michael Jay
Hampton



Richmond Council Admits Major Weaknesses in Risk Control

By James Knight



Risk management is where municipal competence is tested, not advertised. A council may publish strategies, convene boards and produce reassuring diagrams, but none of that matters if basic checks are missed, responsibility is dispersed and elected members cannot see clearly where danger lies.

Richmond Council's latest review is therefore more revealing than its official language suggests. The authority is replacing a largely manual, twice-yearly process with quarterly reporting and what it calls a new digital platform. Yet its own report concedes that the previous system suffered from poor visibility, weak historical context and limited clarity over whether risks were rising or falling. The revised strategy remains unfinished.

The oral evidence was more candid still.

A system not yet under control

Paul Guillotti, the Council's Director of Financial Services, told the Audit Committee that the new framework remained "in its infancy" and was not fully embedded. Staff workshops, he admitted, "haven't been overly well attended". After suggesting that this might mean officers already understood the system, he added: "I'm not that convinced."

That is not the language of a settled control environment. It is the language of an organisation still trying to establish whether its own managers understand the machinery being introduced. The supposed new platform is also less impressive than the phrase implies. It is built around SharePoint and Excel templates. There is nothing wrong with either, but presenting familiar office software as a new digital platform risks giving councillors and residents the impression of a specialist risk system when the real reform is administrative rather than technological.

Controls exist, but are not followed

Andrew Hamilton, the Council's Chief Audit Executive, described the underlying weakness with unusual clarity.

"In the majority of cases, there isn't an absence of a control in place," he said. The problem was implementation. Asked why procedures were missed, his answer was blunt: "Broadly speaking, it's human error."

The audit record supports him. Of 22 assurance reviews completed during the year, only two received substantial assurance. Twenty were judged reasonable. Internal audit issued 113 recommendations, including five at the highest priority level. This is not institutional collapse, but neither is it a clean bill of health. It is evidence of a council whose rules are often stronger than their execution. Taken together, those findings amount to major weaknesses in the Council's control environment, even if they do not suggest institutional collapse.

Tania Kalizic, the Council's Audit Manager, identified a deeper cultural problem. Richmond, she said, could be too trusting and too reluctant to inconvenience those who owed it money. The authority sometimes needed to be "more strict", with clearer demands and firmer deadlines.

In plain terms, the Council's own auditor was describing a debt collection culture weakened by institutional diffidence.

Risks above tolerance, but no further action

The corporate register identifies major risks including financial stability, supplier failure, cyber attack, workforce pressure and new technology. Several remain above the Council's own appetite after current controls are taken into account. Financial stability is scored at 12 against an appetite of 10. Third party suppliers are also at 12 against 10. New technologies, including artificial intelligence, stand at 12 against 8. In plain English, the Council accepts that its existing safeguards have not reduced these risks to a level it considers tolerable.

The striking point is not merely that risks remain high. It is that some entries, including supplier failure, identify no further action.

That is difficult to square with recent experience. At Elleray Hall, a contractor was appointed without a credit check that would have disclosed adverse information before the company later failed. At Twickenham Riverside, internal audit found that some contractor meetings had not been minuted, while councillors raised concerns over variations, contingency and how the promised benefits would be measured.

Twickenham Riverside merits separate examination. For present purposes, the important point

is narrower: these are not theoretical weaknesses. Richmond has already seen what happens when controls are either absent in practice or insufficiently evidenced.

The weakness of the shared service model

The review also exposes a structural question that receives too little attention. Risk management is operated jointly across Richmond and Wandsworth, yet the public papers say little about how borough-specific risks are separated, challenged and owned. A shared service may reduce duplication and bring specialist expertise. It can also blur accountability. When an issue crosses departmental and borough boundaries, who is answerable to Richmond councillors? Who decides whether a problem is serious enough to rise from service level to the corporate register? And how can residents tell which risks arise principally in Richmond, which are shared with Wandsworth, and where political accountability ultimately lies.

The Council's fleet vehicle audit showed the danger of dispersed ownership. Recommendations were delayed because several services shared responsibility and no single officer initially held overall command. Collective responsibility, the committee heard, made implementation harder to monitor. More layers do not necessarily mean more control. Sometimes they merely make it harder to identify who failed to act.

Who verifies the assurances?

When councillors asked how the Council knew its controls were actually working, Mr Guillotti replied: "A bit of both." Some weaknesses would be caught through preventative work. Others would become visible only after something had gone wrong.

Mr Hamilton added that internal audit could not test every control. Risk owners themselves had to show where their assurance came from.

"Otherwise, it's just words, isn't it?" he said.

That sentence should trouble councillors more than any score on a spreadsheet. The system depends heavily on managers assuring the Council that the controls they own are working.

Independent challenge is therefore essential. Yet Richmond is now an entirely Liberal Democrat council, with no opposition group inside the chamber to pursue awkward questions or keep neglected warnings alive. Councillor James Chard, the Liberal Democrat group leader, acknowledged the danger himself, warning that a one-party authority might fail to hear voices telling it that it was wrong.

Richmond deserves credit for finally confronting weaknesses that should have been addressed sooner. But reform cannot become another form of reassurance. The old system lacked visibility, the new one remains unfinished, staff engagement has been uneven, several risks still exceed the Council's own tolerance and auditors say controls are not consistently applied.

After years of warnings, the issue is no longer whether Richmond understands the problem. It is whether anyone will be held accountable if the same failures are allowed to happen again.

Help build the story: join the 3rd Act drama group

From The 3rd Act

Following the success of their recent showcase at the ETNA Community Centre, The 3rd Act drama group is throwing open its doors for the new term, and they want you to be part of the story!

As a vibrant group within Richmond, U3A are dedicated to collaborative storytelling, devising original scripts, and proving that theatre belongs to everyone, regardless of prior experience.

Whether you want to step into the spotlight or pull the strings from the wings, there is a place for you. They are a friendly, inclusive bunch, and while enthusiasm is the only true requirement, they're particularly keen to hear from anyone with skills or an interest in sound and lighting tech (managing portable equipment, music, and simple lighting cues).



“If you’ve ever had the itch to perform or help behind the scenes, now is the perfect time to get in touch,” explains Group Leader Susy Hodges “You’ll find no pressure here, simply a fantastic team spirit and the satisfaction of bringing a live performance to the stage.”

New term details:

- **Start date:** Wednesday 26 August 2026
- **Time:** 2 to 4pm every Wednesday (except 2 September)
- **Location:** ETNA Community Centre, 13 Rosslyn Road, Twickenham TW1 2AR

If you're ready to join the cast, or simply want to find out more, please contact Hilary at hilaryshenken@hotmail.com or Susy on susan.hodges9192@gmail.com to secure your spot for the autumn term.

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Thames Water's (TW) misleading promotions attract growing resentment to its TDRA abstraction proposal

From Mike Pemberton, SOLAR

Local campaign group SOLAR, Save Our Lands And River, has identified that TW is fundamentally misrepresenting the financial efficiency of its Teddington Abstraction proposal TDRA [Why Thames Water's "Bargain" Project Is Actually the Most Expensive in the Country - Save Our Lands & River from Thames Water](#) While the project is marketed to customers and councils as having an Average Incremental Cost (AIC) of approximately 69p per cubic metre of water abstracted, this figure assumes the plant operates 365 days a year for its planned life of 80 years.

Yet TW has separately, and consistently, marketed TDRA as an "emergency-only" asset, to be used "once every two years" - a planned use of only 45 days.

When corrected for this operational reality, the true unit cost to customers rises to 512p per cubic metre making it 7.4 times more expensive than claimed, and potentially the costliest water scheme in the country.

Requests for explanation of this misrepresentation have been sent from SOLAR to; Chris Weston, CEO of Thames Water; Chris Murray, Chair of Water Resources South East; and Emma Hardy MP, Minister for Water.

These revelations come on top of Thames Water's recent, unexpected, and very damaging additional TDRA structural and environmental measures to Ham's Burnell Open Space and riverside. This large open and well used recreational green space is next to the recently designated Bathing Status Ham/Kingston stretch of the Thames.

Many residents feel the changes are far more significant for local communities than TW suggest and whilst the scheme has significantly increased in scale no reference to additional costs/best value has been given.

HGV movements would be increasing from 6,246 to around 14,000 on the few available residential roads with serious impact on Kingston's road system. Additional construction removes Burnell Open Space from recreational use from 2 years to around 4 years posing a shutdown threat to Kingston Park Run's many hundred enthusiasts, as in the photo.



After major local concerns about these changes and the revelations about Thames Water's misleading promotion of their TDRA scheme, councilors from both Richmond and Kingston councils have, together, recently requested a joint statement from their councils "Challenging the Economic and Environmental Justification of Thames Water's Teddington Direct River Abstraction (TDRA) Scheme".

Henry VIII's Joust

From Hampton Court Palace

Make it a day to remember at Hampton Court Palace this July, with excitement, pageantry, and the return of Henry VIII's Joust.

11-12 and 18-19 July 2026

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More information and tickets [HERE](#)



HISTORIC ROYAL PALACES

Twickenham Riverside Audit Raises Questions Over Controls and Claimed Benefits

By James Knight



Twickenham Riverside is one of Richmond Council's largest and most politically sensitive projects. With an agreed budget of £67.2 million, internal audit describes it as carrying a "heightened level of inherent risk" because of its scale, cost and reputational importance.

The Council says the scheme is progressing well. Demolition is complete, preliminary works are under way and officers insist the project remains on target. The audit record is more qualified.

Reasonable, not substantial, assurance

The project received a "reasonable" assurance opinion rather than substantial assurance. Auditors identified areas of non-compliance, while some recommendations due in April 2026 remained only partly implemented.

That does not suggest a project in crisis. It does mean the controls governing it are not beyond question.

The most notable finding concerned meetings with contractors which had not been formally minuted. Councillors also raised concerns about contract variations and the relatively small contingency available to the scheme. Officers described the omissions as rare and a "small inconsistency", saying procedures had been tightened and that a lessons-learned report would follow.

On a project of this scale, missing minutes are not a minor administrative lapse. They establish what was agreed, who authorised changes and whether public money was subjected to proper challenge. Where financial headroom is limited, discipline over variations matters more, not less.

The Sponsor Board wanted clearer information

The most revealing intervention came from Councillor James Chard, leader of the Liberal Democrat councillor group and a member of the Twickenham Riverside Sponsor Board. He told the Audit Committee that the board had met earlier that day but had not seen the project risk information in the form he expected.

"We didn't see it in quite the form that I'd have wanted to see it," he said, adding that he had asked for it to be presented properly in future.

That is significant because it came from the leader of the Liberal Democrat councillor group, not from an opposition critic.

Paul Guillotti, the Council's Director of Financial Services, told councillors that every major project should have both a project board and a project risk register. The real question is whether that information reaches elected members in a form that permits proper scrutiny of cost, programme, contractor exposure and emerging risks.

How were the benefits counted?

The concern over "benefit realisation and tracking" is not new. In *Twickenham & Richmond Tribune*, Edition 452, published on 4 July 2025, an earlier investigation, "**Twickenham's High Speed 2? Riverside Costs Balloon To £67.2 Million**", challenged the assumptions used in the Council's Treasury Green Book appraisal.

At issue was the counterfactual, the baseline against which the scheme's claimed benefits were measured. A sound appraisal should compare the development with the most realistic alternative had it not proceeded. It should not compare the finished scheme with a condition created by the redevelopment process itself.

The Tribune investigation argued that Richmond assessed the existing site only after leases had been terminated, commercial properties emptied and public spaces fenced off. It also questioned the treatment of the King Street properties, acquired by the Council for £6.8 million and later valued at about £8.7 million, together with the existing value of Diamond Jubilee Gardens and the riverside promenade.

In plain terms, the concern was an artificially depressed baseline. The functioning riverside had been replaced in the appraisal by a diminished site whose income, occupancy and public use had already been reduced by decisions taken to enable the scheme.

That matters because a project can then appear to create benefits which are partly the restoration of value it first removed. If commercial income disappears because tenants have been required to leave, and that loss is then treated as the normal starting point, the apparent gain may be overstated.

This does not prove that the appraisal was invalid, nor that the scheme lacks public benefit. It does mean that the scale of the claimed benefit depends heavily on how the starting point was constructed.

Success must be measured

The Council has spoken of town centre renewal, increased local spending and wider civic benefit. Yet the Audit Committee heard that specialist advice was still required on how those benefits should be measured and over what period. Members specifically requested that the next audit examine "benefit realisation and tracking."

Trust is already strained by the scheme's substantial increase in cost. A project now carrying a budget of £67.2 million cannot rely on general assurances that it remains on track. The greater the public investment, the stronger the obligation to show what residents are receiving in return.

The Council may be right that the project will deliver what it promises. But confidence is not evidence. Richmond must publish the measures by which success will be judged, the risks still being carried and the progress made against audit recommendations.

The public should not be asked to take a £67.2 million project on trust.



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Give your items a second life at this month's Twickenham Repair Café

From Twickenham Repair Café

The next Twickenham Repair Café will be open on Saturday 18 July, for the repair of household items. The café does not charge for repairs, but asks for a donation based on what you think their time and expertise is worth. There's no need to book ahead, just drop in (only one item per person for repair).

While you wait, you can enjoy the café inside the Repair Café, serving tea, coffee and a selection of homemade cakes.

Event details:

- **Date:** Saturday 18 July 2026
- **Time:** 10.30am to 12.30pm
- **Location:** St Margaret's Church Hall, Twickenham TW1 1RL

Find out more about the [Twickenham Repair Café](#).



Job opportunities at The Elleray Centre in Teddington

From The Elleray Centre

The Elleray Centre is a new community centre in the heart of Teddington and is managed by a local charity. Although it only opened six months ago, it is already becoming recognised as a place that has something to offer the entire local community.



As well as being the home of the much valued Elleray Social Club for adults, it is the venue for many classes and courses. In addition to a number of health and well being activities, there are martial arts sessions, children's foreign language classes, belly dancing, a regular programme of talks and workshops on a very varied range of subjects, a children's drama group, music and choir and of course, our own fundraising events. And every week, we receive new enquiries from tutors, instructors and group leaders who wish to hold their classes and meetings in our hall or rooms.

To help us ensure that everything keeps running smoothly we are now recruiting a full time Administration Co-ordinator and expanding our team of Facilities Co-ordinators.

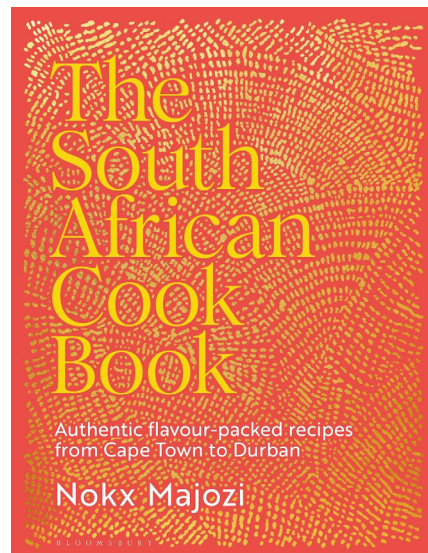
Further details are shown on the images, but for a full job description and application form, please email our Manager at manager@elleraycentre.org or call her on 020 8977 0549. If you are emailing or leaving a message, please make it clear which of these jobs you are interested in!

The closing date for applications is July 31, but if you feel that one of these opportunities could be just what you're looking for, don't wait until then - make contact now!



The South African Cook Book

Perfectly timed to publish when our daytime temperatures are comparable, perhaps, to a hot South African summer day, is this gorgeous new cook book. *The South African Cookbook: Authentic flavour-packed recipes from Cape Town to Durban* is from the South African chef **Nokx Majozi**, who recently joined the team at acclaimed London restaurant **Fallow**. From a hearty Boerewors roll to a fresh rainbow salad, and from iconic bobotie to the infamous melktert, the book is packed with 90 everyday recipes that celebrate the diverse and brilliantly vibrant flavours of South African cooking and which will help any home cook bring the flavours of South African food to their own kitchens. With recipes that have been handed down through generations of her family, and her own modern interpretations of traditional dishes, these are Nokx's most-loved recipes. From braai to street food, pies and pastry to desserts, expect recipes that delight the senses and awaken your taste buds.



Nokx learned to cook at an early age, inspired by watching her parents in their home kitchen in Durban, South Africa. Breaking the mould, she knew she wanted to be a chef and spent three years studying before travelling to the US to cook South African food in Florida and eventually settling in London. She was Head Pie Maker and Senior Chef at Holborn Dining Rooms, bringing the flavours of her home country to pie fanatics, and has recently joined the team at acclaimed London restaurant Fallow. She has worked with Women in Hospitality, an organisation set up to nurture the careers of aspiring female chefs, and has been named one of the 100 Most Influential Women in Hospitality by CODE, twice. The book is published by Bloomsbury at £26, for a hardbacked, veritable travelogue to South Africa.

Here are a couple of recipes to give you a taste of what's in the book:

Sugar Bean Curry (Serves 4)

“There’s nothing tastier than a bowl of beans simply simmered in stock and seasoned with salt and pepper, but currying them takes them to a whole new level. This dish is the ultimate comfort food for me on colder days. When we saw that the weather was going to be bad, my brother would start the beans soaking overnight and then make this curry the next day. The soft, tender sugar beans soak up all the warmth and spice of the curry, filling the whole house with a delicious fragrance while it simmers away.”

- 500g dried sugar beans, or borlotti beans
- 3 tbsp vegetable oil
- 1 cinnamon stick (optional)
- 1 onion, finely chopped
- 1 tbsp chilli powder
- 1 tbsp curry powder
- 2 tomatoes, finely chopped
- 2 potatoes, peeled and cubed
- Sea salt and black pepper

To serve

- Coriander leaves
- Plain rice
- Durban roti



Soak the beans overnight in plenty of water. The next day, drain and rinse the beans and place into a pan. Cover with twice the volume of fresh water as beans. Bring to a boil over a high heat, then reduce the heat and simmer gently for 40 minutes. They should be cooked through, but not falling apart. Cook for a little longer if needed.

Put the oil in a large pot and set over a medium heat.

Add the cinnamon stick, if using, and the onion and cook for 6–8 minutes, stirring regularly, until the onion is soft and translucent.

Add the chilli powder and curry powder, and keep stirring to cook for a minute.

Drain the beans over a bowl or jug, reserving the cooking liquid. To the pan of onions, add the tomatoes, potatoes and the cooked beans. Pour over the reserved bean liquid until the potatoes are covered. Top up with more hot water if needed.

Reduce the heat and simmer for 15 minutes until the potatoes are cooked and the sauce has thickened up. Add a splash more water to loosen the sauce if needed.

Season to taste, scatter over the coriander and serve with plain rice and/or Durban roti.

Rainbow Salad (serves 6-8)

“This rainbow salad is a showstopper in every sense. It’s packed with every colour of the vegetable spectrum, from crisp peppers and radishes to leafy greens and shredded red cabbage as well as Hispi cabbage, also known as pointed cabbage or sweetheart cabbage, whose leaves are delicate and sweeter than regular green cabbage. I love how it’s not just a feast for the eyes, but for the taste buds too. Each veggie brings its own crunch, freshness and flavour, and the tangy dressing ties it all together beautifully. This is the salad I make when I want something vibrant, healthy and guaranteed to brighten up my day. Every bite feels like a celebration of what nature has to offer. Ditch the regular leafy greens and make this your new middle-of-the-table salad!”

- 2 carrots, grated
- 125g butternut squash, peeled and julienned
- 1 red pepper, deseeded and julienned
- ¼ green cabbage, such as Hispi or Savoy, thinly sliced
- ¼ red cabbage, thinly sliced
- 100g baby spinach, thinly sliced
- 5 radishes, thinly sliced
- 20g parsley, chopped
- 60g mixed seeds, such as sunflower, pumpkin, linseeds

For the dressing

- 1½ tbsp apple cider vinegar
- 1 lemon, zest and juice
- 3 tsp runny honey
- 3 tsp Dijon mustard
- 6 tbsp olive oil
- Sea salt and white pepper



Start by making the dressing. In a blender or bowl, add the cider vinegar, lemon zest and juice, honey and mustard. While the blender is running or you are whisking by hand, slowly add the olive oil in a thin stream until it’s all incorporated. Season to taste with salt and white pepper.

In a large bowl, mix all the vegetables, the chopped parsley and the seeds.

Drizzle over the dressing and toss to coat everything thoroughly. Serve on a large platter.

Toddler Time

Encouraging a baby to try different solids can be rather exasperating. But here's an easy way to give your child a healthy, nutritious meal in just minutes. Created by Edward van der Lande, an ex-army officer, passionate foodie and proud parent

of two young boys, **More Toddler Meals** are very clever. Inspired by the nutrient-dense freeze-dried food pouches used by elite forces, Ed spotted an opportunity to bring that practical thinking into baby and toddler foods. The result is a range of quick, convenient meals designed to feel closer to home-cooked food than the usual processed pouch. The More Toddler Meals range of three - current - products has been created for children aged 10 months to 4 years: **5 Veg Macaroni**; **Super Green Pasta Stars** and **Sweet Potato & Aubergine Dhal**. Each offers natural ingredients, proper flavour and real textures. Great for feeding little ones at home, out and about, or at the end of a particularly busy day.



Preparation is so easy - just rip open the sachet, fill with boiled and cooled water to the line, stir and wait five minutes. On the back of the pack, all the ingredients are clearly laid out, and you can be assured that there are no 'nasties'. A lot of baby and toddler foods tend to taste very similar: soft and bland., but these meals each taste different from each other, with a decent, fuller flavour. This is important for babies and toddlers who are learning, and trying different tastes and textures. Being freeze dried, it locks in all the goodness and makes mealtimes quick and simple. They are an excellent, ambient, store cupboard standby and are available from Ocado, Amazon or moretoddlermeals.co.uk, with an RRP of £3.95 a meal.

b.box for kids, is an award-winning Australian feeding and hydration brand, supporting children from nursery to secondary school with a range of thoughtfully designed lunchboxes, snackboxes, water bottles and more. Combining style, functionality and practicality, the collection is available in a variety of soft and vibrant colours to suit every taste. There are award-winning sippy cups that have a cleverly weighted straw to allow them to drink at any angle. The soft silicone straw has a unique two-way valve, ensuring easy drinking and no leaks, even with warm water. **B.Box** has so many other great products, with something from birth right through to school lunch boxes. These feature a unique stretch-and-flex whole fruit section, large sandwich section and leakproof compartments, giving kids more options at lunchtime. They can be customised with the company's range of lunchbox additions (such as gel cooler packs) and accessories. Check out the website as there is something for toddlers and children of all ages (adults too), including insulated food jars, silicone tableware, feeding mats, suction plates, storage containers and lots more.



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Summer Holiday Bliss as Opposed to Blues!!!!

By Bruce Lyons

I guess I have seen it all, Covid, Strikes, Volcanic Ash, Floods and more.

But, for a travel agent Summer 2026 is the Strangest of All!!

The combination of Fuel Issues, Global Warming, Cost of Living Crisis and maybe a spoonful of over supply has produced some fascinating and unexpected "last minute" And, as we are just before the Summer holidays I thought I would share a little information with you.

Free Child Offer, to Corsica

They are not giving you a child, but are offering an entirely free holiday to 17 yr old and younger - only one per booking.

There are 1/2/3 & 4 bedroom villas with pools this offer is ONLY to Corsica and on the Sunday BA CITYFLYER flight to Calvi - there is a lot of choice and you can book 1 & 2 week holidays, there is no "BOOK BY" just a caveat "while stocks last" as an example 1 week for

three (including one child of 17 or under would be on 13thJuly, for £2,080 (1 week) or £2,738 for 2 weeks total prices for the 3 !) This with a transfer, studio with shared pool x 2 bedrooms and the flights - not a bad deal! And if could be any date for 1 or 2 weeks - even longer! And even cheaper if 4 or 5 in the party. Call for quotes, please remember it can only be on the SUNDAY Stansted to Calvi flight.



60% off in the Greek Islands - this has a book by date of 20thJuly.

One or two weeks from a variety of airports in the UK (Gatwick/Heathrow/Stansted/Luton/Birmingham/Bristol/Manchester/Leeds & Edinburgh- these again are villas with pools /shared pools 1 or 2 weeks could be longer -on request); 1 bedroom studio, shared pool Gatwick flights to Skiathos & ferry; and car 1 week per person £1,338 and even less for 2 weeks £1,179 per person, for example.

AMA Waterways (Book by 14thJuly) are celebrating the 25thAnniversary Ho Chi Minh City.

For a short period they are offering savings of Up to £1,900 on bookings, they claim to have the Highest Rated River Cruise Ships, every room has a view, a Palate Pleasing Journey and so much more

Featured journeys.



For example; the AmaDara "Riches of the Mekong" 14thAugust twin balcony - 3 nights pre cruise Siem Riep , 7 night River Cruise, 2 nights post cruise Ho Chi Minh City, flights included £4,879.00 - p.p. Saving of £575 per person.

Today their River Cruise reach beyond Europe; Columbia in South America, Egypt and the Nile, Zambezi in Zimbabwe, and the Mekong in Asia.



We have all the prices and dates - just call for fuller details further details; 020-8744474

Giulio Cesare

by GF Handel, libretto by NF Haym

The Grange Festival at The Grange, Alresford

The term mixed-media is made for post-modernist [David Alden](#)'s directing of *Giulio Cesare*. The gravity of Handel's historical account is heavily overlaid with broad comedy, yet never loses the magnificence of his music. It is eclectic, violent, sexy and edgy, but is melodic, incisive, creative and beautiful.

It features four countertenors, a rare thing.

(Glyndebourne's 2014 [Rinaldo](#) also had four.) Moreover, *Giulio Cesare* has a well-served contralto role, and the bubbly baroque music keeps all moving afresh.

Designer Jon Morrell's eclecticism embraces costume and set. While Caesar's general, the praetor Curio, is dressed as a Roman centurion, Tolomeo's general Achilla wears a modern uniform, vaguely like General Gadaffi. Cornelia, widow of the Roman statesman Pompey, and her stepson could be from post-war London. Nireno, the butler, is a bandaged mummy (an old retainer?). Although it is 48BC in Tolomeo's palace in Alexandria, the set relishes in anachronisms. A revolve allows quick changes from the triumphant arch, to Tolomeo's staterooms, or a chamber in his harem with a snake-filled tank and walls covered in tropical foliage.



At a very long dining table, think Putin's safety desk, Tolomeo invites Cesare to discuss diplomacy with their respective generals. In Cesare's aria *va tacito*, a metaphor of hunting accompanied by a horn obbligato, the four progress warily around the table. Cesare's guard act as tasters for Tolomeo's dining fare, resulting in a cross between musical chairs and Russian roulette as the hapless soldiers expire.

In the eponymous role of Cesare, [Tim Mead](#)'s countertenor is clear-cut, yet warm and expressive. His Cesare may be Shakespeare's "noblest man that ever lived", but he has very human weaknesses. Tolomeo's sister Cleopatra seduces him with her obvious charms, and Mead's Cesare is soon so enthralled that he is, quite literally, in a spin.

Tolomeo is a sybaritic psychopath. On meeting Cesare, he presents him with the head of Pompey in a bucket. Cesare is appalled and immediately wary. As the mercurial Tolomeo, [Hugh Cutting](#)'s countertenor has a silvery sinister edge. His attempted rape of Cornelia is truly repulsive.

Cornelia becomes the target of the lust of both Tolomeo and his general Achilla, and is subject to all sorts of atrocities. Yet proud Cornelia remains resilient. [Jess Dandy](#) is outstanding as a dignified and brave Cornelia. Her amazing voice is a creamy rich contralto, and Dandy's acting consummately expresses the rawness of her shredded emotions. When she is promised to Achilla by Tolomeo as a "prize" if he assassinates Cesare, Cornelia's anguish, in her duet with Sesto, is profoundly affecting.

Sarah Brady's Cleopatra is as sinuous and slippery as the asps she enjoys as pets. First seen as a smoky-eyed Goth, tantalising her brother Tolomeo, Brady is capable of flipping from flapper to femme fatale to suit Cleopatra's passing personae. Changing from her disguise as the maidservant with the roaring twenties bob-cut, to the Queen, as his burgeoning lover, she manipulates Cesare as a military ally to usurp Tolomeo. It is a nuanced trajectory coloured by Brady's emotive soprano, using dramatic captivating coloratura. Her seductive *v'adoro pupille* is the love-song that sends Cesare in a spin amongst a ballet of floating spheres, reflecting cool blue light.



Zheng Jiang's Sesto is an earnest youth, straining to protect his stepmother and to avenge his father's death. Jiang's nimble countertenor has a soft fluidity that elicits empathy yet is underlaid with bubbling anger. Owen Willetts does sterling work as Nireno, whilst weighed down by his mummy swaddling. His strong ringing countertenor seems underutilised, which is a pity as it is splendid. James Atkinson makes a chilling Achilla, full of menace and barely concealed violence. His sinewy baritone speaks of Achilla's ruthlessness. Bass [Tristan Hambelton](#)'s Curio has a swaggering self-assuredness and he sings with an authoritarian richness.



An ubiquitous group of five male dancers, choreographed by [Tim Claydon](#), animate the stage, variously as subordinate mummies, black clad ninjas, alluring sirens, Roman soldiers, or androgynous niqab wearers. Sometimes vaguely animal, as caterpillar-like crawling creatures, or, with some puppetry, colourful serpents, tanks full of them. Lithe and intriguing, it could be stand-alone ballet, but here it pulls the focus.

Baroque maestro [Christian Curnyn](#) conducts the Early Opera Company to bring out the vigour of Handel's musical energy. Curnyn

integrates instrumental with vocal music empathetically, absorbing the changing emotions of each character within the orchestra's sumptuous and stimulating music.

This tongue in cheek *Giulio Cesare* has wow-factor. There is so much going on that one needs to see it three times, to absorb the drama and music, to disentangle the visual gags, and to heard the world-class singing.

Read Mark Aspen's review at www.markaspen.com/2026/06/23/giulio-cesare-2

Photography by Richard Hubert Smith

Giulio Cesare is dedicated to the Grange Festival's retiring Artistic Director, Michael Chance, himself an acclaimed countertenor, who has taken the Grange Festival from strength to strength since its inception with [Monteverdi's Il Ritorno d'Ulisse in Patria](#) in 2017.

Falstaff Among The “Naked Ladies”

York House, Twickenham - July 13th-18th



The roistering, ribald, uproarious tale of Falstaff’s wooing of Windsor’s Merry Wives will be played, for your delight, in front of Twickenham’s famous “Naked Ladies” fountain in the grounds of York House from Monday, July 13th - Saturday 18th. Our open air, fully costumed and magically lit performances of one of Shakespeare’s most popular comedies cannot fail to delight and enthrall you and your family. Bring rugs and a picnic and we can promise you an unforgettable evening of English magic and fun beneath a cloudless English sky.

THE MERRY WIVES of WINDSOR plays in York House Fountain Gardens, Twickenham from the 13th - 18th of July.

Booking available now at
www.richmondshakespeare.org.uk



RICHMOND SHAKESPEARE SOCIETY

Brindisa to host riverside celebration for Galicia Day

From Brindisa Tapas Richmond

As one of London's best-loved Spanish restaurants, Brindisa Tapas has long championed the country's regional food, wine and traditions. This July, it's shining a spotlight on Galicia with a one-day riverside fiesta celebrating the region's national day.

On Saturday 25th July, Brindisa Tapas Richmond is transforming its riverside terrace into a proper Galician celebration - the kind with live music, exceptional food and flowing beer. Marking National Galicia Day, the annual festival honouring the region's culture, history and exceptional produce, the one-day takeover will bring the spirit of northern Spain to the banks of the Thames.



Leading the festivities is an Estrella Galicia pop-up bar, pouring crisp, refreshing beer all day long. They'll also be handing over the tap with guests bold enough to pour their own standing to win branded prizes and free beers.

Meanwhile, the kitchen is bringing the real showstoppers outside. Whole Galician octopus, hand-caught and unmistakably the main event, gets cooked tableside and served over Koffmann's potatoes with smoked paprika and a generous glug of Núñez de Prado extra virgin olive oil.

For those wanting something heartier, the Txuleta Rubia Gallega, a Galician blonde ex-dairy cow sirloin, aged and fired to order, arrives with charred Padrón peppers and chimichurri, built for sharing (or not).

No fiesta is complete without music, and throughout the day a traditional acoustic guitarist will fill the venue with the sounds of Spain.

Celebrated every year on 25th July, Galicia Day honours the region's rich culture, traditions and world-class produce. At Brindisa Tapas, where Spain's regional cuisines have always been at the heart of the menu, there's no better excuse to celebrate with fantastic food, flowing beer and a proper fiesta.

Grab a seat by the water, raise a self-poured pint, and celebrate Galicia properly.

BRINDISA
TAPAS

St Mary's University

Outstanding National Student Survey 2026 Performance Reflects Positive Student Feedback

St Mary's University, Twickenham is celebrating an outstanding performance in the 2026 National Student Survey (NSS) published today (July 8 2026). Overall, St Mary's now ranks 13th out of all universities in the UK* - climbing 21 places since last year. The University also ranks 2nd in London, climbing two places.

work – and confident in their futures.

"I would like to thank our students for their engagement with the survey and their ongoing support for this University. I look forward to seeing many of them at our Strawberry Hill campus for graduation ceremonies next week, where our academic and support teams will join me in celebrating their success."



In the 'Learning opportunities' category – which focuses on how academic courses explore concepts in depth, connect topics, and develop skills for the future – the University is placed within the top 10 universities in the UK.

The University is building on its strong foundation of teaching excellence, with 89.4% highly rating 'Teaching on my course', which reviews how well academic staff deliver content, explain complex ideas, make subjects engaging, and support student learning.

In addition, results underline academics' commitment to learning and support, with St Mary's scoring 91.5% for 'Academic support', which looks at both how easy it is for students to reach teaching staff when they need help, and the extent to which staff have provided advice and support. St Mary's University ranks within the top five universities in London, and top 30 in the country for these factors.

The NSS, which surveys final year undergraduate students on their university experience, found that St Mary's had improved across all seven of the key themes, ranking in the top five in London for: Teaching, learning opportunities, academic support, and organisation and management.

Speaking of the results, St Mary's Vice-Chancellor Prof Anthony McClaran said, *"I am delighted to see the outcomes of this year's NSS. Our teams here live our values, and through tenacity, creativity and empathy, they deliver an outstanding experience for our students."*

"In over 175 years of delivering education for our global community it is heartening to see that our University's relentless focus on excellence, respect and inclusivity, and approach to higher education with humanity and generosity of spirit, continues to deliver graduates who are ready for

**amongst higher education providers with university status (excluding specialist providers)*



**St Mary's
University**
Twickenham
London

New NHS community art programme announced for Richmond's Barnes Hospital

From South West London and St George's Mental Health NHS Trust

A new chapter is beginning at Barnes Hospital, where modern mental health facilities and a new Special Educational Needs (SEN) school are taking shape as part of South West London and St George's Mental Health NHS Trust's (SWLSTG) [Better Communities Programme](#).

Opening in autumn 2027, the redeveloped site in the London Borough of Richmond, East Sheen, will bring together healthcare,



education and community spaces in a setting designed to break down mental health stigma and make highquality mental health support more accessible.

Central to this vision is the creation of a dynamic, communityrooted art programme. In partnership with the Friends of Barnes Hospital, the Trust is seeking an experienced and enthusiastic consultant or organisation to lead the development and delivery of artwork for the new facility.

This new art programme will build on the success of previous arts initiatives delivered through the Better Communities Programme – most notably the coproduced and widely celebrated artworks created at Springfield Hospital. There, artists, patients, carers and the wider community collaborated through a series of workshops, resulting in vibrant installations throughout the hospital.

At Barnes, the ambition is to curate a collection of artworks that are collaborative, compassionate, and sustainable – pieces that reflect local history, nature, celebrate the culture and identity of Richmond, and promote wellbeing for patients, staff and visitors. The programme will prioritise coproduction, ensuring that people with lived experience, as well as local communities, play a central role in the creative process.

Ian Garlington, Director for the Trust's Better Communities Programme, said: *“Our ambition for Barnes Hospital is to create a place that feels welcoming, inspiring and deeply connected to the community it serves. Art has a powerful role to play in breaking down stigma, supporting wellbeing and helping people feel at ease when they walk through our doors.*

“By working closely with the Friends of Barnes Hospital and inviting artists and local people to coproduce this programme, we have a wonderful opportunity to honour the history of the site while shaping a creative, compassionate environment for the future. I'm excited to see the ideas,

collaborations and conversations this project will spark.”

Kathy Sheldon, Chair of the Friends of Barnes said: *“We are pleased to be working alongside the Trust to support this important initiative at Barnes Hospital.*

“As the site continues to evolve, we are encouraged to see a strong focus on creating spaces that are welcoming, inclusive and connected to the local community. We look forward to seeing the art programme play a key role in shaping a positive, community-focused environment for patients, staff and local residents alike, while reflecting the character of the area and the people it serves.”



About the programme and how to apply to lead it

With £40,000 jointly funded by the Trust (£10,000) and the Friends of Barnes Hospital (£30,000), the programme will run from autumn 2026 to summer 2027, with installation due in spring/summer 2027.

The partnership is seeking a consultant to lead programme design, engagement workshops, artist selection, project management, and budget oversight, in coordination with the build team.

Individuals and organisations with a strong track record in community arts, coproduction, and project management are encouraged to apply.

Applications (no more than 2,000 words) should outline:

Experience and background

Proposed approach to [meeting the brief](#)

Approach to delivering coproduction, community engagement and robust project management

Supporting materials such as PDFs or presentations may also be included.

All applications should be submitted by 5pm on 19 August via email to: BetterEnvironments@swlstg.nhs.uk

Local Dementia Care Worker Wins National Award for Outstanding Compassion and Innovation

A dedicated Right at Home Weybridge & Richmond Carer has been recognised on the national stage after winning the Dementia Community Care Worker Award at a ceremony held at the Hilton Bankside in London.

Sally Ann received the award in recognition of her exceptional compassion, person-centred approach, and commitment to improving the lives of people living with dementia.

The award celebrates community care workers who demonstrate innovation, empathy, and outstanding support, while making a meaningful difference to individuals and their families.



Sally was recognised for the remarkable impact she has had on one individual, Robyn, by tailoring her support around Robyn's interests, preferences, and wellbeing. Understanding that a traditional home assessment had previously caused distress, Sally reimagined their first meeting as a relaxed dog walk in the park. This thoughtful approach helped build trust in a familiar and comfortable environment, allowing Robyn to engage at her own pace.

As a fellow dog lover, Sally also embraced Robyn's close bond with her dog, Thula, using their shared love of animals to develop a genuine connection. Together, they returned to enjoying regular nature walks, helping to improve Robyn's confidence, independence, and emotional wellbeing.

One of Sally's most memorable acts of kindness was creating a special "Magic Moment" by organising a day trip to Leeds Castle. Giving her own time, Sally spent six hours with Robyn to ensure she could fully enjoy the experience, creating treasured memories while also providing valuable respite for Robyn's husband, Charles.

Sally's compassion, creativity, and dedication have had a lasting impact, not only on Robyn but on her entire family. Her ability to deliver truly person-centred care embodies the very best of dementia support and highlights the vital role community care workers play in enhancing the lives of those living with dementia.

Congratulations to Sally Ann on this well-deserved national recognition.

For more information about the person-centred home care provided by Right at Home Weybridge & Richmond please visit www.rightathome.co.uk/weybridge-richmond/ or contact 020 3376 3535.

Small Steps Welcomes Hungarian Ambassador Following Prestigious International Recognition

Small Steps, the local charity providing free specialist support for young children with physical disabilities, was honoured to welcome Dr Ferenc Kumin, Hungarian Ambassador to the United Kingdom, and Press Secretary Petra Hajdu to its Richmond centre on Tuesday 7 July.



The visit followed a landmark achievement for the charity: its recent recognition as a **Designated Institute for Practice** by the renowned **András Pető Faculty of Semmelweis University in Budapest, Hungary** - the world's leading authority on Conductive Education. The Ambassador's visit provided an opportunity to see first-hand how Small Steps delivers Conductive Education, meet the specialist team, and learn more about the charity's growing role in helping to train the next generation of conductors.

This remarkable international recognition was formally presented by **Dr Andrea Zsebe**, Dean of the András Pető Faculty, at a special Semmelweis University alumni event hosted by Ambassador Kumin at the Hungarian Embassy in London on 12 June. For Small Steps, whose team of conductors are Pető-trained alumni, the honour was especially meaningful and deeply personal.

Speaking at the event, **Head of Small Steps Anita Coppola MBE** said: *"This recognition is a tremendous honour and a reflection of decades of dedication to Conductive Education in the UK. We are incredibly proud to strengthen our relationship with Semmelweis University and to help shape the next generation of conductors."*

Being named a Designated Institute for Practice is a powerful endorsement of the quality and impact of Small Steps' work. It highlights the organisation's commitment to upholding the gold-standard principles of Conductive Education established in Hungary. Crucially, it also means Small Steps can now welcome conductor students from Budapest, providing hands-on training and playing an active role in developing future professionals in the field.

The Ambassador's visit reinforced the significance of this new partnership and celebrated the strong links between Hungary, the birthplace of Conductive Education, and Small Steps' work in the UK. During the visit, Ambassador Kumin and Press Secretary Petra met staff and families, observed sessions at the centre, and gained a deeper understanding of the life-changing impact Conductive Education has on young children with motor disorders and physical disabilities.

Transforming Lives Through Conductive Education

At the heart of Small Steps is Conductive Education, a pioneering approach developed in 1945 by Hungarian physician **Dr András Pető**. Designed for individuals with neurological conditions such as cerebral palsy, it is a dynamic and empowering system of learning that focuses on independence and possibility.

By breaking everyday skills into small, achievable steps, Conductive Education enables children to build confidence, develop practical life skills, and gain a deeper understanding of their own abilities. It is an active, positive approach that encourages children to discover what they can do – and to keep building on that success.

At Small Steps, these principles are brought to life every day, helping children make meaningful progress while supporting families with expert, compassionate care.

This prestigious recognition, together with the recent visit from the Hungarian Ambassador, marks a significant milestone for Small Steps, strengthening its place within the global Conductive Education community and reaffirming its commitment to delivering free, life-changing support to children and families.



Richmond win Silver at London Youth Games 2026 Girls Basketball

The 2026 London Youth Games Basketball Competition delivered an incredible day of competition on 5th July 2026. The event saw the top four boys and girls teams from the Basketball Qualifiers come together at Crystal Palace National Sports Centre in the battle to become London Youth Games champions.

The silver medal finish was a fantastic reward for Richmond's young athletes, who performed brilliantly throughout the day. Richmond defeated Southwark 21–14 in the semi-final before narrowly losing 39–37 to Barking and Dagenham in the final.

Southwark, Barnet, Richmond and Barking and Dagenham competed in the girls' event after emerging as the top four teams from the Girls' Basketball Qualifiers on 24 May 2026 at UEL SportsDock, where 18 teams competed.

The inclusion of basketball at the London Youth Games has long provided a platform for future careers, with alumni including Luol Deng (Croydon), Steve Bucknall (Lambeth), including Shanice Beckford-Norton (Newham) and Savannah Wilkinson (Barking & Dagenham), all of whom benefited from competing in the Games early in their careers.

The winning boroughs of the Girls Basketball Competition:

Gold: Barking and Dagenham

Silver: Richmond

Bronze: Southwark

Mosa Modesto and Davou Fom, Richmond Basketball Team Managers, said: *"I'm extremely proud of the team. The girls' team have made a real jump in the right direction, and it sets us up for success going forward. It's fantastic to highlight the specific areas where basketball is growing and booming and the London Youth Games highlights that in a great way."*

In direct alignment with the Mayor of London's strategy to invest in youth clubs and steer young Londoners away from gangs and crime, the London Youth Games provides a vital, positive alternative.

By creating safe, inclusive spaces, the Games actively support City Hall's mission to redouble efforts to reduce violence against women and girls, ensuring every young Londoner can play, compete and thrive without fear.

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 Basketball 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 and 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](#)



England Team To Play Fiji at Hill Dickinson Stadium

England men's head coach Steve Borthwick has named his team to face Fiji in Round 2 of the Nations Championship on Saturday 11 July at Hill Dickinson Stadium in Liverpool (kick-off 2.10pm BST, live on ITV1).

There are two personnel changes to the starting XV which faced South Africa in Johannesburg last weekend, with Henry Slade and Guy Pepper coming into the side. Elsewhere, uncapped trio George Kloska, Benhard Janse van Rensburg and Noah Caluori are named amongst the replacements.

Jamie George will captain the side, with Ollie Chessum and Ellis Genge serving as vice-captains.

"We've had a really positive week of preparation, and the players have worked hard in training," said Borthwick. *"We know Fiji will provide a tough challenge. They are a dangerous side who will demand the very best from us."*

"It's fantastic to be playing at Hill Dickinson Stadium, which is an outstanding venue. There is a real passion for rugby across the north of England, and we're looking forward to experiencing a brilliant atmosphere in Liverpool."

Following the match, England will travel 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.

FIJI v ENGLAND

Saturday 11 July 2026

Hill Dickinson Stadium, Liverpool

Kick-off: 2.10pm BST

15. Marcus Smith (Harlequins, 51 caps)
14. Tommy Freeman (Northampton Saints, 28 caps)
13. Henry Slade (Exeter Chiefs, 75 caps)
12. Seb Atkinson (Gloucester Rugby, 5 caps)
11. Immanuel Feyi-Waboso (Exeter Chiefs, 14 caps)
10. Fin Smith (Northampton Saints, 17 caps)
9. Jack van Poortvliet (Leicester Tigers, 25 caps)

Replacements:

16. Luke Cowan-Dickie (Sale Sharks, 59 caps)
17. Asher Opoku-Fordjour (Sale Sharks, 7 caps)
18. George Kloska (Bristol Bears, uncapped)
19. Tom Curry (Sale Sharks, 69 caps)

1. Ellis Genge (Bristol Bears, 81 caps) – vice-captain
2. Jamie George (Saracens, 111 caps) – captain
3. Joe Heyes (Leicester Tigers, 23 caps)
4. Alex Coles (Northampton Saints, 20 caps)
5. George Martin (Saracens, 22 caps)
6. Ollie Chessum (Leicester Tigers, 36 caps) – vice-captain
7. Guy Pepper (Bath Rugby, 13 caps)
8. Ben Earl (Saracens, 52 caps)

20. Henry Pollock (Northampton Saints, 11 caps)
21. Alex Mitchell (Northampton Saints, 31 caps)
22. Benhard Janse van Rensburg (Bristol Bears, uncapped)
23. Noah Caluori (Saracens, uncapped)



Ajer: Norway taking Brentford mentality into England quarter-final

Written by Brentford Football Club

Brentford defender Kristoffer Ajer says Norway are “as ready as we possibly can be”, as they prepare to face England in the World Cup quarter-finals on Saturday (10pm kick-off BST).

The Bees man has featured in all but one match at the tournament in North America, helping Norway reach the last eight after a remarkable run which has included a 2-1 win over Brazil in the round of 16.

Ajer, who is now in Miami with his international team-mates ahead of the clash with the Three Lions, reflected on his World Cup journey so far, playing alongside Erling Haaland, and the challenge of facing Harry Kane this weekend.

“The World Cup so far has been more than I could ever dream of,” Ajer said. “The whole country has been super excited for it, and I’ve been preparing for it for several months; the way we’ve been playing in every single game has been fantastic.”

“It’s been incredible to watch the country back home really, really buzzing for us and celebrating. The results have been superb. We’ve played some really strong sides and been able to beat them, so it’s been great. The Brazil win... it’s not possible to describe the feeling I had and the team had after it. They’re a fantastic country with so many top players, so being able to control the game in many aspects was surreal.”

Norway’s hopes of another famous World Cup win will once again be spearheaded by Erling Haaland, who has been central to their run to the quarter-finals, scoring seven goals in four appearances so far.

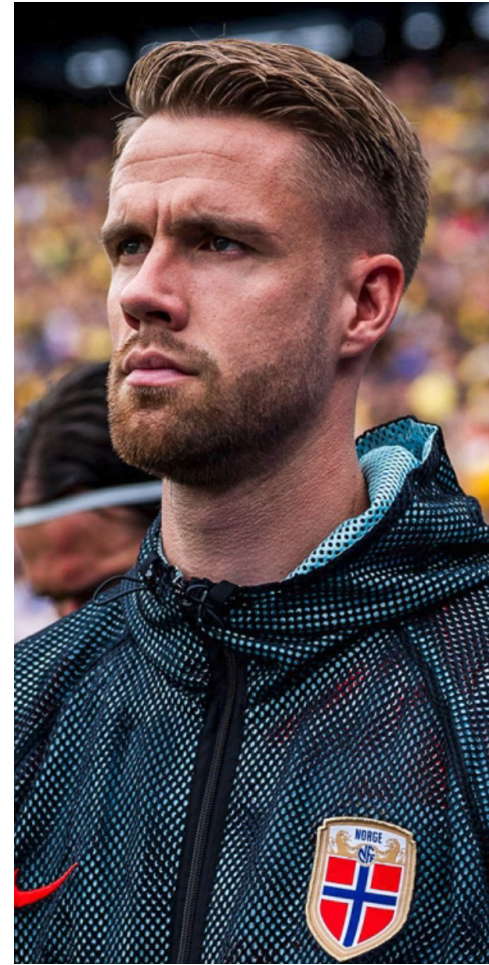
“Playing alongside Haaland is obviously fantastic,” Ajer continued. “He’s the best player in the world, so having him in attack, you always have a chance. Hopefully he can score a few goals tomorrow as well!”

“Everyone’s really buzzing for the game, but it’s a very similar mentality to Brentford: we’re humble but confident. We know that we’re playing one of the big favourites to win the whole tournament and we need to top perform once again to have a chance to advance.”

A major part of that challenge will be keeping another of the world’s top strikers quiet, with Ajer well aware of the threat posed by England captain Kane.

“Kane is one of the best strikers in the world,” the Norwegian centre-back stated. “The season he has had at Bayern Munich and the tournament he is having show that you have to be well prepared.”

“We’ve analysed England, and we’re as ready as we possibly can be. Again, similarly to Brentford, we take one game at a time. When you play these big nations, you know that if you look too far ahead, you lose the next game. We are fully, fully ready and only thinking about England on Saturday.”



Richmond upon Thames is the best place in London to dine alfresco – and has the UK’s most dining-friendly summer weather

From White Stores

Richmond upon Thames is the best place in London to enjoy a long lunch in the garden or a picnic in the park this summer, following new research into the UK’s ideal areas for dining outdoors.

The Alfresco Index, compiled by garden furniture retailer [White Stores](#), scored all 361 UK local authorities from 0 to 100 across five key considerations for eating outdoors: the summer weather (weighted at 27%), the amount of private and public outdoor space (27%), the quality of the surrounding setting (18%), the choice of places to eat out (18%) and the affordability of everyday groceries (9%).

Richmond upon Thames leads the capital on 65.0 and comes 10th nationally, the only London borough in the top 10, thanks to the most dining-friendly summer climate in the country: it tops the weather category of all 361 local authorities, with summer daytime highs of 22.5°C and around 1,679 hours of sunshine a year.

Havering is second in London and 14th nationally on 63.5, pairing similarly warm summers – highs of 22.5°C – with more outdoor space than most of the capital on its rural, green-belt fringe.

Merton follows in third on 61.9 (19th nationally), with the 10th-best summer weather of any UK local authority and highs averaging 22.6°C around Wimbledon. Bromley is fourth on 60.4, the greenest of the leading boroughs: as the largest borough by area, with green belt to the south, it offers more room to dine out than most of inner London. Hammersmith and Fulham completes a strong top five on 59.4 (42nd nationally), with the third-best summer weather in the country – highs of 22.8°C – and around 1,343 places to eat out. Westminster ranks sixth in the capital on 58.7 and leads the entire UK for choice of places to eat out, with roughly 4,462 food-service venues, though its limited private outdoor space holds it to 46th overall.

At the other end of the ranking, Barking and Dagenham is London’s lowest-ranked borough in 284th – well clear of the national bottom, where Inverclyde in western Scotland ranks last of all 361.

London’s standout strength is its weather: the warm, sunny south-east climate gives the capital several of the most dining-friendly areas in the country. Where it loses ground is space – private gardens in central London are among the smallest anywhere, well below the typical UK local authority’s 310 square metres – which is why parks, balconies and patios do so much of the work. The top of the national table is otherwise firmly out of town, led by Dorset on 67.3, with the South East taking 14 of the top 20 places.

The best places to dine alfresco in London

Regional rank	Local authority	Alfresco Index score (out of 100)	UK rank
1	Richmond upon Thames	65.0	10
2	Havering	63.5	14
3	Merton	61.9	19
4	Bromley	60.4	33
5	Hammersmith and Fulham	59.4	42
6	Westminster	58.7	46
=7	Hackney	58.6	48
=7	Wandsworth	58.6	48
9	Ealing	58.3	56
10	Kingston upon Thames	57.9	61

Source: *White Stores Alfresco Index, 2026.*

Commenting on the study, Rob Mead, Buying Director at [White Stores](#), said: “*Eating outdoors is one of the simplest pleasures of a British summer, and this research shows how much the experience varies from one part of the country to the next – from the weather and the choice of places to eat out, to how much private garden space people have at home. Wherever someone lives, a comfortable set of table and chairs, a bit of shade and some shelter can turn a garden, balcony or patio into the best seat in the house for the few warm months we get. The districts at the top of this index pair the right climate with the space and the venues to make the most of it, but with the right setup almost anywhere can be a great place to dine alfresco.*”

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