

Twickenham & Richmond TRIBUNE

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Editors

Berkley Driscoll
Teresa Read



8th July 2022

T&RT

Half Moon over Holy Trinity, Twickenham Green

Photo by Berkley Driscoll

TickerTape - News in Brief

London Overground – Sunday 10th July

No service between Willesden Junction and Richmond
Use alternative Tube or rail replacement bus services.

Vandalism in Kneller Gardens

Residents are fed up with mindless vandalism in Kneller Gardens. The two large commercial bins from the Café have been pushed into the river Crane, apparently for the second time in less than a week. Hopefully the large bins will be chained to the wall to prevent a repeat.

Council waives fees to encourage ‘Play Streets’ for family fun

Families in Richmond upon Thames are again being invited to come out and play as part of Car Free Day this September, with a scheme aimed at encouraging children to play outside in their streets.

Postponed for the last two years due to the pandemic, Richmond Council is again encouraging people to hold a Play Street on Saturday 24 or Sunday 25 September 2022, by closing their roads to through-traffic for up to four hours. It means children will be able to play outside and have fun with their friends, family and neighbours.

To encourage as many streets as possible to take part, the Council is again waiving the administration costs to the road closures and hopes to build on the success of this year’s Jubilee Street Parties which saw over 300 street parties held across the borough.

The Play Street programme is part of a London-wide campaign by London Play and Transport for London.

Find out more about [Play Streets](#) and apply before this year’s deadline of Sunday 14 August.

The Friends of Barnes Common rebrands as Barnes Common

After 30 years the name and look of the Friends of Barnes Common, the organisation that focuses on Conservation across Barnes, will now be known as Barnes Common.

The team are looking forward to seeing lots of visitors to their stall at the Barnes Fair on Saturday 9 July 2022 where visitors can sit in the famous green tractor and talk to staff about ongoing projects.

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COVID-19

Teresa Read

World Health Organization

Epidemiological update on COVID-19

Globally, the number of weekly cases has increased for the fourth consecutive week, after a declining trend since the last peak in March 2022. During the week of 27 June to 3 July 2022, over 4.6 million new cases were reported, a figure similar to that of the previous week. The number of new weekly deaths decreased by 12%, with over 8,100 fatalities reported.

At the regional level, the number of new weekly cases increased in the Eastern Mediterranean Region (+29%), the South-East Asia Region (+20%), the European Region (+15%), and the Western Pacific Region (+4%), while it decreased in the African Region (-33%) and the Region of the Americas (-18%).

The number of new weekly deaths increased in the Eastern Mediterranean Region (+34%) and the South-East Asia Region (+16%), while decreases were observed in the African Region (-50%), the Region of the Americas (-13%), the European Region (-12%) and the Western Pacific Region (-12%).

As of 3 July 2022, over 546 million confirmed cases and over 6.3 million deaths have been reported globally.

These trends should be interpreted with caution as several countries have been progressively changing COVID-19 testing strategies, resulting in lower overall numbers of tests performed and consequently lower numbers of cases detected.

IN THE NEWS

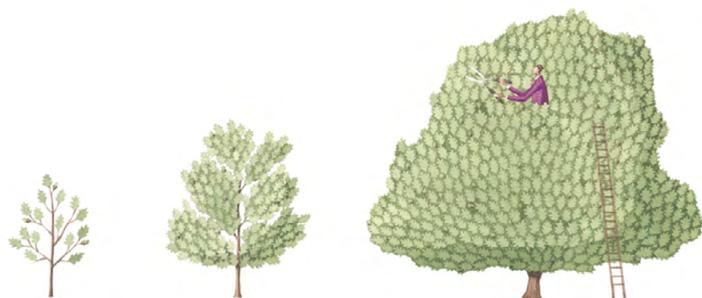
Voice of America, 8 July 2022: As COVID-19 Cases Rise, New Variant Poses Major Challenge. "The Omicron subvariant BA.5 is the worst version of the virus that we've seen"

Daily Record, 8 July 2022: Warning to UK travellers as Covid cases rise in Europe holiday hotspots

Reuters, 7 July 2022: China reports 478 new COVID cases for July

ALJAZEERA, 3 July 2022: What's behind the rise in COVID-19 cases? COVID-19 cases are surging again around the world amid Omicron variant mutations.

New Delhi Times, 2 July 2022: COVID Cases up by More Than 30% in Britain Last Week



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darryl parkin

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The Tree Agency

Barnes Fair two hundred years ago

By Simon Fowler

Every community across Richmond seems to organise an annual summer fair on the green or in a school. For the most part they are peaceful affairs allowing children to work off surplus energy and their elders to catch up with the gossip.

Two hundred and twenty years ago it was very different. It was a time of great social stress and a fearful government did their best to suppress the protests. Annual fairs, with the wide availability of beer, were always potentially a flashpoint for trouble. The fair in Mortlake was banned by the magistrates in 1787, and a decade later pub landlords were warned about resurrecting it again.

In early July 1801 because of fears over public disorder the magistrates banned a fair due to take place on Barnes Green. Two weeks later – on the 20th and 21st - the papers mentioned ‘an immense concourse of people’ who had assembled on Barnes Green ignoring the magistrates’ orders.

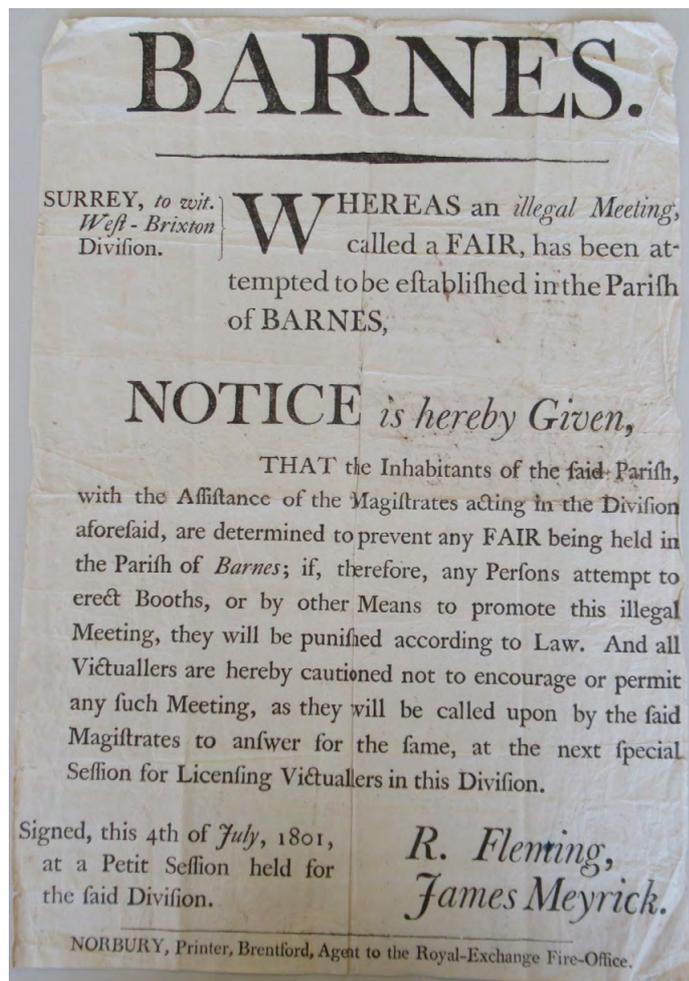
Sir Robert Baker, a magistrate in Richmond, described how he quelled the rioters in a letter to the Duke of Portland, the Home Secretary. In it he describes how it took him three days to stop the trouble, with the help of the Richmond Yeomanry, that is the feared mounted militia:

The lowest class of the inhabitants had erected booths on the Green and collected from various parts puppet shows, minstrels, hawkers and pedlars of various descriptions for the purpose of establishing a fair in direct opposition to the wish of the principal inhabitants. With much difficulty I succeeded in pulling down the stands and every sort of erection and also in keeping peace and quietness during the evening.

By Monday the mob collected in greater force and attempted to erect their booths again, which by the aid of constables was prevented but in the course of the evening, at about midnight, the mob became desperate and were proceeding to outrages when my Corps of Yeomanry was obliged to be called upon to preserve the public tranquillity.

Yesterday, evening the mob collected in still greater force when I again attended with my Corps and entering the centre of the mob with only one attendant, I addressed them in a conciliating manner though firm, and happily it was so well received as to gain me repeated Huzzahs and their promise to disperse and no more to disturb the public tranquillity. They were faithful to their promise and dispersed accordingly after crying ‘God save the King’ twice over and thanking me for my conduct.

Subsequent fairs seemed to have passed off peacefully. But if you go to Barnes Fair today bear in mind its riotous heritage



Credit Surrey History Centre



River Crane Sanctuary



Music and Nature in our Beautiful Borough with so many venues on offer to entice us to Walk, Relax, Socialise and Support local artists and charities.



Ham Polo offers a Saturday Brunch and we can walk there along the Twickenham Riverside and take **Hammerton's Ferry** across the river with Andy to support his Swim for Cancer cause. Proceed along the path to the Polo Grounds and enjoy the birds, trees and wildlife along the way. Music and refreshments await and the wonderful polo ponies too whilst the music soothes the spirit and even a little dance is encouraged to get us moving again.



We need your help to support two great causes: [Isobel Pearce](#) and Friends are thrilled to be performing at **The Jazz Sanctuary's** summer party in St. Margaret's in aid of: **War Child** and **Off the record** – a local charity supporting teenagers.

Venue: Turk's Head - Winchester Road, TW1 1LF

Date: Friday 22nd July Time: 7.45pm.

Come along and party for a good cause! [Book Here](#)

"We'll be doing lots of upbeat Swing and Latin Jazz along with some funky versions of tunes you'll all know."

Isobel Pearce Vocals, John Crawford Piano, Paul Stead Guitar Jack Yardley on drums and more to come.

[River Crane Sanctuary](#) [Instagram](#)

Pied Wagtail



Dear Editor,

Queens Road residents totally reject proposal for ugly and unnecessary 5G mast by Clapperstile Gate entry into Bushy Park

There appear to be a rash of ill thought out planning applications for new 5G telephone masts across the Borough of Richmond. The telephone companies have simply not recognised that the location of their masts creates significant loss of property values, and also the loss of many attractive views that made the Borough of Richmond such an attractive place to live. They do not seem to care about local Communities in their dash to beat other companies competing for sites in an ever decreasing supply shortage situation. It is not clear why they cannot work together to share current sites, and upgrade present facilities rather than abandon them as they do now. Look at the number of "retired" cabinets all around the Borough - if they are no longer of use, they should be removed by the installer.

The latest ill thought out planning application is for a 48 foot high 5G mast by the Clapperstile Gate entry into Bushy Park. There has been no previous contact with any local resident by the applicant - nor by any officer or councillor. The gate entry columns were built well before the last war, and have appeared in numerous films, so are of historical interest, plus of course including Barnes Wallace and his bouncing bomb. They used to support two decorative gates, which were transferred to a unused corner the NPL site on Hampton Road, but many local residents would like them to be returned to Queens Road - their real home. I would not rule out that at a future date once their historical



importance is fully recognised. The enormous and ugly telephone column is 15 metres (about 49 feet) high, and would be by far the tallest structure in Queens Road, plus numerous cabinets, spoiling the appearance of the whole area. The nearest house is only a few feet away, with dozens of other domestic properties surrounding the site less than 50 metres away.

I am sure that all local residents will feel as we do, that this small area is a totally unsuitable site for such a large structure, particularly as it is so close to private properties on all sides, and with a Royal Park as a close neighbour and a Childrens' nursery only yards away. Incidentally, the Bullard Road name has appeared completely out of the blue, and we were not consulted about the naming of that short section of road.

The QRRRA has asked for Teddington Society Planning Group to have a look at this application with a view to recommending more suitable sites and less invasive sites in mind - such as Coleshill Passage which could house these large columns, and more importantly, be almost completely out of sight.

I have just returned from a short holiday in Yorkshire and have just tested positive for COVID 19 so have to avoid all contacts at present. Once I am free to meet people again, I, and my Queens Road colleagues and neighbours leaving in nearby roads will be more than happy to meet representatives of the telephone company and council officers to find a more suitable site, to ensure that the Community keeps this attractive park entrance free of unnecessary electronic clutter.

Kind Regards,

Brian Holder, Chair, Queens Road Residents Association

Dear Sir,

Heathrow Noise edition 0295

I am a member of the Teddington Action Group, an organisation of residents who are troubled by noise from flights in and out of Heathrow and who oppose Heathrow expansion and work to refute the claims made by Heathrow and aviation supporting bodies that suggest that airport expansion will benefit both our area and our nation.

It is interesting to read the two letters from the retired BA pilots about noise from Heathrow and low BA departing flights. It is encouraging that BA are finally showing some interest in this and mobilising responses. The article, that has provoked the two letters on low flights, can be found on the Teddington Action Group website at <http://www.teddingtonactiongroup.com/2021/07/08/low-flights-heathrow/> with a link on the icon at the end to the full research paper.

Firstly: we have never said that BA fails to observe the manufacturers' recommendations or that BA compromises safety. We do accuse BA of flying lower than many other airlines and causing quite unnecessary suffering to residents on the ground. Regrettably, the evidence is there for all to see. We residents do know this from first-hand experience. We can only presume that the two correspondents have not examined the evidence.

Secondly: contrary to what your correspondents say, Heathrow do not operate an ICAO (International Civil Aviation Organisation) recommended noise abatement procedure – if they did the article would probably not have been necessary. If there is any doubt about this, the correspondents can ask Heathrow.

Thirdly: we have produced in the article, data showing the difference in height between the various flights and airlines – and we are not just comparing short haul against long haul. We have also produced a diagram from the CAA document CAP1191 showing the comparisons between airlines. BA are consistently one of the lowest flights – and, of course, BA are by far the most numerous at Heathrow.

Fourthly: The ICAO recommend a particular type of noise abatement procedure for particular situations (there are two). BA do not operate the recommended one at Heathrow.

Fifthly: the report and diagrams from the established and respected aviation consultants To70 show the dramatic reduction in noise received on the ground that can be brought about by observing the ICAO recommended guidance, and even more by holding the flaps down to 4,500' on departure.

I commend to the two correspondents a re-read of the article on the website of the Teddington Action Group and hopefully they may better understand the problem.

Yours sincerely

Neil Spurrier, Strawberry Hill

Teddington Tidbits

By 'Teddington Resident'

Were you consulted about the new 15m high telecommunications mast?

Hutchison 3G UK Ltd has submitted a planning application to install a new 15m (49 feet) monopole tower for 5G communications to support antenna, associated radio-equipment housing and ancillary development adjacent to 1 Admiralty Road and also the junction of Bullard Road and Queens Road in Teddington. The mast will be very close to housing and a children's nursery.

The application was submitted 30 June with neighbourhood notification was to begin 5 July 2022. However, the **deadline for any "representations" must be made *in writing* no later than 20 July!!!** Very interestingly, the ICNIRP application questionnaire documents state that

- the design was made by a Trainee Design Technician
- nobody has visited the installation site

Details can be found on:

https://www2.richmond.gov.uk/lbrplanning/Planning_CaseNo.aspx?strCASENO=22/2085/TEL

Community Toilet Scheme (CTS) Twickenham Green

Twickenham Cricket Club
The Cricket Pavilion, The Green, Twickenham, TW2 5TU
020 8894 3110

Opening hours:

Monday/Wednesday/Friday - 10am to 5pm

Saturday 11am to 10pm

Sunday when cricket is being played

(Also open when there is a cricket match and the pavilion is in use)

The Cricket Pavilion does not seem to display the obligatory CTS LBRUT sign. A permanent, visible TOILET notice is needed in the central area of Twickenham Green.



Registered Charity No 1130201



Saturday 9th July at Ellera Hall
10.00am to 2.00pm

Free Entrance Refreshments Plant Sale

Ellera Hall Social Centre

Ellera Road Teddington TW11 0HG

020 8977 0549 info@ellerahall.org www.ellerahall.org



Old 'un but good 'un

Next year the Twickenham Folk Club - TwickFolk - turns forty! The Twickenham Folk & Singers' Club first opened the Cabbage Patch doors in January 1983. The current organiser, John Hocking, would love to hear from anyone who performed at the Club or was an audience member in the 80s and 90s. The Club's records only go back to 2001, so who knows who played?

Contact him at info@twickfolk.co.uk

The Royal Parks: BBQs not permitted

Tom Jarvis, Director of Parks at The Royal Parks, said:
"We are enjoying particularly warm weather and we welcome everyone to the parks to seek shade, soak up the nature and enjoy a picnic.



"But please remember that BBQs are not permitted in the parks and sadly there have been some awful occasions where we've seen wildlife including lizards, toads, frogs, newts, insects and birds killed because of an accidental fire.

"Fires are also a risk to the emergency services who are called upon to put them out.

"No-one ever believes it'll be their actions that causes a fire, but fires can start easily. Please protect wildlife and leave no trace by enjoying a picnic not a BBQ, and by taking any litter home if the bins are full."



Share the joy of a sensory garden

Summer is now in full bloom - and so is the beautiful new garden in front of the ETNA Community Centre in East Twickenham.

This feast of colour and scents is open to everyone. There is attractive wooden seating where you can relax and escape the hustle and bustle of the high streets, surrounded by a variety of plants, trees and flowers.

On Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays from 11.30am to 1.30pm, the Real Junk Food Café operates in the ETNA Centre and at these times you get a drink, snack or spot of lunch to enjoy in the garden or out on the terrace.

Designed and planted in 2021, the sensory garden is a community project funded by generous grants. Come and discover this pretty and peaceful haven, only a few minutes from Richmond Bridge in East Twickenham. Volunteer gardeners also very welcome!

Location: ETNA Centre, 13, Rosslyn Road TW1 2AR
Telephone: 0208 892 3676



Let us know the streets which you think could use additional street lighting to help people feel safer

As part of Richmond Council's work to tackle violence against women and girls, residents are encouraged to request additional street lighting on the borough's public roads and footpaths where they feel unsafe.

Whilst better street lighting alone will not necessarily make Richmond upon Thames safer for women and girls, councillors have received feedback about certain streets in the borough where inadequate lighting makes people feel unsafe. To get a better picture of where these streets are, the Council is reminding residents that they can [request additional street lighting](#) on public highways and footpaths. The request will then be subject to an assessment. Please note that the Council can only add lighting to public highways and not to private land.



Whilst this form is limited to street lighting, the met police also have a [StreetSafe website](#) where you can record areas where you feel unsafe due to other factors such as abandoned buildings, vandalism, or perhaps you have been followed or verbally abused. The police will then use this information to work with the Council on additional changes such as installing CCTV or introducing night-time patrols.

The Council has allocated £139,000 towards its Safety of Women at Night strategy, which includes the following key strands of work:

Increasing engagement with businesses operating at night-time, ensuring they understand safe space initiatives and work with us to improve the safety of women and girls in and around their venues

- Increasing community safety officer focus where businesses and communities are active at night
- Delivering bystander training to businesses and night-time staff
- Holding one stop shops across the borough to allow people to access support and advice on safety measures
- Developing a 'Safety of Women and Girls' community forum to bring together partner businesses and the local community
- Delivering communications to raise awareness around staying safe at night
- Working with schools to engage with young boys aged 13 and over
- Providing direct support to survivors of sexual abuses and harassment
- Working with the Street Pastors to provide visible and practical support to vulnerable women at night



Barnes Fair

Saturday, 9 July 2022

The Fair is held on Barnes Green, London SW13, between 9.30am and 5.30pm. Please note that the traffic is heavy in Barnes and the surrounding areas on Fair Day. The easiest way to approach Barnes Fair is by train to Barnes Station or Barnes Bridge – both are about a 10 minute walk. More info [HERE](#)

All the fun of the Fair

Barnes Fair

BCA Barnes Fair takes place on Saturday 9 July, 9.30am - 5.30pm. Admittance is free. Some parking restrictions will be in place Friday pm and Saturday and we apologise for any traffic disruption that these may cause. For advance details about the event, see barnes-ca.org. There will be a Fair Information stand on-site with detailed maps to help you plan your day.



Bandstand

10.15 - 10.45am	Barnes Green Day
11 - 11.45am	Goldeneye
12 - 12.30pm	St Osmund's School Choir
12.45 - 1.30pm	Bats of Ealing
1.45 - 2.30pm	Olympic Choir
3 - 3.45pm	Richmond Music Trust
4.15 - 5.15pm	Barnes Concert Band



Events Stage

10.30 - 10.45am	Crouching Tiger Karate
11.30 - 12pm	Barnes Ballet School
12.30 - 1pm	Petite Performers Barnes
1.30 - 2pm	Barnes Community Players
2.30 - 3pm	Clifford Studios
3.30 - 4pm	Butterfly Ballet

Food & Drink

There is a delicious selection of food and drink to enjoy at Barnes Fair! There are BBQs, food trucks and food stalls positioned all around the Green and these include the following local businesses:

The Crossing (main Fair BBQ, by Bandstand, offering craft burgers, chilled rose wine and more), **Rick Stein, Barnes,**

The Brown Dog, Ela & Dhani and Nuay's Thai Bistro.

There will also be a special Festival area with **&feast, The Ginger Pig and Barnes Pantry.** Plus draught beer from **Jeffersons**, champagne and charcuterie from **Cote de Roam**, cocktails and mocktails from **Dima's Vodka** and, of course, **BCA Pimm's**, made, as usual, to our secret recipe!



Vintage Rides

Enjoy a selection of traditional fairground rides and attractions on the Green by Station Road. These include a Gallopers carousel, helter skelter, swing boats, hook a duck and more. Tokens (instead of cash) are required for each ride - available on-site.



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Thanks also to all our teams of volunteers who do so much to ensure that Barnes Fair is always a success!

Kew returns to the screen with a second series of 'Kew Gardens: A Year in Bloom' on Channel 5



A new six-part TV-series, *Kew Gardens: A Year in Bloom*, will return to Channel 5 this July, following the work of the Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew. Channel 5 were given unprecedented access to film at both Kew Gardens and Wakehurst, Kew's wild botanic garden in Sussex, taking viewers behind the scenes, giving an exclusive glimpse of what makes Kew so special.

Over a year, cameras witness the changing seasons and meet the teams who care for the plants, create the incredible displays, perform world-changing scientific research and have to deal with everything from catastrophic storms to more than two million visitors a year. Building on the stories from the first series which aired in 2021, the series highlights include rare blooms skilfully cared for by Kew horticulturists, one of which flowers for the first time in ten years; follows how Wakehurst is transformed into a living laboratory as Kew scientists work hard to battle climate change; whilst back at Kew, scientists seek to secure the coffee plants of the future and the much-loved 'tree gangs' also return to the screen scaling steep ravines at Wakehurst and contending with ducks scuppering their plans at Kew Gardens.

Richard Deverell, Director, Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew says;

"The first series of Kew Gardens: A Year in Bloom was very popular, so naturally we were eager to work with Channel 5 on series two. We have been filming this second series since last September following the rich variety of work in our organisation, showcasing skilled horticulturists nurturing our plants across two sites and scientists helping to uncover the power of plants for food, fuel or medicine. Nature really does hold the most incredible power in its hands. I am proud of how this series provides a glimpse into the work we do and how our staff shine so brightly. I hope it prompts many people to make a visit this year."

Episode 1

It's early spring in Kew Gardens and daffodils, crocus and magnolia are bringing out the visitors in search of the first colour of the year. Also making a fresh start is Simon Toomer, the new head of living collections who has the massive job of evaluating nearly 17,000 different plant species in the gardens to decide what stays and what goes. Meanwhile Paul Rees is doing a health check on the tuber of a dormant titan arum, a perennially popular plant that produces a huge flower that smells of rotting flesh.

Kevin Martin is also embracing change as he takes over as Kew's chief tree guardian, head of the arboretum. He's using sophisticated technology to see what is happening inside some sickly trees... that is if the £5000, computerised sonic hammer behaves itself.

The ten-storey tall Great Pagoda reopens for the spring season, and we get a guided tour with Rachel from Historic Royal Palaces, the charity that cares for this unique building. She tells us all about its history, from playground for Princess Augusta in the 1700s, being used for testing bombs in WW2, through to the cutting-edge restoration that has returned dragons to its rooftop and the whole structure to its former glory.

Alberto shows us Spring in the glasshouses, and we see the unusual emperor alcantarea go out in a blaze of glory. It grows two meters in two weeks and then produces strange spikey flowers for the first time in its 20-year life – but this is the last thing it does before dying.

Meanwhile at Kew's sister site, Wakehurst, Conservation Supervisor Steven is keeping ancient skills alive; he is coppicing hazel trees and using the wood to create hedgerows. Leaping into the 21st century, Chris is making a withdrawal from Wakehurst's high-tech Millennium Seedbank. He is thawing deep-frozen seeds for Alice in the nursery, who brings them back to life and takes the resulting coastal plants down to the Brighton seafront as part of a multimillion-pound effort to return lost plant life to the area.

Filmed by Curve Productions for Channel 5, the series was commissioned in 2021 and filming took place from September to June 2022.

Watch live on Tuesday 19 July at 8pm or on demand [here](#).

Royal
Botanic
Gardens **Kew**

The Wildfowl & Wetlands Trust launch campaign to support the creation of increased areas of urban wetlands

The Wildfowl & Wetlands Trust (WWT) are asking residents to pledge their support for the creation of 100,000 hectares of healthy wetlands to help fight today's climate, nature and wellbeing crises.



As part of their [Wetlands Can!](#) campaign, which aims to support the creation of new wetlands, WWT are calling for the creation of more urban wetlands to help take action against inequalities in wellbeing.

Creating wildlife-rich wetlands like ponds, streams, and rain gardens in deprived urban communities could help reduce inequalities in wellbeing, according to a newly published report from the Trust. [Read the report.](#)

With your support, the WWT will campaign for change and urge the UK government to prioritise and invest in more wetlands. Each name collected through the pledge will build momentum and help solve today's pressing climate, nature and wellbeing crises.

[Pledge your support now](#)

Richmond Gymnastics offers free inclusion taster session

Richmond Gymnastics are offering a free taster session for those with a disability and/or additional needs.

As well as producing World and European medallists and running one of the largest recreational programmes in the country, Richmond Gymnastics provides Disability and Inclusion gymnastics offering children with additional needs the opportunity to get involved with sport activities.



Richmond Gymnastics are also keen to talk to organisations working with special needs children within the London Borough of Richmond to open up further opportunities for children to take part.

Their open session is being held at their RGA Centre in Kew (TW9 4EL) on Wednesday 31 August from 2 to 3pm.

Advance booking is required - for further details and to book visit [Richmond Gymnastics Association.](#)

WORLD CHOCOLATE DAY

Yes folks, this week saw us celebrating World Chocolate Day. (as if we need an excuse to indulge!). I know a thing or two about chocolate (helping judge the Academy of Chocolate Awards). But it's not just about the flavour; we should also be mindful of the origins of our chocolate, and choose ethically produced brands where possible.

Divine Chocolate is the only Fairtrade and B Corp certified chocolate company to be co-owned by cocoa farmers. It's based on a business model that champions farmers, makes top-notch chocolate for ethically conscious consumers. Divine believes producers should earn an equitable share of the value they help create via the cocoa supply chain. That's why Kuapa Kokoo Farmers' Union, the world's largest Fairtrade cocoa co-operative of over 100,000 farmers, has a 20% ownership stake in Divine Chocolate. A favourite bar from Divine is Dark Chocolate Pretzel & Caramel - a balance of sweet and salty. Rich dark chocolate with chunks of pretzel and pieces of sweet caramel...it's divine! (£2.40 for a 90g bar from Ocado or Waitrose)



Another ethically minded company is **Tony's Chocolonely** (HQ'd in the UK locally, incidentally, in Richmond). [Tony's Chocolonely](https://www.tonychocolonely.com) calls for positive changes to make all chocolate 100% slave free. The chocolate supply chain is fraught with problems, especially in West Africa. Tony's Chocolonely wants to change that, changing the industry from within by raising awareness of the issue, leading by example and inspiring key industry stakeholders to act. It is supporting independent and

non-grocery stores by adding two new chocolate bars to its existing range which are exclusive to them: Milk Pecan Crunch Caramel and Milk Chocolate Chip Cookie. As always, both new 180g chocolate bars are Fairtrade and palm oil free. Made with responsibly sourced cocoa in fully recyclable packaging with zero plastic, they're available in independents across the UK from June, RRP £3.99.

Looking for the ideal gift? Well, two masters of their crafts, **Diplomático Rum** and **Dark Sugars Cocoa House** created the ultimate rum and chocolate experience: a limited-edition range of artisanal rum truffles. The chocolates are handmade every week in Greenwich with 75% cacao, fresh cream and dusted with cocoa. They marry premium dark rum and West African-inspired chocolate. The Diplomático Rum Truffle, Blood Orange and Rum Truffle and Rum Crème de Sel Truffles are on sale in-store and online at darksugars.co.uk until September. But the company constantly has other fabulous, beautifully packaged, products.



Finally, **FATSO**, producing 100% ethically produced, chunky bars of dark chocolate. Sourcing the best cocoa from family-run Luker's Farm in Colombia, FATSO is true single origin with Fino de Aroma

accreditation (just 8% of cocoa growers are awarded this globally!) and grown with the sustainable future of the local community and our planet in mind. Available in three flavours: **Morn'n Glory** a 60% cacao breakfast-inspired combination of cornflake, toast and orange marmalade; **Home Run** a 60% cacao bar inspired by US baseball with chunks of salted pretzel, whole almonds and honeycomb, and **Nan's Stash**, 70% cacao - Nan's biscuit tin in a bar; with peanuts, toffee and digestive biscuits. £5.95 for a 150g bar from sofatso.com





Pride and Prejudice

by Jane Austen, adapted by Janet Munsil

Richmond Shakespeare Society at Fountain Gardens, York House, Twickenham until 9th July

It is a truth universally acknowledged that *Pride and Prejudice* is one of the most well-known and beloved stories of all time, but Munsil's version brings a whole new freshness of character and a quick-paced quality to this popular tale, whilst somehow making you feel you are going through the chapters of the book in detail.



Designer Junis Olmscheid delights the senses are with exceptionally colourful and period-perfect costumes (with John Gilbert and Miriam King). Each character's particular colour creates a mesmerising rainbow, complementing the stately homes created with a few simple set pieces and floral bouquets, and with Paul Nicholson's lighting designs, together managing to create sets that mirror the grandeur of places such as York House.



The minimal staging allows a focus on the talent of the actors. Anna Piggott brings a liveliness and brightness to Elizabeth with her quick wit and cutting tongue. She makes the character interesting and updated whilst still being loyal to Austen's creation. Hugh Cox will, from now on, be the epitome of Mr Darcy with his dashing good looks and ability to act like the biggest constipated arrogant knob turned besotted knight in shining armour.

The scene between Elizabeth and Darcy when they bump into each other at Pemberly gave me goose pimples through their sizzling chemistry, yet I also wanting to hide behind my programme out of sheer awkwardness; a purely magical moment!

The cast excel in moving the story along at a quick pace with quick set changes covertly done by the super-quick crew.

Music and sound effects, excellently engineered by Marc Pearce and Alexis Childs, allows the audience to escape to the English countryside back in the late 18th Century, a few hours of absolute escapism into colour, creativity, class and classical literature that leaves them wanting more.

Read Viola Selby's review at

www.markaspen.com/2022/07/04/pride-prejudice-rss

Photography by Simone Germaine





Silent Lines

by Richard Maliphant, music by Dave Price after Georges Bizet
Russell Maliphant Dance Company at Richmond Theatre

Come with a clear open mind to the Maliphant universe.

From darkness bodies begin to move in Maliphant's slow motion style. Their silhouettes serve as backdrop for stunning video projections by Panagiotis Tomaras, layering their bodies with a watery pattern that moves like the ripples of a swimming pool. Light becomes the main performer. Anonymous bodies begin a roundelay, bound together by holding hands, the movement of one body impacting another.



Everything is liquid, no sharp movement. Then the dance becomes more rhythmic and animated, as solo dancers emerge from the group.



The choreography explores every way the human body can spin and spiral in every aspect of its anatomy. Dancers, everything is turning. The effect is trance like, like Dervishes whirling into a state of Nirvana. The dance is underlaid with a sound-bath that you couldn't quite call music, shifting from vibrating noise, to wooden percussions, animal sounds, rain drops and something resembling a singing saw. It reminds me very much of the sleep sounds we have used in the first few months to help our newborn to sleep. The entire experience is extremely calming and meditative. It is utterly absorbing. Yet the mind does wander at times, focusing the senses. I am suddenly aware of the vibrations of sound in the auditorium floor, the Old Library smell of the Richmond Theatre. But every time you refocus on to the stage you are welcomed back with another beautiful image.

The dancers seem at all times completely, calmly in control. I am particularly impressed by the extraordinarily limber young dancer Alex Thirkle. The absolute highlight however belongs to performer Edd Arnold who uses his impressive breakdancing skills to unbelievably poetic effect, as he quietly, gently tumbles and spins across the floor to a soft Chopin-like piano tune. Life is slowed right down. The mind is calmed. An utterly dreamy hour of dance meditation.



Read Suzanne Frost's review at www.markaspen.com/2022/07/06/silent-lines

Photography courtesy of RMDC



Moral Panic and Wildcat's Last Waltz

Bitesize Festival at Riverside Studios, Hammersmith until 31st July

Just take a look at the smorgasbord of offerings at the Bitesize Festival: comedy, drag, dance, music, dark drama are all on the menu. The invite is for an hour, an evening, a week. Instead of sitting through two acts with the interval queuing at the bar, for a tenner you can pick'n'mix from three hour long nuggets an evening.

My starter was a gem from Blue Dog Theatre called *Moral Panic*, a one-man show starring the hugely talented Jack Cooper. It mixes murder and muddled morality. Cooper plays Charles Hawthorne, an up-tight video censor whose working days are spent watching such gems as *Angels of Savage Grace*, featuring demonic nuns enjoying a sex orgy. He regards such morally degenerate films as a form of cultural terrorism.



Charles is a snobbish Cambridge graduate who has sent his young son to boarding school. 'You have to break their will. It's how you make great men,' he opines. This great man falls though when Veronica, a sexy Italian work-colleague, threatens to take the promotion he feels he deserves. What happens on his garden lawn to sequinned Veronica could well be a scenario in one of his video nasties.

Then on to cabaret, *Wildcat's Last Waltz*, starring Joshua Welch as a potty-mouthed widow with an anarchic approach to life. She adored her late husband and longs for another 52 years of wedded bliss with a man who showed his devotion by scratching the dry skin off her feet with a Stanley knife. No greater love ...

In his hilarious depiction of an ageing Fitness Queen, Welch involves audience victims, whom Wildcat enrolls in a frenetic fitness class, advising them: 'If you are asthmatic, breathe whenever you can.' Exercise has not always paid off though. 'You spend forty years doing Pilates and your fanny falls out,' she complains after suffering a prolapse by the luncheon meat counter.



However, humour masks a rather sad figure. Mother to a drunken son and a grandson who calls her Granny Grot Bag, she cuts a lonely figure as she slumps in her armchair.

Read Gill Martin's reviews at www.markaspen.com/2022/07/07/moral-panic and at www.markaspen.com/2022/07/07/wild-waltz

Photography courtesy of Blue Dog Theatre and Joshua Welch Company

Tamerlano

by George Frederic Handel, libretto by Nicola Francesco Hyam
The Grange Festival, The Grange, Northington

Power and its corruption ... absolute power and its tyranny. These are themes that strike a tragically topical note. Yet these are the subjects of Handel's opera, *Tamerlano*, set in what we now call the Middle East ... 620 years ago.

In July 1402 near Ankara, Sultan Tamburlaine the Great, ruler of the Tartar Empire and Turkish Sultan Bajazet, the Ottoman Emperor, met in a battle involving a quarter million men. Tamburlaine was victorious and Bajazet was taken captive.

Handel's plot is solely concerned with Bajazet's captivity. Everything happens in a claustrophobic palace without windows, where Tamerlano, who holds all the cards, mocks and taunts his captives, who include Asteria, Bajazet's daughter.

Italian countertenor Raffaele Pe excels as the tyrant Tamerlano, a dangerously unhinged psychopath, whose knife-edge moods switch in a moment. Pe's singing is outstanding, notes rippling effortlessly in fiery virtuosity. The main target of Tamerlano's anger is Asteria, who twice attempts to assassinate him, but only serves to stoke his lust to have her as his Queen. Celebrated soprano Sophie Bevan's Asteria is a stark contrast to her captor, a grounded and determined princess, strongly resolved on revenge.

Veteran tenor, Paul Nilon makes a dignified and noble Bajazet, stubbornly defiant in the face of overwhelming odds, a man of integrity and principle. Nilon skilfully builds the growing passion of his frustrated hatred with increasing intensity, exploding with indignation at Tamerlano's threatened ultimate humiliation, to have Asteria thrown amongst his most violent prisoners for them to defile.

Mezzo-soprano Angharad Lyddon is riveting as Princess Irene, the ultimate femme-fatale, who uses glamorous power-dressing as a weapon in her single-minded goal, to become Tamerlano's Empress.

With its threatening foreboding feel and claustrophobic presence, director Daniel Slater successfully creates the atmosphere of *Tamerlano*, which is Grange Festival's third Handel opera, after [Belshazzar](#) in 2019 and [Agrippina](#) in 2018. *Tamerlano* is no less of a triumph and scores for the Festival on all counts.

Read Mark Aspen's review at www.markaspen.com/2022/07/01/tamerlano

Photography by Simon Annand





As Real as Anything

by Andrew Cartmel

Thursday Theatre at the Hen and Chickens, Highbury until 9th July

A backdrop for tension, a room reminiscent of *Abigail's Party*, dominated by a sofa, surrounded by vibrant art on the walls, and an inevitable drinks table: this is the home of theatrical professionals, Duncan and Gwen and the setting for *As Real as Anything*.



Four protagonists are emotionally on shaky ground. The highly watchable Alasdair Shanks plays Duncan, is a floundering theatre director, who is constantly bickering with his wife, Gwen, a producer, skilfully acted by Rosie Edwards, who has strong stage presence. The couple are joined by weekend guests, Jake and Rosie, a playwright and actor respectively. Denim-clad Jake, played by Jamie Hutchins, goes all out to be an *enfant terrible* working-class writer, while his spouse, played by Kelsey Short, is an actress desperate to recapture former stardom.



The stars of all four are dimming and desperation is passed round like canapés. Things unravel alarmingly fast, as Duncan's and Rosie's past affair comes to light, against the background of Gwen and Jake forming a strong bond, bringing both relationships to the cusp of ruination. The actors truly excel in making the transformation and the relentless breaking down of relationships feels tangible.

Lighting by Edmund Sutton is moody and sensitive, especially during Rosie's masterclass scene, and the soundtrack is apt and enticing. The set is neatly designed, with stunning artwork by Sarah Jane Docker. Strong dialogue and real human situations written by [Andrew](#)

[Cartmel](#) and detailed direction by Jenny Eastop, who has an impressive background, makes *As Real as Anything* one to look out for.



Read Heather Moulson's review at www.markaspen.com/2022/07/06/real-any

Photography by Conrad Blakemore

WE'VE BEEN HIDING!

Travel News by Bruce Lyons

Six Nations rugby in 2023

Typically Italian
Experience, Explore & More

ROME FOR THE RUGBY
Italy v Ireland
Depart London Heathrow
Thursday 23rd February 2023



3 Nights from **£769** per person

Return BA flights to Rome with luggage allowance*.
3* Star hotel, centrally located in the city centre.
Twin or double room including breakfast.

Includes match tickets.
Tribuna Tevere section, Stadio Olimpico
Italy v Ireland - Saturday 25th February 2023

deposit **£300** per person

Book this event with your travel agent today

This holiday is 100% financially protected. ABTA W6934 ATOL 6872
Subject to availability and change, based on two people sharing a twin room.
Quote reference 3462408934. Prices correct as of July 2022.
*Luggage options available on request. Kick off time 2.15pm TBC.

 ABTA
ABTA No. W6934

large BA has not cancelled middle- and long-distance flights.

Cost of Living, inflation – fuel costs how are they impacting the Holiday market? By and large things haven't been passed on YET, though things can change.

How are we finding searching for new holidays? Surprisingly, there is availability and even some good "Lates" believe it or not – especially in the Greek Islands.

We have also noticed that there is excellent value in high end hotels with flights to Tunisia, where 5* Hotels are desperate to get back into the Holiday market, not only were they affected by the lockdowns but also by the Thomas Cook collapse. So, if you yearn for 5* on the beach with great Kid facilities and are strapped with a modest budget – look no further.

What's Trending, as they say – well Staycations still command a lot of attention but with 2 busy years as a result of Covid, and Global Warming giving us more reliable Summers – it can be tricky to find the perfect property at short notice. But on the UK front there is a wider choice now with Great Rail trips, short tours plenty of activity vacations too. Hiking, Biking, Trekking, Birdwatching, Canoeing and much, much more

St Hilda's Sea Adventures have a few spaces on their Small Ships in the Highlands and Islands, and news today for our Rugby Fans both Italy v Wales March 2023 and Italy v Ireland February have 3-night trips with Stadium Tickets, BA flights, 3* Hotels from £769 – Book Now with £300 deposit. <https://www.crusadertravel.com/>

These last weeks have proved challenging to say the least. Just when we thought it was all going to be plain sailing someone threw a spanner in the works!

Staff Shortages – Flight Cancellations and more...actually we have been more affected by local travellers (not booked through us) calling for help- On our own bookings the first thing we do when an operator or airline contacts us is look for the alternative – straight away and till now, touch wood, we have solved all. Unfortunately, this is often not the case with callers as by the time they are asking us what to do – the dust has settled, and the alternatives are all full.

We have even helped a group of 20 to reconstruct their Red Sea Holiday when EasyJet cancelled all their June/July flights to Hurghada and Sharm

The most important thing is your plans are affected try to find the alternative straightaway – the situation is unlikely to improve, and you need to take action straight away. By and

Six Nations rugby in 2023

Typically Italian
Experience, Explore & More

ROME FOR THE RUGBY
Italy v Wales
Depart London Heathrow
Thursday 09th March 2023



3 Nights from **£769** per person

Return BA flights to Rome with luggage allowance*.
3* Star hotel, centrally located in the city centre.
Twin or double room including breakfast.

Includes match tickets.
Tribuna Tevere section, Stadio Olimpico
Italy v Wales - Saturday 11th March 2023

deposit **£300** per person

Book this event with your travel agent today

This holiday is 100% financially protected. ABTA W6934 ATOL 6872
Subject to availability and change, based on two people sharing a twin room.
Quote reference 3462408937. Prices correct as of July 2022.
*Luggage options available on request. Kick off time 2.15pm TBC.

 ABTA
ABTA No. W6934

WIZ Tales - Greece and Climate Change

Teresa Read

This week a wildfire seriously affected a town near Athens causing a nearby monastery and local villagers to be evacuated. Another fire on the Southern Peloponese Peninsula also resulted in hotel guests being evacuated. By Tuesday fifty-two wildfires had been reported in the country.



During the summer firefighting season two hundred European Union firefighters assist Greece; the first unit of twenty-eight Romanian firefighters with five vehicles leave at the end of the month, replaced by French firefighters. Other countries that will assist are Bulgaria, Germany, Finland and Norway.

According to the European Forest Fire Information System 424 square miles have burned so far this year.

Col Stratos Anastasopoulos who was coordinating firefighting aircraft across Greece said that last year there had been around one hundred fires a day over a five/six day period.

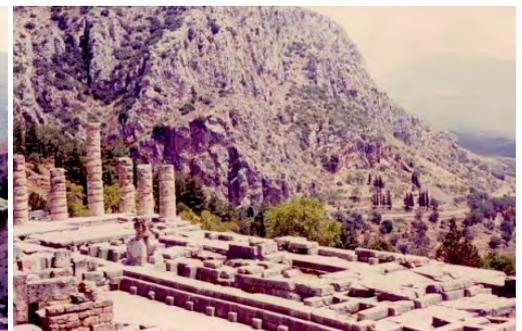
However, Greece is not the only country affected by an increase in forest fires, said to be the result of global warming.

“Global warming” was highlighted in 1975 by an American scientist, Wallace Broecker.

In 1989 Margaret Thatcher, the UK Prime Minister, said in a speech to the United Nations:

“We are seeing a vast increase in the amount of carbon dioxide reaching the atmosphere... The result is that change in future is likely to be more fundamental and more widespread than anything we have known hitherto.”

It is now 2022.



Information and Photographs of Greece:

<https://worldinfozone.com/gallery.php?country=Greece>



St Mary's University

Richmond FC and St Mary's University Announce Partnership

St Mary's University, Twickenham and Richmond FC have today announced an exciting new partnership that will support an outstanding rugby experience for the men's rugby union players at the University.

The partnership will offer a dual education and rugby programme, with the aim of developing St Mary's students on and off the pitch and jointly supporting the playing ambitions of both clubs. Alongside attracting and developing talented young rugby players, students will benefit from accessing the partners' extensive rugby facilities, and a range of placement opportunities.



St Mary's has a well-established reputation for the quality of its student sport programme and is one of the best universities in London for men's and women's rugby union. Richmond Rugby are a founding member of the Rugby Football Union and the 1st XV compete in the Championship. Richmond run another four senior men's teams, two senior women's teams, one U23's team, one colts' team (U18's), a veterans' team and youth and mini rugby for 600 girls and boys.

President of the St Mary's Men's Rugby Union

Club, Harry Milne, said, "The players are really looking forward to working with Richmond who are a great local club. We are keen to work hard and improve, enjoy our rugby and help develop the sport."

Head of Sport at St Mary's Andrew Reid-Smith, said, "St Mary's are delighted to be working with Richmond Rugby on this excellent initiative. We want to support the students to fulfil their potential and encourage them to stay involved and help develop the game. Both partners believe that participating in rugby affords our students opportunities to attain excellence, enjoyment and friendship, adding value to their university education and beyond."

Speaking about the partnership, Director of Rugby at Richmond Steve Hill, who will be overseeing the St Mary's men's programme, said, "This partnership makes a huge amount of sense, with both organisations, and in particular the players, gaining benefit. We are keen to help players develop whilst they are completing their studies and for them to have a clear pathway to continue in rugby once they have graduated. Richmond's wide range of teams will offer opportunities for all to continue to be involved in the game as either a player, coach, official or administrator."

Prospective students can email gareth.crewe@stmarys.ac.uk for further information about the men's rugby union programme and the partnership.



St Mary's
University
Twickenham
London

St Mary's University

Drama St Mary's Student Awarded Prestigious Laurence Olivier Bursary

Current student Aimee Ebsworth studying [BA Acting](#) at St Mary's University, Twickenham has been awarded the Carmen Silvera Bursary.

The bursary was given in conjunction with the [Laurence Olivier Bursary](#), donated by the agent Barry Burnett and is worth £3,000. The bursaries were established in 1987 by the [Society of London Theatre \(SOLT\)](#) to support students with financial difficulties through their studies and this year, a total of £77,500 worth of Bursaries was awarded to 19 drama school students across the country.



The auditions took place at St Martin's Theatre last month in front of a panel of theatre industry experts headed by Lee Menzies, West End producer and Chair of the Laurence Olivier Bursaries Committee.

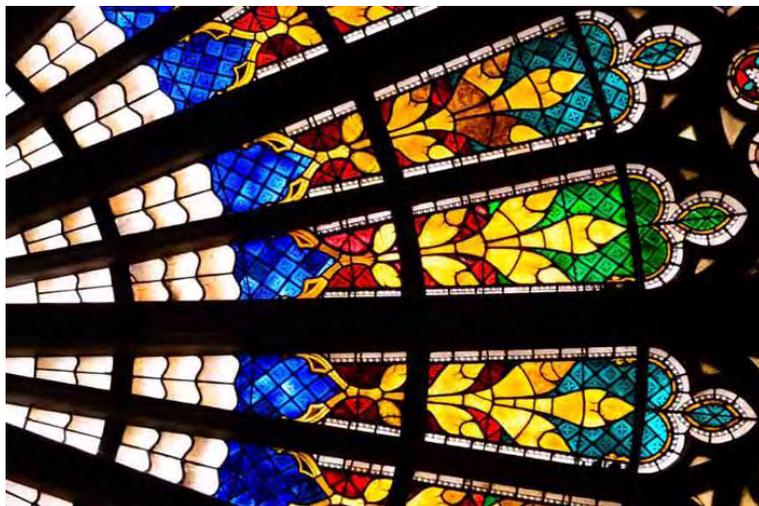
Speaking of her achievement Aimee said 'The experience as a whole has given me the opportunity to focus solely on my acting and studies next term. It's made me love what I'm doing even more and I'm unbelievably grateful for my wonderful lectures who put me forward and to be awarded this bursary that will open many doors for me as a young actor. I'm so excited to see what the future holds!'

Head of Drama St Mary's, Mark Griffin said 'The competition for these bursary awards is incredibly fierce and we're so proud that Aimee made such a huge impression on the panel. Her talent, charisma and determination are inspiration to all of us in Drama St Mary's and it's fantastic that these qualities have been recognised and rewarded in such an encouraging way by the industry. She is most certainly an actor, comedienne and musician to watch out for in the future.'

To find out more about Drama St Mary's and the courses they offer, please visit [the University website](#).

St Mary's to Host Sixth Form Theology Conference and Essay Competition

[The Institute of Theology and Liberal Arts](#) at St Mary's University, Twickenham is delighted to be hosting a Sixth Form Theology conference on Friday 16th September from 10am-3pm.



The conference is open to all Sixth Forms and is free to attend. It will cover a range of topics which are explored throughout our [BA Theology, Religion and Ethics programme](#) while also relating back to the A-Level syllabus. The day will feature talks from four St Mary's academics: Dr Susan Longhurst on Secularism and Humanism, Associate Professor Matthew James on Bioethics, Dr Jeremy Pilch on Mary and the Church and the Director of the Institute of Theology and Liberal Arts, Dr Jacob Phillips who will be discussing Jesus.

If you would like to attend, please [email the Theology and Liberal Arts team](#) by 9th September to register.

Additionally, the Institute of Theology and Liberal Arts will be hosting the Lower Sixth Theology Essay Competition. This year's essay title is 'The existence of God can be known through reason alone' Discuss. The competition is open to students currently in Year 12 in England and Wales. The prize for first place will be £250 and there will be five honourable mentions who will each win a £20 book voucher.

All entries must be submitted by Friday 8th July at 5pm and it is anticipated that the winners will be announced at a ceremony in mid-September 2022.

If you are interested, you can [find out more on the St Mary's website](#).



St Mary's
University
Twickenham
London

Brentford Welcomes

By [Brentford FC](#)

Trust holding welcome event at Stadium Hub



In partnership with the [Brentford FC Community Sports Trust](#), we are running a welcome event primarily aimed at Ukrainian women and their children living in west London on the 14 July from 4pm – 6pm at the Brentford Community Stadium Hub.

The event will offer the chance to those who have recently moved to the local area, or those who have lived nearby for a while and want to come along, to meet others and hear how the Club and the Trust can support them.

What to expect

- An informal space to meet new people and learn more about the local community
- Light refreshments and snacks
- Games and entertainment for children

What you will get

- Find new friends
- Learn about the local community

To register your interest please visit www.brentfordfc.com/brentford-welcomes

Please let us know if you have any access requirements or any questions email: enquiries@brentfordfc.com

Address

Brentford Community Stadium Hub, Opposite entrance F, Brentford Community Stadium TW8 0RU

Multi-country outbreak of monkeypox, External situation report #1 - 6 July 2022

Highlights

- Updates on the multi-country outbreak of monkeypox has transitioned from the Disease Outbreak News to a biweekly situation report. The situation report will provide details such as the latest epidemiology, new guidance documents and updates on WHO advice. For information not included in this report, please see the Disease Outbreak News published on 27 June 2022.
- WHO published a guidance document to provide public health advice for gatherings during the current monkeypox outbreak on 28 June. The advice was developed for host governments, public health authorities, national or international organizers, and professional staff involved in the planning and delivery of gatherings, including people organizing smaller gatherings or attending gatherings of any type and size.
- The outbreak continues to primarily affect men who have sex with men who have reported recent sex with one or multiple male partners, suggesting no signal of sustained transmission beyond these networks for now.

Epidemiological Update

From 1 January to 4 July 2022, 6027 laboratory confirmed cases of monkeypox and three deaths have been reported to WHO from 59 countries/territories/areas in five WHO Regions (African Region, Region of the Americas, Eastern Mediterranean Region, European Region, Western Pacific Region) (Table 1). Since the previous Disease Outbreak News was published on 27 June 2022, 2614 new cases, (77% increase) and two new deaths have been reported; nine new countries/territories/areas have reported cases. Ten countries have not reported new cases for over 21 days, the maximum duration of the incubation period of the disease. This is the first time that local transmission of monkeypox has been reported in newly-affected countries without epidemiological links to countries that have previously reported monkeypox in West or Central Africa.

- **Read the Report in full:** [20220706_monkeypox_external_sitrep_final.pdf \(who.int\)](#)
- **External Reports will be posted here:** [Multi-country outbreak of monkeypox, External situation report #1 - 6 July 2022 \(who.int\)](#)
- **More about the monkeypox outbreak 2022:**[here](#)
- **All DONs related to this event:**[here](#)
- **More about monkeypox:**[here](#)



**World Health
Organization**

Ghana reports first-ever suspected cases of Marburg virus disease

Accra – Ghana has announced the preliminary finding of two cases of Marburg virus disease and if confirmed these would be the first such infections recorded in the country. Marburg is a highly infectious viral haemorrhagic fever in the same family as the more well-known Ebola virus disease.

Preliminary analysis of samples taken from two patients by the country's Noguchi Memorial Institute for Medical Research indicated the cases were positive for Marburg. However, per the standard procedure, the samples have been sent to the Institut Pasteur in Senegal, a World Health Organization (WHO) Collaborating Centre for confirmation. The two patients from the southern Ashanti region – both deceased and unrelated – showed symptoms including diarrhoea, fever, nausea and vomiting. They had been taken to a district hospital in Ashanti region.



Preparations for a possible outbreak response are being set up swiftly as further investigations are underway.

“The health authorities are on the ground investigating the situation and preparing for a possible outbreak response. We are working closely with the country to ramp up detection, track contacts, be ready to control the spread of the virus,” said Dr Francis Kasolo, World Health Organization (WHO) Representative in Ghana.

WHO is deploying experts to support Ghana's health authorities by bolstering disease surveillance, testing, tracing contacts, preparing to treat patients and working with communities to alert and educate them about the risks and dangers of the disease and to collaborate with the emergency response teams.

If confirmed, the cases in Ghana would mark the second time Marburg has been detected in West Africa. Guinea confirmed a single case in an outbreak that was declared over on 16 September 2021, five weeks after the initial case was detected.

Previous outbreaks and sporadic cases of Marburg in Africa have been reported in Angola, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Kenya, South Africa and Uganda.

Marburg is transmitted to people from fruit bats and spreads among humans through direct contact with the bodily fluids of infected people, surfaces and materials. Illness begins abruptly, with high fever, severe headache and malaise. Many patients develop severe haemorrhagic signs within seven days. Case fatality rates have varied from 24% to 88% in past outbreaks depending on virus strain and case management.

Although there are no vaccines or antiviral treatments approved to treat the virus, supportive care – rehydration with oral or intravenous fluids – and treatment of specific symptoms, improves survival. A range of potential treatments, including blood products, immune therapies and drug therapies, are being evaluated.



Grassroots participation in sport and physical activity

The Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS) was making some progress in increasing national participation in sport and physical activity until the impact of the pandemic reversed these gains. However, it needs to do more to reach key groups who are less likely to be active including women, the least affluent and Black and Asian people, according to a report by the National Audit Office (NAO).

The government promised an increase in grassroots sport participation as part of the long-term legacy of the London 2012 Olympic and Paralympic Games. Government set up an Olympic and Paralympic Legacy Cabinet Committee in 2012 to oversee the delivery of a variety of programmes for the legacy. Several initiatives were set up, such as Sport England's £135 million 'People Places Play' programme which sought to improve local facilities, train local sports leaders, and encourage adults to try Olympic and Paralympic sports. However, the proportion of adults participating in sport at least once a week declined in the three years following the Games. The Olympic and Paralympic Legacy Cabinet Committee was disbanded in 2015 and government attention to legacy waned.

The government shifted its approach in 2015 to focus on outcomes of participation in sport and physical activity, such as physical and mental wellbeing, through a new strategy 'Sporting Future'. It promised to target funding at tackling less active groups of the population, believing this would deliver the biggest gains for public spending. 'Sporting Future' also committed government departments to work more closely together on delivery and funding, as maximising participation in sport and physical activity contributes to a range of other departments' priorities such as tackling obesity. While there was some increased collaboration following the publication of the strategy, this has not been consistent or sustained.

Activity rates increased nationally in the three years before the COVID-19 pandemic, but progress with specific, less active groups was mixed. The percentage of active adults increased from 62.1% in the year to November 2016 to 63.3% in the year to November 2019. This is equivalent to 1.1 million additional active adults, more than double the government's target of 500,000. Sport England set itself activity targets for 2020 for two specific less active groups: women aged 16-60 and lower socio-economic groups. Immediately prior to the pandemic the number of people from lower socio-economic groups increasing their activity levels through Sport England funded programmes was on track, at 83% of the target level. But for women aged 16-60, the rise was only 18% of the target. Among less active groups which did not have set targets, over-75s and disabled people experienced statistically significant increases in activity levels prior to the pandemic, but there was no such increase in Black or Asian ethnicity groups.

The COVID-19 pandemic was highly disruptive for sports and physical activity. The percentage of adults who were active fell to 61.4% in the year to November 2021 - the joint-lowest level for the year to November results since Sport England began collecting these data in the year to November 2016. This fall has exacerbated inequalities in activity for the least affluent, Asian people and disabled people. DCMS is exploring what lessons it can take from the pandemic.

Sport England's new strategy for grassroots sports and physical activity, 'Uniting the Movement', takes a more localised and collaborative approach than before. It continues to focus on encouraging activity among the inactive but also gives greater prominence to addressing inequalities in participation. DCMS also plans to publish a new strategy in summer 2022 to replace its 2015 strategy. This will include how it will work across government to ensure greater joined-up working between the sector and government departments. Both Sport England and DCMS are developing how to measure the success of their new strategies.

To support the delivery of its strategic objectives for participation in sport and physical activity, the NAO recommends that DCMS sets out how it will lead the delivery of objectives that it shares with other departments. It should also set out how it will measure the success of its strategy. Sport England should check that its distribution of funding supports its objective to target lower socio-economic groups and do more to share its insight and learnings with the sector.

Gareth Davies, the head of the NAO, said:

"Grassroots participation in sport did not receive the post-London Olympics and Paralympics boost hoped for at the time. Since 2015 DCMS has refocused its approach on the benefits of sport and physical activity, targeting the inactive.

"Overall activity levels were gradually increasing before the pandemic but these gains were lost as facilities and clubs were disrupted. In recovering the position, DCMS should also tackle persistent inequalities in participation."



National Audit Office

Click here for the [full report](#) and click here for the [PAC Chair's statement](#)

Investigation into the management of the Holocaust Memorial and Learning Centre

Although construction of the Holocaust Memorial and Learning Centre has not yet begun, the National Audit Office (NAO) has identified several emerging risks and uncertainties at this stage of the programme which are likely to increase costs and cause delays.

The creation of the Holocaust Memorial and Learning Centre was recommended by the Holocaust Commission in January 2015. The Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC) is responsible for managing the delivery of the programme, supported by a UK Holocaust Memorial Foundation Advisory Board. DLUHC aims to 'create a fitting National Memorial to the six million murdered Jewish men, women and children and other groups who became victims of Nazi persecution, accompanied by a learning centre that will enable visitors to gain a greater understanding of the scale and nature of the Holocaust and of Britain's role in relation to it'.

The NAO's investigation sets out findings on how DLUHC is set up to manage the programme, maximise its impact, and manage risks to cost and schedule.

As part of its investigation, the NAO found:

- The Department has set up governance arrangements for the programme
- The Department has clearly set out what it considers to be the strategic benefits of the Memorial and Learning Centre and mapped them against its objectives
- The programme has controls to try to safeguard against substantial cost increases

The NAO also identified the following emerging areas of risk to the programme:

- DLUHC has recruited specialists from across the Civil Service and externally, but the team does not have staff with programme management expertise in senior positions
- DLUHC estimates that difficulties in finalising planning permission for the intended location of the Memorial and Learning Centre had caused at least 12 months of delays as at June 2022
- DLUHC does not have an alternative location if it is unable to build the Memorial and Learning Centre in Victoria Tower Gardens
- The creation of the organisation to run the Memorial and Learning Centre is an additional risk to the schedule
- There are several sources of funding for the construction of the Memorial and Learning Centre, but not all are guaranteed.

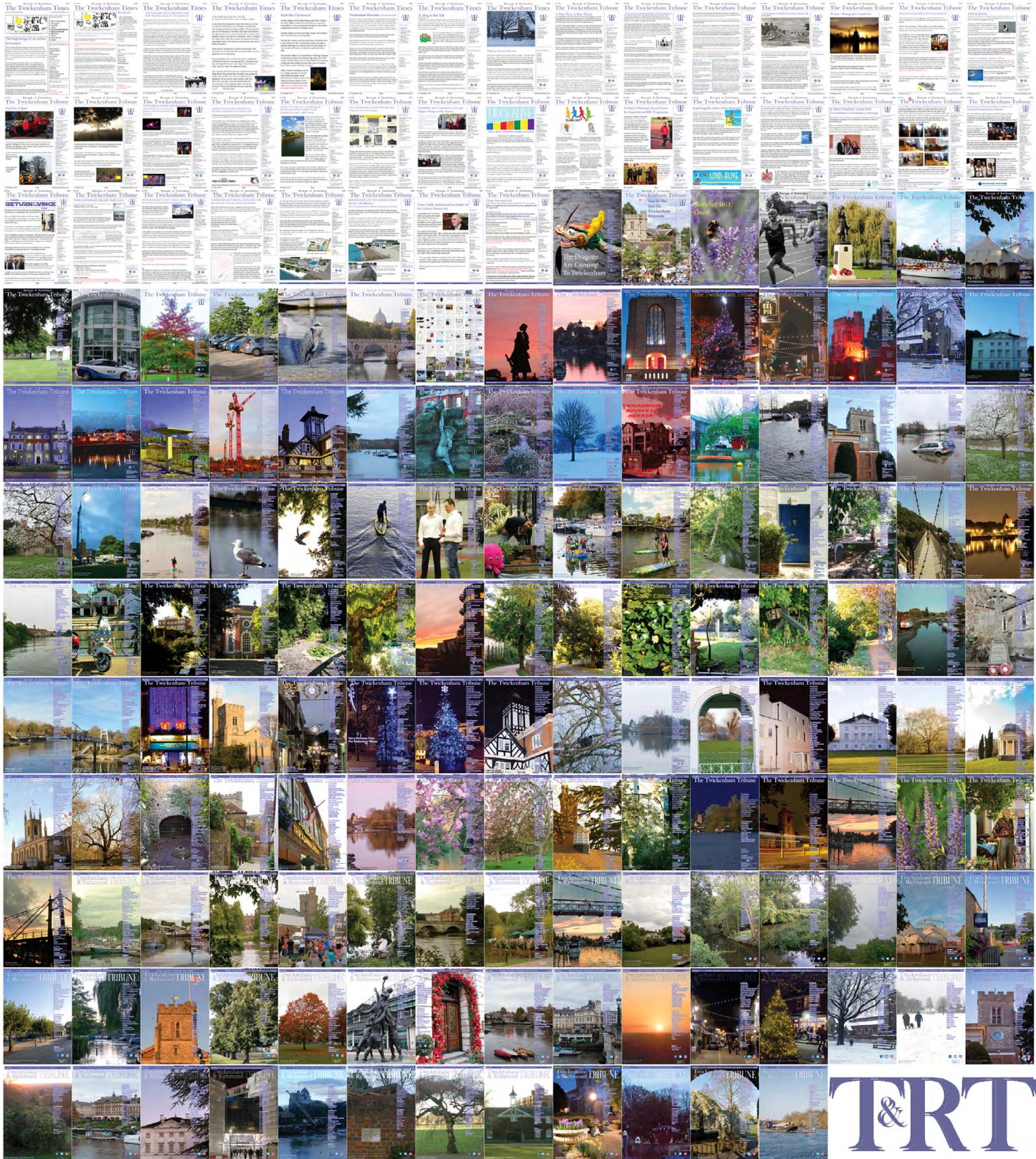
As new risks have emerged since the full business case was approved (such as difficulties with planning permission and construction cost inflation), the NAO recommends that DLUHC should have further discussions with HM Treasury about how best to control cost increases. DLUHC should also ensure that senior programme and project leaders have the necessary skills or have completed appropriate training, in line with government guidance.

Click here for the [full report](#)



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