

Twickenham & Richmond TRIBUNE

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Editors

Berkley Driscoll
Teresa Read



21st July 2023

T&RT

Crescent moon over Holy Trinity, Twickenham Green
Photo by Berkley Driscoll

TickerTape - News in Brief

Tube and national rail strikes

There is planned strike action affecting London Underground services between Sunday 23 and Saturday 29 July. From 23 July, severe disruption, with no service on Wednesday 26 and Friday 28 July is expected. Customers using London Underground services on 23 July are advised to complete their journeys by 19:00.

There are no strikes planned on bus, DLR, London Overground (including Night Overground), Elizabeth line, tram or IFS Cloud Cable Car services. Some DLR, London Overground (including Night Overground) and Elizabeth line services may be affected by station closures where stations serve London Underground lines.

There are also national rail strikes planned on Thursday 20, Saturday 22 and Saturday 29 July, which may affect some District line, London Overground, Elizabeth line and tram services. [Plan ahead, check before you travel](#) and allow extra time to make your journey.

For more information, please visit Tfl [website](#).

District line: Sunday 23 July

No service between Turnham Green and Richmond
A rail replacement bus service will run.

London Overground: Sunday 23 July

No service between Richmond and Gospel Oak (via West Hampstead)
A rail replacement bus service will run.



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Covid-19

By Teresa Read

World Health Organization

Weekly epidemiological update on COVID-19 - 20 July 2023

At the country level, the highest numbers of new cases reported within the 28-day period were reported from the Republic of Korea (501,931), Brazil (54,182), Australia (48,248), Singapore (26,445) and New Zealand (24,112).

The highest numbers of new 28-day deaths were reported from Brazil (921), Australia (690), Peru (410), the Russian Federation (402) and Italy (206).

The European Region reported over 86,000 new cases, a 71% decrease as compared to the previous 28-day period. No country has reported increases in new cases of 20% or greater compared to the previous 28-day period.

The highest numbers of new cases were reported from the Russian Federation (20,854), Italy (15,725) and France (7,982).

The highest numbers of new deaths were reported from the Russian Federation (402), Italy (206) and Portugal (81).

NEWS

Nature: As COVID-19 cases rose, so did diabetes – no one knows why. A study of more than 38,000 young people has confirmed what researchers had begun to suspect: the COVID-19 pandemic precipitated a jump in cases of type 1 diabetes in children and teenagers.

Nature: Had COVID but no symptoms? You might have this genetic mutation. A common variant in an immune-system gene is linked with a much higher chance of dodging symptoms after SARS-CoV-2 infection.



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darryl parkin

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The local picture postcard column

By Alan Winter

Part 206. The Red Lion pub in Barnes

Located at No.2 Castlenau and on the junction with Church Road and Rock's Lane, this building was first registered as a public house known as 'The Strugglers' in 1718 but was destroyed by fire in 1835 and rebuilt in its present form along with the change of name. In recent times it was a hotel and a free house until 1978 when it was acquired by Fuller's.

One of over 600 pubs with this name 'The Red Lion' is the most common pub name in the UK.

Its location next to many sports pitches in the Barn Elms complex and almost next to the London Wetland Centre in Queen Elizabeth Walk means that there is a great variety of customers over an average week. An old rumour has it that Jimi Hendrix wrote his famous song 'Purple Haze' in the pub while on a break from recording at the Olympic Studios in the 1960's.



There have always been plenty of rugby players and footballers in there on Saturday nights after their afternoon games.



Two of our postcards this week also show an entrance to the Ranelagh Club next to the Red Lion which was in its day the largest polo club in the world and used virtually all the land between Rocks Lane and the River up until the middle of the 20th Century. For the sake of continuity I will come up with some Ranelagh Club postcards for next week's column (I hope!)

Back to our postcards this week and the first and coloured one shows a policeman sorting out the

traffic outside the Red Lion in about 1904.

120 years later It is now a very busy traffic-light controlled junction of course. The other two postcards show the Red Lion around 100 years ago. No Barn Elms or London Wetland Centre in those days and Barnes was then a lovely green riverside village a few miles to the West of the centre of London.

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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Belgian Refugee Champion Wins Belgian Award

By Gerald Baker

Six thousand Belgian refugees famously settled themselves across Twickenham and Richmond in the First World War, brought here by the equally renowned Pelabon Munitions Works. There were even more refugees living in Teddington and Barnes.

Dr. Helen Baker came across the lost story of the Belgians and made it known, not just across the Borough but also to Belgium and the wider world. She has now been honoured by the Belgian Government with the medal of *Chevalier de l'Ordre de la Couronne* (Knight of the Order of the Crown).

The award is made for “all her good services reviving the forgotten memories of Belgo-British friendship in one of the largest Belgian refugee communities in First World War Britain, as epitomized in the riverside memorial which she championed in the London Borough of Richmond upon Thames.”

Helen, who has lived yards from the factory site in East Twickenham since 1947, said,

“It’s really incredible. The munitions factory was among the largest in Britain - it took up six huge buildings across all of what is now the Richmond Bridge Estate riverside development.

“This meant there were so many Belgians here - but nobody knew! Not just us kids – my parents didn’t know, the neighbours didn’t know, all of them neighbours of the Belgian factory. The story only managed to linger on in just a few people with a real connection to the old site, like the ice rink staff and the management of the riverside flats.”



The medal of the Ordre de Chevalier de la Couronne.

©Diana Willis



Belgian workers from the Pelabon munitions factory. ©Guy Pelabon



Belgian shops in Richmond Road, East Twickenham. ©Guy Pelabon



After the unveiling. L-R: H.E. Guy Trouveroy; Helen Baker; The Mayor, Cllr. David Linette. ©Andrew Wilson

Helen has now researched the story in depth, contributing it to local and national journals, and telling it on national TV. *“From the beginning, I was impressed by how well the British and Belgians got along with each other - on the whole -, and thought it should be a lesson to us in how to manage these situations today.”*

The old factory, including the ice rink, was demolished in 1991. To preserve the memory for ever, Helen led East Twickenham residents in designing and fund-raising for a memorial, which now stands nearby in the riverside Warren Gardens. The monolith symbolizing timelessness was made by a Belgian stone-cutter out of Belgian bluestone, and a poetic message winds round it in English, French and Flemish, written by then-7-year old Issy Holton from the Belgian children’s old school, Orleans Juniors. The memorial was jointly unveiled on April the 1st 2017 by the Belgian Ambassador, H.E. Guy Trouveroy, and the Mayor of Richmond upon Thames, in a ceremony with performances by English, French, German and Dutch children. Both the memorial and the ceremony represented cooperation and reconciliation between different peoples.

“I don’t see the award as just for me,” Helen insisted. *“I see it as belonging to all the people of Twickenham and Richmond who were inspired by this wonderful story.”*

Water safety event at Teddington Lock

London Fire Brigade will be hosting a pop-up event at Teddington Lock on Tuesday 25 July to mark World Drowning Prevention Day and to talk to young people about the dangers of swimming in the Thames.

The event will run from 12 noon to 4pm on the Ham side of the lock footbridges.

Teddington Lock and its two footbridges are popular during summer months, particularly with children and young people coming from Richmond upon Thames and neighbouring boroughs like Kingston upon Thames and Hounslow, looking to jump into the river or swim to cool off in hot weather.



London Fire Officers and the Teddington Lifeboat Station crew will be on hand to talk about cold water shock and how to 'Float to Live'. There will be opportunities to take part in activities including how to use a throw bag to rescue 'Drowning Derek'.

Everyone is welcome, particularly parents, guardians and teachers who have critical roles in making sure young people and children are fully aware of the dangers of swimming and jumping, not just in this area or on the Thames, but in any open water.

We have released a new film demonstrating what you should do if someone gets into trouble in the river, including how to use a throw line board. We are the leading borough with 13 throwline boards along the riverside. Check the [throwline locations](#).

Watch the Life-saving warning around swimming in the Thames video [HERE](#)



You are not alone

Doug Goodman has a close encounter with his neighbours.

It was a very hot day and I had drunk a few beers in the garden when I'm sure I heard a voice say hello. At first I thought I was imagining it but then, looking down at me from the shed roof, was a big, well-groomed fox.

Not wishing to scare him I kept still and replied with a friendly greeting. He explained that he hoped he hadn't scared me and that he was bored and wanted to chat. We talked for a while before a shrill cry summoned him back to the burrow in the next garden. He told me that feeding the family, foraging for food and entertaining the three new cubs was quite exhausting. His family was the fifth generation to live next door and I've observed them grow up and leave home. Most have been friendly and curious but I've always avoided leaving out food or getting too close. However a tiny cub, possibly just out of the den was so curious about me and couldn't decide if a human was safe or not. It followed me around the garden and dropped an apple at my feet.

I told the tiny creature that he was welcome to play in my garden but to avoid sitting on plants and digging. We'll see what happens.



A DAY ON THE RIVER

By Bruce Lyons



The Great River Race didn't take place in 2020 & 2021 due to Covid-19 restrictions as well as problems with Hammersmith Bridge.

And in 2022 it was abandoned at 2 days' notice due to the Late Queen's death and as a result it was rowed in silence by the Rowers as a tribute to her Majesty.

So, 2023 is going to be a great year – 16th September, Millwall Slipway, (opposite Greenwich) to Ham House.

21.6 Miles; 28 Bridges; up to 250 Boats (only fixed seats) of all shapes and sizes rowed by up to 3000 rowers.

There is plenty to see if you just join at Ham, on the tow path, around 14.00 but better still, this year Turks Launches are following the race in the "Southern Belle" Why not take a day out, join at Millwall Slipway to watch the Rowers and Boats being prepared for the start from 8.30 and follow the race on the Southern Belle leaving from Mast House Pier just down the road leaving around 12.00 and cruise up river to Ham (about 3 ½ hours) and see the finish and join in the party. Advance booking only!



See all London's Riverside Iconic Buildings en route as well as passing many rowing teams.

Sadly, I won't be rowing this year, but we are agents for the Southern Belle Spectator and there are a very few tickets available – email me bruce@crusadertravel.com or call on 020 8744 0474.

More information about the race – <https://greatriverrace.org.uk/>



London's Royal Parks celebrated by Green Flag as among the best in UK

The Royal Parks can wave Green Flags with pride after they retained the highest quality award for parks and green spaces, again, this year.

The Royal Parks charity manages London's eight Royal Parks along with Brompton Cemetery and other important green spaces in the capital.

Greenwich Park, Green Park, St James's Park, Kensington Gardens and Brompton Cemetery have all been re-awarded their Green Flag status this year.



The Green Flag award is the UK and international quality standard for parks and green spaces. The Royal Parks are judged, or visited, by a mystery shopper every year. The Green Flag judging process includes a review of our Park Management Plans and a site visit to meet park teams. This includes meeting staff across park, landscape, volunteer, and biodiversity management to showcase work in the field.

The other Royal Parks – The Regent's Park, Hyde Park, Richmond Park, Bushy Park - have retained their status and will be judged again in 2024.

All Royal Parks have also achieved or retained the Green Heritage Site Accreditation, supported by Historic England, for the management of its historic features.

The awards mark the culmination of an historic twelve months. The central parks were viewed by billions across the globe when the Royal Parks welcomed millions of visitors to major national ceremonial events marking the funeral of Queen Elizabeth II and the Coronation of King Charles III.

Michael Rowland, Head of Park Operations, The Royal Parks, said:

"In recent months we have been proud to have shown the parks at their absolute best, when we welcomed millions of visitors to our central parks, to join in and be part of the most notable national ceremonial events of the century

"These Green Flag awards are testament to the hard work, dedication vision and teamwork of our staff, contractors, apprentices and volunteers who maintain these parks at the very highest standards of excellence."



Join the Mayor's coffee morning at Asgill House

On Thursday 3 August, the Mayor of Richmond will be holding a coffee morning in the beautiful Asgill House, by Richmond riverside.

Taking place from 10 to 11.30am, guests will have a chance to view part of the Asgill House, enjoy a historical talk and explore the elegant gardens, while enjoying a coffee and pastry.

The event will also have a raffle, helping to raise money for the Mayor's charities.

Tickets are £10 per person and can be [booked online](#).

For a full list of events, visit the [Mayor's charities](#) page.



Team Richmond finish second in 2023 London Youth Games

After nine months, 31 competitions and 24 top ten finishes, Team Richmond amassed 1001 points to secure second place in the Jubilee Standings at the 2023 London Youth Games.

The games have seen over 500 athletes aged between 10 and 17 from across Richmond upon Thames take part.

Starting back in October 2022 at the Cross Country competition, where Richmond won two bronze medals, Richmond continued to impress throughout the year.

Securing top five and medals across numerous competitions, Richmond finished six points behind Haringey and are already looking to their next achievements in the 2023/2024 London Youth Games season.

The podium performances from Richmond were:

Girls Basketball (Gold)
Kayak Sprint (Gold)
Boys Judo (Silver)
Archery (Silver)
Girls Athletics (Silver)

Boys Cross Country (Bronze)
Girls Cross Country (Bronze)
Girls Para Swimming (Bronze)
Kayak Slalom (Bronze)
Girls Judo (Bronze)
Boys Athletic (Bronze)



Dan Hayden, borough team organiser, said Richmond's triumph in the competition showed the quality of sports across the borough and that the London Youth Games see the best young sportspeople in London.

TATA – The Twickenham Connection

On Wednesday this week, Al Jazeera announced “India’s Tata Group to build \$5bn EV battery gigafactory in UK”; the story also made headlines on many news sites around the world.

UK Prime Minister Rishi Sunak was reported as saying that Tata’s decision to build its first battery factory outside India in the UK is a huge vote of confidence in Britain.

Some readers will be aware that Councillor Alexander Ehmann, Chair of the Transport and Air Quality Services Committee, is also the TATA Ltd, Director of UK Public Affairs as disclosed on his Register of Interests.

Of course, the big Twickenham connection with TATA is the ownership of York House in Twickenham, now Council offices. Sir Ratan Tata bought the house in 1906 and in 1924 it was sold to the Twickenham Urban District Council.

You can find out more about York House at the York House Society website [HERE](#)



York House, Photo by Berkley Driscoll



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by William Shakespeare

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



Council waives fees to encourage Play Streets for family fun

Families in Richmond upon Thames are again being invited to come out and play as part of Car Free Day on Saturday 23 and Sunday 24 September, with a scheme aimed at encouraging children to play outside in their streets.

Residents can apply to close their roads to through-traffic for up to four hours. To encourage celebrations we are waiving the usual administration fees for street parties.

The Play Street programme is part of a London-wide campaign by [London Play](#) and Transport for London. London Play is offering free spacehoppers (or other play equipment) to the first 100 streets that apply. Also, everybody signing up will go into a prize draw to win a free go kart build and race workshop to be run on their event.

We are also offering small grants of up to £50 which can be spent on play equipment or refreshments (excluding alcohol) on the day. This grant is only available for the first 30 play streets so get your application in early!

To host a play street, residents need to get permission to have their street closed and will need to speak to their neighbours in case there are any objections.

Residents will also be responsible for organising and supervising events, including ensuring someone is present to allow safe access if required for residents' cars and emergency vehicles. Any street can apply, providing their street isn't a main road, bus route or emergency vehicle route.

View [Play Streets](#) for more information on how to apply. Applications must be submitted by **Thursday 31 August 2023** for September 2023 events.



HOUSE OF MING - STYLISH CHINESE LUXURY

Take note if you're a fan of Chinese food...there's a new restaurant in town and I really recommend you make the trip up to St James's to check it out.

House of Ming has only been open a few weeks, but it's certainly worth putting onto your 'must do' list. The original, globally acclaimed, **House of Ming** originated in New Delhi in 1978 and also has a branch in Bhopal. House of Ming London is housed within St. James' Court, A Taj Hotel, and offers diners dishes inspired by regional Sichuan and Cantonese cooking, unique creations from the chef team and recognisable House of Ming favourites.



We popped up to town the other day to check it out, and boy,



am I glad we did: the restaurant is absolutely stunning. It's one of the most beautifully decorated restaurants I've seen for years, and is a tribute to interior designer Atelier Wren, who took inspiration from the original branch and elements of traditional Chinese design. Our table was in a romantic booth, reminiscent of a railway carriage. Silk velvet curtains, marble table tops, the most gorgeous lantern - and everything else, was really top-notch.

The menu is very, very extensive. To be honest we were spoilt for choice. We had asked to try the Chinese wine on the menu, but they didn't have any in stock as yet, so we opted for a bottle of South African Sauvignon Blanc. Perusing the menu, I was rather startled to see that each dish had a calorie count beside it; not something that one really needs when enjoying a rather special meal. Perhaps they should have that on offer for those who are calorie counting?

I started with **Scallop golden garlic** (Prawn, scallop, fried garlic, Chiniang caviar) and my husband chose **Fresh bamboo roll, seafood and golden mushroom** (Seafood and enoki mushroom). Both were excellent.

Next we had **Spicy soft-shell crab** (crispy crab golden garlic chilli, spices, mango, scallion) Reader, this was superb! For mains I chose **Roast duck, black truffle oil sauce**. This was, to be honest, my least favourite dish as I enjoyed the flavours but found the texture of the sauce rather strange and somewhat slimy. My husband had chosen **Black pepper beef** (Sliced beef fillet green and red pepper, onion, black pepper and garlic) and declared it absolutely delicious.



We were urged to try desserts (not that we actually had much room for them) and I chose one of the chef's signature dishes - the **Melting pot**. (Chocolate mousse and passion fruit cremeux). This was a spectacular dish, and incredibly rich too. The **Matcha and raspberry opera** (Matcha sponge, raspberry jam, vanilla buttercream) chosen by my husband was another stunningly beautiful dish that was thoroughly enjoyed.

The menu has been carefully curated with culinary additions specific to London, including *Yu Xian fresh black cod*, diced chicken *Tai chin kai* and the *BBQ lamb with cumin and chilli*. In addition, there is an impressive selection of vegetarian and vegan options too such as the *Stir-fried edamame beans with Sichuan sauce*, *Crystal pickled vegetables* and the *Tofu pouch* which is filled with mushroom water chestnut, garlic and a chilli sauce.



House of Ming isn't cheap, but the setting and the quality of service is rather spectacular to say the least. If you are curious but not wanting to spend a lot, there is a three course executive set lunch for £35 and a set dinner for £80 plus other set menus that would be great for a special occasion. There are private dining facilities and a curated restaurant playlist by Gok Wan (that you can also [listen to](#) on Spotify) For a very special occasion, there's an imperial dining option of the Chef's Choice which consists of a ten course menu, designed exclusively to be enjoyed in the private dining room. There is also a tea sommelier as well as a special tea trolley offering a wide variety of Chinese white tea, green tea, black tea and oolong tea.



Alongside House of Ming, there are four other eateries at the Taj Hotel: Michelin-starred Quilon; the award-winning afternoon tea restaurant Kona; The Hamptons Bar, and TH@51 restaurant, Bar and Courtyard. The hotel brand was established over 100 years ago in India, and today has decadent outposts in India, North America, Africa, the Middle East, Malaysia, Sri Lanka, Maldives, Bhutan, Nepal, and here in the UK.

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WIZ Tales: The Falkland Islands

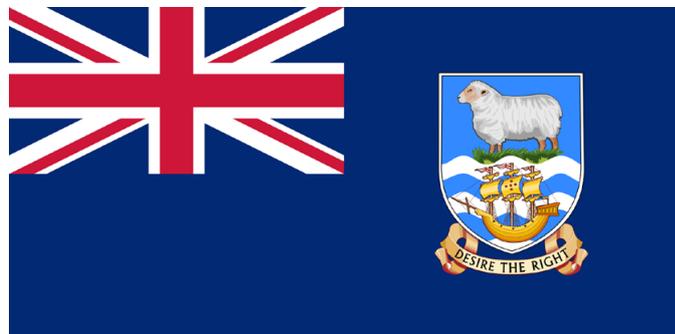
By Teresa Read



The Falkland Islands, an Overseas Territory of the UK, is in the Atlantic Ocean. The Territory of the Falkland Islands has a small population. Many of the people live in rural areas; Stanley is the main urban centre.

Argentina invaded the Falkland Islands on 2 April 1982. United Kingdom armed forces re-took the Territory in June of the same year.

In 2013 the Falkland Islanders voted to remain a British Overseas Territory. The chief of state of the Falklands is the British monarch; a Governor heads the Falklands' government.



Flag of Falkland Islands

On 20 July 2023 it was announced that the European Union referred to the Falkland Islands using the Argentine name of Islas Malvinas (Islas Malvinas/Falkland Islands); the UK is no longer part of the EU so was not involved in the proceedings.



Falklands Legislative Council's premises at Gilbert House, Stanley



Falkland Islands Company's historical building in Stanley



Naval confrontation during the 1914 Battle of the Falkland Islands (painting by William Lionel Wyllie)



Depiction of a Falklands corral, shepherds and sheep in 1849 (painting by Royal Navy Admiral Edward Fanshawe)

More photos and information on the Falkland Islands:

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

School is out for the Summer!

By Deep Patel

~ Through the Eyes of a Twickenham Shopkeeper ~

As the academic year draws to an end my corner shop will enter a hibernation phase where we will have very few customers coming in as practically the whole of Twickenham goes abroad! This means lack of fizzy drink, ice cream and sweet sales and ultimately will have a knock on effect to the local economy as lack of sweet sales means lack of trips to the dentists and so on, so if you have kids, let them have sweets across summer to keep the economy going!



Aside from promoting sweets to your children, what is the actual purpose of my article this week I hear you ask? Well, as school term draws to a close and we say goodbye to the academic year, there are many different emotions echoing around my shop...some of relief of leaving primary school forever, some of sadness for missing the friends that they have spent the past 10 years with and may now leave behind as many go to different schools to pursue their secondary education... but one thing for sure is that everyone...and I mean EVERYONE, regardless of their age, socio-economic status, occupation, gender or background is affected...Everyone.

This whole week I had conversations with customers from so many different backgrounds about the end of the school year and the beginning of the 6 week long school summer holidays. These conversations have surprisingly been far less with those who have children at schools, but more unexpectedly with young single customers who remark jubilating about how they can now spend an extra half an hour in bed every morning for the next 6 weeks due to their being that much less traffic from the school runs every morning. Conversely to celebrations, there have been some of our more senior-citizen customers gearing themselves up for what they describe to be the most “manic and draining” period of their year when grandchildren will be continually dumped on them for “free child care” for days on end as their own children escape to work leaving the little terrors’ every demands to be catered for by them...then you get the local residents who live on the busy Hampton road (where my shop is situated) all getting excited about how the massive fall in traffic has made them feel like they are living in a little remote village in the country (I smile on the outside, on the inside thinking to myself enjoy it whilst you can suckers, soon enough we will all be breathing those sooty road fumes in again and complaining of the continuous busses, bikes, cars and kids shouting and screaming on their way to school again)...you may now be reading this thinking, he’s a bit cynical...well that may be...but all this aside, the real truth is that we all love Twickenham, we all love our busy noisy main road and even the dust and shouting kids on their way to school each morning...yes...it may not seem ideal...but it’s a place we call home...and although at times we may moan and complain...It’s our place...and we wouldn’t change it for the world...

Remember...

“School days will affect you for all your days...”

MY CREATURE-KINDNESS TIP OF THE WEEK...

STOP FOXES, RATS, MICE & SQUIRRELS KINDLY (GOOD KARMA):

Place empty bowls filled with white vinegar around places where you don’t want them to come...they will go without you having to harm them...use humane mouse & rat traps and release them back out in parkland areas. Use electronic plug in deterrents with good reviews around your house to stop them coming (the smell of white vinegar also stops ants kindly).

For ANY specific tip to stop any “pest” or insect KINDLY (for good karma/blessings), email me: thedeeapatel@gmail.com or join my Facebook page: “KIND WORLD”

The Great River Race – London’s River Marathon

Saturday, September 16th, 2023



Hundreds of crews will once again be heading for the river on the morning of the 16th of September. More than 200 boats with over 1,500 competitors will take part in this 21.6-mile marathon on the Thames from Millwall in East London to the finish at Ham, Richmond, rowing under all of London’s 28 bridges.

The 34th GRR is open to any traditional style boat powered by a minimum of 4 oars or paddles carrying a cox and a passenger. Many competitors from all over the world have been returning year after year to take part in the event since it

launched in the late 80s and can’t wait to get back on this tidal stretch of the Thames.

This is the first Great River Race since 2019 because of covid and then the death of the Monarch last year which resulted in the Queen Elizabeth Memorial River procession.

This year in addition to boats from all over the UK there will be several Dutch crews taking part and other competitors coming from Hong Kong, New Zealand, Canada and the United States.

It appeals to every level of competitor, from young novice scouts to hardened coastal rowing veterans determined to beat their previous records. Of course, many simply enter in fancy dress to have fun and to enjoy making money for their charities. It’s a great day out for competitors and spectators, many hundreds of whom line London’s bridges.

All crews will be competing in traditional fixed seat rowing boats carrying a passenger and cox to emulate the craft of London’s Watermen, the water taxis who carried passengers across the Thames when London bridge was the only alternative. Several of the City’s livery companies such as the Worshipful Companies of Founders, Tallow Contact Chandlers and Glaziers will be entering in their splendid Company Barges.



You can get a flavour of the event by looking at videos of previous events on

<https://youtu.be/3WOk12c4C80>

<https://youtu.be/GKxKa8G6Ce0>

For further information: Great River Race 2023 www.greatriverrace.org.uk

Contact Irene Randall on 07721 675675 or info@greatriverrace.org.uk



Julius Caesar

by William Shakespeare

Richmond Shakespeare Society at York House, Twickenham until 22nd July

Twickenham's famous "Naked Ladies" provide a suitably classical backdrop to *Julius Caesar*. Under their rearing horses, conspirators grumble about Caesar's ambition, while offstage Rome's commoners cheer as Marc Antony offers him a crown.



This year's cast for RSS's annual open-air production is uniformly excellent, and all put tremendous energy into the performance, confident and sure-footed with Shakespeare's text, albeit slightly adjusted. Some roles have been gender-flipped: most notably Francesca Ellis's honourably conflicted Marcia Brutus.



The conspirators overcome Brutus's scruples and loyalty to Julius Caesar and the plot goes ahead, despite the entreaties of Brutus's wife Portia, and Caesar's wife Calpurnia, Fiona Poole and Sarah Sharpe respectively shining in these all-too-brief roles.

Matthew Flexman's superstitious statesman Caesar almost gives his historic appointment at the senate on the Ides of March a miss. He shaken by Albi Best's warnings as a particularly enigmatic Soothsayer, and Calpurnia's prophetic dreams; plus a night full of earthquakes, gaping graves, and strange lights. (It's almost tempting fate to attempt an *al fresco* production with these tempestuous elements!)

While Ellis's Brutus and Stuart Watson's Cassius dominate the play's first half, the second half sees Scott Tilley's partying Mark Antony come into his own as he joins forces with Octavius Caesar and stirs the people of Rome into revolt against the conspirators.



Despite the modern dress wardrobe design from Miriam King and John Gilbert, this production is a straightforward staging of *Julius Caesar* in the round, without frills or gimmicks, although as the shadows grow longer, Marc Pearce's ambitious lighting design comes into its own for the climactic battle scenes.

The setting sun helps to convey the play's tone. As the evening sun gives way to twilight, so Rome's political stability unravels, and the conspirators move from the elation of their apparently successful coup, to fighting for their lives.

Julius Caesar is a bold choice for outdoor performance, but director Simon Bartlett delivers a taut, exciting production, full of strong performances, that will be long remembered.

Read Andrew Lawston's review at www.markaspen.com/2023/07/18/julius-caesar-rss

Photography by Simone Best

Pretty, Witty Nell

by Ryan J-W Smith

Rogue Shakespeare at the Baron's Court Theatre until 22nd July

When Charles II was invited back onto the throne in 1650, he believed that the way to the hearts of his subjects would be to restore many of the pursuits and past times that had been banned under Cromwell. Seeking ways to improve the morale of his subjects, he even became far more affable himself, often attending public events and becoming generally more visible. To aid him in improving entertainment, the construction of two new theatres was ordered; and women were now to act upon these stages. Availing herself of improved access to both stage and King was the young Eleanor Gwyn.



Taken from his book *Rogue Shakespeare*, Ryan J-W Smith brings his play, *Pretty Witty Nell* to the somewhat claustrophobic but equally atmospheric Baron's Court stage. Crafted poetically, using rhyming iambic pentameter, this stylish piece charts the true-life story of Nell Gwyn and her journey from orange-seller to King's mistress, told 'autobiographically' by Nell herself.

Anyone who has attempted to write verse in rhyming iambic pentameter, a particularly rare art nowadays, will know it is quite a challenge. However, not only does Smith succeed in this, but he does so with a style which makes the story engrossing from start to finish. An hour's poetry is delivered without a single dull moment. None of it rhyming for the sake of rhyming or fitting the metre for the sake of fitting the metre, every word, every line is painstakingly considered and worthy of tremendous praise.

But what's the use of a monologue containing such rich text if the actor simply can't do it justice with its delivery? Well, no need to ask that question here as Hannah Attfield, in her portrayal of Nell, excelled in every element. Not only is she word-perfect over the hour-long poem, but she delivers each word with wonderful energy and great enthusiasm and with a thoughtfulness that has her audience captivated throughout.

Pretty Witty Nell is a truly memorable production, a triumph.

Read David Stephens' review at www.markaspen.com/2023/07/19/pretty-witty

Photography by Ryan J-W Smith



The Merry Wives of Windsor

by Otto Nicolai, libretto by Lars Harald Magagerø, after William Shakespeare
Grimeborn Festival at the Arcola Theatre until 22nd July

Otto Nicolai's take on *The Merry Wives of Windsor* is a thoroughly delightful piece that doesn't entirely deserve its neglect. It's been overshadowed by a far greater work on the same subject, Verdi's *Falstaff*.



The opera is sung in Norwegian with English narration and subtitles. Norway's opera company Queer Voices states its idea of transforming 'the archaic, fat, and sexist Sir John' into a 'liberated and gender non-conforming Falstaff with the narrow-minded people of Windsor reflecting society's attitudes to those who break the binary code'. However, they don't deliver what it said on the tin.

Part of the difficulty with queering traditional operas lies in the music. The necessary of rewriting the music doesn't easily work. In transposing Falstaff's role, Mae Heydorn lurches from using a chest voice for low notes to something higher and comfortable. Nor is her character very convincing. Someone gender non-conforming is not going to be acting as a sexual predator in the blatantly public way that Falstaff does. Falstaff comes across as more deluded than dangerous: young, thin, and not entirely masculine. This isn't really Falstaff.



The town of Windsor, for all its faults, couldn't really be queerer if it tried. Mrs Ford and Mrs Page are very touchy-feely. Ford carries a handbag and wears a skirt and heels, although his top half is businessman butch. So, there is barely any convention left in Windsor for Falstaff to disturb.

Nothing adds up dramatically. However, the score is captivating with plenty of charm. The piece isn't deep. It is a conventional comic opera of its time that doesn't engage with the melancholy of age, class or gender antagonism that Verdi and Boito mine so effectively in *Falstaff*.

Director Kristin Lundemo Overøye keeps things moving along nicely, supported by Fridtjof Brevig's inventive costume designs, and the singing is impressive. The solo pianist Kelvin Lim's stamina maintains the momentum over three acts. *Merry Wives of Windsor* makes a lively interesting start to 2023's Grimeborn Festival.

Read Patrick Shorrock's review at www.markaspen.com/2023/07/20/merry-wives-qv

Photography by Talitha Khachik

Henry VIII's Joust

**Experience the thrill of the country's greatest knights battling it out
02 - 06 August 2023**

History's most thrilling sport returns to its celebrated home of Hampton Court Palace this summer holiday. Be dazzled by a real Tudor joust at the home of Henry VIII – a famous jouster himself. You may even glimpse him participating in the event!

An Epic Tudor Joust Up Close

You will see up-close the pomp, ceremony and splendour of what it took to be in a joust. Then pick your favourite knight and cheer, jeer and follow all the fun of an epic face-off until one knight reigns supreme.



Alongside the excitement of the joust, spectacular falconry displays will showcase the hunting techniques once popular with Henry VIII and the Tudor Court. Between

shows you will also be able to get up close to the birds and learn about these majestic animals.

Performance times

The Joust will take place at 11:00, 13:30 and 16:00 daily, and last approximately 60 minutes. The falconry displays will take place at 12:30 and 15:00 daily and last for approximately 30 minutes. Please note, event times are subject to change.

Explore The Home Of Henry VIII

Your ticket to the joust will also give you access to the breath-taking palace, including [the maze](#), the [Great Hall](#), and the [Tudor kitchens](#) where you can try your hand at cooking Tudor style.

After all that exploring, treat yourself to lunch or a cake in the [Tiltyard Café](#), or visit one of the delicious ringside food and drink stalls.

Don't miss out on an unforgettable day out for all the family. Pre-book your tickets today or [become a member](#) to visit time and again for free.

Find more information [HERE](#)



HISTORIC ROYAL PALACES

St Mary's University

Renowned Criminal Barrister Awarded Honorary Doctorate

At a ceremony today in London's Westminster Cathedral, renowned criminal barrister Caroline Haughey OBE KC has been awarded an Honorary Doctorate by St Mary's University, Twickenham (SMU).



Based at Furnival Chambers, Caroline specialises in modern slavery and human trafficking cases and was made the award in recognition of her work in this area and for her support for the SMU Bakhita Centre for

Research on Slavery, Exploitation and Abuse.

She prosecuted the first modern slavery case in Britain and subsequently advised on the drafting of the Modern Slavery Act 2015. Caroline has prosecuted a number of firsts under the Act, including the first child sex exploitation, first child labour exploitation, and first 'victimless' prosecution. She also prosecuted the largest trafficking and labour exploitation case in Europe, Operation Fort.

Caroline was the author of the first Independent Modern Slavery Act Review 2016 and was a joint legal adviser on the second Independent Modern Slavery Act Review. She has also been the independent member of the Prime Minister's Modern Slavery Task Force.

Caroline Haughey holding honorary doctorate

St Mary's Vice-Chancellor Anthony McClaran said, "Caroline is an exemplary candidate for an honorary doctorate at St Mary's. Bringing an end to, and supporting victims of the appalling crimes of human exploitation is a core part of our mission as a university.

"Caroline's work to end these crimes and raise awareness of the challenges faced by people with lived experience of modern slavery, alongside her global reputation for professional excellence and integrity make her an excellent role model for our graduates and researchers."

Caroline has been a supporter of the work at SMU on slavery, human trafficking, exploitation, and abuse since the establishment of the Bakhita Centre. She has been a regular source of information and advice to our research projects, including most recently sitting on the Advisory Group for an Arts and Humanities Research Council funded project.

The Bakhita Centre was founded in 2015 to conduct research on modern slavery and human trafficking, to influence practice and policy, and to raise awareness across the university, in local communities and further afield. Earlier in 2023, the centre announced its inaugural patron, SMU alumnus Sir Mo Farah.

The Centre aims to broaden the University's research on global issues that intersect with modern slavery, including gender-based violence, sexual and other forms of exploitation, abuse and discrimination based on structural inequalities, race, ethnicity, asylum seeking/ refugee and migrant status.



St Mary's
University
Twickenham
London

St Mary's University

BBC Radio Host Nihal Arthanayake Awarded Honorary Doctorate

Award winning BBC radio host Nihal Arthanayake has today been awarded an honorary doctorate by St Mary's University, Twickenham (SMU) at a ceremony in Westminster Cathedral.

Nihal, an alumnus of BA History and English Literature at SMU, received the award during the University's summer graduation ceremonies. The honorary doctorate was awarded in recognition of Nihal's extensive career in the British media and his work to improve the quality of our national debate through his Radio 5 Live programme and his debut book *Let's Talk: How to Have Better Conversations*.



Nihal began his career whilst he was studying at St Mary's as a performer, recording artist, and event organiser. After graduating he continued pursuing these interests whilst also working as a journalist, writing for the Observer, the Sunday Times, and a number of music publications.

Speaking of the Award, Nihal said, "This is so much of an honour that I can barely process that it is happening to me. St Mary's was the first place that I really began to value

knowledge, and I will be eternally grateful to this wonderful University for that."

St Mary's Vice-Chancellor Anthony McClaran said, "We are delighted to have this opportunity to celebrate all that Nihal has achieved since graduating from St Mary's. Throughout his career Nihal has demonstrated our values of excellence, respect, inclusiveness, and generosity of spirit, and we are proud to have been part of his journey. He is a fantastic role model for this year's graduating class."

He launched his national broadcast career in 1999 with BBC TV appearances, before joining BBC Radio 1 as the host of Asian Beats with DJ Bobby Friction. Nihal saw success from the start in his radio career, winning a Sony Radio Award in 2003. In 2007, he went on to present the Radio 1 Weekend Breakfast Show, where he was one of only two DJs to present both a mainstream and a specialist show on the channel.

Since 2016, Nihal has presented the afternoon show on Radio 5 Live, which features conversation on issues affecting the UK and wider world and interviews with celebrities, politicians, and thinkers. He also presents the BBC Sounds Podcast *Headliners*, where he interviews some of the biggest names in the music industry.

Located in Twickenham, SMU was established in 1850 and is rated in top 5 in the country for teaching quality and top ten for student experience in the 2023 Sunday Times Good University Guide.



St Mary's
University
Twickenham
London

2024 U20 SIX NATIONS fixtures announced

Following on from a fourth-place finish in the World Rugby U20 Championship, Mark Mapletoft's England men's U20 side return for five rounds of competitive action next February in the 2024 U20 Six Nations.

England will open their Six Nations campaign away to Italy on Friday 2nd February 2024, kicking-off at 19:15 GMT, with the tournament's fixtures confirmed by Six Nations this morning.

The competition will run until Friday 15th March with each weekend's fixture lineup mirroring that of the senior men's Championship, as Mapletoft's men continue their journey with a home clash against Wales U20 the following weekend (19:15 GMT kick-off).

A trip to Scotland awaits for the England next on Friday 23rd February, once again kicking-off at 19:15 GMT, before welcoming reigning U20 Six Nations victors, Ireland.

England's encounter with Richie Murphy's Ireland team will take place at 19:15 GMT on Friday 8th March, before concluding their tournament on the road to World Rugby U20 Championship winners France on Friday 15th March (20:00 GMT kick-off).

A new generation of young English talent will be showcased under the Friday Night Lights and will be broadcast extensively across all Six Nations markets as well as 154 territories, with matches covered by BBC and S4C in the UK.

Popularity of the U20 Six Nations has shown a consistent growth; broadcast coverage of the 2023 Championship generated a 11% increase in audience across all markets, a 492% increase in social media followers was recorded for the dedicated U20 accounts and 65% of audience members on TikTok were below the age of 25-years-old.

Mapletoft said: *"Off the back of a thrilling World Championships, I'd like to thank all the players, coaches, staff and parents for their brilliant support to myself and my team over the last month.*

"Everyone involved with the team is proud of the effort and commitment put in throughout the recent World Championships.

"We showed the extensive talent we have in our ranks here in England and we're looking forward to kicking-on into a new calendar year and improving on last year.

"The Six Nations offers a fantastic challenge to the U20 side year-on-year – it gives a platform to these young men to not only wear the Rose, but to test themselves against some of the best prospects in the game whilst representing their country.

"We're committed to continuing that development for these young players and allowing them to savour that experience so that one day, they will be ready to pull on the jersey in a senior capacity."

England men's 2024 U20 Six Nations fixtures:

Italy vs. England – Friday 2nd February, 19:15 GMT kick-off

England vs. Wales – Friday 9th February, 19:15 GMT kick-off

Scotland vs. England – Friday 23rd February, 19:15 GMT kick-off

England vs. Ireland – Friday 8th March, 19:15 GMT kick-off

France vs. England – Friday 15th March, 20:00 GMT kick-off



2023 U18 International series fixtures confirmed

England U18 Men head coach Jonathan Pendlebury's side will travel to South Africa this August for an U18 International Series against France and hosts, South Africa.

The age-grade make the trip to the Rainbow Nation this year for Tests in Durbanville and Paarl, with an invitational Western Province U18 XV team also partaking in the series.

Three rounds of action will be held at school venues on 11th, 15th and 19th August, as the Western Province side face their European counterparts on the last two matchdays.

The venue for England's opening encounter with France on the 11th (14:00 kick-off) will be announced in due course, but England's second day matchup with the Western Province Pathways side will take place at Stellenberg High School in Cape Town's northern suburbs on 15th August (12:00 kick-off). Paarl Boys High School will host South Africa U18 fixtures with visitors France as well as England on the 19th (14:00 kick-off).

Pendlebury is anticipating another well-contested series after last year's squad gained a lot of experience ahead of their U18 season.

"Bringing together this group of new players, with some familiar faces, has been a brilliant experience so far and the boys are raring to go," the head coach stated. The boys we have at our disposal are a group with a lot of potential, we have selected from a wide range of clubs, schools, colleges and academies which will only add to the unique blend we are forming here.

"The team put in an incredible shift in 2022 and their development as a collective, as well as individuals, was evident - we're aiming for more of the same this August. Our games against France, South Africa as well as Western Province, will offer these players room to express themselves and to explore together as a unit. We can't wait for what's in store."

U18 International Series fixtures:

Friday 11th August

Venue: TBC

14:00 BST: England U18 vs France U18

Tuesday 15th August

Venue: Stellenberg HS (Durbanville)

12:00 BST: England U18 vs WP U18 XV

14:00 BST: SA U18 vs France U18

Saturday 19th August

Venue: Paarl Boys High School (Paarl)

12:00 BST: France U18 vs WP U18 XV

14:00 BST: SA U18 vs England U18

England men's U18 squad

Forwards

Tayo Adegbemile (Saracens, St Albans School)
Will Conduit (Midlands West, Stourport College, ACE)
Ronan Daniell (Harlequins, Hurstpierpoint College)
Sam Graham (Newcastle Falcons, Durham School)
Junior Kpoku (Exeter Chiefs, Finborough School) *
Jack Lightbown (Sale Sharks, The Sixth Form Bolton) *
Alfie Longstaff (Yorkshire Academy, Woodhouse Grove)

Jamie Miller (Harlequins, Whitgift School)
Billy Sela (Bath Rugby, Beechen Cliff) *
Solomon Shand (Gloucester Rugby, Hartpury College)
Olamide Sodeke (Saracens, Gravesend Grammar School) *
Connor Treacey (Bath Rugby, Beechen Cliff)
Kepueli Tuipulotu (South Central London Academy, Harrow School) *
Charlie West (Saracens, St Albans School)

Backs

Jack Bracken (Saracens, St Albans School) *
Ollie Davies (Sale Sharks, Kirkham Grammar) *
Lucas Friday (Harlequins, Trinity School) *
Charlie Griffin (South Central London Academy, Harrow School) *
Angus Hall (Saracens, The Judd School, Tonbridge)
Dom Hanson (Sale Sharks, Stockport Grammar)

Nick Lilley (Exeter Chiefs, Exeter College)
Finn Newton (Saracens, Haileybury)
Louie Platt (Yorkshire Academy, Mount St. Mary's)
Zuko Robb (Harlequins, Gordons School, ACE)
Toby Wilson (Sale Sharks, Kings Macclesfield)
Finlay Wiseman (South Central London Academy, Hampton School)

*denotes capped player at England U18 level

Louie Platt has joined up with the England U18 squad ahead of the series



Match Preview: Fulham v Brentford

Brentford take on Fulham at Lincoln Financial Field on Sunday - the first of three Premier League Summer Series games in the USA. Get all the build-up to a unique west London derby below

Written by Brentford Football Club

Brentford face Fulham at Lincoln Financial Field in Philadelphia on Sunday 23 July.

This is the first of three Premier League Summer Series fixtures this month as Thomas Frank's side gear up for another top-flight campaign.

The Opposition

Mitrovic interest an unwanted distraction as Cottagers look to build on impressive Premier League campaign

Over the last five years, Fulham have learned the hard way that playing in the Premier League is a privilege that has to be earned.



In 2018/19, they returned to the top flight after four seasons away, ploughed tens of millions into a somewhat scattergun approach in the transfer market, and finished second bottom, 10 points from safety, after collecting just seven league wins all season. Not to mention the fact they went through three managers.

Two years later, the Cottagers were back. There was a more careful approach to strengthening the squad to handle the step back up, yet this campaign was arguably even worse, not least because Covid restrictions meant that 35 of their 38 league games were played behind closed doors. They won just five games and finished 18th, 11 points behind Burnley.

The term yo-yo club is usually associated with the likes of Norwich City and West Bromwich Albion, but Fulham were rapidly advancing towards that territory.

Marco Silva replaced Scott Parker in the summer of 2021 and helped the squad realise its potential in ways his predecessor could not. He guided them to the Championship title in style, with Aleksandar Mitrovic scoring a record-breaking 43 league goals along the way.

When it came to recruitment last summer, by and large, Silva and his staff got it just right. Fulham added Premier League experience in the form of Andreas Pereira, Bernd Leno, Issa Diop and Willian; Manor Solomon impressed during a loan spell from Shakhtar Donetsk, and the signing of Joao Palhinha for a reported £20m from Sporting looks to be a stroke of genius.

Fulham's 10th-place finish was the best since they finished ninth in 2011/12 and their fourth best in their 16 seasons in the division to date. It was no doubt helped by the fact Mitrovic proved his doubters wrong by scoring 14 goals in 24 league appearances – an average of 0.58

goals per game and his best in five top-flight campaigns.

At the time of writing, the club's preparation for the new season has been disrupted by an unwelcome approach for the talismanic Serb.

Saudi Pro League clubs are flexing their financial muscle on a regular basis this summer and Al Hilal – who have already signed Kalidou Koulibaly from Chelsea, Ruben Neves from Wolves and Sergej Milinkovic-Savic from Lazio – are said to have returned with a second bid of about £30 million, after the first of around £25.5m was turned down.

According to Sky Sports, Mitrovic has personally contacted Tony Khan – son of Cottagers owner Shahid – to ask him to accept the offer, which he believes is fair - but it will come as absolutely no shock that Fulham have rejected that one, too.

This is a transfer saga that could become protracted. At 28, Mitrovic is in his prime and, without doubt, the club's key asset. It is easy to see why they have rejected two offers out of hand. Even if he does leave later down the line for an acceptable fee, is his deputy Carlos Vinicius capable of filling his boots? Bringing in a ready-made replacement would cost considerably more than £30m.

With less than a month until the start of the new season, this is not ideal preparation.

In the Dugout

Marco Silva

Despite having turned 46 earlier in July, Marco Silva already has 12 years of managerial experience under his belt, having taken charge of more than 400 matches across three countries.

After a career as a right-back in his native Portugal, he was appointed director of football at Estoril in 2011, but quickly thrust into his first role as leading man when the club endured an unfavourable start to the campaign. He managed to turn the club's fortunes around, winning the Liga de Honra and cementing a return to the Primeira Liga after a seven-year exile.

In 2014, Silva signed a four-year deal at Sporting and went on to win the Taca de Portugal, but he lasted just days over a year in charge. Shortly after the cup win, the club produced a 400-page document where they detailed the reasoning for his dismissal, with one section claiming his failure to wear a club suit during a match partly justified the decision.

A title-winning season at Olympiacos came next, before he took on a fire-fighting job at relegation-threatened Hull. Silva galvanised a Tigers team that included Harry Maguire and Andy Robertson, but ultimately could not prevent the club dropping back into the Championship and he resigned in May 2017.

That preceded time at Watford and Everton, before he joined Fulham just over two years ago.

Silva has taken charge of 94 games during his time at Craven Cottage and guided the club to

the Championship title two seasons ago.

Pre-match analysis

Stephen Gillett, Playmaker Stats: Summer Series provides Frank with an opportunity to experiment

Brentford may have crossed the Atlantic for their pre-season tour in the US, but first up at the Premier League Summer Series this Sunday are fellow west Londoners, Fulham - and here's a quick stat attack from Playmaker (playmaker_EN) ahead of the contest.

Bees boss Thomas Frank hopes strong pre-season performances against domestic rivals will [help his side "attack" the 2023/24 campaign](#) and, although the Summer Series will help bed in new defensive signings Nathan Collins and Mark Flekken, it also offers Brentford a valuable opportunity to experiment in offensive areas.

Shorn of Ivan Toney until January, Brentford will undoubtedly look to polish their set-piece routines while on tour. Last season, the Bees came alive when the ball went dead: no team scored more Premier League goals from dead balls (23 including spot-kicks).

On the subject of penalties, head coach Frank will welcome the chance to gather intelligence on potential deputies for Toney from the spot.

Bryan Mbeumo is a strong candidate to assume Toney's duties from 12 yards and the Cameroon international's stats from last season are a fantastic illustration of another string to the Bees' bow: their counter-attacking prowess.

As Sunday's opponents Fulham will be well aware, Brentford pose a serious threat in transition and only Manchester United (9), Manchester City and Liverpool (both 7) scored more goals on the counter than the Bees (6) last season.

Mbeumo netted four of the Bees' six goals on the break, and with nine Premier League goals last term, the 23-year-old will surely be plotting how to break double figures in the coming campaign.

Heavily linked with a move to Saudi outfit Al-Hilal in recent weeks, Aleksandar Mitrovic has travelled with Fulham to Philadelphia and a quick look at the Serb's stats over recent seasons underlines how key he has been to the Cottagers' recent rise.

After firing home a record-breaking 43 Championship goals in Fulham's 2021/22 promotion campaign, Mitrovic put any doubts regarding his ability at Premier League level to the sword by firing home 14 goals in the top flight last season.

Only one forward - Ivan Toney (109) - won more aerial duels than Mitrovic (100) in the Premier League last term and it will be interesting to note Brentford and Fulham's tactics and line-ups this Sunday given that both teams, to some degree at least, need to prepare to start the season without their talismanic strikers.



Wherever We Go: Brentford launches third kit for 2023/24 season

Brentford's new kit is now on sale online and in-store; the kit will be debuted on Sunday 23 July when the Bees take on Fulham at Lincoln Financial Field

Written by Brentford Football Club

Brentford has today launched its new third kit, designed in collaboration with Umbro, the club's official technical kit partner.

With our home shirt campaign *We're All Home* being released earlier this month invoking a sense of community, our new third shirt is about expressing yourself and showing your support for the team on the road.

[Wherever We Go](#) is about representing Brentford wherever you are, all around the world. This eye-catching shirt is designed to be worn casually and socially, whether that is to the park, on holiday or on a night out.



The Umbro kit, which will be worn for the 2023/24 season, features a bold and bright design illustrating a close-up of the wing of a bee; an immediately recognisable connection between the kit and the club.

The kit is available to purchase from 9am on Friday 21 July, both in-store and [online](#), and is priced at £60 (adults) and £45 (juniors).

The shirt's primary colours are navy, pink and turquoise. Colourful shapes and shading illustrate the wing of a bee, as featured in the club crest. This main pattern also features as trimming on the matching turquoise shorts.

The campaign video features players Kevin Schade, Rico Henry, Romeo Beckham and Chloe Logie, and shows images from the club's first week of the US Summer Series with Bryan Mbeumo, Mikkel Damsgaard and Nathan Collins all involved.

The third kit launch coincides with the club's participation in the first-ever Premier League Summer Series, where the team are touring the US and will play in front of fans in Philadelphia, Atlanta and Maryland.

The kit will be debuted on Sunday 23 July, when Brentford take on Fulham in a US edition of the west London derby.

Look out for an upcoming challenge for our fans to share images of themselves taking this shirt around the globe. Get involved to show your love for the Bees.

Become a [My Bees Member](#) and receive a £5 gift card which can be redeemed against the [2023/24 third kit](#), either in-store or online.



Government clamps down on unfair bank account closures

- New requirements on banks will protect freedom of expression
- New rules will give consumers greater confidence to challenge account closures
- Changes available because of Brexit and recent government legislation

Banks will be forced to explain and delay any decision to close an account under new rules, protecting freedom of expression.

The Government has stepped in to address fears that banks are terminating accounts because they disagree with someone's political beliefs.

The changes will increase the notice period to 90 days – giving customers more time to challenge a decision through the Financial Ombudsman Service, or find a replacement bank.

Banks will also be required to spell out why they are terminating a bank account – boosting transparency for customers and aiding their efforts to overturn decisions.

The changes announced today can only be made due to new powers in the Financial Services and Markets Act 2023, which give Britain control of its financial rulebook following Brexit.

Economic Secretary to the Treasury, Andrew Griffith, said:

“Freedom of speech is a cornerstone of our democracy, and it must be respected by all institutions.

“Banks occupy a privileged place in society, and it is right that we fairly balance the rights of banks to act in their commercial interest, with the right for everyone to express themselves freely.

“These changes will boost the rights of customers - providing real transparency, time to appeal and making it a much fairer playing field.”

The proposed changes follow a call for evidence launched in January, following PayPal's temporary suspension of several accounts last year. It found that changes were needed to ensure the right balance is being struck between protecting customers, and providers' rights to manage commercial risk.

They require secondary legislation, which will be delivered through the powers granted in the Financial Services and Markets Act 2023, as part of the Government's programme in building a Smarter Regulatory Framework for UK financial services.

This runs alongside separate plans to clarify in legislation the requirements for Politically Exposed Persons (PEPs), and a review into whether these are being applied proportionately by financial institutions. These steps were commissioned by Parliament last month as part of the Financial Services and Markets Act 2023; and the FCA will set out how they intend to conduct the review by the end of September.



HM Treasury

A solution to the rail strikes ‘seems a long way away’ says Mick Lynch

The RMT leader also said that he has not spoken to the Government in more than six months

THERE are no negotiations to halt the strikes by rail workers and the RMT has not been in contact with the Government for over six months, according to general secretary Mick Lynch.

He told [GB News](#): “The stuff that we’ve been saying for more than a year, that this is about cuts and a drastic change to the future of the railway is now coming true.

“And they’ve put those negotiations into the companies rather than at national level. So we’ve got a big campaign in front of us, the public are out supporting us this week.

“100,000 people have responded to the consultation on ticket of his closures but we’re hoping the Government will give the company’s permission to come back to the table and we can work up some solutions and get an agreement, but at the moment that seems a long way away.”

In a discussion during Breakfast with Stephen Dixon and Ellie Costello, he continued: “The most recent pay offer was in April. We put that to our members while we were balloting for further strike action to get a mandate.

“We sent them all the document, all 21,000 people that were involved, and they voted nine to one in favour of strike action. So that was rejected very much.

“That offer is still floating around somewhere. But the companies have not put it to us again, they’ve not revised any of their positions. If they want to come back and talk to us, we’ll be available to talk to them.”

He added: “We speak to the train operators every now and again because we have to, because we’re still running the railway and there are other issues but so we are in contact with them but there are no negotiations

“We speak to the companies every day in the workplace, but we haven’t spoken to the Government about this matter for six months or more.”



BRITAIN'S NEWS CHANNEL

Skills shortages could last longer as European funding ends, councils warn

Skills shortages could last longer just as demand increases and dedicated European funding ends, the Local Government Association warns today. In a snap survey of its members, the LGA reveals demand is increasing for skills in new industries such as in renewables, green technology, digital and cyber, while firms are struggling to fill essential roles in more established workplaces such as hospitality, care work and logistics.

Some people with higher qualifications are increasingly taking on work which they are overqualified for, leaving those with fewer qualifications even further from the labour market, despite employers wanting to retrain their staff and recruit more widely. Economic inactivity and those not in employment, education or training is also on the rise in many areas, according to the survey. Some of the causes of this have been attributed to physical and mental health issues in the wake of the pandemic, a lack of career options and apprenticeships, as well as migrants, care leavers and the digitally excluded being disproportionately affected.

The LGA, which represents councils in England and Wales, is also highlighting concerns about a seven month gap on average between the imminent ending of the European Social Fund (ESF), a key source of investment into skills training and jobs creation which has to be spent by the end of this year, and its domestic replacement the UK Shared Prosperity Fund (UKSPF) the employment and skills element of which for most areas is due to start in 2024.

Nearly half of councils responding to the survey said their biggest concern was being less able to help those who had previously received support from ESF, meaning fewer people being helped into work or training. The LGA said this is due to delays in receiving vital replacement funds and their shorter timescales, preventing them from planning longer-term programmes. Despite councils and combined authorities being uniquely placed to understand the skills challenges in their own local areas, the LGA says the fragmented and disjointed nature of current national employment and training schemes makes it difficult to target and join up provision for learners, unemployed people, career changers and businesses.

Previous LGA analysis has found that about £20 billion is spent by central government on at least 49 national employment and skills related schemes or services in England, managed by nine Whitehall departments and agencies, with no overall national strategy or accountability. The LGA says vital national support such as 'skills bootcamps' and other such programmes are subject to unnecessary bidding, using up valuable time and money which could be better spent on planning longer-term strategies to help people retrain or find work, making the most of local investment.

The LGA also warns that Whitehall's delays in distributing this year's UKSPF funds for other priorities should not be repeated next year and there should be no more short-notice changes, which could impact on the delivery of training and job support. Instead, councils, combined authorities and their local partners - businesses, colleges and training providers - need certainty over future allocations so they can address the different labour market and skills challenges they all face.

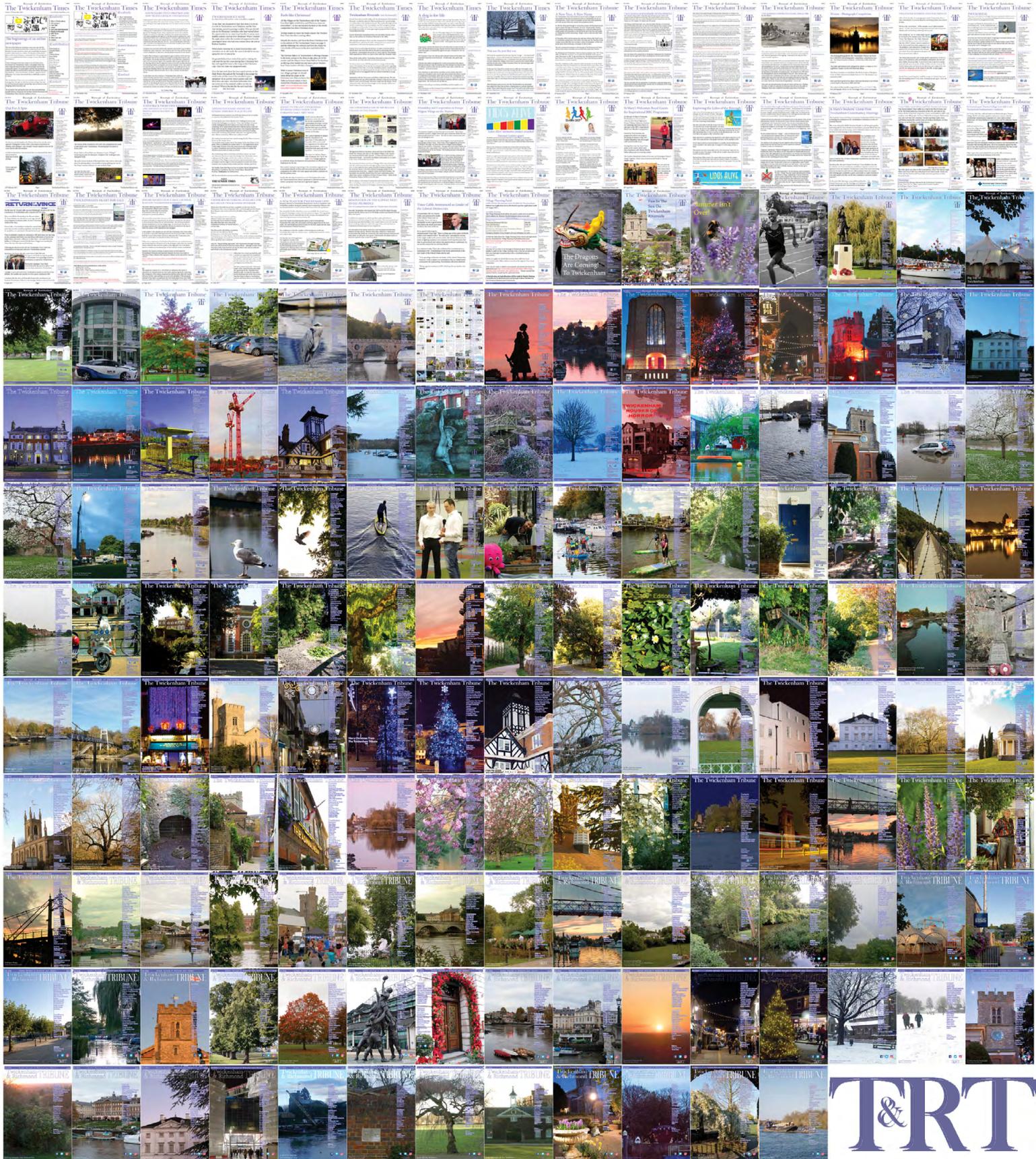
Mayor Marvin Rees, Chair of the LGA's City Regions Board, said:

"Everyone deserves the opportunity to thrive and fulfil their potential by upskilling or retraining, and employers are crying out for new recruits with the right skillsets. Local councils are best placed to connect them, working alongside the business community, unions and our vital training organisations. To do this, we need long-term funding for employment and skills development in our local areas, with the UKSPF included.

"Our snapshot survey reveals councils' deep concerns about being able to meet demand and plug urgent skills gaps, whether it be for growing green jobs to meet net zero targets, or for filling essential vacancies in our health and care workforce. The Government needs to match this urgency by giving councils and combined authorities the vital, long-term and consistent funding they need on time, to encourage people back into the workforce, match jobseekers with employers and safeguard the future of our local economies."



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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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