

Twickenham & Richmond TRIBUNE



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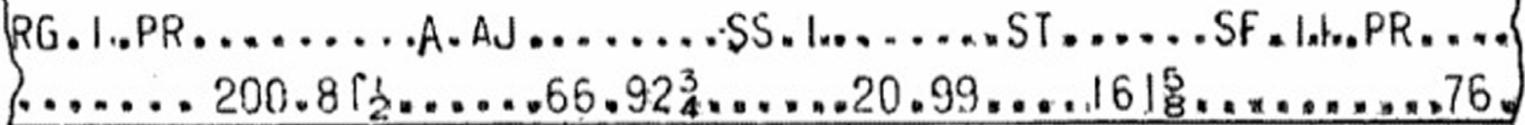
Editors

Berkley Driscoll
Teresa Read



14th July 2023





TickerTape - News in Brief

Rail Strikes affecting South Western Railway

Monday 17 to Wednesday 19 and Friday 21 July - ASLEF overtime ban

Members of the ASLEF union have been instructed not to work any overtime or volunteer on rest days, between Monday 17 and Wednesday 19 July, then again on Friday 21 July.

Usual service during peak hours, reduced to hourly service off-peak:

- Waterloo to Hampton Court
- Waterloo to Waterloo via Kingston
- Waterloo to Windsor & Eton Riverside
- Waterloo to Weybridge via Hounslow
- Waterloo to Reading

Usual service during peak hours, reduced to hourly service off-peak. Some services via Twickenham will be cancelled:

- Waterloo to Shepperton

No services to operate:

- Waterloo to Waterloo via Hounslow

Thursday 20 - RMT Strike action

A significantly reduced service will operate on a limited number of lines. Large parts of our network will be closed and trains will only run between the hours of 0700 and 1900.

Saturday 22 July - RMT Strike action

A significantly reduced service will operate on a limited number of lines. Large parts of our network will be closed and trains will only run between the hours of 0700 and 1900.

Sunday 23 July – normal Sunday service

A normal Sunday timetable will operate however a small number of services will be cancelled due to strike action the day before. Engineering work will also take place so please check before you travel.

Customers are also advised that separate strike action will affect the London Underground network on Sunday 23 July. Please visit the [Transport for London website](#) for more information.

Saturday 29 July – RMT strike

We are still to confirm our services for Saturday 29 July however we expect them to be similar to services on Saturday 22 July.

Sunday 30 July – normal Sunday service

A normal Sunday timetable will operate however a small number of services will be cancelled due to strike action the day before. Engineering work will also take place so please check before you travel.

Find full details at SWR [HERE](#)

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Covid-19

By Teresa Read

At the country level the highest numbers of new 28-day cases were reported from the Republic of Korea (372,557), Australia (62,748), Brazil (56,744), New Zealand (38,949), and Singapore (28,333).

The highest numbers of new 28-day deaths were reported from Brazil (868), Australia (566), the Russian Federation (423), Peru (410) and Italy (251).

The European Region reported nearly 118,000 new cases, a 65% decrease as compared to the previous 28-day period. The highest numbers of new cases were reported from the Russian Federation (21,230), Italy (19,233), and France (19).

The number of new deaths over the 28-day period in the Region decreased by 67% as compared to the previous 28-day period, with 1,531 new deaths reported. The highest numbers of new deaths were reported from the Russian Federation (423), Italy (251) and France (129).

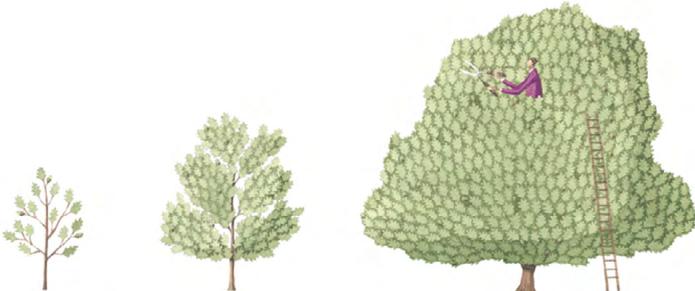
IN THE NEWS THIS WEEK

U.S. Right to Know: Aspartame: Decades of science point to serious health risks

The Lancet: Aspartame: it is the risk that matters, not the hazard

Nature: US congressional hearing produces heat but no light on COVID-origins debate

Nature: Gene linked to long COVID found in analysis of thousands of patients



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The Local Picture Postcard Column

By Alan Winter

Part 205: Radnor House, Strawberry Hill

One of the great historic houses that have sat on the Thames in our Borough during the past 500 years or so. There seems to be some confusion now about this house that looked across the river from Cross Deep for 267 years until the second world war in 1940 when it was destroyed by a delayed action bomb.

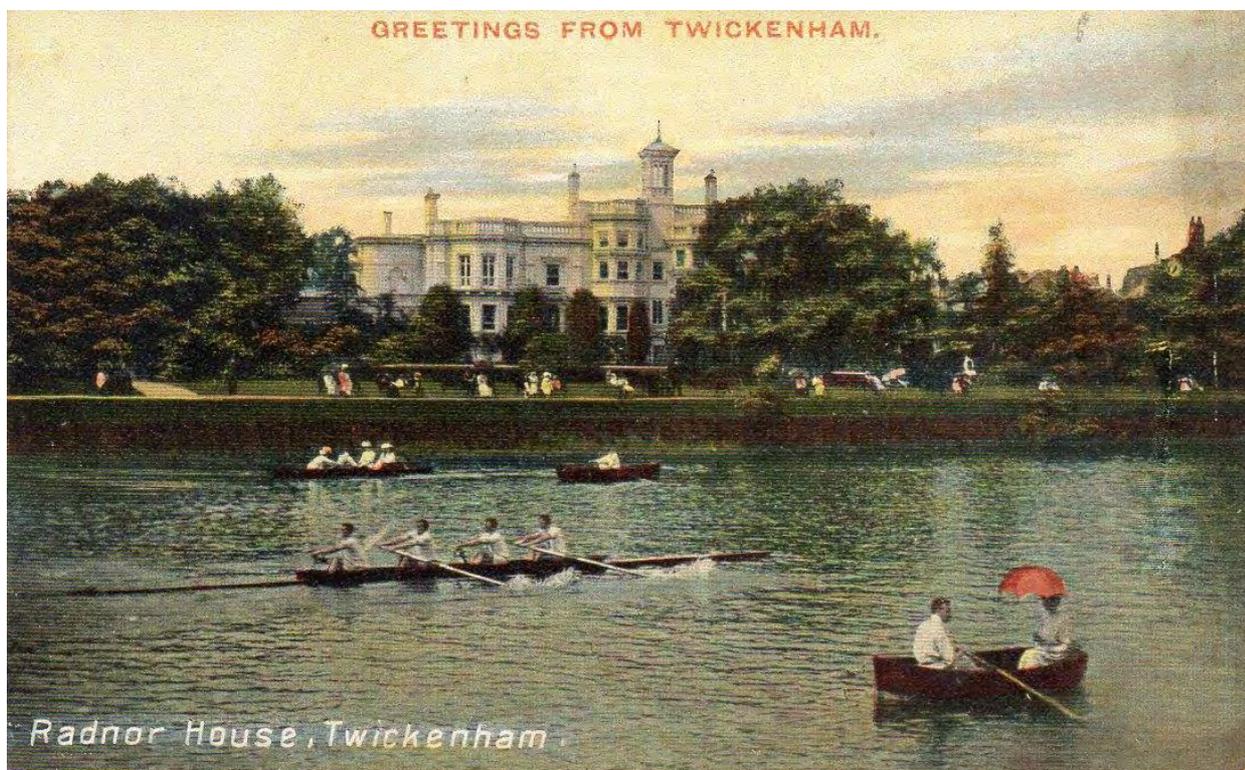
The recent confusion has simply come about by the naming of a school – Radnor House School that sits a little further north up Cross Deep on the Popes Villa site.

Our first (colour) postcard shows the view of Radnor House from the river. And the second (Black and white) is the Cross Deep entrance with the photo taken from Radnor Road.

Radnor House, built in 1673, was, in turn, named after John Robartes 4th

Earl of Radnor who bought the lease of the house and lived there from 1722 until his death in 1757. Robartes acquired about 7 acres of land across the Cross Deep Road opposite the house, extending west to the line of present-day *Radnor Road*, and which he connected to the riverside property by a tunnel like his celebrated neighbour to the north, Alexander Pope. Robartes also purchased adjacent property to the north and extended and embellished the house in gothic style in about 1745. He also decorated the gardens with statuary, all of which incurred the slight mockery of his neighbour, Horace Walpole, who referred the property as *Mabland* in a letter to Richard Bentley, a reference to the ornate decoration of contemporary Marylebone Gardens. Some observers conjecture that Walpole was piqued by his neighbour's anticipation of his own architectural ambitions, as this pre-dated his gothic embellishment of Strawberry Hill House.

Radnor House's riverside gardens to the east included part of Cross Deep Ait, a former larger neighbour of adjacent Swan Island. The two aits are shown as a single entity on John Rocque's map of 1746. A footbridge connected the island, metal remnants of which can still be perceived



lining the central footpath in the gardens today. The picture *View of the Earl of Radnor's House* by Augustin Heckel, engraved by Anthony Walker in 1750 shows the house and garden from the river, with *Cross Deep Ait* in the foreground and *Cross Deep House* and riverside garden to the south. A notable flood that occurred on 12 March 1774 is commemorated by a stone plaque in the remaining wall of the house.



After Robartes' death, Radnor House was left to Robartes' steward, Frederick Atherton Hindley. Following his bankruptcy in 1779 and death in 1781 there followed a period of uncertainty about its ownership due to disputes over title resulting from Hindley's debts. In 1785 it was purchased by Sir Francis Basset who held it until 1793. Subsequent owners included Lady Marjory and Lady Anne Murray, John Ivatt Briscoe and, possibly for a short

period, Francis Needham, 2nd Earl of Kilmorey before he bought and lived at the neighbouring *Cross Deep House*. Between 1846 and 1847, under the ownership of wine merchant, William Chillingworth, Radnor House was remodelled in an Italianate style by Henry Edward Kendall Jr.

By the end of the 19th century, Radnor House was becoming dilapidated. Purchased in 1902 by Twickenham Urban District along with the adjacent properties, in 1903 the gardens were opened to the public and remain today as Radnor Gardens. The house stood empty for some time and was briefly used as a school clinic. The council's reluctant deliberations on renovation of the house were resolved by its total destruction by a 250kg delayed action high explosive bomb which fell through the house at 10.30pm on 16 September 1940. Only a few walls remain, indicated by commemorative stones, as do the Grade II listed gazebo and summer house.

I must refer any interested readers to Mike Cherry's excellent book that gives the whole story of Radnor House and its place in Twickenham. It was published by the Borough of Twickenham Local History Society in 2018 and is available for the price of a pint from the BOTLHS website under publications as Paper 101. (botlhs.co.uk) will get you there.

I am always looking for old postcards, so if you have any that are sitting unwanted in a drawer, in a box in the loft or the garage or under a bed, do contact me on 07875 578398 or by email to alanwinter192@hotmail.com I would like to see them and I pay cash!

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SONGS OF THE SEA

Pictures and report by Doug Goodman

The Teddington Choral Society's Songs of the Sea, performed last week at the Landmark Arts Centre, kept the audience enthralled. Sea shanties, works by Rogers & Hammerstein and Cecilia McDowall and the choral singers conducted by Julian Collings ensured a full house. Baritone Mark Nathan accompanied by Phil Culling on piano sang some memorable pieces. One audience member reported that everyone appeared to thoroughly enjoy themselves, whether they were in the audience or choir.

Future concerts will take place on December 9th at St. Mary's Church Twickenham; in 2024 on 23rd March at All Saints Kingston; on 6th July at the Landmark Centre; Christmas concert on 6th December.



Get involved and have your say in our Night Time Strategy

Enjoy the most exciting events in the borough after dark and help shape our Night Time Strategy.

As part of the work taking place in the borough to rethink how we can improve our evenings, [Visit Richmond](#) have collated a list of entertainment taking place post-6pm. [Richmond Lates](#) showcases the best of the borough, for residents and visitors who are looking for a fun and engaging night out. This exciting programme brings together a series of late night events, activities and food and drink experiences that will keep you entertained after dark.

With pub quizzes, contemporary jazz and karaoke on the schedule, there is no shortage of activities to check out. Our goal is to bring people together and improve accessibility to the arts by working hard to safeguard the theatres, music venues and pubs that are key to the borough's cultural heritage and economy.



Night-time offers unique opportunities to enrich and diversify the experience of Richmond upon Thames. By working with residents to develop our [Night Time Strategy](#), we can bring to life our vision to combat loneliness, improve feelings of safety at night, increase the wellbeing of night workers as well as nurture the next generation of creative workers.

Your voice is key in improving the night-time environment to meet the needs of everyone and fulfil our vision of making Richmond upon Thames the most vibrant, inclusive and safest borough there is.

Have your say on our [Night Time Strategy](#).



Metropolitan Police to host Community Conference

On Monday 24 July, Richmond Borough Metropolitan Police will be holding their first Community Conference.

This is a chance for the Police to share their plans to achieve the Commissioner's promise; increased trust, reduced crime and to raise the professional standards.

Taking place at York House, from 6 to 9pm, the event is an opportunity to bring the community together to share their views, concerns, and ideas to the Police and collectively look at ways to address these.

The event will be attended by Richmond residents, organisations, as well as local police officers.

Food and refreshments will be provided by a local caterer. The event is free to and people are encouraged to [register online](#) to reserve a spot.

If you have any questions, please email SWMailbox-RichmondEvents@met.police.uk.



Have your say on South Western Railway station change proposals

South Western Railway is proposing to close all of their ticket offices. Customers will still be able to access products and services through South Western Railway's website, their mobile app, contactless payment, pay as you go, at their customer contact centre, or at the station.

They are proposing to transition their station colleagues to new multi-skilled. The proposals will create a single team on each station, working together to help customers with different aspects of their journeys from journey planning to ticket purchasing.

View their [Station Change Proposal](#) for more information on the proposal and to have your say.



NEW STAMPS CELEBRATE THE WILDLIFE OF THE UK'S RIVERS

Royal Mail revealed a set of 10 stamps that celebrate the diversity of birds, mammals, insects and fish that inhabit the UK's rivers and streams.

Featured on the stamps are the: Beaver; Atlantic Salmon; Kingfisher; Beautiful Demoiselle; Water Vole; Grey Wagtail; Common Mayfly; Otter; Brown Trout; and Dipper.

The physical geography of the UK, coupled with its maritime position and high rainfall, have combined over geological time to create an extensive and diverse network of flowing waters.

Over 380,000 kilometres of streams and rivers range from the becks, burns and rills rising in cooler mountain landscapes, to large, lowland rivers such as the Thames, Severn and Trent.

Across the four UK nations, famous rivers such as the Clyde, the Bann, the Tyne and the Wye bring cultural identity, landscape character and a window into a world of freshwater nature.

Royal Mail worked with Professor of Ecology at Cardiff University, Steve Ormerod, on the stamp issue.



David Gold, Director of External Affairs and Policy, said: “The UK’s rivers and riversides are beautiful to look at, but how many of us stop to think about how they came to exist in the first place? In these stamps we celebrate our unique natural environment with a strong focus on the rich variety of creatures that live in and alongside our rivers.”

Professor Steve Ormerod, of Cardiff University’s Water Research Institute and School of Biosciences said “These stamps are a timely reminder of the special, highly adapted, and diverse array of animals that need our streams and rivers to be in healthy condition. This is such a wonderful way to celebrate the UK’s rivers and to send a message – quite literally – of why they are important.”

The stamps are available from Thursday (13 July) at www.royalmail.com/riverwildlife, by telephone on 03457 641 641 and at 7,000 Post Office branches across the UK. A Presentation Pack including all 10 stamps in the set is priced at £10.15.



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Directed by Simon Bartlett

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Richmond Shakespeare Society is affiliated to Arts Richmond and this production is entered for the Swan Awards for Drama and Musicals



Transport petition backed by over 1,400 residents and the Green Party debated at Richmond Full Council Meeting

A petition signed by more than Richmond 1,400 residents, brought by Green Cllr Niki Crookdake on behalf of community groups Mortlake and East Sheen Society, Mortlake Community Association and Barnes Community Association, was debated at the Richmond Council meeting on 11 July 2023.

The petition asked the Mayor of London and Richmond Council to appoint an independent transport consultant to advise on the transport infrastructure enhancements and management measures, to support the unprecedented level of development, which will accommodate an additional 3,000 homes and bring more than 6,000 people to live in the area. The petition was also presented to the Mayor of London by Green London wide Assembly Member at the London Assembly Plenary on 6 July 2023.

During the debate the Green councillors exposed that the new Local Plan, which is currently being consulted upon by the Council, is based on out-of-date transport evidence collated in autumn 2018 before the closure of Hammersmith Bridge and Sheen Gate at Richmond Park. The Plan also makes no reference to the unprecedented level of development in Mortlake, Kew, East Sheen and Barnes, even though this is anticipated in the new Local Plan.

Cllr Ehmann, Chair of the Transport and Air Quality Committee, claimed that transport infrastructure on major developments should only be considered after all planning applications have been passed. As the Green Party councillors pointed out this is not in accordance with National, London or Local Planning policies, which advise foresight, and could lead to costly mistakes for Richmond residents. Such preparation should have been included in the April 2023 Transport Infrastructure delivery plan but was not considered.

Cllr Millard, Deputy Leader of the Liberal Democrat Administration, tried to argue that the petition was anti-development. The petition is about the need to improve transport infrastructure in response to the new homes and residents. This argument was even more unexpected as Lib Dem leaders have refused to consider Cllr's Crookdake's proposal to include Chertsey Court in development proposals.

Including Chertsey Court housing estate, which is mostly comprised of social rent homes, will prevent residents from being 'left behind' during the regeneration project and would significantly improve the quality of life for the 170 families currently living there. In addition, it could add a significant number of additional affordable homes. Lib Dem leaders have argued that Chertsey Court could not be included because it is owned by Richmond Housing Partnership.

In response, Cllr Crookdake has said: "The majority of sites in the Local Plan are not council owned. It is the Council's job to facilitate negotiations with owners and developers for the benefit of residents."

Cllr Crookdake concluded: "infrastructure changes require improvements to be negotiated with the strategic road network, Transport for London, Southwest Railway, Network Rail, Port of London Authority and others. They could include significant alterations to the strategic road network, dedicated cycle or bus lanes, new ramped footbridges. The Council needs to co-ordinate this and gather up to date evidence to support critical infrastructure changes, in accordance with the Infrastructure Delivery Plan, this is the Council's responsibility, no one else can do this effectively."

Richmond in Europe Association's annual garden party

On Saturday 8 July, the Mayor of Richmond, Councillor Suzette Nicholson went to the Richmond in Europe Association's annual garden party in East Sheen.

The event included a delicious meal for the guests, prepared by an REA member.

REA Members were in attendance and the Mayor recounted her recent trips to Fontainebleau, where she attended the 10th anniversary concert of the European Youth Orchestra and the visit to Konstanz to christen the ship named 'Richmond'.



Find out more about the [Richmond in Europe Association](#).



Local community events to support residents with banking

This summer, HSBC UK will be hosting a series of community events to allow customers to undertake a range of banking services.

The experts will provide guidance and support including digital account opening and servicing, online and mobile banking help, and education on fraud and Post Office services.

The pop up events are scheduled to take place throughout summer, with the local events taking place at Twickenham Library, Garfield Road, Twickenham, TW1 3JT.



Event dates and times

Pop up events taking place this summer:

- Tuesday 11 July from 12 to 2pm
- Tuesday 25 July from 12 to 2pm
- Monday 14 August from 11am to 1pm

Find out more information about the [community pop up events](#).

HAWTHORN AT KEW GARDENS

Folks, I'm talking about a restaurant, not a tree! **Hawthorn** opened earlier this year just by Kew Gardens station - in the site formerly occupied by The Glass House. But the space has undergone an extensive refurb. It's run by a chef who certainly knows his stuff and has honed his skills in some very elite kitchens. Chef **Joshua Hunter** is classically trained and has cooked in Michelin-starred restaurants including Kitchen W8, Murano by Angela Hartnett, and La Trompette, as well as for celebrity private clients including the Beckham family and Tom Cruise.



Focusing on modern European cuisine, Joshua creates dishes taking inspiration from fresh, seasonal ingredients. He uses carefully chosen suppliers to create simple, unfussy dishes that prioritise flavour and combine his passion for British game and wild food. I met a friend there recently to try the set lunch (Three courses weekdays £47.50 or £52.50 on Saturday). There were choices of five dishes for each course - pretty impressive I thought. I started with an interesting cocktail - a white port spritz. It was refreshing and a generous glassful and it's inspired me to create long summer drinks with port and other dessert wines. We were brought a delicious amuse bouche of a dainty tuille filled with homemade taramasalata while



we scanned the menu.



As it was lunchtime, I didn't want anything too heavy, so opted for fish for both courses. I started with seared loin of tuna (with crispy chilli and garlic dressing, confit belly, ponzu, avocado and spring onion. It was very tasty and I adored the dressing. The tuna was cooked to pink perfection. My friend had chosen the pressed ham hock persillade (served with a whole wheat muffin and truffled Jersey Royal potato salad). I confess that I did have a certain amount of food envy as it looked amazing.



A glass of Chenin Blanc from Stellenbosch was suggested to accompany my meal and was a perfect pairing.



Roast Cornish pollock (with Nduja butter, borlotti bean ragout, clams, crispy chicken skin and coastal herbs) was really superb. When the beautiful plate arrived, I thought the portion was, perhaps, a tad on the small side - but no, it was actually just the right amount, and truly excellent. My friend chose the butter poached plaice (with Parmesan gnocchi, new season peas, smoked eel, braised gem lettuce and confit lemon) Another exceptionally well presented and flavoursome dish. This chef really knows how to balance flavours.



As dessert was included in the set menu, we felt obliged to test the kitchen skills a bit further. Wanting something light, I chose Affogato; it was spectacular and served with white chocolate stracciatella ice cream and a delicious chocolate cracker on top. My friend chose the restaurant's signature dish: Granny Smith apple crumble soufflé - again a tremendously good dessert as it was served hot, and then a portion of custard ice cream placed on top.

A perfect end to the meal was coffee, served with truffles and mini meringues.

This destination restaurant really is a superb addition to the local restaurant scene in Kew. Its proximity to the tube station is, no doubt, already attracting foodies from West London and beyond. There is free parking in the evenings as well, but I'd recommend hopping on the tube so that nobody has to draw the short straw and be the duty driver.

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TRAVELLER'S TALES 149

ONLY HERE FOR VERMEER PART TWO

DOUG GOODMAN CONTINUES HIS DUTCH CRUISE

Two days spent exploring Amsterdam and visiting Rembrandt's house provided a good re-introduction to the Dutch capital. Then it was time for Spirit of the Rhine to continue the Saga cruise to Utrecht. Although only 20 hours during the week were spent cruising between cities, it was very pleasant to watch the countryside glide past and be regularly overtaken by cyclists speeding along the tow-paths. It's important to remember that cyclists have priority and can be aggressive and if they collide with you it's your fault. It's estimated that there are one and a half bikes for every Dutch person. Theft is common but apparently you can sometimes retrieve your stolen bike at the local weekend junk market. Children learn to ride a bike as soon as, if not before, they learn to walk.



Railway Museum Utrecht

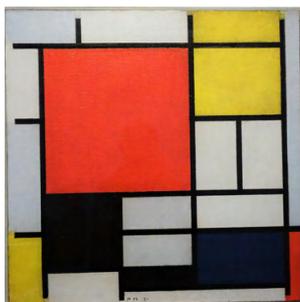


Utrecht Jewish Memorial

Utrecht is Holland's fourth largest city famous for its canal system, lively night-life thanks to a large international student population and for its Domtoren, Utrecht's symbol. The church attached to the 365 foot high tower was built in 1254 and collapsed during a storm in 1674. A climb to the top is rewarded by spectacular city views. Train enthusiasts will enjoy a visit to the railway museum with its original waiting-rooms, collection of locomotives, carriages and memorabilia. Near the museum's entrance is a memorial to the thousands of Jewish citizens who were deported to concentration camps during WW2.



Mondrian. Mill
in Sunlight



Mondrian. 1921



The Hague. Maurituis



Mautithuis Museum

TO ROTTERDAM

The average age of the passengers on this unique arts cruise was around 70 with everyone having an interest in Dutch art in general and in Vermeer in particular. But I can understand why regular guests on the Rhine, Mosel, Danube and other river trips are content to spend their time on board with an occasional excursion. The food, drink, service, comfort and care for passengers' welfare were exemplary.



Girl with the Pearl Earring. Vermeer's Masterpiece



Cat with a Pearl Earring



Ice Scene. H. Avercamp

Rotterdam with a population of 650,000 is Holland's second city with the world's largest port. Completely destroyed in WW2 the authorities made great use of the chance to rebuild their city in a very futuristic style. Forests of sky scrapers dominate the waterfronts and in the city centre you'll see some curious examples of cubist flats. A bylaw states that whenever a new block is erected a little square with a statue must also be included. Nice touch! From The Hague visits were included to Delft to the Prinsenhof Museum, to The Kunst Museum and to the Maurithuis to see the famous Vermeer- the Girl with the Pearl Earring. This was the only Vermeer not on show in Amsterdam but it had been exhibited there earlier. Several modern takes on the 'earrings' brought smiles to visitors' faces. A stunning show of works by Mondrian, 1872 -1944 was on at the Kunst Museum tracing the development of his unique skills from landscape and rural scenes to the cubist style in such brilliant colours: these, his last works were branded degenerate by the Nazi occupiers. A short visit to Amersfoort gave us the opportunity to see Mondrian's childhood home.

After Rotterdam we cruised back to Amsterdam for the week's highlight: the Vermeer exhibition where 26 of the known 37 works by the great artist were on display. Billed as one of the most significant art exhibitions of the century we felt privileged to have tickets thanks to Saga. That evening much reading and studying of the ship's library books and a fascinating lecture helped prepare for the great day.



Rotterdam

Next time: surrounded and overwhelmed by Vermeer

Cruise information from Saga River Cruises. Tel.0800 300 400 and online at saga.co.uk/rivercruises.

WIZ Tales: BHUTAN – Climate Change

Teresa Read



Although the Himalayan kingdom of Bhutan depends heavily on tourism its environment is said to be a greater priority.

Bhutan is one of three carbon negative countries, along with Panama and Suriname – countries absorbing more carbon than emitted.

The Himalayan Kingdom of Bhutan, a landlocked country between India and China, is committed to preserving its forests and to the use of renewable energy.



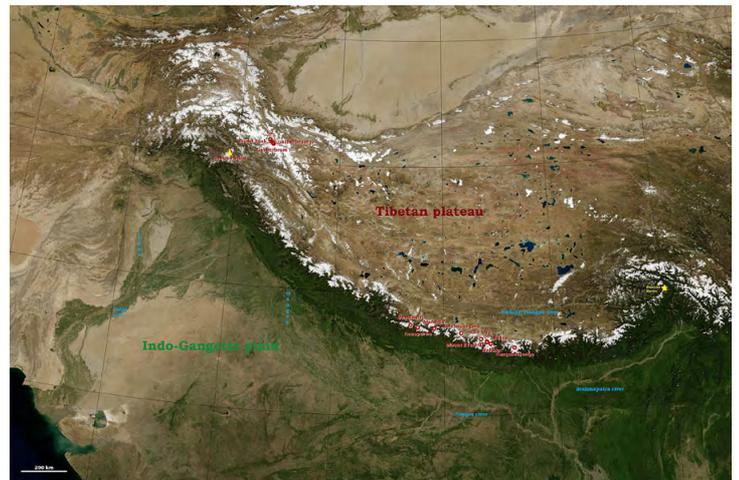
Emblem of Bhutan

Around two thousand glaciers are beginning to melt resulting in floods and landslides; thirty percent of Bhutan’s agricultural production takes place on slopes vulnerable to landslides and soil erosion.

USAID has commented that the communities of the high mountains of Bhutan are among the first to experience the impacts of climate change on their pastures and changing water supplies.



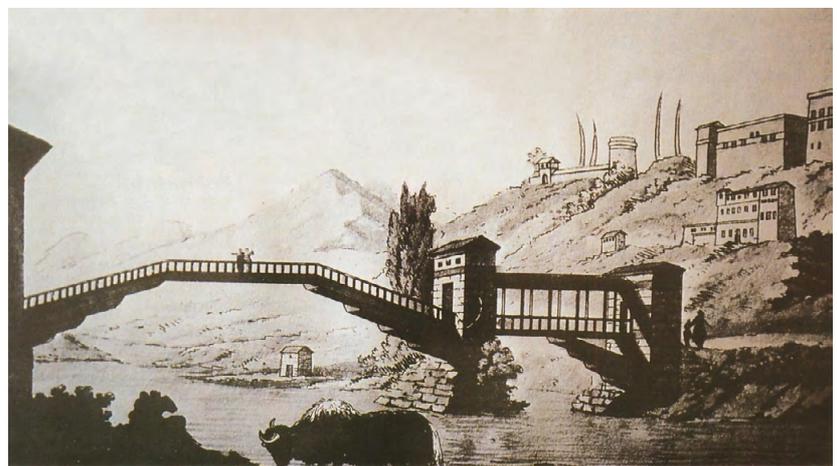
Flag of Bhutan



Himalayas and allied ranges



Painting of Bhutan, 1813



Sketch of Bhutan's interior, 1783

More information and photographs of Bhutan: <https://worldinfozone.com/facts.php?country=Bhutan>

If something is meant to be...it will be...

By Deep Patel

~ Through the Eyes of a Twickenham Shopkeeper ~

The old saying...If something is meant to be...it will be...
This week in the shop I learnt this in a rather curiously odd way...

Earlier in the week a customer of ours came into the shop to buy a pint of milk. She was out of breath and struggling carrying what looked like a large off-white coloured suitcase. "I'll need this milk to make myself a cuppa when I get home" she said. I asked her where she was going, and she explained her aunty had passed away some time back and that she was clearing her aunty's house and running items to the charity shop and tip throughout the week. I offered my respects and asked her what was in the off-white suitcase that she was lugging around...she said it was her aunty's much loved sewing machine that she just couldn't face throwing out so she was walking to Twickenham lugging it along whilst stopping every 50 metres to put in down and take a little rest (she must have been super woman).



Two hours later when she walked by my shop again, she swung open the door and shouted in "I made it, I gave it to the British heart Foundation as my aunty loved them". The woman then went home and supposedly had a well-deserved cuppa.

A few days passed, and the week was coming to an end. I opened the shop early one morning and a man walked by my shop, also with a sewing machine in his hand. I asked him where he had got the sewing machine from, he said his friend found it by the recycling centre at the corner of Twickenham Green (where people tend to illegally dump items that they don't want in their homes anymore) and asked if I would mind keeping the machine in my shop until he passed by again next week. I agreed (he was a frail, older man). He said if we found any of our customers wanted it, we could give it away to them. What were the chances of two old sewing machines coming into my shop in the same week? Then just as the man left the machine in a corner of my shop, the lady who took the first sewing machine walked into the shop again...when she glanced at the machine she stopped and couldn't stop staring at it...she seemed in utter shock and disbelief...

It was her aunty's machine that she had taken herself, by hand into the Heart Foundation charity shop at the start of the week!! Someone had bought it from the charity shop then changed their mind and dumped it... the older man then had picked it up and bought it to the shop as he was unable to carry it any further, only for the original lady who took it to the Heart Foundation charity in the first place to find it in the shop AN ENTIRE WEEK LATER...YET AGAIN! This time, a tear came to the lady's eye. I asked her if she was ok and she said, "now I am". I asked her what she meant, and she said the past 4 nights she kept regretting getting rid of the sewing machine in the first place, she said it was her aunty's pride and joy and she wished she'd kept it in the family as a memory of her.

I told her I believed that there were no such things as a "coincidences" and that this was all her aunty's plan... The lady then immediately picked up the sewing machine and walked it out of my shop back to her home with the biggest smile on her face... that machine was always meant for her...it found its way back to her...there are no such things as a coincidence...the universe really works in mysterious ways...

Remember...

"If something is meant to be...it will find a way somehow..."

MY CREATURE-KINDNESS TIP OF THE WEEK...

STOP ANTS INSTANTLY...WITHOUT KILLING!...

Sprinkle white vinegar, talcum powder, peppermint oil or rosemary powder where they come...Olbas oil does the trick too! They will stop coming without you having to harm them...light citronella candles or burn peppermint oil in aromatherapy tealight diffusers to stop them coming...you will get blessings in your life or have good karma for choosing a kind way too! This remedy also works to deter virtually any insect without harming them...like it & share it! For ANY specific tip to stop any "pest" or insect KINDLY (for good karma/blessings), email me: thedeepatel@gmail.com or join my Facebook page: "KIND WORLD"



2023-24 Season

Orange Tree Theatre, Richmond until July 2024

A greenhouse is, of course, a place where oranges grow! Amongst the offerings at Richmond's Orange Tree Theatre this summer will be its inaugural *Greenhouse Festival* at the end of August. This is a new initiative, a showcase which will provide an opportunity for graduating drama students to display their talents in productions such as Ionesco's *The Chairs* and [Sophie Treadwell's *Machinal*](#).



Another fresh initiative this coming season will be the expansion of the Orange Tree's educational outreach, nurturing new talent: another greenhouse. The OT's youth theatre will include workshops and performances of *Twelfth Night* and [Hamlet](#). Leading this outreach is the Orange Tree's Community Director Francesca Ellis, who is well [established as a Shakespearean](#) actress and director.



Tom Littler, the Orange Tree Theatre's new Artistic Director, emphasises the importance of the Orange Tree's intimate space, which has an ability to open up the very heart of these classics. This season he was very much hands-on, directing OT's current season's "clever, nuanced" production of Somerset Maugham's play, [The Circle](#).

Announcing their programme for 2023-24, Littler outlined the theatre's new season, which promises to combine contemporary drama with respected classics. He stressed the caveat that classics will be treated with the care they deserve; it will be a journey of re-discovery. Included will be *Uncle Vanya* directed

by [Sir Trevor Nunn](#), Noel Coward's last play *Suite in Three Keys*, and Oliver Goldsmith's *She Stoops to Conquer*.

Other eye-catching productions include the intriguing *Tiny Tim's Christmas Carol*, where it's up to Tiny Tim to remind his father Bob Cratchit of the story, and a fascinating re-imagining of Jane Austen's novel *Northanger Abbey*



Contemporary writing includes *Test Match* about tensions at Lord's during the women's world cup and *Red Speedo*, an American thriller directed by [Matthew Dunster](#), who has directed a number of award winning [Martin McDonagh](#) plays in the West End.

Seeds are sown for a creative and well-balanced season of challenging theatre, now watch what germinates the Orange Tree's greenhouse.

Reda Steve Mackrell's preview at www.markaspen.com/2023/07/14/ott-season-23-24

Photography courtesy of OTT



West Green House Opera

The Theatre on the Lake, Hartley Witney 21st – 30th July

The crowning feature of West Green House is the magnificent gardens. Marylyn Abbott had created Kennerton Green garden in New South Wales and three decades ago bought a lease to the IRA bomb-damaged West Green House. She rebuilt it and turned its overgrown grounds into an “individual *[garden]* filled with personality”, recreating its original features and adding a Nymphaeum by Quinlan Terry.



Marylyn Abbott had also been on the management of the Sydney Opera House. Opera is her even greater passion and in 2000 she inaugurated the [West Green House Opera](#). The opera setting has grown with passionate ambition. One of the most inspired ideas is the “floating” stage. It has the audience in pavilions on the lakeside and the stage on the island, hovering over the lake.

The setting was cleverly used in [last season's *L'elisir d'amore*](#), when Dulcamara, the quack apothecary, arrived by boat. An even better opportunity to exploit the island this year may arise with Offenbach's *Robinson Crusoe*, which involves a pirate ship! Robinson Crusoe is Robert Murray, recently in another eponymous role in [Mitridate, re di Ponto](#).



Nymphaeum at West Green House

West Green House Opera season repertoire is wide ranging. The Offenbach is in his operetta mould and Sondheim's *Sweeney Todd* edges towards musical. The grand finale piece, though, treads more traditional ground with that inseparable pair of operas, *Cavalleria Rusticana* and *Pagliacci*, affectionately known as “Cav&Pag”. John Andrews is conductor, and also returning are Angharad Lyddon, a captivating Cherubino in [Le Nozze di Figaro](#), and the renowned mezzo [Sarah Pring](#).

The opening production is the most intriguing, *Mozart's Constanze*, the last days of Mozart as told by his widow. It uses dance, traditional in



many operas, and puppetry, to create widely varying art forms, the essence of opera.

Within the ten-acre [magical gardens](#), amongst the delicately lit trees reflected captivatingly in the lake, the setting of the Theatre on the Lake, its stage poised on the living waters, is an utterly enchanting experience. Don't let it be missed.

Read Quentin Weiver's season preview at www.markaspen.com/2023/07/14/west-grn-opera-23

Photography by Elizabeth Wait

RSS JULIUS CAESAR in the Fountain Gardens

“Beware the Ides of March” - fair enough - but with March behind us now the Richmond Shakespeare Society urges you to put Monday, July 17th into your diaries. On that date and until July 22nd, we will be offering a truly remarkable production of Shakespeare’s best known Roman play - JULIUS CAESAR.

Our annual outdoor show in Twickenham’s Fountain Gardens (the “Naked Ladies” to you and me) promises to offer a contemporary, in-the-round setting of the conspiracy, assassination and bloody aftermath of that historic event of March 44BC.

If you would see the tyrant fall under the blue skies of Champions Wharf, basking in Summer sunshine and fortified by a picnic and bottle of wine, book now on www.richmondshakespeare.org.uk

JULIUS CAESAR - the Fountain Gardens, Champions Wharf, Twickenham, the Embankment, TW1 3DT. JULY 17th-22nd



Orange Tree Theatre announces Summer Schools programme

The 2023 Summer Schools programme makes a return for an exciting and inclusive opportunity for young people. Whether you are new to drama or an experienced performer, the programme will allow guests to meet new people, learn new skills, and make some theatre!

The activities will involve devising and rehearsing their own plays, to be performed on stage at the Orange Tree on the final day (Saturday afternoon). Working with a director, the groups will decide what story they want to tell and how to tell it.

Starting from Monday 14 August, there are two sessions for 7 to 11 years and 12 to 16 year olds.

For the full details, including how to book and bursaries, please visit [Orange Tree Theatre website](http://www.OrangeTreeTheatre.com).



St Mary's University

St Mary's Wins Four Awards at Aimhigher London Practitioner Awards

The Widening Participation Team at St Mary's University, Twickenham (SMU) has won four awards at the annual Aimhigher London Practitioner Awards.

Hosted at SMU, with Professor Anna-Lise Gordon and Nikki Anghileri as invited speakers, the awards are Aimhigher London's celebration of the successes of their partners, who go the extra mile to engage with learners to widen access to higher education and ensure their on-going success.



For the second year running, SMU has won the Institution of the Year award, with Goldsmith's University and UWL as runners-up. This recognises an outstanding contribution to the development of the Aimhigher London Network and the collaborative work supporting young people from disadvantaged or under-represented backgrounds to progress to Higher Education.

SMU staff members also won individual awards, with Widening Participation & Outreach Manager Nancy Bentley winning the Commitment over Time award and Senior Widening Participation and Outreach Officer Mandip Birk winning the Widening

Participation Champion award.

Student Ambassador Marie Nyvang-Hansen also won Student Ambassador of the Year for her outstanding contribution as a positive role model to learners.

SMU colleagues were shortlisted in two further awards, with Disability and Dyslexia Support Manager, Helen Duncan, nominated for Outstanding Collaboration and Widening Participation Outreach Officer, Holly Bazeley, nominated for Inspiring Practitioner.

Aimhigher London is a partnership of 14 London-based Higher Education Providers, 25 schools and virtual schools, and many, many more individuals, so to be nominated and win so many awards is truly a testament to the outstanding staff.

Speaking of the Awards, SMU Dean of Teaching and Learning Prof Adam Longcroft said, "I am delighted to see this fantastic recognition of our colleagues working in widening access and student success. There was strong competition at the awards, which is a brilliant celebration of the vibrancy of work in the sector to improve outcomes for learners across London at all stages of their higher education journeys.

"Congratulations to Nancy, Mandip and Marie on their awards, and to all of colleagues that work in and with the Widening Participation at SMU for their support in making us Institution of the Year again."



St Mary's
University
Twickenham
London

St Mary's University

St Mary's Appoints Dr Kim Salmons as Head of the School of Liberal and Creative Arts

St Mary's University, Twickenham (SMU), has announced the appointment of Dr Kim Salmons as the new Head of the School of Liberal and Creative Arts (SLCA).

The Head of School is responsible for providing strong academic leadership and innovation for the newly formed SLCA, driven by a commitment to Teaching and Learning, the Student Experience, Partnerships, Research, and Knowledge Exchange.



Dean of the Faculty of Education, Theology and the Arts, Professor Jacob Phillips, said of Kim's appointment, "Kim is a brilliant appointment for the University from a highly competitive field. She has a breadth of experience in the creative and liberal arts and is perfectly placed to deliver on our vision for the School and to develop the arts at St Mary's, whilst placing the student at the heart of everything we do.

"I feel sure that under Kim's leadership the SLCA will equip graduates with skills relevant to a modern, technological world and drive forwards cross-faculty and industry collaboration."

The SLCA is the home to the University's

Creative Arts and Humanities subjects, and offers an impressive portfolio of undergraduate, postgraduate, and research degrees in a range of subjects including Liberal Arts, Acting, History, Film, English Literature, and Creative and Professional Writing. The School also features a thriving public engagement culture, regularly hosting conferences and events to share studies and best practice with the academic community, students, and the general public.

Speaking of her appointment, Dr Kim Salmons said, "I am delighted to have been appointed as the head of the new School of Liberal and Creative Arts here at St Mary's. I am committed to promoting the importance and centrality of the liberal and creative arts at St Mary's and I look forward to stewarding the school's journey as a centre of heritage, culture, and artistic endeavour. My aim is to develop and secure the reputation of the University's academic and professional expertise through public engagement and outreach."

Dr Kim Salmons is an Associate Professor in Modern Literature, gaining her PhD from the University of Surrey in 2015 on 'The Representation of Food in Modern Literature: Thomas Hardy and Joseph Conrad'. She has published two monographs on Hardy and Conrad (Palgrave, 2017) and has co-edited a volume on *Migration, Modernity & Transnationalism in Conrad's Fiction* (Bloomsbury, 2021). Kim is the Co-Director of the Conrad Study Centre at St Mary's, and teaches on the English Literature and Liberal Arts programmes.



St Mary's
University
Twickenham
London

Council's leisure centres survey results released

We are currently developing a new Physical Activity, Sport and Leisure Strategy for Richmond upon Thames to provide a comprehensive and collaborative approach to delivering sport and physical activity in the borough.

An online survey ran between October and November 2022, shared via schools, libraries, voluntary sector groups, sports clubs, youth clubs and leisure centres. This gave residents an opportunity to speak about the barriers they face to both exercising and using our leisure centres, and what would encourage them to use them more.

From December 2022 to February 2023, we consulted underrepresented groups including inactive people, young people and parent carers through the form of focus groups.

From the 1,295 respondents to the initial survey, 70% were 'satisfied' with their most recent experience at one of our leisure centres, while 18% said that they exercise, though not at a Council leisure facility.

72% said the thing they liked the most about the centre they were using was the 'location', followed by 61% who said they liked the 'facilities (e.g. pools, gym, courts, halls, pitches)'

36 respondents (3%) said that they do not exercise or do less than 30 minutes per week, with 'costs involved', 'not sure how to start' and 'not enough time due to care/childcare responsibilities' being the most common barriers. However, nearly half (47%) said that they would be quite likely to join a leisure centre if they were to start exercising.

Now that the data gathering is complete, the next step will be to review the information, produce options and draft the strategy itself, which we will also want to hear residents' thoughts on, in due course.

Cllr Julia Neden-Watts, Deputy Leader and Chair of the Environment, Sustainability, Culture and Sports Services Committee said:

"We are very grateful to every resident that took the time to give feedback on their experiences of exercising in the borough and with using Council leisure facilities. It's great to hear that so many are happy with their experiences so far, and we have gathered lots of useful information on how we can improve.

"Being active is hugely important to both mental and physical health in the long term and we want to ensure that there are offerings that are suitably accessible and convenient for everyone in the borough to use.

"No matter your level of fitness or experience with exercise, there are options and support available to help you. Check out our [Richmond Moves webpages](#) to learn more about how you can start moving more!"

Read the full [leisure centres survey reports](#).

To get access to a [leisure centre](#) near you, you can join [Feel Good Fitness](#) today. Until Monday 31 July 2023, you will pay just £1 joining fee when you sign up!



Highlights, report and reaction:

Boreham Wood 1 Brentford 1

Brentford begin pre-season campaign with a 1-1 draw at Meadow Park; Halil Dervisoglu's close-range finish cancelled out by Timmy Abraham in the second period after Thomas Frank made 10 half-time changes; Frank: "I liked what I saw"

Written by Brentford Football Club

Brentford began their 2023/24 pre-season campaign with a 1-1 draw against Boreham Wood.

Halil Dervisoglu's close-range finish was the least the Bees deserved following a dominant opening to the game, but the hosts gained a foothold after the break against a much-changed Brentford side and levelled through Timmy Abraham midway through the second period.

Brentford carved out the game's first chance with two minutes on the clock. Henry darted up the left flank and played the ball inside to Keane Lewis-Potter, who teed up Paris Maghoma on the edge of the 18-yard box. The midfielder's well-struck effort was parried by Nathan Ashmore in the Boreham Wood goal and Dervisoglu blazed over on the rebound from six yards.

The Bees continued to push for an opener, moving the ball through the thirds with pace and purpose. On 11 minutes, Lewis-Potter skipped past David Stephens to work some space in the area and took aim for the bottom corner from 10 yards. Ashmore pushed the ball to his left and Olakigbe was quickest to react, setting himself with his knee and firing over the bar on the volley.

Thomas Frank's side were in front eight minutes later and it was a goal of Henry's making. On a trademark foray up the left flank, the full-back took Ethan Pinnock's diagonal ball in his stride - leaving David Agbontohma in his wake - and fizzed in a low cross from the byline which was turned home by Dervisoglu.

Brentford came close to doubling their advantage on 24 minutes. The lively Lewis-Potter cut in from the left touchline, beat two defenders and saw his effort from a central position pushed away by Ashmore into the path of Yehor Yarmoliuk, who lifted over from a tight angle.

The hosts should have levelled a minute later, Lee Ndlovu dragging wide of Ellery Balcombe's left post with the Brentford keeper on the floor having dropped down to block the striker's initial attempt.

Henry almost got himself on the scoresheet five minutes before the break, receiving a short pass from Yarmoliuk and pulling the trigger from 30 yards. The ball looked destined for the top corner but dipped the wrong side of the crossbar.

Olakigbe was the only Brentford player to reappear after the interval and Boreham Wood grew into the game against a much-changed Bees side.



Seven minutes after the restart, one of the hosts' trialists saw his shot fly across the face of goal via a deflection. Chris Bush – rising above the crowd to nod the resulting corner towards goal – forced Matt Cox into smart stop, with the ball eventually hacked away by a Brentford defender inside a crowded six-yard box.

Abraham then dipped a long-range effort over the bar as last season's National League play-off semi-finalists continued to probe for an equaliser.

And Boreham Wood and Abraham weren't to be denied. On 68 minutes, the hosts' left-back advanced down the wing and floated a cross towards the back post. Abraham's impressive first touch presented him with space for a shot and he made no mistake in firing beyond Cox from close range.

The home side had the lion's share of the ball during the final quarter of the game but struggled to convert possession into opportunities – Tyrone Marsh's acrobatic attempt during the final moments the closest they came to a winner - as Brentford's first test of pre-season ended in a draw.

Next stop Philadelphia for the Premier League Summer Series.

Brentford first half: Balcombe; Roerslev, Pinnock, Mee, Henry; Yarmoliuk, Janelt, Maghoma; Lewis-Potter, Dervisoglu, Olakigbe

Brentford second half: Cox; Crama, Kim, Bech, Farr; Baptiste, Trevitt; Yogane, Peart-Harris, Olakigbe (Brierley 70); Young-Coombes

Frank: I liked what I saw

Thomas Frank was pleased to see the hard work in training translating to the first pre-season friendly of the season against Boreham Wood.

The Bees boss said: "It was good in many ways. It's always good to get the two 45 minutes in after we played two different teams in the two halves today.

"The lads have been working very hard over the last 10 days or so and it was great to see that out here today.

"Looking at the more experienced team in the first half, we saw a lot of things we'd worked on, trying to add layers to the offensive play, especially trying to control it a bit more but also getting more in behind.

"The goal came from one of those balls in behind, and then a nice ball under for a tap in.

"Second half we played the younger ones, lots of effort, a few changes which meant we lost control of the game a little bit, but I liked what I saw from the very young players."

Keane Lewis-Potter said he was 'buzzing' to be back playing for the Bees, nearly five months after picking up a knee injury in the Premier League.

The 22-year-old played the opening 45 minutes against Boreham Wood in the 1-1 draw, where he looked lively in the pre-season friendly at Meadow Park.

"It was great to be back out there, especially after a tough four, nearly five, months out with injury. I was buzzing to get back out there," Lewis-Potter said.

"Just being back out there with the boys was great. It was a tough time being in the physio room for all those months and over the summer as well."

He added: *"I said to the boys when I came back in that I was trying to get back used to those knocks and bruises you get from those tackles that come in!"*



RUGBY FOOTBALL UNION CONFIRM CONTRACTED PLAYERS FOR THE RED ROSES

The Rugby Football Union (RFU) has announced the players who have been awarded contracts for its women's senior players, the Red Roses.

The contracted players have been selected by incoming Red Roses Head Coach, John Mitchell, with his coaching team of Louis Deacon, Lou Meadows and Sarah Hunter, alongside, Executive Director of Performance, Conor O'Shea, and Head of Women's Performance, Charlie Hayter.

The new contracts agreed in collaboration with the Rugby Players' Association and player representatives, will cover salaries, match fees, Rugby World Cup 2025 arrangements, commercial and community engagement initiatives as well as an agreement around revenue sharing if business targets are exceeded.

The three-season agreement, up to 2026, sees 32 contracts awarded of varying lengths, including two players who will shortly go on maternity leave remaining contracted. Two additional contract offers will be confirmed by the end of the year. Six transition contracts have also been awarded to support aspiring Red Roses in their early professional journey, and safeguard some of their week for dedicated rugby development.

Charlie Hayter, RFU Head of Women's Performance said: *"We are pleased to confirm the players offered contracts who will form the Red Roses contracted player squad for the 2023/24 season. This is a hugely exciting time for the Red Roses, especially with our home World Cup on the horizon in 2025. However, we know there is a lot of work to do before then, and we are excited to bring the group together shortly to start preparations for WXV which will be the immediate focus for us all."*

Contracted players:

Holly Aitchison (Bristol Bears)
Zoe Aldcroft (Gloucester-Hartpury)
Sarah Beckett (Gloucester-Hartpury)
Sarah Bern (Bristol Bears)
Hannah Botterman (Bristol Bears)
Jess Breach (Saracens)
Mackenzie Carson (TBC)
Poppy Cleall (Saracens)
Kelsey Clifford (Saracens)
Amy Cokayne (Leicester Tigers)
Vickii Cornborough (Harlequins)
Lark Davies (Bristol Bears)
Abby Dow (Ealing Trailfinders)
Rosie Galligan (Saracens)
Zoe Harrison (Saracens)
Tatyana Heard (Gloucester-Hartpury)

Megan Jones (Leicester Tigers)
Sadia Kabeya (Loughborough)
Ellie Kildunne (Harlequins)
Alex Matthews (Gloucester-Hartpury)
Claudia MacDonald (Exeter)
Maud Muir (Gloucester-Hartpury)
Cath O'Donnell (Loughborough)
Morwenna Talling (Sale Sharks)
Lucy Packer (Harlequins)
Marlie Packer (Saracens)
Connie Powell (Harlequins)
Amber Reed (Bristol Bears)
Helena Rowland (Loughborough)
Emily Scarratt (Loughborough)
Emma Sing (Gloucester-Hartpury)
Abbie Ward (Bristol Bears)

Transition contracted players:

Maisy Allen (Exeter)
Grace Clifford (Loughborough)
Katie Buchanan (Exeter)

Lizzie Duffy (Sale Sharks)
Lilli Ives Campion (Loughborough)
Nancy McGillivray (Exeter)



RED ROSES V CANADA TWO-TEST SERIES ANNOUNCED

The Rugby Football Union is delighted to announce that the Red Roses will host Canada Women in a two-Test series this September.

The series opener will be played at Exeter's Sandy Park on Saturday, 23 September (KO 14:30), before the second match, which will take place on Saturday, 30 September at a venue and time to be confirmed, concludes the series.

[Priority Tickets](#) for the first fixture of the series available to O2 and Virgin Media customers now before going general sale on Friday, 14 July where they can be purchased on the [England Rugby website](#).

The two-Test series will be the first time the two sides have faced off since the Red Roses won a brilliant Rugby World Cup 2021 semi-final over Canada 26-19 at Eden Park, when England made history by winning a record 30 consecutive tests.

The matches will also be the Red Roses' first since their successful [Grand Slam Six Nations campaign](#), before they travel to New Zealand shortly thereafter to compete in the [WXV tournament](#) launching in October.

England forwards coach, Louis Deacon said:

"We are delighted to be facing one of the world's best teams on home turf. Canada is a powerful team and present a fantastic challenge as we look to build on the success of our TikTok Six Nations campaign and continue improving as a squad.

"The two-Test series is the perfect preparation as we build up to the inaugural WXV tournament in New Zealand."

Charlie Hayter, RFU head of women's performance rugby, said:

"Exeter has been a fantastic host venue for the Red Roses on a number of occasions and we are excited to be heading back to Sandy Park.

The club and its supporters are passionate fans of the women's game and embraced the team each time we play there."



Chancellor responds to July's labour market statistics

The Chancellor's response to ONS July labour market statistics is below.

Chancellor the Exchequer Jeremy Hunt said:

"Our jobs market is strong with unemployment low by historical standards. But we still have around 1 million job vacancies, pushing up inflation even further. Our labour market reforms - including expanding free childcare next year - will help to build the high wage, high growth, low inflation economy we all want to see."

Additional information:

- Our unemployment rate is lower than in Canada, France, Italy, Spain, and the Euro area.
- The Bank of England have said that the unemployment rate is projected to be 3.8% in Q2 this year, lower than the forecast of 4.1% in the February MPR. The unemployment rate is projected to remain below 4% until the end of next year rather than rising above 4.5% as expected in the February MPR.
- Our employment rate is higher than in the US, France, Italy, Spain and the Euro area.
- The unemployment rate (4.0%) remains low by historical standards.
- There were estimated to be around 30 million employees on payrolls in June 2023, over a million above pre-pandemic levels.
- The Spring Budget delivers on our plan to grow the economy in a way that does not fuel inflation – with a package of major supply side reforms boosting both employment levels and business investment.
- The OBR forecast our jobs market reforms will bolster our labour market by more than 100,000 by 2027-28.



HM Treasury

GMB RESPONDS TO THAMES WATER CASH INJECTION

Employees at Thames have been kept in the dark and the company seems to be in denial about the state of the finances, says GMB Union

GMB has responded to shareholders in Thames Water agreeing to provide a further £750m in funding as the company attempts to fight the threat of government control.

Gary Carter, GMB National Officer, said:

"This £750 million investment by shareholders will come as a relief to GMB members, but it's less than promised and still leaves a massive hole in Thames Water's finances. Shareholders had already committed to a £1 billion investment to make good on its recovery plan.

"Employees at Thames have been kept in the dark and the company seems to be in denial about the state of the finances, as well as and it's inadequate protection if customers, staff and the environment. Thames has to take responsibility for the crisis it has brought on itself and shareholders have to come up with the cash to clean up the environment and investment in the assets and workforce. Customers and workers cannot be expected to pay. That's the shareholders job."



A&E delays persist ahead of planned industrial action

The Royal College of Emergency Medicine (RCEM) has responded to the [latest Emergency Department performance statistics for June 2023](#).

Published Thursday (13 July 2023) by NHS England, the June data show two in five patients waited four-hours or more in A&Es and more than 108,000 patients (8%) waited 12-hours or more from their time of arrival at A&E.

Commenting on these figures, Dr Ian Higginson, Vice President of the Royal College of Emergency Medicine, said:

“The data show some small improvements, but these are tiny positives when you consider that more than 100,000 patients still had to wait longer than 12-hours in English Emergency Departments alone. We cannot accept this as normal; these long delays are dangerous and appalling and have a major impact on our patients and staff.

“Summer is generally thought of as being a time of reduced pressure on the NHS. Yet we are seeing little evidence that the [Urgent and Emergency Care delivery plan](#) is having a significant effect, or that it will yet prove to be little more than words on paper.

“With the unprecedented industrial action underway and consultants set to strike next week, the NHS remains in a precarious position.”

The A&E performance figures come on the day that the longest period of industrial action by junior doctors (post-graduate doctors in training) begins.

Dr Higginson continued: “We support our members’ and colleagues’ right to take industrial action. We urge the BMA and the government to move past this current impasse and find a resolution quickly, for the sake of patients and staff.

“Many healthcare workers and patients will be worried about the industrial action taking place this weekend, Trusts must ensure they have the appropriate plans in place as patient safety is paramount.

“If our members and colleagues are concerned their service is becoming unsafe, they should escalate their concerns via their Clinical Lead, Medical Director and the Chief Operating Officer.

“While industrial action may be disruptive, patients who need Emergency Care should seek it in the normal way by attending A&E or calling 999.”



Royal College of
Emergency Medicine

Aspartame hazard and risk assessment results released

Assessments of the health impacts of the non-sugar sweetener aspartame are released today by the [International Agency for Research on Cancer \(IARC\)](#) and the [World Health Organization \(WHO\) and the Food and Agriculture Organization \(FAO\) Joint Expert Committee on Food Additives \(JECFA\)](#). Citing “limited evidence” for carcinogenicity in humans, IARC classified aspartame as possibly carcinogenic to humans ([IARC Group 2B](#)) and JECFA reaffirmed the acceptable daily intake of 40 mg/kg body weight.

Aspartame is an artificial (chemical) sweetener widely used in various food and beverage products since the 1980s, including diet drinks, chewing gum, gelatin, ice cream, dairy products such as yogurt, breakfast cereal, toothpaste and medications such as cough drops and chewable vitamins.

“Cancer is one of the leading causes of death globally. Every year, 1 in 6 people die from cancer. Science is continuously expanding to assess the possible initiating or facilitating factors of cancer, in the hope of reducing these numbers and the human toll,” said Dr Francesco Branca, Director of the Department of Nutrition and Food Safety, WHO.

“The assessments of aspartame have indicated that, while safety is not a major concern at the doses which are commonly used, potential effects have been described that need to be investigated by more and better studies.”

The two bodies conducted independent but complementary reviews to assess the potential carcinogenic hazard and other health risks associated with aspartame consumption. This was the first time that IARC has evaluated aspartame and the third time for JECFA.

After reviewing the available scientific literature, both evaluations noted limitations in the available evidence for cancer (and other health effects).

IARC classified aspartame as possibly carcinogenic to humans (Group 2B) on the basis of limited evidence for cancer in humans (specifically, for hepatocellular carcinoma, which is a type of liver cancer). There was also limited evidence for cancer in experimental animals and limited evidence related to the possible mechanisms for causing cancer.

JECFA concluded that the data evaluated indicated no sufficient reason to change the previously [established acceptable daily intake \(ADI\) of 0–40 mg/kg body weight for aspartame](#). The committee therefore reaffirmed that it is safe for a person to consume within this limit per day.

For example, with a can of diet soft drink containing 200 or 300 mg of aspartame, an adult weighing 70kg would need to consume more than 9–14 cans per day to exceed the acceptable daily intake, assuming no other intake from other food sources.

IARC's hazard identifications are the first fundamental step to understand the carcinogenicity of an agent by identifying its specific properties and its potential to cause harm, i.e. cancer. IARC classifications reflect the strength of scientific evidence as to whether an agent can cause cancer in humans, but they do not reflect the risk of developing cancer at a given exposure level.

The IARC hazard evaluation considers all types of exposures (e.g. dietary, occupational). The strength-of-evidence classification in Group 2B is the third highest level out of [4 levels](#), and it is generally used either when there is limited, but not convincing, evidence for cancer in humans or convincing evidence for cancer in experimental animals, but not both.

“The findings of limited evidence of carcinogenicity in humans and animals, and of limited mechanistic evidence on how carcinogenicity may occur, underscore the need for more research to refine our understanding on whether consumption of aspartame poses a carcinogenic hazard,” said Dr Mary Schubauer-Berigan of the IARC Monographs programme.

JECFA's risk assessments determine the probability of a specific type of harm, i.e. cancer, to occur under certain conditions and levels of exposure. It is not unusual for JECFA to factor IARC classifications into its deliberations.

“JECFA also considered the evidence on cancer risk, in animal and human studies, and concluded that the evidence of an association between aspartame consumption and cancer in humans is not convincing,” said Dr Moez Sanaa, WHO's Head of the Standards and Scientific Advice on Food and Nutrition Unit.

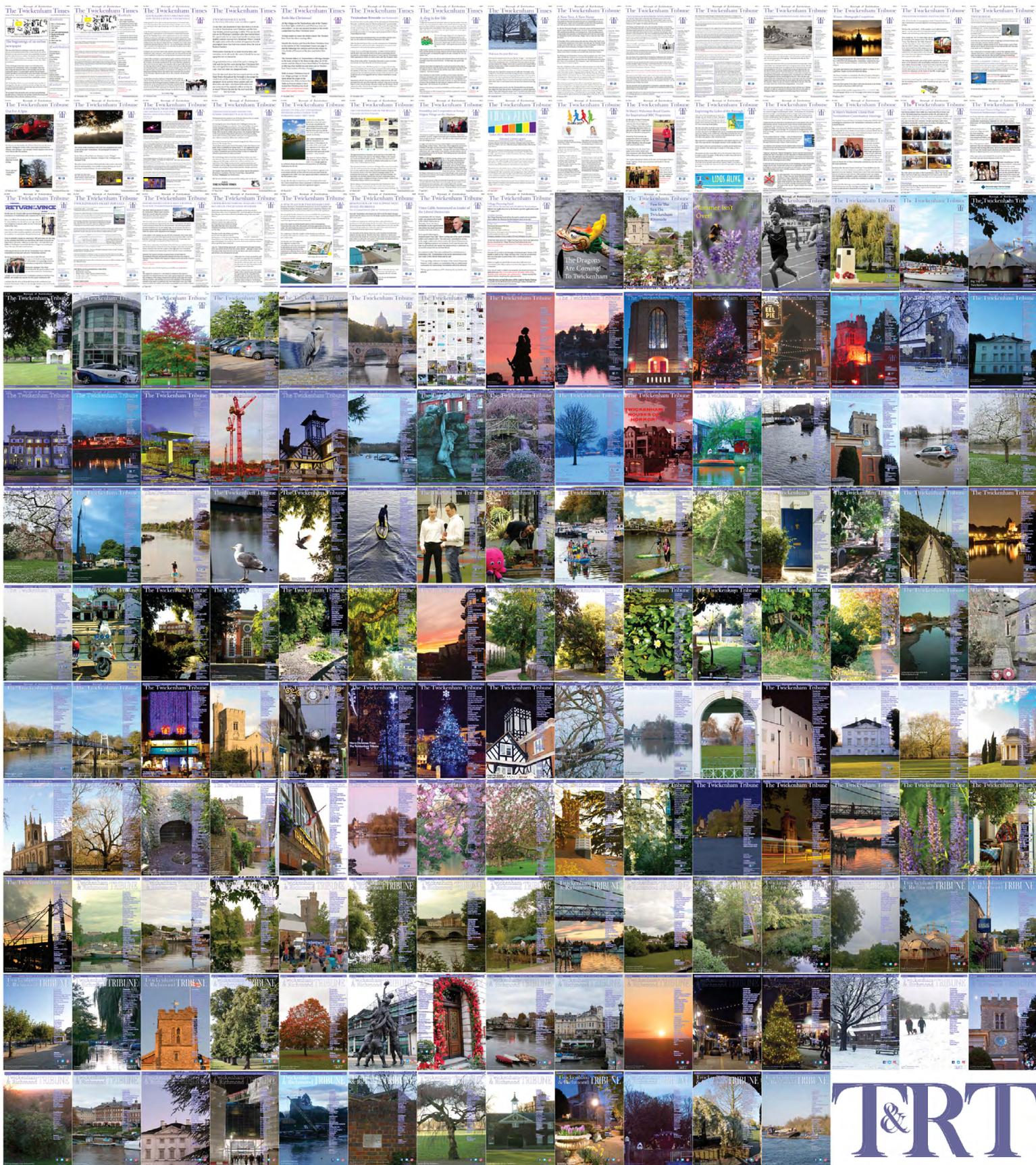
“We need better studies with longer follow-up and repeated dietary questionnaires in existing cohorts. We need randomized controlled trials, including studies of mechanistic pathways relevant to insulin regulation, metabolic syndrome and diabetes, particularly as related to carcinogenicity.”

The IARC and JECFA evaluations of the impact of aspartame were based on scientific data collected from a range of sources, including peer-reviewed papers, governmental reports and studies conducted for regulatory purposes. The studies have been reviewed by independent experts, and both committees have taken steps to ensure the independence and reliability of their evaluations.

IARC and WHO will continue to monitor new evidence and encourage independent research groups to develop further studies on the potential association between aspartame exposure and consumer health effects.



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Published by:

Twickenham & Richmond Tribune (in association with World InfoZone Limited)

Registered in England & Wales

Reg No 10549345

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

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