Est 2016 A newspaper for the London Borough of Richmond upon Thames Edition 520

Twickenham & Richmond Tribune



Dawn's early light, Twickenham Riverside
Photo by Berkley Driscoll

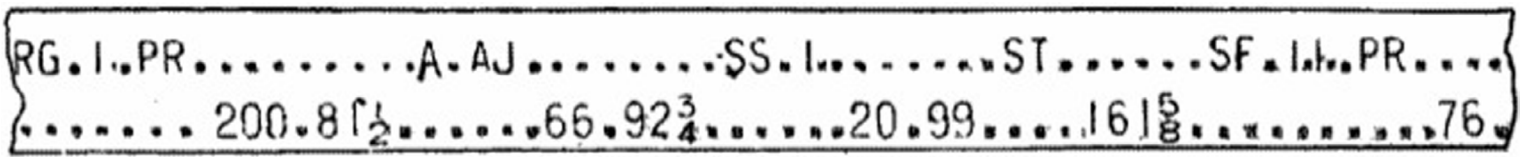
23rd October 2026
T&RT

Contents

Editors: Teresa Read, Berkley Driscoll

TickerTape Richmond Mencap launches autumn and winter activities for young people	Richmond Mencap
The Tree Agency	
The Local Picture Postcard Page - York House – Terrace At Riverside	Alan Winter
Crusader Travel	
A Royal Price Tag: £18 Million for George III's Observatory	Michael Jones
Regal Spice Twickenham	
Letters	
Thames draw-off	Port of London Authority
Crusader Travel	
Join a Christmas Card Making Workshop	Friends of Teddington Memorial Hospital
From George III to D-Day: The Secrets of Richmond's Royal Observatory	Michael Jones
Mega Skip Day	
'The Green Party Is Now Antisemitic and Supports Terrorism', Says Former Richmond Opposition Leader	James Knight
Prince Albert Times	
How Independent Is Richmond Council's New Independent Chairman?	James Knight
Cuppa with a Copper	Metropolitan Police
Richmond's £39 Million Cuts Plan Faces Questions as Auditors Reveal Gaps in Oversight	James Knight
Twickers Foodie: Tim Spector Good Mood Food	Alison Jee
Twickers Foodie: October Food and Drink News	Alison Jee
Twickers Foodie: In Residence Comes to Twickers	Alison Jee
Gibraltar Sunborn - Dive Adventure	Sunborn Gibraltar
Traveller's Tales 185 - Destination Dorset	Doug Goodman
Mark Aspen Reviews: The Marriage of Figaro	Michael Rowlands
Mark Aspen Reviews: Faith Healer	Andrew Lawston
Mark Aspen Reviews: Angel's Bone	Patrick Shorrock
Mozart Requiem	Hampton Choral Society
Squire's Twickenham Searches for Santa!	Squire's Twickenham
Richmond Photos	Shona Lyons
Halloween Dance Party	The Home Guard Club
Gyles Brandreth's Poetry Together brings hundreds of local school children together in Twickenham to celebrate poetry in the National Year of Reading	Poetry Together
Ham Village Green Community Event	
St Mary's students achieve counselling qualification through innovative psychology degree	St Mary's University
Reverse Glass Painting Workshop	The Arts & Crafts Movement
Twickenham Designers, Colorido, give Richmond community traders a new brand design identity	Colorido Studios
Hampton business makes Santa read children's own Christmas letters	Tinselton
Red Roses Team to Play Canada in Ottawa	RFU
Match Preview: Hull City v Brentford	Brentford Football Club
Deteriorating TfL network leading to increased delays for passengers	Mayor of London
Government slashes red tape and tariffs to give businesses breathing space	HM Treasury

CONTACT DONATE ADVERTISE



TickerTape - News in Brief

Richmond Mencap launches autumn and winter activities for young people

From Richmond Mencap

Richmond Mencap is offering a programme of term-time and holiday activities from October 2026 to January 2027, providing opportunities for young people with special needs and learning disabilities to get out, have fun and connect with others.

The programme includes cinema trips, mini golf, bowling, an escape room and trampoline park, as well as seasonal outings to the Halloween and Christmas lights at Kew Gardens.

Richmond Mencap describes the programme as safe, friendly and inclusive, with small groups, trauma-informed staff and a focus on clear communication, confidence-building and social connection.

The programme begins on Sunday 25 October with a cinema trip to Odeon Richmond, followed by a visit to Thames Valley Adventure Playground on Tuesday 27 October and then a full programme of exciting visits and activities right through to January.

Register your interest

If you have any questions, contact Carlos Ossa at carlos@richmondmencap.org.uk.



The Local Picture Postcard Page - Part 349

York House – Terrace At Riverside

By Alan Winter

Here are three postcards from the 1950s and 1960s. All are of the same place along the Riverside at York House, Twickenham. The differences are that they have all been published by different companies and have all been given different titles. This wasn't an unusual occurrence as publishers rushed to get postcards on sale without researching actual names of sites or areas that they had photographed.



Our first postcard was published by Francis Frith & Co of Reigate. They were a company in the vanguard of postcard development from the 1890's and for much of the 20th century. This postcard names the riverside view from York House as the Terrace. This view is looking East towards Richmond.

Postcard number two has been photographed in much the same place as the first card, but this time is titled "Twickenham York House Promenade". It was taken from a point about 50 feet further east than the first card. This card was published by Photocrom of Tunbridge Wells.

Our final postcard was photographed from much the same place as the first two but this time the photographer spun round completely and took the photo facing the West. If you look closely, you can see both the Eel Pie Island Bridge and also the old Twickenham baths building in the distance to the centre of the postcard. This particular card was posted in September 1966 and published by Coward & Co. of Kingston.





Local Postcard Annual Available for Christmas!

The Twickenham and Richmond Tribune will be celebrating its 10th Anniversary in November. Many people have suggested that we publish a book of these postcard columns and Editor Berkley Driscoll and I have been working on this project for a few months. More details to follow but the book is scheduled to be ready in November to coincide with the Tribune's 10th Anniversary. It will make an excellent local Christmas present and purchasing details will be announced shortly.

CrusaderTravel

020 8744 0474

crusadertravel.com

Escapology Experts

info@crusadertravel.com

Your friendly local Travel Agency

established in Twickenham since 1966

With over 50 years' experience we pride ourselves on being able to offer an unrivalled service with attention to detail. Come and have a chat with us in our cosy office off Church Street Square, we are open 6 days a week from 11am until 5pm (Closed Sunday)



A Royal Price Tag: £18 Million for George III's Observatory

By Michael Jones



One of Richmond's most extraordinary homes has come onto the market for £18 million. The Grade I listed King's Observatory in Old Deer Park, built for George III in 1769, has been transformed into a luxurious private residence, complete with its original astronomical cupola and more than six acres of landscaped grounds.

Set within 6.59 acres of landscaped grounds, the four-bedroom property offers 7,343 square feet of accommodation, including a spectacular library capable of holding 6,000 books, a lift, four bathrooms and the original astronomical cupola. The grounds include an ornamental lake and a Portland stone boathouse, with sheep pictured grazing in the surrounding meadow.

£90,464 a Month, Before the Bills

But what would it cost to buy? According to Rightmove's mortgage calculator, a purchaser putting down a 10% deposit of £1.8 million would face estimated mortgage repayments of £90,464 a month, based on a 30-year mortgage at 5.35% interest. That's approximately £1.09 million a year in mortgage repayments alone, before maintenance, insurance or running costs.

Despite its £18 million asking price, the observatory attracts an annual Council Tax bill of just £4,972.19. That's less than two days of the estimated mortgage repayments. The property is also leasehold, with approximately 138 years remaining.

Room for Another 10,000 Square Feet?

For anyone finding the existing accommodation a little cramped, the marketing particulars describe proposals for approximately 10,000 square feet of additional accommodation beneath the grounds, together with underground parking for up to 17 cars.

The proposed extension could more than double the existing living space, although the necessary **planning permissions** would still need to be secured. Permission has already been granted for a separate staff cottage, which has yet to be built.

A Family Home Fit for a King

Hong Kong-based businessman Robbie Brothers acquired the observatory in 1989, then painstakingly restored and converted it into a family home. His son Patrick and his family have lived there for the past five years. Following the death of Patrick's mother last year, the family has decided to sell.

For anyone with £18 million to spare, the property offers a rare opportunity to live in a building once used by royalty and some of Britain's most distinguished scientists, with a few sheep grazing outside the window.

To view the estate details on Rightmove, click HERE

Photo ©Andy Scott via Wikimedia Commons


Regal Spice
Fully Licensed Indian Cuisine
SUMMER
BANQUET
NIGHT
MONDAY TO THURSDAY
STARTER + MAIN DISH + SIDE DISH + RICE/BREAD
£12.95 ONLY
BOOK YOUR TABLE
02088939291
02085697026
CALL TO BOOK
OR
ORDER ONLINE
deliveroo
JUST EAT
12 The Green, Twickenham TW2 5AA

Letters

Dear Sir,

Taste trip around the world - ish

Have to say Be Richmond's promotion feature on international dining in Richmond didn't entirely inspire confidence in how tightly the organisation has its finger on town's pulse.

Sebastian's has not been "a Richmond favourite since 2013", though the claim is regularly repeated on Be Richmond posts: the original Windsor branch opened in 2013, the Richmond one only four years ago in King Street on the site of a string of earlier failed restaurants, most recently Jamie's. And the Indian restaurant Cinnamon Bazaar no longer offers "a modern interpretation of the country's rich culinary traditions", since it closed this summer, and is being replaced by yet another chain pizza branch.

Best wishes to all the surviving independents,

Maev Kennedy
St Margarets

Dear Editor

No fires or Barbecuing



I was intrigued when, at the end of our 'heat wave' (also known as summer), a sign appeared on Twickenham Green.

The sign states "No Fires or Barbecuing". This sign was put in place just in time for the colder and wetter weather we now enjoy. Indeed, as we suffer high winds and heavy rain, the sign is there to discourage any propensity towards our enjoying BBQ and beachwear parties.

As I write the sign is still there. It is attached to a heavy wooden pole, which has been hammered into the ground.

If only there had been another way of displaying the sign. Perhaps our council could have done some research and possibly found a nearby notice board to display the sign?

Oh well, I suppose the pole could at least now be used for firewood, or has the council banned our use of wood fires?

Yours faithfully,
Mary, West Twickenham

Thames draw-off

Thursday 5th November to Friday 18th December 2026

From the Port of London Authority

In order to carry out essential maintenance works on Richmond lock, weirs and sluices, it is necessary to hold up the weirs across the low tide period, at Richmond Lock and Weir.

The Draw-Off period will commence at approximately 13:30 on Thursday 5th November 2026 and will complete at approximately 10:00 on Friday 18th December 2026.

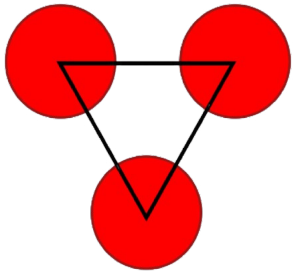
During this period, river users are reminded that the river between Richmond Lock and Teddington Lock, will **NOT** be maintained at the nominal level of 1.72m above Ordnance Datum Newlyn, and it is expected the riverbed will be exposed at low water.

Owners of vessels, structures and moorings between Richmond Lock and Teddington Lock should act in good time, either to move their vessels, structure or mooring to a more suitable location or to assure themselves that the vessel, structure or mooring can safely take the ground. Short term moorings are of limited availability in the upper district.

River works licence holders and riparian landowners are reminded that any interference with the foreshore such as dredging, excavating or disturbing the riverbed requires a licence from the Port of London Authority. Environmental legislation provides for very high levels of fines when licensing requirements are not strictly adhered to.

Persons navigating through the weirs and upriver of Richmond Lock must do so with great care, with regard to people working in and around the Lock and weirs. Weirs may be raised and lowered at various times for maintenance purposes, requiring arch closures.

Arches closed to navigation will be marked in accordance with the Port of London Authority Thames Byelaws 2012 namely:



- By day, three red discs 0.6 metres in diameter at the points of an equilateral triangle with the apex downwards and the base horizontal
- By night, three red lights in similar positions to the discs displayed by day.



Requirements to proceed with caution or at slow speed will be made in accordance with the procedure set out in the Port of London Authority's Port Information Guide, under 'Speed Reductions' with the International Code Flags 'Romeo Yankee' displayed.



Persons in charge of vessels are reminded to be aware of their wash, as boats and structures may be grounding or about to float around the the low water period.

PORT OF LONDON AUTHORITY



Join a Christmas Card Making Workshop

From The League of Friends of Teddington Memorial Hospital

Get into the festive spirit at our handmade Christmas Card Making Workshop, while supporting Teddington Memorial Hospital. Join a fun, creative class where you'll make your own gorgeous, unique Christmas cards to send to loved ones and special friends.

Whether you're a seasoned crafter or simply looking for a fun way to start your Christmas preparations, this is the perfect opportunity to get creative, meet others and support your local hospital.

Expert card-maker Julie Ritchie will guide you step-by-step as you make four or five beautiful Christmas cards to take home. You'll use a variety of materials and embellishments, with all materials included to create unique card designs to send to your loved ones.

All ticket proceeds will be donated to The League of Friends. Every pound raised helps the League fund equipment, facilities and projects that make a real difference to our local community.

- **Date**: Saturday 14 November 2026
- **Time**: 10am to 2pm
- **Location**: Constitutional Club, Teddington
- **Price**: £25 per person

Book your tickets



From George III to D-Day: The Secrets of Richmond's Royal Observatory

By Michael Jones

Built for a king, used to educate princes, measure time and predict the weather that helped change the course of the Second World War. The King's Observatory in Richmond's Old Deer Park has an extraordinary story to tell.

What connects King George III, the Transit of Venus, the birth of modern meteorology and the Allied invasion of Normandy? The answer lies in an extraordinary building hidden away in Richmond's Old Deer Park.

Designed by Sir William Chambers, the architect responsible for Somerset House and the Great Pagoda at Kew, the elegant Palladian building was commissioned so that George III and Queen Charlotte could observe the Transit of Venus across the Sun on 3 June 1769. The event was of enormous scientific importance, as observations from different locations around the world enabled astronomers to calculate the distance between Earth and the Sun, helping establish the scale of the solar system.

A Royal Classroom for the Age of Enlightenment

George III's interest in science extended far beyond astronomy. He was an enthusiastic student of mathematics, mechanics and natural philosophy, as science was then known. The eighteenth-century Enlightenment was transforming European understanding of the natural world through observation, experimentation and reason, building upon the achievements of scientists such as Isaac Newton.



The King's Observatory reflected this intellectual movement, becoming a centre for scientific education within the royal household. Stephen Charles Triboudet Demainbray, who had helped educate George III and encouraged his interest in astronomy, became its first Royal Observer. He and his son subsequently taught astronomy and scientific principles to the King's children, introducing them to astronomical instruments, mathematical calculations and practical observations of the heavens. George III also maintained a workshop at the observatory, reflecting his enthusiasm for scientific instruments and mechanical devices.

This represented a changing approach to education, with scientific knowledge increasingly regarded as an essential part of understanding the world rather than a pursuit confined to professional scientists. The observatory allowed the royal family to study science through direct observation and experiment, reflecting the growing importance of scientific knowledge to Britain's navigation, engineering and maritime trade.

Richmond Time

Long before Greenwich became the internationally recognised Prime Meridian in 1884, the King's Observatory had its own astronomical meridian. In 1778, stone obelisks were erected in Old Deer Park to provide fixed reference points for aligning astronomical instruments, enabling precise observations of celestial movements. Some survive today as reminders of Richmond's contribution to astronomical measurement.

The observatory also played a role in precision timekeeping, providing accurate time information for royal and government institutions, including Horse Guards. Before standardised national time, determining the precise hour was a key scientific task, especially for navigation, where small timekeeping errors could cause major mistakes when calculating longitude.

From Royal Astronomy to Victorian Science
The observatory's importance continued long after George III. In 1842, the British Association for the Advancement of Science took over, turning it into a centre for systematic scientific research, particularly meteorology, geomagnetism and precision instruments.

Scientists studied temperature, atmospheric pressure, humidity, wind conditions and variations in Earth's magnetic field. Among those associated with the observatory was Sir Francis Ronalds, a pioneer of electrical communication and automatic meteorological recording. His work helped develop instruments that could continuously record weather conditions without requiring an observer to take every measurement manually.

These innovations reflected the Victorian transformation of science, as individual observations increasingly gave way to systematic measurement, standardised instruments and long-term records. The observatory subsequently came under the Royal Society and eventually the Meteorological Office, becoming part of Britain's national scientific infrastructure.

The Richmond Weatherman Who Helped Save D-Day
One of the observatory's most remarkable connections is with the Allied invasion of Normandy in June 1944. In 1939, Scottish meteorologist Group Captain James Stagg became Superintendent of Kew Observatory. During the Second World War, he was appointed chief meteorological adviser to General Dwight D. Eisenhower, Supreme Allied Commander.

Much of his wartime work was carried out at the Allied headquarters in Bushy Park, Teddington, before he moved to Southwick House near Portsmouth in June 1944. It was there that he delivered the crucial weather forecasts that helped determine the timing of the Normandy landings.

The planned invasion depended heavily on weather conditions, with suitable winds, visibility, tides and sea conditions essential for landing troops and equipment on the Normandy beaches. Stagg and his team forecast deteriorating weather for the original invasion date of 5 June 1944, persuading Eisenhower to postpone the landings by 24 hours. The invasion went ahead on 6 June during a brief improvement in conditions, while German commanders had been less inclined to expect an invasion during the unsettled weather.

Stagg's judgement became one of the most consequential weather forecasts in military history. His story is dramatised in the 2026 film *Pressure*, starring Andrew Scott as Stagg.

From Royal Observatory to £18 Million Mansion
The Meteorological Office finally closed the observatory in 1980, ending more than two centuries of scientific activity at the site. The closure attracted parliamentary attention, with questions raised in the House of Commons about the ending of one of the longest running series of meteorological observations and the institution's future.

The Crown Estate subsequently leased the building for commercial use, and it became offices for Autoglass. In 1989, Hong Kong-based businessman Robbie Brothers acquired the leasehold interest. Following its years as commercial offices, the building underwent an extensive restoration and conversion into a family home, completed in 2018.

Today, the Grade I listed observatory stands within 6.59 acres of landscaped grounds associated with the eighteenth-century landscape designer Capability Brown. Its history encompasses royal patronage, the Enlightenment, scientific education, the development of modern meteorology and one of the most consequential weather forecasts of the Second World War.

For more than two centuries, this remarkable building helped advance Britain's understanding of the heavens, the weather and the natural world. Its transformation into an £18 million home marks another chapter in a history that began with a king looking towards the stars.

Photo ©Andy Scott via Wikimedia Commons


Saturday 24 October
From 9-11am or until
skip is full (whichever comes first)
Little Queen's Road,
Teddington
MEGA
SKIP DAY
Get rid of your unwanted
items for FREE
LONDON BOROUGH OF
RICHMOND UPON THAMES

‘The Green Party Is Now Antisemitic and Supports Terrorism’, Says Former Richmond Opposition Leader

By James Knight

Andrée Frieze, the former Green Leader of the Opposition on Richmond Council, has resigned from the Green Party after 14 years, accusing it of adopting an antisemitic policy that denies Jewish people the right to national self-determination. Her departure follows a contentious vote at the party’s annual conference, where members voted by 1,022 to 813 to adopt a motion declaring that Zionism is racism.

Frieze, who represented Ham, Petersham and Richmond Riverside for eight years, announced her resignation on 5 October in a statement entitled *The Green Party is now antisemitic and supports terrorism*. She argued that the decision fundamentally contradicted the principles that had originally attracted her to the Greens, a party in which she had spent more than a decade campaigning and had risen to lead the opposition on Richmond Council.

A Party She No Longer Recognises

Frieze, who is Jewish and has family in Israel, has strongly criticised Benjamin Netanyahu’s government and its conduct in Gaza. However, she maintains that opposing Israeli government policies is fundamentally different from denying Jewish people the right to national self-determination. She told *The Times* that she had spent approximately 18 months raising concerns about antisemitism within the party before finally deciding to leave. Speaking to TalkTV, she also alleged that organised recruitment by supporters of the motion had influenced the conference vote, although she acknowledged that she had never personally experienced antisemitic attacks from members of the Richmond Greens.

The decision has exposed divisions within the national party, with four of its five MPs opposing the motion while party leader Zack Polanski did not participate in the vote. The controversy has also attracted criticism from European Greens, including senior figures in Germany. Jewish Greens acknowledged in a statement on 21 October that their members remained divided over the decision, although the organisation rejected Frieze’s conclusion that the policy had made the party antisemitic or unsafe for Jewish members. Supporters of the motion maintain that opposition to Zionism is not inherently antisemitic and that the policy concerns political ideology rather than Jewish identity.

What Next for Richmond’s Greens?

Frieze’s departure follows a substantial electoral setback for the Richmond Greens. Having previously held five council seats and provided the principal opposition to the Liberal Democrat administration, the party lost every councillor in May’s local elections. Its boroughwide vote share fell from approximately 26.7 per cent in 2022 to 16.04 per cent in 2026, leaving it third behind the Liberal Democrats and Conservatives.

Richmond Park’s Liberal Democrat MP, Sarah Olney, has publicly expressed sadness at Frieze’s departure, describing her as a personal friend despite their political differences. Olney also criticised the conference motion for alienating members of the Jewish community, both locally and across London.

The Greens retain a substantial local electoral following, but the loss of their council representation, followed by the departure of a former opposition leader, raises questions about their future direction. Having established themselves in Richmond through environmental campaigning and local opposition, they must now consider how those priorities sit alongside an increasingly contentious national political agenda.

MONTHLY EDITION

ISSUE 003 * PRINCE ALBERT TIMES * OCT 26

It's Spooky Season....
HALLOWEEN PARTY

It's that time of year again... and we're getting ready for one hell of a spooky night!

Join us Saturday 31st October from 8pm for an evening of banging tunes, dancing, spooky surprises, plenty of drinks and a few tricks along the way!

Expect a proper Halloween party atmosphere, with creepy decorations, a fang-tastic disco and plenty of reasons to stay out for just one more drink...

Fancy dressing up? Go for it!

Not your thing? No worries—Just bring yourself, your mates and your party spirit!

So round up the gang, grab your best drinking buddies and come join us for a night of boos, booze & Halloween mischief! Don't miss it... it could get scary!

Saturday 31st October | From 8 till late!



Our Halloween decorations are always a scream, make sure you pop along to the pub in October to see this year's display!

ONLY IN THE PUB: A CELEBRATION OF CASK ALE

Only In The Pub is back! Our celebration of cask ale shines a light on the craft, care and passion that go into brewing and serving the perfect pint.

Over the next five weeks, we'll be bringing a selection of exclusive new brews to the bar, alongside the return of seasonal favourites such as Red Fox.

And that's not all — the Magic Stamp is back too! With the app, you'll receive a digital stamp every time you enjoy a cask ale. Simply ask a member of our friendly team for more information and start collecting your stamps.



Download the Magic Stamp app to earn free pints!

DUBOIS V WARDLEY 2

Get ready for the upcoming rematch between Daniel Dubois and Fabio Wardley. Dubois will be defending the WBO heavyweight championship that he won from Wardley earlier this year. Watch the action live in the pub on Saturday, October 17, with the main event ring walk expected around 10:30pm. It's one not to miss!

HARLEQUINS RUGBY

Harlequins face two more exciting fixtures as they take on Sale Sharks and London rivals Saracens this October. First up, Quins travel to face Sale Sharks on the 11th October at 3pm. Watch all the action here, live on our big screens. Or why not gather some friends and elevate the experience by booking one of our Garden Pods - with their own TVs and heater, it's the perfect place to watch the match.

The action then returns to The Stoop for the London Derby on 25th October, as Saracens journey south of the river to take on Harlequins at 3pm. Come join us at the pub to watch the action live, or pop in before and after your visit to the Stoop. We're proud to offer fast, friendly service without ever compromising on quality, so you can always count on a great pint, perfectly poured, served with a smile.

LIVE SPORT FOR OCTOBER

Premier League:

Sunday 11th
Liverpool V Man City KO 4.30pm

Sunday 18th
Nottingham Forest V Arsenal KO 5.30pm

Sunday 24th
Chelsea V Tottenham KO 5.30pm

Champions League:

Tuesday 13th
Arsenal V Lille KO 8pm

Wednesday 14th
Paris V Man City KO 8pm

Wednesday 21st
Bayern Munich V Arsenal KO 8pm

EVERY MONDAY-THURSDAY
ENJOY 15% ALL DRAUGHT BEER & WINE
12PM-6PM

EVERY THURSDAY
ANY 2 COCKTAILS FOR £15
6PM- 8PM

THE PRINCE ALBERT, TWICKENHAM TW2 5QB | princealbert@fullers.co.uk | 020 8894 3963

How Independent Is Richmond Council's New Independent Chairman?

By James Knight



Former Green councillor Richard Bennett has been appointed by Richmond's entirely Liberal Democrat Council to chair its Audit Committee. But years of electoral cooperation between the two parties raise questions about the political independence of the appointment.

Independence is a curious thing in local government. It is much invoked, frequently promised and occasionally rather difficult to recognise. Nowhere is the distinction between political independence and constitutional independence more important than in Richmond upon Thames, where the Liberal Democrats occupy every one of the Council's 54 elected seats.

It was this entirely Liberal Democrat Council that appointed former Green councillor Richard Bennett as independent chairman of its Audit, Standards and Statutory Accounts Committee. The Full Council made the appointment, giving it the proper constitutional authority.

Yet with no opposition councillors present to challenge the choice, the decision rested entirely in Liberal Democrat hands. The appointment is particularly interesting because of Bennett's political history. A former Green councillor for South Twickenham, he served during a period when the Greens and Liberal Democrats enjoyed a longstanding electoral partnership, publicly known as the Progressive Alliance.

From Electoral Partners to Independent Scrutiny

The relationship developed following the 2016 Richmond Park parliamentary by election, when the Greens withdrew their candidate rather than divide the opposition vote. What followed was more than an occasional understanding between parties with similar views. The Liberal Democrats and Greens coordinated their electoral campaigns, producing joint leaflets and election posters and cooperating over council candidacies. For several election cycles, the two parties were not simply competitors. They were political partners, working together to secure electoral success.

That history makes Bennett's new position particularly interesting. The Audit Committee is responsible for overseeing some of the Council's most important safeguards, including financial reporting, internal controls, risk management and governance. Its independence is especially valuable when the administration enjoys complete political control. Yet its new chairman comes from a party that spent years campaigning alongside the very administration he must now scrutinise.

The Greens' Electoral Dilemma

The political landscape has since changed considerably. Following May's local elections, the Greens lost their remaining representation on Richmond Council, leaving the Liberal Democrats in possession of every seat. For the Greens, the result presents an uncomfortable question about their political future. Having previously secured representation during a period of electoral cooperation, might their most realistic route back into the council chamber involve rebuilding relations with their former Liberal Democrat partners?

There is no evidence that Bennett's appointment forms part of any such arrangement. Nor would it be reasonable to suggest that his political background automatically prevents him from exercising independent judgement. Nevertheless, the possibility of renewed electoral cooperation creates an obvious question about the political distance between the two parties. An independent appointment must do more than satisfy the formal requirements of a council constitution. It should also command public confidence that those exercising scrutiny are sufficiently removed from the political interests of those being scrutinised.

An Unusual Professional Background

Bennett also brings considerable experience from outside local government. According to his professional profile, he served as UK General Manager of Palantir Technologies between 2010 and 2012. Palantir, the American data analysis company, has subsequently become a prominent supplier of technology to governments, intelligence agencies and defence organisations. Its involvement in military applications of artificial intelligence and surveillance has attracted controversy over the ethical implications of such technology.

Bennett's employment predates many of those developments, and no one suggests he was personally involved in them. His experience nevertheless gives him an unusual background for a former Green politician, while potentially providing useful expertise in managing and scrutinising complex organisations.

Independence Will Be Tested

To Bennett's credit, his first appearance as chairman demonstrated a willingness to ask uncomfortable questions. At the October Audit Committee meeting, he described the Council's reliance on savings from its transformation programme as the "elephant in the room", reflecting concerns about the financial pressures confronting the borough. He also insisted that the committee should determine its own agenda rather than simply accept the business placed before it. These were encouraging interventions, suggesting that Bennett appreciates the seriousness of his responsibilities.

But individual conduct, however commendable, does not entirely resolve the wider question of institutional independence. The appointment was made by the Full Council, as the constitution requires. Yet in Richmond, Full Council now means 54 Liberal Democrat councillors and nobody else. That makes the circumstances of the appointment particularly important. Was the position openly advertised? Were other candidates considered? And what consideration was given to Bennett's previous political associations, particularly the longstanding Progressive Alliance between the Greens and Liberal Democrats? There may be entirely satisfactory answers, and the Council should have little difficulty providing them.

The Liberal Democrats have achieved something remarkable in Richmond: complete control of the elected council. But such dominance carries responsibilities as well as advantages. Without an opposition capable of challenging the administration from within the council chamber, the independence of its other institutions becomes more important, not less. Richard Bennett may prove an effective and determined chairman, and his opening performance offers some grounds for optimism. Nevertheless, his appointment raises an uncomfortable question about why an entirely Liberal Democrat Council chose someone from a party with which it had enjoyed years of close electoral cooperation.

There is a considerable difference between appointing someone who is independent in constitutional terms and choosing someone whose political independence is beyond reasonable question. The Liberal Democrats had the opportunity to demonstrate their commitment to scrutiny through an appointment visibly removed from their established political alliances. Instead, they selected a former electoral partner. Whether that reflects a preference for familiar political company or simply a judgement of Bennett's professional abilities remains unclear. But in a council without an elected opposition, the appearance of independence is almost as important as independence itself.


METROPOLITAN POLICE
RICHMOND UPON THAMES
SAFER NEIGHBOURHOODS
CUPPA with a COPPER
Come and have a chat with your local Safer Neighbourhood Team over a cuppa.
PEMBROKE LODGE
PEMBROKE LODGE
Saturday 7th November
11:00am – 12:00noon
Pembroke Lodge Tea Room
Richmond Park, Richmond upon Thames
Share your concerns
Ask questions
Meet your local officers
Help keep our communities safe
LOCAL PEOPLE | LOCAL POLICING | SAFER COMMUNITIES

Richmond's £39 Million Cuts Plan Faces Questions as Auditors Reveal Gaps in Oversight

By James Knight



Unfinished business cases, missed building inspections and growing fraud risks emerged as councillors examined the borough's finances and internal controls.

Richmond Council's plans to reduce annual expenditure by £39 million have come under renewed scrutiny after auditors acknowledged that some of the business cases supporting its transformation programme remain unfinished. The disclosure came during an **Audit Committee** meeting which also examined missed building control inspections, fraud risks in temporary accommodation and the growing threat posed by artificial intelligence.

The meeting on 20 October offered a revealing picture of the pressures facing the Liberal Democrat administration. Its latest financial strategy forecasts a budget shortfall of £19.3 million in 2027/28, rising to £30.8 million by 2030/31, even after assuming that the transformation programme succeeds and Council Tax increases by 4.99 per cent annually. More troublingly, the Council warns that it could exhaust its reserves during the financial planning period unless it takes further action.

The Elephant in the Room

The committee's independent chairman, Richard Bennett, identified the central concern when he described financial sustainability as the "elephant in the room". The Council's external auditors, Ernst & Young, confirmed that they were examining the assumptions underpinning its Medium Term Financial Strategy. They had identified financial sustainability as an area of risk, although they had not concluded that the Council's arrangements contained a significant weakness.

The discussion became more revealing when councillors turned to the transformation programme, which is expected to deliver £39.2 million in ongoing annual reductions in expenditure, supported by £18 million in implementation funding. One councillor challenged whether a report previously presented to the Finance, Policy and Resources Committee had provided sufficient detail to scrutinise the individual projects. The internal auditor accepted the criticism, acknowledging that some business cases had not yet been written.

The distinction matters. The Council's September financial strategy already assumes the successful delivery of the transformation programme. Its substantial projected deficits therefore arise even after the anticipated reductions in expenditure have been taken into account. If those reductions are delayed or fail to materialise, the financial position could deteriorate further.

Large Cuts to Everyday Services

Council leader Gareth Roberts has already warned that residents may face reductions in basic municipal services. Speaking to *The Daily Telegraph* on 17 October, Roberts said the Government's funding reforms were forcing Richmond to contemplate potentially unpopular decisions. The newspaper reported a cumulative £104 million reduction in core funding over four years. "No option is off the table," Roberts declared, specifically identifying street cleaning and waste collection among the services under review.

A move from weekly to fortnightly rubbish collections has not been confirmed, but the possibility illustrates what the Council's financial difficulties could mean in practice. Residents could face less frequent services while their Council Tax bills continue to rise.

The Council is entitled to pursue genuine efficiencies, particularly where improved procurement or administration can reduce costs without diminishing services. But reductions in collection frequency, maintenance or access to support are cuts to provision, whatever terminology accompanies them. The question is how much of the £39 million programme represents genuine efficiency and how much may ultimately be achieved by reducing what residents receive.

Questions Over Building Inspections

Financial sustainability was not the only concern raised during the meeting. A committee member questioned the findings of an internal audit concerning building control, citing 2,377 occasions across the shared service when required inspections of inactive construction sites had not been completed. Approximately 1,365 were attributed to Richmond.

The auditor explained that new procedures had been introduced and work was underway to address the backlog. However, she had not closed the recommendation because she wanted evidence that the revised arrangements were operating effectively. The target date for completing the remedial work was March 2027.

The figures relate to missed inspection occasions rather than necessarily representing the same number of individual buildings. Nor does an overdue inspection automatically mean that a construction site is unsafe. Nevertheless, the scale of the backlog raises legitimate questions about the effectiveness of the Council's oversight arrangements. For residents living near construction sites, building control is not an abstract administrative function. It forms part of the system intended to ensure that building work complies with essential safety standards.

Fraud Risks and Temporary Accommodation

The committee also examined the Council's efforts to detect and prevent fraud, including the increasingly complex risks associated with temporary accommodation. One councillor questioned why the number of housing applications rejected following fraud investigations appeared unusually low compared with previous years. The fraud officer explained that some results depended on the National Fraud Initiative's periodic data matching exercises, with further findings expected early next year. He also said investigators had concentrated resources on temporary accommodation, where the Council had developed a better understanding of the risks.

Another councillor questioned how authorities investigated temporary accommodation providers operating across borough boundaries. The officer explained that London councils shared intelligence about providers and suspected fraud, but acknowledged that there was no comprehensive central record. Work was continuing to improve information sharing through the London Fraud Hub. The issue matters because temporary accommodation is a substantial and growing financial pressure for many local authorities. Fraudulent applications, inaccurate records or weak provider oversight can divert scarce public resources from households with genuine needs.

The discussion did not establish widespread fraud within Richmond's temporary accommodation arrangements. It did, however, demonstrate that the Council considers the area sufficiently important to have devoted specialist investigative resources to it.

A New Threat from Artificial Intelligence

Bennett also questioned the Council's preparedness for fraud involving artificial intelligence. The fraud officer warned that emerging technology was making sophisticated fraud easier to perpetrate, allowing individuals without specialist technical knowledge to obtain tools previously requiring considerable expertise.

Investigators were therefore paying closer attention to the digital origins of applications, including metadata, submission patterns and internet addresses, rather than relying solely on information supplied by applicants Councillors questioned whether stronger verification procedures might be necessary to distinguish genuine applicants from automated or fraudulent submissions. The officer

acknowledged the challenge of balancing effective fraud prevention with the efficiency of digital services. Individually checking every application would be impractical, making the identification of suspicious patterns increasingly important.
It was a reminder that the Council's financial pressures are accompanied by new demands on the systems intended to protect public money.

Auditors Under Pressure
The committee also heard that Richmond's internal audit programme was still behind schedule. Staff vacancies, recruitment difficulties and delays in obtaining specialist external resources had affected progress. The head of internal audit acknowledged that he would have preferred to complete more reviews by the end of September, but he remained confident that at least 90 per cent of the annual programme could be delivered. This creates an additional challenge. At precisely the moment Richmond is embarking on an extensive programme of organisational change, the function responsible for providing independent assurance is itself under resource pressure.

Bennett questioned whether conventional periodic audits would provide sufficient oversight of the transformation programme and suggested that the committee might need more continuous engagement. He also emphasised the importance of the committee determining its own priorities rather than simply accepting the programme of business placed before it.

Encouraging news emerged about the Council's historical accounting difficulties. Ernst & Young reported progress towards restoring normal audit assurance, with further improvement expected over the coming financial years. Nevertheless, an improved audit opinion on past accounts does not mean future spending reductions will be delivered.

The Scrutiny Deficit
Richmond faces genuine financial pressures from government funding reforms and rising demand for statutory services. Its annual government funding is expected to fall by approximately £29 million by 2028/29. But those pressures do not absolve the Liberal Democrat administration of responsibility for its spending priorities, nor do they justify making substantial service cuts without proper public scrutiny.

The October meeting exposed an uncomfortable weakness in the Council's approach. The transformation programme is already central to its financial forecasts, yet some supporting business cases remain unfinished. Councillors themselves questioned whether the information presented to them was sufficiently detailed to examine individual proposals. With substantial cuts required and reserves rapidly diminishing, decisions may reach the Council only when the financial timetable leaves little room for meaningful challenge.

This matters particularly in Richmond, where the Liberal Democrats occupy all 54 elected seats. Without an opposition capable of challenging the administration, the responsibility for rigorous scrutiny falls almost entirely upon councillors from the governing party and the Council's independent oversight arrangements. The Audit Committee demonstrated that difficult questions can be asked. Less clear is whether those questions are asked early enough to influence decisions, rather than merely examining them after the direction of travel has effectively been settled.

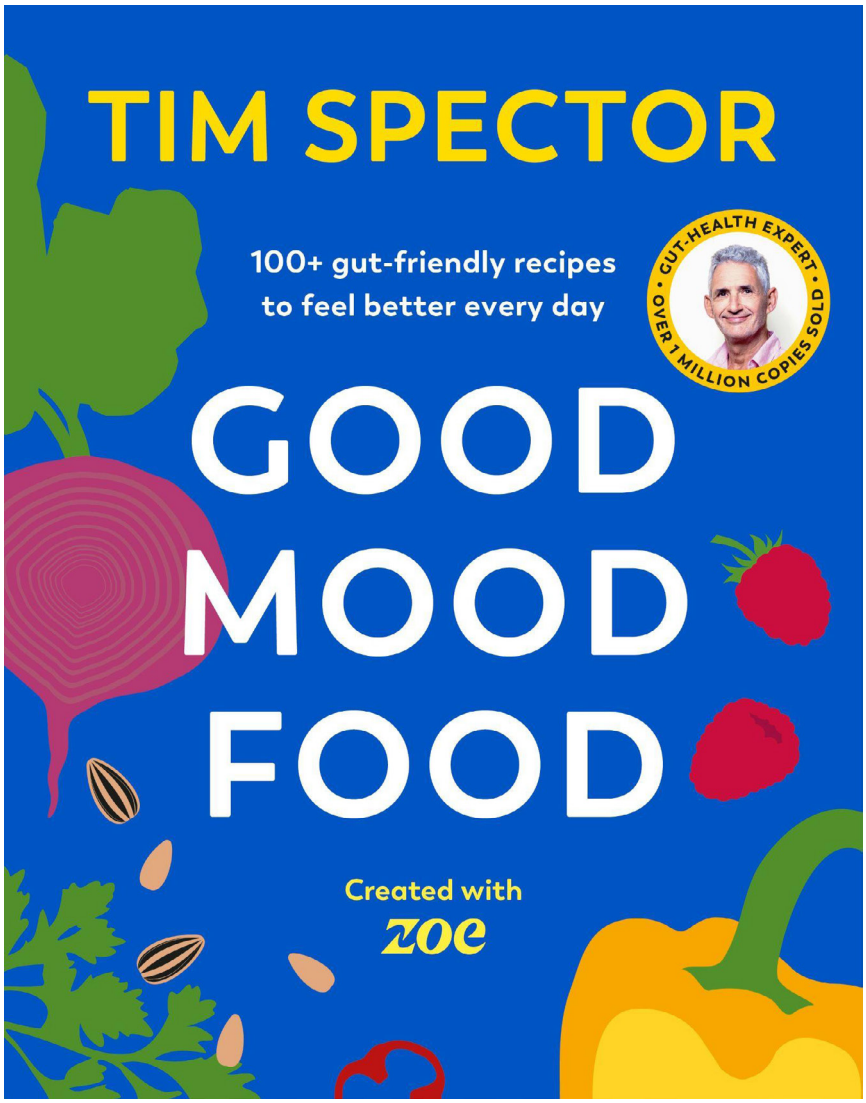
Residents are entitled to more than assurances that difficult decisions are unavoidable. They should be able to see what services are proposed for reduction, what alternatives have been considered and whether the financial case withstands examination before commitments become irreversible.

Scrutiny that begins only when the decisions have effectively been made is not meaningful accountability. It is little more than an opportunity to record objections.

You can access the committee papers **here.**

Twickers Foodie – By Alison Jee

Tim Spector Good Mood Food



A groundbreaking new cookbook has been published this week from scientist, No.1 bestselling author and ZOE co-founder, Professor Tim Spector. **Good Mood Food**, published by Jonathan Cape at £30 hardback, shows how what we eat shapes how we feel, think and age. *"I want to share what I've learned about how we can all achieve a better mood, increased energy levels and long-term brain health, through delicious, easy, satisfying recipes – all grounded in the latest science."* says Spector.

For centuries, medicine has treated body and mind as separate concerns. But a revolution is underway: the science is now clear that what we eat directly affects how we feel, and the long-term health of our brains. In **GOOD MOOD FOOD**, Professor Tim Spector – epidemiologist, microbiome pioneer, and the UK's most trusted voice in nutrition science – reveals the powerful connection between gut and brain. When we nurture our gut microbiome with varied, plant-rich food, we can improve our energy, day-to-day mood, mental health, and cognitive resilience as we age. The recipes in **GOOD MOOD FOOD** are designed to support whole-family health, with targeted ideas for protecting brain health over time, reducing the risk of future cognitive decline, and supporting those already experiencing symptoms. They also offer faster benefits: boosting mood and energy within days when dealing with work stress, family pressures, low mood or anxiety. And for children – at the critical window when neural connections are forming – these recipes could make a meaningful difference. From 15-minute meals to weekend batch cooking, cupboard raids to on-the-go lunches – **GOOD MOOD FOOD** makes eating better feel effortless and genuinely pleasurable. Here are a couple of recipes to tempt you to buy a copy:

Stuffed Aubergine Traybake

"This is a delicious way to make the most of aubergines, one of my favourite vegetables. You can even use white aubergine varieties if you can find them. The toppings are very much optional so please don't feel obliged to splurge on them unless you have them already in your store cupboard. A spoonful of yoghurt on the side is all it really needs, with some nuts or seeds for extra crunch."

PREP: 10 minutes **COOK**: 50 minutes **SERVES**: 4

- 2 aubergines
- 4 tbsp extra virgin olive oil
- 1 onion, finely chopped
- 3 garlic cloves, finely chopped
- 2 tbsp Spice Mix (Baharat or Garam Masala)
- 2 tbsp harissa
- 1 x 400g tin lentils, drained and rinsed
- 1 x 400g tin chopped tomatoes
- 30g sultanas (optional)
- 40g dill, finely chopped
- Salt and black pepper



TOPPINGS (optional)

- 4 tbsp Greek or plant-based yoghurt
- 4 tbsp tahini
- 40g pomegranate seeds
- 2 tbsp pomegranate molasses
- 60g pistachios, roughly chopped
- 10g coriander, roughly chopped

1. Preheat the oven to 200°C/180°C fan/400°F/gas 6 and line a baking tray with baking parchment.
2. Halve the aubergines lengthways, score the flesh in a criss-cross pattern and scoop out as much of it as possible. Finely chop the aubergine flesh and set aside.
3. Heat the olive oil in a large non-stick frying over a medium heat and sauté the onion for 3 minutes until softened. Add the garlic and cook for 1 minute more.
4. Stir in the chopped aubergine and fry for 3–4 minutes, stirring continually, until the aubergines are soft.
5. Add the spice mix, harissa, lentils, chopped tomatoes, sultanas (if using), dill and a generous pinch of salt and pepper. Heat through, then spoon into the hollowed-out aubergines.
6. Arrange on the prepared baking tray and bake for 40 minutes. Serve topped with the yoghurt, tahini, pomegranate seeds, pomegranate molasses, pistachios and coriander

Easy Peasy Yoghurt Cake

"Possibly the world's simplest baking recipe, this cake is super simple to make once you have the ingredients ready. You ideally need a 500g pot of Greek yoghurt to start with, then you use this 500g pot as your measuring tool to speed up the process. This cake is delicious served warm, drizzled with kefir and honey, and is surprisingly healthy as the main ingredients are nuts, seeds and yoghurt. It's a wonderful recipe to try with children and novice cooks as it introduces them to mixing and baking with low risk of failure. The batter can be also used to make cupcakes. Spoon the mixture into 12 cupcake cases and reduce the baking time to15–20 minutes."

PREP: 10 minutes **COOK**: 45 minutes **SERVES**: 8–10

- 1 x 500g pot Greek yoghurt
- 400g ground almonds (2 yoghurt pots)
- 150g caster sugar (½ yoghurt pot)
- 1 tbsp baking powder
- 3 tbsp poppy seeds
- Zest of 2 lemons
- 4 eggs
- 300g frozen blueberries (1 yoghurt pot)



TOP-UPS

- Honey, to serve
- Kefir, to serve

SWAPS

- Any frozen berry for blueberries

1. Preheat the oven to 200°C/180°C fan/400°F/gas 6 and line a 28cm square baking tin with baking parchment.
2. Pour the Greek yoghurt into a large bowl. Wash and dry the pot, and fill twice with ground almonds. Add to the yoghurt. Half-fill it with caster sugar and add this to the bowl as well, along with the baking powder, poppy seeds, lemon zest and eggs. Mix well until the mixture is combined – make sure there are no lumps.
3. Gently fold in the blueberries, transfer to the prepared baking tin, spread out evenly and bake for 45 minutes.
4. Allow to cool slightly before serving, drizzled with kefir and honey (if liked). The cake will keep for 3–4 days and can be frozen for a later date.

Extracted from Good Mood Food by Tim Spector (Jonathan Cape, £30). All photography by Issy Croker.

Twickers Foodie – By Alison Jee

October Food and Drink News



When I recently visited the Hampton Court Palace Food Festival I discovered a wonderful new product. It's from **Gourmet Tallow** and is a Wagyu beef tallow that comes in a spray form. Beef tallow, once a staple product for our grandparents' generation, is enjoying a revival and has a number of health benefits (see here). This premium tallow is 100% British and sourced from Warrendale Wagyu - ensuring a high quality, consistent and trusted product. It has a really deep, beefy, flavour and is the perfect flavour enhancer for sautéing, roasting, air frying and, of course, BBQs. It's made from just two ingredients: British Wagyu beef tallow and avocado oil (no nasties like seed oils). It really is delicious and adds depth to your cooking. It's available online from gourmet-tallow.co.uk or Amazon for around £15 a 200ml spray can.



Those folk at **MOMO** have done it again: another delicious limited edition flavour of their excellent kombucha. The Brixton-based brewery has launched **Amadora's Passion Fruit Kombucha** (£4.50 per 330ml glass bottle), created in collaboration with **Natoora** (www.natoora.com). Available from **momo-kombucha.com, Natoora, GAIL's Bakery, Selfridges, Planet Organic** and **Whole Foods Market**, this **Great Taste Award** winning seasonal flavour is **Soil Association** certified organic, and made with **Spanish-grown fruit.** Sales of this kombucha will also support **Natoora's Farm Fund**, helping the next generation of farmers shape a more sustainable future. Vibrant and zesty with a sweet tropical burst**,** this kombucha stars organic passion fruit grown by fourth-generation farmer Amadora in Mairena del Alcor, Seville. Unlike commercial crops picked early to withstand transport, Amadora's passion fruit is never harvested from the vine. Instead, she lays nets beneath the plants and waits for the fruit to drop naturally: a sign it has reached peak ripeness**.** This patient, hands-off approach produces passion fruit that is **less acidic**, v**ibrantly sweet,** and **full of aromatic depth.**

Another new product I discovered recently is a range of drinks called **Ferment Fizz.** It's fermented lemonade. This is a new category of soft drink made from real fruit and fermentation. Unlike kombucha, it starts with fruit rather than tea, creating a fuller, sour-fruity flavour and a gut-friendly profile. It's the world's first fermented lemonade. It's microbiology. During fermentation, beneficial microbes break down sugars and starches into simpler, more bioavailable compounds — like organic acids, vitamins, and antioxidants. What do you get? Easier digestion, better absorption, and serious gut love. The lemonades retain the fibre from fermented fruit, complemented by inulin—a naturally occurring plant fibre that nourishes your microbiome. The result? A natural, effective boost to your gut balance. Fermentation feeds the beneficial bacteria in your gut, supports healthy regularity, and creates compounds that survive digestion to reach your colon — where they really make a difference. That's how the lemonades stay functional, even after pasteurisation. Available in three flavours at £2.35 a 330ml bottle from Ocado.





If there's one condiment set to define flavour trends in 2026, it's Chilli Crunch. This umami-rich drizzle can transform many everyday meals so dramatically with the magic recipe being drizzled over eggs and noodles, pasta, corn on the cob and roasted vegetables, that food lovers are adding Chilli Crunch to almost everything. Now, **Woolf's Kitchen** has given its cult-favourite recipe a delicious new twist with **Chilli Crunch with Omega Pressery Avocado Oil.** Made in collaboration with premium avocado oil specialists **Omega Pressery**, the new recipe combines the bold heat, irresistible crunch and deep umami flavour that has made **Woolf's Kitchen's original Chilli Crunch,** made with rapeseed oil, a customer favourite. It's really tasty and available from Ocado at £6.50 a 175g jar. But I'd suggest getting two as you'll find you're putting it onto or into almost every savoury dish!



I've long been a fan of **Agua De Madre** and am delighted to see that there is now a new recipe that I'm really enjoying: **Night Time Cherry Remedio.** Made from whole crushed cherries, chamomile and passion flower, infused with Agua De Madre signature fermented lemon & ginger, it has no added sugar, contains Vitamin C and is a source of antioxidants. What's more, it's caffeine free, packed with ferments and fibre and is 99% whole crushed fruits. The inspiration came from 'The Madre', Nicola Hart, who finds herself increasingly struggling to unwind after busy days running one of the UK's fastest-growing wellness brands. It's the perfect winter bedtime drink. You can add hot water, hot milk, or even stir it into yogurt. Around £7.50 a jar from aguademadre.co.uk or Wholefoods, but the others in the range are more widely available from major supermarkets and health food shops.



WILD'R, is a new fish brand shaking up the aisle with **the UK's first chilled, ready-to-eat tuna steaks**. In selected Sainsbury's stores, and online at £7.35 for a pack of two steaks. The first product is **Ginger, Lime & Coconut MSC Yellowfin Tuna Steaks,** wild caught, marinated in herbs and spices, grilled and chilled - ready to eat straight from the pack. Founded by adventurer Doug Worboys, WILD'R was inspired by a motorcycle journey from Alaska to Honduras, where locally caught wild salmon, cooked and shared by roadside communities, sparked an idea. Think warming ginger, zesty lime and toasted coconut, with all the flavour of a proper grilled tuna steak and no cooking or prep. WILD'R MSC-certified Yellowfin Tuna Steaks are naturally high in protein with 25g per steak, high in omega-3 and low in saturated fat.



At a time when so many of us are having to tighten our purse strings and cut back, especially on things like wine, I was pleased to learn about **CH Pierre, a new £5.45 Bordeaux exclusively available from Sainsbury's**. It proves that great wine doesn't need a premium price tag. Bordeaux has long been regarded as one of the world's most prestigious wine regions, yet many assume quality comes with a hefty price tag. Now, this new arrival at Sainsbury's is challenging that perception. **CH Pierre Bordeaux** is crafted from grapes from the Entre-Deux-Mers region: 80% Merlot, 15% Cabernet Sauvignon, and 5% Cabernet Franc. Fresh and fruit-forward, it offers ripe red and black fruit layered with subtle spice, a balanced palate, smooth tannins, and a long finish.

Twickers Foodie – By Alison Jee

In Residence Comes to Twickers



There's an exciting new dining experience coming to Twickenham very soon:

In Residence offers Michelin-experienced chefs the opportunity to develop original dining concepts shaped by their own personal histories, experiences and culinary heritage.

Drawing on their journeys cooking around the world, each chef brings together the people, places and traditions that continue to inspire them, sharing their stories through food and bringing exceptional dining experiences to local communities on their own high streets.

By taking over much-loved local spots after hours, from cafés and garden centres to farm shops, In Residence transforms familiar spaces into intimate, candlelit dining experiences, reimagining what a night out on your own doorstep can look like.



Each menu is also accompanied by a bespoke wine pairing, curated by an expert sommelier. Whether guests are wine enthusiasts or simply curious to learn more, our dedicated team brings each course to life by sharing the inspiration behind the dishes and their carefully chosen pairings in an on-table passport and with hyper-personalised service.

At the heart of In Residence is the belief that good, exciting food should be available to you no matter your postcode, making extraordinary culinary experiences possible just around the corner.

In Residence puts serious chefs into characterful rooms in neighbourhoods that don't usually get them. This November in Twickenham they're hosting **Solan – Agata Tomczak and Giorgio Santorsola**, who between them have cooked at Noma, Osteria Francescana, Disfrutar, KOL and NOPI, and who cook privately for many celebrity clients. Their menu is called **'Italia, Polska'**: six courses drawing on Agata's Kashubia in northern Poland and Giorgio's Puglia, at £85 a head with a welcome cocktail.

Though their culinary journeys have taken them around the world, it is the flavours and traditions of their childhoods that continue to shape their cooking. Having grown up in Poland and Italy respectively, Agata and Giorgio find connections between their cultures, weaving the two cuisines together to create original fusions that look to the future while honouring their pasts. From jars of fermented Polish gherkins to the family tradition of making tomato passata in Puglia, both chefs share memories of food as an act of care - something made and enjoyed together, and passed down through generations.

Hailing from Puglia, the sun-drenched heel of Italy, and Kashubia, Poland's Baltic lake county, their menu is where Italian caprese meets smoky Polish cheese (handmade by Agata) and peasant pasta passatelli meets golden wintery Polish broth.

For six weeks only, a menu built uniquely for In Residence is touring from high street to farm shop. There are limited seats, intimate candlelight, six courses and a welcome cocktail. Both chefs will be cooking just a few feet from your table and café spaces are transformed.

Twickenham is Saturday 7 November – one night only, 65 seats. It's the only single-night date in the series, and bookings close on 29 October so the kitchen can buy for an exact number. It's at **The Crown Café**, 10 Crown Road, St Margarets Twickenham, TW1 3EE

For further info and to book click here For info on other venues click here

GIBRALTAR

sunborn

YACHT HOTEL RESORT



First

DIVE ADVENTURE

Experience

£450
PER PACKAGE
(FOR 2 GUESTS)

- ‘TRY DIVE EXPERIENCE’ FOR 2
- SUPERYACHT SUPERIOR ROOM, BREAKFAST
- 2 NIGHTS, 2 GUESTS
- EXTRA TOWELS, FLIP FLOPS IN THE ROOM

info@divegib.gi 00350 20045649 for calls 00350 54097190 for WhatsApp

Traveller's Tales 185

Destination Dorset

Doug Goodman Visits His Favourite County



I know West Dorset rather well and have at least two holidays in my favourite county every year. The attractive coast and country region between the market town of Bridport and the seaside resort of Seatown is about three hours' drive from Twickenham on a good day but much longer on a summer Friday. The tiny resort of Seatown was the destination for a week's self-catering holiday in mid -September in an old cottage. There's an historic pub, The Anchor, a holiday park, one shop and a few old cottages some of which feature in tour operators' brochures. Two holiday properties are available in a building which was once a look-out post for coast guards and the customs and revenue officers who kept a check on local fishing boats whenever they landed along the coast. Fish were the usual goods to come ashore but often accompanied by tobacco and spirits from France. During Napoleonic times smuggling was a very profitable business for the local population helped sometimes by the very revenue officers who were paid to stop it.



Seatown in the !930s



Seatown today

Although there's the holiday park and a small car park for walkers, who want to explore the footpaths of the Jurassic Coast to the east and west and a shingle beach for sun worshipers, not much has changed in almost a hundred years as the 1930's and 2026 pictures show. Golden Cap, reached by a steep climb, is the highest point on the south coast providing magnificent views over Lyme Bay, The Anchor, a one-minute walk from the cottage, retains secret hiding places for smuggled goods and has fascinating pictures and maps from the past. In front of the pub the rusty anchor came from The Hope of Amsterdam a 350 ton, 50-gun ship carrying a vast haul of gold and silver. She was wrecked while sailing from Curacao to Amsterdam in the mid -18th century. The day after the ship foundered over 2,000 local people and later 10,000 from all over the county arrived on the beach in search of treasure. One searcher, Augustus Elliott, was arrested with gold and silver in his possession. He was released as so many Dorset people had taken part in the treasure hunt that it was impossible to find any jurors who had not been involved. Local beers, a varied menu and of course fresh fish are served in the Anchor's restaurant and there's a garden high above the beach. Enjoy a drink as the setting sun provides spectacular colours beyond Golden Cap and Lyme Bay.



The Anchor



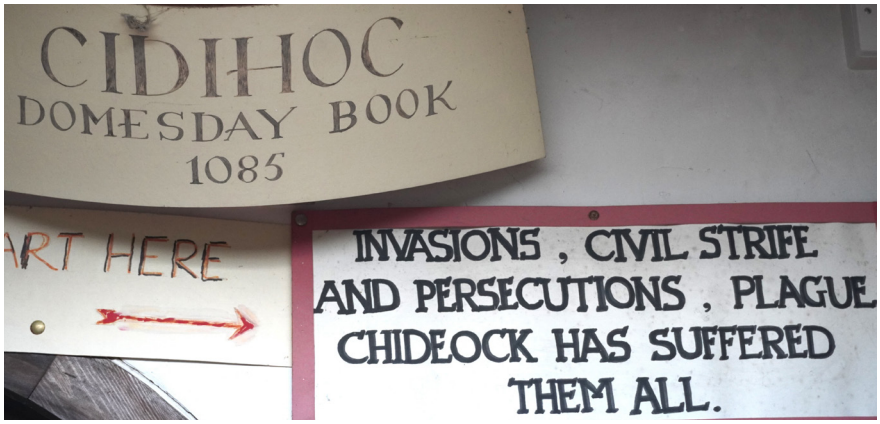
Seatown Beach looking West

CHIDEOK

Seatown is reached from the village of Chideok, (pronounced chiddik), down a half-mile long very narrow road. The pretty village with its rows of thatched cottage is on the A35, one of only two main routes from the south east to Devon and Cornwall and is often jammed with slow-moving traffic on the steep hills leading into and from Chideok. There's a delightful pub called The George Inn and another The Clock Inn. Nearby is a road sign pointing to The Catholic Church of Our Lady, Queen of Martyrs and St Ignatius. On the site of a castle demolished by The Parliamentarians in 1645 there's a tall cross commemorating seven of the 360 people put to death for their Catholic belief between 1535 and 1681. Chideok was a major rallying point for those of The Catholic Faith during The Reformation and throughout intense persecution. The area still retains a strong Catholic presence. The church was rebuilt on the site of a former secret worship place and consecrated in 1874. The Chideok Estate's manor house was built in 1805 and is situated next to the church. Our Lady, Queen of the Martyrs contains portraits, tombs, beautiful columns and a decorated barrel-vaulted roof. Inside is a museum tracing the history of the area with a fascinating collection of documents, Civil War objects, maps, pictures, farm implements and stories provided by local inhabitants.



Martyrs' Church in Chideok



Museum in The Martyrs' Church

BRIDPORT

Bridport is my favourite market town. I could happily live there-and nearly did. On Saturdays and Wednesdays, the town is full of visitors buying produce, clothes, plants, household items, take-away food and handicrafts from the stalls which line East Street and West Street. South Street is devoted to antiques of every description. Lots of pubs, restaurants, coffee bars and independent shops can be found in Bridport. The Bull Hotel and pub is my favourite spot for a Saturday lunch and it serves Fullers beer as well as tasty Dorset brews. On Saturdays a variety of bands entertain the crowds taking a break from shopping in Bucky Doo Square by the tourist office. The St Michael's trading estate is well-known for its art and antique shops. A short drive west from Bridport's centre is The Symondsbury Estate. There's an excellent restaurant, fashion

store, a shop selling produce, books and outdoor items and a 'lifestyle' shop selling pottery, rugs, cards, candles and a wide range of gifts. Don't miss the beautiful art gallery 'Sou'- Sou'-West with its regular exhibitions of local and national art. Children can spot the farm animals, cyclists can hire bikes and walkers can follow the many waymarked paths including a steep track to the summit of the iconic landmark Colmers Hill.



Bridport Market



Music in Bridport



Local Landmark Colmers Hill

LOCAL ATTRACTIONS

Close to Seatown is Charmouth which has a fine sandy beach, café, a fossil museum and a shop selling 200 million years old fossils from The Jurassic Coast. At low tide you can walk to Lyme Regis and find ammonites, belemnites and other fossils. The way is muddy, rocky and tough on the feet. There are occasional landslips and mud slides along this part of the coast so caution is advisable and check on tide times. Lyme is a very popular for holiday stays and day trippers. It's the shops, sandy beach and promenade leading to the 13th century Cobb Harbour that attract the visitors. When the sun's shining the place to have lunch on the beach is at The Harbour Inn but watch out for thieving gulls.



The Cobb Lyme Regis



Lyme Beach



Greedy Gull



Fountain at Forde Abbey



Garden at Forde Abbey

Forde Abbey near Chard is always on the list of places to be visited. The gardens are beautiful all year round and the former monastery is a family home. Sections are open to visitors who get the chance to see the magnificent tapestries woven in Mortlake from the Raphael Cartoon in the V&A. There's also a restaurant, gift and plant shop. Try to time your visit for 14.30 to see the UK's highest fountain in action. Another garden well worth a visit is Burrow Farm to the west of Axminster. Established 60 years ago the shrubs and trees offer beautiful vistas in carefully planted areas. Lunch in the garden and a well-stocked nursery is a perfect half-day's outing. There's so much to see in West Dorset and Devon that a week's holiday is far too short.



Burrow Farm Gardens

Information. The Coastal Cottages are featured by Holiday Cottages. www.holidaycottages.co.uk Chideok the Martyrs' Church and museum. www.chideokmartyrschurch.org.uk Bull Hotel and Pub. www. thebullhotel.co.uk Symondsbury Centre. www. symondsburyestate.co.uk The Art Gallery at Symondsbury. www.sousouwest.co.uk Harbour Inn Lyme Regis. www.harbourinnlymeregis.co.uk Forde Abbey. www.fordeabbey.co.uk. Burrow Farm Gardens. www.burrowfarmgardens.co.uk

Mark Aspen
www.markaspen.wordpress.com
Expressing the art of the theatre critic

The Marriage of Figaro

by Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart, libretto by Lorenzo Da Ponte
Glyndebourne Productions at Glyndebourne Festival Theatre until 7th November



The Marriage of Figaro has had a long connection to Glyndebourne, as it was its first ever opera with George Christie's wife performing in 1934, so it is a fitting opera to start the autumn season.

Its subject matter is interpersonal relationships and marriage, which is seen through the eyes of the servants of the Count. The feudal anachronism of *droit du seigneur* is delightfully parodied and punctured through *opera buffa* ridiculing the attitudes of the nobility. The action takes place during the course of one day, a reflection on the fickle nature of human emotions.



The staging by Mariame Clement takes its theme from the rococo garden designer Louis Carmontelle, who famously sketched the Mozart family with the eight year old Mozart at the piano. Designer Julia Hanson has taken the mid-1700's for her thankfully coherent and elegant pastel coloured set. The core of the stage is a revolve, allowing multiple smooth and rapid scenery changes. The Count's silk coat and breeches (he gets dressed coming out of his bath!) and the silk panniered dress for the Countess, along with the other costumes by Julia Hansen, are exceptional.



The opera has stock *opera buffa* characters such as a doddering music master (Max Mihofer) and a bombastic lawyer who sneezes so hard his wig falls off, and Antonio the drunk gardener (Alexander Vassiliev). All are also beautifully dressed, but in an old fashioned way for 1760's as a reflection of their out-moded thinking. Figaro (Jasurbeck Khayclarov) and Susanna (Henna Mun) are more contemporaneously dressed showing their Age of Enlightened spirit coming through.

Bertie Baigent conducts with dedication, precision and verve, keeping the pace on its toes without the orchestra feeling rushed or slurred. The singers were not at their best at first, but some Mozart magic must have occurred in the interval, as the second half was in a different league, with the stand out performance by Madeleine Boreham, who showed her power, versatility and sensitivity yet again, as Countess Almaviva.

The surtitles are contemporary and crystal clear. This is an opera for anyone to enjoy. Further reasons for its enduring appeal are its understanding of forgiveness, the transcendental beauty of its music, and gentle reflections on human frailty.

Read Michael Rowlands' review at www.markaspen.com/2026/10/16/marriage-figaro-glyn

Photography by Richard Hubert Smith

Mark Aspen
www.markaspen.wordpress.com
Expressing the art of the theatre critic

Faith Healer

by Brian Friel
Questors Productions at the Studio, Ealing, until 24th October



In an era of social media misinformation, Questors' current production feels particularly timely. *Faith Healer* is a deceptively simple tale of Frank Hardy, a travelling faith healer who journeys through the Welsh, Scottish, and Irish countryside with his partner Grace and his manager Teddy, attempting to cure the sick.

Against black walls adorned with a single enormous poster for Frank's act, the play is told in four lengthy monologues, each of them almost a short play in its own right. But each returns to the same events and relationships, and all of them tell a slightly different story.



We are invited to speculate on which account of events may be the closest to reality, but eventually this doesn't feel significant. The important question is why some of the characters are misremembering or distorting facts, and what it says about them and their relationships.

Frank opens the show with a charismatic performance from David Lemkin. He stands full of twinkling roguish charm, joking about his initials standing for "Faith Healer" and wondering what path he might have taken in life with a different name. He talks openly about the nights he knew that his "gift" was not going to work and no one would be cured.

Frank makes way for Grace, and we encounter the human cost of Frank's alcoholism and cruelty. His devoted widow is still fiercely loyal to him in some respects, and assures us she's getting better. Sarah Sharpe has to convey the broadest emotional range of the three performers and her monologue is totally gripping.



As Frank's manager and Grace's admirer, Teddy is on the periphery in their accounts, so it's fascinating as he comes to the fore, and gives what he clearly believes is the definitive account of their lives on the road. David Erdos plays the part with a broad cockney accent, punctuating his speech with the theatrical greeting "dear heart", and telling colourful stories about his bagpipes-playing whippet.

Director Roger Beaumont has given the actors room to fully explore their characters and stories in this often bleak play. A series of such lengthy and intense monologues is an ambitious undertaking, but the artistic gamble has certainly paid off. *Faith Healer* is challenging and thought-provoking, but certainly highly rewarding.

Read Andrew Lawston's review at www.markaspen.com/2026/10/17/faith-healer

Photography by Jane Arnold-Forster

Mark Aspen
www.markaspen.wordpress.com
Expressing the art of the theatre critic

Angel's Bone

by Du Yun, libretto by Royce Vavrek
English National Opera at the London Coliseum until 31st October



With human trafficking as its subject, *Angel's Bone* is never going to be great night-out material. Moreover, the victims are two angels, injured in falling to earth. This certainly gives rise to some resonant and disturbing images as the angels are pruned of their wings, but it comes at the cost of making the action remote from the awful reality.

The vague libretto disdains clarity, but it seems that Mr and Mrs XE, who find the angels in their garden, imprisoning and exploiting them, somehow benefit financially from the feathers torn from their wings. The angels are used as sex objects by miscellaneous punters who shower the XEs with cash. This gives rise to some harrowing and disturbing scenes, seen in close up on a vast screen. The results are painful to watch (with music to match). When Mrs XE announces, with an aria of triumph and defiance, that she is pregnant by an angel, the opera judders to a halt in a huge sense of anti-climax.



Du Yun's music has its moments. She puts a huge range of music into the blender, resulting in something without a very strong personality of its own. Her magpie-like approach lacks overall coherence, despite conductor Baldur Brönniman's best efforts.

Mariam Wallentin and Mathew McKinney, as the angels, have arias of lament and anger that are moving and effective. Rodney Earl Clarke's vocal talents are rather wasted as Mr XE, an initially half-hearted collaborator with his wife. Allison Cook convincingly surmounts the formidable vocal challenges of her role. She is generally required to be in fishwife mode, except when Mrs XE feels sorry for herself, a sentiment one is unlikely to share.

Kip Williams's production is thrilling on a purely technical level and makes superb use of the Coliseum's revolve, although it often blocks the stage action, and the opera is subsumed into video depictions.



Opera is always going to be vulnerable to the accusation that it anaesthetises human suffering for the purposes of entertainment. This piece tries to avoid that charge by not being too entertaining.

Angel's Bone is impressively executed with all ENO's panache, commitment, and technical excellence, but it's rather a disappointing downbeat launch to its new season.

Read Patrick Shorrock's review at www.markaspen.com/2026/10/17/angel-bone

Photography by Nirah Sanghani and Tristram Kenton


MOZART
REQUIEM
& Haydn's Little Organ Mass
Musical Director
Emma Warren
with professional
soloists & musicians
Hampton Choral Society
est. 1946
Saturday 28 November 2026, 6.30pm
All Saint's Church, 14-16 Market Place
Kingston Upon Thames, KT1 1JP
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
Hampton
Choral
Society

Squire's Twickenham Searches for Santa!

One Empty Chair - One VERY important Christmas Job

There is one particularly important vacancy to fill at Squire's Garden Centres in Twickenham this Christmas, as the garden centre launches a local search for someone very special to step into Santa's boots this festive season.



With Christmas preparations gathering pace, Squire's Twickenham is looking for a warm, friendly and enthusiastic Santa who will enjoy meeting local children and families and helping to make a visit to Santa's Grotto a truly memorable part of their Christmas tradition.

It is certainly no ordinary seasonal job. The successful Santa will become part of the team bringing the magic of Christmas to life at the centre, welcoming excited young visitors, hearing their Christmas wishes and helping families make memories together.

Julie Leatherdale, Centre Manager at Squire's Twickenham, comments: *"Christmas really is the most magical time of year here at Squire's Twickenham. There's a wonderful atmosphere around the centre and seeing families enjoying the festive season together, particularly the excitement on children's faces when they come to see Santa, is incredibly special.*

"So, this isn't just another Christmas job. We're looking for someone who will really enjoy becoming part of that experience. You don't need to arrive with your own sleigh or red suit, but you do need plenty of warmth, patience, Christmas spirit and a love of making people smile! We'd absolutely love to hear from someone locally who thinks they could be our Santa this Christmas."

Squire's will provide Santa's all-important festive outfit and the successful candidate will have the support of the centre team and Santa's elves throughout the Grotto as well as appearing at *Breakfast with Santa* sessions.

Could a local resident be just the person Squire's Twickenham is looking for?
To find out more and apply, visit Squire's website for all the details or call and have an informal chat with the Centre Manager, Julie Leatherdale at Squire's Twickenham.

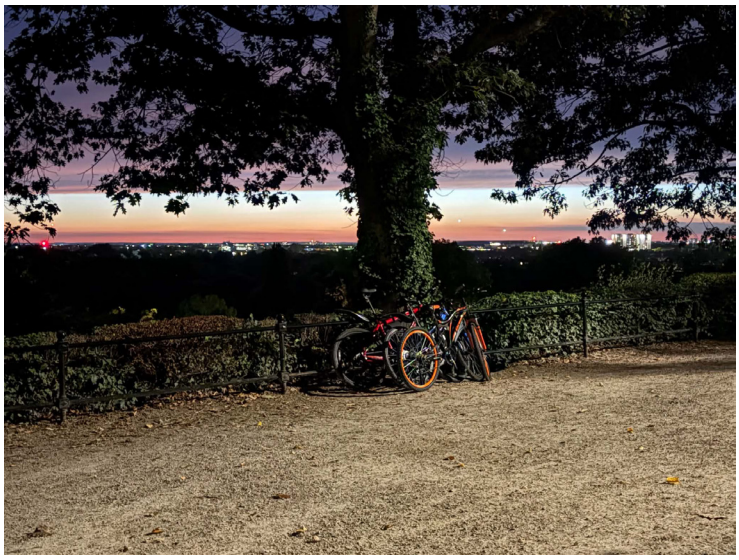
SQUIRES
GARDEN CENTRES

Richmond Photos

By Shona Lyons














THE HOME GUARD CLUB
EST. 1944
Presents
HALLOWEEN
DANCE PARTY
31st
OCTOBER
START TIME
6:30 PM
APPLE
BOBBING
SWEET
SWAP
& LOTS
MORE!
SCAN QR CODE
SCAN TO BUY
GET YOUR TICKETS NOW
eventcreate.com/e/halloween-spooktacular-even

Gyles Brandreth's Poetry Together brings hundreds of local school children together in Twickenham to celebrate poetry in the National Year of Reading

From Poetry Together

On Wednesday 11th November, over 400 school children from the Twickenham area, will come together at The Exchange, to immerse themselves in all things poetry. Gyles Brandreth will host poetry performance sessions, either side of engaging and interactive workshops from award-winning poets, Kate Wakeling and Rhiannon Oliver.



Poetry Together was founded by writer, broadcaster and poetry-lover Gyles Brandreth, who was inspired by research that proves learning poetry by heart has beneficial effects on cognitive function for young and old alike. Supported by HM Queen Camilla, it aims to unite young and old through the joy of poetry, promoting all the notable benefits that come from learning poetry. This is particularly prevalent as research has noted a decline in enjoyment for reading in children, prompting the National Year of Reading campaign this year.

The event will promote the Poetry Together initiative which encourages younger and older communities to connect and recite poetry together over tea and cake; the project sees schools going into care homes all over the country with incredible outcomes.

Poetry Together is run by Dukes Education who are delighted to bring this opportunity to the local community where many of their students live and where they are investing in the redevelopment of the Kneller Hall estate, the new home of Radnor House Twickenham opening as Kneller Hall School in September 2027.

Gyles Brandreth says: 'There is a great deal of research on the benefits of reciting poetry but marry that with the value of intergenerational connection and it's really quite special.'

POETRY TOGETHER
Uniting young and old through the joy of poetry

HAM VILLAGE GREEN COMMUNITY EVENT

Let's Go Outside And Learn invite you to join us for a fun-filled day celebrating our community, nature and the great outdoors!

Saturday 24th October
11:00-15:00

NEW LOCATION (due to forecast heavy rain)
Ham Youth Centre, Ham Close, Richmond TW10 7PL
Entrance via Ham Village Green

Meet Your Community
Meet some of Ham's local organisations and volunteer groups, hear about the amazing work they do, and find out how you can get involved.

Stories in Nature
Settle in and enjoy magical nature stories from a local storyteller.

Discover Ham's Wildlife
Join our bat trail and find out more about the fascinating wildlife that calls Ham home. Find out about the Borough's Biodiveristy Action Plan for nature.



Get Creative
Let your imagination run wild with arts & craft and mosaics.

Be Active!
Have a go at some sports drills.

and more...

www.lgoal.org
For more information please contact gaby.docker@lgoal.org.uk

LET'S GO OUTSIDE AND LEARN
CIC Registration 9435120

rhp

LONDON BOROUGH OF RICHMOND UPON THAMES

hug HAM UNITED GROUP

Friends of Ham Village Green

St Mary's University

St Mary's students achieve counselling qualification through innovative psychology degree

St Mary's University is celebrating the first cohort of students to complete an integrated counselling qualification within its BSc Psychology with Counselling degree, marking the successful first year of a partnership with the Counselling and Psychotherapy Central Awarding Body (CPCAB).



The students have received their Level 3 Certificate in Counselling Studies following the successful completion of an intensive 96-hour module delivered over 12 weeks in the first year of their degree.

St Mary's is the first university in the UK to embed the CPCAB Level 3 Certificate in Counselling Studies. The approach brings academic psychology and professional counselling training together, giving students the opportunity to develop practical skills alongside their academic studies.

Developed in partnership with CPCAB, the module integrates the requirements of both Level 2 and Level 3 counselling training, enabling students to achieve the nationally recognised Level 3 Certificate without completing separate Level 2 and Level 3 courses.

The qualification develops students' skills in active listening, empathy, communication, self-awareness and ethical practice, complementing their academic understanding of psychology and providing a foundation for further professional training.

Dr Silvia Riva, Joint Course Lead for BSc Psychology with Counselling, said *"We wanted to bring psychology and counselling training closer together, giving students the opportunity to develop practical and reflective skills alongside their academic knowledge. Seeing our first cohort achieve this qualification is a wonderful milestone and gives them a valuable foundation for further learning and professional development."*

The integrated approach also provides students with different pathways for their future careers. Alongside their British Psychological Society (BPS)-accredited psychology degree, which provides a foundation for further training in areas such as clinical and counselling psychology, students now have the opportunity to progress directly into professional counselling training.

Dr Marcelle Fernandes Holder, Joint Course Lead, said: *"When Silvia and I developed the programme, we wanted to open up different professional pathways for our students, whether through further training in psychology or progression directly to professional counselling training. Seeing our first cohort receive their certificates was incredibly rewarding, particularly knowing how much they have grown in confidence over the past year. We are very proud of what they have achieved."*

During a recent visit to St Mary's, CPCAB representatives celebrated the cohort's achievement and described the students as pioneers in completing the qualification through this integrated approach.

Natalie Lister, CPCAB Counselling Qualifications Professional, said, *"It has been an absolute pleasure working with St Marys University and their year 1 BSc Undergraduate students. They are the first students in the UK to be awarded with the CPCAB CST-L3 Level 3 Certificate in Counselling Studies embedded into the Psychology with Counselling Undergraduate Degree programme. The faculty staff have been dedicated to the programme and to see the development in the students over the course of the year has been touching and satisfying. The welcome which we experienced when we met the students again in October was inspirational and we look forward to working with the university, staff and students for many years to come. The lecturers and student cohort of 2025 – 2026 have been the pioneers of this project and their efforts and commitment have paved the way for those who follow."*

The successful completion of the first year marks an important milestone for the programme and its partnership with CPCAB, demonstrating how professional training can be integrated into undergraduate study to support students' academic development and future career ambitions. Find out more about the BSc Psychology with Counselling at St Mary's University.

St Mary's University Twickenham London


THE
ARTS & CRAFTS
MOVEMENT
BRINGING THE JOY OF PLAYFUL CREATIVITY
TO A SPACE NEAR YOU
REVERSE GLASS
PAINTING WORKSHOP
Halloween
TRACE IT ♥ PAINT IT ♥ FLIP IT ♥ FRAME IT!
Beginner Friendly
Your first drink FREE!
WEDNESDAY
28 OCTOBER 2026
2 PM – 4 PM (2 HOURS)
La Dolce Vita
Secret Garden Room
195 Waldegrave Road,
TEDDINGTON
TW11 8LX
ALL MATERIALS PROVIDED
FRAMED ARTWORK TO TAKE HOME
DELICIOUS ITALIAN FOOD AVAILABLE
RELAXED, SOCIAL ATMOSPHERE
Scan to book
square.link/u/LXXtrR5g

Twickenham Designers, Colorido, give Richmond community traders a new brand design identity

From Colorido Studios

Colorido Studios, the independent London creative studio based on Eel Pie Island, Twickenham, has delivered a full brand identity for the Richmond Bridge Traders Association (RBTA).



The RBTA, led by Ross Fitzsimons, Matt Allard, and Richard Roberts, wanted a brand identity, logos, architecture and website that spoke for the traders along the stretch between Cambridge Park and Richmond Bridge. The bridge, which first opened to pedestrians in 1776, is the oldest surviving Thames bridge in London and the focal point of the road, was always going to be central to the work.

Colorido's answer is a confident identity rooted in local heritage. It plays with the literal bridge motif and borrows from the signage in and around the area, giving it a look that is modern, distinctive and instantly recognisable. The name, brand and location are intrinsically connected to Richmond Bridge, making it the central focus for a simple and grounded visual language. Drawing on the living history of the area was an important and proud element for the client, such as the bridge's keystones and iconic lamp posts. The identity balances a nostalgic, historic signage aesthetic paired with a distinctive shield emblem that represents a sense of exclusivity and belonging. The palette draws on the blues and greens of the area's river and surrounding greenery, reinforcing the project's connection to local landscape and its sense of place.

Hannah Weatherall, a designer from Colorido, captured photographs of intriguing visual details from architecture to shopfronts and signage. These observations formed the starting point for the branding, which drew on the existing visual language and character of the area to create an identity that was simple, polished and most importantly adaptable.

The identity will anchor a new website that works as a portal for the community, with individual profiles for each trader alongside local information, news and history. Traders can also add the RBTA logo and link to their own sites, so the brand travels with the businesses it represents. Posters, stickers and other local assets extend it onto the street.

Ross Fitzsimons - RBT Member. "*Working with Colorido transformed our identity as a group of independent traders. They didn't just design a logo and a website - they developed and built a complete, cohesive identity that feels authentic to who we are as independent businesses rooted in our local community. Then they translated that energy into a beautifully presented website which will help our community find us and identify our strengths and serve them better at the same time. We're delighted with the work they've done and will be happy to recommend Colorido to other community-based business groups.*"

Jack Kent - Colorido Studios. "*We work on a huge range of projects across so many industries but developing a new brand identity in partnership with the Richmond Bridge Traders was a particularly rewarding one for us in the studio. Richmond Bridge is only a short walk from Colorido HQ so it makes a real difference to bend our design minds towards something that's part of growing our local community. High streets in the UK have it tough at the moment so anything we can do to tip the scales feels like a worthy cause.*"

The website and local assets go live this Autumn.

ARTS RICHMOND

ARTS RICHMOND LITERATURE FESTIVAL

MONDAY 16TH NOVEMBER 2026
AT DUKE STREET CHURCH 7.30PM





As part of this year's literature festival, we are delighted to be joined by

CAROL KIRKWOOD

Weather presenter turned novelist Carol Kirkwood talks about early starts, her 28 years presenting the BBC Breakfast weather forecast and her new book, *The Christmas Invitation*.

BOOK HERE:

www.artsrichmond.org.uk/arts-richmond-events

Hampton business makes Santa read children's own Christmas letters

From Tinselton

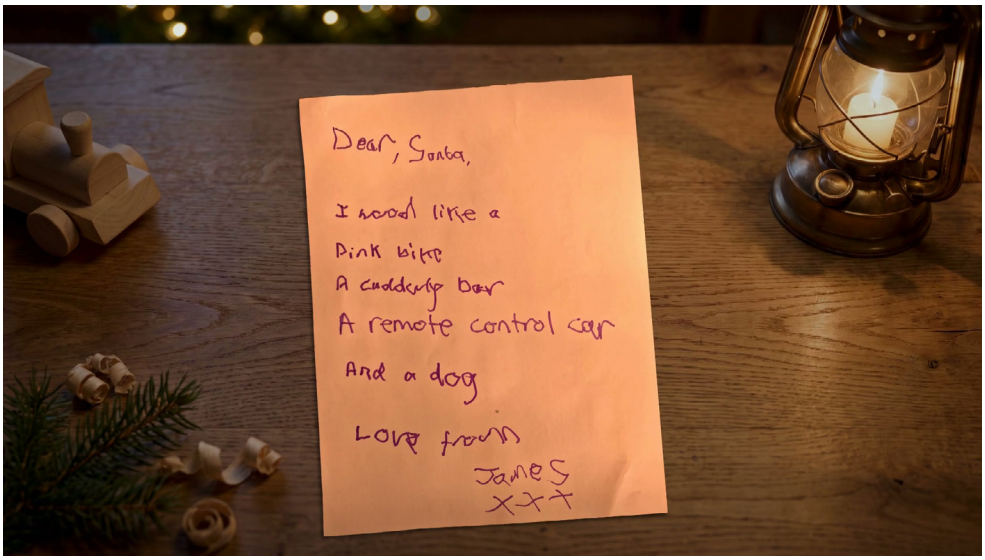
A Hampton business owner has built a way for Santa to read children's own Christmas letters back to them, out loud and word for word.



Paul Mathews launched Tinselton this autumn. Parents tell Santa a little about their child's year, such as a school certificate, learning to swim or being a kind big sister, and Santa records a personal video message about it. Parents read Santa's script first and can change anything before it's made.

The message ends by asking the child to write their Christmas list. When they have, a parent takes a photo of the letter and Santa sends back a second video reading it to them, creases and all.

Santa is an AI character, and Tinselton says so clearly. Children never appear in the videos, and parents never upload a photo of their child.



"*I wanted Santa to talk about the things that actually happened in a child's year, not a template with their name dropped in,*" said Paul. *"And reading a child's own letter back to them, in their own words, felt like the bit of magic that was missing."*

Videos are £16.99 per child for both, or £14.99 for each extra child, for orders by Sunday 15 November, then £19.99. Families are only charged when each video arrives, and there's no subscription.

See Santa in action at https://tinselton.co.uk/#meet-santa


Trafalgar
Schools PTA
PTA
HALLOWEEN
TRAIL
At Kneller Gardens
24th Oct - 1st Nov
ENTRY £3.50
Solve the mystery,
WIN a prize!
www.trafalgarpta.org.uk
TrafalgarSchoolsPTA
@PtaTrafalgar
trafalgarpta
www.trafalgarpta.org.uk

Red Roses Team to Play Canada in Ottawa

Head coach John Mitchell has made four changes to his Red Roses starting XV for the third match of their Test series with Canada in the WXV Global Series.

Gloucester-Hartpury duo Emma Sing and Mia Venner come into the back three at full-back and wing respectively, while Helena Rowland of Loughborough Lightning returns at inside centre.

In the forwards, there is just one amendment to the team that began the second Test - Sadia Kabeya, also of Loughborough Lightning, is selected at openside flanker.

England head to Ottawa – Canada's capital – for a third Test match in 34 days against the third best side in the world. Canada currently lead the series after their narrow victory in Toronto – a first Red Roses defeat in an incredible 41 matches, dating back four years.

"Friday is our first chance to respond," Mitchell said.

"Last Friday, we lost sight of what we could control when it mattered most; that's on us to fix. This week is about getting back to who we are: hungry, accountable to each other and demanding more of ourselves than anyone outside this group ever could.

"We've earned a strong period, but nothing about it is owed to us going forward. Friday is an opportunity to apply sustained pressure, learn from what we missed and come out the other side better than we went in."

Red Roses team to play Canada at TD Place, Ottawa

15 Emma Sing (Gloucester-Hartpury, 17 caps)
14 Jess Breach (Saracens, 60 caps)
13 Megan Jones (Trailfinders Women, 42 caps) - captain
12 Helena Rowland (Loughborough Lightning, 55 caps)
11 Mia Venner (Gloucester-Hartpury, 5 caps)
10 Zoe Harrison (Saracens, 74 caps)
9 Lucy Packer (Harlequins, 48 caps)

1 Hannah Botterman (Bristol Bears, 66 caps)
2 Amy Cokayne (Sale Sharks, 95 caps) – vice captain
3 Sarah Bern (Bristol Bears, 88 caps)
4 Morwenna Talling (Sale Sharks, 33 caps)
5 Lilli Ives Campion (Loughborough Lightning, 12 caps)
6 Abi Burton (Trailfinders Women, 13 caps)
7 Sadia Kabeya (Loughborough Lightning, 35 caps)
8 Maddie Feaunati (Exeter Chiefs, 31 caps)

Replacements

16 Bryony Field (Saracens, 4 caps)
17 Mackenzie Carson (Gloucester-Hartpury, 32 caps)
18 Maud Muir (Gloucester-Hartpury, 57 caps)
19 Demelza Short (Bristol Bears, 4 caps)

20 Alex Matthews (Gloucester-Hartpury, 85 caps)
21 Flo Robinson (Exeter Chiefs, 6 caps)
22 Holly Aitchison (Sale Sharks, 50 caps)
23 Ellie Kildunne (Bristol Bears, 66 caps)

Match Preview: Hull City v Brentford

Written By Brentford Football Club

Brentford face Hull City at MKM Stadium in the Premier League on Sunday afternoon (2pm kick-off GMT, live on Sky Sports).



Keith Andrews' side fell to their first loss of the campaign against Liverpool last time out, while the Tigers have picked up an impressive nine points from their opening seven fixtures back in the top flight.

Analysis, team news, match officials and more - here's everything you need to know ahead of the game.

Pre-match analysis

Stephen Gillett, *Playmaker Stats*: Midfield creativity could be key

Brentford travel to East Yorkshire to take on Sergej Jakirović's Hull City this Sunday, with the Tigers looking to bounce back after a narrow loss at Fulham.

Promoted via the Championship play-offs last season, Hull have made a flying start after a nine-year absence from the top flight, recording back-to-back wins over Manchester United and Coventry City. The Tigers followed up those victories with creditable draws against Aston Villa, Chelsea and Everton, and they currently sit ninth in the Premier League, a point behind sixth-placed Brentford.

Incisive, direct football and defensive resilience have underpinned the Tigers' strong showing on their return to the top tier, but their Bosnian head coach was scathing in his assessment of last weekend's 1-0 defeat at Fulham.

"We were very, very poor," admitted Jakirović. *"We collapsed together; it's also my responsibility."*

Dominated for much of that contest in west London, Jakirović has hinted at a shake-up of his starting XI, but will he tweak his tactics? Thus far, the Tigers have allowed their opponents the lion's share of possession, defended deep and launched lightning raids forward, their threat from open play complemented by considerable set-piece strength.

Hull have averaged just 32 per cent possession this season, with their open-play sequences containing an average of only 2.53 passes. Brentford will therefore have opportunities to bring the ball down, but finding a way through the Tigers' well-organised defence could prove challenging.

Brentford are likely to need patience, precision and variation in their attacking play and, despite Vitaly Janelt and Yehor Yarmoliuk's suspensions, their available midfielders appear well-suited to the challenge.

Mathias Jensen and Mikkel Damsgaard number among the most intelligent passers in the Premier League, and their ability to unlock deep-lying defences could come in very handy on Sunday. Mamadou Sangaré, meanwhile, impressed after his introduction as a second-half sub against Liverpool, and his energy and tenacity could provide the perfect foil for Brentford's Danish duo.

Hull have been particularly resilient at MKM Stadium, however, conceding just twice on home soil this season, a record bettered only by Brighton and Hove Albion (one conceded). Remarkably, the Tigers have achieved this despite averaging just 29 per cent possession in front of their own supporters.

While Jakirović's side are comfortable defending deep, they are by no means passive out of possession.

Although the East Yorkshire side rank comparatively low for overall pressed sequences, they have proved particularly dangerous when winning possession in advanced areas. Only Bournemouth, Everton and Ipswich Town have recorded more high turnovers leading to shots this season, while Hull's three goals from high turnovers are the most in the Premier League. In this regard, Brentford would be wise to keep an eye on Hull's Algerian right winger Mohamed Belloumi, who already has three Premier League goals to his name this term.

Belloumi ranks joint-eighth for successful dribbles, alongside Chelsea's Cole Palmer, while his fierce work rate is reflected by the fact he is also fifth for tackles won.

That sort of appetite to compete and win duels will be paramount this weekend, as will quality and decision-making once the ball has been secured.

Scout report
Dan Long, *Sky Sports*: Hull on course for Premier League survival

As wild as it sounds now, Hull City were among the bookies' favourites for relegation in the Championship last season. They faced significant restrictions on transfer spending across the summer of 2025 and winter 2026, while Sergej Jakirović was a new manager without any prior experience in English football.

BBC Sport pundits Aaron Paul and Jobi McAnuff tipped them to finish 22nd and Opta's supercomputer gave them a 16.7 per cent chance of finishing in the drop zone.

In the early weeks and months, that didn't seem like too much of a stretch; they won only two of their first eight league games. But then Jakirović started to get a tune out of his band of brothers.

Their best period came between 10 December and 3 February. During a run of 11 games, they won eight, drew two and lost one, climbing as high as third, only four points behind leaders Coventry. But it didn't last. They won four of the next 15 and a play-off place was only secured after a final-day comeback win at home to Norwich City.

In the semi-finals, they left it relatively late, but beat Millwall 2-0 in the second leg, and on aggregate, to secure a place in the final. Initially, they thought they were going to be meeting Southampton at Wembley, but the 'Spygate' saga and Saints' subsequent expulsion left them with just four days to prepare to face Middlesbrough following their reinstatement.

And just when a typically tepid final looked to be heading to extra-time, Oli McBurnie struck a 95th-minute winner to send the Tigers up for the first time in nine years. It was also the first time since 2010 that the team finishing sixth had gone on to win the play-offs.

While going up against all odds was inspiring, Hull were written off again prior to the beginning of this season. In response to the criticism, Jakirović said: *"I've seen all the predictions, but it's a great motivation to prove them wrong because we don't have anything to lose."*

Two months into the season and they've done that in abundance already. The Tigers stunned Manchester United at MKM Stadium on the opening weekend, held Aston Villa to a goalless draw a fortnight later, and have come from behind to draw 2-2 against both Chelsea and Everton.

They are under no illusions about the fact they are likely to be in the relegation picture, but they are building the foundations and picking up the points that will allow them to put up a fight.

If they maintain their current points-per-game average of 1.29, they would finish on 49 points - and no team has ever been relegated in a 38-game Premier League season having picked up 43 points. Opta's supercomputer is currently predicting them to finish 15th.

It won't be as simple as that, though. There will be rough patches - it's inevitable.

But if Hull maintain their spirit - and there's nothing to suggest they won't - they will cause some problems.

In the dugout
Sergej Jakirović

Sergej Jakirović had a long, nomadic playing career as a defensive midfielder, which took him to Croatia, Austria, Slovakia, Slovenia and Bulgaria.

He earned five senior caps for Bosnia and Herzegovina and retired in 2017 after a second spell with Croatian lower-league side Matija Gubec. He quickly jumped into management with Croatian second-tier side Sesvete, for whom he had played over 60 league games across two separate spells. He guided them to a fourth-place finish in 2017/18, then moved on to the top flight with Gorica.

They finished fifth in their first season after promotion, but he was sacked in February 2020. Just under two months later, he joined Maribor in Slovenia, but lasted just 13 games.

At the end of 2020, Jakirović took over at Zrinjski Mostar in the city of his birth and in 2021/22 - his only full campaign at the club - he was named Manager of the Season after guiding the club to the Bosnian Premier League title. He left in November 2022 and returned to Croatia, where he spent nine months with Rijeka, another of his former employers as a player.

Next came 13 months at Dinamo Zagreb, where he won the title and Croatian Cup double in 2023/24. A crushing 9-2 defeat to Bayern Munich in their first Champions League game of 2024/25 spelled the end of his time in the Croatian capital.

He moved on to Kayserispor in Turkey in January 2025, but stayed only until early June, when he signed a two-year deal at Hull.

Deteriorating TfL network leading to increased delays for passengers

From Mayor of London

Customers on the Transport for London (TfL) network are losing over 800,000 hours each week on average so far in 2026-27 due to issues with deteriorating assets.

TfL estimates that its renewals backlog – which includes issues with tracks, trains and signals - has reached £6.5 billion and is projected to increase under current funding assumptions.



Issues with underground tracks requiring renewal are causing significant financial pressures. The scale of the track renewals backlog is estimated at over £3.2 billion and there are reports that 42 per cent of track has been classified by TfL as being in "very poor" condition and a further 17 per cent is in a "poor" condition.

The London Assembly Budget and Performance Committee has today written to the Mayor, calling on TfL to publish a clear strategy for preventing further growth in the capital renewals backlog and to return key assets to a sustainable state of good repair, in its 2027-28 Budget submission to in November.

Neil Garratt AM, Chairman of the London Assembly Budget and Performance Committee, said:

"Deteriorating assets are making TfL services less reliable every year, leaving Londoners and visitors trying to get around the capital to suffer ever more stressful and uncertain journeys.

"With 42% of TfL's track classed as very poor condition and a further 17% in poor condition, TfL customers are losing over 800,000 hours per week on average this year. We need urgent action.

"Worryingly, even if the money to fix the £6.5 billion backlog arrived tomorrow, it would likely take at least a decade to complete the work, meaning these reliability problems are set to continue."

"The consequences of underinvestment include congestion, slower journeys, road restrictions, reduced accessibility and reduced reliability.

"The longer we allow TfL assets to deteriorate, the greater economic impact it will have on our city.

"With the Mayor's 2027-28 budget on the way, we must see progress from TfL and the Mayor to ensure funding is in place to reduce this £6.5bn figure. This will allow for improvements in service reliability, boost passenger numbers and generate additional fare revenue, allowing TfL to reinvest in and enhance the services available to London."

MAYOR OF LONDON

Government slashes red tape and tariffs to give businesses breathing space

British businesses will get a bit more breathing space as the Chancellor announces new plans to slash the red tape choking firms, while the Government accepts further recommendations from team of business leaders.

From family-run bakeries to high tech manufacturers and financial services firms, businesses across the country are set to save almost £800m in administrative and tariff costs per year with government making changes that mean less time filling in forms, removing duplicate requests for information, leaving more time to run and grow business.

Prime Minister Andy Burnham said:
"If you run a business, you want to spend your time serving your customers, creating jobs and growing your firm, not filling in unnecessary forms.
"It's not right that pointless bureaucracy gets in the way of people working hard to build something that matters to their high street.
"So we're getting government off their backs and giving businesses the breathing space to grow. Because when businesses succeed, they create good jobs, strengthen their communities and bring growth to every part of the country."

The changes announced by the Chancellor today include:
- Making compliance guidance clearer, simpler and small business-friendly,
- Further simplifying the UK's corporate reporting requirements, reducing reporting burdens for firms. These reforms could save businesses operating as part of a wider national group up to £20,000 per year.
- Extending import tariff suspensions on products favoured by businesses.

The Prime Minister and Business Secretary will today meet with small business owners and representative organisations, including the Federation of Small Businesses, at Number 10 North. There, they will accept recommendations from the Small Business Taskforce, which has seen government work in partnership with business leaders over the past months to identify and reduce the bureaucracy holding firms back.

These changes mark a new partnership with business, shaped by real-world experience and a government determined to listen, adapt and bring down costs.

Chancellor of the Exchequer John Healey MP said:
"British firms are fed up with form-filling and pointless paperwork that eats into valuable time and money when they simply want to get on with running their businesses.
"That is why we are cutting unnecessary bureaucracy and giving businesses the breathing space they need to invest, innovate and create good jobs."

The changes announced by the Chancellor today include over £600m per year in regulatory admin savings for businesses, for example:
- Streamlining company reporting requirements, saving firms up to £290 million per year;
- Reducing duplicative reporting burdens for asset managers , saving £105 million a year.
- Streamlining the home-buying and selling process, saving businesses in the transaction chain £116 million a year

Additionally, the Government is extending import tariff suspensions on more than 250 products favoured by businesses, saving up to £155 million per year.

The changes support the government's plan to cut the administrative burden of regulation on businesses by 25% by the end of Parliament. Delivering this will save UK businesses with employees 280 million hours per year.

For small business, acting on what businesses have said will reduce unnecessary red tape the most, the government will:

- Make it simpler for small firms to bid for public contracts by standardising requirements in sectors such as construction.
- Streamline ONS business surveys to reduce the number of data requests businesses have to fill out.
- Make it easier for businesses to find support and guidance on GOV.UK, and give small businesses a way to report disproportionate regulations.
- Implement the government's "Tell Us Once" ambition, including by pausing the Companies House profit and loss filing requirement for April 2028.

By accepting the majority of these recommendations, developed between government and business, ministers are putting the interests of business back at the heart of government and creating a stronger partnership between government and those driving our economy.

Small businesses are the backbone of the British economy, supporting around 13 million jobs, driving innovation, and bringing communities together.

Together, these changes represent the future partnership between government and business. A relationship informed by the real-world experience of those who run and grow businesses every day, and built on government that listens and adapts to bring down the cost of doing business.

Rain Newton-Smith, CBI Chief Executive, said:
"Good regulation protects consumers and the environment, but unnecessary red tape holds back investment and growth. The Government's acceptance of the Small Business Taskforce's recommendations, alongside progress on corporate reporting reform, is a welcome step towards giving smaller firms more time and headroom to focus on their businesses.
"The test now is delivery. Cutting unnecessary admin can free firms to invest, compete and grow – and business will want to see that ambition translated quickly into meaningful reductions in the burden they face."

Tina McKenzie, National Chair, Federation of Small Businesses said:
"The Regulatory Taskforce has been a good example of business and Government working in partnership to address a common problem. Currently, the weight of compliance can be a struggle, costing time, money, and stress that small businesses can ill afford. Today's report is an important first step in addressing that.
The Taskforce's report sets out clear, practical, and tailored recommendations to help lessen the burden of red tape on small businesses, enabling them to devote more resources to growth and job creation. Pausing the plans for full profit and loss accounts to be filed at Companies House by the smallest businesses is a huge step in the right direction, averting a huge new weight of red tape on the very businesses with the fewest resources to deal with it."

Josie Morris MBE DL, CEO, Woolcool and member of the Small Business Forum said:
"MSMEs continue to face a challenging economic climate, so today's announcement is very welcome. These measures will help to ease some of the regulatory and cost pressures facing businesses like Woolcool, and it's refreshing to see the Government taking tangible action and working positively and collaboratively with the MSME community. MSMEs play a vital role in the UK economy and our future success. I encourage the Government to build on today's announcement, continue its support and maintain its close engagement with the MSME community. This continued collaboration can only lead to positive outcomes."

Andy Hook, Managing Director of Hooked-On Group and member of the Small Business Forum, said:
"I'm delighted to see the government working with small businesses like ours to reduce the regulatory burden we face. This government is not only listening to us, but taking practical steps to make running a business easier. This will give us more time to focus on what really matters: developing and growing our businesses. I welcome these announcements and look forward to seeing further initiatives and recommendations from the Small Business Taskforce."

HM Treasury

Donate

A small donation will help to keep the Tribune online

CLICK HERE for a one-off donation
or
CLICK HERE for a monthly donation

The Tribune is published weekly by members of our community who stepped up at the time when some local newspapers closed or changed style and content. Local community journalists and contributors living in our Borough play an important role in producing the Tribune but like any newspaper the Tribune has essential fixed costs.

Supporting the Tribune with a small donation will help you to keep local news and views alive; support is very much appreciated.

We would like to say "Thank You" to all those who support the Twickenham & Richmond Tribune; your support is very much appreciated.

Thousands read The Twickenham & Richmond Tribune

If you are reading this you could be advertising your business with The Twickenham & Richmond Tribune. Community rates are available

Contact: advertise@TwickenhamTribune.com

View ad details at www.TwickenhamTribune.com/advertise

Contact
contact@TwickenhamTribune.com
letters@TwickenhamTribune.com
advertise@TwickenhamTribune.com

Published by:
Twickenham & Richmond Tribune (in association with World InfoZone Limited)
Registered in England & Wales
Reg No 10549345

The Twickenham Tribune is registered with the ICO under the Data Protection Act, Reg No ZA224725

©Twickenham & Richmond Tribune. All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be used or reproduced without the permission of Twickenham & Richmond Tribune. While we take reasonable efforts, this online newspaper cannot be held responsible for the accuracy or reliability of information.The views and opinions in these pages do not necessarily represent those of The Twickenham & Richmond Tribune.
Terms & Conditions