

# Twickenham & Richmond TRIBUNE

## Contents

- TickerTape
- Local Postcard Page:  
Kings Canadian School – Bushy Park
- Tackling Homelessness
- Ellera Hall
- Council Reports
- Letters
- Tackling Crime is my mission
- Twickenham Riverside
- Chef at The Dysart Petersham is shortlisted
- Traveller's Tales
- WIZ TALES: Samoa Island Chain
- What is so great about leap year day?
- Invest in trees and green space
- Sport

## Contributors

- Alan Winter
- James Knight
- Jonathan Hulley, Conservative parliamentary candidate, Twickenham
- Teddington Society
- Ron Mushiso, Conservative GLA Candidate for South West London
- The Dysart Petersham
- Doug Goodman
- World InfoZone
- Mark Aspen
- Richmond Shakespeare Society
- Deep Patel
- St Mary's University
- Thomas's College
- Hampton Choral Society
- Woodland Trust
- RFU
- Brentford FC
- GMB Union
- LBRuT

## Editors

Berkley Driscoll  
Teresa Read



1<sup>st</sup> March 2024

T&RT

# TickerTape - News in Brief

Join the garden recycling scheme or renew your subscription

LBRuT are now accepting garden waste recycling subscriptions for 2024/25.

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*The Tree Agency*

# Local Picture Postcard Column - Part 238

By Alan Winter

## Kings Canadian School – Bushy Park

In 1915 King George V gave permission to the Canadian Red Cross for Upper Lodge in Hampton Hill to be used as a Hospital for Canadian troops stationed in Bushy Park.

After the end of World War 1. When the King's Red Cross Special Hospital was demobilised in September 1919, the Canadian Red Cross offered the building and equipment to the King. The King, in turn, offered them to the LCC for ten years for use as a residential school for 300 delicate boys.

The Kings Canadian Residential Open Air School opened at the end of 1919.

Our postcards this week are from the 20 years 1919-1939 when the school was opened which features on the first postcard, the other two showing some of the activities the boys got up to. Paddling in the stream and physical training on the lawn.

The main building – Upper Lodge, became the staff quarters. It also contained the kitchen, dining room and a rest room for the boys. Flanking one side of the house were the boys' dormitories, medical and dental rooms, the sick room, the baths and a large kitchen garden which supplied fresh fruit and vegetables.

Each child was instructed to bring an overcoat, sand shoes or slippers, a change of underclothing, hairbrush and comb, a face flannel, two nightshirts, two pairs of socks, six pocket handkerchiefs, a toothbrush and a small collapsible satchel to contain the kit.

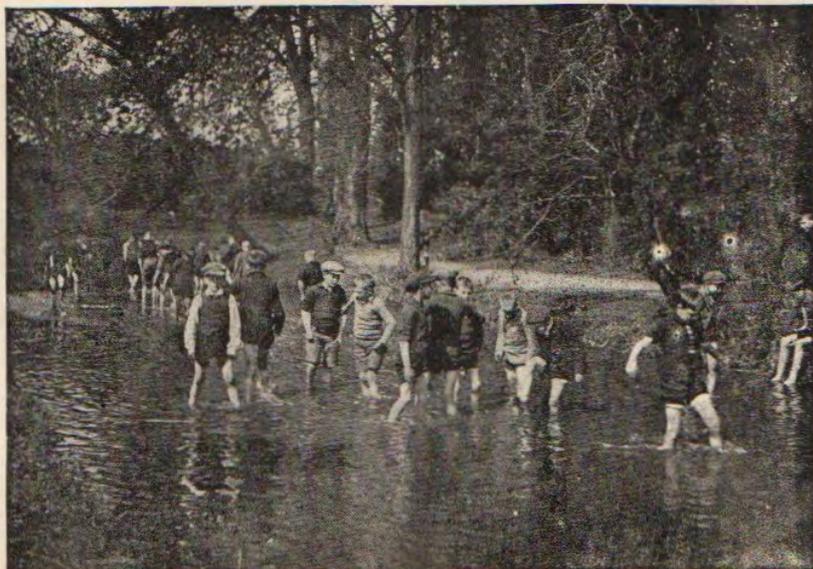
A local Doctor examined the boys when they arrived and also visited the school regularly. Two qualified nurses lived in.

Each week 70 boys were admitted and usually stayed for four weeks. Each party arriving at the school formed a house, of which there were four – King's, Queen's, Canada and Bushy. Each house competed for weekly sports and other trophies.

The boys got up at 07.00 hrs and went to bed at 20.00. Breakfast was served at 08.00, dinner



KING'S . . .  
CANADIAN  
SCHOOL, .  
Bushy  
Park.



The  
Paddling  
Stream.

at 12.15, tea at 16.00 and supper at 19.00. On Saturday evenings, if the weather allowed, a bonfire was lit in the woods and the children enjoyed songs and yarns by the campfire.

On Sundays the children were taken to a place of worship in accordance with the denomination their parents had written on their admission card.

Cinema shows and wireless concerts were held in the lecture hall and, once a week a concert was given by those boys on the fourth week of their stay who were about to leave.

In 1939 the school closed at the outbreak of World War 2.

The buildings remained unused until 1942 when the USA entered the war. THE US 8<sup>th</sup> Army Air Force took over the site as its headquarters, renaming it Camp Griffiss. In 1944 the Supreme Headquarters of The Allied Expeditionary Force under the command of General Dwight Eisenhower moved to Bushy Park. The initial planning stages of the allied invasion of Normandy took place here.



By 1963 most of the temporary hutments used by the Hospital and Camps had been cleared from the site.

Upper Lodge and the stables were sold for residential development and are now apartment blocks.

Bushy Park remains a public Park.

If you have any old postcards sitting in a box or album at home that you are considering parting with, I'd be very interested in arranging to see them. Please contact me on 07875 578398 or by email at [alanwinter192@hotmail.com](mailto:alanwinter192@hotmail.com) I am happy to pay cash for any postcards or photographs that I find of interest. So don't throw old postcards etc. in the skip or recycling bins. Please show them to me first!

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# Tackling Homelessness and rough sleeping in Twickenham constituency

By Jonathan Hulley, Conservative parliamentary candidate, Twickenham

Politics is said to be the battle of ideas, where parties and candidates promote their domestic and international intentions and interests. **However, every now and again, you get to make a positive and practical difference in the lives of others.**

Recently, I was introduced to Roger, pictured on the right of the photo, a longstanding St Margarets resident who faced homelessness last December for reasons beyond his control.

**As well as your Conservative Parliamentary candidate for Twickenham, I am also a lawyer**, specialising in social housing law, and it was in these two capacities that I promised Roger that I would try to help him.



Together with other concerned residents, **we set about trying to find temporary Council accommodation for Roger**, who needed to be near St Margarets, so that he could be near his family, friends, the local hospital, and continue to live in a community that he had called home for over 25 years. Our efforts resulted in **the Council accepting that they owed a legal duty to find him temporary accommodation.** However, shockingly, because of the chronic lack of temporary accommodation in Richmond Borough, Roger was initially offered a bedsit in Ealing, nearly an hour away by bus or car.

**This was not acceptable. After applying further pressure on the Council, they relented and instead offered him temporary accommodation in Feltham**, much closer to his family, friends, and support network in St Margarets. More recently, **the Council has accepted that they owe Roger a legal duty to house him permanently.** Following a further intervention on his behalf, I am delighted that he will be offered a new permanent home in Richmond Borough by the Guinness Partnership Housing Association.

**Sadly, Roger's case is not unique.** In fact, I am handling several housing-related cases on behalf of residents who have attended my regular shadow MP surgeries. I will continue to fight their corners for as long as it takes.

Recently published homelessness statistics point to an increasingly alarming picture. There has been a 27% increase in the number of people counted as homeless and sleeping rough in the previous year, and **rough sleeping has increased in every region compared to the previous year (with the largest increase in London).**

That is why I was pleased to see that Richmond Council will be applying for registered provider status so that it can bid for public funding to acquire more homes in the borough for temporary accommodation. But with the need so great, **our council's response has been too late and inadequate.**

**The council have also stood by whilst our housing associations have built up a huge backlog of voids**, where scores of much-needed social houses are sitting empty because they have failed to refurbish ready for relet. Over 600 residents, many of whom are being sent miles away from their community, are languishing in expensive temporary accommodation because of this.

**Decent, affordable, and secure homes make our lives better.**

**We need political commitment to turn things around and a long-term plan for housing, as recently articulated by Michael Gove**, which recognises the importance of healthy and sustainable communities.

For support, please contact me at [jonathan.hulley@outlook.com](mailto:jonathan.hulley@outlook.com)

# Statement to the Council - Elleray Hall Project

Rosemary McGlashon, Teddington Society

My name is Rosemary McGlashon. I am lead for planning at the Teddington Society and am on the Executive committee.

I want to talk about Elleray Hall.

Councillor Michael Wilson presented the Council's plans for Elleray Hall at a special presentation to the Teddington Society's Executive Committee 3 or 4 years ago. He said that the estimated build cost for the new Elleray Community centre would be around 2 million pounds and that the cost would be covered by the 2 million pounds value of transferring the old site to (probably) RHP.

Based on that, the Society's Planning Group supported the project and was pleased that the Council was building a hall for all the community in Teddington. But the Executive had reservations regarding local residents concerns about the effect on them individually.

Now - just 4 years later - the stated likely cost has rocketed to 5.8 million pounds and not only has the value of the old site not been adjusted upwards, a subsidy of £918 thousand pounds is now proposed to be paid to RHP for them to build the new affordable units on the old site. So that's an all-up total of 6.7 million pounds. And we still do not know the final cost.

The Teddington Society has been concerned about value for money for this project for several months, so much so that we asked Councillor Giesler to provide an article on this topic for the last edition of our newsletter Tidings which is sent out to all of our members. We appreciate the time he took to write this and thank him for the article. But that has not allayed concerns and the Teddington Society still thinks that Councillors should reconsider whether this project is really the best use possible for nearly 7 million pounds of local taxpayers' money.

We want older people in Teddington to be supported with a day centre, which we believe has on average about 30 users per day, but we are asking if there are more cost-effective ways of supporting them. According to the published data the Council currently contributes 42 thousand pounds per year to the existing Elleray charity. It might be more cost effective to increase the ongoing support for the charity and refurbish old Elleray Hall than to spend almost 7 million pounds on the new build.

We call on Councillors—especially our local ones, but also Council Leader Gareth Roberts and Councillor for Finance Robin Brown - to take a look at this project and to seek better value for money alternatives before committing to such an enormous spend.

Thank you for listening.

Teddington  
Society



# Council Reports

## Transport and Air Quality Committee

Read the Tribune's report on the Council Committee Meeting held on Tuesday 27th February 2024.

See the report below on pages **12 - 13**.

## Education and Children's Services Committee

Read the Tribune's report on the Council Committee Meeting held on Thursday 22nd February 2024.

See the report below on page **16**.

## Finance, Policy and Resources Committee

Read the Tribune's report on the Council Committee Meeting held on Tuesday 27th February 2024.

See the report below on pages **34 -36**.

# Next week at Richmond Council

On Tuesday, we have one of the most important meetings of the civic year, the annual **Budget Meeting**, where the council sets the budget for the next financial year and the Council Tax. Start time 7pm – York House, Twickenham.

You can read the papers for this meeting by clicking [HERE](#)

How to participate: members of the public who live or work in the borough can submit questions or speak on an item in the agenda. To ask a question, you need to submit your question by 12 noon, two working days in advance. To speak, you must register by noon the day before the meeting.

For full details, please follow the link [HERE](#)

On Thursday, the **South West London and Surrey Joint Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee** is taking place.

Note: this meeting is hosted by Kingston Council at The Guildhall, Kingston upon Thames – start time 6.30 pm.

You can read the papers for this meeting by clicking [HERE](#)

Dear Tribune,

### **Community? What Community?**

In September 2021, I participated in one of Richmond Council's online so-called Community Conversations entitled: *'Improve our High Streets'*.

I made numerous suggestions and sent photographs based on my considerable experience of life in Japan where community spirit is paramount and the lively high streets sparkle with vibrant displays, polite, helpful, knowledgeable shop staff, and spectacular, irresistible fresh foods which, unlike as is so often the case here, are hygienically produced and displayed.

Soon afterwards, I was contacted by one of the Council's organisers, who said she had listened to the meeting, liked my suggestions, and wanted to discuss them further.

I invited her to my home to discuss them. She said she was very impressed by what I had said and invited me to join her group of selected local people who met several times a year to discuss community improvements. Keen to help improve the local amenities, I agreed.

But I heard nothing more. Nothing!

Last week, I joined another online Community Conversation. The actual production, such as picture quality and sound, was extremely poor. They had invited questions in advance, along with questions to be read out live to the panel during the meeting. Despite my having registered in advance, neither system worked.

I wonder why? I suspect that Richmond Council do not actually want to hear anything from the public and live questions would mean that councillors might be put on the spot with no time to prepare excuses.

Afterwards, I received an email requesting me to rate this meeting. It included such catchphrases as *'Connect better'*, *'Lead by example'*, and *'Put people first'*, trite words none of which applied to my experience in the above Community Conversations or, indeed, to ANY of my experiences with Richmond Council. But I replied to the request, explaining that nothing had resulted from the 2021 meeting into which I had put so much effort.

As a result, a mere 29 months after her broken promise, I received a reply from the aforementioned organiser containing an apology together with several excuses for her never having bothered to contact me.

But it was too late. The damage was done.

Why should anyone waste their time making suggestions to a Council that simply doesn't listen?

Michael Jay, Hampton.

Dear Sir,

### **Readers Beware , Empty Road Ahead!**

Recently, I received two fines for parking in unmarked side roads, my first ever in 60 years of driving.

One was for being a good Samaritan by taking a neighbour with a serious leg injury who was bleeding severely to Teddington hospital. I drove there in order to relieve pressure on the NHS ambulance service. The other was for taking my wife to hospital for cancer treatment when I parked near Strawberry Hill station in order to use the train and thus reduce traffic congestion and pollution as Richmond Council would like us all to do.

Both locations were quiet roads with no signs or road markings denoting restrictions yet numerous appeals to Richmond Council were cold-heartedly rejected.

This is similar to the recent case of retired police officer Norman Brennan who was fined £130 by Richmond Council for doing the right thing, namely, following shop thieves to identify them and help the police, as urged by Policing Minister, Chris Philp. Mr Brennan was fined but the thieves got away scot free.

Well done, Richmond Council!

Part of our caring Council's response was to send me the latitude and longitude of an imaginary parking restriction sign – a sign which did not actually exist. Of course, my invitation to their officials to accompany me to inspect this non-existent sign was declined. They also referred me to their online map of controlled parking zones, a map which is completely incomprehensible and especially difficult to look at while driving and avoiding all the potholes.

I can only conclude that such unmarked roads are designed to entrap drivers, possibly to help pay for such things as 'consultations' and the recently increased allowances for councillors. So, instead of taking public transport, I now drive everywhere, especially in view of the totally unreliable trains.

The fines themselves are trivial but the principles involved are not, and, in its heartless grasping, avarice to extract money from innocent drivers, our Council has done far more harm than good. Had they put the £millions they have extracted from us to good use, such as mending Richmond's dangerously pothole-ridden roads, we might have considered voting for them. No wonder Richmond is said to be the richest borough in London.

But, never mind, it's also said to be the 'Best Borough in London'.

Best for the Council coffers, that is, but not so best for the residents.

Name and address supplied.



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# Council Reports

## Transport and Air Quality Committee - 27 February 2024

James Knight

The first item discussed was a **Ward Concern** raised by Cllr Michael Butlin (South Twickenham) regarding a low bollard in Otford Gardens, Strawberry Hill. He said that people were tripping over it, and it needed to be replaced with a taller one. The committee chairman, Cllr Alexander Ehmann (St Margarets and North Twickenham), said officers would monitor the situation.

The **Thomson House School Street** proposal was introduced by officer David Tidley, head of the transport strategy. There had been an experimental school street, and the committee was asked to make it permanent. Cllr Julia Cambridge (East Sheen) spoke on behalf of all ward councillors and asked for the boundary to be extended and APNR cameras to be used to tackle non-compliance. Cllr Ehmann said that using APNR would increase the impact on neighbouring roads as 1/3 of the traffic has been taken off the street, but it would be much higher if cameras were used. He also said there was no data to support Cllr Cambridge's claim that compliance has gone down; therefore, he does not feel it's the natural next step to install cameras. Cllr Butlin said he thought having school streets without cameras was wrong because he expected the same standard across the borough. Cllr Ehmann said the committee could come back to look at this again.

Next up was the **Directorate Budget and Fees & Charges** introduced by officer Alex Moylan. He said that the council tries to ensure that non-statutory services are not subsidised by council taxpayers, so most services had at least an inflation increase every year. The parking charges are also being used to incentivise people to use public transport rather than their car. Most parking charges will rise by 10%, but central Twickenham will see parking rates go up 19% for on-street parking. The premium for second and third CPZ permits will double from +50% to +100% for the second pass and from +100% to +200% for the third and subsequent permits. The 10% parking discount for residents (20% for those over 75) will be removed as they don't meet the council's policy objectives.

Cllr Andrée Frieze (Ham, Petersham and Richmond Riverside) commented that parking charges were now benchmarked against a return bus journey to incentivise bus travel, so why was the 30-minute free parking being maintained when this encourages car use? Cllr Ehmann jumped in and said it was a political decision and unfair to ask officers questions about this. He said the Liberal Democrat administration had decided to retain it whilst moving parking charges to a more 'realistic' figure that matched more closely the cost of using public transport, 'which would be preferable for residents.' Cllr Gareth Richards (Ham, Petersham and Richmond Riverside) was concerned about the increase in fees for CCTV (which will increase from £25 to £210 for a search, and the search & release evidence fee increasing from £100 to £510). He said if someone had their bike nicked, would you be charged this amount? His answer was it was time-consuming, and the council was currently subsidising insurance companies. Cllr James Chard said he supported Cllr Frieze in removing 30 minutes of free parking and moving parking charges to a min of £3.50.

**North Worple Way Traffic Study** was next, with Officer Nick O'Donnell introducing the item. Due to the closure of Hammersmith Bridge, traffic volumes on this narrow road have increased. Therefore, the council is proposing to introduce a no motor vehicle restriction operating 7 am to 7 pm for westbound traffic on an experimental basis. Cllr Chard asked if the scheme could be expanded to include more roads; he was told yes, but it's better to start small and expand a scheme rather than having to reduce the size of one. Cllr Frieze asked why a low-traffic neighbourhood was not consulted upon. The council officers were worried about having too many knock-on effects. Cllr Frieze said the council needed to do more to disincentivise car usage in the borough. Cllr Ehmann said he was trying to work with the grain of public opinion.

The appointment of the new **Parking enforcement** was the next item. The new contract will cover Richmond and Wandsworth, unlike the existing contract, which just covers Richmond. The three bids were assessed against 50% price, 40% quality and 10% social value. Cllr Butlin said he felt he was being used as a 'rubber stamp' and the committee should be consulted more on contracts in the future. Cllr Ehmann said that if more information were made available to the committee, it would have to discuss the matter in a closed session, which would decrease transparency. He suggested more private briefing sessions to involve the committee more.

Moving onto the **Q3 Budget Monitoring Report** – there is a £658,000 underspend, mainly due to parking income being £450,000 higher than expected and the fees from utility work licensing being higher by £189,000. Cllr Frieze asked to confirm that all fines were included in the figures; the answer was yes. The final item on the agenda was the **Forward Plan** which was agreed and the meeting closed.

You can read the full papers of the committee and watch the webcast by clicking [HERE](#)

## Anti-terrorism bollards installed at Richmond Station



# Tackling Crime is my mission

By Ron Mushiso, Conservative GLA Candidate for South West London

Despite our reputation as one of the safest boroughs in London, the London Borough of Richmond upon Thames is not an island unto itself. The lived experience of Londoners I speak with every week and the data tell us that crime has surged under the eight-year tenure of Mayor Sadiq Khan. Knife crime in London is up by 49%, sexual offences are up by 50%, and robberies are up by 45%. There is a distinct sense of helplessness when crimes are reported but are not being actively followed up. The London Borough of Richmond might be safer, but the starting point for these types of comparison gives a false sense of reality. None of us are immune to these trends, and residents rightfully worry about the safety of their neighbourhoods.



That is why I pay tribute to our local safer neighbourhood teams in Richmond and Twickenham, who have been working hard to remain vigilant and responsive despite limited support from the Mayor's office and City Hall. The [Barnes Safer Neighbourhood](#) teams have been tirelessly patrolling hotspots in and around St Paul's School and the Harroddian School so that pupils feel safe getting home. In Twickenham, the [Heathfield Safer Neighbourhood](#) team has been actively working to tackle reports of drug dealing, violence, and sexual offences reported around the Hounslow Heath Estate area. These efforts should demonstrate clearly that the Met Police are on our side and they are doing a great job with limited resources under very challenging circumstances.

I am calling for more support for our police force because knife-related crimes continue to plague communities, instilling fear, especially among the youth. As a teacher, I am always reminding my pupils to remain vigilant and to walk home in groups. I am well aware that it shouldn't be this way. Our society is broken when young people who intimidate others and commit these crimes do not know their right from wrong. Moreover, they seem to hold attitudes that suggest their brazen crime activities are without consequences. It is perhaps this attitude that led to 110 recorded knife crimes in the borough in the last 12 months, including a recent stabbing in Teddington on New Year's Eve. Fortunately, this was not a fatal stabbing, but it should not take another tragedy for the Mayor to act. As the Mayor, Sadiq Khan is responsible for Police and Crime in London. Keeping us safe should be his primary mission.

I believe the current Mayor has taken his eyes off the ball, and that is why I believe we need a change at the top. We need a fresh set of eyes and a new approach to keeping Londoners safe. Susan Hall is the only candidate that can genuinely challenge this Mayor. She has already set out her plan to equip the police with the necessary resources required to better serve our community. With a proposed £200 million investment back into the police force, they will have the tools needed to go after criminals. It means they will have the capacity to gather data and carry out effective Stop and Search methods that build trust and confidence within our communities. Mayor Khan's controversial decisions, like disbanding Borough Commanders and restructuring the Metropolitan Police, have left our forces stretched thin. Recruitment targets have been missed, and resources are scarce.

Susan Hall has pledged to reintroduce Borough Commanders and invest in specialized police units for the borough. Under Susan Hall, Richmond will have its own Borough Commander, something we haven't seen since 2017. If elected as the London Assembly Member on the 2nd of May 2024, I will be asking her to look at the idea of rolling out pop-up police hubs, similar to the [Safe Space](#) initiative outside Richmond station on Friday nights. These are the sorts of pragmatic ideas that need to be championed by City Hall. Public safety will be my mission as the London Assembly Member.



# RICHMOND



## Join the conversation

Come and find out, and influence, how the Metropolitan Police Service is changing to deliver more trust, less crime and high standards for Londoners.

We'd love you to join officers in a conversation to explore what our new plan, A New Met for London, created following feedback from 10,000 community members, partners, and Met people, will mean for improved policing for your local communities.

The theme of this event is anti-social behaviour (ASB).

Come and share your views and help shape the reforms being made and the service to your community.



Tuesday 19<sup>th</sup> March 2024



Arrival between 1800-1830hrs



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MORE TRUST | LESS CRIME | HIGH STANDARDS

# Council Reports

## Education and Children's Services Committee - 22 February 2024

James Knight

The first item was the new **Home to School Travel Policy** for children with Special Educational Needs and/or Disability (SEND) designed to reduce costs by training more children to travel by public transport and to give personal travel budgets for travel. A public speaker, Holly Rose, spoke about her difficulties getting transport as Achieving for Children, whom the council delegated Education Services to, would not provide transport because she only had custody for 50% of the time, putting her under huge pressure. The committee agreed to pass the new policy except for the part where custody is shared and requested this part be referred back.

The next item was **The Children and Young People's Plan 2023-2028**, co-produced with children for the first time. However, this has been delayed because partners felt more Needs and Actions should be added. Cllr Michael Butlin (South Twickenham) asked about the reference to dental during the introduction; it was about the borough having one of the poorest rates of child dental health in London. Cllr Michael Wilson (Heathfield Ward) said there should be more difficult targets and asked where the stretch was to push everyone to achieve more.

Moving onto the **Dedicated School Budget**, the grant for 2024/25 is £212.052m compared to £200.5m, representing an increase of £11.5 million or 5.75%. There has been an ongoing issue that high-needs education exceeds the standard funding provided by the Government. Like some others, the council has received Government safety value funding, which has recently been extended for another five years as further work is needed to reduce costs. Cllr Wilson raised the meeting some school governors had with the Secretary of State for Education, where she said Richmond was sitting on money it could give to schools. Cllr Niki Crookdake (Mortlake and Barnes Common) said the issue in the past was that schools held high levels of reserves and that the committee needed to be provided with a schedule of them.

This was followed by the internal **Directorate Budget Report**. The social care team was supporting 963 children by the end of 2023, 10% more than the pre-pandemic years. This rise in need has impacted the overall costs of residential and support packages. An extra £213,000 is being allocated for SEND transport, with around 365 children using this service, around 20% of children with SEND placements. Cllr Julia Cambridge (East Sheen) said she was "super happy" seeing an increase of 4 years of paid council tax for care leavers living in Richmond and outside the borough at the cost of £164,000. Overall, there is a £4,583,700 increase in budget and £806,600 of cost reductions/cuts needed to balance the books.

**Achieving for Children (AfC) Reserved Decisions** was the next item. Richmond is the joint owner of this community interest company that runs children's services for the council. Certain 'key decisions' are reserved for the council, and this item sought approval for the five-year strategic plan, the 2024/25 budget & medium-term financial plan and the treasury plan for the next financial year; after a brief discussion, these were approved.

Following was the **Education Capital Maintenance Programme for 2024-25** for schools still controlled by the council. Richmond's approach puts the onus on schools to bid for work to be carried out and requires a 10% contribution to costs from the school's budget capped at £20,000. The government grant for next year is anticipated to be around last year's £1.178 million. Not all schools made a bid, with 15 schools submitting 26 projects for funding.

**The Education High Need Capital Program** was then examined. The committee was asked to approve entering contracts to design and build new special schools at Petersham and Hampton. Due to a funding shortfall, the council plans to fund this £4.4 million gap from its general fund to be repaid out of future high-needs capital funding. There is a pipeline of SEND-related capital totalling £25.3 million but a funding gap of £7.4 million. The chair cut the discussion short as they were up against the guillotine. The **Forward Plan** was briefly discussed before the meeting was closed.

You can read the full papers of the committee and watch the webcast by clicking [HERE](#)

# Twickenham Riverside Adventure Playground

Young people can't wait to find out what is there for them on the Twickenham Riverside site.

Unfortunately, the Council did not include them in their plans and are intending to "outsource" the play area for teens on Twickenham Riverside.



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[volunteer@richmondcvcs.org.uk](mailto:volunteer@richmondcvcs.org.uk)



020 8843 7940



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Registered Charity 1075259



## NAMASTE VILLAGE COMES TO TWICKERS

Renowned, award-winning, Indian vegetarian restaurant **Namaste Village** is opening in Twickenham this weekend, from 5pm on Saturday, 2 March at 27 York Street. (the site of the previous Atithi restaurant, near the bus stop)

**And for the whole month of March, there's a 'soft opening' with a generous 50 percent off all food.**

Further information and the menu is on the website [here](#)

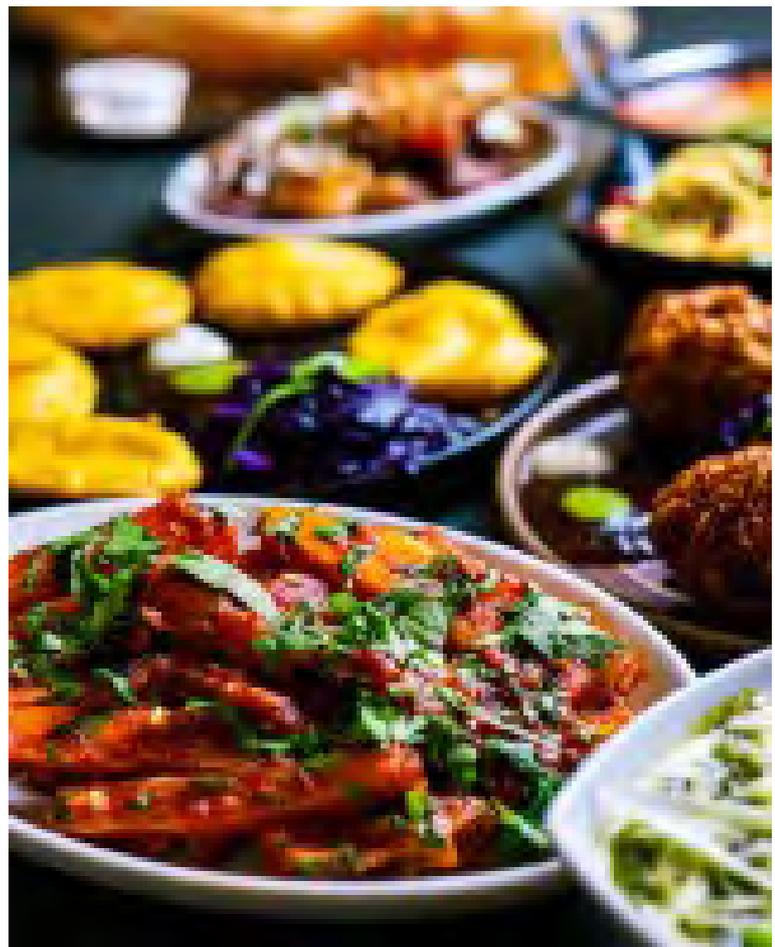
The restaurant is open Tues to Fri - 12:00 to 14:00 | 17:00 to 22:00 and Sat - 12:00 to 22:00  
Sun - 12:00 to 21:00.

**Terms and Conditions:** Cannot be combined with other offers | Discount applies to Al a carte | 2-31 Mar 2024 only | you must ask for the offer or share code NVT-WEEKONE before placing the order.

To quote from the website: *“Indian cuisine is as diverse as its people, traditions, and the country itself. From the spice fairs in the north to the abundance of the south, the rich Mughlai cuisine of the central mass to the exotic tastes of the east and west, the land of India has a palette full of flavours to celebrate.*

*But the true Indian sentiment that makes any nook comfortable is the shared experience of culture. As the masalas mingle with each other in braising pots, people from all walks of life and cultures leave their differences at the gate to dine, drink and dish out conversations together.*

*The brewing relationships as people break bread together are very close to our Indian heritage; this is why we celebrate traditions and engage in festivities, to rejoice in our shared love. Food is the heart of India, and Indians know it.”*



And, of course, a full review will follow in due course...

## SHOWING YOUR LOVE ON MOTHERS' DAY

The Fourth Sunday in Lent is **Mothering Sunday**. This year it falls on March 10, and is also called Mothers' Day. Whatever you call it, it's a great time to show your appreciation of your mother, if you're fortunate still to have her in your life. If you're able to see your mother, and perhaps bring her some flowers, on March 10, then that's probably one of the best presents you can give - but there are also lots of other options:



They sometimes describe gin as 'Mother's ruin', but here's a great present that's not a ruinous price! Yes, you could just send a bottle of gin by mail order, or take one to her, but **Hampers.com** has put together a fabulous **Mother's Day Luxury Gin Hamper** for £69. What's more, it contains a full sized bottle of an unusual gin, much appreciated by any gin fan. The star of the show is a bottle of **Shivering Mountain's Early Harvest Edition** of their Premium Dry Gin, distilled in the Peak District and inspired by local



mountain Mam Tor. (full of berry, floral and spice notes). It's paired with a duo of tonic waters to complement it perfectly, and there are sweet treats, including a bar of 72% dark chocolate from **Chococo** and gin fizz gummies, followed by **Mr Filbert's** dry roasted peanuts. It's packed into a reusable bamboo tray. If she has a sweet tooth, you could instead opt for the **Mother's Day Gin Lovers Cream Tea Hamper** for £59, with a smaller bottle of the hard stuff, and the components of a wonderful afternoon tea.



Start her morning the right way by whipping up some pancakes topped with fresh fruit and drizzled in some top-notch New Zealand honey such as **Melora Mānuka Honey**. It's an unusual, indulgent (and sweet) idea and one that Dad can easily do with the help of the children. The **Squeezy Melora Manuka Honey** bottle (£12.50) is so handy and perfect for the breakfast table. The company has a fascinating story: it began in the mid 1990's, with a vision to have the traditional Māori knowledge of the Mānuka plant recognised as an important and worthwhile resource for world health. They created a fair and open agreement between the landowners, beekeepers and processing company. This agreement ensures all parties receive an equal share of the profits from all honey sold. More information and the delicious range of products made from Manuka honey is at [www.melora.co.uk](http://www.melora.co.uk)

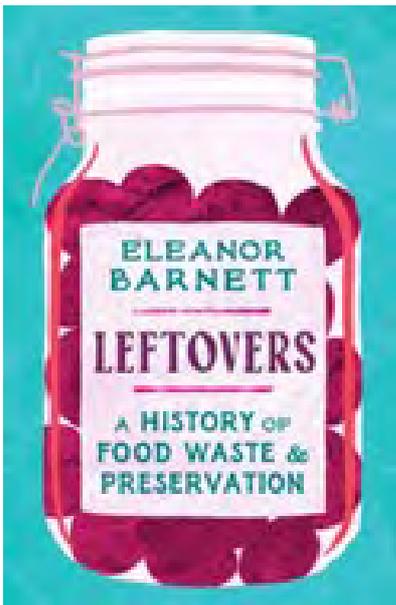
Chocolates are always welcome, and so is an Espresso Martini, so how about combining them? **Joe & Seph's** - makers of the most fabulous popcorn - also make delicious choccy truffles, and have just launched an **Espresso Martini Caramel Truffle**. This boozy Espresso Martini caramel, made with fresh double cream, blended with 5% coffee liqueur & vodka, and a shot of espresso, is encased in a Belgian chocolate shell. Each truffle is a decadent little globe of flavour, so you can let your mother know that you think the world of her. £12.99 a box from [joeandsephs.co.uk](http://joeandsephs.co.uk) They also make Milk Chocolate Salted Caramel Truffles and Vegan Dark Chocolate Caramel ones.





Everything's coming up rosé! To keep her 'in the pink', how about a perfect medley of **Sea Change wines**, including the new Prosecco Rosé, an elegant Provence and a tasty Whale label Rosé from Château Canet. The **Only Rosé Pack** contains a bottle of each for £44.99. Sea Change is an award-winning, ethically sourcing, eco-friendly wine company, supporting global ocean conservation projects. Organic practices encourage soil fauna and flora and improve soil structure and health. There's no unnecessary plastic wrap around the cork, natural corks are used, and the paper for the labels comes from certified sustainable forests and made partially from grape waste. Combine these factors with a donation to marine charities from every bottle sold, and choosing Sea Change does make a difference. More info at [www.seachangewine.com](http://www.seachangewine.com)

If she's not into alcohol, I'd suggest a trip to your nearest **Whittard** store, or visit the website. The company has put together a lovely gift set for £30 that contains an English Rose Loose Tea Caddy, Luxury White Hot Chocolate and Salted Caramel Biscuits in a smart jute bag. It's also fully customisable, so you can choose a different hot chocolate, tea or coffee to swap in her preferred flavours. You can collect from the store free of charge or pay £3.95 for standard or £6.95 for next day delivery. [www.Whittard.co.uk](http://www.Whittard.co.uk)



If mum's a foodie, I'd recommend a fascinating newly published book: **Leftovers**. It's an informative and entertaining history of food preservation and waste in Britain, from the 16th Century to today. It explores the ingenious ways our ancestors sought to extend the life of food, and opens a window on the lives and values of ordinary folk in the past, revealing how wealth, inequality and religious doctrine shaped perceptions of food waste from Elizabethan times onwards. Embracing Tudor household management, new methods of food preservation introduced in the Industrial Revolution, state promotion of waste avoidance in two World Wars, and politics of food in the era of sustainability, **Leftovers** is really interesting. It's written by Eleanor Barnett, a food historian who, as **@historyeats** on Instagram, posts daily food history stories, paintings and objects from across the world. It's published by **Head of Zeus** at £27.99 hardback.

Save the expense of a restaurant meal with a ready-to-cook meal from a company such as **Côte At Home**. Its Mother's Day three course dinner is designed by Gordon Ramsay's former executive chef with everything delivered to your door in a chilled box, ready to cook. Start with Pont-l'Évêque cheese, pickled carrots and cucumber, romesco dip, baguette & truffle saucisson. Then Beef Wellington, peppercorn sauce, new potatoes, roasted root vegetables and red cabbage, then chocolate roulade, pistachio ganache and cherry compote. This three course meal for four people costs £114.95. Available now to pre-order for delivery 6-8 March. More info on the website [www.coteathome.co.uk](http://www.coteathome.co.uk)



# Friendship Café

Do you know anyone who might benefit from a warm welcome and some friendly conversation?

Just a reminder that our friendship cafe is open on Thursdays 10:00 - 11:30.

Holy Trinity Church Twickenham:  
1 Vicarage Rd, Twickenham TW2 5TS



HOLY TRINITY TWICKENHAM

welcome to our

FRIENDSHIP CAFÉ

Thursdays 10:00am - 11:30am

WWW.HTTCHURCH.ORG

# Chef at The Dysart Petersham is shortlisted in prestigious Roux Scholarship cookery competition

A 22-year-old employee at The Dysart Petersham is in the running to be named the UK's best young chef – as he seeks to emulate his boss, who claimed the prestigious title 14 years ago.

Darryl Shotlander, a Senior Chef de Partie at the family-run, Michelin-starred restaurant in Richmond, will compete next week in one of two regional finals of the Roux Scholarship, widely regarded as the UK's top competition for young chefs.

He's hoping to go on to mirror the success of The Dysart Petersham's Head Chef Kenneth Culhane, who won the Scholarship after reaching the national final as a 28-year-old back in 2010.

Marking its 40th anniversary this year, the Roux Scholarship is judged by a formidable panel of internationally acclaimed chefs, including top names such as Angela Hartnett, Brian Turner, Clare Smyth, André Garrett and James Martin, together with cousins Michel Roux Jr and Alain Roux.

Many of the previous winners have gone on to achieve huge success, running their own restaurants and securing coveted Michelin stars, but victory also secures the invaluable mentorship of the Roux family and of previous "Roux Scholars".

Darryl said:

*"Winning the competition would be the ultimate honour. I've seen what the Roux Scholarship can do for chefs' careers and their lives."*

*"I'm 22, so I'm the youngest chef competing this year. It's really nice to be on the same stage as so many other very talented individuals and I'm just hoping to demonstrate my skills well and just do my best."*

Originally from Canada, Darryl gained experience in Italy and in central London before moving to the more classical French-style of cooking at The Dysart Petersham.

He secured his place among the Roux Scholarship regional finalists after creating a mouthwatering French/Italian-inspired dish of roasted pork short loin and crackling, served with hay-smoked kidney, sweet potato Cappelletti with apple, hazelnuts and gorgonzola, chou farci and an apple and mustard cream sauce.



*“I was keen to incorporate various different styles of cuisine,” Darryl explained. “My background is traditionally in Italian-style cooking. I spent a year in Italy and even before that had spent two years making pasta. Now that I’m in the UK, I wanted to pool some of my Italian past with the influences and subtlety of French cuisine that I’m learning from Kenneth at The Dysart.”*

He added:

*“Kenneth has been a massive inspiration. Since moving to the UK, the Roux Scholarship was a huge conversation that I had with chef Kenneth. I really want to compete in this competition.”*

For the regional final, Darryl will have to cook his creation for judges in London on Thursday March 7, with the additional challenge of creating a dessert from a mystery box of ingredients handed to him on the day.

In total, 18 young chefs are taking part at two regional finals – in London and Birmingham – with the top six competitors then going on to the national final, to be held at the three-Michelin-starred Waterside Inn in Bray, Berkshire, on Monday April 8.

The Dysart Petersham’s Head Chef Kenneth Culhane said:

*“We are delighted for Darryl. It’s wonderful to see thoughtful young talent come through the Dysart team and embrace this incredible opportunity.*

*I’ve seen first hand how much of a positive influence the Scholarship has on a young chef’s career and thus am delighted to help and mentor young chefs that come through our kitchen over the years.”*

Kenneth added:

*“The world of a modern chef is a very complex business. It’s certainly not a cliché to say that winning the Scholarship will change your life. This gives a chef a great opportunity to express their passions and explore new landscapes with so many wonderful professionals. It certainly teaches you that responsibility and opportunity are synonymous.”*

Darryl’s participation in the Roux Scholarship adds to a string of successes for The Dysart Petersham. The restaurant has recently been awarded a coveted Michelin star for the fifth successive year, and it has been named among London’s top 30 restaurants by independent restaurant commentator SquareMeal.

In addition, the prestigious Harden’s guide – which lists the UK’s “most notable restaurants” – has ranked the food at The Dysart Petersham as “exceptional”, with a rating of five out of five.





# SPANISH TAPAS & *Conversation*

**Saturday 16th March 2024**

**12.30 - 14.30**

To Book:

[info@spanishletsgo.com](mailto:info@spanishletsgo.com)

All proceeds go to ETNA!



SCAN ME



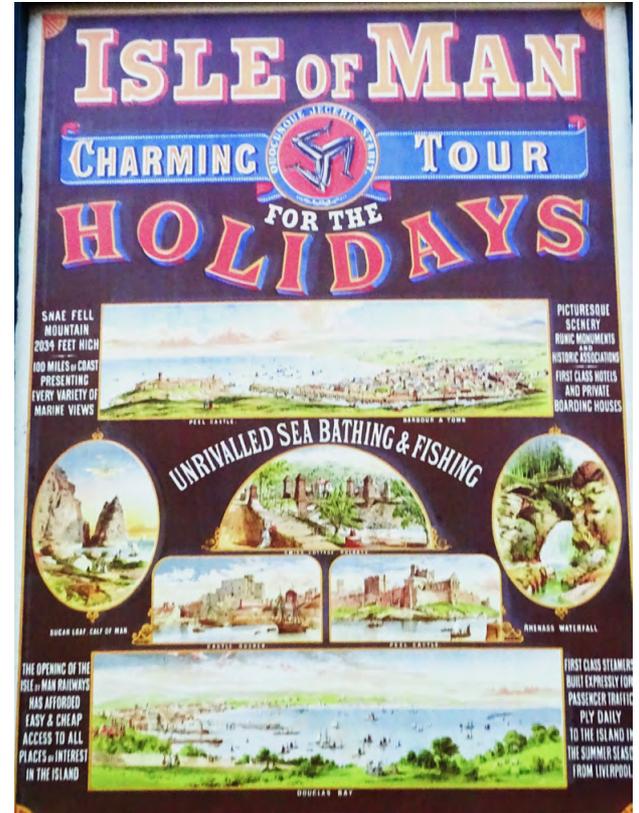
**ETNA Community Centre**  
**13 Rosslyn Road, Twickenham, TW1 2AR**

# Traveller's Tales 156

## Mysterious Man Part 2

Doug Goodman sees more of The Isle of Man

After my feature on the legends and stories about the little people and the many scary creatures roaming The Isle of Man, I was worried that I might have upset them. 'Always speak kindly about them,' advised an islander. Apparently they are mischievous and enjoy playing tricks on anyone causing offence. It seems I escaped their wrath but I noticed that the contents of my bottle of delicious gin from the Fynoderee distillery at Ramsey had diminished considerably. There's so much to see on the small island in the middle of The Irish Sea: castles, museums, art galleries, historic sites and a great choice of rail transport. Outdoor pursuits offer hiking trails, bird watching, exploring old villages and plenty of beach activities. The first place I visited was the WW1 internment camp at Knockaloe near Peel in the west. This huge camp was where 30,000 German, Austro-Hungarian and Turkish men aged 17 to 55, who were considered a danger to the UK during World War One, were incarcerated and guarded by the British Army. Looking at the fields stretching away to the distant hills it was hard to imagine such a large development of huts surrounded by barbed wire. Twenty three compounds each held 1000 men amongst whom was Joseph Pilatus who was the inspiration for Pilates. The museum contains many artefacts from the period and the scale model of the camp aids the imagination.



Happy Times in The Isle of Man



Knockaloe Internment Camp



Model of Internment Camp



Harbour and castle at Peel

### CASTLES AND TRAINS

Peel Castle viewed from the end of the harbour near the fascinating Manannan House Museum is impressive. The fortress is situated on St Patrick's Isle and is reached on foot by a causeway. It was an 11th century fort for Viking Kings and later became the centre for the island's government. There's plenty to see in Laxey but the most important site is the giant – in fact the world's largest – water wheel. While renovations continue the 170 year old wheel is an

impressive object and was built to drain water from the miles of tunnels where one fifth of all the UK's zinc was mined. From Laxey the electric tramway took us on an hour's journey through beautiful scenery to Ramsey. The 17 mile ride is in carriages dating from 1893. The Isle of Man produces a wide range of commemorative postage stamps with trains featuring prominently.



Laxey Town



Laxey Water Wheel



Tram Travel



Trains Commemorated

Our guide was asked where the famous TT motor cycle races took place as we drove along narrow country lanes, 'You're on it,' was the reply. The 37 mile course, which opened in 1904, covers the island and attracts over 40,000 spectators. I didn't notice any dual carriageways so it becomes impossible for non-racing vehicles and people to move around on any part of the race course during an event. The next treat, especially for steam train lovers was a trip from Castletown to Port Erin. Constructed in 1873 the Isle of Man Steam Railway was used by local people as well as tourists and also for transporting goods. It's a major tourist attraction with four steam trains, immaculately preserved, pulling carriages dating from 1913. The gleaming engine pulling our train was number 4, named Loch after Island Governor Loch built 150 years ago. Castletown, the island's ancient capital, is a pretty town with plenty to see. The medieval fortress is one of Europe's best preserved castles. Built for a Norse King it was home to successive rulers until the 1600s. It was later used as a mint and a prison. Children will love exploring its rooms and passages. The final form of travel could have been along the main promenade by horse drawn tram but in winter the horses take a much deserved holiday at a rest home near the airport. Late spring and summer will see full services on the trams and trains. One ride not to be missed is by electric tram from Laxey to the island's summit Snaefell. Three days on The Isle of Man in early February was delightful but I cannot help feeling how much better a week in the summer would be.



Steaming



Castle Rushen



Slow Travel

For more information: [manxnationalheritage.im](http://manxnationalheritage.im); [visitisleofman.com](http://visitisleofman.com)

# WIZ TALES: Samoa Island Chain

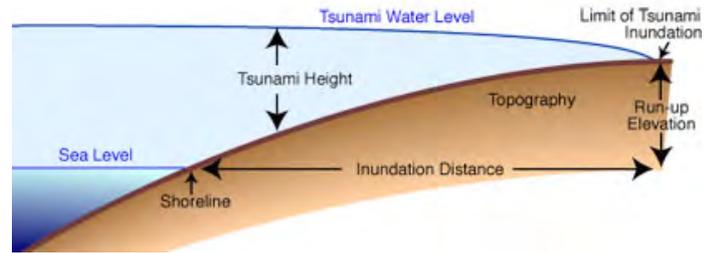
Teresa Read



## Earthquakes accelerated the rise in the sea level of Samoan islands

In September 2009 a tsunami caused by an earthquake in the Pacific (8.3-magnitude) killed an estimated one hundred and ninety people in an area including American Samoa, Samoa and Tonga.

However, it is understood that two earthquakes in 2009 have also altered the earth's mantle below the Samoan island chain.



Measures to describe a tsunami size

The Samoan Islands are sinking faster as the earthquakes caused a deformation in the Earth's mantle beneath the island chain; this has added to the rise in sea level already predicted due to climate change.



Afonon village, Tutuila island, American Samoa



Matafao Peak, Tutuila Island, American Samoa



American Samoa's Ofu Beach



Pola Island, Tutuila Island, American Samoa

Photographs and information: World InfoZone:

American Samoa <https://worldinfozone.com/gallery.php?country=AmericanSamoa>

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

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

# What is so great about leap year day?

By Deep Patel

~ Through The Eyes of a Twickenham Shop Keeper ~

It comes every four years...and has always sounded a bit odd to me...but what exactly is so great about leap year day? This has been the talking point in my newsagent shop this week, so what did my customers have to say?

Well, one woman came into my shop and told me she was twenty years of age...I didn't want to be rude...but she definitely looked older. It was then I realised that her birthday was on the 29<sup>th</sup> February ...the woman was not 20 years old at all...she was in fact 80 years old... but as she was born on leap year day, she had only had 20 "actual" birthdays though her life...that's 60 times less presents and most importantly... 60 times less birthday cake!!



## Happy Leap Day!

The same day a...man came into my shop smiling from ear to ear...I asked him why he was so happy today...he said it was because he had managed to book the last registry office slot for his wedding on the 29<sup>th</sup> February 2025...he told me it was one of the hardest days to secure a slot for a marriage as apparently all the men try to get married on the 29<sup>th</sup> February in the hope that they only have to buy 1 anniversary present for their wives every 4 years...would you believe some people?

Aside from these two happenings...what was the deal with adding on an extra day to February? Why do we even bother? One of my customers explained the reason why...I mean all of you reading this article right now will probably already know as you will already be exceptional in the intelligence department (or you wouldn't be reading this exquisite publication in the first place), but for those of you who may not, know...we have an extra day added to February every 4 years as each year in actual fact is 365.25 days long, so every 4 years, we have to add an extra day to make up for this! It takes the Earth 365 days, 5 hours, 48 minutes and 46 seconds to orbit the sun, according to NASA – and while that is rounded down to the 365 days we recognize as a typical year, those nearly six extra hours don't disappear. Instead, leap years are added to account for the difference...and I thought it was something to do with frogs...

**Remember...**

***“It isn't about how many moments you have left in life... it's about how much life you can fit into each moment that counts...”***

### **MY CREATURE-KINDNESS TIP OF THE WEEK...**

**STOP ANY INSECT KINDLY (GOOD KARMA):** Sprinkle pure essential peppermint oil, Olbas oil, fine black pepper or white vinegar around places where you don't want them to come (but NOT directly on them)...they will go without you having to harm them. For ANY specific tip to stop any “pest” or insect KINDLY (for good karma/blessings), email me:

[InsectLoversUnite@gmail.com](mailto:InsectLoversUnite@gmail.com) or join my Facebook page: “INSECT LOVERS UNITE”.



## The Circle

by Somerset Maugham

Theatre Royal Bath and the Orange Tree at Richmond Theatre

Do we learn from history? Of course not. But can we learn from family history? This is the premise of *The Circle*, written in 1921 in the aftermath of the Great War. Nevertheless, its study of the inestimable value of marriage teaches much in 2024. *The Circle*, however, is a comedy, and embraces its subjects with a light touch. Sparkling and fresh, it is written with quicksilver wit.



It is the summer of 1920. In the grand country house of Arnold Champion-Cheney MP, and his young wife Elizabeth, an awkward luncheon party is about to take place. The romantic Elizabeth has invited his mother Lady Catherine, “Kitty”, to visit. Arnold has not seen his mother for thirty years, since she absconded with her lover, Hughie, Lord Porteus ... who is coming with her. And Arnold’s father, Clive Champion-Cheney has just unexpectedly arrived too. Then there’s the dashing Teddie Luton, a weekend house guest.



Elizabeth bubbles in excitement at her mother-in-law’s audacious amorous adventures. “Some of us are more mother; some of us more woman”, she breathlessly states. Olivia Vinall scintillates as a bright flirtatious Elizabeth. If opposites attract, Arnold would be an ideal husband for Elizabeth. He is a dour and serious politician. Pete Ashmore portrays Arnold’s intransigence and his bottled frustrations.

The unanticipated appearance of Arnold’s father is disconcerting, but he has a ready wit. Local celebrity Clive Francis brings an air of mischievous insouciance to the role, and a constant twinkle in his eye.

Kitty is brash, decorated, and of adamantine self-assurance, clinging onto her perceived youth. Jane Asher burrows gimlet-like into the character, giving Kitty real depth. Porteus is a prickly old man, his patience frayed by unfulfilled aspirations. Nicholas Le Prevost revels in the role, using a mere shrug to comic effect. Nevertheless, the mutual affection between Hughie and Kitty shines through the bickering.



Will the circle come round and family history repeat itself, as Elizabeth’s burgeoning attraction to the handsome and unencumbered Teddie Luton escalates? Director Tom Littler’s precise and stylish [Richmond revival](#) of *The Circle* leaves the answer ambiguous ... but the nature of circles is that they tend to roll on.

Read Mark Aspen’s review at [www.markaspen.com/2024/02/21/circle-rt](http://www.markaspen.com/2024/02/21/circle-rt)

Photography by Nobby Clark and Ellie Kurttz



## *The Children*

by Lucy Kirkwood

Putney Theatre Company at Putney Arts Theatre

A plot involving a retired couple of physicists and a disaster at a nearby nuclear power station seems unlikely to inspire an evening of entertainment. But, under the sharp direction of Carrie Cable, *The Children* serves a fascinating drama full of intelligence, comedy and challenge.

An unexpected visitor disturbs the routine of the couple, Hazel and Robin, when they are surprised by the arrival, after 38 years, of Rose, an ex-work colleague. Why has Rose returned? Are there hints of a past affair? Why is their farm cottage sitting on a crumbling cliff; why a tidal wave and explosion; why a Geiger counter, an exclusion zone and a shortage of electricity?

On the East coast, near the nuclear power station where there has been a radioactive leak, the couple, retired nuclear engineers from the plant, are trying to preserve normality, Hazel with yoga, and Robin by milking his cows. Rose arrives from America, the catalyst for disruptive change, to persuade Hazel and Robin to go with her to the disaster scene to stem the radiation leak, set on saving the future for “the children”. Like peeling the layers of an onion, earlier connections between the characters unravel to tell a compelling story of their past.



Frances Bodiam captures the essence of Hazel with well-observed skill, a cautious mother and domestic goddess with a deep suspicion of the extrovert Rose. As her husband Robin, Paul White is convincing as a stubborn man struggling against the odds, but ultimately optimistic. His deadpan explanation of a failed Viagra-fuelled encounter with their milkmaid delicately balances comedy and pathos. Melanie Wakeley conveys the spirit of the self-assured Rose, independent and childless, much the opposite of Hazel, but also giving glimpses of her vulnerability.

As they put together the pieces of the jigsaw, the cast beautifully observe the mannerisms and the reactions between the characters. Nevertheless, questions remain ambiguous. Did Hazel deliberately make herself pregnant by Robin to capture him from the arms of Rose? But what is not in doubt, is the poignant and disturbing end to the play with the sound of crashing waves, followed by church bells mournfully ringing, as if from under the water.

Read Steve Mackrell’s review at [www.markaspen.com/2024/02/24/children-ptc](http://www.markaspen.com/2024/02/24/children-ptc)

Image courtesy of PTC



## The Magic Flute

by Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart, libretto by Emanuel Schikaneder  
English National Opera at the London Coliseum until 30<sup>th</sup> March

*The Magic Flute* is a challenge to put on, making formidable technical demands of a large cast and requiring lots of changes of scenery. But, in the hands of Rachael Hewer, this revival of Simon McBurney's splendidly theatrical 2013 production achieves miracles, with its hanging platform, which can be tilted in a variety of directions against dramatic backdrops and projections, including ordeals by fire and water, that had me wanting McBurney, and set designer Michael Levine, to turn their attention to Wagner's *Ring*.



The music was splendidly handled by conductor Erina Yashima, so that it was always agile, light and fleet, delivering a wonderful mounting sense of exhilaration. Mozart done right like this feels as natural as breathing. Raising the orchestra to stage level works well, enhancing connection with singers and enabling Tamino and Papageno to interact with the flautist and percussionist when they have recourse to flute and bells at points of crisis.



The cast had no difficulty with Mozart's exacting vocal requirements, which opera house managements have a tendency to underestimate, particularly in some of the smaller parts. Not here, with Jonathan Lemalu as the Speaker, Peter Hoare as Monostatos, Alexandra Oomens as Papagena, and Carrie-Ann Williams, Amy Holyland, Stephanie Wake-Edwards blending together beautifully as the Three Ladies, which is rarer than it should be.

Rainelle Krause turned the coloratura hazards of the Queen of the Night into exciting vocal opportunities, although I wasn't sure about giving her a wheelchair. Disability equals villainy seems like a politically incorrect reversion to early James Bond films.

John Relyea was a vocally smoother Sarastro than his previous shouty Wotan, fully delivering all those low, low notes that sound designed to expose deficiencies in a bass's technique. This was a Sarastro as a CEO speaking to the Board, rather than priestly mode. But Sarastro remains a dislikeable figure, awarding prizes for ignoring suicidal fiancées, and arranging a punishment beating for Monostatos. Norman Reinhardt grew into the part of Tamino with increasing vocal steel and sweetness. David Stout was a restrained but amusing and appealing Papageno, who took his ladder with him everywhere, and Sarah Tynan looked and sounded glorious as Pamina.



Reda Patrick Shorrock's review at [www.markaspen.com/2024/02/29/flute-eno-24](http://www.markaspen.com/2024/02/29/flute-eno-24)

Photography by Manuel Harlan

# Congratulations to Coward at 125!

125 years since Noel Coward's birth and 94 years since its first production the Richmond Shakespeare Society are presenting The Master's imperishable comedy, PRIVATE LIVES. In 1930 when Coward and Gertrude Lawrence delighted and shocked London audiences the critics found it brittle and lightweight, a mere butterfly, but the butterfly has continued to delight more-or-less continually ever since with many and frequent revivals. Inevitably the shock of a divorced couple accidentally thrown together in a French hotel and unable to resist a passionate re-union has faded with the years but the romance, the tenderness, the razor-sharp wit of the loving-hating couple remain as fresh as ever.

PRIVATE LIVES plays at the Mary Wallace Theatre on Twickenham's Embankment from March 16<sup>th</sup>-23<sup>rd</sup> with booking at [www.richmondshakespeare.org.uk](http://www.richmondshakespeare.org.uk)



Rehearsal photos by CHARLOTTE HOROBIN

## Landmark Arts Centre to host choir events

Landmark Arts Centre will present two unique choral music events next month. Come along and enjoy a wide variety of music taking place at the hall.

On Saturday 23 March 2024 from 7.30pm, Twickenham Choral invite guests to a performance of J.S. Bach's St John Passion, to mark the 300th anniversary of the first performance of this colossus of musical achievement on Good Friday 1724.

[Find out more and book tickets for St John Passion.](#)

Sunday 24 March at 5pm sees a return of the Landmark Festival of Choirs, a musical celebration that promises to enchant and inspire. This event brings together three resident choirs – ManSong, Landmark Sound, and Landmark Singers – along with the returning stars, Chase Bridge Community Choir.



[Find out more and book tickets for the Landmark Festival of Choirs](#)

DRAMACUBE presents  
MATILDA THE MUSICAL JR

March 13th-21st

Dramacube is an award-winning local drama company for children. Buy tickets to watch their 8 to 12yr casts perform Matilda the Musical Jr.

For dates and how to book, visit <https://artsrichmond.org.uk/whats-on>

**D**ramacube

PRESENTS



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ROALD DAHL'S

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**HAMPTON HILL THEATRE**  
**PERFORMANCES 13TH - 21ST MARCH**  
**Book tickets at [dramacube.co.uk](https://dramacube.co.uk)**

# Council Reports

## Finance, Policy and Resources Committee

27 February 2024

James Knight

Pools on the Park / Ellera Hall / Twickenham Riverside / Community Safety Plan / Universal Credit Migration / Community Safety Partnership / Council Tax Recommendation

The first item was the Capital Funding Review with three public speakers for this item. The first speaker was Mr. Martin Baker from the **Pools on the Park Health Suite** Action Group. He was scathing about the conduct of the council and individual councillors and their lack of transparency over the closure of the health suite facility. The second speaker, Rosemary McGlashon from the Teddington Society, spoke about the redevelopment of **Ellera Hall**. Initially, the society was told it would be revenue neutral but is now concerned it is no longer value for money as the council plans to subsidise it with around £6.7 million of public money. The society would like the council to pause the project to conduct a full review to see if the existing building can be refurbished, which could be more cost-effective. The third speaker, Mr Hackett from the Ellera Road Residents Association Neighbours of Ellera Hall (TRANEH), said the value for money claims made by the council could be substantiated. He said serious questions about this project should not be swept under the carpet. He said there needs to be a transparent review of the project. Cllr Roberts challenged the two Ellera Hall speakers, trying to imply they did not support new social housing. However, both of them stated they supported social housing, but the North Lane Carpark site could be used instead.

Two interested councillors also spoke; Cllr Crookdake (Mortlake and Barnes Common) spoke against the council's strategy of providing all the **new special school places** in stand-alone high-need schools rather than having a more balanced approach where some places are integrated within mainstream education. Places integrated into mainstream schools can cost between £5,000 to £30,000 per place instead of £190,000 per place at these proposed stand-alone schools. Cllr Robin Brown (Hampton Wick and South Teddington) Finance and Resources Lead Member said these places are needed and that some children have needs above what can be met in mainstream school. He went on to say that the council decided to go ahead before the government had provided the money and is taking money from the basic needs pot (which funds the expansion of mainstream school places) to bridge the gap. Cllr Caroline Wren (Fulwell and Hampton Hill) asked for clarification on the exact cohorts of need being created. Cllr Crookdake said her understanding was that some low-level needs places were being created in these supposedly high-needs new schools. Cllr Robin admitted not all the places were for high-needs children but said this will create capacity for them in the future as numbers increasing and it was a form of future proofing.

The second speaker was Cllr Richard Bennet (South Twickenham). He said, 'each year I seem to express scepticism about our capabilities to deliver the capital programme and sadly each year I turn out to be right.' He said we will soon need a financing requirement of £95 million and a borrowing requirement of £78 million. Even then, the numbers don't reflect what will be required for Twickenham Riverside. He asked for tighter controls and a more professional

approach. The chair of the meeting Cllr Gareth Roberts (Hampton) asked if Cllr Bennett was concerned about a particular project? He replied that the figures for **Twickenham Riverside** were the same as January 2023 despite high inflation and before receiving any quotations. Cllr Wren said she was concerned about costs “ballooning” for Ellera Hall, Twickenham Riverside and Clarendon School. Cllr Bennet said that he had not seen risk registers and information was being withheld from him (which is worrying because he is the chair of the audit committee who are supposed to have oversight of this).

The next item was the **Richmond Community Safety Plan 2024/27**. Cllr Crookdake addressed the committee as an interested councillor. She said the council should provide funding for some new police bases for the Richmond side of the borough. Cllr Brown said the funding from new police bases should come from the Metropolitan Police who are selling sites in the borough and should reinvest the money into new sites rather than the council using its own money. Cllr Wren asked about housing associations not being part of the scheme, which she saw as a significant oversight. Cllr Bennet said that the plan looked like it had been rushed, with no targets and KPIs. He said the June 2025 review point is too far ahead. He found the whole document to be “airy-fairy.” Cllr Wren said there was a lack of measurable goals. Cllr Kuldev Sehra (Whitton) stated that Richmond had the lowest crime rate in London so what we are doing works so why not continue to carry on the same? Cllr Bennet said that he disagreed with that, and it was complacent. Cllr Roberts asked, “How do you do better than safest, the superlative.” Cllr Bennett said that this was complacency. Cllr Roberts looked very angry at this point and clicked his pen repeatedly. Cllr Phil Giesler (Teddington) said the effectiveness of the police liaison groups varied and that they were not learning from one another. He said there should be more coordination between them, which an officer said they could look at. Chief executive Mike Jackson pointed out that Housing Associations attend Community Partnership meetings at a high level. Cllr Wren said there needed to be far more effort on tackling young people’s substance abuse as we have the highest rate in London.

The **Cost-of-Living Support** update was the next item on the agenda. Cllr Sehra welcomed the work to encourage people to claim benefits using the government’s LIFT (Low Income Family Tracker) programme. Cllr Brown said the Government funding has been important in the council’s cost of living support. The council has written to the Chancellor of the Exchequer asking for the Household Support Fund to be extended in the Budget. He said the council will be unable to maintain this cost-of-living support level indefinitely. There will need to be a switch to improving people’s reliance and ensuring they claim all the benefits they are entitled to and have the skills to manage their money.

**Richmond Sanctuary Strategy** was then briefly discussed next. This will establish a £1.6 million budget to support refugees over the next three years. Cllr Richard Baker (Teddington) asked who would be on the oversight board. The answer was heads of services with a role in service delivery.

The committee then discussed **Universal Credit Migration** because the Department of Work and Pensions will move the remaining people on legacy benefits onto Universal Credit starting April 2024. Two thousand working-age residents in Richmond will have to submit a new claim once they receive a migration notice. Once in receipt of Universal Credit the housing cost element is paid directly to the tenant and there is a risk of tenants not using the money to meet their rent liability. Cllr Wren asked for the committee to be regularly updated on this

matter.

Agenda item 10 was the update of the **Digital Strategy Update**. Cllr Brown said they would ensure digital inclusion was considered. Cllr Wren asked how more people could be encouraged to use the app, as only ten per cent of those downloading it use it monthly. There was a short discussion and the committee noted the update.

Following was the **Change Programme Progress Update**. Cllr Bennet spoke as an interested Councillor. He remembers being at the committee when the late Geoffrey Samuels brandished a copy of Ernest Gower's Plain Words, claiming that document was impenetrable. He said we were being asked to note progress, but he thinks there has not been much progress at all. Mike Jackson, the chief executive, said we are still mobilising in many areas. The council have appointed a new executive director Sam Olsen to lead the change program as the Local Government Association Peer Challenge review identified that the shared service did not previously have the capability to undertake a significant change program.

Next up was the **Annual Contracts Report and Procurement Report**. Cllr Brown said he was disappointed that the Government had not made full use of Brexit freedoms to reduce some of the red tape around procurement. Cllr Wren was pleased about the impact of climate change being considered in future contract awards. Item 13 the **Annual Equalities Report**, was presented. Cllrs had no questions, meaning this item took under one minute 30 seconds to deal with.

The next two items were combined: the **Q3 Monitoring Report** and the **Corporate Monitoring Report**. The council is projecting an underspend of just under £5 million. However, that budget assumed the council needed to spend £5 million of reserves so overall it is unlikely any reserves will be used this year. Cllr Brown observed that the major challenge is in education and children's services, and the council is looking at efficiencies it can make.

The **Directorate Budget Report 2024/25** and the **Council Tax** were taken together. Cllr Robin introduced the budget; he said the council is not immune to pressures other authorities are facing. The budget is proposing to use two million pounds of reserves. The finances are tight, so we must raise the council tax by the maximum amount. Cllr Crookdake said that the council's care contribution policy needs to be reviewed to protect the most vulnerable. Cllr Wren picked up on a paragraph in the report stating the council had not achieved the savings it had anticipated. The answer was that Achieving for Children did not have the capacity to make the changes needed, so a new project officer has been appointed. With no real debate or questioning of the council tax rise, the recommendation was approved unanimously. Though, the full council Budget meeting will make the final decision next Tuesday.

Item 19 was the **Treasury Management Strategy and Capital Strategy**, which was 'zipped through' at the chair's request. This is the annual update, but no changes have been made in the previous year. There was £6.5 more income from investments than anticipated when the budget was set due to the rate of return increasing from 1.7% to 4.83%.

The last item was the **Forward Plan**, which showed that in contrast to this meeting with 19 items, the next one will only have 3. Cllr Wren requested an update on the £1 million York House refurbishment. With no further business the chair closed the meeting.

You can read the full papers of the committee and watch the webcast by clicking [HERE](#)

Active Women and Girls Foundation in partnership with Age UK Richmond is offering a **FREE Pilates course - (24 lessons)** to local women over the age of 60, who are carers and/or are on pension credit or low income.



**Starts:**

**Tuesday 12th of March**

**12pm - 1pm**

**Whitton Social Centre,**

**TW2 7DT**

**Limited  
spaces!**

**To book please email Sarah  
info@activewomenandgirls.org.uk  
or call (after 5pm) 07941 334956.**

**Booking is essential, participants need to be able to get on & off the floor unaided. Conditions apply, proof of low income needed.**

**Funded by London Borough of Richmond upon Thames.**

# St Mary's University

## St Mary's University Celebrates Launch of St Mary's University Press

St Mary's University, Twickenham (SMU) has celebrated the launch of the [St Mary's University Press](#) at an event on its Strawberry Hill campus.

The Press will produce publications that further scholarly investigation, advance interdisciplinary inquiry, stimulate public debate, and enhance cultural life.



These will cover a broad range of subjects including Theology and Religious Studies, Education, Philosophy, Humanities, Psychology, Sport and Human Physiology, Business and Law, Social Sciences, and Health and Applied Science.

St Mary's University Press will primarily publish academic volumes based on research sponsored by the University or its scholars, including scholarly monographs and reference works. Through combining high quality scholarship with excellent production values, the Press aims to produce academic works of lasting value.

Alongside traditional hard and paperback volumes, the press will operate with electronic editions and Print on Demand

models. The Press will also endeavour to reprint new scholarly editions of classic books that have now fallen out of print.

The Press will embody St Mary's Catholic values, encouraging inclusiveness, generosity of spirit, respect, and excellence in the publications it sponsors. Its publications will be produced to the highest professional standards, providing a forum to influence public policy debate and problem solving.

The aim of the Press is to empower the St Mary's community to have a positive global impact, as well as stress the formation of the whole person: mentally, emotionally, and spiritually.

Speaking of the launch, Chair of the St Mary's University Press, Prof. John Charmley said, "We are delighted to see the launch of the St Mary's University Press after significant work from members of the University community. As Britain's premier Catholic University, St Mary's produces its own first-class research and acts as a centre for the publication of international research.

"The Press is committed to furthering knowledge and making innovative and rigorous scholarship available to the widest possible readership through our range of research publications. I look forward with excitement to seeing the first volumes from the press being published."



St Mary's  
University  
Twickenham  
London

# Thomas's College announces founding Master

Following a highly targeted recruitment process, we are delighted to announce the appointment of Will le Fleming as the founding Master of Thomas's College.

Will is Head of The Abbey School in Reading, one of the country's foremost independent girls' schools. He has an impressive track record of success within the independent school sector, with a particular understanding of academically ambitious London day schools.

Educated at Eton and Clare College, Cambridge, Will has worked as a journalist and author. He is married and has a young daughter.

Will's teaching career began at St Paul's School, where he rose to become Undermaster, before taking on a Deputy Headship at St Paul's Girls' School. His interest in developing an innovative and pupil-focused curriculum led to the Executive Headship of Fulham School before he took up his current role as Head of The Abbey.



Will's stewardship has seen sustained academic success, substantial curriculum development, extensive new facilities and the launch of award-winning partnership and community programmes.

Will's principles align perfectly with the mission of Thomas's. Our own parents, David and Joanna Thomas, responded to the rote-learning prevalent in 1970s junior education by developing an ethos which was centred on deep and sustained kindness, breadth of experience, and academic excellence. Will's vision for the College is for a transformative curriculum that sees this ethos develop and grow into secondary education. The College will place choice and personal development at the heart of learning, empowering pupils to choose a path that leads to outstanding outcomes at 18 and on into futures they will face with confidence. This vision resonates with our founding principles and with our sustained desire over 50 years to keep building and evolving so that children receive the education they deserve.

This significant moment in the evolution of Thomas's settles our strategy and structure for the foreseeable future. Thomas's College will be a new co-educational secondary school in London for children aged 11 to 18 which will offer day, weekly and flexi-boarding places. We are delighted that Will's involvement with its development begins this year ahead of the school opening in September 2025.

With this important appointment confirmed, more detailed information will follow, along with many opportunities to meet Will and hear more about his ground-breaking vision for the College.

In the meantime, if you have any questions or would like to know more, do contact Laura Cottrell, Director of Admissions of Thomas's College, at 020 7978 0902 or [college@thomas-s.co.uk](mailto:college@thomas-s.co.uk)



# GPs: invest in trees and green space now to reduce pressure on the NHS

Policymakers must prioritise the environment to improve the health of the nation and ease pressure on the NHS, say doctors.

New research by conservation charity the Woodland Trust reveals 96% per cent of GPs surveyed want the Government to take action to combat health threats from climate change and extreme weather.

And the poll of 255 doctors from practices across the country shows 70% say they should be able to prescribe time out in nature to ensure the health of future generations.



The survey reveals 77% of GPs believe more trees could help reduce the financial burden on the NHS and 94% are calling for more trees around urban schools to combat lung diseases like asthma.

Previous research has found significantly lower asthma rates among children aged four to five in areas with more street trees.

Almost half of doctors (45%) have seen a rise in patients reporting climate anxiety in the past 12 months, with the survey results clearly showing that against the backdrop of a changing climate, improving the environment must be integral to safeguarding people's future health.

**Dr Darren Moorcroft, chief executive of the Woodland Trust said:** *"This powerful research, from trusted medical professionals, shows the need to prioritise the environment to reduce the burden on the NHS and save lives.*

*"Policymakers must take heed of these results. A startling 96% of GPs - who are on the frontline of healthcare in this country - want environmental issues moved up the political agenda.*

*"They recognise the potentially life-giving benefits of a cleaner, greener world, ever more important due to the greater effects of climate change - and want their patients to be able to access those benefits more easily."*

**Trish Goodwin, Link Worker for Bolton GP Federation said:** *"This poll clearly shows how GPs value the important role of nature and the environment in helping to reduce the pressure on their services and the NHS in general, with the changing climate we believe it should be a priority. From our perspective, people that attend green projects, such as walking in rural locations, report an improvement in physical health symptoms, and state that there is a significant improvement in their mental wellbeing. It is critical that patients living in urban and high pollution areas have access to*

woodland and green spaces to improve both their physical and mental health”.

Climate change is causing more extreme weather conditions, with heatwaves claiming thousands of lives each year. Trees can help reduce temperatures on the ground by up to 12 degrees. Doubling urban tree cover from 15% to 30% could lower average city temperatures by 0.4°C, and in some areas by as much as 5.9°C, potentially saving thousands of lives.

*The Woodland Trust has urged people to join doctors in backing its [climate campaign](#) to get more trees in the ground to fight the twin threats of climate change and biodiversity loss. There are two ways to get involved - buy and plant a tree from their online Tree Shop or sign up to their monthly newsletter.*

**Dr Moorcroft added:** “We know it’s going to take more than trees to solve the climate crisis, but we won’t have a world worth living in without billions more of them. We have made it our mission here in the UK to plant 50 million more trees by 2030.

*“Woods and trees make us healthy and happy. They lock up carbon, fight the effects of climate change, improve our health and wellbeing and reduce pollution and flooding, protecting nature, people and our planet. This is why we are asking for people to support our climate campaign to plant more trees.”*

The survey results, from research carried out among GPs from Dynata’s UK Healthcare Panel, come hot on the heels of the launch of a new tree equity app which the Woodland Trust has developed in partnership with American Forests, which shows that in areas of lower tree cover there are less positive health outcomes. The app will allow a more targeted approach to tree planting in areas most in need.

With a general election looming, the Woodland Trust is calling on political parties to make increasing native tree cover a long-term target.

Among their election asks the Woodland Trust is looking for:

-A new long-term target to increase native tree canopy cover in England to 16%, supported by a minimum canopy cover requirement of 30% for new development. Currently less than a fifth of counties meet that target.

-A £100 million Woods for People Fund to buy land and create woodland that’s accessible, publicly owned and wildlife-rich where this is currently lacking.

-targeted funding to help local authorities produce and update their tree strategies and ensure they have the staff and skills to plant and manage trees.

-investment in commercial, local authority and community tree nurseries to rapidly expand the supply of UK and Ireland sourced and grown trees. This will support objectives for conservation and the urban environment, mitigate the risk of introducing pests and diseases, and create viable green jobs.



**WOODLAND  
TRUST**

# Young people share their feedback on parks

From Richmond Council

In the autumn of last year, our parks team ran a consultation to learn more on how young people engage with our parks and open spaces. The results are now available to read.

The aim of this consultation was to understand what young people in the borough use the parks and open spaces for and what improvement they would like to see implemented.

We would like to thank everyone who took the time to provide responses. The feedback collected will be used to make changes and improve the parks and open spaces all around the borough to make Richmond upon Thames an even nicer place to live and study in.



Based on the feedback we received, some of the key findings and next steps are:

- Increasing the number of pollination stations in parks
- Increasing provision of bins, benches, and picnic tables
- The parks team will continue working with the Youth Council when developing new projects
- The addition of play or sports and fitness facilities for children and teens
- Focus on ensuring our sites are safe and welcoming for everyone, especially women and girls

View the results and learn more about the [Youth Engagement Consultation](#).

## Mega Skip Day

Next Saturday 9 March, LBRuT are holding their popular Mega Skip Day from 9am-noon at Little Queens Road, Teddington.

You can get rid of your unwanted items for free!

Usually there is a charge for bulky waste collections. On **9 March**, put your unwanted items in the Council's mega skip for free.

### How the mega skip works:

- Max six items per household
- First come, first served
- We accept furniture, smaller electrical appliances, black bags etc.
- We won't accept building rubble, paint or dangerous chemicals
- We will recycle the items we collect
- Please bring ID to show you are a local resident, eg. driving licence, passport or bill



# Rag'n'Bone Man to perform at England v Ireland on 9th March

England Rugby is excited to announce that multi-platinum singer-songwriter, Rag'n'Bone Man, will feature at the Guinness Men's Six Nations fixture between England and Ireland on Saturday 9th March at Twickenham Stadium, performing a half-time show.



In what is already a hugely anticipated clash between England and Ireland in the tournament, the three-time Brit winning artist and his band will perform some of his biggest hits to the 82,000 crowd from the centre of the Twickenham pitch from a purpose-rigged stage.

First bursting onto the scene in 2016 with his massive hit 'Human', Rory Graham (aka Rag'n'Bone Man) quickly became a household name. His multi-platinum debut album of the same name earned him critical acclaim, collecting three BRIT Awards, sold out tours around the globe and it became the fastest-selling British male debut album of the decade. He is known for his huge voice with epic anthems such as 'Human', 'Skin' and 'Giant', which are regularly featured as part of the England Rugby matchday programming.

Rory also supports his local rugby club, Havant RFC, where two of his children play in the age-grade teams.

**He commented:** *"It's a massive honour be asked to perform at Twickenham for such a huge game in the Six Nations. Being a small part of the day for the England v Ireland game, and to have the opportunity to bring my two eldest boys (rugby obsessed) is going to be really special."*

**Ed Curran, Brand Lead at England Rugby commented:** *"We're excited to welcome Rag'n'Bone Man to Twickenham Stadium for this important match in the Guinness Men's Six Nations Championship. With his huge voice, anthemic songs, and genuine love for the game, we're sure the crowd are going to love his half-time performance."*

In 2019, Rory's distinctive and powerful deep baritone vocals sparked the attention of the notorious DJ/Producer Calvin Harris, resulting in their iconic track 'Giant' which became one of the biggest tracks of the year and earned the pair a coveted Ivor Novello Award. The duo has recently reunited for the new single "Lovers In A Past Life", released on 16th February.



England Rugby

# Match Preview: Brentford v Chelsea

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

Written by Brentford Football Club

Gtech Community Stadium plays host to a west London derby on Saturday as Brentford welcome Chelsea to TW8 (3pm kick-off).

The Bees have won on each of their previous three visits to Stamford Bridge (2-0, 2-0 and 4-1), while the two sides played out a 0-0 stalemate in this fixture last season.

Thomas Frank's side lost 4-2 to West Ham United on Monday, while Chelsea's most recent league game was a 1-1 draw with Manchester City.

## Pre-match Analysis

Stephen Gillett, Playmaker Stats: Brentford likely to have set-piece opportunities on Saturday

Chelsea visit Gtech Community Stadium to face Brentford this Saturday looking to cast off the disappointment of last weekend's Carabao Cup final loss to Liverpool.

An entertaining game saw both teams create opportunities, but Mauricio Pochettino's side were cruelly consigned to a 1-0 extra-time defeat by Virgil van Dijk's 118th-minute header.



## Head to Head

	Comparisons	
37	Goals	42
48	Goals Conceded	41
241	Shots	241
46%	Possession	59%
58	Yellow Cards	78
1	Red Cards	3



The Londoners attracted criticism for their conservative approach in the additional 30-minute period, with Pochettino's post-match comment that "the team felt maybe penalties would be good for us" particularly coming under the spotlight.

Sky Sports punditry duo Jamie Carragher and Gary Neville have since ignited a debate regarding Chelsea's lack of killer instinct in the extra period of the cup final, but the stats suggest the Blues would have stood a good chance of prevailing in a shoot-out if the game had indeed gone to penalties.

Cole Palmer started and finished Sunday's showpiece for Chelsea and, having scored all five of his spot-kicks this season, the young England international is the Premier League's most prolific penalty specialist this season.

The Blues also had Enzo Fernández and Noni Madueke on the pitch when the final whistle blew at Wembley, and the pair have both netted from 12 yards this season in the Premier League. Meanwhile, without Mohamed Salah, Liverpool had no one in their squad (let alone on the pitch) with experience of scoring from the spot for the Reds in a league or cup game.

Given Chelsea's penchant for penalties, Brentford will need to be disciplined in their own box against Pochettino's side this Saturday.

No team has won more top-flight penalties (8) than Chelsea this term (Fernández's miss at West Ham in August the only blot on the Blues' copybook) and Raheem Sterling has been awarded more spot-kicks (3) than any other player.

The Bees have excelled in this regard, though, so far this season, with only Aston Villa (0) conceding fewer penalties in the top flight than Thomas Frank's side in 2023/24.

Callum Wilson's penalty in a 1-0 defeat at Newcastle marks the only time Brentford have shipped a spot-kick during the current campaign and Bees fans may remember that goalkeeper Mark Flekken was rather hard done by that September day for an aborted challenge on Anthony Gordon at St James' Park.

In addition to shrugging off their Carabao Cup hangover, Chelsea will no doubt be intent on ending a four-match winless run against the Bees, which stretches back to 2022.

Brentford have won on each of their previous three visits to Stamford Bridge (2-0, 2-0 and 4-1), while the two sides played out a 0-0 stalemate when the Blues last visited the Gtech - remarkably, only six of Chelsea's 20-man squad that day are still at the club.

One potential vulnerability Brentford may highlight ahead of Saturday's clash concerns Chelsea's disciplinary record. The Blues have received more yellow cards (82, including double yellows) and rank in the division's top five for free-kicks conceded this season in the Premier League.

Conor Gallagher (54) and Moisés Caicedo (39) rank first and third in the top flight for fouls conceded - and it is therefore likely Brentford will have set-piece opportunities to exploit this weekend against their west London rivals.

## Scout Report

Dan Long, Sky Sports: Chelsea in danger of second successive season outside Premier League's top 10

For so many years, Chelsea were such a force in the Premier League. Even before Roman Abramovich's multi-million-pound takeover in 2003, they were seldom more than a handful of points behind the eventual title winners.

In fact, from 1996/97 to 2021/22, they only finished outside the top six on one occasion.

Now, they are staring a second successive season outside the top 10 in the face for the first time in 28 years.

Such a predicament would have been unthinkable just a few years prior - and even as recently as the summer, when a £400 million transfer spend saw the total spend under Todd Boehly's ownership surpass the £1 billion mark.

When Brentford travelled to Stamford Bridge at the end of October, it looked as though things were starting to look a bit more promising for the Blues after their pretty miserable start of one win in the first six. They had beaten Fulham in the west London derby, given Burnley a hiding at Turf Moor, then drawn 2-2 with Arsenal after throwing a 2-0 lead away late on.

They dominated proceedings against the Bees, too, but just could not find a way to cancel out Ethan Pinnock's opener and, when Bryan Mbeumo struck in the 96th minute, hope was obliterated. "We need to blame ourselves because we were not nasty or clinical," head coach Mauricio Pochettino conceded.

Chelsea responded with a 4-1 win at Tottenham, thanks to Nicolas Jackson's late hat-trick, and then drew 4-4 with Manchester City in a thriller for the ages but, after the November international break up until Christmas, they just entered a huge slump, results-wise, losing four of their six games, which included a 4-1 thumping at Newcastle and a 2-0 loss at struggling Everton.

It was noted by Pochettino, who said, speaking after the defeat to Wolves on Christmas Eve: “This competition wounds you when you are not clinical enough.”

Ahead of Saturday’s game, they have won four of their last seven in the Premier League, which seems to have silenced anyone who was rubbing their hands together at the thought of the club entering the relegation battle. There’s one positive, at least.

Overall this season, they just have not realised their potential. There has been a pretty sizeable underperformance in terms of expected goals (49.94 xG v 42 actual) and, crucially, expected points (40.84 xPTS v 35 actual). In the rankings of the latter statistic, they sit seventh.

Last Sunday, they lost the Carabao Cup final against a youthful Liverpool side, leaving the FA Cup as their sole chance of silverware this season.

“In extra time, it’s been Klopp’s kids against the blue, billion-pound bottlejobs,” said Sky Sports’ Gary Neville after Virgil van Dijk’s winner at Wembley. It was a scathing statement and one Pochettino argued was “not fair”.

The fact of the matter is that Chelsea’s wild spending in the transfer market has brought expectation from both fans and neutrals alike. Earlier in the season, Pochettino called for patience - the patience of some is now wearing thin.

### **In the Dugout**

Mauricio Pochettino

Mauricio Pochettino made his senior debut for Newell’s Old Boys in his native Argentina aged 17 in 1989 and spent five years at the club - playing under future Leeds boss Marcelo Bielsa - before moving across the Atlantic to Espanyol in 1994.

In Catalonia, he became a legend. The centre-back played more than 250 games across seven seasons for the Periquitos and won the Copa del Rey twice, but financial issues at the club around the turn of the millennium, shortly after Pochettino had agreed a pre-contract agreement at the club, meant they were unable to fund it, so he joined PSG in 2001, where he acted as a mentor to a young Mikel Arteta.

After two and a half years, he joined Bordeaux, but things did not go to plan and, after 16 appearances, he returned to Espanyol - initially on loan, then permanently - where he closed out his career in 2006 at the age of 34. He later studied a sports management master’s degree and completed his coaching badges but, shortly after completing his UEFA Pro Licence, he returned to Espanyol for a third time when he was appointed as Ernesto Valverde’s successor. He had spent just shy of four years at the club when his contract was terminated by mutual consent in November 2012.

Pochettino made his name in England managing Southampton from January 2013 to May 2014 and, after the completion of the 2013/14 Premier League campaign, was appointed by Tottenham.

As had been the case at Espanyol in his playing career, he became a legend in north London, not least for helping to develop superstar striker Harry Kane, but also taking Spurs to their first Champions League final in 2019.

A disappointing start to the 2019/20 season led to his sacking after five and a half years and, after a year out of the game, he returned to another former club, PSG.

He lifted Ligue 1, the Coupe de France and the Trophee des Champions during his second spell at the Parc des Princes.

The 51-year-old left the French giants in July 2022, only a year after signing a new two-year contract, and, after another year out of the game, he joined Chelsea in May.



# Hounslow Council Workers Win Union Recognition

GMB Union immensely proud of our workplace members in Lampton

GMB union has signed a recognition agreement with Lampton Group, the London Borough of Hounslow's wholly owned trading company.

Lampton staff carry out a number of key roles in the borough, including property and grounds maintenance, waste and recycling and operating council leisure facilities.

The deal will now see more than 1,200 members of staff protected by collective bargaining rights in terms of pay, terms and conditions.



Workers at Lampton have welcomed the win after extensive negotiations.

**Lee Plummer, Lampton worker, said:**

“Lampton workers provide essential services, supporting residents across the borough.

“After weeks of negotiations, it’s great to see that work recognised and to have this vital recognition win.

“This agreement will provide a strong framework for engaging with the employer, improving workplace conditions for members and working together to support residents across Hounslow.”

**Jack Phipps, GMB Regional Organiser, said:**

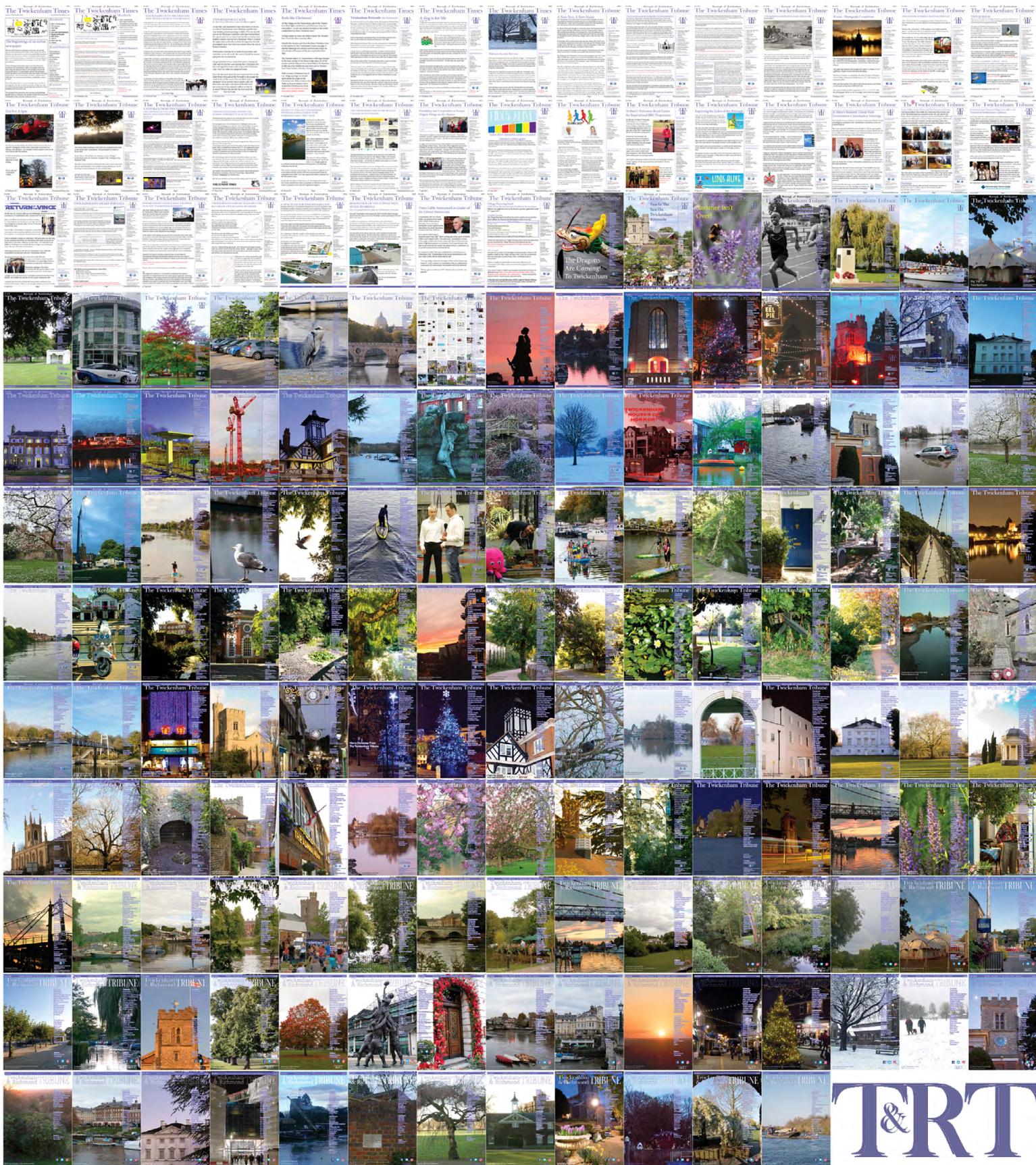
“We are immensely proud of our workplace reps and our members in Lampton and the way in which they have built up a strong and growing membership across the Borough of Hounslow.

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