

Twickenham & Richmond TRIBUNE

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Editors

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2nd February 2024

T&RT

TickerTape - News in Brief

South Western Railway

Altered train services and buses replace trains in the Teddington area **Sunday 4 February**

The lines in the **Teddington** area will be **closed all day** due to maintenance work.

- **London Waterloo to Shepperton** services will be diverted after **New Malden** and will terminate at **Hampton Court**, calling additionally at **Surbiton**.
- **Buses** will run between **New Malden and Shepperton via Kingston**.
- **London Waterloo to London Waterloo via Wimbledon and Kingston** services will be diverted after **New Malden** and will terminate at **Hampton Court**, calling additionally at **Surbiton**.
- **Buses** will run between **New Malden and Twickenham via Kingston**.
- The afternoon and evening **London Waterloo to Kingston via Hounslow** services will terminate at **Hounslow**.
- Some **London Waterloo to Windsor** services will be retimed to leave **London Waterloo earlier** and make additional stops between **London Waterloo and Twickenham**.

Buses replace trains between Staines and Windsor Saturday 3 and Sunday 4 February. The lines between **Staines and Windsor** will be **closed all weekend** due to maintenance work.

Saturday

- **London Waterloo to Windsor** services will be diverted after **Staines** and will terminate at **Ascot**.
- **Buses** will run between **Staines and Windsor**.

Sunday

- **London Waterloo to Windsor** services will be **revised** and will terminate at **Staines**. Some services will make additional stops between **London Waterloo and Twickenham** due to other work in the **Teddington** area.
- **Buses** will run between **Staines and Windsor**.



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Local Picture Postcard Column - Part 234

By Alan Winter

Maids Of Honour Row-Richmond

Our postcards this week show the four houses facing the East side of Richmond Green and known as Maids of Honour Row.

Dating from 1718 Maids of Honour Row is an exquisite terrace of four early Georgian Grade 1 listed homes that occupy an enviable setting overlooking picturesque Richmond Green on the grounds of the former Richmond Palace, once home to Elizabeth I.

I am pleased to credit Patrick Baty for his web-site history of this historic Row. Patrick is one of the foremost authorities on architectural paint and colour.



“Maids of Honour Row is ‘an excellent, entirely uniform, terrace’ of four three story houses each five windows wide with a parapet hiding the roof. They have distinctive pink “rubbed” brick dressings to the windows, set off by white-painted sash windows, keystones and cornices. The Row was built on the site of Henry VII’s Palace at Richmond, just beside the entrance gate.

It appears that the four houses were built as a speculative development by Thomas Honour, a carpenter, and that they were occupied by 1719. Two of them were rented by the Prince of Wales (the future George II) for his wife’s Maids of Honour.

It is further understood that ‘The poor rate books survive from 1726, when the Maids of Honour were first recorded as paying rates’ and that rates continued to be charged until 1737 when it was noticed that they [the Maids of Honour] occupied the two middle houses.

The maids received a stipend of £200 per year in addition to their board and lodgings in these houses. The rate books of 1780 and 1790 show that No 1 was occupied by Dr John Worgan (1724-90), organist of Vauxhall Gardens and of several London churches. Colonel Joseph Burton was a sub-tenant of that house in 1831, when his son Richard Burton, the explorer, attended Dr Delafosse's school on Richmond Green."



We can wander around Richmond Green by picture postcards again later in this column. For a relatively small area the green and its immediate environs has a fascinating history with royalty, politicians, actors, authors and rock stars all calling it home in the last few centuries.

Postcard Fair next Saturday in Teddington.

Saturday 10th February sees the first postcard fair of the year at Teddington Baptist Church in Church Road, Teddington. There will be some 15 dealers with stocks of tens of thousands of postcards spanning some 130 years and covering every subject you can think of as well as topographical postcards of places throughout the United Kingdom and the rest of the world. The fair also has specialist stamp and coin dealers as well as other ephemera and books etc. Open from 10.00 until 4.00.

For those of you interested in local postcards and photos, do come and see my tables next to the stage. I have boxes of postcards of Twickenham, Richmond, Kingston, Teddington and the Hamptons for sale. Also Bargain boxes where prices per card start at 10 pence and 20 pence each. Come and have a browse! Light refreshments available all day. If you have postcards for sale please bring them along to show me. See you there.

**WEST LONDON
POSTCARD FAIR**
Including STAMPS and POSTAL HISTORY

**TEDDINGTON BAPTIST
CHURCH**
CHURCH ROAD, TW11 8PF

**SATURDAY 10th
FEBRUARY**

10am – 4pm Admission £2.00
14 DEALERS REFRESHMENTS

EASY BY RAIL – Teddington (on Kingston loop from Waterloo) –
EASY BY BUS – 33, 281, 285, 481, R68 and SL7
EASY BY ROAD – From M3/A316

Enquiries: ALAN WINTER
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Feel the love!

Limited edition Love magnet included with every booking that includes the 14th of Feb or if booked on the 14th of February!



Stag Brewery – an opportunity missed

From Niki Crookdake

Mortlake and Barnes Common Green Councillor

The Opposition Green councillors are disappointed that the Liberal Democrats approved the Stag Brewery Application at the Planning Committee meeting on 31 January. Councillor Richard Bennett, Deputy Opposition Leader, was the only councillor to vote against the scheme.

The main reason Richard did so was because a tiny 65 out of 1,075 homes will be affordable. Apparently, the development can only provide this small amount so the developers can make £122m profit out of the Brewery site. More affordable homes and the developers would make less money. It's all to do with so-called 'financial viability'.

Mortlake and Barnes Common Green Councillor, Niki Crookdake, spoke against the application at the Committee, citing problems with the financial viability assessment. At the meeting she said:

"We could have more affordable homes if the developers actual financing costs of 4% were included in the financial viability assessment, rather than inflated costs of 6%".

"We could have more affordable Homes if the estimated £6-10m of Neighbourhood CIL receipts were re-invested in the site for Mortlake residents, but this wasn't even considered."

"We could have more affordable homes if the Council hadn't insisted on a secondary school, which revised pupil numbers have proved we don't need, plus a cinema we don't want because we already have four in the area.

"We could have dedicated community facilities or a GP surgery on site, but officers concluded they weren't 'financially viable.'"

Another reason Cllr Bennett voted against the application was because the only playing field in Mortlake wasn't retained. Instead, it is being repurposed for the new secondary school, depriving local primary school children of any outdoor space.

Another concern that Green Councillor Niki Crookdake raised was the £40m Borough Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) from this development, which will benefit many wards outside Mortlake, but not Mortlake itself. This CIL is helping to fund the £44m Twickenham Riverside regeneration, the £30m regeneration in Ham, and the £100,000 Kneller Hall redevelopment in West Twickenham.

As Niki concluded:

"Mortlake is the biggest ward in the borough with the second highest level of social housing. We need affordable homes and community facilities here, so that residents can grow up and grow old in the same community. Perhaps our needs are less understood because councillors are less familiar with the Mortlake area. Sadly, this is an opportunity missed."



RICHMOND & TWICKENHAM

Developer's plans for the Mortlake Brewery site approved

From Marcela Benedetti,

Labour candidate for the London Assembly for Richmond, Kingston & Hounslow

Richmond Council's planning committee has this week approved developers' plans for the Mortlake Brewery site - with less than 7% of homes in the new scheme deemed affordable.

All eight Liberal Democrats on the nine-strong committee of nine backed the highly controversial plans.

The decision came despite significant opposition from local residents who have called on the plans to include a higher proportion of affordable housing.

Marcela Benedetti, Labour's candidate for the London Assembly for Richmond, Kingston & Hounslow, said: "Disappointingly, Liberal Democrat-run Richmond Council missed this golden opportunity to put right its shocking record of failure in building affordable homes".

"It is no surprise that the Mayor of London, Sadiq Khan, has previously singled out councils, including Richmond, for failing to pull their weight in providing the truly affordable homes that our community so badly needs."

The previous proposal for the Brewery site was rejected by the Mayor in 2021 partly down to the lack of affordable housing contained in the plans.

Richmond has the second-worst record on affordable housing out of all 32 London boroughs and was one of only five to complete fewer than 100 affordable homes in the last year. Of more than 25,000 affordable homes started in London last year only 383 are in Richmond.

Each time a new set of developers' plans has come before Richmond's planning committee, the levels of affordable housing have fallen way below the Mayor's long-term, strategic affordable housing target of 50% for any new development. The latest plans - for just 7% - are a kick in the teeth for the aspirations of local people looking to have a home of their own.

The local Labour Party has consistently supported the local community, setting out a better plan for the site that includes:

- Housing for local people at affordable prices
- A green transport solution to reduce traffic and pollution
- Retention of the Brewery field and more green space
- Relocation of Thomson House Primary School to the site
- A community centre Mortlake

The latest plan for the Brewery site is now likely to go back to the Mayor for a fresh decision.



Fourth Time Lucky for Stag Brewery

Read the Tribune's full report on the Stag Brewery Development's planning hearing, which was back before the planning committee for the fourth time on Thursday, 1st February.

This is the largest redevelopment area in the borough, at over 22 acres.

See the report below on **pages 38 – 43**.

Full Council Report

30 Jan 2023

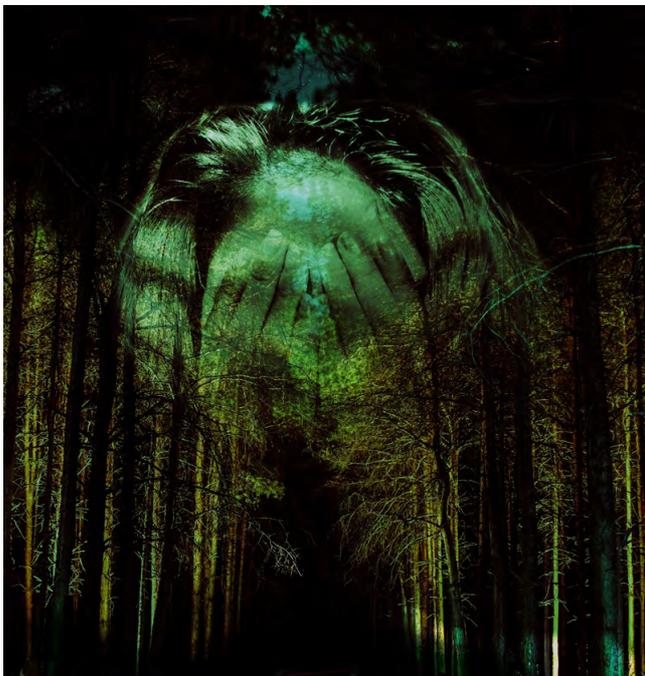
Read the Tribune's report on the Full Council Meeting held on Tuesday, 30th January.

See the report below on **pages 26 – 31**.

DNA

**Young Actors at the Mary Wallace
February 15th- 18th, 2024 at 7.45pm**

From February 15th-18th the talented RSS Young Actors Company will present Denis Kelly's gripping drama - DNA. A group of teenagers do something bad, really, really bad. Once they find that their attempted cover-up unites them and brings harmony to their once fractious lives, where is the incentive to put things right? In a world filled with lies and deceit, a bond formed in the shadows may be the only thing holding them together.



Booking now at www.richmondshakespeare.org.uk

The Mary Wallace Theatre is situated on Twickenham's Embankment, close to St. Mary's church and the Barmy Arms.



Dear Tribune

“A Pilot” hiding in the clouds

It seems that my letter, published in your edition of 19 January 2024, hit a raw nerve with someone, prompting them to write a disparaging letter in response, which was published in your 26 January 2024 edition anonymously, but purporting, at least, to be from a reader who only identified themselves as “A Pilot, Retired”. (I have to use the pronouns “they”, “them” etc. as I have no idea if the author is male, female or non-binary - I hope that isn’t too “woke” for your newspaper).

I find it surprising that an editor would see fit to publish, on an anonymous basis, a personal attack on a correspondent who had put his name to his letter. If the first letter discloses its author, then so should any published reply, especially a disparaging one.

The policy of The New York Times on pejorative quotes, as adopted by The Guardian, is worthy of note: “*The vivid language of direct quotation confers an unfair advantage on a speaker or writer who hides behind the newspaper, and turns of phrase are valueless to a reader who cannot assess the source*”. What applies to pejorative quotes plainly also applies to the publication of pejorative letters.

Why does “A Pilot” “*hide behind the newspaper*”? Of what (to use a famous Thatcher term) are ‘they’ “frit”?

Turning to the content of “A Pilot’s” letter:

(i) ‘They’ accuse me of “sour grapes”, which is odd as that phrase means “*that that person is angry because they have not got or achieved something that they wanted*” (Cambridge Dictionary). I was not aware of the outcomes of the two by-elections of 18 January 2024 when I wrote and submitted my letter very early on 19 January 2024. In any event, the LibDems won both. By the time “A Pilot’s” letter was published, it was known that the Conservatives had lost both seats. I leave it to readers to decide where any “sour grapes” lay.

(ii) The accuracy of my careful analysis of the 12 January 2024 (pre by-election) edition of the Tribune is not challenged. I made no comment about any other editions of the Tribune, which I now read only rarely (partly because it publishes material by GB News, the hard-right-wing-leaning TV channel). So, contrary to what is suggested, I made no allegation or implication of general “bias” by the Tribune. I would not generally use the term “bias” in relation to a newspaper, as it relates usually to decision making. I would instead say that the 12 January 2024 edition clearly favoured the Conservative Party.

(iii) “A Pilot” accuses me of criticising and seeking to fetter “free speech” by reason of drawing attention to the pro-Tory nature of the 12 January 2024 edition. That’s nonsense. I have no issue with the Tribune publishing Conservative leaning material. My point is that if the Tribune wishes to be a newspaper for the whole population of the London Borough

of Richmond, it would need - in a pre-election issue - to print material that presented the positions of other parties too. I.e. I'm not against political "free speech", but encouraging more of it!

(iv) It's alleged to have been "unnecessary" for me to state (a) that I'm a member of the LibDems and (b) that I'm a retired litigation solicitor, no longer in practice. As to each of those:

(a) As stated at the end of my letter, it was "*For sake of transparency*" that I disclosed my political affiliation. To quote The New York Times again, by giving my name, my party and my former profession, I was enabling readers to "*assess the source*" i.e. me as the author, as opposed to "*hid[ing] behind the newspaper*". Indeed, without the information that I was a LibDem member, "A Pilot" wouldn't have had a basis for writing 'their' anti-LibDem criticisms!

(b) "A Pilot" questions whether my reference to my former profession "*could ... be a veiled threat ... against ... Free speech*". I have difficulty in trying to discern that of which 'they' are "frit". My letter contained no allegation of anything unlawful or libellous on the part of the Tribune, so the possibility of legal action didn't arise. Besides, I stated expressly that I'm retired and no longer in legal practice. The reason for my mentioning my former profession was clearly stated in my letter: "*As a retired litigation solicitor (non-practicing) [yes, I know the second 'c' is American spelling], I have followed the Post Office 'Scandal' for two years ... and commented about it on LinkedIn*". That 'Scandal' is mainly about litigation, both criminal prosecutions and civil actions brought by the Post Office and the group litigation headed up by the indomitable Alan Bates. Hence, stating my former profession explained both my interest in the 'Scandal' and my experience and expertise in its subject matter (more in civil than criminal litigation).

Finally, I'd cordially invite "A Pilot" to stop hiding in the clouds, like Biggles (or Biggles' sister or non-binary cousin) on a mission, and reveal 'their' identity.

Yours

Jonathan Haydn-Williams
Richmond

Editor's note:

The letter in Tribune edition 377 was from a regular reader and letter writer. The information of profession (retired pilot) was perhaps given as the answer to the letter in the previous edition (376) referring to information of the writer's profession (retired solicitor). Letter writers can request that identity is not revealed in print, therefore Name and Address Supplied is sometimes used although the identity is obviously known to the newspaper concerned.

Regarding an observation that there were "no flyers for other political parties" the Tribune was not contacted by other parties with candidates in the elections. Regarding "no letters of support" (for "other parties") the answer is simply that none were received. However, election coverage has been given to other political parties in the past when information has been forthcoming.

The letter writer can request that his or her identity is not revealed in print - hence "Name and address supplied". In other words, the writer's name and address has been supplied to the newspaper, but they are being kept confidential.

Richmond Council takes stand against knife crime to safeguard residents

Due to rising knife crime in the capital, Richmond Council has made calls to the Mayor of London and the government to address police funding shortfalls and restore confidence in public safety.

Following the tragic fatal stabbing at Strawberry Hill station, councillors have tabled a motion that underscores the Council's unwavering commitment to combating knife-related incidents within the borough.

Councillor Gareth Roberts, Leader of Richmond Council, said:

“The recent incidents involving knives and similar sharp objects, especially the tragic incident at Strawberry Hill station, have deeply affected our community. our hearts go out to the victims and their families, it is imperative that we take firm stance against violence and work collaboratively to prevent these acts from ever happening and ensure Richmond upon Thames is safe for all our residents.”



As
a

Whilst local police have continued taking action to keep the borough safe, the high number of abstractions of dedicated ward officers and longstanding financial shortfall has created challenges in meeting the demand.

To tackle this, Councillors have urged the government to address the £100 million deficit in capital city grant funding for the Metropolitan Police which was initially identified in 2018. This funding gap has widened over the years, limiting the ability of law enforcement agencies to address crime effectively.

The call forms part of the Council's strategy to work collaboratively with local groups as part of the Richmond Community Safety Partnership, which includes the Metropolitan Police, the Mayor's Office for Policing and Crime (MOPAC), and the Richmond Safer Neighbourhood Board (SNB).

The partnership focuses on building an understanding of the values and challenges within the borough to create an environment that caters to the safety needs of residents, ensuring that every member of the community feels confident and protected in their surroundings.

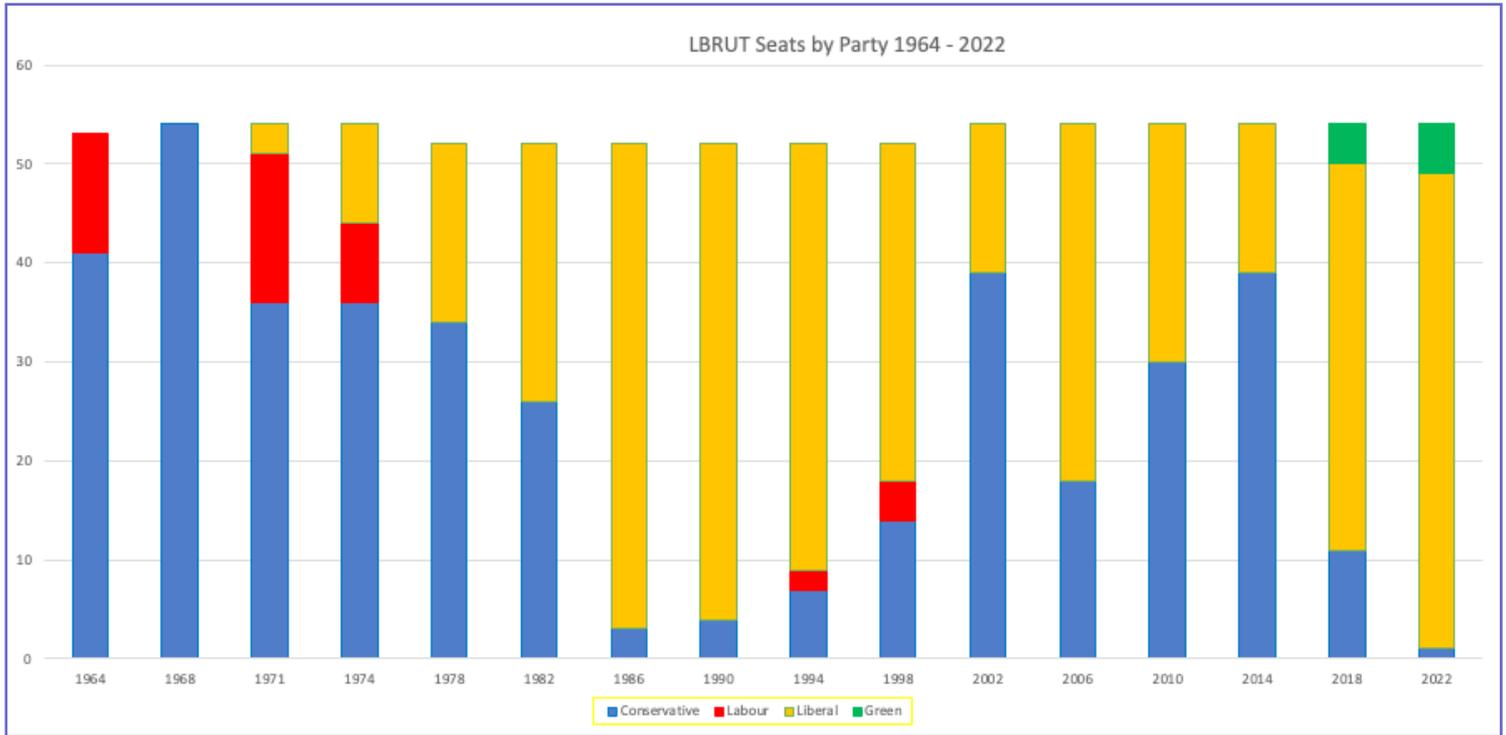


Political Control of Richmond Council

By James Knight

Last week, we omitted the graph that showed the result of every local Election since 1964, when Richmond upon Thames Council was established as a shadow authority before our new borough came into existence.

As you can see, there is a broad pattern of the Council being Liberal Democrat-controlled when the Conservatives run the national government and vice-versa.



Join Age UK Richmond's Board of Trustees

Age UK Richmond are looking for two Trustees to bring their skills to make a genuine and long-lasting impact on the lives of local older people in the borough.

The team at Age UK Richmond are interested in hearing from people who have relevant digital experience such as in digital transformation, digital marketing or digital project management and experience working at a leadership level.

They are also looking for a committed individual with an interest in our cause with experience in fundraising and income generation who can provide guidance to the charity in strategy, techniques and opportunities.

For role descriptions and details on how to apply, please visit the [Age UK Richmond website](#).

If you would like to have an informal conversation about the role, or about Age UK Richmond upon Thames before applying, please contact gavin.shand@ageukrichmond.org.uk.



Richmond Council takes action against property owners to restore derelict historic building

From Richmond Council

Richmond Council is celebrating the successful renovation of a historic building in Richmond town centre as part of its commitment to reviving neglected spaces and preserving the borough's unique heritage.

The old print shop on King Street which dates back to the 1830s, designated as a 'Building of Townscape Merit' within the Richmond Riverside Conservation Area, garnered concern from local residents due to broken windows, a damaged roof, and structural faults. The Council's Planning Enforcement team, despite challenges posed by overseas ownership, invoked its powers under section 215 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 to address the issues and uphold the aesthetic standards of the local landscape.

Councillor Julia Neden Watts, Deputy Leader of the Council, said: "We have a shared responsibility in maintaining the quality of public spaces. Neglect has consequences, and the revitalisation of this historic building signifies our commitment to taking necessary actions to ensure our borough remains vibrant, thriving, and respectful of its heritage."

The Section 215 notice which mandated substantial improvements, including the restoration of windows, frames, doors, downpipes, gutters and roof, was issued in September 2021 with the owners given until February 2022 to make the necessary works to avoid prosecution. Successful negotiations prompted repair works, accompanied by a planning permission application for the roof replacement.

The building is not currently in use and the owners are considering further planning applications to bring it back into use.



Richmond Health Watch report on the Hampton pharmacy closures

Richmond Health Watch has published a report on the pharmacy closures affecting Hampton. Two of the three pharmacies have closed, and the remaining one has been struggling to cope with the increased workload. The remaining pharmacy, Station Approach, now only provides a prescription collection service, and most over-the-counter medicines are no longer available. This means people must travel outside Hampton for many over-the-counter medicines and other medical sundries.

After an investigation, Health Watch Richmond has also formally requested an action plan from Boots to reduce the disruption at the pharmacies in Hampton under provisions contained in the Health & Social Care Act 2012

Elsewhere, Health Watch Richmond has stated that pharmacies must give three months' notice of closure, but this has not been passed on to the communities or the health system impacted by the Hampton closures. It refers to how Richmond's main pharmaceutical planning document published in August 2023 did not reference the closures as a sign that the system was not working. This suggests errors were made at either the NHS or the local authority, or both.

The findings of the report were also raised at the Health and Social Care Parliamentary Select Committee on 16 January 2024, and you can see the session by following this link <https://www.parliamentlive.tv/Event/Index/549ac412-bb4f-48f8-9758-eaca62788652>

The report highlights some concerns raised by residents:

“Due to [the] number of people and the size of the Boots, the queues are outside of shop and it’s hard to stand for long periods of time. I do not blame the staff I feel they are in an impossible position.”

“Queueing is very difficult for both of us as we are both pensioners with very bad osteoarthritis.”

“I had to wait over an hour outside Boots Station Road in the cold in a queue with a sick child for an urgent prescription as only 2 people could fit into the small customer area at a time during the refit.”

“You have to wait at least half an hour before being seen at the pharmacy. I have terminal cancer and my partner has to go to queue for me and I’m alone the whole time he is waiting and queuing...”

“3 week no tablet’s/diabetic.”

“I have to travel to Kingston now as pharmacy in Ashley Road is prescriptions only and no other goods can be purchased.”

You can read the full report by following this link

https://www.healthwatchrichmond.co.uk/sites/healthwatchrichmond.co.uk/files/Hampton%20Pharmacy%20report_0.pdf



Friends of Marble Hill

Historic Marble Hill House and its beautiful gardens have undergone an award winning refurbishment.

The Friends of Marble Hill aim to ensure that the house and grounds continue to be there for everyone to enjoy.

Join the Friends for £10 per household a year and help fund our work in preserving this much loved local treasure for the future. To join, pay via the QR code and send us your name email and address



www.friendsofmarblehill.org.uk

Mayor of London pulls out of People's Question Time

By James Knight

Nick Rogers AM, the Conservative Assembly for South West London, sharply criticised Sadeq Khan's decision to pull the in-person People's Question Time, replacing it with an online session.

On X (formerly known as Twitter), he said; "People's Question Time *should* have been held in person in Richmond with an audience of residents, chaired by me as the local AM" He went on to say, "he didn't want public scrutiny a few months from the election, so this now won't happen."

Neil Garratt AM, The leader of the Conservative group on the London Assembly, said the mayor was hiding from the public.

"Sadiq Khan is running scared of scrutiny. Twice in January he announced policies straight after London Assembly meetings because he knew his half-baked plans would not stand up to our questioning."

He said, "Now he's dodging Londoners' questions as well, banning the people from People's Question Time so he can hide online."

The Conservative chair of the London Assembly, **Andrew Boff AM** said: "The mayor's unilateral decision to scrap the in-person People's Question Time planned for Richmond in February goes against the Assembly's representations that to go online now at the very end of this term, would send a damaging signal to our constituents about our commitment to direct engagement."

"Our preference is for an in-person People's Question Time in Richmond, with the local constituency member in the chair."

A spokesperson for City Hall said the event was being moved online due to the conduct of some audience members at the last question time event. At that event, some members of the audience heckled the mayor over the ULEZ extension.

You can register to take part in the next People's Question Time on Thursday, 29th February (7-10 pm) by following this link <https://www.london.gov.uk/peoples-question-time>



The Council Sketch

At January's full council meeting, it was apparent how inappropriately dressed many of the councillors were for a formal council meeting. Many clearly did not take the meeting seriously and did not look the part.



Being scruffy undermines credibility and shows a lack of respect for the residents they represent.

We don't expect them to be impeccably dressed in suits and ties like the 1950s; a smart shirt, pressed dress trousers, and smart shoes are enough.

Cllr Michael Wilson (Cllr for Heathfield Ward, Vice Chair of the Education and Children's Services Committee and husband of Munira Wilson, MP for Twickenham) seen above at January's full council meeting was said to be one of the 'offenders'.

In contrast, Cllr James Millard (Hampton Wick & South Teddington) has recently undergone a sartorial revolution, ditching the casual look and now fully togged up in a suit; being well-dressed adds to your credibility.

The leader should watch out, as it's not unknown for coups to occur in the LibDem Group. The chat in the members' rooms is that a change of leader will happen sooner rather than later due to the current leader's refusal to reform the committee system. One councillor has said that the committee system reintroduced by Cllr Robers is "profoundly unpopular" as they are just a rubber stamp, with all the real power residing with the committee chairs.

Volunteer at the Richmond May Fair

The Richmond May Fair returns on 11 May 2024 on Richmond Green, TW9 1LX.

With over 100 local charity and small business stalls, a Victorian funfair, entertainment and the hugely popular dog show, the Richmond May Fair is a great day for the whole community.

Volunteers are crucial to the success of the fair and if you can spare an hour or two on the day, it would be appreciated. You can work across different areas of the fair including stalls, music and sound, the dog show and more.

Find out [how to become a volunteer](#).

You can also [apply to become a stallholder](#).



IT'S 'FLIPPIN' VALENTINE'S SOON!

This year we have **Shrove Tuesday** followed immediately by **Valentine's Day**. So, highly conveniently, I'm recommending that you invest in one of these lovely, limited edition, heart-shaped crêpe pans from **Bonne Maman**. Present your beloved with a pretty stack and top with your favourite Bonne Maman preserves or spreads (chocolate orange is my favourite). For tips and lovely recipes visit bonnemaman.co.uk. The heart-shaped 25cm non-stick Bonne Maman crêpe pans are available now, for a four-week period while stocks last, from Home Departments in Sainsbury's plus Argos stores nationwide at rrp £19.



Paperchase is launching its first-ever Valentine's Day collection at **Tesco** and it's a fun range, with plenty of heart motifs to go around, emanating from the classic, quirky Paperchase aesthetic. The range is very reasonably priced, and includes candles (for that romantic table setting), gift bags, Martini glasses, and of course, notebooks. I was very taken with the **Paperchase Date Idea Matchsticks** at just £3. Featuring pink and red doves, and it's filled with matchsticks containing date ideas - and is also ideal for lighting your candles or fire!

I'm rather partial to liquorice, and particularly love the range by Danish confectionery brand **Lakrids By Bülow**. It has a **Love collection** with the popular **Strawberries & Cream** flavour making a return for 2024 and a new fruity companion, **Peaches**. This limited-edition Love collection is the perfect gift to share the love. The LOVE collection is available at John Lewis, Selfridges, Fenwick, lakridsbybulow.co.uk and at the new LAKRIDS BY BÜLOW UK stores in Canary Wharf and Monmouth Street. RRP Small (125g) £11.00, Regular (295g) £15.00



Better still is the **Love Selection Box**, a selection of everything your heart could desire. This heart-shaped box combines popular classics with limited edition flavours. The box includes Strawberries & Cream, Fruity Caramel, Milkshake, Dark & Sea Salt, Coffee Kieni, Salt & Caramel and Classic- Salty Caramel. RRP (450g) £40.00

If you're a cocktail fan, then have some fun with this delicious canned cocktail: **Cheeky Wee Kiss**, from multi award-winning Scottish canned cocktail company **Angels Dare**. It's the cocktail you just have to share after you've asked that simple question: 'Would you like a Cheeky Wee Kiss?' Open the can, and there's your ready-to-drink answer – a mix of dry gin, sweet yet fiery rhubarb and ginger, a dash of strawberry, and the gentle embrace of cranberry juice. And if you like your cocktails on the drier side, I'm pleased to report that it's not too sweet either. £6.50 per 250ml can online from angelsdarecocktails.co.uk





As well as being cheeky, you could, of course, also be corny: with this **Valentine's Night In Gift Box**. £20 from **Joe & Sephs** [here](#). Curl up on the sofa to watch a film, and enjoy two limited-edition Valentine's popcorn flavours, decadent White Chocolate & Raspberry Popcorn Bites, and a Valentine's Card. This Kit contains everything you need to create a cosy night with your Valentine.

Now, much as I love champagne, a good one is often out of the budgetary realms for most of us. I'd recommend choosing a good sparkling alternative. As well as producing champagne, the French also produce some other superb sparklings, such as this **Calvet Crémant de Bordeaux Brut Rosé**. It has hints of strawberry, biscuity notes, fine bubbles and a rounded finish. At a fraction of the price of a bottle of Champagne, what's not to love? £12 a bottle from **Ocado**, so you have time to place your order for pre-Valentine's delivery.



And if you're planning to stay at home to celebrate with your loved one, the supermarkets will be doing a great range of meal deals:



Waitrose, M&S, Tesco and **Asda** to name a few, in different price ranges. This year **Waitrose** is offering a great deal that includes a starter, main, side and dessert plus a bottle of fine wine or a ready-to-pour cocktail from **MOTH: or Tails** for £20, allowing customers to make savings up to £19.40 - that's almost half price.

I usually buy a couple from different supermarkets and spread the products over a week or so as they are such good value!

Fancy a spot of lobster? Yes please!

M&S has just announced its most luxurious **Valentine's Day Dine In** menu yet – and it's certainly not to be missed! Apparently, last year, over one million people enjoyed an M&S Valentine's Day Dine In.

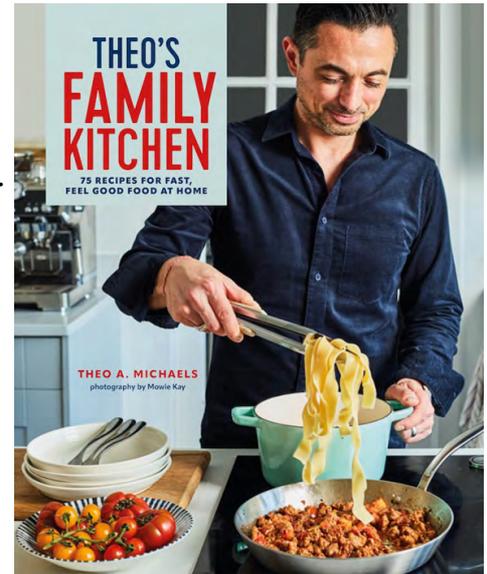
For the first time, lobster will be on the menu, with other options including fillet steak beef



wellington, lamb shanks with asparagus and indulgent white chocolate and raspberry mousse heart for dessert. Not just that, but this year also sees the first fully **Gluten Free Menu**, a new **vegan** menu and the option to pick up a four pack of **Passionstar** martini cocktail tinnies. It's a bit more expensive, at £25 (still great value at £12.50 per person!) Available in stores from **9th – 14th February**.

THEO'S FAMILY KITCHEN

Popular chef, columnist, former Masterchef contestant, TV chef and father of three, Theo Michaels, is resident chef on Channel 4's Steph's Packed Lunch and has already published seven cookbooks. His latest holds the answer to the challenges of feeding a family with easy, yet exciting, recipes and dishes that children can be involved in preparing. There are tray-bakes, one-pots, fake-away ideas and special occasion treats. In *Theo's Family Kitchen*, you'll find ideas to suit the fussiest of eaters, veggies and carnivores alike. There are also things to satisfy a sweet tooth and make the most of forgotten foods lurking in the freezer or store-cupboard. It's harback, and published by Ryland, Peters & Small at £20. *Photography by Mowie Kay © Ryland Peters & Small*



To give you an idea of the book, here are a couple of recipes (and such an easy way to prepare burgers!):

TRAY-BAKED BURGERS IN BUNS SERVES 4

"I love game-changing recipes like this one. We love burgers in our house and my tray-baked version, where everything is cooked from scratch, makes pulling together an affordable burger dinner for the whole family a cinch!"

- 400 g minced beef
- 2 tablespoons dried oregano
- 1 white onion, grated
- 1 tablespoon Cajun seasoning or smoked paprika
- 1 teaspoon salt
- 4 brioche burger buns, split
- 4 slices of Cheddar cheese (not processed burger cheese slices, they will turn into a melted mess!)
- 4 slices of firm mozzarella cheese
- a sticky condiment of your choice (caramelized onions, bbq sauce or tomato ketchup)
- 20 g butter, melted
- a high-sided baking pan

Take the minced meat out of the fridge 15 minutes before you are ready to start cooking. Preheat the oven to 200°C fan/220°C/425°F/gas 7.

Put the meat in a bowl with the oregano, onion, Cajun seasoning and salt. Use your hands to bring it all together but don't overwork it – you want a fairly loose mixture. Divide the mixture into 4 portions of equal size and form into patties just under 1 cm/½ in. thick and the same diameter as your burger buns.

Place the bottom half of the buns into a tight-fitting baking pan, top with a slice of Cheddar cheese, then add the meat patty followed by a slice of mozzarella, then spread your sticky condiment on the



top half of the bun and place on top of the burger. Brush the top of the bun with a little melted butter and add a sprinkle of salt.

Tightly cover the baking pan with foil and bake in the preheated oven for 30 minutes. Remove the pan from the oven and let the burgers rest for 5 minutes with the foil on. Remove the foil, check the meat is cooked and serve!

NOTE Depending on your oven, how cold the ground meat is and how thick your patties are, cooking times may vary slightly. Always check the burgers are cooked through before serving.

GINGERED TREACLE TART SERVES 4

“My gingery treacle tart is a combination of spicy fresh ginger and sweet golden syrup. It’s utterly delicious and best served with a scoop of creamy vanilla ice cream on the side. This is a take on one of the recipes I cooked during my time taking part in the MasterChef competition.”

- 1 x Shortcrust Pastry Tart Case/Pie Shell, or use a store-bought one if you are short on time
- a pinch of sea salt flakes, to garnish
- vanilla ice cream, to serve

FILLING

- 90 g butter
- 450 g golden/light corn syrup
- 90 g fresh white or brown breadcrumbs
- 2 eggs
- 1½ tablespoons finely grated fresh ginger
- ½ teaspoon lemon juice
- 25-cm/10-in. tart tin

* You can make the Shortcrust Pastry Case/Pie Shell up to 3 days in advance

Make the pastry case/pie shell.

After baking the pastry, reduce the oven temperature to 160°C fan/180°C/350°F/gas 4.

To make the filling, melt the butter in a medium saucepan set over a low heat. Whisk in the golden/corn syrup (keeping the filling slightly warm helps to incorporate the ingredients better). Once combined, remove the pan from the heat and add the breadcrumbs, followed by the beaten eggs and finally, the grated ginger and lemon juice. Mix until combined.

Pour the filling into the pastry case to fill it to the top and bake it in the preheated oven for about 15 minutes, there should still be a slight wobble in the middle (but don’t overcook it). Remove from the oven and leave to cool in the tin/pan for about 1 hour.

Sprinkle a small pinch of sea salt flakes over the top just before serving and serve sliced with scoops of vanilla ice cream on the side.



Traveller's Tales 154

Monastic Memories

Doug Goodman experiences some no-frills holidays

This sort of holiday won't appeal to everyone but if you are looking for a basic, stimulating and peaceful time then a stay in a monastery might just be the answer. I've enjoyed visits to monasteries in Romania, Mallorca and Greece. All were fascinating: most offered very basic accommodation in old historic buildings. Some were free in exchange for a donation and each one provided an insight into the spiritual lives of the nuns and monks who lived and worked in the monasteries.



Romania. Dragomirna



Romania. Dragomirna



Romania. Painted Monastery

In Northern Romania near the border with Ukraine in the province of Bucovina there are some beautiful painted monasteries. These buildings are decorated on the outside as well as inside with delicate murals from the 15th and 16th centuries depicting biblical scenes. The churches are listed by UNESCO as World Heritage Sites. Based in the town of Suceava and with a local guide we visited five of the monasteries in three days. Without a guide it would have been impossible to see inside the buildings as all were locked with the key obtainable only from a villager. Only one place accepts visitors for meals and accommodation and that was Dragomirna. On the approach it looked like a massive fortress built to protect the region. It was in fact built for that very purpose in the 17th century by permission of Prince Miron Barnoschi as a defence against Turkish and Tartar raiders. Amongst Dragomirna's 72 nuns I was the only male. Partly through a vow of silence and a language difficulty it was impossible to communicate with them except with the nun appointed to look after us. She had lived in London for about 10 years. The food was terrible and the home-made wine undrinkable: the bed was the most uncomfortable imaginable in a plain room with a huge ceramic heating system. But these 'discomforts' didn't matter. The view of the inner courtyard with nuns scurrying around, the flowers, the beauty of the architecture and, most of all, the sense of peace and tranquillity ensured a memorable two days. Romania has much to offer visitors: from Transylvania with the associations of Bram Stoker's Dracula, castles and Carpathian Mountain wildlife to the sites and political history of the country's capital Bucharest. But for me the north of the country with its hospitality, land resembling the Swiss Alps and amazing monasteries is the biggest attraction.



Romania. Local Transport

THE MONASTERY AT LLUC IN MALLORCA

After an hour's drive from Mallorca's famous Hotel BonSol in Illetas to the Tramuntana Mountains for a day's walking, the group was ready for a good meal and rest. We were staying at the Monastery of Lluç in the north west of the island. Surrounded by forests and high mountains the Santuaria de Lluç dates from the 13th Century and is the most important pilgrimage site on the island. The rooms, predictably, were basic but the food was wholesome consisting of typical Mallorcan dishes such as roast suckling pig and sopa Mallorquina-a mixture of local vegetables and rustic bread. This dish, more like a stew than a soup, is popular in the winter and served in the mountain region. Lluç has changed since my visit 30 years ago. The rooms or former monks' cells are comfortable, there's a restaurant, gift shop and museum. The jewel of Lluç is the Basilica de la Mare de Deu de Lluç with its magnificent main altarpiece. Mallorca is my favourite holiday destination. Palma the capital is clean and full of museums, wonderful restaurants and Tapas bars and very easy to explore on foot. A short bus ride from the centre gets you to the BonSol, the family-run seaside hotel which welcomed Errol Flynn in 1953.



Mallorca. Lluç



Mallorca. Lluç

HOLY MOUNTAIN

Mt. Athos is a semi-autonomous Greek Republic situated at the top of the Aegean Sea on one of the three peninsulas in Halkidiki. It is an important centre of Eastern Orthodox monasticism. Over 2,000 monks live on Athos in 20 monasteries or in Skites – small dwellings. Some choose to live as hermits. The 40 mile long region can only be reached by boat from Ouranoupolis to Dafni by visitors holding a permit, called a diamoniterion, issued by the ecclesiastical authorities in Thessaloniki. Non-orthodox males can enter after satisfying the authorities of an archaeological, historical research or appropriate reason. A four day stay is the maximum time allowed and just 15 visitors can enter on any one day. Women are banned and even domestic female animals are prohibited. Holidaymakers can take a cruise along the coast to see, from a distance, the stunning buildings.



Greece. Mt. Athos



Greece. Mt Athos Karyes the Capital



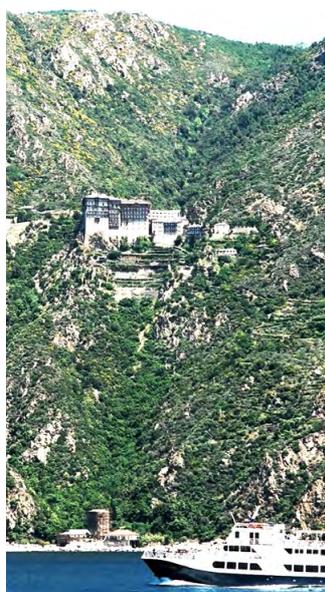
Greece. Mt. Athos, Vatopedi

I visited the republic three times and stayed in three monasteries while touring several others. Some had no electricity and at others we noticed computer terminals being delivered. But in so many respects there was a feeling of travelling back 300 years. Almost all the monasteries resemble fortresses and were designed to protect the community from raiders. Some were

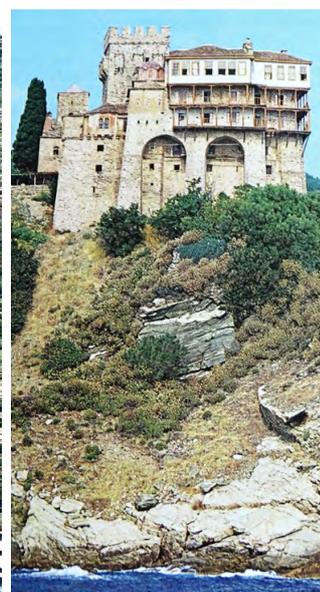
founded in the 8th Century. All have thick double doors which are locked at sunset. Roads are rough with virtually no public transport between the monasteries and the small town of Karyes.

On arrival you do indeed travel back as the local date is 13 days behind elsewhere thanks to the continued use of the Julian Calendar. At each monastery, guests meet their host – usually the abbot. In a panelled room with a table covered by a lace table cloth, water, coffee, tsipourou and sweets are served after exchanging greeting and signing the visitors' book. Then you are escorted by your host monk to your room, which is often a communal dormitory. Rules and regulations are carefully explained. Views from Simonas Petras and Stavronikas were stunning. Food was simple. Salads from local produce, soups, pasta and fruit accompanied with sweet red wine were delicious. No meat or dairy products are available. Etiquette demands that no one starts to eat until the abbot

at the head table gives the sign. A monk reads from the bible during the brief meal. You learn to eat fast because the moment the abbot finishes his meal everyone must stop. Food, after all, is a necessity and not for pleasure. Washing facilities were almost non-existent as you do not expose your skin to others we were told. The monks spend six hours in communal prayer, six for rest, six working and the rest in private study. We were encouraged to rise at 4.00 am to attend the early liturgy: woken by the sound of the simantron - a wooden plank like a gong struck by a monk.



Greece. Mt Athos,
Simonas Petras



Greece. Mt Athos,
Stavronikita

A memorable moment while at Vatopedi, a monastery where Prince Charles used to stay, was the deafening echo in the marble refectory of cutlery being dropped on to tin plates at the signal from the abbot that the meal was over. The treasures in the museums and archives held in the monasteries were fascinating. Gold and silver objects, ancient documents and priceless and much venerated icons were on display but seen by so few people. The monks I met were kind and very hospitable. With long beards and clothed from head to foot in black robes it was impossible to guess their ages. I did discover that I had been granted permission to bring the first group of travel writers to The Holy Mountain to encourage recruitment through press publicity. The population was getting older so new recruits were being sought. Newcomers undergo a lengthy trial period before acceptance as a member of the Holy Community. All are free to leave at any time but the vast majority choose to give up their previous life and dedicate themselves to the service of God. Whether the travel coverage in several UK papers did help I never found out but my visits had a profound effect after learning much about the monks' way of life and experiencing their spiritual retreats. If another visit to Athos arises I could be tempted to stay.

Pictures of Lluc Monastery supplied by Toni Gomez-Cerda from the tourist office in Palma.

What would you do...?

By Deep Patel

~ Through the Eyes of a Twickenham Shopkeeper ~

As a shopkeeper, a lot of my day is spent selling things...all sorts of things from...baked beans to birthday candles...but one of the other things I guess you could say I sell is dreams...or perhaps the prospect of a dream coming true...has anyone guessed what I am talking about yet?...no?...well let me tell you then...lottery tickets! So when I asked my customers if they won, “what would you do?”, what did Twickenham folk have to say? Read on and find out...



Now we have all heard the saying “money can’t buy you happiness” which I can see is true, as if it did buy you happiness, all the rich people would always be happy which we all know is not always the case...I know plenty of incredibly rich yet incredibly miserable people (which is silently quite reassuring) and of course the same is true for the opposite (let us be fair here).

So if money can’t buy us happiness, why on earth do so many of us buy lottery tickets (me included)? Well...money can’t buy us happiness...but it may help right? So then the next question arises...what would you do with it if you won? When I asked this question to my customers, the first thing most of them said was “I would give some of it to you!” which I thought was so kind of them to say! After this, many said “I give most if away to charity” (what a truly lovely folk Twickenham folk truly are). The next top answer was “I would give some to my family and friends”...ahhhh how nice, Twickenham folk are truly family and friends focused too. After this, the next answer was “I don’t really want to win, it’s too much money for one person” to which I answered “well why are you even buying a ticket then?”...yes that was a common answer, but a weird one if you ask me?

Out of all this, the thing that surfaced was that when asked what they would do if they won the lottery, the majority of customer’s first answer was “give some to you Deep!”...when I asked them why me they said “without you I wouldn’t have had the ticket, thanks to you for selling it to me!”...for the rest of the week I walked around with a huge smile on my face feeling so loved by the customers...even if they may have been saying it to be polite...it’s the thought that counts, and I felt chuffed that as their local shopkeeper, I was put ahead of their friends, families and even charities on their priority list of whom they would give money too if they won the lottery...I am truly humbled...ahhh Twickenham people... what a bunch of lovely folk you are... #ProudToLiveInTwick

Remember...

“People may love you more than you know”

CREATURE-KINDNESS TIP OF THE WEEK:

GOT FLIES?

Don’t waste your money on fly sprays...that will only mask the problem and is bad for us too...instead get to the root of the problem and remove any uneaten dog/cat food soon after your pet has eaten it, keep food covered up or stored in airtight containers, keep bin lids both outdoors and indoors firmly closed at all times and sprinkle talcum powder in your kitchen bin every few days to keep it dry and mask the smell of rotting foods that flies are attracted to lay their eggs in...always choose a kind way...you will get blessings in your life and have good karma too! Share this tip!

For more tips, email: InsectLoversUnite@gmail.com or join my Facebook group: “INSECT LOVERS UNITE”.

Thank you!

Full Council Report

30 Jan 2023

By James Knight

The mayor opened the meeting with “firstly a special welcome to our new councillors, Richard Baker (Teddington) and Cary Bishop (Hampton North)”, after their by-election successes. The mayor joined in with a round of applause, and there were some cheers and shouts from the assembled councillors. She then made the announcement that

two former councillors and mayors and a freeman of the borough had sadly passed away. Alan Benson was awarded the freedom of the borough in October 2022 for his campaigning and advocacy work for the rights of disabled and older people. Gina MacKinney was mayor between 1993-1994, whilst Eleanor Stanier (was mayor between 2001-2002). The council stood in remembrance for one minute.



Public Questions

Mr Chris Key asked the first public question about how **many reports of violence against teaching staff** in local schools they are aware of in the past three years. Cllr Penelope Frost (Ham, Petersham and Richmond Riverside) replied that 86 incidents had been recorded.

Mr Nick Dexter, on behalf of the Twickenham Labour Party, asked, “**What drawbacks are there to the Council having disposed of its housing?**” referring to the controversial decision made by the Liberal Democrat administration to transfer its housing stock of 7,200 homes to the RHP housing association in July 2000. Cllr Millard, deputy leader and lead member on housing, gave a condescending reply where he read back a question and said, “Well, that is a fascinating question!” He went on to say, “No doubt you’re mainly interested in writing your next party-political leaflet, and so you are only asking about the drawbacks, but the truth is that there are pros and cons.” He said he doesn’t think losing control of the housing stock leads to a worse experience for tenants.

Mr Philip Moshi asked, “What are **the costs the Council has incurred in implementing the Mayor of London’s Free School Meals programme?**” Cllr Robin Brown (Hampton Wick & South Teddington), the Finance and Resource Lead Member, said the council had spent £79,000. He did not mention that capital costs for council-run schools come from a dedicated government grant known as the School Condition Allocations (SCA) and are not really ‘council money’ as this is not funded from council tax receipts. Going political, Mr Moshi’s supplementary question is that during this “Tory cost of living crisis”, the best thing to do would be to re-elect Labour Sediq Khan as Mayor of London. Cllr Brown replied that the best thing to do would be to vote for the Liberal Democrats. They would have focused the money spent on universal free school meals on those most in need, those on universal benefits only, so they could also help those children in secondary schools.

Ms Jackie McLellen asked if the proposed **zebra crossing in Shacklegate Lane Teddington** would result in further reductions in parking. Cllr Alexander Ehmann (St Margarets and North Twickenham) said one parking space might be lost. Ms McLellen was unable to ask her supplementary question as the internet connection went down.

Mr Martin Baker asked on what date the council agreed to repurpose the £181K health suite refurbishment budget to a group exercise studio. This refers to the controversial **decision to remove the steam room and sauna from Pools in the Park Richmond**, which has seen a campaign formed to

try and get these facilities reinstated. Cllr Julia Neaden-Watts (Twickenham Riverside Ward) replied that the Environment committee made the decision to repurpose the funds towards a group exercise studio on 7 November 2023. However, there was “**an unintentional error**” in the terms of reference for the Environment Committee for repurposing budgets. The limit was stated as £100,000 when it should have been £250,000 to align with the level of officer delegation. Therefore, the matter was taken to the Finance Committee, and the £12,000 approved is the sum likely to be spent in the current year.

Members Questions

The first member to ask a question was the newly elected Cllr Carey Bishop (Hampton North), who said that many people miss their trains at Hampton Station due to delays caused **by bus driver handovers at The Avenue** and this should be moved to Hampton Station. Cllr Alexander Ehmann said the bus company needs to develop a better solution, and it will be added to the agenda of the forthcoming Public Transport Liaison Group. Readers will be interested to note that Richmond Council do not webcast or publish the minutes of this liaison meeting, unlike most other London boroughs.

Cllr Andrée Frieze (Ham, Petersham and Richmond Riverside) asked about the future of the council owned Grimwood Road Nursery in Twickenham, which is vacant. Cllr Gareth Roberts then read out a long-winded reply prepared by officers in his Bertie Wooster’s silly voice, which was somewhat inappropriate in a formal council meeting. Essentially, Habits and Heritage, the local environmental charity, has been tasked to find new tenants to run the site as a community-growing space. Her supplementary question was inaudible, so we cannot report on this.

Newly elected Cllr Richard Baker (Teddington) asked about the implications of the government refusing to continue the **Household Support Funding** beyond March 2024. Cllr Brown replied that it will significantly impact the authority to support vulnerable families who continue to struggle. Just under 50% of the funding has been spent on providing holiday food for families receiving free school meals. The funding is also used to fund crisis grants administered by Richmond Aid & Citizens Advice Richmond so people can access food and/or energy bills or other essential household items. It’s also being used to support looked after children, children in need and care leavers. Cllr Baker said that considering the cost-of-living crisis has not gone away, will the council consider funding these programs itself? Cllr Brown said the council is still seeing demand at very high levels and will be looking at options to continue support.

Cllr Rhi Lee (South Twickenham) asked about the recent measles outbreak in London and the **low MMR vaccine uptake in the borough**. Cllr Piers Allen (West Twickenham), Chair of the Health and Wellbeing Board, replied that vaccination was a priority for the borough and outlined the council’s initiatives. They will target children and young adults aged 6 to 25 years old who had missed vaccinations.

Councillor Bennett (South Twickenham) asked, “How often are the **risk registers** updated on Council projects with a value greater than £5 million?” Over the past couple of months, he has been focusing on this issue after weaknesses were found in the procurement of the contractor of Elleray Hall, where officers did not follow the correct procedures, and the appointed contractor pulled out, leaving the council with heavy losses. Cllr Brown said the risk registers are updated monthly by the Project Management Office (PMO), part of the property management team.

Cllr Andy Hale (Barnes) asked about what steps the council can take to make it easier for residents to report incidents of **graffiti in the borough**. Cllr Roberts replied that the council relies upon residents to be our eyes & ears and report graffiti using the council website or app. He said the council were also trying to get utility providers to use anti-graffiti paint on their equipment, “but they don’t seem to care quite as much as we do.” Readers should note that the council recently changed their policy and no longer accepts reports of graffiti on utility infrastructure. The council now tell residents to report it directly to the company that owns the equipment; however, most graffiti can no longer be reported to the council.

Cllr Michael Wilson (Heathfield Ward) tabled a soft-ball question about the recent joint **Ofsted & Care Quality Commission inspection of Children's services**. Cllr Frost replied they received the highest grade, recognising that considerable improvements have been made in the last four years, but there is more to be done. He followed up by saying one of the recommendations was that NHS South West London Integrated Care Board needs to tackle the lengthy waiting lists for autism and ADHD assessments and what she can do to help our partners. Cllr Frost said that while children are waiting for their diagnosis, and we know there are long waits, Achieving for Children will provide interim help as a stopgap, which parents appreciate.

Cllr Niki Crookdake (Mortlake and Barnes Common) asked about the **attainment gap for socio-economically disadvantaged pupils** in Richmond compared to neighbours nationally. Cllr Frost replied that a wave of déjà vu came over her as she had asked the same question at the last meeting. In 2023, Richmond's key stage 2 attainment gap was 33 points, compared to 23 points nationally and 31 points to our neighbours. The gap is due to the disproportionate higher scores of non-disadvantaged pupils. However, the progress scores of disadvantaged pupils are stronger in Richmond compared to our national peers. Her supplementary question is whether transitioning children who require continuing healthcare will continue to be a priority under the new SEND plan, as there is still much to do. Cllr Frost said she is pleased to confirm they will remain a priority.

Cllr Jeremy Davis (Hampton North), "Does the Leader join me in condemning the spreading of false information to the residents of Hampton North by the Conservative candidate in the recent by-election, claiming that this administration did nothing on first hearing about the **closure of two Boots Pharmacies in Hampton & Hampton North**." In an over-the-top flourish, Cllr Roberts shouted; "Members of the council will be Shocked! SHOCKED to learn that there was false information in the recent by-election in Hampton North" Note: There is a separate article in this edition where Health Watch Richmond questions how the proper closure procedure was not followed, and the council managed to produce a report on pharmacy services that did not mention the imminent closures nor prepare the community for the closure, thus calling Cllr Roberts's account into question. The issue of whether they did enough has certainly hit a raw nerve with the Liberal Democrats, who are on the back foot.

Cllr Sam Dawson (Hampton) asked what the council was doing to make our residents feel safe during the late afternoons and evenings after the recent **stabbing at Strawberry Hill Station** and other knife crimes in recent weeks. Cllr Roberts replied we are working with the police, who have agreed to put on extra patrols in the area. British Transport Police are also doing more patrols to dissuade people from coming into the borough to commit crimes. Cllr Roberts said that it should be remembered that we are the safest borough in London, and we know the fear of crime is as pervasive as crime itself in causing distress to residents. He said that in the past 12 months, there had been a 52.9% decrease in knife crime in this borough.

Cllr Ian Craigie (Kew) asked about the **debt position of Richmond Council**, considering news reports about the high debt levels of many councils. Cllr Brown replied the council had external borrowings that were below average; at the end of December 2023, they stood at £115 million. The only loan taken out so far by this administration was £16m for the role of LED street lighting. Current modelling suggests no external borrowing will be required in 2024/25 to support the capital program.

Cllr Margaret Dane (East Sheen) tabled a question on how the council uses the '**Low Income Family Tracker**' (LIFT) to help residents. Cllr Brown explained the program brings together different sources of data to help identify households that may be financially vulnerable. It can also identify benefits they may be eligible for and not currently available. Her supplementary question was what plans to use the tracker in the future. Cllr Brown said it would be used for campaigns on attendance allowance, healthy start vouchers and social tariffs for water rates.

The mayor announced that as thirty minutes had elapsed, the remaining ten questions would receive a written reply. These were questions on council carbon emissions relating to refuse disposal, derelict land in East Sheen, spending on children's mental health, mega skip day, and increasing the number of waste streams collected for recycling. There were also five questions for written answers on the ratio of community safety officers per capita in Richmond, cable gullies to charge electric cars, specialist school places, extending the council's 'Good Moves Scheme' that tops up the ULEZ scrappage scheme payments, and the ratio of mental health professionals.

Cllr Frost then moved the adoption of the annual **Advisory Council on Religious Education (SACRE)**. She thanked the efforts of everyone who had helped to write the report.

The next item was to approve an **extended absence** (six months) for Cllr Tony Paterson (Mortlake and Barnes), who is seriously unwell.

The following item was the **appointment to outside bodies**. The council agreed to appoint Cllr Richard Payne as a trustee to The Richmond Charities and Dr Mary Henes as a trustee of the Richmond Parish Lands Charity.

The council then agreed to the Member Governance Working Group's recommendation to make the late Martin Elengorn and the late Geoffrey Samuel **honorary aldermen** of the borough in recognition of their service to the borough.

Due to the result of the two by-elections, the composition of the council changed; thus, the council approved a report detailing some new **appointments to committees**, as by law, appointments to committees must be in proportion to the size of the political groups.

The council then debated a **motion one** moved by Cllr Frieze on behalf of the Green Party.

*Council: notes: rising homelessness in the borough and its impact on lives, Council services and finances; growing **youth homelessness** nationally, with c.136,000 young people approaching councils as homeless or at risk in 2022-23. 20,200 were in London, up 10% on the previous year; how young people are overlooked in national homelessness and housing strategies. resolves to write to Government in support of **the #PlanForThe136k campaign** and requests it urgently adopts a cross-departmental strategy to end youth homelessness, and re-examine how Richmond's housing allocation policy addresses and prioritises youth homelessness."*

Cllr Crookdake seconded the motion and spoke about homelessness affecting 16-17-year-olds. Last year, 25 people presented as homeless, with 23 (90%) taken into care and 15 of them (60%) being unaccompanied asylum seekers. She also suggested that adults aged between 18-21 who were previously classified as 'children in need' get priority status for council housing, rather than just care leavers. Cllr Millard said he fully supports the campaign but wants to amend the motion to focus it on national action and that the local housing allocation policy should not be changed. Cllr Frost seconded the amendment and said the biggest reason 17-year-olds are homeless is family breakdown, and it's not for housing allocation policy to meet their needs. What is more important is for support to be given to families before they reach the point of breakdown. No further councillors wanted to speak, so Cllr Frieze exercised her right of reply that she wanted the council to try harder and not just be 'noting' everything was OK. The council voted to approve the amended motion.

Motion Two was the uprating of the temporary housing allowance, moved by **Cllr Millard**.

*"Council calls on Government to use the Spring Budget on March 6th to uprate the **housing benefit subsidy cap for temporary accommodation** placements as a matter of urgency. The subsidy remains capped at 2011 rates, creating unchecked financial stress on council budgets and the real risk of a breakdown in the safety net that our most vulnerable residents rely on."*

Cllr Millard said London's monthly temporary accommodation bill is now £90 million. He said this is

creating a multi-million-pound black hole in the council's finances because of the 600 plus people in temporary accommodation. **Cllr Stephen O'Shea** (Twickenham Riverside) seconded the motion, saying the outdated cap needed to go and that London was at breaking point. **Cllr Crookdake** moved an amendment on behalf of the Greens, saying there was not enough affordable housing in the borough, and this was the only way to bring down rents. She said the council could have invested more developer receipts to provide more affordable homes on the Stag Brewery site; instead, there will be 53 social rent homes out of 1,075.

Cllr Frieze said this was caused by austerity and the sale of council housing. She said Richmond needed to sweat its assets more to build new houses and not be complacent. **Cllr Brown** said his administration had been trying to use all the land the council owned to provide housing and was not aware of any other available site. **Cllr Roberts** said he could not support the amendment as he said the council should be focused on speaking against 13 years of Tory austerity (conveniently forgetting about the 5 years of Liberal Democrat involvement in the coalition).

Cllr Bennett said we can't just pass motions that are always self-congratulatory and criticise the government. **Cllr Giesler** said he thought the amendment wouldn't help as it would narrow the council's focus. **Cllr Millard** exercised his right of reply and said most of the debate was off-topic and should have been on updating the cap. The motion was passed without the amendment.

Cllr Warlow moved **Motion Three** on the closure of the Health Suite at Pools in the Park.

"The Council notes that some residents:

- i) have expressed concern at decision to **remove the Health Suite at Pools on the Park** and*
- ii) pointed to some elements of the process leading to the decision as lacking in clarity and transparency.*

In order to alleviate those concerns, the Council requests the Environment Committee to determine whether to refer the matter to the Policy and Performance Review Board for consideration of any lessons that may be learned from the way in which the community were engaged in the lead up to the decision."

Cllr James Chard (Twickenham Riverside (raised) a point of order and said the third motion was frivolous, as he could raise the issue with the committee himself and if the council said no, he would lose the opportunity to raise it with the committee himself. An officer advised that the motion was in order as it was asking the council to express its opinion as a whole, but should the motion fail, he would not be able to bring the matter up at the committee himself for a set period. There was then a tense minute of deliberation between the Green Councillors until **Cllr Warlow** decided to **withdraw the motion**. Is this another situation where the Liberal Democrats are trying to shut down the debate on their performance?

Motion Four was moved by **Cllr Katie Mansfield** (St Margarets and North Twickenham).

*"**Council condemns knife crime** in the borough including the fatal stabbing in Strawberry Hill and understands the anxiety residents feel as a result of these crimes. Council thanks our police for their work in our communities but recognises their job is made more difficult by the high number of abstractions across the borough. Council calls on The Mayor of London to ensure effective police coverage to protect and reassure our residents. Council **calls on Government to address the £100m shortfall in funding for police in London** that was first identified in 2018 and which has fallen further behind since."*

Cllr Mansfield said that at the last police liaison meeting in her ward, over 30 parents of teenage children had turned up because they had witnessed or heard about muggings involving knives on school children, and Orleans school had sent a message out to their pupils on how to be vigilant. She said the police were clear they do not have the resources to be as visible as the community expects or for them to deter knife crime. Rather than abstracting police officers from ward teams, the Government

should meet the full cost of policing demonstrations. She also painted a picture where the major could not recruit or retain police officers, and numbers were falling. She said both the mayor of London and the government were failing the people of London. Cllr Roberts seconded the motion.

Cllr Crookdale from the Green Party moved an amendment. She said the police do not work in a vacuum, and the council needed to fund more community safety officers at the council. She pointed out that Wandsworth employs 7 whilst Richmond only has 2. This restricts their ability to intervene early to prevent anti-social behaviour that leads to knife crime in the future. The Greens asked the council to increase the number of Community Safety Officers, and Cllr Bennett seconded this. **Cllr Giesler** said that residents had heightened anxiety due to the fight that broke out on New Year's Eve, a glassing incident, a knife incident on Church Road, and a fatal stabbing at Strawberry Hill. He said in November 2023, a third of the local police were abstracted.

Cllr Sam Dalton blamed the Conservative Government as he said the main knives used were zombie knives, and they should have been banned from our streets eight years ago. He went on to state that the Conservative Government only seems to act when a celebrity starts pushing for them, referring to the campaign by Idris Elba.

Cllr Mathew Hull (Fulwell and Hampton Hill) said he has never seen residents this concerned about crime before. **Cllr Michael Butlin** (South Twickenham) said his ward has the lowest crime in all of London, but then a stabbing happened. He asked that we speak to the police more about doing more to stop the carrying of weapons. **Cllr Michael Wilson** said that the police need to do more to engage with young people. **Cllr Frieze's** Contribution was that youth services across London had been cut in half, and the police displaying images on social media about knives made some young people more afraid, and consequently, they carried knives for self-defence. **Cllr Hale** said the amendment is nit-picking and welcomes the new officers being provided.

Cllr Ehmman said that 30 years ago, his brother Oliver was stabbed but thankfully had survived. However, his brother had suffered from anxiety, and that led to mental health issues that eventually led to him taking his own life. He said there was a somewhat invisible crowd of people who were suffering the effects of knife crimes, and the fear can manifest itself in a more worrying way. Many people suffer from deep mental health issues connected to knife crime.

Cllr Bennett said the incident in Strawberry Hill was close to home as he was at the station an hour earlier. Two of the accused are minors, and youth services are important. He said he was interested in the Community Safety Plan coming to the committee soon. He said that when you keep wanting to dismiss our motion, you have another example of where you are just calling on someone else to do things.

Cllr Roberts said we had seen police numbers in our borough drastically cut ever since he was a councillor. We have seen the number of ward sergeants halved, and the police station in Richmond closed. It is right that we are calling on the mayor and the Government to do something. He said the amendment was a classic example of politicians' logic, then, pulling a face, said, "Something must be done; this is something; therefore, we must do it." Their motion doesn't say how many community safety officers are needed. He said they were asking the council to endorse a wish list. He said they were suggesting these things to have something to say, which was very tiresome. He said that the borough does well with the resources we have.

Cllr Mansfield said she doesn't support the amendment, said the amendment would water down the motion and that there needs to be an increase in police numbers. The motion was passed without the amendment, and the Mayor declared the meeting closed.



Pressure

by David Haig

Teddington Theatre Club, at the Hampton Hill Theatre

Weather is hardly ever out of the headlines nowadays, with climate gurus making dire predictions, but back in the dark days of June 1944 never was the task of predicting the weather so crucial.

Pressure, TTC's docudrama, gives insight into a little-known but immensely important figure in history, James Stagg. It recreates the war-time atmosphere in such a way that the audience is carried along into the tense, fearful days before D-Day, when months of planning and thousands of lives were subject to the whims of the British weather.



Scottish meteorologist Dr. James Stagg (Alex Pearce) has just been assigned the RAF rank of Group Captain as chief meteorological adviser to Gen. Eisenhower (Marcus Ezekiel). Stagg holds the key to the date for the landings on the beaches of Normandy.

Stagg is up against American weatherman, bull-headed Colonel Irving Krick (James Woodburn), whose forecasting is based on patterns in the mid-West. The pragmatic, tenacious Stagg bases his forecasts on precise scientific readings and knowledge of the complexity of British weather.

The most fleshed-out character is Kay Summersby (Lydia Kennard), Ike's loyal chauffeuse. Under her brusque manner and stiff khaki tunic, she's obviously in love with her boss. (Rumours abounded about the General and his driver). However, on stage the only mouth-watering forbidden fruit they share is an ... orange.

Emotions and personal problems can have no place in the theatre of war, but Stagg's wife is going into labour with perilously high blood pressure, and she and baby are at risk.

Jangling phones compete for attention among a welter of weather charts as the clock counts down in this tense tale of war and weather. It is a tension-filled, tightly crafted drama that is superbly acted and meticulously directed by Clare Cooper. The entire ensemble cast is note-perfect.

Chain-smoking Ike has his forthright toughness, Krick his bombast, but Stagg is left with his isobars and calibrations. While his military colleagues have cold steel, bombers and warships, his weapons are anemometers, barometers and thermometers.

Read review and comments by Gill Martin's and Susan G at www.markaspen.com/2024/01/24/pressure-ttc

Photography by Kim Harding





Northanger Abbey

By Zoe Cooper

Octagon Bolton et al at the Orange Tree Theatre, Richmond until 24th February

I first read *Northanger Abbey* when I was eighteen and fell in love with Catherine. However, after watching the many adaptations of Austen's work, it is this version that truly encapsulates the real meaning behind the writing for me.

Through just three actors the audience become part of a performance by Catherine ("Cath"), Henry Tilney ("Hen") and Isobel Thorpe ("Iz") retelling Catherine's story. We are swept up in a hilarious and occasionally dark gothic romance, retelling the way Cath wishes to see her life. The laughs keep coming, through the electrifying chemistry between all three actors, as they distinctly portray a multitude of characters.



AK Golding absolutely astounds as she singlehandedly portrays a conversation between General Tilney and John Thorpe being recollected by Iz. Equally, Sam Newton manages to go be Cath's mother in labour, a painful scene yet ironically comical; then to the often awkward Hen; the fast horse obsessed John Thorpe; or to Henry Tilney's sister, eerie but unsettlingly funny.

The minimalist set, creatively designed by Hannah Sibai, encourages focus on the actors and use of their imagination, just as Catherine does. A table and some boxes depict carriage or "comfy" bed. The Thorpe are thrown off their 'carriage' when it overturns, in gasp-inducing slow motion movements choreographed by Jonnie Riordan.

Comedy challenges preconceptions through certain events that Cath may have not wanted in her gothic story, and we are kept on our toes with what will happen next.

Through the intense relationship between Cath and Iz and the impact of the prejudices of society, profoundly and passionately portrayed, we see all is not as it appears. We are not watching a gothic romance, but a girl growing up, and finding her true self. Rebecca Banatvala has emotive and faultless understanding of Cath, a girl whom she depicts as coming to understand she does not have to be a romantic heroine.

Under the daringly refreshing direction of Tessa Walker, Cooper's adaptation has not only modernised *Northanger Abbey*, but has reminded me of why I love finding myself 'between the pages of a book'.



Read Viola Selby's review at www.markaspen.com/2024/01/25/northanger

Photography by Pamela Raith



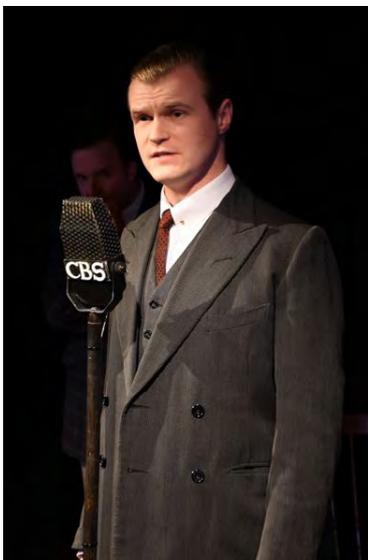
Panic - A Live Radio Musical

by Stephen Dolginoff

Teddington Theatre Club, at the Coward Studio, Hampton Hill until 3rd February

The glamorous Evelyn mingles with the audience like a socialite at a cocktail party, there to be charmed by men in smart suits and authentic American accents.

The pace of the musical, *Panic*, skilfully directed by Wesley Henderson Roe, does not stop for breath as we witness a famous historical event, the radio production of *War of the Worlds* that terrified America in 1938.



Effective lighting and sound, designed respectively by Ed Pagett and Josh Bayfield, sets the atmosphere of the time.

Orson Welles, despite his acclaimed theatre skills, could not get Hollywood to beckon. Jacob Taylor cuts an imposing and charismatic figure as Welles, revealing his vulnerabilities, while seeing through his egotism and vanity. We are drawn to empathise with this iconic figure as he and his apprentice Howard sing of their frustrations. Stoo Gill portrays Howard Koch, the frustrated writer, as awestruck, hapless and ambitious.

Aggie Holland is monumental in her depiction of Evelyn, her cut-glass ambition, her voice and casual elegance flow naturally, without restraining her sense of comedy. The rocky relationship with co-star Welles; their competitiveness is full of humour, yet with an underlying empathy.

Fellow collaborator, the hard working John Houseman is caught between the wayward Orson, and pressure from big man Bill Paley. Jonathan Warriss-Simmons puts his skills to good use as he represents Houseman, as a newly-minted upper-class Englishman, carrying this burden.

Panic a powerful musical, a big musical in the small intimate space of the Coward Studio. It is deservedly packing in the audiences; so if you want to “accidentally” believe in a “real” invasion from Mars, then get panicking now!



Read Heather Moulson’s review at www.markaspen.com/2024/01/31/panic

Photography by Sarah J Carter

Local dancer from Richmond took to the stage for Step into Dance's Battle 2024

Battle is an annual event by Step into Dance, a Royal Academy of Dance programme in partnership with the Jack Petchey Foundation

On Saturday 27 January 2024 a young dancer from Richmond Upon Thames participated in Battle, an energetic and dynamic hip hop dance event organised by Step into Dance. Tamia Jordan age 17 from Richmond Upon Thames College won the 2v2 experienced battle alongside Emre Djemal age 15 from Frederick Bremer School in Waltham Forest.

Battle is an annual celebration of hip hop dance organised by Step into Dance, the UK's largest inclusive dance programme run by the Royal Academy of Dance and funded by the Jack Petchey Foundation, which is celebrating its 25th anniversary. The event provides the opportunity for young dancers to come together and share their passion for dance, all the while battling it out in front of their friends and a rapturous audience.

This year's high energy event took place at Old Town Hall in Stratford London, where dancers from around London took part in a day of workshops and showcases.



Young dancers also participated in 1v1, 2v2 and crew dance battles to be crowned champions. All battles were performed in front of a judging panel featuring Bgirl Roxy, Chris Alozie and previous **Battle** winner, Caine Harrison.

Winners of the 1v1, 2v2 and crew dance battles included:

- 1v1 Beginner: Malakhi Best, Age 17 (City & Islington College), Islington
- 1v1 Experienced: Mia Wisniewska, Age 15 (The Norwood School), Lambeth
- 1v1 External: Tyler Alexis-Ward, Age 15 (Xpression Dance), South London

2v2 Beginner:

- Jereil Boateng (Age 13, Woodcote High School) and Nicole Jarvis (Age 13, Woodcote High School), Croydon

2v2 Experienced:

- Emre Djemal (Age 15, Frederick Bremer School in Waltham Forest) and **Tamia Jordan (Age 17, Richmond Upon Thames College)**

2v2 External:

- Lil P'Nut (Cold Collective) and Isiah Samuel

Audience members were also treated to two performances; one by an emerging young rap artist and the second by RAD's youth dance company, SYNC. The piece was entitled *Punctuation* and was choreographed by Step into Dance practitioner, Nathan Mafwa.

This year's **Battle** marked an extra special celebration as it commemorated 50 years of hip hop, along with Breaking becoming a sport at the 2024 Paris Olympics.

Tim Arthur Chief Executive of the RAD said: "Step into Dance's Battle event raises the roof every single year – and this year was no exception. What a delight it was to see so many young dancers from across London and Essex come together to celebrate the joy and wonder of dance. Congratulations to everyone who took part in this truly fantastic event."

Gemma Juma, Chief Executive of Jack Petchey Foundation said: "The talent and sense of community from these Breakers is incredible. Year after year, young people show what they can achieve with hard work, commitment and determination. The Battle shows how much fun young people can have along the way!"

Maja, a Youth Consultation Panel member of the Jack Petchey Foundation, said: "These young performers were brilliant, talented and inspiring. What a great day of showing off their skills."

To find out more about Step into Dance watch this video: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4t_IH8mVC74.



St Mary's University

St Mary's Women's Health Researcher Delivers Presentation at Houses of Parliament

Women's Health and Performance Associate Professor at St Mary's University, Twickenham (SMU), Dr Nicola Brown, was recently invited to Westminster where she presented to the Fit and Healthy Childhood All-Party Parliamentary Group (APPG) on her research surrounding the breast-related challenges facing girls in sport.

Nicola was invited to share her expertise with the APPG panel alongside three other speakers during a session held specifically to look at girls in sport. All the invited speakers are part of different organisations that have started initiatives to try and improve girls' participation in sport.



Nicola is the co-developer of [Treasure Your Chest](#), an initiative that educates schoolgirls on breast health through free evidence-based resources. Treasure Your Chest is a collaborative project between St Mary's University, the Research Group in Breast Health at the University of Portsmouth, and the University of Chichester.

The initiative has conducted research involving over 1200 girls, finding that 46% consider their breasts a barrier to participating in sport. The research also found that over half had never worn a sports bra.

Having identified that there were clear gaps in knowledge and awareness surrounding breast

health amongst schoolgirls, Treasure Your Chest developed a set of free [breast education resources](#) available to teachers, coaches, sport groups, and others wanting to foster a healthier and more informed environment for girls in sport.

Nicola and the team have spent years researching the concerns girls have about their breasts, allowing them to identify the most effective ways to deliver resources in a school setting, as well as develop content that best resonates with the girls. These resources include the importance of breast support, proper bra fit, and the different types of sports bras.

Treasure Your Chest's resources have been downloaded by over 200 schools so far, with an estimated reach of more than 20,000 girls. The team has also conducted an evaluation of its resources, finding that the girls show improved knowledge, enhanced confidence, increased use of sports bras and regular checking of bra fit.

Speaking on Treasure Your Chest, Nicola Brown said, "Beyond the basic biological aspects of puberty, there is very little education for girls about breast development and how to navigate these changes to their body. Breast development is the first visible sign of puberty that other people can see, so it can be a challenging time for some girls.

"Treasure Your Chest is all about empowering girls to make informed choices that can alleviate, if not eliminate, some of the barriers preventing them from participating in sport. The initiative is really about giving every girl the opportunity to learn about her body and how best to support it."

More information on Treasure Your Chest and access to the free resources can be found at

www.treasureyourchest.org



St Mary's
University
Twickenham
London

Business Students Pitch Product through Young Enterprise Programme

Our Business students have been busy getting involved in the Young Enterprise programme this year, supported by Business Curriculum Lead, Ryan Ali and Young Enterprise volunteer, Mark Langston.

Young Enterprise is a national charity who specialise in Enterprise Financial Education. They work directly with young people, teachers, volunteers and influencers to build a successful and sustainable future for all young people.

Participating students at Richmond upon Thames College (RuTC) have been working hard to establish their Young Enterprise company, elect roles and refine their business idea to bring to market. They meet weekly in the college boardroom to discuss, plan and create their brand in this exciting new venture.



We are pleased to announce this academic year, our Young Enterprise group have formed a company called ‘Safe When Drinking (SWD)’.

The learners will launch a product which is a low-key, high-quality drinks cover, designed to be transportable, reusable and endorsing a sustainability aspect that confines to the Young Enterprise ethos.

The group will be pitching their drinks cover product and have the chance to hone their sales and marketing skills over the next month, when they plan to set up stalls in Kingston and Spitalfields Markets.

Ryan commented, “*The Young Enterprise programme at RuTC engages young learners with the skills it takes to run a business and prove to themselves that they have what it takes to be an entrepreneur.*”

[Find out more about our Business courses and how to apply for September 2024 entry here.](#)

Fourth Time Lucky for Stag Brewery

By James Knight

It was Groundhog Day for residents in Mortlake, with the controversial Stag Brewery Development back before the planning committee for the fourth time on Thursday, 1st February. This is the **largest redevelopment area in the borough, at over 22 acres**. There were also some fireworks with the Green Party Councillor for Barnes and Mortlake, saying that with the council dominated by Twickenham councillors, the developer contributions were being unfairly sent to other parts of the borough like the £44 million Twickenham Riverside Development and the money should be spent on Mortlake instead.

The latest redesign was due to the announcement in the summer of 2023 by Housing Secretary Michael Gove MP that all buildings over 18 meters would require a second means of escape rather than the previously proposed 30-meter threshold following feedback from expert bodies. Thus, the developers have reduced the height of some buildings to avoid having to provide secondary means of escape.

Before the meeting, the Mortlake Brewery Community Group said the council should “use this opportunity to review the community’s concerns about the previous plans, notably density, traffic, lack of social housing and destruction of green space.” They also questioned if a new secondary school was needed as rolls locally were falling.

Cllr Jonathan Cardy, chair of the planning committee, opened the meeting.

Public speakers

The meeting started with two speeches by members of the public.

Georgina Cox, an A-level student who lives on the nearby Chertsey Court, said that she faced many issues living on that social housing estate, such as disrepair, anti-social behaviour, and drug dealing. We have wanted to transfer for many years, but the lack of housing stock has made this impossible. I was initially excited at the prospect of affordable housing on the brewery site. This is now 7% rather than the originally proposed 17%. She pointed out that other local developments have achieved higher levels, such as the Homebase site at 25% and Barnes Hospital at 20%. When she returns from university, she would like to return to the community she grew up in, but she will not be able to unless the council insists on more affordable housing.

Patience Trevor, speaking on behalf of the **Mortlake Brewery Group**. She said the buildings will still dominate the river and its setting, and the density is too high at 527 habitable rooms per hectare. She drew the attention of the committee to changes in the NPPF, which now directs councils to reject schemes where the resulting built form would be fully out of character with the surrounding area.

Speakers on behalf of the applicants

Rebecca Brook spoke on behalf of the architects and said that the amendments were mainly internal, with only a few external changes. She said the changes do not impact the design, intent, massing, or scale of the master plan. She said it was a sustainable mixed-used development with new generous pedestrian connections to the river, new public open spaces, 400 new trees and a new secondary school.

Cllr Julia Neaden-Watts (Twickenham Riverside) asked about lowering the ceilings by 5 cm in each unit in some blocks. Cllr Stephen O’Shea asked about the increase in units that only have a northerly outlook against local plan policy, and the developer confirmed four more units would be affected, all in the retained Maltings building. Cllr Piers Allen (West Twickenham) asked about comments from statutory consultees that some accessible units do not meet the guidelines. The response was that the developer would be willing to amend these to meet them. Cllr Richard Bennett (South Twickenham) asked about the 60% decline in office space; Rebecca replied there was still a substantial amount of employment space, so it continued to be a mixed-use development. Cllr Jonathan Cardy (Fullwell and Hampton Hill) asked about the air quality for the flats above the cinema as they were on a main road; the response was that the council officers were happy with the

proposals.

Mr Guy Duckworth, representing the developer Reselton Properties, a subsidiary of Singapore-listed City Developments Limited which bought the site in 2015. He said the scheme “was truly mixed-use” and no gas or oil would be used in the development, and all heating is provided by site-wide electrically powered air and source heat pumps. Because of this and other factors, the scheme has achieved an air quality positive status. He said there would be Community Infrastructure Payments of somewhere between £50 and £70 million, most of which will be paid to Richmond Council. He said that throughout its history, the brewery site has been a barrier to public access to the river, but this development will result in full public access.

Cllr Neaden-Watts asked about the loss of the playing field. Mr Duckworth said the playing field is private, though they had allowed community use to take place, and the new school will have a community use agreement in place. Cllr Bennett asked why office space was given up to protect the number of housing units. Mr Duckworth replied that new regulations on fire safety had added about £25 million to the scheme and had reduced the size of saleable accommodation by around 10,000 square feet, so converting the 17,000 feet above the cinema from office space to residential helped the scheme recover the viability loss. We recognise the need for affordable housing and have strived to deliver as much as possible; the type needed the most social rent; we have striven for the type needed the most - family-sized units. At the request of the council, most social housing units onsite are three-bedroom units. He added the viability assessment undertaken before the changes in building regulations indicated a maximum level of affordable housing of 3.6% of the area. They underwrote to deliver 7%, and more if the early, mid or late-stage viability reviews show the development was more profitable than expected.

Cllr O’Shea asked about the changes to the National Planning Policy Framework NPPF and the need for ‘beautiful buildings’, which he said was subjective. Still, we could make the argument these are attractive buildings. Do you agree? He said the architects chosen were award-winning, and he believes they are extremely attractive, especially compared to Battersea Power Station. Cllr Cardy asked how the voids would be protected from unauthorised occupation, such as the turrets on the new blocks and top floor of the existing Maltings buildings. Mr Duckworth said there would be clauses in the leases, and they might devise plans to re-incorporate that space if they can work out a way to meet the new regulations.

Interested Councillor speeches

In this section, councillors who represent the ward can speak, and planning committee members can then ask questions for clarification.

Cllr Niki Crookdake (Mortlake and Barnes Common) spoke as an interested councillor as the development is in her ward. She said that because the development will only make £122 million in profit, only 65 out of 1,075 can be affordable, with officers estimating the developer should have made £50 million more profit. “What justification can there be for this woeful number of affordable homes?” She said we could have more affordable homes if we do not accept that cyclical increases in construction costs are higher than cyclical increases in sale values. We could have more affordable homes if the developer’s actual financing costs were in the viability assessment in line with GLA advice, giving them at least another £20 million in profit. We could have more affordable homes if the £6 to £10 of neighbourhood Community Infrastructure Levy CIL receipts were reinvested in the site for Mortlake Residents, but this was not even considered. We could have more affordable housing if the council insisted on a secondary school when revised estimates have proved we don’t need it or a cinema we don’t want as we already have four in the area.

We could have dedicated community facilities or a GP surgery on site, but we haven’t got this because officers concluded it was not financially viable. Despite CIL receipts from this development paying for new community facilities all over Richmond, for example, the £4.5 million development of Elleray Hall in Teddington. We could have retained office space and 124 jobs, but these have been sacrificed for seven more private units. We could have retained the only playing field in the area. Instead, we have lost over 60% of the opportunity to provide a playground for primary-aged children.

If this is passed, many wards outside Mortlake will benefit significantly from the £48 million CIL payment, the

biggest in Richmond and one of the largest in London. It will be helping to fund the £44 million Twickenham Riverside Development in Cllr Neaden-Watts and Cllr O'Shea's ward. The £30 million regeneration of Ham in Cllr Roberts ward [note she meant Richards] and over £100,000 for the {inaudible} development in Cllr Allen's own ward.

Mortlake is the biggest ward in the borough, with the second highest level of social housing. We need affordable homes and community facilities there so that residents can grow up and grow old in the same community. Perhaps our needs are less understood because of the dominance of Twickenham members who are less familiar with the Mortlake area. She said the plans had materially changed, did not meet new local and national planning policies, and crucially not supported by local residents. She said council leaders refuse to listen to locals and press ahead regardless. As she finished her speech, there was applause from the public gallery.

Cllr Michael Butlin (South Twickenham) said he thought the new secondary school was much-needed. Cllr Crookdake replied that one of the reasons why the school was thought to be needed was the pupil yield from the development, but due to the tenure mix changing on this development and the other three in the area, the yield was now projected to be lower. Also, there are falling roles across the borough, with ONS forecasting a fall in secondary school pupils of 1,035 in the next five years and 2,211 in the next ten years. She said the school was no longer required and that the community wanted to see the primary school relocated to this site. Cllr Butlin's second question was about the playing field being given away. Still, my understanding is that now, there is no public playing field, only some private facilities, and that's being replaced with a facility controlled by the borough. Cllr Crookdake said that 60% is being lost, and the remainder will be a Multi-use Games Area MUGA, which can't be used as a public park. Also, it will house a bus turning point.

Cllr Allen said there was a review mechanism that could increase the level of affordable housing. Do you accept this? Cllr Crookdake said the development will be constructed over a long period, and we have no control over the project's expenses. She said that she was involved in the buying and selling of many companies in the past, and review mechanisms are fine, but if you do not control any of the levers of what the PML will look like, it's very difficult to get the money you expect to get.

Cllr Anton McNulty-Howard (Mortlake and Barnes Common) spoke as the second interested councillor. He said some of the delegated matters should have more public involvement. He had concerns about the flooding issue, as The Ship pub was nearly inundated and had floodwater up to its windowpanes and vehicles were damaged. This may have been because the Thames Barrier was not down, as their predictions of river levels and rain were incorrect. Some of the thinking in the past about the danger levels was not properly assessed. I have written to the planning committee, and they have told me they can't do anything more about this as the previous application accepted the flood risk report. But I feel this needs further investigation.

Cllr Gareth Richards (Ham, Petersham and Richmond Riverside Ward) asked if he supported the scheme overall. Cllr McNulty-Howard said the community had a lot of reservations, but the previous plans that were passed were good but have been overtaken by the referrals to the Mayor of London. He was unhappy about the density and height but realised that there was a need for the developer to secure a certain percentage of profits from the site, and "we simply need to get on with it." He would wish for something different, but we have to deal with what we have got, but "let us also make the best of it" He went on to say "It's a big site, big money is involved, years of disruption yet to come and we need to negotiate though that for the benefit of the community."

Cllr Cardy asked about what he meant by the involvement in the delegated matters. Were you referring to the siting of bat boxes and species of trees to be planted? Cllr McNulty-Howard said that it would be useful. However, he was also very concerned about where the CIL money would end up being spent, along with the need to develop a plan in the area for managing traffic arising out of this and other developments and their cumulative impact. Cllr Cardy said there were democratic processes around where the council's money was spent. He said the developer was talking more to community groups than him, as a councillor, and it should be remembered that he represents the whole community.

The third interested councillor, Cllr Tony Parson (Barnes & Mortlake Ward), is currently in hospital, so a statement was read out on his behalf. His four points of concern are 1, conditions & informatives, 2 campaigners' input into the debate, 3, transport and 4, flood risk.

He asked that the informative requesting space be leased to the police and a post office be refined to refer to two separate units, as his ward lacks both. The campaigner's input: I have many friends in the two groups, and I respect their fears, but as things have now crystallised, it is better to now to ask for small improvements rather than attack the whole scheme. The application was the right size when the LibDems planning committee approved 830 units in 2020. Thanks to well-meaning local Labour Party activists involving the Mayor of London, the Mortlake overpopulation will be greater, and the percentage of affordable housing will be far lower. Please don't cause more delay by approaching the mayor again. 3 Transport proposals, generous community infrastructure levy will come to the council and more of this should be spent in Mortlake especially on transport improvements, such as foot and cycle bridge over the Thames and if there is not enough money for a whole bridge, build half a bridge so that when more money is available the other half can be built. The second improvement put forward was improved western access to Mortlake Station. Finally, he is concerned about flood risk as the 1 in 100-year flood risk will cause the development to be flooded. He supports the development but is concerned about the flood risk

Officers Reply

Moving onto the officers' reply: this section is designed to give officers a chance to comment on what has been said in the previous selection and clarify any planning policy and planning law issues.

Mrs Thatcher, the council's planning officer who manages the major development applications in the planning department, started with education-related issues. This application is purely about the main master plan, and the school's resolution is the same as that approved in July by the council. Achieving for Children has said that until 2030, the expected pupil numbers will be expected to exceed the places currently available. Year 7 is full across the eastern school place planning area, and there is currently a shortage of places.

Heights was considered last July. The report identifies potential harm; however, considering this, it is still deemed acceptable, and there have been modest height reductions and scale reductions on sensitive boundaries. The environmental statement concludes there is an overall benefit to the streetscape. The London Plan no longer uses the density matrix, and the NPPF requires that densities should not be wholly out of character with surrounding areas. Officers deem it would not be out of character and will be "creating beautiful places."

The loss of 2 hectares of Other Land of Townscape Importance OLTi is justified due to the comprehensive redevelopment, and the volume of open space is being increased overall. The re-provision of the sports field with the MUGA and the sports hall outweighs the loss in sporting use terms. The bus turnaround would need separate planning permission, which Cllr Crookdake referred to.

For affordable housing, the applicant has adopted the council-preferred inputs, and it is still showing that profits are still well below what would be expected for a development of this type. We are looking at a profit margin of 5.4% to 7.3%, which is £92 million to £110 million below what would normally be made on this type of development. They have agreed to an early, mid and late-stage review mechanism to see if the affordable housing offer can be increased. The cinema reduces the viability of the development, but it supports the footfall, improves the leisure offer and meets the design brief.

Despite the reduction in office floor space, it's still a genuine mixed-use development. There is still 10% of the space for affordable business use. Flooding risk: a lot of work has been done with the Environment Agency, and it follows the Thames Estuary 2100 plan, which requires flood defences to go up to 6.3 meters, but in this development, they go up to 7.3 metres. How the CIL contributions are spent is not in the remit of the planning committee.

Moving on to the questions of clarification to the officer:

Cllr Crookdake asked about the 19th of December changes to the NPPF relating to density. Why do you think it's not wholly out of character? And hasn't there been a lack of consultation as this committee meeting is taking place so soon after the 19 December changes to the NPPF? Mrs Thatcher replied that in the past, they had NPPF changes come into force on the day of the planning meeting, and they had provided updates the same day. There are now new sentences in the NPPF, but the 'beautiful places' is not a new theme; it is also subjective. She said that officers thought the scheme was respectful to the area's historic buildings, the architectural choice was fitting, and the heights of the buildings had been considered.

Cllr McNulty-Howard asked for clarification about where the floodwall will deflect water and whether it will affect The Ship pub. The reply was that if the Environment Agency had a concern, they would have raised it. Cllr O'Shea asked about the loss of office space and its impact on the vibrancy and attractiveness of the development. The reply was that the loss of 2,000 square meters is not seen as a huge detriment, and there will still be shops at the ground level. Cllr Chris Vardy (South Richmond) asked what would happen next should this scheme be approved; it is clear the GLA / Mayor of London still had concerns about affordable housing. What happens if the GLA turns it down? The next step is that the application would be referred to the GLA for stage 2, and they have two weeks to decide to either take the decision over, direct refusal or let the decision stand. It then also needs to go to the Secretary of State. Or the applicants can appeal for non-determination.

Cllr Cardy said that he didn't share the pessimism of Cllr Crookdake over the viability of the cinema, but if it were to fail commercially, is there a way that we can condition it for affordable housing. Mrs Thatcher said that it cannot be conditioned and would have to be conserved at the time an application was made and that she couldn't say if cinema use would be deemed community use without looking at case law. Cllr Bennett said the GLA has already expressed that this is inadequate in affordable housing. Do you think it will come back? Mrs Thatcher said that she honestly did not know. It could be referred to the GLA, but last time, it was not refused on affordable housing, so if they do refuse it on the grounds of viability, I would be interested to know why. An alternative action would be an appeal for non-determination by the applicant, which would go automatically to the Secretary of State.

Cllr Neaden-Watts asked about the flood defence, the gap in the flood wall for the steps down to the river, and the towpath users were worried about the runoff from the site. The reply was that it was close to greenfield runoff rates, and any flow would be towards the road, not the river. Cllr Jeremy Davis (Hampton North) asked about open space. Is there any difference between this application and the one in July? The answer was nothing. Cllr Butlin asked about the community use of cinema and if extra defences could be provided. The reply was that they couldn't put this as a condition for the cinema, and it should just be kept to the minutes whilst the flooding should not come into the site due to the levels.

Cllr Allen asked about the accessibility layouts of some units of the affordable homes. Mrs Thatcher said as this is an outline application, they cannot confirm the final layouts yet, so they have been conditioned. Cllr Crookdake said that last year, it was confirmed all the space is commercial, and there is no commercial space. Unlike many other projects elsewhere in the borough, Mortlake has no dedicated community space. Given the GLA advice on testing the differences between interest rates and funding models over six months ago, what is the value impact? Cllr Thatcher said the council's consultants had accepted the 6 percent interest rate. She also said there was a boathouse in Building Nine, and in Building Six, there was also community use. Cllr Cardy asked about building height. The reply is that building heights are the same, apart from slight reductions in Building One and Building Ten.

Cllr O'Shea, the use of Thomas House School, the architect mentioned there could be a conversation for continued use. What is the mechanism? The reply was that a community use agreement would be secured as part of the application. Cllr Crookdake asked about how the viability review mechanism will deal with costs, as the net costs will determine future council payments. Mrs Thatcher said the 17.5% of the profits and the sales values are the two key costs that we put into the agreement, and we need to make decisions based on the viability put forward to us at this current time. Cllr Davis asked about the possible employment levels and the floor space reduction. The current employment is limited; how many people worked at the brewery when the brewery was operational? Mrs Thatcher said that at the peak, she thought it was 153, and the development would provide employment space for 290. Cllr Cardy suggested CIL money for a feasibility study for a bridge

and an additional entrance for Mortlake Station. Is that something we can refer to the relevant committees? Mrs Thatcher said it couldn't be attached to the application, but the individual councillors would raise it at the service committees themselves.

Section on views

This section is where councillors give their views on the application prior to their final decision.

Cllr Neaden-Watts said, "We find ourselves back and looking at the art of the possible in light of our old foe viability" The lower level of job from reduced floorspace is regrettable, but we can't get what everyone wants from this site. The uplift in housing units is something we seek, but we acknowledge the concerns about density. The affordable housing levels are still low, and we can rail against that, but considering the alternations that need to be made, we should be thankful it has not sunk lower. She believes the appearance of the cinema has improved with the copper cladding. Overall, the design is successful; it is an improvement on what is there and not out of character, and it's transforming a brownfield site, which is welcome. The delivery of a secondary school is also a planning gain. The changes that have come about do not detract from July's decision; this high-quality design successfully responds to restraints.

Cllr Bennett, we were advised to be constant and only change our decision based on changes in the application. We have listed the harms; some are quite serious, such as the number of units not meeting standards relating to light, amenities, noise, balconies, provision of private amenity spaces, limited spaces between buildings, and raising privacy and outlook implementations, along with North facing and single-aspect units. Building Four was 60% below standard; Building Six had 75%; Building Nine had 69%; and Building Eleven had 65%. I find that disquieting. He does not believe the benefits outweigh the harm. Affordable housing is valuable, but it's just a drop in the ocean, and the percentage is so far adrift from what is in the local plan it really worries me. Transport: I have never believed it would be possible to make a right-hand turn out of Williams Lane into Richmond Road. We should have had some transport strategy for Richmond as we have so many applications going through, and that strategy should have informed this and the other applications.

Cllr Richards: I'm going to agree with Cllr Neaden-Watts. It is impressive that they have created a site that will be totally heated by heat pumps; no hydrocarbons are used to heat the site. Adding all the bird boxes, bat boxes, and solar panels will be a net environmental benefit to what is there now.

Cllr Allen, I want to be consistent with the views I expressed in the July resolution. I still believe the benefits outweigh the harm. Secondly, I'm minded to accept the officer's recommendation. Affordable housing is disappointing, but we have a review mechanism.

Cllr Butlin, I say yes. As someone who has experienced not having a bathroom until the age of twelve, I have never forgotten what it is like to live in unattractive areas. But with my transport cap on, there is a very nice bus that goes up the A316, and we should improve access to that bus by putting in a footbridge over the road. Overall, I like it.

Cllr Cardy said he was minded to support his colleagues. If we compare this to the last application, which we have to and have consent for, he appreciates concerns about the height of the development and transport limitations. It has not gone up but has gone down in several places. For transport, we must balance 200 square meters of office space with 7 accommodation units. Unless they were outrageous petrolheads, they would not generate more traffic than the office space. So this is less unacceptable to the local community than the last scheme. I'm also grateful that the changes to the design to meet safety standards have not seen the number of affordable houses on the development. Given Grenfell, we can all agree that fire safety in tall buildings needs to be improved. The changes may have been abrupt, but they are a sensible one.

The Vote

The decision was 8-1 in favour of recommending approval, with the final decision delegated to officers.

The chair thanked people for their time this evening and concluded the meeting.

END MALE VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN

53%
of teenage girls feel
unsafe on public
transport

80%
of UK women have
been harassed
in public

Every
3 days
a woman is
murdered

**Stop
Violence
Against
Women**

Join the walk to show your
support
Saturday 17 February
1pm
Meet at **Hampton Square**
(by Sainsbury's) and follow a
2 mile route to **Hampton and**
Richmond Football Club

Learn how you can help tackle violence against women:
richmond.gov.uk/VAWG_events



LONDON BOROUGH OF
RICHMOND UPON THAMES

In
partnership
with



England Team To Face Italy



England men's head coach Steve Borthwick has named his team to play Italy in the opening game of the 2024 Guinness Six Nations at Stadio Olimpico on Saturday 3rd February (kick-off 2.15pm GMT live on ITV1).

Jamie George will captain a starting XV which includes two uncapped players with Ethan Roots and Fraser Dingwall both earning a starting place in Rome for round one of the Championship. In the front row, Joe Marler is named at loosehead and packs down with skipper George at hooker and Will Stuart at tighthead. At lock, vice-captain Maro Itoje partners Ollie Chessum. The back row sees debutant Roots on the blindside flank, Sam Underhill at openside and Ben Earl will wear the No.8 shirt.

In the half-back berths, scrum-half Alex Mitchell is paired with vice-captain George Ford at 10. The midfield sees Dingwall named at inside centre to win his maiden England cap, with Henry Slade at 13. In the back three, Elliot Daly starts on the left wing, with Tommy Freeman on the right and Freddie Steward selected at full-back to round off the starting line-up.

Amongst the replacements, back-row forward Chandler Cunningham-South, wing Immanuel Feyi-Waboso and fly-half Fin Smith will all win their first England caps when they join the action. They take their places alongside Theo Dan, Ellis Genge (vice-captain), Dan Cole, Alex Coles and Danny Care on the bench.

"After an excellent week's preparation in Girona, we look forward to the challenge of playing Italy in Rome," said Borthwick. "The Azzurri are a dangerous team, with some talented ball carriers and players who like to find space. We'll need to make good decisions, keep our discipline, and maintain a level of intensity to our performance from the first whistle to the last."

Commenting on the selection of England's five uncapped players, Borthwick added: *"Winning a first cap for your country is always a very special occasion. We're delighted for the debutants who have all worked incredibly hard to get themselves selected in the 23 to face Italy. I know Saturday will be a very proud moment for the players and their families. My message to them this week has been to be themselves, to grasp their opportunity, and to play with the strengths and skills that deservedly got them selected to a strong Six Nations squad."*

ENGLAND v ITALY

Saturday 3 February 2024, Stadio Olimpico, Kick-off: 2.15pm (GMT)

- | | |
|---|--|
| 15. Freddie Steward (Leicester Tigers, 31 caps) | 1. Joe Marler (Harlequins, 88 caps) |
| 14. Tommy Freeman (Northampton Saints, 3 caps) | 2. Jamie George (Saracens, 85 caps) – captain |
| 13. Henry Slade (Exeter Chiefs, 57 caps) | 3. Will Stuart (Bath Rugby, 33 caps) |
| 12. Fraser Dingwall (Northampton Saints, uncapped) | 4. Maro Itoje (Saracens, 76 caps) – vice captain |
| 11. Elliot Daly (Saracens, 64 caps) | 5. Ollie Chessum (Leicester Tigers, 18 caps) |
| 10. George Ford (Sale Sharks, 91 caps) – vice captain | 6. Ethan Roots (Exeter Chiefs, uncapped) |
| 9. Alex Mitchell (Northampton Saints, 11 caps) | 7. Sam Underhill (Bath Rugby, 30 caps) |
| | 8. Ben Earl (Saracens, 25 caps) |

Replacements:

- | | |
|---|--|
| 16. Theo Dan (Saracens, 7 caps) | 20. Chandler Cunningham-South (Harlequins, uncapped) |
| 17. Ellis Genge (Bristol Bears, 58 caps) – vice captain | 21. Danny Care (Harlequins, 96 caps) |
| 18. Dan Cole (Leicester Tigers, 107 caps) | 22. Fin Smith (Northampton Saints, uncapped) |
| 19. Alex Coles (Northampton Saints, 3 caps) | 23. Immanuel Feyi-Waboso (Exeter Chiefs, uncapped) |

Match Preview: Brentford v Man City

Analysis, team news, match officials and more. Here's everything you need to know ahead of Brentford's Premier League game against Manchester City

Written by Brentford Football Club

Brentford begin February with the first of two Premier League clashes with champions Manchester City in the space of just a few weeks, live on *Sky Sports* (Monday, 8pm kick-off)

City and Brentford played on the final day of last season at Gtech Community Stadium with the visitors already crowned champions in a game that the Bees won 1-0 thanks to Ethan Pinnock's goal.

It's hard to see this one being as low scoring, though. Brentford's last three results all ended 3-2 (one in favour, two not) while City have been scoring goals even without Erling Haaland – although the Norwegian is expected to be back in contention for this one.

Pre-match Analysis

Richard Cole, Playmaker Stats: Frank could join a select club with a third win over Guardiola

There are positives to take from Brentford's midweek defeat at Tottenham Hotspur Stadium. The first half in particular was a fine performance from the Bees. Neal Maupay opened the scoring, making it four games, four goals in 2024 for the French forward after Ivan Toney's shot could only be parried away by Guglielmo Vicario.

The Brentford midfield, with Christian Nørgaard making his first Premier League appearance of the new calendar year, did a fine job disrupting Spurs' fluidity early on. The Bees had 12 interceptions to Spurs' four, 14 clearances to seven, and won 10 aerial duels to one in that first half.

In fact, Spurs had just one shot on target before the break – Timo Werner's clever low effort that Mark Flekken did well to keep out.

Brentford will need to do the same things at an even higher level in Monday's game as well as avoid what both Thomas Frank and Nørgaard described as a "blackout" early in the second half that led to conceding three goals in quick succession.

But Thomas Frank may well already have the code to crack City.

The first games between the two in the 2021/22 season were narrow defeats for the then newly promoted Bees who put in a good account of themselves. Last season it was very different. Brentford weren't afraid to go at City on their own turf in the first tie (registering eight shots on target to City's six in that game with just 25 per cent of possession). The champions struggled to deal with Ivan Toney who would love to get stuck in against them once again.



And while the last game between the two sides was less frantic, it was another deserved win for Brentford and another game when they had more shots on target than Pep Guardiola's side (four to three).

Should Brentford win then Thomas Frank will join a select group of just nine managers to have won three or more games against Pep Guardiola. If you want to know, that list includes Jürgen Klopp, José Mourinho, Ole Gunnar Solskjær, Antonio Conte, Mauricio Pochettino, Carlo Ancelotti, Nuno Espírito Santo, Arsène Wenger, and Thomas Tuchel.

But Frank would be unique among that group should the Bees win: the Dane would become the first manager ever to defeat a Guardiola team in three consecutive league games.

Scout Report

City going through the gears following Club World Cup triumph

It was another season, another title for Manchester City last year.

When they dropped points in three of their first 10 Premier League matches, they opened the door for Arsenal, who happily climbed to the summit and led the way until April, despite losing 3-1 to City in mid-February.

By this point, though, Pep Guardiola's men were motoring. From 25 February to 21 May, they won 12 league matches in succession and, with the Gunners succumbing to the inevitable increasing pressure, they won a fifth title in six years with two games still to play, meaning they could afford to draw to Brighton and lose to Brentford with no repercussions whatsoever.

In the summer, the club were not hugely busy, but they spent more than £200 million on four near-like-for-like signings. Mateo Kovačić came in from Chelsea to replace İlkay Gündoğan after his free transfer to Barcelona, while Jérémy Doku and Joško Gvardiol replaced Saudi Pro League bound Riyad Mahrez and Aymeric Laporte, respectively. Matheus Nunes joined from Wolves, too, in place of Cole Palmer, who left for Chelsea, where he has blossomed.

The season started with defeat, as Arsenal exacted their revenge for City pipping them to the title by way of a penalty shootout win, after an initial 1-1 draw in the Community Shield. "*We faced an extraordinary team,*" conceded Guardiola. They did make up for it with European Super Cup victory over Sevilla 10 days later, however.

For the most part, City have been extraordinary this term, too - again, though, they do not lead the way in the second half of the season.

Six straight wins to start the campaign took them top, but defeats to Wolves and Arsenal saw them drop to third by mid-October - then wins over Brighton, Manchester United and Bournemouth lifted them back to the summit. By this point, their Carabao Cup hopes had been ended by Newcastle for another year.

Between mid-November and mid-December, they drew four games - including a thrilling 4-4 at Chelsea and an equally gripping 3-3 with Tottenham at the Etihad - and won just one of six games. Even then they were given a scare by Luton Town, which meant they dropped as low as fourth; quite something for a team of their calibre.

Travelling to the Club World Cup in December brought a welcome break from the Premier League,

particularly as the previously infallible Erling Haaland showed he is, in fact, human by sustaining a foot injury that kept him out of nine games in all competitions. But his absence was not felt at the tournament in Saudi Arabia, as City breezed to the trophy via wins over Urawa Red Diamonds and Fluminense.

“To win this trophy is to be the best team in the world,” said Guardiola after his side beat the latter in the final. *“To win the treble was truly special, but to win two more trophies and now hold these five major titles shows the unique mentality of this team. It is something no other English team has ever achieved, and we will always remember this incredible time we spent together.”*

Since returning to the UK, they have won three games in the Premier League to climb to within three points of current leaders Liverpool with a game in hand and twice in the FA Cup, which has seen them book a fifth-round date with Luton.

City are starting to move through the gears again so, with Premier League, FA Cup and Champions League glory still very much on the cards, it's far too early to write off the chances of Guardiola's squad achieving an unprecedented quintuple over the next five months.

In the Dugout

Pep Guardiola

Pep Guardiola was born an hour's drive from Barcelona and joined the club's La Masia academy in 1984, aged 13. He rose through the ranks and became a key part of Johan Cruyff's team in the 1990s, before later playing under Bobby Robson and Louis van Gaal at the Nou Camp.

During 10 full seasons in the first team, the midfielder won 15 trophies, including six La Liga titles and the European Cup in 1991/92. He departed after 17 years in 2001 and played out the rest of his playing days with Roma and Brescia in Italy, Al-Ahli in Qatar, and then in Mexico with Dorados, before calling it quits in 2006.

Before long, he was back in Spain as Barcelona B manager. Promotion in the first season, 2007/08, saw him selected to step up as Frank Rijkaard's successor and, over the next four seasons, he established himself as one of the great minds of football. His tiki-taka style of play heralded an astonishing 14 trophies, six of which they won during a mind-blowing 2009.

The serial winner took a year's sabbatical before joining Bayern Munich in June 2013. In Germany, he delivered three straight Bundesliga titles, two German Cups, one European Super Cup and one Club World Cup - the third of a career that had spanned all of six years to that point.

By the end of his time in Bavaria, Guardiola already knew his next move, having signed a three-year contract in February 2016 to replace Manuel Pellegrini that summer.

In the eight years since, he has become Manchester City's most successful manager, leading them to 16 trophies over the years that they have become a footballing powerhouse; one of Europe's undoubted elites.

The Spaniard is under contract at the Etihad until the summer of 2025 and, once Jürgen Klopp leaves Liverpool in the summer, he is set to become the longest-serving current Premier League manager and the third longest-serving boss in the country.



Residents mark Burns Night at Royal Star & Garter

Burns Night has been celebrated with bagpipes and a traditional supper at Royal Star & Garter's three Homes.

Residents washed down their haggis, neeps and tatties with a dram or two of whisky, as they marked Burns Night in the charity's Solihull, Surbiton and High Wycombe Homes on Thursday, 25 January.

Royal Star & Garter provides loving, compassionate care to veterans and their partners living with disability or dementia, and has new services reaching out into the community.

The Homes were decorated with bunting and Saltire flags, with bagpipers also present in Surbiton and Solihull.

In each Home the famous Robert Burns poem 'Address to a Haggis' was read out to residents, before they tucked into their meals.

At the Solihull Home, circle dancers performed traditional Scottish dancing. Afterwards Alasdair, a resident who was born in the Highlands and went on to serve in the Royal Army Medical Corps, said: "I'm a proud Scotsman, and I was amazed to see the effort staff put in to make this a special day. Hearing the bagpipes and seeing the Burns traditions brought back many happy memories."

In Surbiton, residents also enjoyed a whisky-tasting session, while in High Wycombe, singer Kuran provided the live music entertainment on the day. Residents also made shortbread, and took part in a Scottish quiz and wordsearch.

Royal Star & Garter celebrates special days in the calendar such as Burns Night, Valentine's Day, and UK patron saints' days, as residents enjoy these traditions.

The charity is welcoming new residents in its three Homes. For more information on this, or to work for the charity, go to www.starandgarter.org



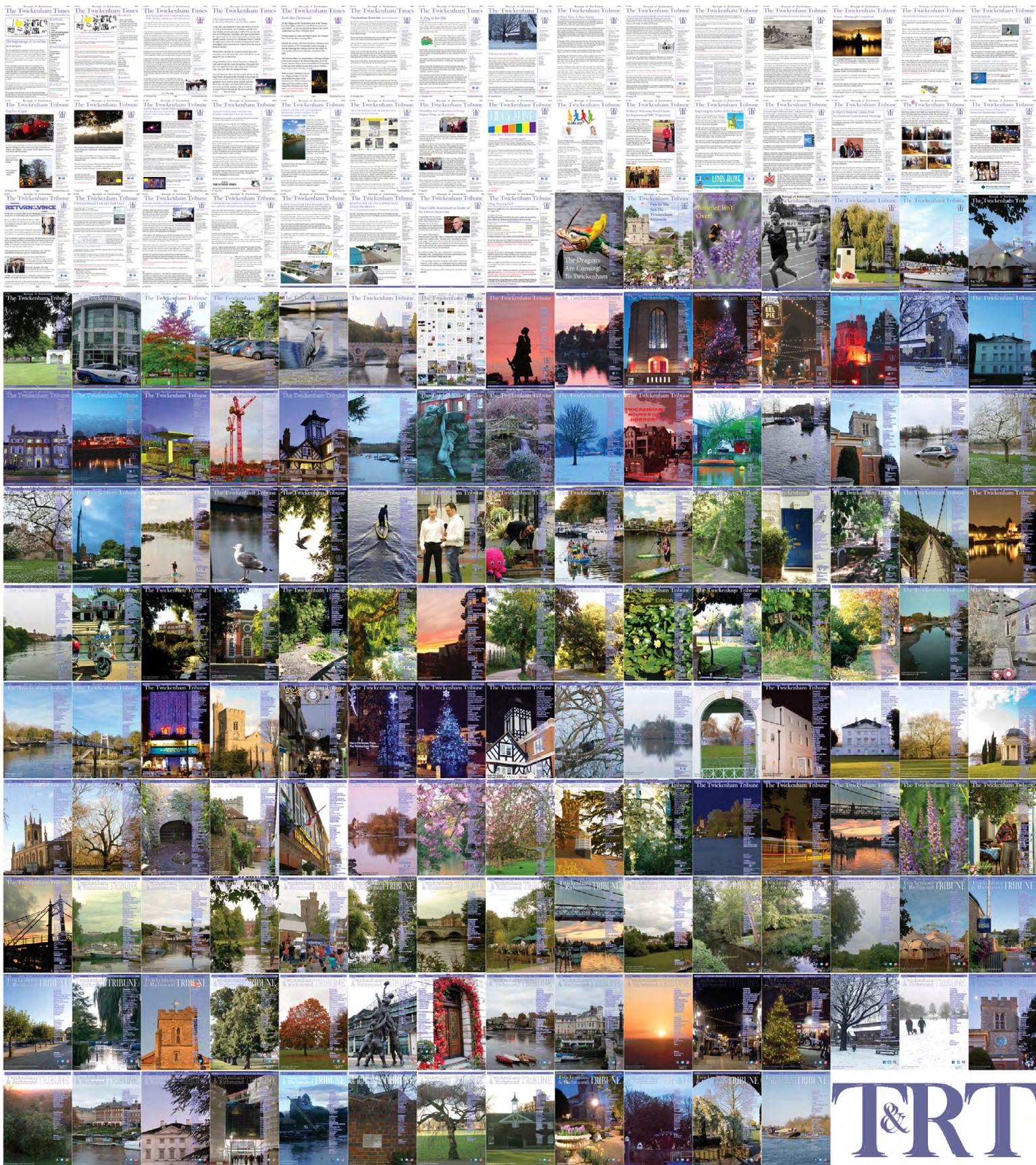
Image: Alastair Adams plays the bagpipes inside Royal Star & Garter in Surbiton © Royal Star & Garter



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