

Twickenham & Richmond TRIBUNE

Contents

- TickerTape
- TickerSeal
- COVID-19
- Local Postcard Page:
Fulwell Bus Garage – 121 Years Old
- Loss of Horse Chestnut Tree on Twickenham Green
- Help Jonathan fight the Labour Party Independent Schools Parents' Tax
- Hampton North Ward
- The new plastic-free poppy
- Richmond Park in autumn
- Green Travel: Dangerous Walking Infrastructure
- Twickers Foodie
- WIZ Tales - Sierra Leone
- Shopkeeping... Spiders... & Halloween...
- Sport

Contributors

- Alan Winter
- Jonathan Hulley
- Councillor Geoffrey Samuel
- The Poppy Factory
- Woodland Trust
- Kew Gardens
- Alison Jee
- Mark Aspen
- Royal Parks
- World InfoZone
- Deep Patel
- St Mary's University
- Richmond College
- Royal Star & Garter
- RFU
- Brentford FC
- GB News
- LBRuT

Editors

Berkley Driscoll
Teresa Read



27th October 2023

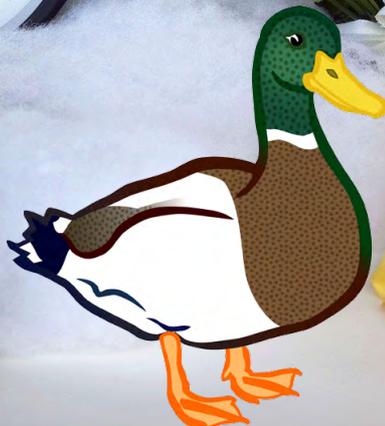
T&RT



Clocks go Back!!

Remember to set your clocks back by one hour as we leave British Summer Time this weekend.

Clocks go back 1 hour at 2am on Sunday 29th October.



TickerTape - News in Brief

Holy Trinity Church, Twickenham Green, welcomes Reverend Simon Couper

Reverend Simon Couper, formerly Vicar of St Paul's, New Beckenham, was inducted and collated as Vicar of Holy Trinity Church Twickenham Green at a special service on the evening of Tuesday, October 17th. The church, which was originally built in 1841 for the growing Strawberry Hill population, sits at the heart of the parish with two services each Sunday, a Sunday School and very well used community facilities. Closely linked to Archdeacon Cambridge's School, the church family is looking forward to an exciting time of growth as a community in the coming weeks and months and welcoming parishioners old and new.

For more information on Holy Trinity Church please visit <https://httchurch.org/>

Travel District line

Thursday 26 to Sunday 29 October
No service between Earl's Court and Ealing Broadway/Kensington (Olympia)/**Richmond**
Use the Piccadilly line, local or rail replacement buses for alternative routes. Rail replacement buses will run between Hammersmith and Acton Town. Visit our [Journey Planner](#) for more information.

London Overground

Sunday 29 October
No service between **Richmond** and Willesden Junction
Rail replacement buses will run. This is due to Network Rail works.

Church Street, Twickenham – Police arrests

Police were called to an incident in Church Street, Twickenham at 6pm on Monday evening. The Metropolitan Police Tweeted:
“Three men have been arrested on suspicion of racially aggravated criminal damage and inciting racial hatred. Officers were called to reports of a group trying to remove and set fire to Union flags in Church Street, Twickenham just after 6pm tonight. It's alleged they had made remarks about the ongoing conflict in Israel and Gaza.”

Three people were arrested at the scene. Apparently, they pulled down a Union Flag from outside the Fox Pub, tried to set fire to it and allegedly chanted “Free Palestine and Allahu Akbar”.



The Tree Agency

darryl parkin

The Treehouse
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COVID-19

Teresa Read

World Health Organization

Epidemiological Update published 27 October 2023, Data as of 22 October 2023

Globally, over half a million new cases were reported during the 28-day period from 25 September to 22 October 2023. The number of new cases decreased by 42% as compared to the previous 28-day period. Over 4,700 new deaths were reported during this period, a decrease of 43% as compared to the previous 28-day period. As of 22 October 2023, over 771 million confirmed cases and over six million deaths have been reported globally.

At the regional level, the number of newly reported 28-day cases decreased across four of the six WHO regions: the Region of the Americas (-83%), the Western Pacific Region (-76%), the African Region (-67%), and the Eastern Mediterranean Region (-11%); while case numbers increased in two WHO regions: the European Region (+10%), and the South-East Asia Region (+14%).

The number of newly reported 28-day deaths decreased across four regions: the Region of the Americas (-68%), the African Region (-50%), the European Region (-45%), and the Western Pacific Region (-20%); while death numbers increased in two WHO regions: the Eastern Mediterranean Region (+55%), and the South-East Asia Region (+978%) – primarily due to retrospective adjustment from India.

The European Region reported over 371,000 new cases, a 10% increase as compared to the previous 28-day period. Fifteen (25%) of the 61 countries for which data are available reported increases in new cases of 20% or greater, with the highest proportional increases observed in Serbia (14,619 vs 3,769 new cases; +288%), the Russian Federation (83,765 vs 28 441 new cases; +195%), and Armenia (684 vs 293 new cases; +133%).

The highest numbers of new cases were reported from Italy (141,255 new cases; 236.8 new cases per 100,000; +24%), the Russian Federation (83,765 new cases; 57.4 new cases per 100,000; +195%), and the United Kingdom (53,280 new cases; 78.5 new cases per 100,000; +6%).

The number of new 28-day deaths in the Region decreased by 45% as compared to the previous 28-day period, with 1,352 new deaths reported. The highest numbers of new deaths were reported from Italy (560 new deaths; <1 new death per 100,000; +36%), the Russian Federation (172 new deaths; <1 new death per 100,000; +237%), and Sweden (138 new deaths; 1.3 new deaths per 100,000; +28%).

NEWS

Nursing Times: “Very long Covid” being experienced in one in 20 cases. One in 20 people infected with Covid-19 have symptoms which last more than a year, a leading study into the virus has found.

NHS Imperial College Healthcare: High dose vitamin C ineffective in treatment of Covid-19 while cholesterol-lowering medicine improves outcomes. _

NHS: Booking a vaccination

<https://www.nhs.uk/nhs-services/covid-19-services/covid-19-vaccination-services/book-covid-19-vaccination/>

- Click on the “Start Now” button and you will be taken through an easy Click button procedure to book your appointment at a suitable venue.
- Vaccination appointments can be booked on the NHS website or the NHS App. If you do not have access to the internet telephone 119. You can use textphone 18001.

The Maple Leaf Pharmacy on Twickenham Green will give both COVID and flu vaccines. If you have problems booking with the NHS website you can phone the Maple Leaf for advice and possibly an appointment on 020 8894 5034

Details of Pop-up clinics in Richmond upon Thames available on the Council website.

The Local Picture Postcard Page Part 220

By Alan Winter

Fulwell Bus Garage – 121 Years Old

Fulwell Bus Garage today is a Transport for London bus garage. It is north of Fulwell railway station and operates as two halves, with entrances on the A311 Wellington Road and B358 Stanley Road. It is currently operated by Abellio London and London United.

Today it supports 12 bus routes covering an annual journeys total of 5,440.080 miles.

The first two postcards are dated over 100 years ago just before the first world war.

The London United Tramways Company intended that Fulwell should be the centre of a vast and great tramway network. Before 1901 all public transport had been horse drawn and each horse drawn bus had needed 11 horses to run a 60 miles per day service. Trams running on rails and powered by electricity were modern, clean, efficient and glamorous. Fulwell Depot was planned to accommodate rolling stock for the lines to Hampton Court, Kingston and Wimbledon.



There was great disruption. The work in the Hampton, Twickenham and Teddington districts cost £16,000 a mile, a huge sum in those days. Heath Road, Twickenham had to be widened by

45 feet and the wall of Bushy Park had to be set back all the way from Hampton Court to Garrick's Villa, Hampton. In addition, a large number of buildings in the High Streets of Hampton Hill and Hampton Wick had to be demolished in order to widen these previously narrow thoroughfares. A number of bridges also had to be rebuilt and widened.



The garage opened in 1902 as a tram shed and, with 18 tracks,

it was one of the largest in Greater London. Trams ran from the Fulwell site for more than 30 years, when they were replaced by trolley buses. In fact, the Fulwell location was the first in the London area to run trolley buses.

In 1931 London's first trolleybuses moved in alongside the trams and the last trams left in 1935. In 1933 the newly formed London Passenger Transport Board took over London United Tramways. Fulwell became London Transport's main trolleybus works making use of some of the space available. It was thus one of the last two depots to convert to motor buses on 9 May 1962.

Our final image is of my favourite bus, the number 267 that has operated from Fulwell for many years. Why is it my favourite? Because it regularly takes me to the new Brentford Football Club stadium at Kew Bridge which is now in its third successful year of hosting Premier League Football. Come On You Bees!

Electric buses were introduced for the first time at Fulwell in 2022.

There was also a Fulwell Social Club that closed in 2004 when the area it took up was needed for more buses etc. Back in the 1960's I remember a sports ground on the South Road side of the site. There was a football pitch and a bowling green. I haven't been able to find any photos of the sports ground but if anyone out there has any, I would like to see them. If you send them to me, we will feature them in the next available issue of the Tribune. The sports ground was redeveloped commercially many years ago, with an entrance off South Road.



If you have any old postcards that you would consider parting with, I'd be very interested in arranging to see them.

Please contact me on 07875 578398 or by email at alanwinter192@hotmail.com I am happy to pay cash for anything like that which I find of interest. So don't throw old postcards etc. in the skip or recycling bins. Show them to me first!

A date for your diary. Saturday November 18th. The West London Postcard Fair takes place at Teddington Baptist Church between. 10.00 and 4.00. Refreshments all day. Some 14 dealers. My tables are by the stage. Come and say hello and bring along any old postcards you may wish to dispose of. Thanks, stay safe and well.

CrusaderTravel



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Loss of Horse Chestnut Tree on Twickenham Green

By Teresa Read

During the week a horse chestnut on Twickenham Green was felled; it was reported that the tree on the Hampton Road side of the Green was over 110 years old.

It is understood that horse chestnut and lime trees were planted by Twickenham Council in 1872.

As a resident living within a minute or so walk of the Green I was interested to know whether new trees are to be planted. Young trees along the footpath running across the Green were planted some years ago and are now quite large if not fully grown.



*Twickenham Common showing Gifford Lodge and its neighbours
Engraved by Thomas Boydell in 1753*

I remember a prominent member of the Twickenham community telling me a number of years ago that the horse chestnuts on Twickenham Green were all planted around the same time. I have written to the Council tree officer to ask whether more trees would be lost in the near future.

As an interesting footnote; Horse Chestnut trees and their fruit, the conkers, are often seen as part of the English landscape but it is interesting to know that they originate from the Balkan Peninsula, native to the mountains of Albania and northern Greece, only introduced to our country in the early seventeenth century.

Below are photos showing the removal of the horse chestnut.



Photo by Heather Morgan



Photo by Berkley Driscoll



Photo by Berkley Driscoll

Help Jonathan fight the Labour Party independent Schools Parents' Tax

From Jonathan Hulley

Conservative Prospective Parliamentary candidate for Twickenham constituency, Jonathan Hulley was dismayed to see **Labour's reckless proposal to tax independent school fees** as a key policy offering at their recent annual conference.

It was also **Jeremy Corbyn's flagship policy**, showing us how little Labour has changed under Keir Starmer's leadership. Make no mistake this is a **tax on parents who send their kids to independent schools** which will do so much damage to thousands of families in Twickenham if Labour gets the keys to Downing Street at the next election.

Jonathan was educated at state schools but fully recognises the value of the independent school sector not only for the families that send their children to them but also for the wider community through their outreach work and community access to their facilities.

He also passionately believes that **parents should have a choice** on how their children are educated and the government has no place in using the tax system to deliberately restrict that important choice.

The **new parent tax** would also result in those paying as much as **20% higher fees** cutting back on what they spend locally on goods and services. This will adversely affect many **local businesses** who will lose custom, whilst the schools themselves may also have to start making staff redundant all of which will harm our local economy.

Independent schools educate more than 500,000 children in the UK. **And there are 9 Independent Schools in Twickenham constituency, educating over 4600 pupils.**

All, or even part of that number of pupils being released into the state education sector would be hard to absorb and lead to **significant disruption** for millions of children across the country. The policy to put VAT on fees, would not raise nearly enough money to cater for the disruption and the creation of new state school places.

The **short-sightedness** of Labour's proposal is that they have no plan where these pupils would go to school instead. By losing our network of independent schools and putting a greater strain on finances available for the state sector, state school funding per pupil would decrease sharply. More and more pupils would enter the state system without the necessary resources like classrooms and teachers being in place. This would especially be the case in our area as most schools are already full, and there are no easy options to expand them.

Let's not forget that independent schools provide a service to their local communities.

Not only do they educate large numbers of children without relying on local authorities' funding, but **they also offer bursaries** for pupils from disadvantaged backgrounds.

Thousands of **outreach programs** are already in existence where independent schools share their expertise to improve standards for state pupils. Instead of threatening independent schools with closure, we should look at enhancing their partnerships and projects to broaden education for all.

This is a clear and present threat from Labour to thousands of families in the Twickenham constituency who send their children to Independent Schools.

Jonathan urges all residents to show their opposition to this Labour Party proposal by writing to him at jonathan.hulley@outlook.com



Hampton North Ward

Councillor Geoffrey Samuel

SOCIAL HOUSING

Over twenty years ago the then Council, after consulting tenants and obtaining cross-party support, transferred all its housing to a Housing Association which took the name of Richmond Housing Partnership [RHP]. This is an entirely independent body although many people – and a number of tenants -assume [wrongly!] that it is part of the Council. As a Councillor I am able to raise issues with RHP, but Councillors have no control of RHP nor great influence. I raised this whole problem at the last full Council meeting 24% of housing in our ward is ‘social housing’ with PA as the second biggest provider but a number of smaller associations also provide housing in our Ward. Last week I met a Director of RHP and raised issues with him of anti-social behaviour [eg **Roy Grove**], failure to undertake repairs [eg **Stevens Close**], tree problems [eg **Bishops Grove**] etc. I will be meeting a Director of PA next month and will be able to raise issues in **Fulmer Close**.

AGEUK

This large national charity has several offices on the top floor of the White House and I was pleased to visit them recently. One of their current campaigns is “Offline and Overlooked” and refers to the millions of people who either do not have a computer or –like many elderly local people – have limited ability with it. I am strongly supporting this campaign and would like to hear from any local resident who knows of anyone in these categories. I have told the Council that I will support further digitalisation of services ONLY if there is also provision for such residents.

BOOTS

At the last full Council meeting I referred to the dissatisfaction at the impending closure of both the Hampton Square Branch and its nearest alternative. Residents have also told me that there are already problems with the one remaining Hampton Branch where there are queues. I therefore asked the Council formally to seek from Boots an assurance that this Branch would be fully staffed and that a prescription-delivery service would be offered to every Hampton North resident. The Council has agreed to do so.

THE WHITE HOUSE

It appears that Youth provision will be moved into the White House. I am still campaigning to ensure that the café remains fully open every day, the MUGA [Games pitch] is restored and courses, classes and activities for everyone available. Further report next month.

ROY GROVE

The narrow road leading to the houses is normally fully used for parking making it very tight for other vehicles to pass along it. I have therefore asked the Council to permit pavement

parking at this point to improve the situation.

BEWARE!

Local residents are rightly concerned to receive 'visits' from Darren Bingham who appears, polite and well-dressed, to tell a story which ends with a request for money. I have raised this with Police who are "well aware of the distress and annoyance [his] activities cause". He has recently – as well as previously – been arrested and sentenced but, once he has served his sentence, is free to continue. Police are "looking into all options...". If he calls on you do report it to Police immediately. [He has called on me!] Beware also of the latest scam when a caller, purportedly from your Bank, phones to check on a recent alleged [and bogus] payment that has been made. In a long and convincing narrative they persuade you to take an action that would, of course, be a disaster. Watch out for boys in black coats on moped Y465MZT who were seen in **Ringwood Way** and elsewhere acting suspiciously.

THE AVENUE – BUS TERMINUS?

I have passed on to Abellio residents' complaints of the use of this bus stop as a terminus. Issues involve safety and annoyance caused by engines left running. Abellio have now promised me that they will conduct a proper safety investigation.

SHORTER ITEMS

- In response to my request for more electric charging points the Council has now installed them in **Haslemere Close and South Road**.
- There is real local support [which I share] for a pedestrian crossing in **Oak Avenue** but as there is not total agreement on the location the Council has, at my request, extended the consultation period.
- I have reported to the Council complaints about overgrown hedges in parts of **Fearnley Crescent**
- I am trying to arrange a meeting with Sainsburys as they are responsible for some of litter which the excellent Hampton Heath volunteers spend their week-ends clearing

E-MAIL ADDRESS

For many years I have used gjshn@btinternet.com for both my Council and personal work. However I have recently experienced real difficulty in circulating the newsletter as no provider wishes to provide at modest cost some 700+ circulars once a month. I have therefore changed to the expensive option of my own "domain" and from now on gjs@gsamuel.co.uk will be my address for the Newsletter, all contact with residents and my Council work. As I am advised that there may be teething problems the BT address will continue for some weeks but I would like readers and residents to use the new address from to-day. Many thanks!

Please contact me on my personal computer gjs@gsamuel.co.uk. I am usually able to respond within 36 hours.

The new plastic-free poppy

The Royal British Legion's 2023 Poppy Appeal launched on Thursday with our new plastic-free poppy.

2023 sees the biggest change in the poppy's design for a generation.

Since its emergence as a symbol of Remembrance poppies have come in many shapes and sizes, and 2023 sees the biggest change in the poppy's design for a generation.

Your poppy shows you care and helps us continue our vital work supporting the Armed Forces community.

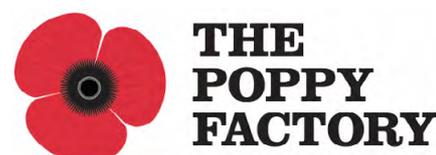
After more than three years in development, the Royal British Legion has produced a plastic-free poppy, made entirely from paper that is completely recyclable at home.

With paper created from renewable fibres from renewable sources including offcuts from coffee cups, the innovative new poppy design features a traditional poppy shape, with a black centre embossed with 'Poppy Appeal', and a leaf with a crease.



It can be fastened with a pin in the stem or worn in a buttonhole.

[Order your plastic-free poppy](#)



Richmond Park in autumn

Listen closely when visiting [Richmond Park](#) in autumn, and you might hear the whispers of older, wilder landscapes. The largest of London's Royal Parks, this popular 2,500-acre green space comes into its own when the warm days of summer have passed. Explore the expansive landscapes, colourful foliage, and enthralling wildlife that gives the park its beloved distinctive character.

Why visit Richmond Park during autumn?

There are plenty of great reasons to visit Richmond Park during autumn. Meadow grasses glow in mellow golds and leaves burn with seasonal colours. What more could you want from an autumn walk in one of London's top parks?

Other reasons to take an autumn walk in Richmond Park include the fiery reds of the maples and sweet gums in [Isabella Plantation](#), and the many different types of lichens and fungi that grow in the park during the season, such as Oak Polypore and Parasol mushrooms.

All this and more combine to offer a sense of peace, tranquility, and harmony with nature in the middle of a bustling city. Come experience it for yourself. Please remember it is illegal to forage in any of London's eight Royal Parks as these natural resources help balance the eco-system as well as serve as an important food source for wildlife in the parks.



Best walking routes in Richmond Park

There are many walking routes to choose from in Richmond Park. Here are a few of the best for your autumn walk:

Tamsin Trail

Follow this 11km/7-mile trail to visit all corners of Richmond Park in autumn, which takes between two and four hours to complete, depending on your pace, frequency of stops, etc. Enjoy spectacular views from [King Henry's Mound](#) and Sawyer's Hill while soaking up the colours and spotting wildlife.

Beverly Brook Walk in Richmond Park

Join this 2.4km/1.5-mile section of the longer Putney-Wimbledon [Beverley Brook Walk](#) as it cuts through the park for a blissful 45-minute stroll. Join the main Tamsin Trail path at the Roehampton gate car park until you cross the footbridge over Beverley Brook. Leave the Tamsin Trail and walk as far as you like along the riverbank, where you can see the rich autumn colours reflected in the brook's chilly waters. Head away from the river to rejoin the Tamsin Trail and return to the car park.

Tips for visiting

Heading to Richmond Park for an autumn walk? Follow these tips to make the most of your visit:

- Dress appropriately. October can be cold and wet, so wear layers of appropriate clothing. Wear a weatherproof jacket, cap, sturdy walking boots or wellies, gloves if walking in the morning or evening, and a scarf.
- Bring water and snacks. Even though you can purchase food and beverages at several points in Richmond Park, bringing bottled water and snacks is a good idea - you never know where your walk will take you.
- Help nature thrive. Keep 50m away from the deer at all times. Read our [guidelines](#) on dogs in Richmond Park.
- Visit early morning for stags in the mist: Take in the eerie sight of majestic stags emerging from the mists by visiting just before sunrise.
- Help us keep the park beautiful. Dispose of rubbish in the bins provided, do not remove or deface anything in the park, do not play loud music, and behave respectfully toward other visitors.
- Take note of gate times. The pedestrian gates are open 24/7 except during the November and February deer culls, when they're locked from 8.00pm until 7.30am. The main traffic gates open from 7.00am.



Richmond Council Leader responds to racial hatred incident in Twickenham

The Leader of Richmond Council, Councillor Gareth Roberts, has reiterated the Council's commitment to tackling hate crime in Richmond upon Thames following an incident on Church Street in Twickenham Monday night where a group of individuals were witnessed inciting racial hatred.

“I want to thank the Metropolitan Police for their swift action in arresting the individuals involved in this incident and want to reassure our communities that we will continue to work closely with the police to monitor incidents and ensure action is taken.

“Hate has no place in our society. Richmond upon Thames is the safest borough in London, and I am grateful to all those who work together, our community partners, police, faith leaders and Council officers, to make sure our residents and visitors are safe from crimes fuelled by hate.

“I'd also like to urge people to report hate crime when they witness it. Silence hides hate, so no matter how small or trivial you think an incident might be, it is important it is acknowledged and reported. Reporting also means that you will get access to support and advice to help you feel safe again.”

You can report a hate crime or incident in the following ways:

- Call 999 if it is an emergency and a crime is in progress
- Call 101 in a non-emergency to report, whether you're a victim, witness or making a report for someone else
- Report it online via the [Met Police website](#)
- If you want to report crime completely anonymously to the police, use [Crimestoppers](#)
- [Stop Hate UK](#) offers a 24-hour telephone number for people wanting to report hate crime. They also offer support and advice to those affected by hate crime and discrimination. Call 0800 138 1625 or go to their website.
- For a confidential 24-hour helpline for young people under 18, call 0808 801 0576 or text 07717 989 025



SEEING THE LIGHT

Turner's Discovery of Italy

Last chance to visit "Seeing the Light", a collection of sketches of JMW Turner's first and life-changing trip to Italy! Do not miss it. Closes this Sunday 29th October! Wed-Sun, 12-4pm.

Info and tickets on <http://turnershouse.org>



TURNER'S HOUSE
TWICKENHAM

LAST WEEK!
Closes on Sun 29 Oct!

"Such a lovely exhibition – truly lovely"

SEEING THE
LIGHT

Open
Wed-Sun
12-4pm

Green Travel: Dangerous Walking Infrastructure

Teresa Read

During the last week I had been thinking about writing about the dangerous paving in parts of Twickenham and was surprised to find via Twitter that residents living near my original home in the borough, in Richmond, have a similar problem: Marlborough Road, Cambrian Road and Onslow Road. This leads me to believe that broken pavements are not being replaced fast enough and I know from experience the injury that can be caused by this state of affairs.

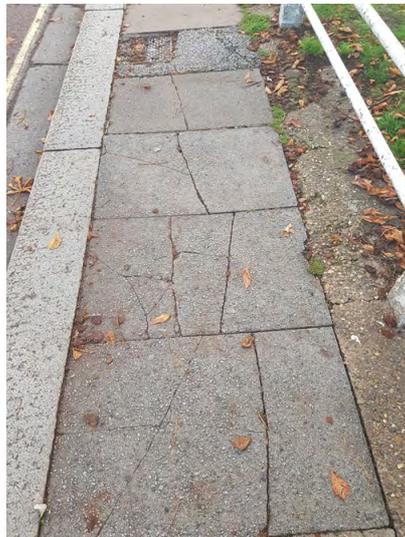
I have lived in Twickenham for many years and remember the Council Nominate a Pavement scheme where residents could contact the Council to replace dangerous street paving. In 2007 I became a Committee Member of the Strawberry Hill Residents Association (SHRA), at the same time as the late John Armstrong. John would pace the streets of Strawberry Hill, sometimes with a LBRUT Council officer, to identify broken and dangerous paving, as well as shrubs that had grown over paved area making it difficult for those with disabilities to pass. Unfortunately, walking around the area now it seems that this task is no longer undertaken.

Nowadays, our Council has a Green Travel agenda and promotes the use of travel via walking and public transport. However, just across the boundary of Strawberry Hill and directly adjacent to Twickenham Green there is a very dangerous area of broken paving leading to a bus stop. There are those who have hurried for a bus and tripped on this cracked and broken paving causing long term injuries.

The abovementioned paving is next to the realms of the Friends of Twickenham Green, whose committee room is on the Green in the Cricket Pavilion, frequented by present and past councillors; surely, they should have reported the hazard to the appropriate department in the Council? The pavement in question is opposite a retirement residence and the homes of long-term residents of the area; it leads directly to and from a bus stop and should be an area of concern.

Surely, a Council that promotes Green Travel should make sure that walking areas are fit for purpose and not become the cause of long-term pain and disability for residents who pay a high Council tax. This is a wake-up call for all those involved in overseeing the dangerous pavement situation - as residents in this area have seen, necessary repairs can be too late.

It is up to Councillors and residents' associations, recognized by the Council, to make themselves aware of dangerous and obstructive walking areas and call the Council to take remedial action before someone else's life is adversely affected by this unsatisfactory state of affairs.



T&T
TWICKENHAM
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 **discover
twickenham**



HALLOWE'EN

MINI DISCO!

SUN 29 OCT 3-6PM

(SUITABLE FOR 11 YEARS OLD AND UNDER)



FREE FACEPAINTING!

3-5PM WITH JOANNE FROM FACINATING

**DIAMOND JUBILEE GARDENS
TWICKENHAM EMBANKMENT**

Young Botanical Artist Competition winners celebrated at Kew Gardens this autumn

Friday 20 October 2023- Sunday 7 April 2024, Shirley Sherwood Gallery of Botanical Art, Kew Gardens

From October, Gallery 6 of Kew Gardens' Shirley Sherwood Gallery of Botanical Art will showcase 50 shortlisted artworks from the inaugural Young Botanical Artist Competition. Created by The Shirley Sherwood Collection in collaboration with Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew, the competition was open exclusively to entrants aged 16-25, and offers a unique opportunity for the next generation of botanical artists to showcase their work in a gallery setting.

The overall winner of the 16-18 age group award is 17-year old Marianna Zych from Poland. Her watercolour painting *Prunus serrula* was created as her first-ever botanical artwork following just one month of painting classes. The overall winner of the 19 – 25 category is Khanh Ly Nguyen from



Vietnam, whose watercolour *Bauhinia variegata* leaf showcases the intricate detail of this stunning tree. The competition proved enormously popular around the world, with over 1,000 entries from 77 countries. The final selection of 50 artworks were submitted by artists from 17 countries, including Brazil, India, Japan, Uzbekistan, and Indonesia. Visitors to the exhibition will be able to vote for their favourite artwork and a People's Choice award will be announced in April.

The selection of shortlisted artworks was made by a panel of esteemed judges, including contemporary botanical artists from around the world and curators from Kew's galleries, with the panel searching for botanical artworks that represented their subjects creatively, but with scientific accuracy. Botanical paintings and drawings have long been used to further our understanding of plants and fungi, particularly given that it is an art form capable of recording minute details which are often more accurate than a photographic record. As we work to better understand and preserve our planet's biodiversity, botanical art continues to play a vital role in helping to record and observe countless species the world over.

Dr Shirley Sherwood OBE says: "I couldn't be more thrilled with the standard of the entries we received for our inaugural Young Botanical Artist competition and I'm grateful to my daughter-in-law Rachel Sherwood for bringing the initiative to life. It's been fascinating to see such a broad range of responses to the competition and to have received so many entries from across the world. To see first-hand the next generation of talented botanical artists coming to the fore is enormously inspiring."

Maria Devaney, Galleries and Exhibition Leader at RBG Kew adds: "Although often thought of as very traditional in style, at its heart botanical art is all about innovation, discovery and nurturing the innate curiosity about the world we share. It's been wonderful to see such an enthusiastic response to the competition as a whole, and it's fantastic to be able to celebrate the achievements of the shortlisted entrants with this special exhibition."

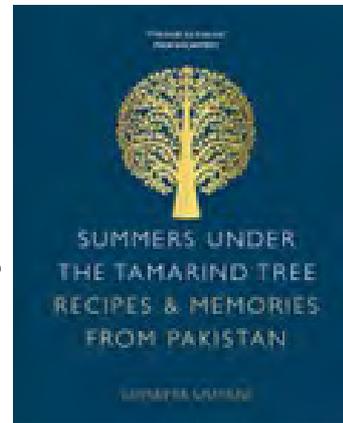
The Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew, is dedicated to harnessing the power of plants and fungi to end the extinction crisis and secure a future for all life on Earth. With Kew's world-leading research, global partnerships and beloved gardens – home to the world's most diverse collections of plants and fungi – Kew is using its trusted voice to shape policy and practice worldwide. As a charity Kew relies on the critical support of its visitors, not only to sustain the gardens, but to protect global plant and fungal biodiversity for the benefit of our planet and humanity.

Royal
Botanic
Gardens **Kew**

SUMMERS UNDER THE TAMARIND TREE

I know that summer is now just a memory, but I wanted to share with you a fabulous cookbook that is so evocative that you can almost smell those exciting scents and hear the sounds of author Sumayya Usmani's childhood in Pakistan.

In this new edition of her award-winning memoir-cookbook, **Summers Under The Tamarind Tree** she celebrates the varied, exciting and oft-overlooked cuisine of her beautiful birthplace, honouring its heritage and traditions through more than 100 family recipes and evocative food memories. “When people think of Pakistan, they probably picture a simple land plagued by troubles.” She says, “But having grown up in Karachi, my memories of my childhood in Pakistan are filled with exciting scents, sounds and rich flavours. Food is the spirit of Pakistani people and the cuisine has been hundreds of years in the making. When I moved to the UK, I was struck by the fact that despite a large Pakistani diaspora, our cuisine never found its individual voice. My patriotic spirit and passion for the food I grew up cooking and eating sowed the seeds for this book. I hope that the flavour of my heritage comes through in each recipe I share.”



With food photography by Joanna Yee and published by White Lion Publishing at £20.

SUMMERS UNDER THE TAMARIND TREE: Recipes & Memories from Pakistan is a fabulous book. Here are a few of its recipes to whet your appetite.

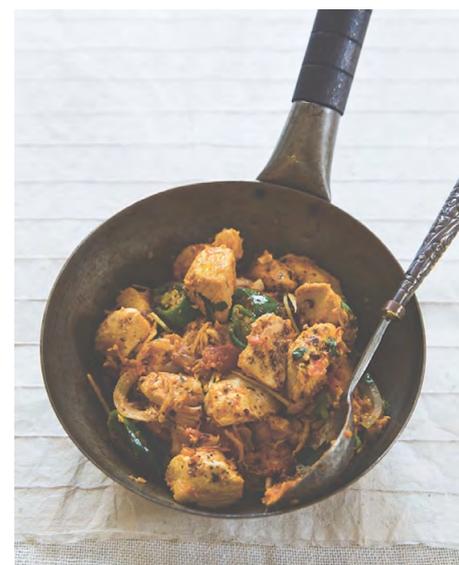
Karhai Ginger Chicken - Preparation 10 minutes | Cooking 25–30 minutes | Serves 4

“On the days I was greeted with the hot citrus tang of fresh ginger from my grandmother’s garden as it was sliced artfully into julienne pieces, I knew I was getting Pakistani-style ginger chicken for supper. This is a dish that is found in every restaurant and home in Pakistan and is simple and quick to make, with bursts of raw ginger added at the end for a fresh finish. Serve with a daal and rice – and you can substitute chicken with boneless duck or turkey for a fuller flavour.”

- 2 tbsp vegetable oil
- 1 tsp cumin seeds
- 1 tsp each of garlic purée and grated ginger
- 200g/7oz chicken breast cut into 5cm/2-inch chunks
- 2 large tomatoes, finely chopped
- 1 tbsp tomato purée
- 2 tbsp plain yogurt
- ½ tsp red chilli powder
- ½ tsp freshly ground black pepper
- ¼ tsp ground turmeric
- salt, to taste
- 1 tbsp unsalted butter

To garnish

- 5cm/2-inch piece ginger, peeled and cut into julienne
- handful of coriander (cilantro) leaves, chopped
- 2 green chillies, finely chopped
- 10 mint leaves, chopped



Heat the oil in a wok-style pan over a medium heat. When hot, add the cumin and allow it to splutter for 30 seconds. Add the garlic purée and grated ginger and fry for a further 30 seconds, or until the raw

smell of garlic disappears.

Add the chicken to the pan and fry until it is sealed all over. Add the tomatoes and cook for 5–7 minutes until softened, then add the tomato purée and the yogurt and cook for 8–10 minutes, or until the oil starts to separate. Add the red chilli powder, black pepper, turmeric and salt and cook for a further 5–7 minutes until the chicken is done. Add the butter before turning off the heat and letting the butter melt.

Before serving, add the julienned ginger, coriander, green chillies and mint, and stir through.

Crispy chapati kachumber salad - Preparation 20 minutes | Serves 4–6

“This popular South Asian salad is made from uniformly diced pieces of fresh vegetables, lots of lemon and dry-roasted cumin. It’s a great accompaniment to barbecue dishes and biryanis. Inspired by Italian panzanella, I’ve added crispy leftover chapati (or use paratha) for texture.”

- 2 large tomatoes, deseeded and finely chopped
- 1 large red onion, finely chopped
- 1 cucumber, deseeded and finely chopped
- 1–2 thin green chillies, deseeded and finely chopped
- 2 tbsp fresh pomegranate seeds
- juice of 1 lemon, plus wedges to garnish
- salt, to taste
- 1 tsp dry-roasted cumin seeds, roughly ground
- ½ tsp chaat masala
- 1 chapati bread, toasted and broken into small 2.5cm/1-inch pieces



Combine the first five ingredients with the lemon juice, cumin, salt and chaat masala. Chill until serving. Add the broken chapati pieces before serving and stir well. Garnish with lemon wedges.

Walnut and cardamom laddoo Preparation 15 minutes | Cooking 15 minutes | Serves 6–8

“Walnuts grow in abundance in northern Pakistan, and this is a traditional dessert making use of the bounty.”

- 2 tbsp ghee
- 3 green cardamom pods, seeds finely ground
- 250g/9oz/2½ cups shelled walnuts, finely ground
- 150–200ml/5–7 fl oz/2/3–scant 1 cup condensed milk
- 3 tbsp desiccated (dry unsweetened) coconut

Heat the ghee in a heavy-based saucepan over a medium heat. When hot, add the ground cardamom and stir for 2–3 minutes until the ghee is fragrant. Add the ground walnuts and stir for about 2 minutes until the walnuts smell slightly roasted.

Pour in the condensed milk and stir vigorously for about 10 minutes or so, or until the mixture comes together like a ball. Once you reach this stage, turn off the heat and allow the walnut mixture to cool for about 3–4 minutes. Spread the desiccated coconut out on a plate. Using your hands, form about 1 tablespoon of the mixture into golf ball-sized balls then roll in the desiccated coconut. Place on a plate and allow to cool completely. Cover and store in a cool, dry place and eat within 3–4 days.



STICKS 'N' SUSHI KINGSTON

Danish-Japanese isn't a combination that one often finds here in the UK. But I am glad to have discovered it in Kingston at **Sticks 'n' Sushi**. The company was established 11 years ago in Wimbledon and has very recently opened its largest site to date, on the corner of the Bentall Centre.



It's pretty massive: two floors and an external terrace for al fresco dining, with the decor striking a balance between Japanese minimalism and Scandi elegance. The tables aren't too close together, and if dining in a foursome, there are some rather cosy little sofas at some tables.

On arrival, one is warmly welcomed - embodying that famous Japanese concept of 'Omotenashi' - to wholeheartedly look after each and every guest. Our server, Irina, was delightful, and nothing was too much trouble. On perusing the cocktail menu, I opted to take them up on the challenge offered to produce any cocktail not featured, so asked for a Negroni with a Japanese twist. What a result: Japanese gin was included and it was wonderful. My husband chose a Meantime beer (but there were plenty of Japanese beers available too).

There is a central open kitchen, where it's possible to witness the skills of the sushi-masters first hand. The menus are well laid out, with a la carte and set menus. We were novices, so chose one of the set menus - the Carpe Diem (£93 for two) - that would give us a full range of dishes to try. Wow! What a fabulous introduction it was. We had broccoli, in supreme soy with spicy goma. Reader, it took broccoli to a stratospheric level and I'm already checking recipe books in order to make some more. Then Ebi Bites (beautifully presented tempura prawns with miso aioli, chilli, lime & coriander) which were piping hot and delightfully crunchy. The Kani Korokke (crab croquettes with wasabi caesar) were little balls of pure deliciousness and the final starters - the only cold ones - were tuna tartare bites that would be the pride of any cocktail party hostess's canape tray and Shake Carpaccio, a plate of beautifully decorated slivers of salmon with miso aioli, trout roe, chives, daikon & lime marinade.



We paired our meal with a bottle of the house white wine (Stormy Cape Chenin Blanc - £30, the reds start at £33 with a Portuguese Evaristo)

The 'Main' courses were outstanding: a selection of sushi, with fillings such as chicken, avocado, salmon, and shrimp.



Then a platter of sticks: Yaki Yagi (goat cheese wrapped in ham) Tsukue Chilli (chicken meatballs, chilli dip, teriyaki and spring onions and finally Hotate Bacon (scallops and bacon with miso herb butter). It was a mammoth feast indeed.

The only slight let down was the dessert menu.

I can never resist panna cotta and the white chocolate one topped with liquorice and raspberry foam was not only tiny but rather disappointing. My husband chose vanilla ice cream with tonka bean which



he thoroughly enjoyed. On checking the menu while writing up this review I see that they recommend you choose a few desserts to enjoy, which accounts for the size of the dishes themselves. To be honest, any more than we had would have been too much anyway, as we were certainly very replete.

With Christmas looming around the corner, from **27th November** until Christmas Eve, three special festive **Sticks'n'Santa** set menus will be available for pre-booked tables of over six guests, each offering their own spin on the most popular Sticks'n'Sushi dishes. Starting at £40 per head, the menus can be [viewed here](#) and there is also an Evergreen menu for those wishing to opt for a plant-based meal. What's more, bookings placed for a Monday or Tuesday will receive a complimentary glass per head of Telmont champagne. Smaller groups and walk-in guests are also able to enjoy a taste of Christmas with three seasonal dishes. The festive additions comprise the 'Kakiage Tempura & Ikura', 'Wagyu Temaki' - seared Kyushu wagyu beef, sushi rice, tsume soy & crisp nori and 'Miso Fried Sprouts' - a Sticks'n'Sushi twist to convert even the most avid sprout sceptic!

We were really impressed with our meal and the whole Sticks 'n' Sushi experience. We'll be back very soon and it's perfectly located for Christmas shopping (and the 281 bus stop).

And I'm delighted to report that the company is opening another local branch in the New Year - in Richmond (in the old House of Fraser building).

Competition Winner

The winner of last week's Twickers Foodie competition is Sue Weaver, who wins a pair of tickets to **The Spirit of Christmas Fair** at Olympia. Congratulations!

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WIZ Tales: Sierra Leone

Teresa Read



2023 Earthshot Prize Finalist from Sierra Leone, Protect and Restore Nature

Freetown The Treetown

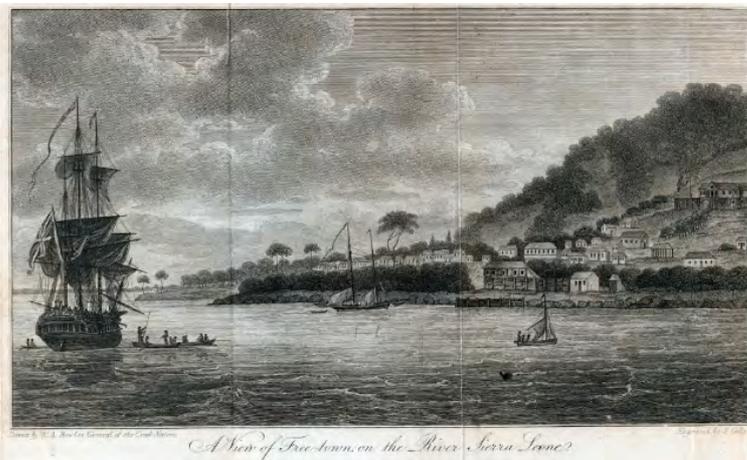
Over the last fifty years, Sierra Leone’s capital, Freetown, has lost millions of trees due to rapid population growth and expansion of the city.

In August 2017 deforestation led to landslides when part of Mount Sugar Loaf, on an edge of Freetown, gave way and a huge mudslide killed over three hundred people.

Now, the Freetown city council works with residents to raise awareness of the importance of replacing trees. “Freetown the Treetown” is a “pay-to-grow” project; residents are paid to plant trees and monitor mangroves with progress tracked online.



Mangroves



Freetown, Sierra Leone 1803



Freetown, Sierra Leone 1856



Sierra Leone: information and photos: <https://worldinfozone.com/country.php?country=SierraLeone>

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We want to make sure everybody in the UK has the chance to plant a tree. So we're giving away hundreds of thousands of trees to schools and communities. Together, we'll get millions more trees in the ground.

Choose your pack(s) from the list on the website and fill out our application form. We make two deliveries a year, in March and November. We're currently taking applications for tree packs to be delivered in March 2024. Applications are expected to close in January, or sooner depending on stock availability.

Got a question about our free tree packs? Take a look at our frequently asked questions [HERE](#)



Before you apply you'll need to:

Know the six digit grid reference for the land you wish to plant using the [grid reference finder](#)
Have permission from the legal landowner
Read through our short list of [FAQs](#). They are packed full of important and useful information which will help your application.

It's also a good idea to contact your local council's tree enquiries team before you apply, as they may have important guidance for planting in your area.

Request a free tree pack for your school or community [HERE](#)

Find more information and details of Tree Packs [HERE](#)



WOODLAND
TRUST

Shopkeeping... Spiders... & Halloween...

By Deep Patel
Shopkeeper at Meet & Deep Newsagents,
34 Hampton Road, Twickenham

~ Through the Eyes of a Twickenham Shopkeeper ~

My name is Dee Patel and I am a shopkeeper in Twickenham. I like to write about conversations that I have with customers in my newsagents on Hampton road, there is always something interesting to talk about. Today I wanted to write about Halloween, spiders and good karma (a strange mix perhaps!)

Halloween is here this month but why are spiders associated with Halloween and what exactly is it about spiders that spooks us out so much?

So Halloween...what do we do at Meet & Deep Newsagents you may wonder? Well, my mother and father who have run the shop for nearly 40 years dress up...I don't mean in a nice shirt and blouse...noooo...not my parents...they like to go all out and wear full Halloween outfits...in fact last year, they actually made little children coming in the shop scared...one little girl even cried a bit and ran towards the door after my mother sprang out from behind the counter for an open arm hug exclaiming "Happy Halloween!"



Shashi (father) and Pallu (mother) 2022

My parents like to encourage all the local children to come into our shop and “trick or treat”... they think it’s lovely and they give free sweets from the shop to the children that come (pop by this year if you are around...you don’t have to be a kid...adult trick or treaters are welcome too.



Me (Deep) and my brother (Meet)

Halloween also coincides with autumn...Autumn is the “spider season” in the UK...when male spiders start coming into our homes looking for luuuurve (to find a mate!).

If you want to keep them away, I am a firm believer in choosing a kind way rather than poison... de-clutter your rooms...remove all boxes as spiders love hiding places! Get rid of damp...use dehumidifiers as spiders like humidity...mix 30 drops of pure essential peppermint oil into a cup of water and then into a spray bottle and spray all corners of your house and areas where you don’t want spiders. Spray regularly to keep them away. This also stops moths and most insects...using peppermint oil neat in areas will stop ants without harming them. If you really want to go to town, spiders dislike the colour blue...so paint your rooms blue!

As a shop keeper in Twickenham, I often get customers coming in for pesticides, mouse poison, glue traps, sticky moth tape, slug pellets, etc but I always give them one of my leaflets instead that has all the kind and natural ways to stop insects without harming them...some people say why do you care, they are bugs? I say if we want to make the world a better place, start with the smallest of things...be kind...not only will you get back good karma, you will also be putting a little bit more compassion out there in a world that needs it right now...

Read my tips below and keep them handy, take a photo of them and share...be the reason this world is flooded with kindness and compassion...whoever said a shopkeeper in Twickenham could not change the world from behind his little shop counter...all we have to do is have good intentions, a heart that cares and...try.

Please follow my Facebook Page “KIND WORLD” for any creature kindness tips, or to contact me for any kind ways to stop any “pests” without harming them, or email me thedeepatel@gmail.com.

REMEMBER:

“It’s the little changes that we make in life that will eventually change the world”



Enron

by Lucy Prebble

Richmond Shakespeare Society at the Mary Wallace Theatre until 28th October

When America sneezes, the world catches a cold, and it was a gargantuan sneeze that spread the financial virus of 2008, resulting in the meltdown of many global economies. The earlier events at Enron, described so succinctly in this award winning play, certainly started Uncle Sam's nasal hairs tickling.

This cautionary account of Enron's monumental collapse takes us on a journey of revelation, condensing the complexities of jaw-dropping underhand dealings, fake holdings and off-the-book accounting practices, for which two of the company's directors were convicted of fraud and gaoled.



Slickly choreographed fast and furious scene changes are facilitated by Junis Olmscheid and Marc Pearce's multi-level set design, with its sophisticated stage-lighting techniques.

Charlie Golding gives a solid performance as Jeffrey Skilling, self-styled "smartest guy in the room", who powered the fraudulent dealings. His vain, laid back approach at the beginning allows room to reflect the emotional journey, through anxiety, to frustrated desperation.

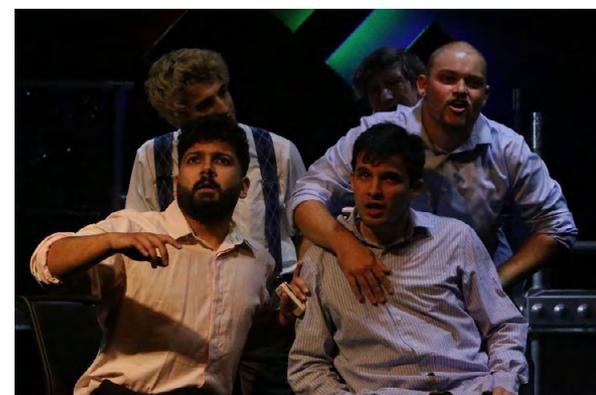


The highly talented Amanda Adams plays Claudio Roe, a fictional representation of the 'few good men' of Enron, who challenges Skilling's position on many important issues. Adams displays both the powerful, determined, ambitious business leader and the caring, thoughtful and questioning human.

Skilling's key operator was geeky Andy Fastow, whose "raptor" methods exploited financial loop-holes. Cornwell, a physical theatre enactor, personifies these "off-balance-sheet, special purpose entities" as three sinister sisters, superbly played by Harriet Evans, Anastasia

Babich and Vinutha Hegde. Clever, subtle movements and perfectly matched postures make them intriguingly believable. As Fastow, the reclusive controller of these beasts, accessing his office-lair through a trap-door, Aleksei Toshev portrays the grating, desperate side-kick to perfection.

Frances Abbot plays the brow-beaten Kenneth Lay, a God-fearing Southerner, and victim of Skilling's greed and thirst for power. Abbot's consummate performance subtly displays his shift from proud gentleman to a desperate, broken and defeated man.



An enthusiastic ensemble supports the principals in energetic performances that keep the pace of this complex piece lightning fast. Director Maxina Cornwell's highly watchable interpretation of *Enron* is hugely enjoyable and totally engaging from start to finish.

Read Ian Moone's review at www.markaspen.com/2023/10/24/enron-rss

Photography courtesy of RSS

Treasure Island

by Jago Hazzard after R.L. Stevenson

Teddington Theatre Club at Hampton Hill Theatre, until 28th October

Arrrh! Screeching seagulls and waves crashing against the seashore: we know we are on *Treasure Island*. Atmospheric scene setting gives way to comedy, corny jokes, song and some very rhythmic tap-dancing by Hugo Allain, who plays Squire Trelawney. This is a parody with a difference, for it is a vehicle to display a range of acting skills of actors, who are also required to show their knowledge of different acting styles, Restoration comedy, Shakespeare, melodrama ... slapstick 'to boot'.

The set is flexible; the deck of a sailing ship with sails, ropes and captain's quarter deck, becomes an island, plus movable trees. The costumes are colourful and well-co-ordinated.



The guiding hand of director Asha Gill is very much in evidence. Stage choreography, including slo-mo, is superb. There are excellent examples of choral movement, used to comedic effect; and entertaining sword fighting. The joy of this production is the actors' ability to play comic roles with serious intent.



Caroline Gudge is an appealing Jim Hawkins, keen to escape his mother's apron-strings in order to embark on the voyage of a lifetime and to become a 'man'. This was a credible well-executed performance. Theo Byrne and Hugo Allain, as Dr Livesey and Squire Trelawny, are a perfectly matched duo, especially in the tea-drinking scene, beautifully capturing the mannerisms of restoration comedy.

Matt Dennls is a fearsome Captain Smollett, another actor with energetic physical and vocal skills. Mrs Hawkins, played by Nicola Doble, is admirably suitable as Jim's over-protective mother. She displays great comic skills, especially when being wooed by Josh Clarke, in the character roles of Captain Flint and then Ben Gunn.

Conor Strachan, who plays Long John Silver, is a skilled guitar player and vocalist. But there are plenty of treats in store with all the characters in this cast.

TTC's *Treasure Island* will attract different ages and interests: children for the slapstick; theatre buffs for the whole art of acting, drama and theatre; and the rest who just want an evening of fun and silliness.



Read Celia Bard's review at www.markaspen.com/2023/10/26/treasure

Photography by Sarah J Carter



Farm Hall

by Katherine Moar

Theatre Royal Bath and Jermyn Street Productions at Richmond Theatre until 28th October

Theatre has many functions. Comedy makes us laugh; tragedy makes us cry. It can entertain ... or it can make us think. *Farm Hall* has a contemplative depth that no other live art could provide. It is theatre at its best. It is not easy theatre though, and requires an investment by the audience, but an investment that pays handsomely.



Operation Epsilon was a military action towards the end of World War II. The British government detained some of Germany's most gifted nuclear scientists, including three Nobel Prize winners. They were interned until early in 1946 at Farm Hall, a house near Godmanchester. The ex-MI6 base was comprehensively bugged. The subtle idea was that, by listening to their conversations, more information could be obtained than by interrogation.



Equally subtle is Moar's writing, much being verbatim from the scientists' own words, and the sharply incisive and shrewdly perceptive directing by Stephen Unwin. The set is a large room, dilapidated St James meets faded William Morris.

At first, light banter relieves the bored brainpower, but it becomes more pointed as personal animosities surface, and old scores are uprooted. Then comes the shattering news of the dropping of the atom bomb on Hiroshima.

Unwin's punctuations are theatrical brilliance. The news of the bomb is greeted with horror, all frozen in a tableau, petrified in the overpowering light of the atomic flash. Later, the few minutes leading up to the BBC Home Service confirming their fears masterfully create an atmosphere of palpable tension. Silence is pierced by one of the scientists counting down the minutes, with Teutonic efficiency, the others stiff with anticipation. It is nail-biting.

The scientists are different in outlook, views and temperament, but three-dimensional characters, with strengths and weaknesses. The acting is unimpeachable, and all the actors achieve a concentrated intensity, worn lightly.

Essentially an examination of moral dilemmas, and the complexities of coming to terms with those dilemmas, here is play with relevance, profundity and intellectual sinew. *Farm Hall* is totally engaging, and demands that engagement. If there is one play to see this year, this is it.



Read Mark Aspen's review at www.markaspen.com/2023/10/24/farm-hall

Photography by Alex Brenner

Dragon's Teeth

by Shirland Quin

The Questors Studio, Ealing until 28th October

When the Questors opened its theatre in Mattock Lane back in 1933, its first offering was the premiere of an experimental play, *Dragons' Teeth*, contemporarily described as “undoubtedly the most experimental work done by a London society in recent months, if not years”. And it is a still bold choice by director David Hovatter to update it as a studio play, even if the original number of characters reportedly needed for the last act has been reduced from the original seventy to a modest eight!

Set in some form of weapons facility the plot revolves round the testing of a new machine, designed to provide for the control of unmanned flights and unmanned tanks. The characters divide between those rooting for a successful test, deterrence being the way to secure future peace; and the young fiancée of the inventor, who is horrified by the idea of her future husband developing a better killing machine.

Millie Jewry as Nellie Marston gives a strong performance as the inventor's sister clinging to patriotism, as she copes with losing two siblings in the last war. A key part is that of Lydia, the peace-loving fiancée, changed from an artist to an Indian actress-dancer to reflect the casting of Sweta Gupta. Her dilemma, faced with the discovery that the man she loves plans to continue developing more and more deadly weapons of war, was totally believable.

Omar Aga's Darell Marston has a very short space of time to demonstrate his change from a man following his brothers' military footsteps by producing technological marvels, into someone who abhors war. But was his brother, played by Alex Hunter, more worried about the country getting ahead in the deterrence game, or progressing his own career?



I don't know what form the final dream scene took in the original, other than the fact that it so disturbed “the adjustment” of an original reviewer. So, I was a little apprehensive when I found out it was to be performed as Kathakali theatre. However, this sequence was brilliant, totally absorbing and expressive of the awful power of war, with the constant background muted sound of the drums of war setting the mood. Maybe the coincidental timing of this performance of *Dragons' Teeth* needed a less audible reminder of war than first envisaged.

Read Polly Davies' review at www.markaspen.com/2023/10/21/dragon-teeth

Photography by Ewart Shellshear



Heathers the Musical

by Kevin Murphy and Laurence O'Keefe

Bill Kenwright at the New Wimbledon Theatre until 28th October

“*Heathers the Musical* contains haze, loud noises including gun shots, flashing lights and strobe as well as strong language and mature themes, including bullying, murder, suicide, physical and sexual violence and references to eating disorders.” That’s the dire warning in the theatre programme but, hey, it *is* a musical so how upsetting can it be?

Way back in 2018 a re-release of *Heathers the Musical*, a bizarre and bloody story of teenage cruelty, hit the cinema screens. Even further back in the mists of time, i.e. 1988, it was cult satirical smash hit about vindictive and paranoid high-school kids who could score top marks in meanness. Cyber-bullying and sexting circa 2023 have nothing on these American youngsters in this black comedy, but modern fans in their Letterman jackets, sequins and fake leopard-skin rock up for a rollicking, rumbustious roller coaster of a ride.



Whooping and stamping were the order of the night for a high-octane show with a plot based on a clique of four teenage girls, three called Heather, students attending an Ohio high school, and troubled teen misfit JD. The menacing, intense character cuts a creepy figure. His addiction to iced Slushie helps freeze his brain against the horror of witnessing his mother’s death as a child. Kill the most popular students and then stage their deaths as suicides seems to be JD’s mission in life. The three Heathers allow the hapless Veronica to hang out with them and bask in their bubble of popularity, at the price of submitting to humiliations handed out on an industrial scale. Veronica falls for JD, who ensnares her in his murderous web.

The production boasts a talented and energetic cast who sing and dance their way through a score of numbers. Standout dancers are the hunky quarter backs, who perform a cleverly choreographed slow-mo fight sequence with J.D. Impressive pecs and biceps add to their allure.

Heather the Musical is at times sentimental, schmaltzy and melancholic but despite its mix of silliness and shootings, murder and mayhem it fits the bill for a bright night out. And for veteran producer Bill Kenwright, whose death on press night was announced from the stage, it was a fitting final curtain.

Read Gill Martin’s review at www.markaspen.com/2023/10/25/heathers-mscl

Photography courtesy of Bill Kenwright

Three Ellen Kent Operas To Play At Richmond Theatre In 2024

22 Jan, 23 Jan & 18 March

This World Opera Day, Richmond Theatre announces that award-winning producer Ellen Kent returns to the venue in Spring 2024 with the **Ukrainian Opera & Ballet Theatre Kyiv** presenting three stunning classical productions of Puccini's **Madama Butterfly**, Bizet's **Carmen** and Verdi's **La Traviata**.



Ellen Kent's **Madama Butterfly**, winner of the 'BEST OPERA AWARD' by the Liverpool Daily Post Theatre Awards, returns in a new production with exquisite sets including a spectacular Japanese garden and fabulous costumes including antique wedding kimonos from Japan. One of the world's most popular operas, Puccini's Madama Butterfly tells the heart-breaking story of the beautiful young Japanese girl who falls in love with an American naval lieutenant – with dramatic results. Highlights include the melodic 'Humming Chorus', the moving aria 'One Fine Day' and the unforgettable 'Love Duet'. Sung in Italian with English surtitles.

Bizet's masterpiece, **Carmen**, is an evening of passion, sexual jealousy, death and unforgettable arias. Carmen is the story of the bewitching gypsy girl whose tantalising beauty lures a soldier to desertion and leads to her own murder. The opera includes some of the most evocative and best-loved melodies in opera – The Habanera, The Seguidilla, The Flower Song, The Chanson Bohème and perhaps the best-known baritone aria of all The Toreador's Song. The stunning set reflects the magnificent architecture of Seville with its Roman and Moorish influences, which includes the main square, the bull ring and the famous tobacco factory. The set was built for Ellen Kent in England by Setup Scenery, who also build sets for the Royal Opera Covent Garden. Sung in French with English surtitles.

La Traviata, the tragic tale of searing passion and memorable music, is Verdi's outstanding interpretation of one of the most popular love stories of the 19th century, La Dame aux Camelias. Based on a true story, it tells of the passionate loves and life of the consumptive courtesan, Violetta. There are many echoes of Verdi's own life in Traviata and he threw himself into the music. The highlights include the Brindisi, the best-known drinking song in opera, the duet Un Di Felice and Violetta's haunting aria Addio Del Passato. This magnificent production boasts sumptuous sets and costumes. Sung in Italian with English surtitles.

Alike Ellen's past UK and Ireland opera tours, Ellen personally hand-picks and directs all soloists to create visually beautiful and moving productions. Ellen Kent said *'I am delighted to be working with the Ukrainian Opera & Ballet Theatre Kyiv again after the huge success of the spring 2023 tour. I started working with Ukraine in 2000 and have continued these strong relationships ever since, working with the Odessa National Opera for which I was awarded The Golden Fortune Honorary Medal from the President of the Ukraine, as well as the Kharkiv National Opera and for the last couple of years with the brilliant Opera & Ballet Theatre Kyiv.'*

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Save Our Wild Isles Community Fund

Closes 1 Nov

A fund to empower community groups and organisations across the UK to protect and restore nature in local areas.

Aviva, in partnership with WWF and the RSPB, is dedicating £1 million to this fund, delivered by Crowdfunder.

Whether you're working together to plant community gardens, support local wildlife or anything else to help nature near you, you can get £500 to kick-start your project PLUS £2 for every £1 you raise, to help your project reach its target quicker. That's a total match of £15,000 per community project.

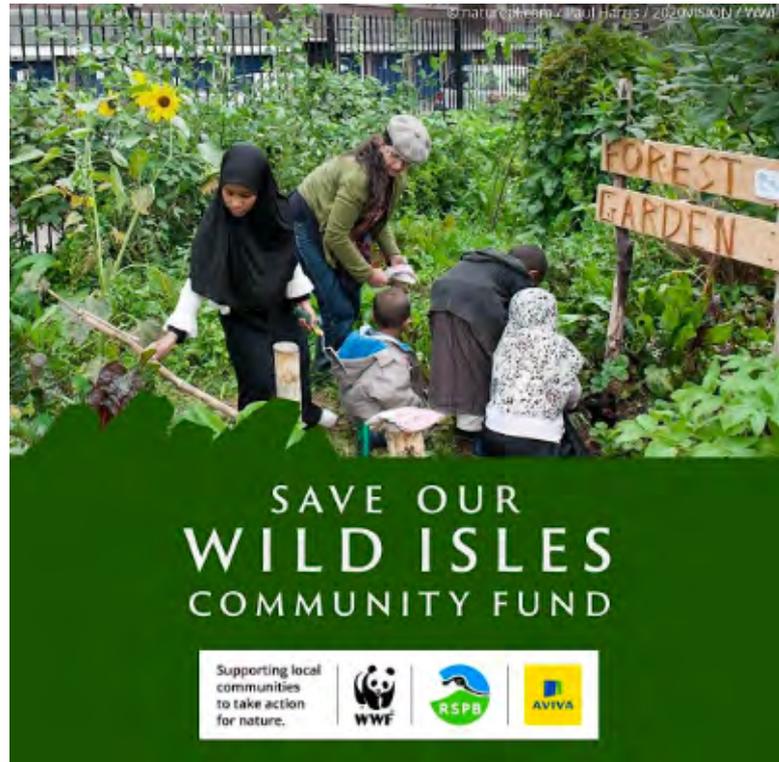
Three key areas that the fund covers are:
Nature Restoration: Dive into activities that enhance local biodiversity. Whether it's protecting or restoring habitats, creating nature havens, connecting green spaces, or addressing activities that directly impact biodiversity, your project will be a force for nature's revival.

Nature Connectedness and Pro-Environmental Behaviours: Take action to foster a greater connection to nature within your community. Promote pro-environmental behaviours that will benefit nature and leave a lasting, positive impact.

Community Cohesion and Connection: Funded projects will do more than conserve nature, they will bring communities together in beautiful ways. By connecting people of diverse backgrounds, generations, and abilities to both nature and each other, you'll build a stronger, more united community.

The closing date for applications is 23.59pm on 1 November 2023.

For full details to and apply, [visit the Aviva Save our Wild Isles Community Fund webpage.](#)



St Mary's University

Free Saturday Classes for Local Young People at St Mary's University

Back for 2023/24, National Saturday Club are offering their most extensive programme of free weekend classes for 13–16-year-olds at St Mary's University, Twickenham (SMU) ever.



The National Saturday Club supports young people across the UK to access free creative tuition at their location university. Applications are now open for young people to apply to any of the three SMU Saturday Clubs:

- The [Performance & Theatre Club](#) (Youth Theatre) will run from Saturday 4th November 2023. Now in its third year, the Club functions as the Drama St Mary's Youth Theatre, with high quality facilitation delivered by past and current BA Acting students at SMU. The teenage Club members develop their self-expression, and communication skills, building to a performance in July.
- The [Society & Change Club](#) is focused on humanities subjects, and will run from Saturday 27th January 2024. Club members will explore the issues that are shaping the world today from climate change to new technologies and global interconnectivity and will reflect on how their own voices can influence these issues in future.
- The new [Science & Engineering Club](#) will be launched on Saturday 24th February 2024. Following the recent launch of the Computer Science BSc at SMU, the Club will allow members to experience different academic subject areas on campus, and to consider the future career paths open to the next generation of creative and innovative scientists and engineers.

On average, 75% of students participating in the Clubs at SMU meet one or more Widening Participation criteria such as being eligible for Free School Meals, or from an underrepresented ethnic background.

Reflecting on their participation last year, the parent of a young person said: "My daughter has become far more confident and mature as a result of Saturday Club. She really values the respect and support that she is given. It has definitely exposed her to the opportunities after school."

To support this exciting programme of activities, the St Mary's University Widening Participation team are seeking exceptional Saturday Club Directors. One will coordinate the Society & Change Club, and the other the Science & Engineering Club. Each Director will design and plan a programme of stimulating and inclusive Saturday morning workshops for a cohort of 13 - 16-year-olds. The new Club Directors will start preparation work in November, ready to start programme delivery on Saturday mornings in early 2024.

Our existing Saturday Club, the Performance & Theatre Club, is coordinated by Drama Director, Daniela Roberts Santos. Daniela has said: "Directing the Saturday Club has been the most fulfilling brilliant adventure. My aim is to empower the group so that they take accountability and are proud of the work they achieve at the end of the year."

Applications for the Saturday Club Director roles close on Monday 30th October 2023 – [visit our website for more information and to apply](#).

The National Saturday Club programme enables universities to develop their civic engagement by engaging young people within the local community and reducing barriers to access by developing young people's vital practical skills and creative capacities.

You can find out more about the National Saturday Club programme [on their website](#).



St Mary's
University
Twickenham
London

A Level Politics Students Visit the Houses of Parliament

In early October, Richmond upon Thames College's 1st year A Level Politics students took an important and insightful trip to the Houses of Parliament to help aid their studies and witness parliamentary debates. The trip was recounted by student, Sofia Seymour:

"The Houses of Parliament are home to various sights and sectors that serve as tourist attractions, a place of educational opportunity and where laws and legislation are created and debated across the House of Commons and the House of Lords.

Our trip to Parliament began with locking away our phones and cameras before being taken on a tour. The tour began with viewing historical paintings, which detailed how the Houses of Parliament came to be, statues of various past political figures that the Suffragettes bound themselves to and intricate designs within the buildings, from mosaic depicting patron saints - to floor tiles showing national flowers.



This choice of intricate interior design was not continued into the House of Commons, which is mainly finished with green leather and dark wood. As guests at the House of Commons, we, alongside other members of the public, were situated behind a glass window and able to watch debates between members of Parliament. The topic on this day was Housing, which saw deputy Labour leader, Angela Rayner debate with Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities and Conservative party member, Michael Gove. Subjects such as non-existent meat taxes, cancelled transport links and the current housing crisis were discussed and disputed. Minutes after we left, the Prime Minister delivered a statement covering the conflict in Israel and Palestine.

Moving onto the House of Lords, we observed its ornate designs and decorations; including a golden centre piece, a red motif and in contrast to the House of Commons, no window separating the public from government officials. The discussions that we witnessed were centred around water and sewage regulations. We watched politicians converse for a few minutes and were then taken to a workshop which focused on pressure groups and think tanks. During this workshop, we learned about various groups, both inside and outside government and their differing processes. We had also planned to meet Richmond upon Thames MP, Sarah Olney, but were unable to on this occasion due to the Prime Minister's involvement in the House of Commons at the time."

Tutor Kasim Agpak commented on the outing, "It was a great experience for our students to visit and observe both houses at the heart of British democracy. They have also learnt about different ways of participating in politics, which is significant considering the increase in political apathy in recent years."

[Browse our courses and find out how to apply for 2024 here.](#)



Royal Star & Garter's Director of Care departs on award-winning high

Royal Star & Garter's Director of Care has received a prestigious national award, as she prepares to leave the charity after 22 years.

Pauline Shaw OBE was awarded the Chief Nurse Adult Social Care Gold Award during farewell drinks at the Royal Air Force Club in London on 19 October.

Professor Deborah Sturdy CBE, the Chief Nurse for Adult Social Care for England, was there in person to surprise Pauline with the award, which is in recognition of her outstanding achievements at Royal Star & Garter, and distinguished career in nursing and social care.

Royal Star & Garter provides loving, compassionate care to veterans and their partners living with disability or dementia, with Homes in Solihull, Surbiton and High Wycombe and services reaching out into the community.

Pauline joined the charity in April 2001, and helped transform it into one of the best care home providers in the country.

Under her guidance, the charity has revolutionised care for people living with dementia, leading to national awards and recognition. Pauline also oversaw the move from the charity's historic but outdated Richmond Home to three new state-of-the-art Homes, and in 2018 received an OBE from Queen Elizabeth II for services to veterans. Through her networking, the charity participated in the pilot of the Nursing Associate programme, with Pauline ensuring the voice of social care was included, and she has championed learning opportunities in the Homes for military and civilian nursing students.



Professor Sturdy praised Pauline's work and impact in adult social care. She said: "I am delighted to give Pauline the Chief Nurse Gold Award for her exceptional contribution to adult social care nursing. Pauline has been a pioneer of practice development and dedication in the field. She has been an inspiring leader to many, not only at Royal Star & Garter, but across the sector."

Pauline said: "It is such an honour to receive this award. I feel so fortunate to have had the opportunity to develop outstanding nursing and dementia care in the sector."

Pauline qualified as a Nurse in 1982 and worked in the NHS. She joined Royal Star & Garter shortly after returning from New Zealand, where she lived and nursed for 12 years. Under Pauline's leadership, Royal Star & Garter's Solihull and High Wycombe Homes have received Outstanding CQC inspections, while the Surbiton Home is rated Outstanding for care.

Looking back on her Royal Star & Garter career, Pauline said: "I've been part of an innovative, forward-thinking organisation striving to provide the best quality care and put residents at the centre of what we do. I'll miss the people and the sense of community that is central to the Royal Star & Garter family. I'll miss chatting to the residents and being a part of their lives. We are a charity that continues to evolve and flourish. We are determined in what we do and how we positively impact people's lives. I am confident the quality of care, delivered through our values, is in good hands."

Royal Star & Garter Chief Executive Andy Cole paid tribute to Pauline. He said: "Pauline has transformed the care we provide to veterans and their partners during her more than two decades with us. We are fortunate to have benefitted from her passion and dedication for such a long time. Pauline will be missed by residents and staff in our Homes but this award from Professor Deborah Sturdy is worthy recognition for all she has achieved. We are determined to build upon her good work, and continue to do her proud."

Pauline will leave Royal Star & Garter on Thursday, 26 October, with Shirley Hall named as the charity's new Director of Care & Wellbeing.

Royal Star & Garter is welcoming new residents to its Homes in Solihull, Surbiton and High Wycombe. For more information on this, or to work for the charity, please go to www.starandgarter.org



**Royal Star
& Garter**
Care with courage

Frank delivers squad update ahead of Brentford's trip to Chelsea

Brentford head coach Thomas Frank insists that defender Ben Mee is 'in a good place' following his involvement with the B team on Wednesday night; the Bees boss also provided an update on Shandon Baptiste, Josh Dasilva, Mikkel Damsgaard and Keane Lewis-Potter, who have all been absent in recent weeks

Written by Brentford Football Club

Brentford head coach Thomas Frank has confirmed that the Bees have no fresh injury concerns ahead of Saturday's game against Chelsea.

The Bees boss provided an update on Ben Mee, Shandon Baptiste, Josh Dasilva, Mikkel Damsgaard and Keane Lewis-Potter, who have all been absent in recent weeks.

"Available players, compared to last week, will be the same," Frank began.

"Then of course I can choose to pick another line-up, although we played a very good game [against Burnley].

"Ben Mee is definitely getting closer. He is in full training and [got some valuable minutes with the B team on Wednesday night](#), so he's in a good place now."

Frank added: "Shandon has been training with the team this week and is going in the right direction, so that's very positive.

"Josh is on the grass, on one-to-one. [Damsgaard] is progressing in the gym as he should do. It's not a muscle injury, so he can get on to the grass and then the team quicker [than Dasilva].

"Keane [calf] will have another scan next week. He will hopefully train on the grass in a week's time."

Brentford have been victorious on their last two visits to Stamford Bridge, but Frank insisted that the Bees are very much the underdogs on Saturday against a side that have taken seven points from their last three Premier League fixtures.

"Chelsea look really promising," he said. "The players they have are very high quality. The talent and potential in the squad is extremely exciting. I can see the team competing in two years' time or maybe earlier, depending on how the development goes.

"In the midfield, [Moisés] Caicedo and Enzo [Fernández] are two fantastic players. And don't forget [Conor] Gallagher is a Chelsea player who is doing very, very well.

"Up front, [Raheem] Sterling is probably in his best age and is getting back to his high, high level. He has been the most dangerous player for Chelsea this season.

"[Nicolas] Jackson is young and exciting. [Mykhailo] Mudryk, fantastic player. Cole Palmer, fantastic player. Going forward there is so much potential and so much strength. It's a very good team we're playing."



U18 Men's October Development Camp Squad Announced

40 players have been selected by England U18 Men's head coach Jonathan Pendlebury for the first wider meeting of the pathway side this season at Bisham Abbey.



The camp, taking place from Thursday 26 – Saturday 28 October, follows on from specialist front-five forwards sessions held across September and October where tight five players throughout the pathway were put through their paces in specialist set-piece drills.

Now, Pendlebury and his team reconvene in Berkshire for a campaign curtain-raiser this half-term involving players selected from all four RFU centralised academies, as well as nine Gallagher Premiership academies.

Core pathway staff have coordinated a three-day programme embedding the foundations of England's age-grade principles of exploration, adaptation and levelling up with on-field activities in units and in-game scenarios.

Taking charge of his first full camp since officially joining the RFU, England U18 Men's assistant coach Will Parkin set the scene for this week's meeting in Bisham.

"This is the first camp of the season for the boys since returning from the summer series in South Africa. We spoke in the summer about getting better and better and we are looking to continue that focus heading into this weekend," he stated.

"The players have been away over the last two months, finishing the summer with their academies in Rounds 1 and 2 of the Premiership Rugby Academy League and then starting the season playing for their clubs, schools and colleges. Jon [Pendlebury] and I would like to thank their coaches and teachers for their commitment to giving these boys valuable minutes on the pitch.

"It sees us bringing 40 boys together, of which 14 are new into the pathway off the back of their performances for their respective teams. This is an exciting opportunity for us to see them in a new environment and for the players to have the opportunity to test themselves and develop their ability at a higher level. These next few days will see us continue to focus on our principles of SAS (Speed, Attachment, Space) whilst putting the boys under pressure to develop their fundamental skills, so that they go back to their clubs as ever-improving players.

"Developing players for England Rugby is something that I am incredibly passionate about. I'm excited about getting the boys together this week for us to continue the work from the summer and to see how much we can enhance our game."

Over a dozen fresh faces to England Rugby pathway activity are complemented with 21 previously-capped U18 players this weekend, 20 of those being tourists to South Africa this past summer.

Indicative of the progression being made in the pathway in recent times is the same U18 development camp conducted four years ago hosting current England 2023 Rugby World Cup representatives Theo Dan, George Martin and Freddie Steward.

Work continues to prepare more youthful prospects to excel in the senior set-up away from the field over the coming days, with bespoke sessions from psychologist James Mackenzie as well as nutrition

education.

Pathway strength & conditioning coach James Hairsine will be joined by fellow S&C coaches from across the Premiership to ensure further streamlined supervision for the pathway cohort.

Hairsine commented on his expectations from this weekend's activity, whilst U18 Men's lead physiotherapist James Clegg stated the role his department plays continuing the development shown by players for their academies and country.

"The strength & conditioning department's purpose is to support the players physically in their re-connection to the England pathway, with the schedule this week being established to optimise players' learning on the pitch whilst continuing to support their overall long-term physical development from their respective clubs," Hairsine said.

"The camp will benefit the players by levelling up their experiences from previous tours and camps, or if new to the England programme, expose and stretch these players based upon a novel camp environment.

"I will be hoping that the players continue to apply themselves across the schedule, are curious around their preparation and that they are always looking to explore new approaches and ideas."

Clegg added: "As a medical team of sports medicine doctors and physiotherapists, in the short-term we are tasked with supporting the players both physically and mentally to allow maximal involvement and opportunities for learning & development.

"This is only possible with ongoing collaboration with the clubs' medical teams, who provide us with up-to-date information which ensures each player's camp experience is optimised.

"This camp will also allow us to capture and perform some injury prevention measures, with the focus on assessing risk-factors associated with future shoulder injuries and the information forming the basis of prevention delivered in partnership with clubs."

England U18 Men's October Development Camp Squad (includes academy side and school)

Lawrence Adediran (Leicester Tigers, Brooksby College)	Alfie Longstaff (Yorkshire Academy, Woodhouse Grove) *
Tayo Adegbemile (Saracens, St Albans School) *	Josh Mann (Exeter Chiefs, Truro College)
Ben Agbenu (Northampton Saints, Bedford School)	Jamie Miller (Harlequins, Whitgift School) *
Jack Bracken (Saracens, St Albans School) *	Finn Newton (Saracens, Haileybury) *
Will Conduit (Midlands West, Stourport College, ACE) *	Tyler Offiah (London & South Central Academy, Wellington College)
Ronan Daniell (Harlequins, Hurstpierpoint College) *	George Pearson (Midlands Central, City of Oxford College)
Ollie Davies (Sale Sharks, Kirkham Grammar) *	Josh Pengilly (Exeter Chiefs, Truro College)
Tom Davis (Sale Sharks, St Mary's College, Crosby)	Louie Platt (Yorkshire Academy, Mount St Marys) *
Charlie Evered (Exeter Chiefs, Truro College)	Zuko Robb (Harlequins, Gordons School, ACE)
Robert Gaffan (Northampton Saints, Rugby School)	Solomon Shand (Gloucester Rugby, Hartpury College) *
Sam Graham (Newcastle Falcons, Durham School) *	Ollie Streeter (Harlequins, Gordon's School)
Charlie Griffin (Saracens, Harrow School) *	Ethan Surrey (Midlands Central, City of Oxford College)
Deian Gwynne (Hartpury College)	Tom Threlfall (Leicester Tigers, Nottingham High School) *
Angus Hall (Saracens, The Judd School, Tonbridge) *	Connor Treacey (Bath Rugby, Beechen Cliff) *
Dom Hanson (Sale Sharks, Stockport Grammar) *	Kepueli Tuipulotu (London & South Central Academy, Harrow School) *
Patrick Hogg (Newcastle Falcons, Durham School)	Ben Webb (Harlequins, Gordon's School)
Archie Hurford (Yorkshire Academy, Woodhouse Grove)	Jonny Weimann (Northampton Saints, Bedford School)
Jack Lightbown (Sale Sharks, The Sixth Form Bolton) *	Charlie West (Saracens, St Albans School) *
Nick Lilley (Exeter Chiefs, Exeter College) *	Sam Winters (London & South Central Academy, Harrow School)
James Linegar (Bath Rugby, Kingswood School)	Finlay Wiseman (London & South Central Academy, Hampton School) *

*denotes a previously capped player at pathway level

Boris Johnson Joins Gb News

Former Prime Minister Boris Johnson is joining [GB News](#) as a programme maker, presenter, and commentator.

Boris joins in the new year and will play a key role in the channel's coverage of both the UK general election and the US elections next year.

He will create and present a new series showcasing the power of Britain around the world, as well as hosting the occasional special in front of live audiences around the UK.

Announcing his first major broadcast role, Boris said: "GB News is an insurgent channel with a loyal and growing following. I am excited to say I will be joining shortly - and offering my frank opinions on world affairs."

He said of the new series: "I will be talking about the immense opportunities for Global Britain - as well as the challenges - and why our best days are yet to come."



In a video Boris also promised he would "be giving this remarkable new TV channel my unvarnished views on everything from Russia, China, the war in Ukraine, and how we meet all of those challenges, to the huge opportunities that lie ahead for us."

Click image to view video

Editorial Director Michael Booker said: "I'm delighted to say, GB News has got Boris 'done'!

"We are tremendously proud to have him join the GB News family, particularly as we head into a seismic year for politics both here and across the Atlantic.

"Boris has been the most influential Prime Minister of our generation and his unique insight into domestic and world affairs will be a smash hit with our viewers and listeners.

"As well as his political skills, he's an incredibly talented journalist and author, so we can't wait to start working with him on what will be must-see TV."



BRITAIN'S NEWS CHANNEL

Have fun but stay safe this Bonfire Night

Fireworks are fun when enjoyed safely – that’s the message from the Royal Society for the Prevention of Accidents (RoSPA), as the nation prepares for bonfire night celebrations.

RoSPA says that attending an organised display is the safest option, but with some people unable to get out and about and some local councils cancelling firework displays, there could be an uptick in people celebrating at home. And with every bonfire night witnessing serious injury cases, RoSPA recommends anyone hosting a display at home to read its [firework safety advice](#).

Anyone planning on celebrating Bonfire Night should know:

- It is illegal to set off fireworks in public places, including streets and parks.
- It is illegal to buy, attempt to buy, give or in any way make a firework available to someone under the age of 18.
- It is illegal to set fireworks off before 6pm and after 11pm. This extends to midnight on 5th November and 1am on Hogmanay, Chinese New Year and Diwali.
- It’s safer to celebrate at an organised event if there’s one in your area, but if you’re planning a private display at home, make sure you know how to keep you and your loved ones safe.
- Keep a safe distance.
- Follow the Firework Code and read instructions before use.
- Not all fireworks are suitable for private use, it depends on the size of your garden – so do your research before purchasing.

RoSPA’s 10 Point Firework Code:

1. Plan your firework display to make it safe and enjoyable, and check the time you can legally set off fireworks
2. In England, Scotland and Wales only buy fireworks which carry UKCA or CE marks. In the case of Northern Ireland look for the UKNI symbol along with the UKCA or CE mark. Keep your fireworks in a closed box, and use them one at a time
3. Read and follow the instructions on each firework using a torch if necessary
4. Light the firework at arm’s length with a taper and stand well back
5. Keep naked flames, including cigarettes, away from fireworks
6. Never return to a firework once it has been lit
7. Don’t put fireworks in pockets and never throw them
8. Direct any rocket fireworks well away from spectators
9. Never use paraffin or petrol on a bonfire
10. Make sure that the fire is out and surroundings are made safe before leaving.

Phil Le Shirley, Public Safety Advisor at RoSPA, said:

“Bonfire night can be a magical time for families and communities, and we believe the safest way to enjoy fireworks is by going to an organised display where there will be the appropriate safety protocols in place.

“However, we do recognise that not everyone can attend organised displays and may wish to have their own at home. We therefore advise those people to only purchase fireworks from licensed sellers, follow the manufacturers guidelines and dispose of them safely.

“It’s also important to remember that sparklers are classed as fireworks and therefore are illegal to be sold to anyone under the age of 18, and sparklers should not be given to children under the age of five.”



accidents don't have to happen

Driving In the Dark as Clocks Go Back

With the clocks set to go back this weekend, many drivers may find themselves struggling to see when getting around in the dark. Motor expert, Louise Thomas at [Confused.com car insurance](https://www.confused.com/car-insurance) comments:

“The clocks going back this weekend signifies the start of the colder season, which is usually cosy and festive. But it also means that our evenings will get darker earlier, and this can be an issue for drivers. Our research found that almost 2 in 5 (18%) drivers struggle to see clearly when driving at night time. This could be down to a variety of factors, but things like bright LED headlights and general visibility can be a problem.

“If driving at night time, cyclists, children and pedestrians might be hard to spot, especially if they’re not wearing any reflective clothing.

And animals, such as cats, dogs or wildlife could also be a hazard. In residential areas you should drive slowly to ensure you have enough reaction time if anyone steps out into the road.



“It’s also a legal requirement for your headlights to be in full working order, so you should check them regularly.

And for drivers who are dazzled by headlights when driving, you should use low beam headlights when appropriate. This includes when driving down dark country lanes and another car is approaching from the opposite direction, or if another driver is in front of you. And if you find another driver is dazzling you from behind, adjusting your rearview mirror could help.

“To help reduce glare, you should keep your windscreen clean from dirt. And if you wear glasses, lenses with an anti-reflective coating can also help.

“When driving around at night the most important thing to keep yourself and other road users safe is to stay aware of your surroundings.

If you’re feeling tired then remember to take regular rest breaks and stop in a safe place. So make sure you’re extra careful as the darker nights start drawing in.”

How far can you legally go to stop someone from playing a trick on you this Halloween?

The season of 'spookiness' is officially upon us! As Halloween approaches, many of us are looking forward to the fun-filled celebrations that come with this beloved holiday. From trick-or-treating and costume parties to carving pumpkins and enjoying delicious treats, there's something for everyone to enjoy.

However, amidst all the excitement, it's important to be aware of the potential legal issues that can arise during Halloween festivities. What can you do if someone chooses to play a 'trick' and damages your property? Can you intervene to stop property damage? Can you be held legally responsible if a child has an allergic reaction to the 'treats' you gave them?

Sergio Abreu, Legal Adviser at DAS Law has the answers to these questions (and others) to avoid making this Halloween a legal horror story.

Is trick or treating illegal and are there any age restrictions on how old you have to be to take part?

So, "Trick or treating" is not considered an illegal act, although it is considered by some to be an "unwelcome American cultural import" and can sometimes result in incidences such as property damage, nuisance and personal injury.

Anyone can take part in Trick or Treating as there is no legal age limit on this however, the NSPCC does express for parents and children to exercise caution when they are trick or treating on their own or without parental supervision.

If a child damages your property with a 'trick', can you recover repair costs from the parents?

Property damage can be deemed a criminal offence as well as a civil matter. Halloween is a very busy time for the police as they can receive a high volume of calls at this time of year. Before contacting them, please consider whether the matter can be resolved amicably. However, if you are concerned about your safety then you should contact the police as soon as possible.

Generally speaking, parents or guardians are responsible for ensuring their children are supervised in certain circumstances, although this will vary depending on their age as older children are less likely to require supervision as they will have a greater responsibility for their actions.

This means that any civil action for recovery of losses due to damage caused by a child would need to be taken against the child. However, holding a child responsible for their actions may not be a realistic way forward as a child is unlikely to have assets to pursue damages, so it would be preferable for you to hold the parent or guardian responsible.

To hold a parent or guardian responsible, you would need to prove that they have been negligent and this resulted in the child damaging your property. This would be dependent on circumstances and evidence and could include arguments such as failing to supervise or failing to control the child. The success of this argument would be dependent on proving the elements of negligence – was there a duty of care? Has that duty of care been breached? Has there been any damage as a result of that breach? Is the damage foreseeable?

How far are you allowed to go to stop a child from playing 'tricks' on you and your property?

A landowner is entitled to the peaceful enjoyment of their land and protection from any unlawful interference with their use or enjoyment of it. If you are in fear for your safety and/or feel harassed, then you should contact the police straight away as these are criminal matters.

From a civil point of view, it could be argued that a regular stream of people invading your property whilst 'trick or treating' would amount to a legal nuisance or could amount to harassment but these arguments would be circumstantial and based on evidence.

Normally, you could look at taking legal action for nuisance for remedies such as damages and/or an injunction. If the nuisance is proven, a key question would be who could an injunction be taken out against?

Due to the transient nature of the nuisance, it would be difficult to bring a claim against a one-time offender as would be the case with Halloween. However, if someone persistently posed a nuisance, then it would be more likely to succeed in a claim against them for trespass rather than nuisance.

Can you physically intervene if an act of vandalism is taking place on your property by a minor?

I would advise against any physical interactions and if the situation escalates you should report the matter to the police.

Any property damage is potentially a criminal offence and you could threaten to report the perpetrator to the police. You could also look to take a civil claim for damages to compensate you and put you back in the position you were before the damage as discussed above.

Any physical interactions could cause the situation to escalate. If you assault an individual, this could be reported to the police, and it may be difficult to justify whether this response was reasonable in the circumstances and you could risk criminal sanctions.

If you give a child sweets for Halloween and they choke or have an allergic reaction, are you responsible?

This would of course depend on the circumstances. Assuming the sweets have not been interfered with, a claimant would have to prove that you have been negligent to hold you responsible for any injuries that occurred as a result.

To establish negligence the court will look at whether you owed the claimant a duty of care, that there has been a breach of that duty, and this has caused the claimant some kind of loss. They must also be able to prove that the loss was foreseeable.

In practical terms it may be difficult to establish negligence if you simply gave a child a sweet and they choked as this could be down to any number of reasons - for example, the child's behaviour contributing to the incident.

The child would be assuming a certain level of risk and therefore, if any claims were brought, you would look to argue either a voluntary assumption of risk and/or contributory negligence as a defence.

However, the circumstances may be different if you give a baby or toddler sweets as they may be less likely to detect certain dangers so extra care should be taken.

The goods that I have purchased specifically for Halloween are faulty, can I return them?

If you have purchased an item and it turns out to be faulty, not fit for purpose or not as described, the Consumer Rights Act 2015 provides that you can reject such goods within the first 30 days after purchase.

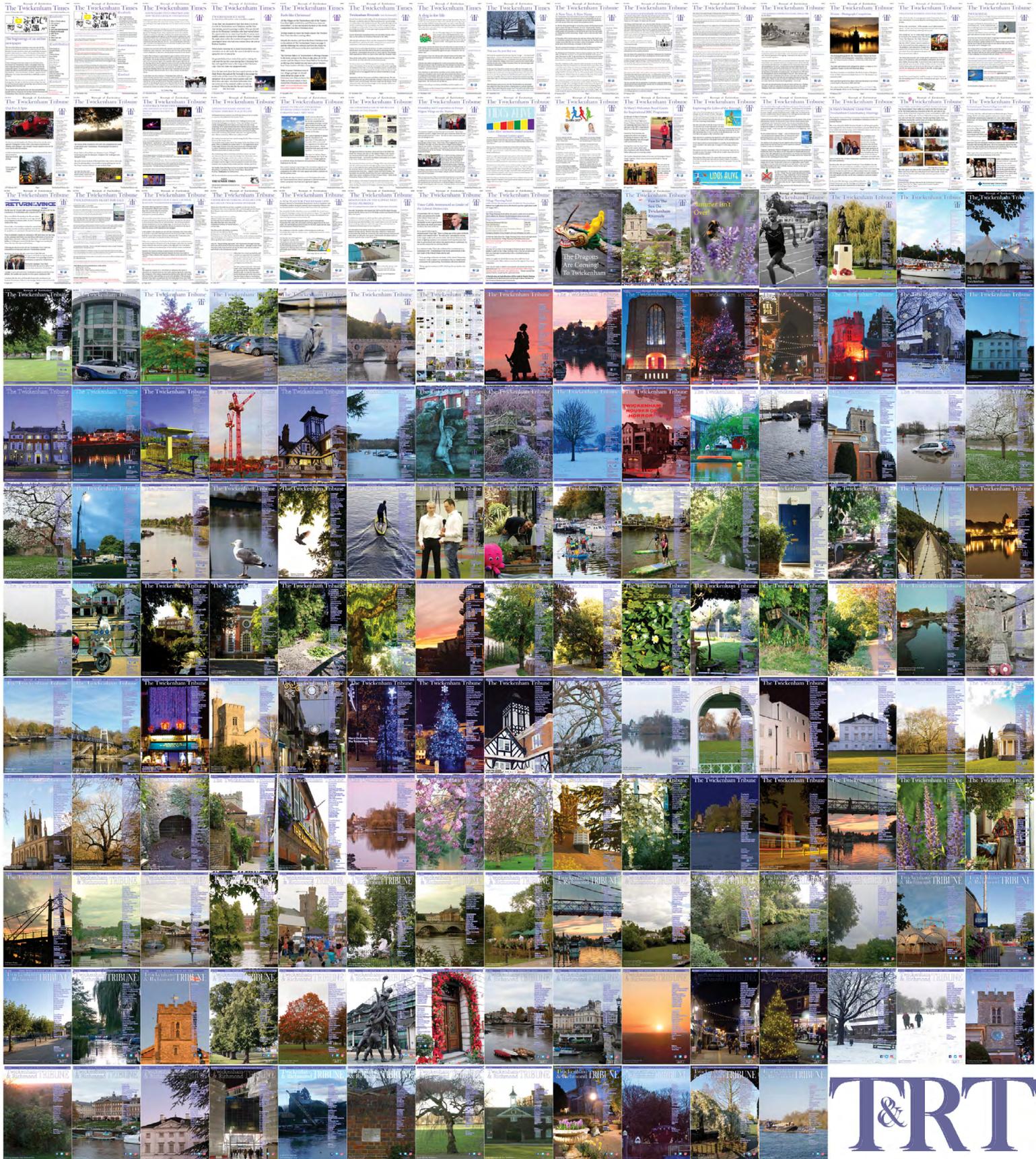
If you notice any issues after 30 days of purchase, the onus will be on you to prove the above breaches and for the seller to prove that the issues raised are not inherent problems or to rebut them.

The remedies available in such instances are a repair, replacement and finally a rejection of goods. After 6 months of purchase, both the onus of proving the fault/issues and proving that these are inherent problems lies with the consumer. The best practical advice would be to act promptly to avoid complications with the seller.

Disclaimer: This information is for general guidance regarding rights and responsibilities and is not formal legal advice as no lawyer-client relationship has been created.



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