Twickenham TRIBUNG & Richmond TRUBUNG

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- Royal College of Emergency Medicine
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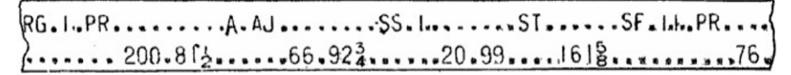
Berkley Driscoll Teresa Read







24th February 2023



TickerTape - News in Brief

Come chat with a local pharmacist on the Community Health Bus this March

Residents can access blood pressure checks, support to stop smoking, preventative health advice from a local pharmacist, free COVID-19 testing kits and more free services on our Community Health Bus, which will be returning to Richmond upon Thames for three dates in March.

The health bus will be parked at the following dates, times and locations in March:

- **Wednesday 1 March**, 10am to 3pm Tesco Teddington, 20-28 Broad Street, Teddington TW11 8RF
- **Tuesday 14 March**, 8.30 am to 2.30pm outside Kanset Pharmacy, 177 Ashburnham Road, Richmond TW10 7NR
- Thursday 23 March, 11am to 5pm York House lay-by, Richmond Road, Twickenham TW1 3AA

Eligible residents will also have access to their first or second dose of the COVID-19 vaccine as well as a flu jab.

A local pharmacist will be available to offer advice on a range of different areas

River footpath opened by Twickenham station

A new footpath along the River Crane is now open to the public, providing a direct link between Twickenham station and Moormead Recreation Ground.

The path was a planning requirement of the Twickenham Station development, built by Solum, a partnership between National Rail and Kier Property. The development was opened in January 2020, but opening of the path was very much delayed due to a number of issues, including the laying of an unsuitable surface.

The path will be open to the public from dawn until dusk.

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Covid-19
Teresa Read

IN THE NEWS THIS WEEK

Evening Standard: Covid-19 infections increasing in most parts of UK in fresh sign of new wave. Rates are currently highest among secondary school-age.

Reuters: Britain's Queen Consort Camilla was forced to pull out of another engagement on Wednesday as she continues her recovery from COVID.

New York Times: For Older Americans, the Pandemic Is Not Over.

Aljazeera: WHO to 'push until we get the answer' on COVID origins: WHO chief Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus says it is 'crucial' to know how the coronavirus pandemic started.

World Health Organization

COVID-19 Weekly Epidemiological Update: Data as of 19 February 2023

At the country level, the highest numbers of new 28-day cases were reported from the United States of America (1,113,288), Japan (l,095,815), China (635,433), the Republic of Korea (430,042), and Germany (329,229).

The highest numbers of new 28-day deaths were reported from the United States of America (13,517), China (9,945), Japan (6,536), Australia (2,179), and the United Kingdom (2,063).

European Region

The European Region reported over 1.3 million new cases. The highest numbers of new cases were reported from Germany (329,229), the Russian Federation (272,478) and Italy (119,336).

The highest numbers of new deaths were reported from the United Kingdom (2,063), Italy (1,249), and the Russian Federation (1,105).



Belgium on Thames

By Simon Fowler

The rapid German advance across Flanders in the autumn of 1914 bought a flood of Belgian refugees to Britain. Some 250,000 eventually crossed the Channel: the largest group of people ever to be offered refuge in the United Kingdom.

Initially they were supported by local charities. But soon many men and women began to look for work. Hundreds of Belgians thronged to Charles Pelabon's factory near Richmond Bridge in Twickenham to make hand grenades and other munitions. The unfinished skating-rink had been purchased by Monsieur Pelabon, a dynamic French engineer-entrepreneur. M. Pelabon had installed the first machines by the end of December 1914 and soon expanded from just the one very large building to five or six. One of his last additions, completed by mid 1915, was the well-known red brick riverside building which later became Richmond Ice Rink until its much-regretted demolition in 1992. There was a certain amount of grumbling in the local press about the unsightliness of having such an establishment so close to the river. In November 1918 newspapers reported that: 'Every day this week a pall of filthy smoke has hung over the river, while a night the sky has been lit up with the glare of fires.'

The Works grew to a point where it employed nearly 2000 staff, men and women, and the Belgian community of Twickenham and Richmond probably reached 6000.

East Twickenham became known as the Citè Belge de la Tamise. Many Belgian shops were established in Richmond Road; many of the workforce lived in St Margarets and Twickenham or across the river in Richmond.

DEST.

The Walloon writer Paul Gérardy described the area:

'A Belgian who passed Richmond Bridge or walked through the streets around the factory at the times of the workers' arrival and departure might well believe he was the victim of hallucination, as he might have the feeling of being suddenly transported to an industrial town in the environs of Liége. You hear the singing, drawling tones of the language everywhere, as cheerful and good-natured as on the side of the River Meuse.'

M. Pelabon was a paternalistic industrialist of the old-fashioned sort, taking a keen interest in his staff and their families. He agreed to reimburse Twickenham council for the education of nearly one hundred children of his employees at a local school.

After the Armistice the Belgians rapidly returned home. From comments in the local papers this was welcomed: 'Nobody I have talked to is at all in favour of having a big colony of established here.' They had been rather an exotic and Catholic presence in a very conservative area.

A memorial on East Twickenham's Riverside commemorates the Belgian refugees who settled and worked in the area during the First World War.

Major road closure in Richmond starts on Wednesday 1 March

Hill Street in central Richmond will be closed in a northbound direction, between Richmond Bridge and Water Lane, from Wednesday 1 March for approximately three weeks.

This will mean there is no access to Richmond Town Centre for traffic coming across Richmond Bridge and from Petersham.

The closure is due to Thames Water carrying out an emergency repair to a leak.

Traffic diversions

Traffic coming across Richmond Bridge will be diverted down Petersham Road, back up Star and Garter Hill onto Queens Road, onto Sheen Road back to Richmond Town Centre.

See diversion map for traffic coming across Richmond Bridge

Traffic coming from Petersham will be diverted over Richmond Bridge, onto St Margarets Road onto the A 316, to Richmond Circus, back into Richmond Town Centre.

See <u>diversion map for traffic coming from Petersham</u>

Bus diversions

Bus routes over Richmond Bridge will follow the traffic diversion - down Petersham Road, back up Star and Garter Hill onto Queens Road, onto Sheen Road back to Richmond Town Centre.

Pedestrian access

Pedestrian access is open on both sides of the route. All businesses are accessible by foot.



Richmond Council announces Council Tax, as inflation increases create funding pressures Richmond Council is proposing to raise core Council Tax by 2.99% and is also proposing a further 2% increase

in the precept for Adult Social Care, as allowed under government funding plans.

These proposals reflect the significant effects inflation has had on Council budgets. To help low-income households, the proposals also include taking a further £100 off the bills of those who receive support with their Council Tax.

Cllr Robin Brown, Richmond Council Lead Member for Finance, said:

"Inflation is dramatically affecting Council budgets, but maintaining public services is vital to protect those who depend on them and to keep Richmond a great place to live for all.

"The Council's finances are well managed, so we have some reserves to help deal with rising costs. We have also put in place a £5 million savings programme and are looking at other ways to make sure the Council is run as efficiently and effectively as possible, making every penny count. Unfortunately, these alone will not cover the gaps in our budgets, so we must increase Council Tax.

"We don't do this lightly given the pressures on people's finances, but this is necessary for us to deliver a fair deal for all our residents. To help those most in need of financial help, we are setting aside funds to reduce the bills of those on the lowest incomes by up to £100. This is in addition to any support they already receive with their council tax and so will be of direct benefit to thousands of households."

The Council has already dedicated £3 million to assist residents, businesses and the voluntary sector through the cost-of-living crisis. However, increased financial pressures on households are resulting in increased demand on other services, in particular adult and children's social care. In 2023/24, 34% of gross revenue expenditure will be spent on Adult Social Services and 22% on Children's Services (excluding schools and education).

The Council has also set out other key areas for investment over the coming financial year:

- Delivering an action plan to tackle crime and improve the safety of women and girls in the borough
- Investing in school facilities, including creating additional places for special needs education
- Investing in the community safety team to tackle anti-social behaviour, as well as fly-tipping and noise nuisance
- Delivering more affordable housing
- Expanding tree planting, installing EV charging and bike
- Looking at flood resilience as part of the climate emergency strategy
- Becoming a Borough of Sanctuary for refugees and people seeking sanctuary
- Supporting High Streets and local businesses
- Investing in our tourism sector and advice programmes for local businesses
- Transforming Twickenham Riverside
- Looking after the borough's roads and pavements
- Maintaining libraries, playgrounds, leisure centres and parks



The budget proposals will be discussed at next week's Finance, Policy and Resources Committee meeting (Tuesday 28 February), after which Richmond's Full Council will consider the proposal on Tuesday 7 March.

The precept charged by the Mayor of London is increasing by 9.74%. This means that the total band D bill will increase to £2,141.21, an increase of 5.92%.

Residents who need help with Council Tax payments may be entitled to support. Visit the Cost of Living Hub or call 020 8891 1411. Read the full report

March at Kew Gardens



Final slots for Orchids 2023: Cameroon

Back bigger and better than ever for 2023, Kew Gardens' much-loved Orchid festival must end on Sunday 5 March 2023. Taking inspiration from the beauty and biodiversity of Cameroon, Orchids 2023 is a vibrant celebration of colour to brighten up the winter months, and is the first time Kew's Orchid festival celebrates an African nation. Entry included in Kew Gardens admission, with £1 tickets available for recipients of Universal Credit, Pension Credit and other legacy benefits. Time slots must be pre-booked in advance.







Last chance to see When Flowers Dream | Entry included in admission

The perfect escape from grey winter days, When Flowers Dream by Pip & Pop showcases an eclectic, playful and immersive mix of vibrant artworks and a brand-new bespoke installation created especially for Kew Gardens - an imaginary landscape brimming with foods of the future. Runs until Sunday 5 March 2023 in the Shirley Sherwood Gallery of Botanical Art, entry included as part of Kew Gardens admission.







Horticultural Highlights

Horticultural highlights on display this month at Kew Gardens include early signs of spring with crocuses and daffodils in the Woodland Garden, the Natural Area and the Great Broad Walk Borders. At Wakehurst, visitors can spot the first rare rhododendrons blooming across stunning vistas as they make their way through the dramatic ravine of Westwood Valley.







One week left to nominate your Community Heroes for an award!

It's the last chance to nominate an inspirational person, group, or business who has helped to make Richmond upon Thames a better place.

Cllr Nancy Baldwin, Richmond Council's Spokesperson for Communities, Equalities & the Voluntary Sector said:

"Year after year, we continue to learn about the amazing ways members of our community go above and beyond the call of duty to give back and make our borough a better place for all. We really want to make this year's Community Heroes Awards a celebration to remember, and so we are looking for as many nominations as possible! We have an abundance of selfless and inspiring people in this borough, so let's get nominating to make sure that they are recognised and thanked for what they do!"



There are 10 award categories that people can nominate for:

- Young person achievement
- · Communities together
- Community project of the year
- Environmental
- Helping hands
- Trustee of the year
- Business contribution to the community
- Community group of the year
- Lifetime achievement
- Outstanding volunteer

Read the criteria for each category.

If residents know someone who they consider to be a hero, they can <u>submit a nomination</u> by Wednesday 1 March 2023. It only takes a few minutes to do and means we're able to shout about the amazing things being done for others across our borough

All work nominated for should have been done in a voluntary capacity, and more information about how to submit can be found on our website.

For further information about Community Heroes, please email events@richmond.gov.uk or phone 020 8891 7662.

Teddington Direct River Abstraction

Register for the Online Webinar & Community Information Session



NEW CONSULTATION EVENTS CONFIRMED!



on plans to discharge effluent into River Thames at Teddington

Online Webinar and Q&A

Monday, 27th February 7pm until 8.30pm

Community Information Session

Friday, 3rd March at York House 2pm until 8pm

Road closure for toads crossing

Richmond Council are reminding residents in Church Road in Ham to keep an eye out for breeding toads as they begin their annual carriageway cross.

We will be closing a small section of Church Road to allow the toads to cross.

The toads, which live on Ham Common, are currently breeding and will make the 100-metre journey from their habitat to pools on the other side of the road to spawn for approximately three to four weeks.

To ensure the safety of the toads, a small section of Church Road (between Ham Gate Avenue and Latchmere Lane) will be closed from Monday 27 February until Monday 27 March 2023. Residents in the area will be notified by post of the migration and road closure.

Over 100,000 toads annually are helped across roads by volunteers throughout the UK and the number of toad patrols has doubled since 2009.

This year, we also have another toad patrol on Ham Common formal from Ham Pond, across the two adjacent roads. These roads will not be closed.

To aid the toads on their journey, small fencing has been installed along the edge of the



common to enable the toad patrol patrollers to pick them up and help them over the highway to complete their onward journey.

Temporary signage has been erected by the Council to warn drivers about the toad migration.

There will be a diversion in place to avoid the closed road, which is via Ham Gate Avenue, Upper Ham Road and Church Road and vice versa.

Champions Wharf Play Beach unveils boat refurbishments

The boats in Champions Wharf Play Beach have been reinstalled at the beach, with a new refurbishment.

The oars and shields have been replaced after a number of years. The boats have also been painted and include beautifully decorated shields inspired by Vikings.

The work was carried out by <u>Richmond Bridge</u>
<u>Boathouses</u>, so residents may have seen these boats in their workshop on Richmond Riverside.

One of the boats has been renamed 'Freda' after Freda Hammerton, who died in 2021, aged 91. Freda was the daughter of a Waterman and the great niece of Walter Hammerton, who founded the ferry between Marble Hill Park and Ham House.







Marble Hill House reopening

Marble Hill House reopens for the season on 1st April.

Inside the house, you can discover a taste of Georgian life with freshly conserved interiors and new displays that tell the story of Henrietta Howard, Marble Hill's remarkable owner. Outside, explore over sixty acres of riverside parkland, with restored gardens, reinvigorated woods and even a nine pin bowling alley.

Pre-book your free ticket online <u>HERE</u>





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Moulsdale Keeper of the Ligh

Twickers Foodie - By Alison Jee

BOZA

Despite having spent quite a few holidays in Turkey, and being such a foodie, I'd never heard of boza. It was a post on Instagram by another local foodie contact that led me to contact Gokce Baykal who runs **Richmond Boza** to find out some more about this ancient fermented drink - one that's so popular with the Turkish community.

According to Encyclopedia Britannica: "Boza, a thick, fermented drink made from corn, wheat, millet, or bulgur (depending on location), with a subtle tart, tangy taste and a very low alcohol content. Most commonly found in Eastern European and Middle Eastern countries like Turkey, Kazakhstan, Bulgaria, and Romania, boza is a popular winter drink that resembles eggnog. In Turkey, it is slightly sweetened with sugar and cinnamon and served with crunchy roasted chickpeas. The name is possibly a root word for the English term "booze.""

Boza contains proteins, complex carbohydrates, minerals and various vitamins - for this reason is considered a very nutritious drink. It's also **vegan** and high in lactic acid, which has positive effects on digestion and the intestinal flora. The boza produced locally in Richmond is also **gluten free**, as when

noticing the taste was as good with corn and rice, they removed wheat from the ingredients. The Turks have been consuming boza for centuries, and this tradition made its way into Ottoman food culture, with shops selling boza all over the city of Istanbul during the Ottoman period. In Turkey today the health benefits of boza are promoted, with pregnant and nursing women, and athletes encouraged to drink boza. People tend to love or hate the taste of boza - I suppose it's a Turkish equivalent of Marmite!

Gokce and her husband started making boza as a hobby while studying in the United States. They both have PhD's from their studies in New Jersey:

Gocke studied Political Science and her husband is a food scientist. The boza was enjoyed by them and their friends, and when they came to live in Richmond some years ago, they continued making it. Again, friends and neighbours enjoyed the boza, and soon they found their hobby expanding and were selling it locally...

Strangely, boza is a winter drink in Turkey - sold from early October until March or April. To me that seemed rather odd, as it's cold, refreshingly rich and sweet. On chatting about this, Gokce mentioned that originally it would, of course, have gone off in the heat of Turkish summers long ago, hence its winter consumption. But the habit remains to this day.

So what does it taste like? Well, it's rich, sweet, with a slightly slimy texture, yet smooth, and with grainy notes. It reminded me of a milkshake made from yoghurt and rice pudding, or eggnog. Did I like it? Yes, strangely enough I found it very nice, if a tad on the sweet side for my personal taste. I could easily, though, become quite addicted to it!

You can buy **Richmond Boza** from the Turkish shops in the Richmond area: Richmond Greens on Richmond Hill; La Plata in Mortlake; Bakkal in Putney or online from bestgrocery.co.uk. La Plata Deli also offers it on the menu, so you can even try it before you buy!

Twickers Foodie - By Alison Jee

SAM'S LARDER - WORTH THE SHORT TRIP TO CHISWICK

Following my piece recently about the fabulous Cheese market in Chiswick, we hopped on the 267 bus the other Sunday and had the most wonderful time visiting both the cheese market, and then to Sam's Larder in Turnham Green Terrace. Some of you may recall Sam's Brasserie - Sam Harrison's original business - which closed in 2015 after a decade in Chiswick. He then opened Sam's Riverside in Hammersmith, but now he's also back in Chiswick with a great combination of deli and grocery shop, with a small all-day café.





It looks really inviting from the street (with some seating outside

on the pavement) and inside it's bustling and buzzing with a vibrant atmosphere. The counter is groaning with all sorts of enticing pastries, salads and other goodies. The shelves are laden with a cornucopia of oils, vinegars, preserves and other tempting items. There's a large freezer at the rear of the shop stocked with takeaway versions of the Frozen range of meals and icecreams prepared by Sam's Riverside chefs. The chill cabinets are packed with all manner of produce from their

favourite suppliers including Cobble Lane, Chalk Stream Farm, Neal's Yard Dairy and lots more.



We sat by the window, where we could observe the passers-by. I enjoyed a glass of Gusbourne Blanc de Blancs and my husband quaffed a bottle of Hawkstone IPA while we perused the menu. The mushroom soup tempted him, but I decided to concentrate on enjoying my wonderful glass of fizz, watching the world go by. The soup was proclaimed delicious, and the tiny taste I managed to 'steal' certainly bore that out! I wanted something light, so



I chose a small selection of salads. They had three salads on offer that day (£10 for small and £15 large selection): Beetroot & Feta; Kale Caesar and Sam's Superfood. You can add chicken breast or smoked salmon as an extra. They were all fabulous, and I'm inspired to make a kale

salad now, especially with the shortage of fresh salad ingredients in the shops!



My husband, being quite replete with the soup, chose a smoked salmon bagel, which was excellent. He couldn't resist, though, the temptation of bread & butter pudding to finish. To be honest, I would have described it as a bread pudding, but nonetheless the soupcon I tried was really tasty and needless

to say, the plate was emptied.

Prices at Sam's Larder are very reasonable and the ingredients are all top quality British from trusted, British producers.

We thoroughly enjoyed our visit and will be back soon. It's open daily for coffee, pastries, breakfast and lunch. It's also dog friendly, so Crystal Poodle could enjoy the Sam's experience too.

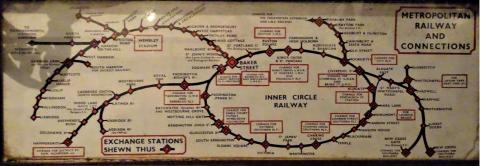
TRAVELLER'S TALES 141 DOWN THE TUBE



Doug Goodman looks at the history of London Underground

London Underground is celebrating the 160th year of its inauguration. It was the very first underground system when it opened in 1863 with steam trains running on the Metropolitan Line between Paddington and Farringdon. Try to imagine standing, or sitting if you were lucky, in an open carriage as smoke and fumes swirled around you. It was a revolutionary and instantly popular method of getting around in London and avoided the crowded, horse-drawn traffic. Cut and cover was the early means of building the tunnels but this caused enormous disruption in London's streets: later came the method of boring tunnels for the track. The most spacious carriages were, and still are, on the District and Circle and Metropolitan Lines while the smaller carriages on the Northern and Bakerloo Lines were scaled down to fit a smaller bore. Today the Underground is the world's second largest after Shanghai and carries two million passengers daily on eleven lines through 270 stations: the busiest is Waterloo followed by Oxford Street. We've progressed somewhat with our transport since those first passengers left their stations coughing and spluttering. But on a trip on The Elizabeth Line on the opening day, from Tottenham Court Road to Paddington, I took The Bakerloo Line back to Waterloo. What a contrast in comfort. The noise was deafening, the carriage was old and dilapidated and, apart from the smoking ban, didn't seem very different to my daily journey to Oxford Circus around sixty years ago.





One of the First Maps

Early Underground Map

EARLY DAYS

The first maps of the underground were very different to the ones we use today. The stations were printed over street maps. They followed the geography of London so you knew exactly where the station was located. The network grew tremendously in the 1920s and 1930s and it became impossible to portray the vast number of central stations and those going far out to the suburbs in a geographical format. To the rescue came Harry Beck, one of London Transport's draughtsmen. His inspiration came from electrical circuit diagrams. In his new map of 1931, which is easily recognisable today, he used only horizontal, diagonal and vertical lines and ignored geography. Stations were boldly marked along with interchanges as it was believed to be more important to see the route and interchanges than it was to know the exact location of your local station. The iconic Underground sign came into everyday use. Many early stations like Mornington Crescent were built with glazed brown tiles on the exterior and can be seen all over London.

LOST STATIONS

While the tube system has expanded in recent times – The Elizabeth Line and the Northern Line extension to Battersea Power Station- many stations have vanished. There's a map showing disused stations and the fascinating TV series 'Secrets of the London Underground' presented by Siddy Holloway and Tim Dunn have generated great interest in the system's history. Many of the disused stations can be visited by booking with The London Transport Museum, while trips behind the scenes of some key stations can be arranged. One station, opened in 1907 and closed in 1932, on the Piccadilly Line between Hyde Park Corner and Green Park, has historical significance. Down Street was used as a communications centre, a base for weapon production and, during the height of the Blitz in 1940, as a refuge by Churchill. Many stations were given over to the public as air raid shelters where thousands slept on the platforms and formed close communities.



Typical Early Station



Victorian Poster



Iconic Design



Lost Stations

In Covent Garden you can visit the London Transport Museum which charts the development of all the forms of transport in our city. As well as maps there's a colourful collection of posters extolling the convenience of taking the tube or bus. A reconstructed booking office from the old Aldwych Station, which was one stop on a branch line from Holborn, is there alongside a 'Blitz experience'. Several unused stations have featured in films with probably the original Aldwych being the most popular in James Bond films. Old tube carriages, steam locos and buses can be explored. The museum's shop has a comprehensive selection of books and gifts. The Elizabeth Line, now in its second year of operation, has made travelling into London from the east and west much quicker and more comfortable and is fully integrated with other lines. One hundred and sixty years ago the new lines had different owners with frequent rivalry over fares, routes and refusals to cooperate. So what can we expect in the future? A north-south link through to Twickenham or perhaps an extension of the District Line from Richmond would be most welcome.



Former Station Down Street



Aldwych Re-created at London Transport Museum



Tourist Top Spot



Latest Addition to the Network

For information on the London Transport Museum, its tours of stations and visits to the Acton Depot collection of railway memorabilia see: www.ltmuseum.co.uk.

WIZ Tales: Belize - A Member of the British Commonwealth

Teresa Read

Belize, known as an important settlement of the Maya, is the only country in Central America to be a member of the British Commonwealth; King Charles III is the Head of State.

The coastal area of Belize has one of the longest barrier reefs in the world; the Belize Barrier Reef Reserve System was

inscribed as a World Heritage site in 1996.

The Blue Hole, in the centre of the Lighthouse Reef Atoll, is a circular hole one thousand feet in diameter and over four hundred feet deep. The Hole, visible from outer space, is a famous dive site.



Aerial view of the Lighthouse Reef Atoll Blue Hole

The International Monetary Fund has reported that Belize is exceptionally

vulnerable to natural disasters and climate change. "It already faces hurricanes, flooding, sea level rise, coastal erosion, coral bleaching, and droughts, with impacts likely to intensify given expected increases in weather volatility and sea temperature." Consequently, climate change is already affecting the livelihoods of much of the population.

Belize as a small country with relatively minor contributions to global greenhouse gas emissions has limited capacity to contribute to mitigation of global climate change.

The Government of Belize considers adaptation to climate change as a high priority and has published its Nationally Determined Contribution under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change.



Aerial view of the Lighthouse Reef Atoll Blue Hole



Sittee River, Belize



Belize Caye



Mound and pits at Caracol



St John's Cathedral, an Anglican church, built at the beginning of the 19c is the oldest Colonial building in Belize

Further information and photographs of Belize: https://worldinfozone.com/facts.php?country=Belize



SPELLING TEST



Bell, Book and Candle

by John Van Druten

Alces Productions and Take Note at The Tabard Theatre, Chiswick until 11th March

Nostalgia is big news at the moment. We seek comfort in a past that we view through rose tinted spectacles; so this trip back to the mid-20th century promised a real treat of escapism.

The play was the inspiration for *Bewitched*, the 1960's TV series. The premise is that a family of witches are living mundane lives in suburbia and bringing out their magic tricks to solve everyday problems.



However, whereas *Bewitched* was witty and had the advantage of studio effects and a thirty-minute episode format, the original play is just that little bit too long and much of its wit has been lost to the mists of time, although it still has some magic moments (pun intended) and got some big laughs from a very enthusiastic audience.



Zoe Teverson shines in the role of eccentric and irreverent Aunt Queenie, but without genuine chemistry between the main characters of Gillian and Anthony the play struggles; and there is an element of trying too hard from both Beth Burrows and Edward Hayes-Neary, who were not quite believable as a couple. Burrows is onstage for the majority of the play and does a good job of holding the piece together. Not only does she have to be believable in a pretty unbelievable role, but she also has to share the stage with a scene-stealing stuffed cat.

If only director Mark Giesser had gone for a full-on parody, we might be looking at the next big thing to

transfer to the West End. As it is we are left in a twilight world of semi-stylised performances that serve to accentuate how dated the play actually is, rather than sending themselves up. Overall *Bell Book and Candle* makes for a nice evening out. The effective design and the elegance of the period is demonstrated in both set and costumes. It looks beautiful and is good old fashioned entertainment. Possibly a little too old fashioned, but entertainment nonetheless.

Read Lottie Walker's review at www.markaspen.com/2023/02/22/bell-book-candle

Photography by Charles Flint

TAST TRACKSIDES

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

Blood Brothers

by Willy Russell

Bill Kenwright Productions at Richmond Theatre, then on tour until 29th April

Despite moving into its fifth decade, Willy Russell's play *Blood Brothers* explores themes of class, family, and the consequences of our choices. Two brothers who are separated at birth grow up in Liverpool on opposite sides of the tracks. The play examines the impact of their different upbringings, Mickey's on the poverty line and Eddie's highly privileged. Andy Walmsley's set, as poor terraced houses transform impressively, frames the change in the characters' circumstances.

The music at the centre of the production is buoyant and vivacious. The Narrator (Richard Munday) leans into the brash rock and roll number *Shoes upon the Table* with a performance as unnerving as the recurring devil on the shoulder.





The lead actors deliver captivating performances,

balanced with giving depth and nuance to their characters in the everyday details of their respective Merseyside lives. Niki Colwell Evans is a standout as Mrs. Johnstone, delivering bittersweet symphonies. Such was Colwell Evans' power in her vocals, that it is noticeable when she is off stage, due to the energy and wattage elevating the music when she returns.

Actors playing kids, then growing into their adult selves feels like a commentary on the lasting callousness of apparently harmless playground games. But perhaps one of the most impressive aspects of this production is the tackling of weighty themes without feeling heavy-handed.

Comedy is blended in nicely into quick-witted responses, but the best oneliners fall to Sean Jones and Joe Sleight as Mickey and Eddie respectively. As the brothers, they play off each other's energy in a way that feels natural and organic in moments of darkness as well as humour. Olivia Sloyan skilfully captures the evolution of Linda, from "one of the gang" as a child, to adulthood and all its subtleties.

Willy Russell's script remains as powerful as ever. *Blood Brothers* is a production that reminds us of the power of musical theatre to be moving and inspiring, as well as be foot-tappingly enjoyable.



Read Brent Muirhouse's review at www.markaspen.com/2023/02/22/blood-bros

Photography by Jack Merriman

ON #ETTECTION

The Mirror Crack'd

by Agatha Christie, adapted by Rachel Wagstaff Original Theatre at the Rose Theatre, Kingston then on tour until 4th March

In Agatha Christie's world, time is suspended and reality abandoned, a manor house, somewhere in Middle England, some strange goings-on and a satisfying ending where justice prevails.

The Mirror Crack'd is based on a typical "Miss Marple" mystery. Rachel Wagstaff's recently written stage adaptation provides a wonderful meaty role for the older actress. Susie Blake seizes



the part of the unlikely sleuth, and with great relish draws us into her quest to search for the truth. The convoluted plot unfolds quickly and is briskly directed by Philip Franks. Oliver Boot's detective



provided an admirable foil for Susie Blake's Miss Marple. Obviously, our amateur sleuth, busily knitting from her armchair, will always keep one step ahead of the plodding 'tec, despite Marple teasing that "I'm a spinster not a detective."

An enjoyable performance from Veronica Roberts, as Miss Marple's compatriot Dolly Bantry, in another well written part for an older actress. Dolly's observations on social changes in 1960's village communities include dire warnings of the coming of supermarkets, and "angry young men." The two ladies enjoy conversations peppered with rueful comments, such as "it's odd that sex makes babies."

Heather Leigh, a flamboyant Hollywood is now in England to star in the title role in *Catherine of Aragon*. Playing a prominent film star could provide for overacting a glitzy stereotype. Instead, Sophie Ward gives a restrained sympathetic performance, especially when explaining some of

the more powerful personal themes in the character's life.

What lifts this production out of the ordinary are the number of clever devices used with, for example, frequent flashbacks watched over by other characters. The cast replay key scenes, taken from different viewpoints, and sometimes played in slow motion, such as the moment of ... the poisoning.

The design is excellent, an open set with a long conservatory type structure of glass and mirrors, which is periodically revolved by the actors as scenes change.



The Mirror Crack'd, an interesting interpretation of a well-known novel, provides a pleasant enough evening of safe, if slightly predictable, theatre.

Read Steve Mackrell's review at www.markaspen.com/2023/02/22/mirror-crackd Photography by Michael Wharley

Treasures from Faraway: Medieval and Renaissance Objects from the Schroder collection

19 March - 19 July 2023

An exhibition of ten objects reveals the often-overlooked relationship between Europe's explorers and traders with artisans and craftsmen to create Cabinets of Curiosities

In the latest of its popular series of In Focus displays, Strawberry Hill House shines a spotlight on how diverse natural materials, from coconuts to rock crystal, along with trade networks with Asia and the Far East created new opportunities for European craftspeople to make objects of wonder for their wealthy patrons.

The aristocratic habit of collecting valuable objects to create what were known as Cabinets of Curiosities, Schatzkammer or Studioli (respectively in Britain, Germany and Italy) developed in the courts of Northern and Southern Europe during the Renaissance.

A Cabinet of Curiosities usually comprised of anything its owner deemed to be unique, exotic or valuable and therefore, worthy of collecting; including items from



the natural world, alongside works of art and antiquities. As a microcosm, the Cabinet of Curiosities symbolically conveyed its patron's knowledge of the wider world through its indoor, miniscule reproduction.

In the 17th-century, the presence of exotic materials increased, especially due to Portuguese maritime explorations and the activities of the Dutch and English East India Company. The expansion of the Ottoman Empire was also a major contributory factor.

The combination of rare and exotic materials - often, but not exclusively, coming from the Far East - and the skilled craftsmanship of Western goldsmiths is the starting point for Treasures from Faraway Horace Walpole's Gothic villa in Twickenham has been uniquely invited to display a selection of exceptional objects from this tradition, collected by several generations of the Schroder family. Highlights of Treasures from Faraway include the Grandmont Reliquary, a 16th-century English ewer and a tankard from Southern Germany, all of which feature beautiful rock crystal elements. During the Medieval and Renaissance ages, rock crystal from countries in the Near East, such as Egypt and Iran, were held in very high esteem by Europeans. In the extraordinary purity and transparency of this material they saw both a representation of virtue and a talisman against harmful forces.

While today we may regard coconuts and nautilus shells as familiar, even ordinary, in the 17th century they were considered as precious rarities. In the hands of artisans, the rounded form and malleability of a coconut shell, or the sinuous structure and mother-of-pearl coating of nautiluses, presented a variety of opportunities to create new and unusual objects, most notably, sophisticated drinking vessels. As the exhibition demonstrates, a coconut shell could with the addition of finely worked silver embellishments, take on the form of an owl-shaped cup. Two cups, believed to be from Nuremberg in Germany and the Dutch city of Delft respectively, reveal the creative opportunities to show not only the skill and artistry of European craftsmen but also, as in the case of the German example, Chinese

carvers.

Ivory was also highly valued for its rarity, preciousness and versatility. Imported from Africa and Asia, via countries such as Egypt, Syria and Cyprus, it was initially used to make sacred objects, but later it became a popular material for more everyday objects.

In 1710 the workshop of London's George Wickes turned a single ivory tusk into a tankard, topped with George II silver-gilt. Strawberry Hill is not only showing this remarkable object once owned by Horace Walpole himself, but also announcing that it has been acquired thanks to the Acceptance in Lieu scheme. The tankard features an ivory body probably carved in Germany in the 17th-century, while the silver mounting was commissioned by Robert Walpole, Horace's father. The exhibition catalogue will consider difficult issues such as the procurement of, and trade in, ivory in this period and its cultural value then and today.

The exhibition concludes with a display of Chinese blue and white porcelain, which still constituted a great rarity in Europe during the 16th and 17thcenturies. Even in Walpole's lifetime, Chinese porcelain represented a technological miracle, due its qualities of smoothness, light weight and brightness of its decoration. It was eagerly collected by the wealthy for its exotic distinctiveness, but also the material qualities, which European manufacturers were unable to imitate for a long time. Early examples of Chinese porcelain, like the blue and white porcelain ewer and bowl in the exhibition, dating back to the 16thcentury and were then embellished with silver or gold mountings by European craftsmen in a manner that emphasised the porcelain's rarity and preciousness. The ewer and bowl are both made of hand-decorated porcelain, probably made during the rule of Emperor



Wan Li at the time of the famed Ming Dynasty, between 1573 and 1620.

"This small exhibition aims to highlight both the symbolic and material characteristics of these objects and specially to explore the ways in which these exotic materials travelled away from their site of production into new cultural contexts, where they acquired new meanings and values," explains Strawberry Hill House Curator Silvia Davoli.

"Walpole himself had similar objects in his collection, an important example of which is the rock crystal ewer on display. However, by the 18th-century these treasures no longer attracted collectors for their symbolic meaning, but rather for their intrinsic preciousness and because they had often been part of prestigious collections."

A digital catalogue to accompany the exhibition has been created in collaboration with Buckingham University students studying on the MA in Decorative Arts and Historic interiors and MA in Art Market Studies and the History of Collecting courses, under the supervision of Adriano Aymonino, Silvia Davoli, and Lindsay Macnaughton.

For more information visit www.strawberryhillhouse.org.uk / Twitter @ strawbhillhouse / Facebook @StrawberryHillHouse / Instagram @ strawbhillhouse

WOULD YOU TELL THEM?

By Deep Patel

~ Through the Eyes of a Twickenham Shopkeeper ~

This week's article is dedicated to the age old question...do I say something...or not? You're probably wondering what I am talking about right? Well, we've all been there...you are getting on with your day and come face to face with a neighbor or colleague (or customer in my case) who clearly has something that someone needs to tell them...they have toothpaste around their lips, they have lipstick on their teeth, they smell less than fresh, their trouser zip is "flying low", they have their jumper on inside out, they are wearing odd socks, their breath smells worse than the dogs, they are wearing their wife's coat (it happens) or they haven't quite managed to clean their nose properly leaving their nasal passages somewhat "obstructed" with some clearly visible residue...so here's the million dollar question...would you tell them? Hmmm it's a hard one isn't it? This is something that happens in the shop rather often, and as a shop keeper who cares dearly for his customers, I always struggle to make that choice...do I tell them...or not?



On the one hand, if I tell the lovely lady who is going to do a big presentation in front of her whole company that she has lipstick all over her teeth, I may well save her embarrassment and subsequent anxiety rather than me not telling her and later that morning, her finding out from a colleague just seconds before her presentation, severely denting her confidence and making her perform to a standard less than she would have, had her teeth not had lipstick all over them. On the other hand, perhaps if I say something...she will feel embarrassed at the start of her journey into work and I will feel bad and uncomfortable each time I see her after (as may she)...

It's difficult to know sometimes isn't it? I mean if it was a jumper on the wrong way around, that's somehow not so bad as the clearly visible residual matter in one's nasal passage following an incomplete nose blow, or having toothpaste around the lips is somehow not as difficult to tell someone as is a comment regarding their less than fresh smelling breath perhaps?...so I guess there is no definitive answer or "one size fits all" and each case must be assessed individually using a clear and logical method of reasoning teamed with sensitivity and added consideration for external and situational factors as well as circumstances perhaps? Or maybe it's as easy as asking myself "do I like the person in question, or do I hate them? (in which case I should tell them bluntly and tear them to pieces and make them feel like s**t as they probably deserve it?). The latter might I add is NEVER my approach as I love everyone I meet in any case...but sometimes it's tempting right?

Once an elderly lady came into the shop wearing a long coat and was looking around with her shopping list, filling her basket as she paraded up each isle. When she reached the till, my mother realized the lady had forgotten to put a skirt on under her coat...my mum immediately softly told her and the lady was so thankful and said that she got dressed in the dark and was rushing to get to an appointment in Twickenham but would go home to put her skirt on first now. If it was me behind the counter...I may have felt confused as to whether I should say something or not, I mean perhaps she wanted to be without her skirt as she felt hot (it was winter though)...who am I to judge, and why should I judge anyway?

I must admit in the past, many a time I have turned a blind eye to gentlemen leaving my shop with their trouser zips "flying low" or ladies with their dresses not quite zipped up at the back...through fear and subsequent embarrassment of being told by the gentleman or lady in question "well you shouldn't be looking there anyway should you?"...ouch...talk about trying to help someone and being left to feel

like some kind of pervert...not great...so what is a shop keeper to do in such situations? Well it comes down to saving the customer's honour...or my own...and after years of contemplation behind a counter in my newsagents, I have finally decided, sod my honour or prospect of embarrassment, the customer should always come first and it is my job as a Twickenham shopkeeper to protect the honour of all who come into my shop each morning before they set off to central London, Sussex or Barcelona (yes some of our customers are traveling that far to work!)...If I want to truly call myself a kind and caring community shop keeper, is it not also my duty to make sure all my customers are set and ready to face their days ahead as they would wish to as well?

So from the time I realised that my customer's happiness and comfort is much more important than the prospect of embarrassment or discomfort that I may feel from telling them the truth, I make it my responsibility to tell customers if they have spinach stuck in their teeth when they are on their way to that important interview for that job they really want, or that they have toothpaste around their lips still when they are heading to meet the person they have been texting for the past month for the first time for a first date...why? I guess I care and would want someone to do the same for me if I was the one with spinach in my teeth or toothpaste around my lips...there is no shame in these things I remind myself, after all, we've all been there, and we are only human.

So next time you meet someone on the bus or train, or in your local supermarket that may have forgotten to look in the mirror, or may have overlooked something that may cause them embarrassment later, stop and gently, politely and tactfully tell them...think to yourself, if it was you instead of them, wouldn't you like to know? Remember also, there is no shame in not being perfect, imperfection after all is perfection itself...the very word says it itself: "IM PERFECTION" or "I'm perfection".

Embrace your imperfections...you were born to be real...not perfect...so be real...and help others to remember that to!

Those who follow my articles will know, what I am about to say about kindness towards little lives...but just in case you are a first-time reader, I always like to share these little good-karma gems, helping each other and all the life forms on this beautiful planet we call home. We are not the only inhabitants of this beautiful planet and there is a kind way for everything...If you have rodent issues, consider live capture traps where you can catch the rodents alive and release them in woodland or parkland areas far from homes. Try electronic highfrequency sound deterrents (check online for ones with good reviews and ones that are safe for your pets if you have any). Put empty jam jar lids filled with white vinegar all around areas where you don't want them to stop them without harming them (they HATE the smell of white vinegar). This also works for foxes, squirrels, mice and rabbits. Just picking up a slug off a pavement with a leaf and moving it over a wall counts as a good deed... choosing a kind way to stop ants (like talcum powder around where they come but not on them) counts as a good deed. Avoid sweeping/washing the garden patio too often to help save countless tiny almost invisible little lives that live there (particularly under large pots in the garden, hence I say gently lift the pots if you need to move them rather than dragging them to avoid crushing little lives). As I always say, the true key to our own happiness lies in the happiness of other life forms...until the next time...have a lovely week ahead and look after the smaller life forms and the universe will look after you. For further tips, check out my Facebook page "Kind World". As always...Peace, love and good karma to all xx

Remember...



"If you would like someone to tell you if it concerned you...tell someone when it concerns them too"...

NEVER HUNGRY IN HAMPTON

Helpful Sources of Good Food on Offer in Hampton

Monday

9am: Hampton Inspired Hub Food Surplus Delivery TW12 2JA

9am - 5pm: Hampton Inspired Hub Community Café TW12 2JA

2.30pm - 4.30pm: Real Junk Food Project at Linden Hall (eat In/take away) TW12 2JG

Tuesday

11.30am: Hampton Inspired Hub Food Surplus Delivery TW12 2JA

9am - 5pm: Hampton Inspired Hub Community Café TW12 2JA

9.30am - 3:30pm: Richmond Foodbank at YMCA Whitehouse TW12 3RN

11am - 12pm: Real Junk Food Project -Noble Green Wines (eat In/take away) TW12 1NL

3pm - 5pm: Community Supper at Linden Hall TW12 2JG

Wednesday

9am - 5pm: Hampton Inspired Hub Community Café TW12 2JA

1pm - 3.30pm: Richmond Foodbank at Vineyard Community Centre TW10 6AQ

Thursday

9am - 5pm: Hampton Inspired Hub Community Café TW12 2JA

11.30am - 1.30pm: Real Junk Food Project at Linden Hall (eat In/take away) TW12 2JG

1pm - 3.30pm - Richmond Foodbank at Vineyard Community Centre TW10 6AQ,

Friday

11:30am: Hampton Inspired Hub Food Surplus Delivery TW12 2JA

9am - 5pm: Hampton Inspired Hub Community Café TW12 2JA

9:30am - 12:30pm: Richmond Foodbank at Whitton Community Centre TW2 6JL

3pm - 6pm: Community Supper at Linden Hall TW12 2JG

Saturday and Sunday

9am - 5pm (4PM Sunday): Hampton Inspired Hub Community Café TW12 2JA















neverhungryinhampton@gmail.com

St Mary's University

St Mary's Alumnus Becomes Youngest Ever Black Professor at Cambridge University



Alumnus of BA Education Studies and Physical Education and MA Pedagogy, Professional Practice in Education at St Mary's University, Twickenham Prof Jason Arday has been appointed the youngest ever black professor at Cambridge University.

Prof Arday, 37, will take up his new role as Professor of Sociology of Education at Cambridge University in March, in doing so becoming the youngest ever black professor at the university. Jason is currently employed as a professor by the University of Glasgow and holds an honorary professorship in the department of sociology at Durham University.

Jason's remarkable academic journey saw him progress from being unable to read and write at 18 to completing his undergraduate studies at St Mary's just four years later.

A popular member of the St Mary's community, Jason held a post as a sabbatical officer in 2008 after completing his undergraduate studies. During his time in the role, he launched the popular annual varsity event against local sporting rivals Brunel University, now entering its 15th year. Jason went on to complete his first master's degree at St Mary's, before going on to complete another master's degree and his PhD at Liverpool John Moore's University.

Jason returned to St Mary's in 2020 to deliver a lecture as part of fresher's fortnight to inspire incoming and returning students.

Aside to his academic achievements, Jason is a prolific fundraiser. Supporting both local and national charitable causes, Jason has raised £4.5m for over 80

charities, including one fundraising effort which saw him run 30 marathons in 35 days.

St Mary's Academic Coaches Student Ice Hockey Team at International Event

St Mary's University, Twickenham academic, and GB Great British Women's Student ice hockey team coach, Ali Emery, travelled to the United States to support her team in the FISU (International University Sports Federation) World Winter Games.

The Games, staged every two years in a different city, are billed as a celebration of international university sports and culture, with thousands of student-athletes competing in each event.

It was a tough tournament for Great Britain in the ice hockey, with the team progressing to the quarter-finals, but not beyond.



However, the players from the Men's and Women's teams had the opportunity to play against incredibly talented ice hockey players.

Ali Emery commented, "It was a tough tournament for GB in the ice hockey, however with opportunity to meet more than 2,500 students from over 50 countries, the players from the Men's and Women's teams both had an amazing experience.

"We were fortunate enough to support BUCS (British Universities and Colleges Sport) athletes as they won gold in the men's curling and ski cross."

Held at New York State's Lake Placid, the event is the second largest winter games in the world.

Ali, who is a lecturer on the Sport Rehabilitation BSc at the School of Sport, Health & Applied Science at St Mary's, was interviewed before and after each game, where she promoted both the sport of ice hockey and the UK university

St Mary's University

experience.

Twickenham

London

An exciting link-up to kick-off your career

At the beginning of February, Richmond upon Thames College (RuTC) and AFC Wimbledon launched the perfect way for students to map out a career in the sports industry.

Eighty students were given a glimpse of a new partnership that could open the door into an exciting world of opportunity. As part of their visit, we announced the official link-up between the AFC Wimbledon Education Hub and Harrow, Richmond & Uxbridge Colleges, London's newest college group. "Better together, stronger

together"

The centrepiece of this exciting link-up is the AFC Wimbledon and HRUC Men's Football Development programme and Women's Football Academy. Students enlisting for this course will benefit from our elite coaching and games programme, utilising the expertise of AFC Wimbledon Academy and our successful Women's team and staff.

In addition to this course, the Club will work closely with the college to develop work placement opportunities for those seeking careers in the industry to do with marketing, media, event management, commercial business,



retail and catering and hospitality. As well as being given stadium tours, students got to hear from Dons first-teamer Jack Currie, who combines playing with studying for a degree, and club staff about careers in sport.

AFC Wimbledon's Managing Director Danny Macklin said: "We are delighted to be partnering with Harrow, Richmond & Uxbridge Colleges.

The Club has at the centre of its planning a number of exciting educational projects and initiatives underway. After the launch of our partnership with HRUC we are very much looking forward to welcoming the first cohorts of participants.

"Through our set-up at the Cherry Red Records Stadium we believe we can provide an educational hub that inspires the local area and allow students, both young and old, to achieve their best."

After earning a reputation for educational excellence, Richmond upon Thames College recently merged with Harrow & Uxbridge to become HRUC, a newest merged London College offering outstanding academic opportunities for thousands of students.

Sijul Miah, Head of School of Business and Industries at RuTC explained, "We are delighted to be working with AFC Wimbledon in this partnership to bring new opportunities to our students.

"Our partnership is designed to give students access to industry leading training and education tailored to individual needs with clear sights of career progression and development. We aim to nurture and develop students into professional athletes of the future"

A key aim of the partnership will be to pool expertise, resources and connections to support and develop young people to realise their potential. Students will be able to gain practical experience within the sports industry, therefore building upon skills gained in the classroom.

Sheila Fraser Whyte, HRUC Group Director for Partnership and Innovation at the College, added: "We are looking

forward to working with AFC Wimbledon Education Hub and giving our students these exciting opportunities to engage in a wide range of skills development and career focused activities which is crucial for ensuring that students achieve their full potential and have the essential qualifications, skills and behaviours to progress"



Roald Dahl would be 'appalled' at woke editing of his books, says Jeffrey Archer

The bestselling author said that he too has been under pressure to make similar changes

Mr Archer told <u>GB News</u>: "I had the privilege of knowing Roald Dahl. Indeed, three of my short stories were on his Tales of the Unexpected [TV series].

"I worked with him as well and he would be appalled. He'd be absolutely shocked and I can see him saying, 'go to hell, you publish my books or you do not publish them'.

"He was a curmudgeonly old thing and not easy to deal with."

In an interview with Andrew Pierce, he said: "In my own case, my publisher approached me some time ago on Cain and Abel and said, 'we've read it through one would you consider any changes?'



"They then admitted that, although 100 million people have read Cain and Abel throughout the world, they've never had one complaint.

"And I said, 'I think we'll leave it as it is, thank you very much indeed' and the version written 40 years ago is the version that's in the shops now."

He added: "The latest I've had on another of my books is would I change 'West Indian lady' to 'Caribbean woman'.

"When I was at Oxford, the captain of the Cambridge team was also captain of the West Indian team for the Olympic Games.

"I don't remember him saying to me, 'Jeffrey, I'm captain of the Caribbean team'."

Mr Archer said the meaning of "woke" has changed: "It changed quite suddenly in the last 10 or 15 years, where it no longer has its original meaning.

"The word woke now means something totally different and that changed in 2017 when a young girl was described as woke and it moved in a totally different direction.

"Now I am of the opinion that the original meaning was good enough for me.

"This modern translation of woke means everyone is wrong except the handful of people who are right."



SUELLA BRAVERMAN INTERVIEW

SUELLA Braverman says her number one priority is to fix illegal immigration - and that "nothing was being ruled out" when it came to dealing with the small boats' crisis.

In her first major TV interview since returning to her job as Home Secretary, Ms Braverman admitted the current situation was "unacceptable".

Speaking to Liam Halligan on <u>GB News</u>, Ms Braverman also told how it was time to start asking legitimate questions about how the ECHR operates in Britain.

She told GB News: "Nothing has been ruled out at the moment. And we are in the process of preparing our bill to be introduced into Parliament very soon. My personal views are well known. What I want to deliver is a system whereby if you arrive here illegally, you'll be detained and thereafter swiftly removed. And if we can deliver that system and that framework, then we shouldn't need to leave the ECHR."

Ms Braverman also said those who were protesting against Britain's asylum crisis shouldn't be derided as racist or bigots.



She said: "Violence is never acceptable and intimidation, harassment, any forms of abuse to anybody should be condemned and I condemn them in the fullest possible terms. And it's clear that we have an unsustainable situation in towns and cities around our country whereby, because of the overwhelming numbers of people arriving here illegally and our legal duties to accommodate them, we are now having to house them in hotels. And that is causing understandable tensions within communities, pressures on local resources and is frankly unsustainable.

"I very much understand people's frustrations with hotels being occupied by large numbers of illegal immigrants or asylum seekers. I think anyone contemplating violence, harassment or intimidation should desist from doing that.

"It is not an acceptable way to voice your concerns or frustrations. We are all frustrated with the situation that we are currently finding ourselves in and, and it is, it is clear and undeniable that there are really serious pressures on communities. And saying so does not make you racist or bigoted."

When dealing with the issue of Northern Ireland, Ms Braverman said it was "vital" we safeguard what we gained from the Brexit vote.

And when pushed over whether the matter could even lead to her leaving the Government she said: "I've resigned in the past because I've found the terms of previous agreements intolerable. I don't support selling out Northern Ireland and giving the EU a foothold in the United Kingdom."

She also described the situation with David Carrick as "unforgivable" and that it was right for the Met Commissioner to be very forward-leaning in his apology to the victims.

In a wide-ranging interview she also addressed the criticism that often comes her way saying: "I see my role as telling the truth and fixing the problem and sometimes the truth is uncomfortable for some people – and they get upset by hearing the truth. I'm not going to shy away from telling the truth to the British people and for the British people. That's my role as Home Secretary. I think there is a tendency to apologise for what Britain did

for the world historically and be a bit shy about our greatness. Looking forward, I'm very optimistic about our future. I believe in the genius of Britain, what Britain has brought to civilization, to culture, to science, to statecraft, and I believe those are great foundations which set us up well for the future."

New UK-based soft-plastic recycling available at Waitrose

- Waitrose has launched soft plastic recycling at 295 Waitrose stores
- Film and flexible packaging accounts for around 25% of all consumer packaging
- Only 8% is recycled due to a lack of kerbside collections and limitations in recycling infrastructure*

Following a successful trial and considerable due diligence to find a UK-based waste management solution, customers can now recycle their soft plastic at 295 Waitrose stores.

Caroline Pinnell, Sustainability & Ethics Specialist at Waitrose, said: "We know that recycling is a key priority for many of our customers so we're delighted to be able to offer flexible plastic recycling across a number of our shops.

"Across both Waitrose and John Lewis, we are continuing to strip away single-use packaging and provide our customers with convenient reuse, refill and recycling solutions. We are on track to meet our 2023 Waitrose packaging target, that all of our own-brand packaging will be reusable or made from widely recyclable or home-compostable material by the end of 2023, two years ahead of the industry-wide WRAP UK Plastic Pact."

So, what can you recycle at Waitrose? As long as it's clean and dry, the following are recyclable instore:

- Carrier Bags
- Bread Bags
- Frozen Food Bags
- Delivery Bags
- Cereal Liners
- Toilet Roll Wrapping
- Salad, Pasta and Rice bags
- Cheese, Fish and Meat Wrapping
- Crisps, Biscuit and Chocolate Wrapping
- Baby & Pet Food Pouches
- Bubble Wrap and Cling Film



The plastic will be sent to a reprocessor in Glasgow where it's washed, separated and then flaked or pelletised so it can be made into new products or materials in their next life - such as:

- Secondary Packaging (e.g. toilet paper packaging)
- Shrink Wrap for transportation of goods
- Delivery / Carrier Bags
- Refuse Sacks
- · Bags for DIY, industrial and horticultural products
- Guttering, buckets or plastic furniture

Wales v England - Guinness Six Nations

The England team that will take on Wales in the Guinness Six Nations this weekend has been named. Steve Borthwick's side will travel to Cardiff today [Thursday 23 February] ahead of the game at the Principality Stadium on Saturday (4.45pm KO).



In the only change to the England starting team that beat Italy 31-14 a fortnight ago, Anthony Watson comes in at left wing. Max Malins is on the right wing and Freddie Steward is at full back. Captain Owen Farrell is at fly half, with Ollie Lawrence at inside centre and Henry Slade at outside centre. Jack van Poortvliet stays at scrum half.

In an unchanged forward pack, vice-captain Ellis Genge joins Kyle Sinckler and hooker Jamie George in the front row. Maro Itoje and Ollie Chessum are at lock. Flankers Lewis Ludlam and Jack Willis and No. 8 Alex Dombrandt complete the XV.

Vice-captain Courtney Lawes could make his England return following injury after being named as a replacement. He is alongside Jack Walker, who made his England debut against Italy, Mako Vunipola, Dan Cole, Ben Curry, Alex Mitchell, Marcus Smith and Henry Arundell.

Borthwick said: "Wales v England in Cardiff is one of the iconic rugby fixtures, steeped in history and always full of passion.

"We know the Principality Stadium crowd will be in full voice and we will have to be at our very best to repeat the success we had in the last round against Italy.

"I have selected a team that I think has the right players and balance to meet the particular challenges we will face this weekend.

"I am delighted to have welcomed Courtney Lawes back to the squad after injury. His quality and experience has contributed to a focused training week, marked by the sort of competition and intensity we expect.

"I could not have asked any more from all the players and there is no doubt that they can't wait to be a part of this special occasion."

Wales v England is live on BBC One and BBC Radio 5 Live.

ENGLAND XV

- 15. Freddie Steward (Leicester Tigers, 19 caps)
- 14. Max Malins (Saracens, 16 caps)
- 13. Henry Slade (Exeter Chiefs, 53 caps)
- 12. Ollie Lawrence (Bath Rugby, 9 caps)
- 11. Anthony Watson (Leicester Tigers, 52 caps)
- 10. Owen Farrell (Saracens, 103 caps) (C)
- 9. Jack van Poortvliet (Leicester Tigers, 9 caps)

REPLACEMENTS

- 16. Jack Walker (Harlequins, 1 cap)
- 17. Mako Vunipola (Saracens, 76 caps)
- 18. Dan Cole (Leicester Tigers, 97 caps)
- 19. Courtney Lawes (Northampton Saints, 96 caps) (VC)

- 1. Ellis Genge (Bristol Bears, 45 caps) (VC)
- 2. Jamie George (Saracens, 74 caps)
- 3. Kyle Sinckler (Bristol Bears, 58 caps)
- 4. Maro Itoje (Saracens, 64 caps)
- 5. Ollie Chessum (Leicester Tigers, 7 caps)
- 6. Lewis Ludlam (Northampton Saints, 16 caps)
- 7. Jack Willis (Toulouse, 7 caps)
- 8. Alex Dombrandt (Harlequins, 11 caps)
- 20. Ben Curry (Sale Sharks, 2 caps)
- 21. Alex Mitchell (Northampton Saints, 2 caps)
- 22. Marcus Smith (Harlequins, 19 caps)
- 23. Henry Arundell (London Irish, 4 caps)

Brentford launch season ticket campaign for 2023/24

Brentford FC has today restated its commitment to affordable, accessible football as it launched its Season Ticket campaign and plans for the 2023/24 season.

The Club has announced that prices in 2023/24 across all Season Tickets will be frozen. A new 10-month in-house direct debit scheme will also be introduced to enable fans to spread the cost across the year. Brentford FC remains one of the cheapest places to watch Premier League football with the standard adult Season Ticket (Band B) working out around £24 per match. Fans have until 31 March to renew.

Ensuring that football remains affordable and accessible

Jon Varney, chief executive said, "We are very mindful that the cost-of-living crisis is biting hard for people across the country and within our communities. Ensuring that football remains affordable and accessible is really important for us and our fans. That's why we have frozen prices and introduced a new direct debit scheme.

"When we set out to review our plans for next season we wanted to consider ways to grow our revenue but avoid inflationary price increases. We also received representations from our fans on this point. I hope that the outcome of this work can ease the financial pressures which many are facing."

Ticketmaster Sport to deliver new online ticketing platform

In order to improve the online ticketing experience, Brentford has also announced that they will be partnering with Ticketmaster Sport from the summer of 2023. Ticketmaster are experienced operators who work with a number of other Premier League clubs. They will provide ticketing services and will deliver a new online ticketing platform for the Club.

Varney said: "Using the feedback we received from our fans and from our staff, we reviewed a number of options in the market and we felt that Ticketmaster was best placed to provide the solution we needed.

"We believe that their platform will make it easier for our fans to buy tickets and manage their ticketing accounts. Their Ticket Exchange in particular was one feature that we were impressed with. It's intuitive and easy to use – and this will be really important for us as we look to maximise seat occupancy going forward. Season Ticket renewals will be handled via our existing system and we will transition to Ticketmaster in the summer."

New 'every seat counts' policy introduced

With prices frozen, direct debits introduced and a new ticketing platform in the pipeline, Brentford is also keen to tackle the issue of unused, empty seats at the Gtech Community Stadium and the challenge of away fans gaining access to home areas. On average, there are over 1,000 unused Season Ticket Holder seats each match.

Varney said: "We understand that not everyone can come to every game, but it is essential that if fans can't make it, another Bees fan can attend in their place. So, from the 2023/24 season we are introducing a new 'every seat counts' policy."

How will the policy work?

In basic terms, next season, fans will face consequences if they consistently leave their seat empty.

Brentford will be introducing a yellow card system - if a Season Ticket Holder fails to use their ticket

for a league match, they will get a yellow card. If they get four yellow cards by the next renewal date in March 2024, they will lose the automatic right to renew their Season Ticket for the 2024/25 season.

To avoid getting a yellow card, each Season Ticket Holder must use their ticket by either:

- 1. Attending the match and have the Season Ticket card scanned.
- 2. Transferring the ticket to another Brentford supporter, and the recipient scans their ticket.
- 3. Listing the ticket on the Ticket Exchange prior to 10am on the day of the match.
- 4. Listing the ticket on the Ticket Exchange after the 10am deadline and it sells before the kick-off but if the ticket is not sold, you will receive a yellow card.

Exemptions will apply for fans with carers and those under 18. All decisions will be subject to an appeals process.

The team and the fans will benefit too

Varney explained why this new policy is important and how it can help the team. "The atmosphere at the Gtech Community Stadium is fantastic but imagine what it could be like with an extra 1,000 fans in the stadium each week? We want the Gtech to be as loud and as full as possible. Fans have their role to play in backing the team, it does make a difference. The players have said it. Thomas Frank has said it. Every seat counts.

"We also know that there are thousands of Bees fans, your friends and your relations, desperate to come along to a game. We want to give them the best opportunity we can to attend."

"It's important to remember that as well as creating a better atmosphere, by using the Ticket Exchange, Season Ticket Holders will also receive a pro-rata refund in cash for tickets sold."

The Club needs to grow to compete

Varney said: "This policy goes hand-in-hand with the price freeze. We are very mindful of the current financial challenges that our fans are facing. But we also need to grow our revenues given the fierce competition to thrive in the Premier League. We need to grow the Club in line with football's financial regulations against other clubs who have more established revenue streams, larger fan bases and different ownership structures. Simply put, increasing stadium occupancy will help us compete."

A fair appeals process but the policy needs to be robust

"I want to stress to fans though that we do understand that circumstances can crop up which prevent them coming to the game at the last minute. That's why we've introduced a policy which gives a bit of leeway. We will be reasonable and we will have a fair appeals process in place to consider any special cases.

"However, the policy does need to have some teeth, otherwise these seats will continue to remain empty."

Lengthy fan consultation informed decision-making

To conclude, Varney paid tribute to the working groups which included representatives from BIAS and Bees United. "The fans involved have been working on this since last year. They have put a lot of their personal time into this, giving us feedback on both the Season Ticket plans and the ticketing platform, debating different ideas and helping us to refine the plan for which we are very grateful.

"All of that work has helped us make the decisions and finalise the campaign for next season which we are announcing today."



Chancellor heads to G20 meeting to reaffirm support for Ukraine

The Chancellor Jeremy Hunt is today in Bengaluru, India to attend the G20 Finance Ministers and Central Bank Governors Meeting in his first visit overseas since taking office.

The meeting comes one year after Russia's full-scale invasion of Ukraine – where the Chancellor will reaffirm the UK's unwavering support for Ukraine and discuss with other G20 members ways to address issues such as elevated global inflationary pressures and the instability in energy and food prices that are being exacerbated by the war.

It follows the latest move on behalf of the G7, the European Union and Australia, who via a Price Cap Coalition, set caps on the price of seaborne Russian oil products effective from 5 February 2023. High-value Russian exports such as diesel and gasoline are capped at \$100 while lower-value products such as fuel oil are capped at \$45. The UK phased out the import of Russian oil and oil products last year.

The Chancellor is attending the G20 alongside the Governor of the Bank of England Andrew Bailey. Both are focused on tackling inflationary pressures in the UK. Inflation is the first of 5 Prime Minister priorities, with the Prime Minister looking to see inflation halve this year on its way back to the target.

The Chancellor and Bank of England Governor will also join a meeting of G7 Finance Ministers on Thursday.

Chancellor of the Exchequer Jeremy Hunt said:

"The UK continues to stand firm in our support for Ukraine with significant military and humanitarian assistance. The sooner there is sustainable peace in Ukraine and an end to this horrific war, the sooner we can address the global economic fallout – diminishing Putin's leverage over the UK and our friends."

The trip also aims to strengthen the already productive UK/India economic relationship and deepen ties to increase new investment and bringing new jobs to the UK. With its rich reputation for a cutting-edge tech industry, the Chancellor will be meeting Indian tech CEOs and founders in Bengaluru to explore investment opportunities and how links with India can help the UK become the world's next Silicon Valley, building on our existing \$1 trillion (£827 billion) tech industry.

The Chancellor added:

"I want the UK to be the world's next Silicon Valley – this is an ambition within reach thanks to our status as a global financial powerhouse and home to world class universities and research institutions.

"We already have a \$1 trillion tech industry, but we want to go further to create jobs and wealth across the UK. To help us get there, we need to deepen investment connections with like-minded countries around the world – starting with our Indian friends who are fast becoming an economic superpower in their own right."

India is projected to be the world's third largest economy by 2050, with a tech industry that generated US\$227 billion (£188 billion) in revenue in FY2022. It is already a significant economic partner for the UK, and the Chancellor is seeking to promote greater collaboration between the two countries.

The Chancellor's work at the G20 will also contribute to the government's priorities to halve inflation this year to ease the cost of living and give people financial security; grow the economy, create better-paid jobs and opportunity right across the country; and make sure our national debt is falling so that we can secure the future our of public services.

HM Treasury

TENS OF THOUSANDS UKRAINIAN REFUGEES HELPED TO ACCESS UK BANKING SERVICES

TENS OF THOUSANDS of Ukrainian refugees have been able to access banking services in the UK thanks to government action, data released today shows.

Basic bank accounts, which the nine largest UK lenders have been required to provide since 2014, allow people with a limited credit history to access and carry out everyday banking, widening people's access to the financial system and the wider economy. The accounts do not offer overdrafts, ensuring people do not get into unaffordable debt.

A year on since Putin's barbaric invasion of Ukraine, the UK has granted more than 215,000 visas to refugees of the war, under our Homes for Ukraine and Ukraine Family Schemes

Following the invasion, the government brought together UK basic bank account providers, ensuring fast action was taken to remove the barriers to opening UK bank accounts faced by Ukrainian nationals, such as the lack of a conventional ID.

This has already helped more than 70,000 people to build their lives more easily in the UK by enabling them to receive their income, send money, and pay for goods.

Economic Secretary to the Treasury, Andrew Griffith said:

"We will continue to help as many Ukrainian refugees as possible access the banking services they need to build a life here – and I'd like to thank UK banks and building societies for their support to date.

"A year on from the invasion, Putin should be left in no doubt that the West will not waiver in its support for Ukraine and its people."

The UK government has been working with its international allies to punish Putin and his cronies for their illegal invasion of Ukraine, while supporting the Ukrainian people and its government.

This includes sanctioning more than 1,200 individuals and 120 entities, including striking the heart of the Kremlin by sanctioning Putin himself, along with his closest associates.

The UK has also committed £4.6 billion of military support by the end of 2023, supplying 10,000 anti-tank missiles, almost 200 armoured vehicles, 2,600 anti-structure munitions, and almost 100,000 rounds of artillery.

And we are also a leading bilateral humanitarian donor, having committed £220 million in assistance.

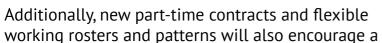


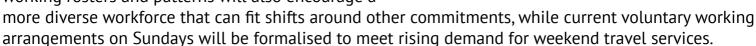
Breakthrough in rail dispute as TSSA members accept offer

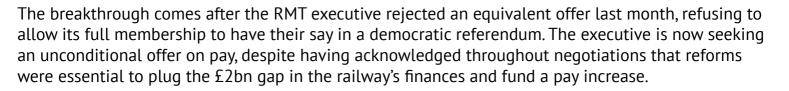
TSSA members across train operating companies have voted to accept a national framework pay offer of at least 9 per cent over two years, bringing an end to the dispute with the union.

It means TSSA members in general and management grades will be eligible to receive a backdated pay rise of 5 per cent increase for 2022 and a 4 per cent rise for 2023, with those on the lowest pay grades being offered a minimum of £1750, or an increase of over 13 percent in 2022/23 pay packets.

As with the offers made to other rail unions, the proposals set out reforms that will support funding of the pay increases, put the industry on a sustainable footing and equip it to meet the changing needs of our customers. These include a new multi-skilled station role, with station staff trained and better equipped to take on a range of responsibilities aimed at better meeting the needs of customers.







Steve Montgomery, Chair of the Rail Delivery Group, said: "This is a positive breakthrough which shows these disputes can be resolved when members are given an opportunity to have their say in a democratic vote. TSSA members have sent a clear message that they welcome this fair offer, which means that those on the lowest pay are now eligible for a rise of over 13%, with all grades receiving at least a 9% rise in their 2022/23 pay packets.

"We hope that the RMT leadership will take this opportunity to reconsider their rejection of our equivalent offer, call off their unnecessary and disruptive strikes and allow their members a referendum on their own deal."

There are currently around 3000 TSSA members in Train Operating Companies, who work primarily as management or on the front line alongside RMT members in roles such as control room staff, selling tickets or as engineers.

Industrial action has cost the industry around £480m in lost ticket revenue since June, on top of its current £2bn fares shortfall post-covid. Taxpayers are injecting between £125 million and £175 million a month to fund the railway.



Data show 1.65 million patients in England faced 12-hour waits from time of arrival in A&Es in 2022

A new briefing by the Royal College of Emergency Medicine, <u>RCEM Explains: Long waits and excess deaths</u>, reveals that in 2022 1,656,206 patients in England waited 12-hours or more from their time of arrival in an Emergency Department. This is equal to over 4,500 12-hour time of arrival waits per day in 2022 and equal to 10.2% of all Type 1 attendances.

In 2022, NHS England reported that 347,703 patients waited 12-hours from decision to admit to admission (DTA), equal to 2.1% of Type 1 attendances. Significantly, the total number of 12-hour time of arrival waits for 2022 is 4.8 times the total number of 12-hour decision to admit (DTA) waits for 2022. This demonstrates how the DTA metric is misleading and only the tip of the iceberg.

Using the total number of 12-hour time of arrival waits for 2022 and the <u>best available</u> <u>scientific research</u> we can calculate that there were an estimated 23,003 excess patient deaths in England in 2022 associated with long waits in the Emergency Department.

Commenting on the FOI findings Dr Adrian Boyle, President of the Royal College of Emergency Medicine, said:

"These data, while shocking, are unsurprising. For a long-time we have known that the true scale of long waits in Emergency Departments has been hidden. Long-waiting times are associated with serious patient harm and patient deaths – the scale shown here for 2022 is deeply distressing. The data show how necessary it is to have transparent figures. We are pleased that both the Department of Health and Social Care and NHS England have heeded our calls and will be publishing the 12-hour data from time of arrival in the Emergency Department regularly from April this year. We look forward to seeing this data be published then.

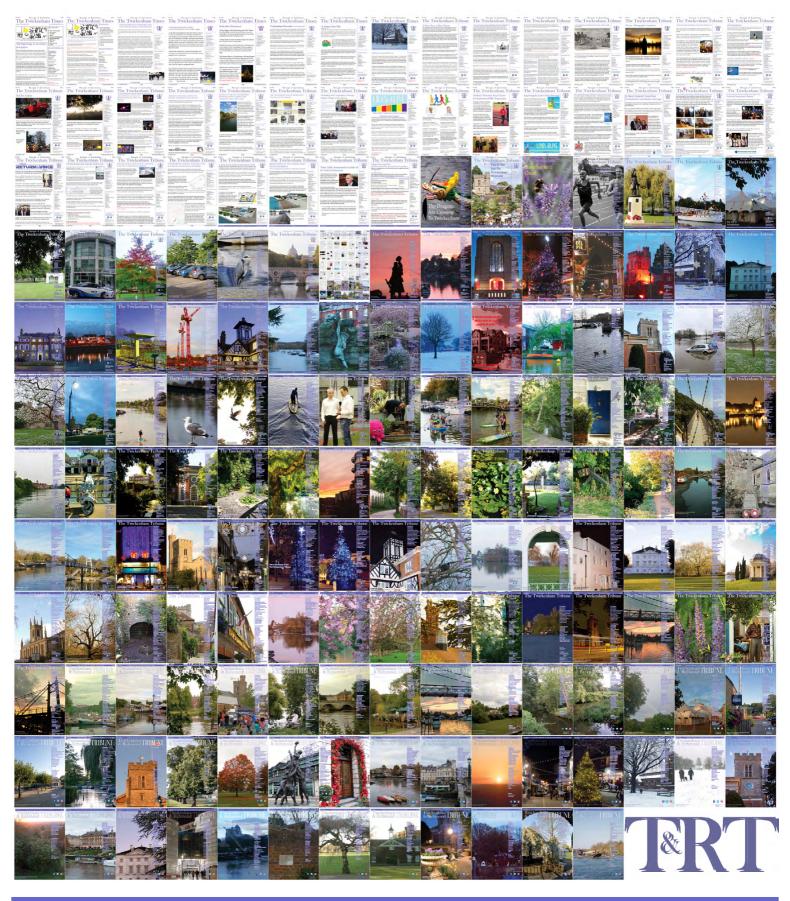
"We believe that being honest with the data will be a service to patients and staff. It will lead to a better understanding of patient flow and to both transformation and change in the emergency care system. However, this transformation and change can only come if we have the staff, beds and resources we need. We urge the government to publish the fully funded long-term NHS workforce plan that they pledged to deliver. This must include measures to retain existing staff who are burned out and may be considering leaving the NHS.

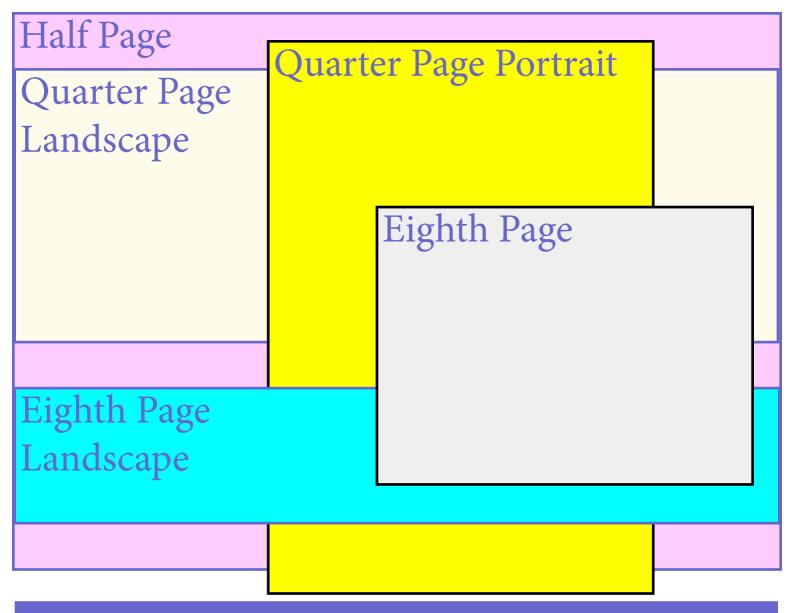
"Alongside the publication of this 12-hour data we must see a renewed focus on the four-hour access standard. We believe the new four-hour target of 76% is unambitious and is too low, it presents the risk that the sickest and most vulnerable patients will continue to face the longest waits. We urge this target to be revised to a more ambitious figure.

"The delays to admission in Emergency Departments are a symptom of a hospital wide problem. We know that 14,000 beds are occupied by patients who should be discharged but are unable to be due to the shortages in social care. We must see sustained and continued investment in social care and a bolstering of the social care workforce. Enabling the timely

discharge of patients will help free up beds and in turn help reduce these longwaits in Emergency Departments."

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