

# Twickenham & Richmond TRIBUNE

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5<sup>th</sup> June 2020

T&RT

Twickenham Lockdown view

Photo by Berkley Driscoll



# TickerTape - News in Brief

## Hammertons Ferry to reopen

Residents were pleased to hear that Hammertons Ferry will be reopening on Monday 8th June. The family run ferry had stopped operations on 23rd March owing to COVID-19. You can see a video about the ferry, from the Twickenham Alive Film Festival, [HERE](#)

## Unauthorised travellers leave Ham

Following the legal warning from Richmond Council, an unauthorised traveller camp has left Riverside Drive in Ham and all the green waste left behind has been removed. The unauthorised camp returned on Sunday 31 May, following their departure from Riverside Pitches on Wednesday 20 May. To facilitate a swift departure, the travellers left behind some green waste – including wood, branches and grass cuttings – which was removed from their vehicles to allow them space to pack up their belongings and move on. The Council began the clean-up exercise immediately and all the waste has already been removed.

## Competition launched to design new park sculpture

Residents are invited to design a new sculpture for Kneller Gardens which celebrates the rich heritage and culture of the park. As part of the Friendly Parks for All programme, the Council would like to install a new sculpture, at the Mereway Road entrance, that could be tactile and interactive, enabling visitors with disabilities or dementia to enjoy it as well. The deadline for submissions is Tuesday 30 June 2020. The submissions must be either emailed to [FriendlyParksRichmond@outlook.com](mailto:FriendlyParksRichmond@outlook.com) or submitted via Instagram [@friendlyparksforall](https://www.instagram.com/friendlyparksforall)

## New project to improve air quality whilst supporting Richmond in getting back to business

Following a successful bid by Richmond Council and the Cross River Partnership, the borough will be one of twelve London boroughs involved in a year-long project to improve air quality by helping businesses recover from COVID-19 in a clean, green and sustainable way. Richmond Town Centre, including the shopping area in East Twickenham, has been selected for the project. It is an Air Quality Focus Area – meaning that the Mayor of London identified it as requiring air quality improvement. If you are a business in Richmond Town Centre and would like to be involved with the Clean Air Villages project, please contact Laura Jacklin on [laurajacklin@crossriverpartnership.org](mailto:laurajacklin@crossriverpartnership.org)

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There were many reports of people 'using the bushes' in Kneller Gardens, but those enjoying the recent good weather on Twickenham Green seem to have been particularly bad.

Residents next to Twickenham Green have complained about their properties being used as loos and others witnessed people climbing into the grounds of Holy Trinity Church to relieve themselves.

Since the council sold off the public toilets on the Green there have not been any obvious facilities. The toilets at the cricket pavilion are supposed to be available for use by the public, but this is currently closed owing to the COVID-19 pandemic. However, this was an issue long before the virus; the pavilion was not always open, was not obviously welcoming to the public and signage has been distinctly lacking despite numerous requests to the council.

Summer is just starting and the Green will be a popular location as it always has been, although the arrival of Sainsburys on the Green seems to have exacerbated the situation, often selling out of beer and cider on a hot day.

The council has not offered any solution, although they appear to be saying that hell will freeze over before any public loos return to the Green.

Well, it seems hell has frozen over and TwickerSeal has his penny ready to spend, so what's your answer to resolve this?





# COVID-19 – this week's updates

Teresa Read

## **NHS North Bristol: COVID-19 Vaccine Study**

Researchers at North Bristol NHS Trust (NBT), University Hospitals Bristol, Weston NHS Foundation Trust (UHBW) and the University of Bristol have embarked upon trials of a vaccine pioneered in the UK which could protect against COVID-19.

Work on the vaccine, developed by clinical research teams at the University of Oxford's Jenner Institute and Oxford Vaccine Group, began in January.

<http://bristol.ac.uk/news/2020/may/vaccine-trial.html>

## **London's Guy's & St Thomas' NHS Foundation Trust, King's College London and the pharmaceutical organisation the SEEK Group:**

### **Trial testing a unique formulation of ibuprofen to treat COVID-19 launches**

The study aims to reduce respiratory failure with COVID-19, which may decrease the need for more aggressive intervention such as ventilation, and decrease the length of hospital stay. The drug is a unique formulation of ibuprofen, already licensed for use in the UK. The drug differs from standard ibuprofen.

<https://www.kcl.ac.uk/news/trial-testing-a-unique-formulation-of-ibuprofen-to-treat-covid-19-launches>

Early on in the COVID-19 outbreak it was said that the use of [standard] Ibuprofen was not recommended.

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/51929628>

## **University of Leicester: Patients May Have a Higher Risk of Developing ME After COVID-19**

“From previous studies involving patients with Epstein Barr and SARS (Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome), it has been estimated that one in ten people (10%) recovering from COVID-19 could develop ME.”

*Epstein-Barr Virus (EBV), known as the “kissing disease” causes glandular fever; it remains inactive within the infected person after recovery of illness.*

University of Leicester: <https://le.ac.uk/news/2020/may/coronavirus-me-risk>

## **Renmin Hospital, Wuhan University, China** **Could EBV reactivation affect COVID-19?**

“EBV acute infection was found in COVID-19 patients. EBV seropositivity was associated with fever and increased inflammation. EBV reactivation may affect the treatment of COVID-19.”

<https://www.researchsquare.com/article/rs-21580/v1>

## **Further reading:**

The Lancet: An outbreak of severe Kawasaki-like disease at the Italian epicentre of the SARS-CoV-2 epidemic

[https://www.thelancet.com/journals/lancet/article/PIIS0140-6736\(20\)31103-X/fulltext](https://www.thelancet.com/journals/lancet/article/PIIS0140-6736(20)31103-X/fulltext)



## **Local Statistics**

The In Your Area website gave the following statistics for COVID-19 on Friday 5 June: 411 confirmed cases in Richmond upon Thames, 524 in Kingston-upon-Thames, 732 in Hounslow. Updates are also available from the BBC on their Coronavirus UK Map.

## **Number of Deaths from WHO Situation Reports:**

At the time of writing the World Health Organization Situation Report for Friday 5 June 2020 gave the following details for countries with high death rates: 106,876 in the USA, 40,261 in the UK, 33,689 in Italy, 32,548 in Brazil, 29,007 in France, 27,133 in Spain, 11,728 in Mexico, 9,548 in Belgium, 8,613 in Germany, 8,071 in Iran, 7,543 in Canada, 6,348 in India, 5,990 in the Netherlands, 5,528 in the Russian Federation, 4,894 in Peru, 4,645 in China, 4,630 in Turkey, 4,562 in Sweden, (0 in Gibraltar) and a total of 387,155 deaths worldwide.





# Anti-social Behaviour in Strawberry Hill and Twickenham Green

Local people in Strawberry Hill, going to and from the Twickenham Green area, have to run the gauntlet of chronic public urination opposite Twickenham Green.

Although a long-time issue with complaints made to the LBRUT Parks department nothing has been done to address the anti-social behaviour of men using areas outside homes, and the garden of the local church, as a toilet - leaving local residents to deal with cleaning the foul-smelling areas.

With good weather, and Sainsbury's and other shops providing supplies of alcohol, Twickenham Green has become a venue for outside drinking.

As well as indecent exposure there has been verbal abuse from those exposing themselves, especially when they have been drinking into the night.

Local councillors and local police have been informed and an official anti-social behaviour report has been recorded.

If an event is held on Twickenham Green a License must be obtained but this seemingly free for all informal congregation leads to a similar "clean up" situation and should be addressed by the Council. Twickenham Green is under the control of the LBRUT Parks Department and David Allister, the Head of Parks has been aware of the situation since a similar situation last year.

As this is an ongoing situation, the Council could provide automatic self-cleaning public toilets on Twickenham Green. Of course, there was originally a public toilet on the Green but this is now a restaurant with limited toilet facilities when open.

The Cricket Pavilion on Twickenham Green, which was refurbished with a large grant of public money, also has toilet facilities but these are rarely open, and closed at the moment, but despite pleas last year there has been no adequate signage installed on Twickenham Green to let people know that they are available.

Cllr Mansfield has replied to emails sent to the Council about the situation on Twickenham Green and has suggested better signage for the use of toilets in the Cricket Pavilion - when it is open - enforcement of social distancing, signs to respect the property of local residents and measures against anti-social behaviour.

Local Councillors for Twickenham Green (West Ward) are [Cllr.P.Allen@richmond.gov.uk](mailto:Cllr.P.Allen@richmond.gov.uk); [Cllr.HLee-Parsons@richmond.gov.uk](mailto:Cllr.HLee-Parsons@richmond.gov.uk); [cllr.a.juriansz@richmond.gov.uk](mailto:cllr.a.juriansz@richmond.gov.uk)

Local Councillors for Strawberry Hill (South Ward) are [cllr.m.butlin@richmond.gov.uk](mailto:cllr.m.butlin@richmond.gov.uk); [cllr.r.bennett@richmond.gov.uk](mailto:cllr.r.bennett@richmond.gov.uk); [cllr.k.mansfield@richmond.gov.uk](mailto:cllr.k.mansfield@richmond.gov.uk)



# Borough View

By Graeme Stoten



## ‘Barnes low-tide’

Capturing the glow of an early sunrise across the River Thames at Barnes, the most northern eastern location within our borough. Hugging the western bend of the river is the Terrace, where some of the oldest riverside Georgian housing in London is to be found. Homes owned by both Gustav Holst and Ninette de Valois are recognised from their blue plaques. The Grade II listed Barnes Railway Bridge built in 1849 captivates the view looking westwards as it gleams in the late-spring dawn light.





# PART 182

## A MARBLE HILL MYSTERY?

Let's start with a brief history of Marble Hill Park after which we will investigate a mystery.

Marble Hill was purchased by the Cunard's, the famous shipping family in 1898. William Cunard planned to develop the estate, and in 1901 started building roads and sewers, and felling trees. The future of Marble Hill was in jeopardy.

Outcry from local residents at the plans prompted a campaign to save Marble Hill. The house and park, they argued, formed a central and critical part of the famous prospect from Richmond Hill. Their destruction would mark the 'ruin of the entire view'. A deal was reached with the Cunard family to halt development and in 1902 Marble Hill was purchased with contributions from the London County Council, private donors and local authorities.

Shortly afterwards the Richmond, Ham and Petersham Open Spaces Act was passed, which protected the view from Richmond Hill from any development. It remains the only view protected by an Act of Parliament today.



The house is now owned by English Heritage, which acquired it in 1986 following the abolition of the Greater London Council. Its extensive grounds are known as Marble Hill Park and provide many leisure facilities including rugby and hockey pitches, a cricket pitch and nets, tennis courts, and a children's play area.

Living in Orleans Road as a youngster in the 1950s, the park was more or less our back garden. Here we first played cowboys and Indians in the fenced off woodlands all day. Here we picked up tennis rackets, putted our first golf balls and learnt how to swerve a football into the top corner of the net from 45 yards! Now, over 60 years later the park I

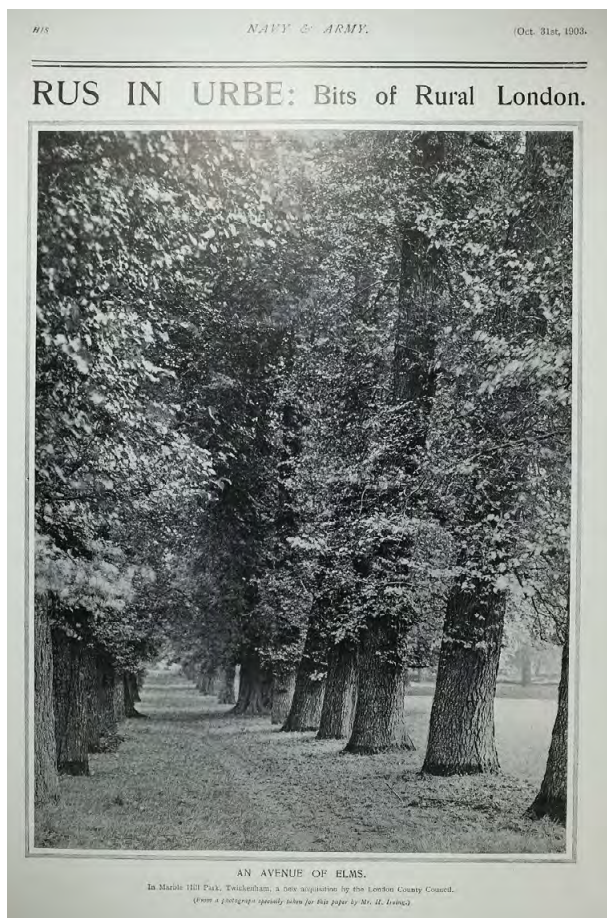
knew so well has thrown up a mystery.

The first postcard image from 1907 shows a pair of park employees standing in an avenue of Elm Trees and captioned Jenny Dene's Avenue. The second postcard was used in 1923 and is captioned with the spelling Jenny Deans Avenue. So our mystery needs some answers.





- Who was Jenny Dean or Dene?
- What was the correct spelling of her name?
- This avenue isn't there today so where exactly was it in the park?
- When was the Avenue planted, and what happened to it?



Our final image is from The Navy and Army Magazine of 31st October 1903 and shows the Avenue as an already mature stand of Elm Trees and so we can assume that they were planted way back into the 19th century.

I think we can also have a guess that Dutch elm disease may well have played a major part of the Avenue's demise. It is one of the most serious tree diseases in the world. ... The disease first spread to Britain in the 1920's when it killed 10-40% of elm trees. Although the initial epidemic died down, a more aggressive species of Dutch elm disease fungus was accidentally introduced into Britain in the 1960s. I don't remember the Avenue in my lifetime so am guessing that it suffered the disease in the 1920s.

Which leaves us with the mystery of Jenny Dean/Dene. First reader to let me know who she was via email (address below) will get bought a couple of drinks in a pub of their choice in the Borough when such an activity is allowable once more. Hopefully we can solve

the mystery in time for next week's column.

With many of us spending more time at home at present it may be that you are using the time to tidy a few drawers or have a bit of a clear-out. If you trip over any old postcards, old envelopes with stamps on, or photograph albums that you would consider parting with, I'd be very interested in arranging to see them. Please contact me on 07875 578398 or by email at: [alanwinter192@hotmail.com](mailto:alanwinter192@hotmail.com) I am happy to pay cash for anything like that which I find of interest. So don't throw old postcards etc. in the skip or recycling bins. Show them to me first! Thanks, stay safe and well.



*The Tree Agency*

**The Tree Agency**

darryl parkin

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# HOW TO WEAR A NON-MEDICAL FABRIC MASK SAFELY

[who.int/epi-win](https://www.who.int/epi-win)

## Do's →



Clean your hands before touching the mask



Inspect the mask for damage or if dirty



Adjust the mask to your face without leaving gaps on the sides



Cover your mouth, nose, and chin



Avoid touching the mask



Clean your hands before removing the mask



Remove the mask by the straps behind the ears or head



Pull the mask away from your face



Store the mask in a clean plastic, resealable bag if it is not dirty or wet and you plan to re-use it



Remove the mask by the straps when taking it out of the bag

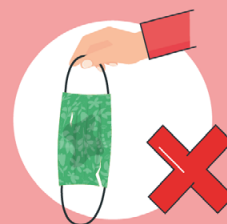


Wash the mask in soap or detergent, preferably with hot water, at least once a day



Clean your hands after removing the mask

## Don'ts →



Do not use a mask that looks damaged



Do not wear a loose mask



Do not wear the mask under the nose



Do not remove the mask where there are people within 1 metre



Do not use a mask that is difficult to breathe through



Do not wear a dirty or wet mask



Do not share your mask with others

**A fabric mask can protect others around you. To protect yourself and prevent the spread of COVID-19, remember to keep at least 1 metre distance from others, clean your hands frequently and thoroughly, and avoid touching your face and mask.**



**World Health Organization**





# RFS The Best of our Recent Historic Screenings

Issue 11, 5<sup>th</sup> June 2020

## GOOD VIBRATIONS

A new series for those of you who are missing Richmond Film Society's screenings or, indeed, trips to the cinema generally as a result of the COVID-19 crisis. Their committee is producing a number of weekly recommendations of films screened during the last 20 years that were extremely well received by their audiences. Should the notes reproduced below entice you to try and catch-up with this recommendation, then you should be able to do so, as it is available on streaming services and for purchase as DVD/Blu-Ray discs from the online retailers as indicated below.

**RFS Context: GOOD VIBRATIONS** was 734th film screened by RFS on 10th February 2015. **Good Vibrations** was the fourth ranked film of Season 52, it got an approval mark of 89% from those attending (The top film from Season 52, **Wadja** and the third from top film **The Hunt** have already featured in our Best of our Recent Historic Screenings as **Issue 4 & Issue 7** respectively). **Good Vibrations** can be streamed from Amazon Prime and Curzon and the discs are available from Amazon and others.

### GOOD VIBRATIONS

Country: UK/Ireland, 2012  
Screenplay: Glenn Patterson  
Directors: Lisa Barros D'Sa and Glenn Leyburn  
Music: David Holmes  
Cinematography: Ivan McCullough  
Running Time: 103 mins, colour and B&W  
Language: English  
Editor: Nick Emerson

### Cast:

Jodie Whittaker (Ruth)  
Liam Cunningham (Davy)  
Richard Dormer (Terri Hooley)  
Dylan Moran (Pat)  
Mark Ryder (Greg Cowan)  
Killian Scott (Ronnie Matthews)

This biopic is based on the life of Terri Hooley, often called the 'godfather of punk'.

In 1970s Belfast, Terri Hooley is an idealistic rocker who finds himself caught in the middle of Northern Ireland's bitter Troubles. Seeing a parallel in the chaos with Jamaica, Hooley opens a record shop, **Good Vibrations**, to help bring



reggae music to his city and encourage some harmony. Hooley soon, however, discovers a new music genre, punk rock, and is inspired by its youthful vitality to become an important record producer and promoter of the local scene. In doing so, Hooley would struggle both with the industry's realities and his chaotic personal life that threatened to consume him. However, he would also be instrumental in creating an alternative Irish community that would bridge his land's religious and social rivalries with an art no one expected.

This film won several Irish film awards and was nominated for Outstanding Debut by British Writer, Director or Producer Colin Carberry and Glenn Patterson at the BAFTA Film Awards 2014.

**Gabriele Cullen**

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## Business 'top-up' scheme launched - but funds are limited warns Councillor

Small businesses not eligible for the Government's COVID-19 support grants or extended business rates relief, can now apply for a new 'discretionary' business fund to help them manage the impact of the pandemic. However, the Council warns that there may not be enough to go around.

The Government has stated that the funding is for small businesses that were trading on the 11th March 2020, with significant ongoing fixed property-related costs. Businesses must be small, under 50 employees and they must also be able to demonstrate that they have seen a significant drop of income due to Coronavirus restriction measures.

But the Government has provided just £2.149m (5% of the funding made available for the original business grants scheme) to help these small and micro businesses who previously were not eligible for the Small Business Grant Fund or the Retail, Leisure and Hospitality Grant Fund.

Richmond Council estimates that there are 12,500 businesses in the borough that currently employ fewer than 10 employees and, whilst some of these will have accessed the earlier Government funding, many will not have been able to.



In order to provide meaningful size grants to all these businesses, the Council would need £50m to £100m.

Cllr Robin Brown, Lead Member for Finance and Resources at Richmond Council, said:

*"I welcome that the Government has listened to the case that we have made that many borough businesses, through no fault of their own, were slipping through the net.*

*"However, the funding we have been allocated will not stretch far enough to cover all the needs of eligible businesses.*

*"We are inviting applications from many of our smaller businesses who missed out on support first time round. Realistically with the limited sum available to us grants will be lower than we would like and not every business can be included.*

*"It's important that we support as many livelihoods and jobs as possible, particularly those connected to small independent businesses which don't have a large financial support network. I hope that the Government rethink their funding package – otherwise I fear that many sound local businesses will struggle to survive this crisis through no fault of their own."*

Find more information on the grant [HERE](#)

Due to the limited amount of funding available, the Council has been asked to develop further criteria of eligibility, based on local need. Therefore, for a strict period of 10 working days from 4 June 2020, the below businesses will now be invited to apply for grants:

- Charity properties in receipt of mandatory charitable business rates relief which would otherwise have been eligible for Small Business Rates Relief. Applications will not be considered for properties where Housing Associations, Educational establishments, Government funded organisations or organisations which are spin offs from local authorities are the liable parties.
- Small or micro-Businesses in shared offices or other flexible workspaces with fixed ongoing property costs of up to £22,500 p.a.
- Other businesses in shared offices or flexible workspaces, with fixed ongoing property costs between £22,500 and £51,000 p.a., which would otherwise have qualified under the Extended Retail, Hospitality and Leisure Scheme
- Regular market traders with ongoing property costs, such as rent or pitch fees, who do not have their own business rates assessment
- Bed and breakfast businesses which currently pay Council Tax
- Medical businesses excluded from the Retail, Hospitality and Leisure Scheme with a rateable value of less than £51,000 or fixed ongoing property costs of less than £51,000 p.a.
- River based businesses with ongoing costs for mooring or marina fees

# Marble Hill Horticultural Marvels

## The humble privet

By Kate Slack- Head Gardener

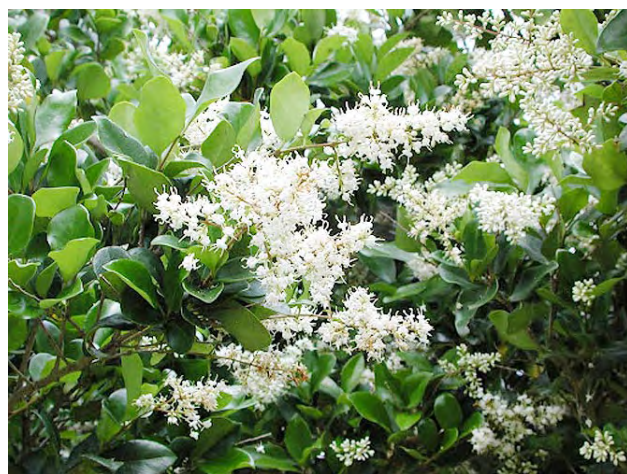
Privet is one of those highly underrated plants which is generally down to the fact that 'familiarity breeds contempt'. Privet hedges have long been the stalwart of suburban gardens and is sometimes thought of as not particularly exciting, however it has been used as a hedge for centuries because of some very good reasons, it is semi- evergreen meaning that it generally keeps some of its leaves over winter and it also responds very well to being hard pruned and trimmed throughout the year.

It makes an excellent thick hedge which has provided privacy for many homes for centuries and is very pollution tolerant which has made it a popular choice in cities and towns. The garden privet (*Ligustrum ovalifolium*) was introduced to this country from Japan around 1885 however the native privet (*Ligustrum vulgare*) can also be used for hedging.



Privet is excellent for wildlife as it provides a dense thicket habitat which is particularly important for smaller birds looking for roosting and nesting sites, Privet is also a food source for 51 different butterfly and moth larvae, including the spectacular Privet Hawk Moth ( Britain's largest Hawk moth) The flowers are attractive a wide range of insects and the black berries it produce provide food for birds later in the year however these are poisonous for humans.

Its wood was used to make charcoal and also for wood turning as it produces a dense fine grained wood if left to grow large enough and its young twigs have been used in basketry and hurdle making At Marble Hill we have planted over 300 privet plants this year in order to create a dense thicket as habitat for wildlife whilst providing an evergreen back drop for the rest of the planting.



So if you are thinking of planting a hedge this year don't rule out the humble privet, or better still plant a mixed hedge including privet which will give you and your garden wildlife year round interest and if you're really lucky you might get the beautiful Privet Hawk moth in your garden





# Not a lot of people know this!

By Sue Hamilton-Miller

I wonder if any of you are watching on BBC2 the excellent programme “A House Through Time” which traces the lives of its inhabitants through the centuries. For 3 weeks David Olusoga is following the lives of people who lived in a Georgian house in Bristol; the first episode was about two ship’s captains, both captains of slave ships that plied their “trade” between Africa, the Caribbean and Bristol. If Richmond House on Twickenham Embankment had still been standing what a rich seam of stories its inhabitants would have provided for this programme. This week I want to concentrate on a slave owner, Lambert Blair, who was living, and died, in Richmond House at the height of the slave trade.



This is his Memorial in a prominent place in St Mary the Virgin Church, Twickenham, erected at a time when the slave trade was an acceptable and highly lucrative industry. So, who was “Lambert Blair of Berbice and of Courtland”?

We know very little about his background, as the Northern Ireland records were destroyed by a fire in 1922. What we do know is that Lambert Blair was born in about 1767 and he and his brother James were Presbyterian Irish merchants who, as young men in the early 1780s, went out from Newry in Northern Ireland to set up an Agency on Saint Eustatia in the West Indies, primarily for purchasing slaves for the Stevenson plantation.

Having amassed a great deal of money by the end of the 18th century they set about buying land in Berbice (now British Guinea), Demerara and Surinam, where they set up plantations trading in cotton, sugar and slaves. Lord Seaforth noted that on a Blair plantation a task gang of 50 slaves had, in 14 months:

- Impoldered 500 acres
- Planted 400 acres with cotton and 50 with plantains
- Dug a canal 2 miles long, 16 feet wide and 2 feet deep
- Removed stuff for a dam of between 10 and 12 feet

There is a remarkable account of the life that Blair led in Berbice, given by George Pinkhard, an army surgeon, who visited him twice in 1796. The full account can be read [HERE](#) but to give you a taste of the life that Lambert Blair led here are some extracts, (some of which you will find shocking):

*Mr. Blair is one of the most opulent planters in these colonies, and, not disliking the good things of life himself, he has assembled them at his place of residence in sufficient supply to enable him to treat his friends with the most sumptuous liberality. He is, generous and social, and the riches of his table are*

*dispensed with all the bounty of his nature. Instead of a plain cottage just rising from the wild woods of an infant settlement, we might have fancied ourselves feasting in one of the hospitable mansions of old England, nay, in some chartered hall, even, of voluptuous London itself.*

*The house is a compact dwelling, neatly built of plain wood, offering in its exterior nothing to attract the stranger's eye, nor to bespeak the many luxuries within. It stands on the border of the sea, open to the wide ocean. Before it is an extensive and flat beach of firm sand, forming a pleasant ride, or walk at the side of the water. ....*

*A large and very handsome boat was sent for our conveyance, having an awning at the stern to protect us from the sun; and we were rowed across the mouth of the river by eight of the finest slaves of the estate, who pulled us on with surprising speed. At the landing place another party of slaves were in attendance with horses in readiness to conduct us to the house. The sun was extremely powerful, but we had a pleasant ride about a mile and a half through fields of cotton and of plantains; the negroes running at the horses sides, according to the custom of the country, as fast as we chose to ride.*

*For dinner we had excellent soup, with boiled fish, stewed fish, and fish in pie—also turtle, and crabs, most exquisitely dressed, and forming two uncommonly rich and high-seasoned dishes. We had likewise a side of lamb, a fine goose, a large well-flavored ham, and a variety of other good things. Pies, tarts, and a well compounded trifle followed, amidst a complete course of sweets. The cook was quite a proficient, and did every justice to the feast, the whole dinner being well dressed, and as well served. We had afterwards pines, shaddocks, melons, water-lemons, and multitudes of other fruits. Nor were the fluids of the banquet less amply administered. Hock, Claret, Madeira, and Port wines were in liberal use. We had also Seltzer and Spa waters, likewise bottled small beer, ale, and porter, with brandy, rum, Hollands, noyau, and other liqueurs—all in supply sufficient for a lord mayor's feast.*

*After our good eating and drinking we took a walk about the plantation, and found every corner of it equally plenteous as the table and the cellar. Such a store of living stock, both large and small, I had not seen upon any estate since my arrival in the Western world. Here were large herds of cows, oxen, sheep, and goats; droves of hogs, horses, and mules; flocks of geese, turkies, ducks, Guinea fowls, and chickens. A more gratifying assemblage of domestic plenty could scarcely be found in any country. Among the stock I should not omit to mention a pen of living turtles kept in readiness for the table: —whole droves of crabs were also running about near the door; —and the neighbouring sea is, at all times made tributary to the board. Several hundreds of negroes employed at work, or moving from place to place, improved the variety of the scene; while they added essentially to the value of the home—for, like the cattle, these are always included in calculating the stock of the estate. Together with the multitude of domestic productions at this all-, supplying abode were likewise some of the more rare and curious specimens—such as the small lion, —monkey—and the large powys, or wild turkey of the woods; also the trumpeter, the fly-catcher, and several other uncommon birds. Our walk was highly gratifying, and offered much to excite, as well as to interest our contemplations.*

#### **A second visit is described in Vol III, Letter IV:**

*I have again been one of a party across the river, to visit our princely neighbour Mr. Blair, who in this remote corner of the globe, where others find it difficult to procure the common provisions of the table, would seem to have assembled an inexhaustible supply of all the good things of life. It was a birth-day festival, and perhaps a more choice and sumptuous repast could not have been found, even in the proud city of London. The dinner table exhibited a happy combination of English taste, and Irish hospitality. It was served in the style of Europe, and displayed a profusion of the best and richest viands, without any of the more common dishes of the country, such as Moscovy duck, Guinea-fowl, kid, and the like. Amidst a crowded variety of other covers we had a large green turtle, with a great variety of the best European vegetables, and, to crown the feast, a complete course of sweets, consisting of no less than four-and twenty dishes. The fruits were*



*endemic, and such as London with all its riches cannot produce. The drinking part of the feast was such as I have described to you before. At no other house in the colony are such entertainments given”*

In 1809 Lambert Blair returned to England where he married Jane Letitia Stopford, the eldest daughter of the late Hon. Lt. General Stopford, and niece to the Earl of Courtown. Their home was Courtland, on the banks of the River Exe in Devon – a beautiful Georgian house, originally created around a farmhouse by the Baring family (the London bankers).



The house is now called Lypstone Manor and is owned by Michael Caines, a celebrated British chef, who purchased Courtland House in 2014 and began restoration work to turn it into an extremely luxurious hotel with 5 AA, a Michelin starred restaurant, and prices to match! Jeremy and I called there a few years ago and told them about Lambert Blair’s ownership of the house, but his name has understandably been airbrushed out of their history of the house.



Lambert Blair died in Richmond House in 1815. In his Will his estates in Berbice, Demerara and Surinam, (including enslaved people), were left to his two nephews John McCamon and James Blair as tenants-in-common. John McCamon died in 1818 so the estates went to the sole ownership of James Blair. In 1834 James Blair, who had entered Parliament in 1818 to protect the interests of slave-owners, received £83,530 (£7.7 million in today’s value) as compensation from the British Government for his 1,598 slaves, thus receiving more money than any other slave-owner in the British Empire.

Lambert Blair’s Will, which instructed his Trustees to sell Courtland, also left money to “*a mulatto man named James Lambert Blair at present in Berbice and well known to my executors, and a mustee (the offspring of a white person and a quadroon) lad James Blair who was bred a ship carpenter in Lancaster but now resides in Berbice*”. He released from

slavery his servant David Maxwell who was living with him in Richmond House and left him £100 and an annuity of £20 p.a. £200 was left to a god-daughter whose name he couldn’t recollect!

He and his wife Jane, had no children. But possibly he didn’t die childless!

# Twickenham's Got Talent!

Twickenham's Got Talent!! The quality of local teen bands' songs, being released on major streaming platforms by Powerjam, a not-for-profit band project for young musicians in the area, is undeniable. Some of these young rock & pop bands have been gigging in the community for the past 5 years, at prestigious events such as Strawberry Hill Music Festival and Richmond Riverside Music Festival alongside adult professional bands. 16 tracks, including original songs by these young rock & pop bands, were recorded by Powerjam just before Lockdown, and partially funded by the Army vs. Navy Rugby Match with support from England Rugby! One Single or EP is being released per week, with original songs on Spotify, Apple music, Soundcloud, etc.

Please have a listen to the releases to date: (<https://www.youtube.com/powerjambandproject>), follow this innovative local music initiative, and support these local talented teen bands--their hard work, and creativity, A source of excitement for our young people who need it especially during this period of social distancing !

*(Fun Fact: local legend, Dave Ambrose (signer of Radiohead, Duran Duran, and Pet Shop boys, called Powerjam band, 'junkbaby"'s debut single "a hit song"!!!)*



Past and future releases can also be viewed by following our pages below:

Instagram: [https://www.instagram.com/powerjam\\_band\\_project](https://www.instagram.com/powerjam_band_project)

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/PowerjamBandProject/>

Soundcloud: <https://soundcloud.com/powerjambandproject>

YouTube: <https://www.youtube.com/powerjambandproject>







“I meant to do my work today  
But a black bird sang in the apple-tree,  
And a butterfly flitted across the field  
And all the leaves were calling me.

And the wind went sighing over the land Tossing the  
grasses to and fro,  
And a rainbow held out its shining hand  
So what could I do but laugh and go?”

**Richard Le Gallienne**

The poem quotes a ‘brown’ bird but I hope the Poet will not mind this change as the [words of Maya Angelou](#) “I know why the caged bird sings” kept coming into my thoughts as the horrors in America unfolded.

Blackbirds are so beautiful and their song fills us with joy amidst all the depression which comes with witnessing and fighting against injustices in the world again and again. We have to ‘sing’ and find respite wherever we can in order to keep standing up to the bullies.



[LOVE in a Mist – Nigella - growing wild and free and Two Roses for Peace and Understanding.](#)

Springwatch is showing us amazing scenes of Nature and the Conservation work being done by dedicated people all across the country. Young people are being given a voice and becoming role models for the changes which we want to see worldwide. Butterflies, bees, wildflowers and birds are glorious along the Sanctuary route so take a walk; stand and stare awhile. Bat pups will be born this month and when three weeks old may be found on the ground when they start learning to fly! Bats are important indicators of Biodiversity as they are sensitive to landscape changes and usage. [Bat Conservation Site for more information](#)

Visit us at: River Crane Sanctuary [Website](#) [Instagram](#) [Flickr](#) Photos/Videos



## FATHER'S DAY IN LOCKDOWN

I thought it sensible to look at Father's Day gifts a tad earlier this year, in the light of COVID-19. So many of us who are lucky enough still to have fathers, will not be able to visit them properly or take them out for a pub lunch (unless of course the Government lifts restrictions very soon). That means that a little more forward planning is in order, especially as so many gifts may need to be mail order, and the post can take a little longer at the moment.

Assuming the budget is available, a good bottle of spirits is usually a pretty good bet. Whisky-wise, maybe a bottle of **J&B Rare Scotch** would be welcome? It is a combination of some 42 malt and grain whiskies resulting in a smooth and subtle blend. Widely available in Waitrose at £22.50 for 70cl it is available in some places in a special gift box – perfect for Father's Day.



Another excellent whisky is available at **Aldi** for a mere £12.99 for 70cl. **Highland Black Scotch** has won multi gold awards and is a blend created with a range of the top Speyside and Highland malts blended together with Grain whisky from Girvan in the Scottish Lowlands. It's then matured in oak casks for eight years minimum and it represents amazing value for such a smooth Scotch!

Did you know about English Whisky? I certainly didn't, but a family owned and run company – **The English Whisky Co** – was the first and foremost and has been going for 14 years. It produces fine English Single Malt at its distillery in Norfolk. The Rum Cask release has been newly released and is available in two strengths in limited numbers at £47.50 and £75 from [englishwhisky.co.uk](http://englishwhisky.co.uk)



If a whiskey rather than whisky is more to his taste, and you have the budget, do check out **Bulleit Bourbon**. This 10-year-old award winning Kentucky whiskey is inspired by the small batch technique used over 150 years ago. It has a distinctive, bold, spicy taste and will appeal to any Bourbon aficionado. Around £42 from Master of Malt or Whisky Exchange.







By Keith Wait

Just down below Teddington lock  
Where tumbling water rushes through  
A pleasure boat in white and blue  
Yet rides the ripples in its dock  
Mahogany and brass, she waits.  
The river's crests still gently rock  
A varnished cradle damp with dew.  
Our mother's mother loved her too  
From buttoned boots and childish smock  
To elegance in crinoline.



But daring days in crêpe de Chine  
Daughter's dress in flapper fashion  
Dancing on the polished decking  
Shocking with Sobranie smoking  
Charmed 'em nightly in the Charleston.  
Mahogany and brass, she waits  
Riding gently at its station  
Fifteen foot of heaven floating  
Above cocktail saucers clinking  
Music to unspoken passion.

Springtime now of nineteen forty  
Now she waits for me and you  
Time and tide stopped  
In the sunlight  
Eyes  
A touch  
A kiss among the willows  
As soft as sleep.

At sea, awake!  
Bullets blast the billows  
A stench  
Fear  
In the Channel  
Tide and time dashed

Forebears scan the family boat  
Wartime now, our fifteen footer.

Teddington to Ramsgate harbour  
We push against the running tide  
Beside the sea, the sea beside.  
This is to be her finest hour  
But onward, seaward, to Dunkirk  
Reach to those who staked their honour  
Faced a fate of fire, tested tried  
As comrades hard about them died  
Willing hostages to valour.  
For them we pitch our pitching boat

Against the anguished seas afloat.  
Palls of smoke soil a sullen sky  
Spitting out its leaden hail of hell.  
Shrapnel sounds her brazen bell  
Breaking her bees-waxed boards which fly  
Heavenwards, upwards, to Dunkirk  
In shards like prayers on high  
Supplications from soldiers  
Scared  
Swimming in fuel oil  
And blood.

The eyes that met  
The finger that touched  
The lips that kissed among the willows  
In pieces scatter  
And with twenty-six brave soldiers  
Sink beneath the waxy waves ... ..

Read the hopeful conclusion to Keith Wait's poem  
in full at

[www.markaspen.com/2020/05/26/fwd-dunkirk](http://www.markaspen.com/2020/05/26/fwd-dunkirk)



*Images by E J Gregory,  
Virginia Smith and P.J.  
Tomlinson*

Poetry



Preview





# my three wheeler is blue with some yellow too

by Angus Strachan

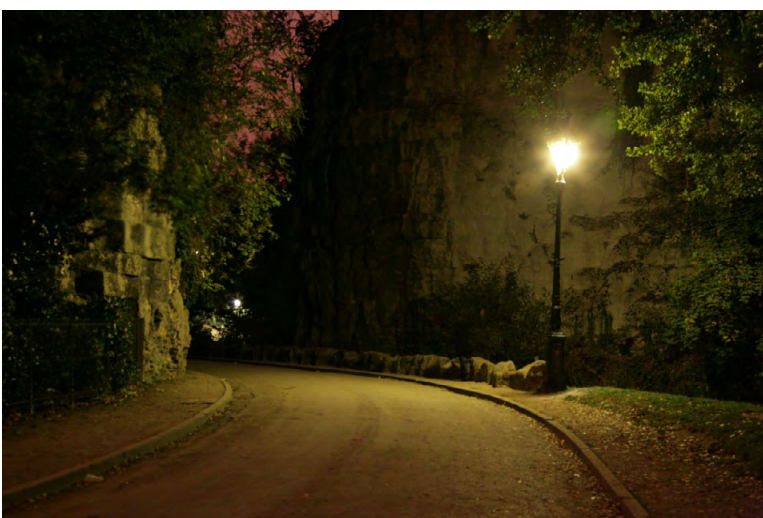
A critique by Andrew Lawston

Donald Campbell's Bluebird, which once broke the land speed record, has been a stationary museum exhibit Beaulieu Motor Museum for decades. Its sleek blue curves bend light around it, suggesting incredible speeds, even as it sits immobile behind a steel rail. We marvel at the engineering and functionalism, while shivering slightly at Campbell's tragic fate on Coniston Water.



Similar ambivalence is evoked by Angus Strachan's haunting piece *my three wheeler is blue with some yellow too*, which references Campbell directly and through the colour of the eponymous trike.

The tone of a melancholy childhood adventure turns from poignant to gently fantastical, as a young boy pedals an urban landscape at four in the morning, in search of companionship.



While the boy's tricycle quest for friends sounds rather quixotic and sweet at first, darker tones quickly gather around the fringes of the poem. The boy's 'older sister is hiding in a shoe box inside a cupboard', we conclude that the sister is dead, foreshadowing the ghostly turn that events take in the poem's supernatural final section. And there are hints of domestic problems, of fiery tempers, and perhaps even abuse. In the parenthetical yawn, we learn that the boy's mother is 'on a hair trigger'.

As the boy pedals on his way, the poem evokes the faintly eerie morning twilight atmosphere through references to the rustling of leaves and 'the shadows whisper to the moon', while he fondly imagines that he's riding 'a monster three wheeler'.

Empty city streets have become much easier to visualise since the lockdown began, and the haunting sense of urban isolation conveyed by the poem will be familiar to anyone who's gone out for an early morning walk in these strange times ... ..

Read Angus Strachan's poem in full at [www.markaspen.com/2020/05/23/3wheel-blue](http://www.markaspen.com/2020/05/23/3wheel-blue) and Andrew Lawston's critique at [www.markaspen.com/2020/06/05/3wheel-blue-citique](http://www.markaspen.com/2020/06/05/3wheel-blue-citique)

Photography by Laura Brinscombe, Arthur Abol and Lars Buchan



# Church Street in Lock Down. Is it really over 2 months already?

By Shona Lyons.



Church Street is still eerily quiet. This week more than most in the last few weeks of lock down probably because quite a few people had gone back to work and the street wasn't as full of people buying from Corto, Limpopo, Snax and Rosie Chai and passing by on their way to the river and the parks. The Estate Agents are open now too, Naz Balti, The Brewery Market & Masaniello are offering take away too but everyone else is still closed.

Simon Gander of Tsaretta Spice did jet spray the square and weed as he said he would. It took him about 3 days. He did a great job and the square has never looked cleaner! He even cleaned the benches. Bruce and I also got all the summer bedding plants in. We have a few more pots to do and have ordered more from our great supplier who really came to our rescue when our usual source hasn't been available. We also did the planters at the top and around the street and have been watering every other day.



We've moved the chess board for the time being. We haven't been putting the pieces out as we don't know how we can keep disinfecting them at the end of every day and how people can distance when they play.

The board needs painting again anyway. Simon says he might try and get us a new board. We don't know if he means an already painted one though or whether he will just get the wood and we will paint it as usual.

There are a lot of forlorn children coming by and we hear them asking where the chess has gone, but that's just the way it has to be for the time being and anyway Tsaretta have said they will really need to spread out into the square in order to keep to social distancing guidelines and also have enough tables outside to make opening economically feasible.



All the flowers are really starting to bloom now, the roses are also looking really great in the square and also in the Church Yard as are all the many hanging baskets in the street.



The council is pressing on in its desire to pedestrianize the street for a 4 months trial to help us all get back on our feet and enable us to open safely, with people able to queue outside & the restaurants have a few tables Al Fresco and all of us manage to keep to the social distancing

guidelines in the street. They had an ambitious plan to start this on the 15th but this has been pushed back to the 22nd of June. A few shops are not happy about the idea but the majority seem to be really for it. Right now it really is a matter of safety and it is just a trial. If it works for everyone, then maybe it could continue but right now the plan is to review it in 4 months. I know quite a lot of traders and residents have coincidentally really been pressing for it for a long time now. So maybe it could work out a really popular and successful idea.

We will just have to wait and see.





# St Mary's University Update

St Mary's Festival of Learning & Teaching

St Mary's  
University  
Twickenham  
London



## St Mary's Festival of Learning and Teaching

Co-creating student success –  
developing inclusive partnerships

**23 and 24 June 2020**

Hosted online by St Mary's University, Twickenham

Our Festival offers a valuable opportunity for colleagues to come together, discuss the challenges of transitioning to online learning, and explore good practice with each other within our overarching theme of student co-creation.

The Festival is being held over two days, and we are warmly welcoming colleagues from St Mary's and other institutions to take a break from their busy schedules and find time to reflect on their practices in a supportive environment. Events throughout the Festival will be scheduled to allow ample breaks from our screens and online 'social spaces' for informal dialogue.

Book your place [HERE](#)

Follow the event on Twitter:  
[#StMarysFLT2020](#)

For more information about this event please email [adf@stmarys.ac.uk](mailto:adf@stmarys.ac.uk).



St Mary's  
University  
Twickenham  
London



## UK Overseas Territories

This week, with the anniversary of the end of the Falklands War on the horizon (Sunday 14 June), perhaps it is time to remember some of our other UK Overseas Territories, these include [Anguilla](#), [Bermuda](#), the [British Virgin Islands](#), the [Cayman Islands](#), [Gibraltar](#), [Montserrat](#), the [Turks and Caicos Islands](#) and [Pitcairn](#) the famous hiding place of Fletcher Christian following the mutiny on the Bounty



Bermuda



British Virgin Islands



Cayman Islands



Gibraltar



# AS CAPTAIN TOM SAYS, TOMORROW WILL BE A GOOD DAY

By Bruce Lyons

As the days pass our industry is becoming accustomed to the reality that most Summer Beach Holidays will not happen this year. At least at best not before late July, early August.

Testing & Tracking & Quarantining / Isolating, even suggestions of certificates of COVID clear etc, is just part of the chaos and doesn't, if you listen, as we do, to the No 10 briefing offer a path to easing lockdown which is sure to be slow and windy, and perhaps for good reason. None of the hospitality and travel sector has had the restrictions lifted yet, neither for travel overseas, nor to stay in Hotels & B & B's even in the UK. I won't bother to bore you with the cost implications. Every part of the sector, even the attractions in the UK have yet to re-open and we have had casualties in the industry already so it is a long climb back up, fingers crossed things will improve in the coming weeks.

So, for us, its work as usual, the day job is changing bookings deferring dates, negotiating refunds and above all ensuring that our clients get the best service we can offer in this constantly changing environment, not always easy. I am afraid Captain Tom's Tomorrow will have to wait a month or two.

In between we are getting the office ready to re-open "COVID-19" though it won't be for a while yet I am afraid. If you are strolling down Church Street our window cards are up to date, but focussing on 2021 departures and there are lots more on the website too.



We have also been gardening the Square and our neighbour, Simon of Tsaretta Spice has jet washed the Square and Benches so do stop by,

If you want to make an enquiry, we would love to hear from you by email or

leave a message on the answerphone or check our website: [www.crusadertravel.com](http://www.crusadertravel.com). Because of this pandemic there are some incredible deals to be had for holidays next year.

At the start of the crisis we adopted the ethos, Plan for the Worst - Hope for the Best and we are following through with that. On travel, as I say above we have loads of new offers on the website

## Horto Villa Triton

2021 Early Booking Offer  
Greece, Pelion Peninsula



Departs from London Gatwick  
7 Nights, Self catering  
Departure Date : 11 Jun 2021

Offer Price from only

**£1263**

pp based on 2 sharing

Many more great offers available

Crusader Travel | 020 8744 0474 | [info@crusadertravel.com](mailto:info@crusadertravel.com)  
Reference: IH69192



and window cards for 2021, covering as diverse locations as Disney Paris, USA, Mauritius, Greece, Croatia, Portugal and more - but if you want to travel this Late Summer or Autumn send an email to; [info@crusadertravel.com](mailto:info@crusadertravel.com).

A couple of weeks ago I mentioned a couple of Destinations that had had no deaths at all; **St Kitts & Nevis, Vietnam**. But nearer at home **Gibraltar** is also in the clear and a wonderful place for a weekend break.

# TRAVELLER'S TALES 73

## MEMORIES OF MONGOLIA



During his second visit to Siberia in 1978 Doug Goodman flew south to Mongolia

South from Siberia over the Altai Mountains and 1000 miles north of Beijing is the coldest capital city in the world. With a three to four month long winter, around 250 frosty days and an average temperature of minus 25 degrees centigrade for over 100 days, you will need warm clothing for a visit to Ulan Bator, Mongolia's capital. It's a very dry cold with invigorating air and constant blue skies. On arrival at the city's only tourist hotel, after a two hour flight from Irkutsk, a celebratory gin and tonic was required. I put the can of tonic outside on the window ledge and five minutes later it had frozen solid and burst.



Suke Bator



Tour Leader Jean Todd



Doug in Minus 25 Centigrade

At over 2 million square kilometres, with high mountains in the north and the Gobi desert to the south, the country is sparsely populated. A third of its 3.3 million inhabitants are nomadic and another third live in the capital. The grassland Steppe is home to the animal breeding nomads who live in yurts or gers. In 1206 Genghis Khan founded the Mongolian Empire, then Kublai Khan conquered China and formed the Yuan Dynasty. At one time the 'Mongol Hordes' ruled land as far west as Austria. During the 1920s there existed 750 monasteries where a third of the male population lived as monks. In 1921 Suke Bator led a revolution which pulled the country out of the middle ages and the socialist state of The People's Republic of Mongolia came into being. Heavily supported economically and financially by the Soviet Union, Mongolia was a useful barrier between Russia and China because relations between the two great powers were not always friendly. Early in the socialist era collectivisation was imposed and purges took place. All this ended with the fall of communism when a peaceful revolution took place. The country became a multi-party state with an elected president.



## FIRST TOURISTS

Back in the 1970s most visitors to Mongolia were Russian military personnel and advisors. This was certainly the case during our flight from Siberia to Ulan Bator on Mongol Air when passengers in army uniforms sat alongside what appeared to be sacks of potatoes. Package tours to Siberia had been available for two years thanks to Thomson Holidays and became so successful that an additional tour to Mongolia was offered. During three winters small groups accompanied by Thomson reps visited The People's Republic much to the amazement of border guards who were not accustomed to checking anyone with multiple-entry visas apart from diplomats. The two regular tour guides were Margaret and Jean, who arrived with their guests almost every two weeks during the winter. The groups of foreigners attracted a warm welcome from the authorities and local people came to look at the strange western tourists.



Settlement of Yurts



Yurts



Tundra

I was extremely lucky to be in the group with Jean, its very knowledgeable leader and with Tim Radford, arts editor at the time, of the Guardian. Both were so enthusiastic to be visiting such an unfamiliar country and I'm indebted to them for their experiences which I've quoted. Tim's first story was about the border guards who requested smallpox certificates from arriving guests: no one had informed them that the disease had long been eradicated. Tim had an out of date 1959 certificate which was accepted; he then passed it to every member of the group who were allowed to enter once the guard had checked the same certificate many times. Hotel Ulan Bator had been built by the Chinese and furnished by Czechoslovakia. It was comfortable but basic: the food was western with vodka, fermented mare's milk and tea – the local variety with butter. Mongolian dishes were always meat with few vegetables the main ones being Buuz - meat-filled dumplings and Khuushuur - a deep fried meat pie.

First sights were memorable as Tim wrote: "I've never seen a landscape so beautiful and unforgiving; when it was cold I've never felt so cold and when we saw the Mongols being themselves, I felt I had never seen a people so interesting, beautiful and alive. I was knocked out by the suburbs of gers or yurts, each with a horse tied up outside; I was bowled over by watching these guys ride as if they were part of the horse; I loved those amazing coats and hats and especially the boots often in spectacular colours." Jean describes the visits to a family ger - well insulated circular homes in the Gobi Desert that can be packed for transportation to a new pasture. Said Jean, "The families were so hospitable to our guests. They gave us food and we drank toasts to peace and friendship with Kumiss, the fermented mare's milk, in their warm yurts". Guests were told about the nomadic existence, how a child learns to ride a horse almost before walking, about the popular pastimes of archery and wrestling and their traditions.

The first tourist groups to venture into Mongolia were fortunate to experience a country that was at the beginning of a tourist influx. The communist party line was strictly adhered to,

Lenin was everywhere and we found it difficult to meet ordinary people. In response to the question put to our Zulchin guide on what school children were taught about Mongolia's great warrior Genghis Khan, the reply was quite succinct: 'we don't teach that as he's not considered to be a progressive person'. So much for the only Mongolian most of us have ever heard of. We naturally wished to send postcards home but none were available in the only shop we could visit. So the kindly authorities printed some for us. The stamps required a glue pot and brush for fixing to the cards.



Former Palace



Lamasery



Panda Postage

**A MAN WITHOUT A HORSE IS LIKE A BIRD WITHOUT WINGS. PROVERB.**

A drive to Terelj provided the opportunity to see some of the vast wilderness. The snow-capped Khentai Mountains, scrubland and the occasional isolated yurt were so unfamiliar to us. The temperature was around 30 below so I was glad to be wearing woolly underwear and a hat made from wolf skin. Most locals wore this type of fur as wolf skin, I was told, is the only fur onto which your body moisture does not condense. Difficult to prove when you're not enjoying temperatures way below zero! It was a strange and slightly unnerving sight to watch your breath freeze and icicles form on your eyebrows when we stood on a rocky hillside looking south towards China. I wondered if I'd ever visit China and look north towards Mongolia. A few years later, standing on The Great Wall I was able to tell a fellow visitor what lay 1000 miles to the north. Excursions to the 150 year old Gandan Lamasery, where monks chanted and prayer wheels revolved in the wind, a tour of Suke Bator Square with ugly Soviet era apartment blocks and a visit to the palace of the 'last living Buddha' filled the short stay in Ulan Bator. Laden with fur hats, dels - the traditional silk knee-length garments with high buttons and long sleeves, vodka, handicrafts and memories of an amazing visit, we headed to the airport for the flight to Irkutsk and eventually the UK, 16 hours and 8 time zones distant.

Mongolia has changed a great deal since my visit in 1978 and it's fully geared up today for tourists. Two things that have not changed are the warmth and hospitality of the Mongolian people and the low, low temperatures in winter. But as Tim remarked, "The air was so cold and pure that it had never even been snuffed by a yak".



# TWICKENHAM STUDIOS ANNOUNCES TV STUDIO PLAN AND PAVES THE WAY FOR THE 'NEW NORMAL' IN FILM AND TV PRODUCTION

Today, world-renowned Twickenham Studios (TW1), operated by Time+Space Studios have announced the opening of a brand new TV Studio facility in conjunction with stringent and strict safety measures that will pave the way for Film and TV production's 'new norm' and that will set the industry standard in a post-COVID world. The launch of their comprehensive "**STUDIO SAFE**" program covers everything from Total Safe Set - Studio/Theatre/Equipment Protocols and Procedures. Already, Twickenham Studios has a major Hollywood production now in situ for a theatrical cinema release planned later this year.

Given the imperative to get this industry working again and with the ever-growing demand for original content Twickenham Studios knows the importance of opening safely in order to keep the production chain moving and protect the livelihoods of all within the industry. Measures introduced give an insight into the future of Film and TV production and how studios will be managed in this "COVID-era".

**Piers Read (Managing Partner of Twickenham Studios) said:** "We are thrilled to announce

the opening of a brand new TV Studio facility at Twickenham that is designed to cater to broadcasters who are in urgent need of studio space in London to produce new shiny floor entertainment shows like ITV's Tipping Point that we previously hosted. The TV Studio is an exciting addition that will complement our rich heritage of seeing some of the finest



independent feature films and television dramas that have been produced here."

**Jeremy Rainbird (Partner of Twickenham Studios) said:**

Twickenham's world-class facilities, is set in a secluded location in the leafy suburb of Richmond which offers several obvious advantages in these COVID-times, in contrast to more

urban locations. With the measures we have introduced we think it is a perfect place for people to re-boot various production workflows by accessing the site safely and securely. We have done everything we possibly can in order to ensure the space is as safe as can be for everyone entering the site by maintaining clear protocols needed to work on set or in theatres.”

**Sunny Vohra (Chairman of Twickenham Studios.)** said: “The film and tv industry provides thousands of jobs to individuals across the UK,

many of whom are freelance and have fallen through the gaps in the government’s economic plans. With the demand for content and the need to entertain people through these turbulent times, we want to enable creativity and ideas to come to life safely.”



Working in line with the British Film Commission, as part of the wider BFI Screen Sector COVID-19 Task Force protocols, to ensure the Film & TV sector can begin restarting scripted productions as soon as possible. STUDIO SAFE Measures that go above Government regulations and guidelines and introduced by Twickenham Studios today include:

- Undertaking social distancing measures – remote COVID training available so that incoming productions understand the measure and can frame risk assessments around the new protocols
- TW1 COVID app, self-certification from all staff, crew and suppliers arriving on site. <https://www.hs-compliance.org/tw1-covid-declaration>
- New COVID aware signage and complex wide swipe doors to safely limit human movement into certain areas.
- TW1 staff will wear certified masks and gloves and are being issued with thermometers to conduct a routine daily temperature check. This is in addition to the self-declaration to confirm people have not been exposed to the virus.
- TW1 staff will follow on set and in theatre protocols established by the industry task force and government guidelines
- Additional cleaning staff will be hired and on constant vigil, ready with sanitisation procedures. We can provide audits of exactly which area have been cleansed and when.
- TW1 have a bio-fogging specialist on standby to treat each space being hired by productions.
- All studios and equipment have localised Sanitation Stations at each entrance with identifying signage.
- TW1 are deploying rigorous new cleaning standards and include hand sanitisers fitted next to each door in the whole studio complex.
- Each space will be cleaned at the start and end of each day. In absolute alignment with green initiatives, Safe Set products will be earth friendly.



# Return to Community Rugby Roadmap

The RFU today announces a national roadmap to support a return to community rugby activity. This roadmap consists of six stages, Stage A relating to individual training with one other person, moving through to Stage F when there can be a return to competitive matches against other teams. We are currently at Stage B following the government's announcement of 28 May.

An infographic and more detailed guidance has been produced to clarify the six stages of the roadmap. Click [here](#) to access the roadmap and [here](#) to read the detailed guidance.

Timescales to allow progression between stages will be carefully managed and will be determined by medical and government advice. Regular updates will be issued by the RFU, along with detailed guidance, as each progression takes place.

Bill Sweeney, Chief Executive Officer at the RFU, comments:

*"A great amount of work has been undertaken since rugby was suspended in March to align the various stages of social distancing announced by the government with our decision making focused on the best interests of players, volunteers and clubs."*

*"When considering the roadmap for a return to community rugby, we were aware that some clubs wanted to get back quicker than others as a major concern of clubs is to retain their players and preserve their revenue streams. We also recognise that other sports may return quicker in England and that rugby may return quicker in other countries. However, we will stay focused on what is right for rugby in England. Whilst we are keen to have rugby being played and members returning to their clubs, we need to be cautious and will therefore only move from one stage to another when guidance and advice says that it is safe to do so."*

*"There are many implications of a staged return to play, including the impact on the competitive programme, rugby activity in clubs, schools, colleges and universities and also the use of club houses and indoor facilities. We remain committed to addressing these challenges in the run up to the 20/21 season."*

*The roadmap focuses on a return to community rugby activity and not the reopening of clubhouses. As these are indoor spaces, they will be subject to separate government advice and guidance. In parallel, the RFU will continue to develop advice and guidance on when and how clubhouses may reopen. The current position is that clubs are able to open indoor facilities only to allow access through the building to pitches, access to toilets and a facility (should appropriate licenses be held) for the serving of takeaway food and drinks.*



**RFU**

# Adult Male Future Competitions Structure Online Consultations Launched

To create a competition structure which meets the needs of current and future rugby players, the RFU this week launched a series of nine online consultation webinars which will run throughout June. Clubs and players from across the country, and at different levels of the game, will be presented with findings from the work undertaken by the Adult Competition Future Structure Group, a direction of travel and different options of what the season will look like.

This virtual process follows January's Adult Male Future Competitions Structure Survey which attracted more than 6,000 responses. The headline results from that survey can be found [here](#).

A huge amount of evidence has been reviewed over the last nine months, including input received through listening panels, surveys, correspondence and by reviewing participation data, conducting deep-dive case studies with clubs and Constituent Bodies. Trends impacting other sports and international rugby unions have also been taken into consideration.

A range of options for future competition structures have been considered against the four important principles used for evaluating and assessing the benefits of change. These are that the competition structure is player-centric, is considerate of the time and distance involved in playing fixtures, enhances the player's experience and the integrity of the competition and is supportive of the financial and sustainability of participating clubs.

Feedback on proposals, which include reducing league sizes in a number of instances, introducing league break weekends, and organising leagues to minimise travel for teams, is essential to ensure a transformational structure which meets the game's needs.

Final proposals will be communicated for further consultation with the wider game later in the summer, ahead of any RFU Council decision on 2 October 2020, for implementation in the 2021/22 season.

Bill Sweeney, Chief Executive Officer at the RFU, comments:

*"We can see from participation trends and data that players are playing less fixtures each season and are choosing to play fewer matches for a number of lifestyle reasons. Demands on players' time through changing socio-economic factors is not the same as it was 20 years ago. Our current playing offer puts pressure on players and clubs to fulfil fixtures, undermining the sustainability of the game.*

*"We now have the opportunity to establish a competition structure across the game to serve the interests of all of our players and clubs and underpin our game for the future."*





# Royal Opera House announces first live concert since beginning of lockdown

The Royal Opera House announces 'Live from Covent Garden', a series of three unique performances to be broadcast live via YouTube and Facebook from its world-famous home in Covent Garden.

The first concert, on 13 June at 7.30pm, will be hosted by the BBC's **Anita Rani** and the Royal Opera House's very own Director of Music, **Antonio Pappano**, and will see the ROH go behind the scenes as we open our theatre to a select group of musicians, artists and performers in the first live concerts since closing its doors to the public on 17 March.

The concerts will be a celebration of ballet and opera, from our house to your house, as social distancing and lockdown measures mean the Royal Opera House's building remains closed to live audiences.



Anita Rani © Elizabeth Gibson

The first concert will be free and will include work from **Benjamin Britten** and **George Frideric Handel**, both of whom have a long history with the ROH, as well as accompanying work from **George Butterworth** and **Turnage**, performed by stars including **Louise Alder**, **Toby Spence** and **Gerald Finley**. We also look forward to an intimate world premiere by **Wayne McGregor**, Resident Choreographer of The Royal Ballet. Further details of this



Toby Spence in *Gloriana*, The Royal Opera © ROH\_Clive Barda, 2013



Antonio Pappano in rehearsal for *Fidelio*, The Royal Opera ©2020 ROH. Photograph by Lara Cappelli

exciting new work will be announced in due course.

Showcasing the best of The Royal Opera and The Royal Ballet companies, and curated by Director of Music, **Antonio Pappano**, Director of The Royal Ballet **Kevin O'Hare** and Director of Opera **Oliver Mears**, the ROH is proud to present some of the world's finest talent in opera, alongside intimate performances from a select number of dancers from The Royal Ballet. All broadcast live and direct to living rooms across the globe.

The following two performances on **Saturday 20 June** and **Saturday 27 June** will be available to view live and on demand for just £4.99 and will include a host of ballet and opera direct from The Royal Opera, The Royal Ballet and the Orchestra of the Royal Opera House.

For more details of performances, dates and times, please visit [our website](#) or follow **#OurHouseToYourHouse** on the Royal Opera House's social media channels.



ROYAL  
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# Concerns worsen for workers with diabetes not supported to socially distance at work

## Diabetes UK is urgently calling for clearer measures to protect people with diabetes

The findings of a new Diabetes UK survey show that two thirds (67%) of people with diabetes attending work do not feel safe. More than half of respondents (54%) also say their employer is not enabling them to socially distance at work.

Since the lockdown started, Diabetes UK has seen unprecedented demand from people with diabetes seeking support on issues relating to employment and coronavirus through its helpline and support services.

The survey of almost 3,000 people with diabetes (2,773 respondents, see notes), revealed that almost half (45%) of the people who are either currently at work, or are soon due to be returning to work outside of the home, reported not feeling confident in raising concerns about social distancing or safety at work with their employer.



The 3.9 million people diagnosed with diabetes in the UK are identified in the Government's list of clinically vulnerable groups, and the current advice is that people with diabetes should follow social distancing measures stringently, stay at home as much as possible, and minimize contact with those they don't live with.

The new research also revealed that more than half of those working (55%) don't know where they can get support from to resolve workplace safety issues. A key element of the government's recent employment guidance to protect workers, was the need for employers to carry out risk assessments for their employees, and make provisions to mitigate risk where it existed. However Diabetes UK's survey found that this does not seem to be working in practice, as of those due to return to work, 60% have not been consulted about a risk assessment taking place, despite being in a clinically vulnerable group.

This builds on evidence collected by the charity in April\*\* at the height of lockdown through a separate survey which found just under half (43%) of key workers with diabetes leaving the house to attend work said that they were anxious about being able to social distance at their workplace, and that their employer was not willing or able to make changes about this.

This demonstrates how the concerns of people with diabetes are increasing and intensifying as lockdown eases and that vital safeguards are lacking for those at increased risk of severe illness or death if they develop Covid-19. Many (75%) have suggested that specific risk



assessments at work for people that are clinically vulnerable would help them most at this time.

Diabetes UK does not believe that the government employment guidance goes far enough to ensure safety at work for people with diabetes and those in other clinically vulnerable groups who are at increased risk of serious illness or death if they catch Coronavirus.

The charity is urgently calling for additional measures to ensure the safety of clinically vulnerable people at work.

Commenting on the findings, Diabetes UK Chief Executive Chris Askew said: *“A return to business as usual is not possible for people with diabetes, because of the lack of adequate safeguards from Government to ensure their safety.*

*“With the new evidence on the increased risk for people with diabetes regarding Covid-19 – Government must act now and review all the current guidelines and measures to keep people with diabetes and other clinically vulnerable groups safe. If lockdown continues to ease without specific and enforceable safeguards for people in clinically vulnerable groups in place, this pressure will only intensify further.*

*“People with diabetes deserve to have their individual needs fully considered, with action taken to reduce any risk of coming into contact with the virus. A generic and catch-all assessment of workplace risks by employers does not go far enough – and this evidence shows is not working in practice for people with diabetes.*

*“The Government must ensure that employers take all the necessary measures to keep all employees safe, now and going forward if they are expected to attend work outside the home – this includes clinically vulnerable people having a right to stay working from home if they do not feel safe.”*

Diabetes UK has written an open letter to the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy and his devolved equivalent Ministers in Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland, urgently calling for more robust protections for clinically vulnerable workers and greater clarity for both employees and employers. We are specifically calling for:

- Those deemed “clinically vulnerable” including those with diabetes, to have a right to stay working at home at this time.
- If an employer cannot facilitate this and the employee still has concerns, they should have access to fair remuneration such as furlough. This will mean that people who are at risk do not face the unenviable choice of weighing up their health or financial security.
- Employers must specifically consider the needs of the clinically vulnerable and all existing guidance on employment protections and workplace assessments should also be robustly enforced.
- Robust enforcement of guidance on employment protections for clinically vulnerable groups, and workplace assessments which specifically address safety of clinically vulnerable groups.
- Effective and proactive communication of these new measures, so that people with diabetes know their rights.

To sign the open letter please visit:

More information on coronavirus and diabetes can be found at:

[www.diabetes.org.uk/coronavirus](http://www.diabetes.org.uk/coronavirus)

**DIABETES UK**  
KNOW DIABETES. FIGHT DIABETES.

# Managing PFI assets and services as contracts end

Public sector bodies risk underestimating the time, resources and complexity involved in managing the end of PFI contracts. With many contracts coming to an end from 2025, there is danger that important infrastructure could return to the public sector in an unsatisfactory condition and services could be disrupted unless a more consistent and strategic approach is taken, according to today's report by the National Audit Office (NAO).

Private finance initiative (PFI) contracts set out a long-term agreement between the private and public sector to deliver infrastructure such as roads, hospitals and schools. The agreements usually provide for the assets to be transferred to public sector ownership when contracts expire. There are currently over 700 PFI contracts and the bulk will start to expire from 2025. In October 2018, government announced it would no longer use PFI.<sup>1</sup>

Today's report draws on a survey of public authorities managing PFI contracts<sup>2</sup>, who are largely local bodies such as NHS trusts and local authorities.<sup>3</sup> It has found that government does not take a strategic or consistent approach to managing PFI contracts as they end. This risks a poor outcome for the taxpayer from the expiry negotiations with the private sector. Poor management of contract expiry can result in assets being returned to an authority in a worse condition than agreed in the contracts. This can lead to extra costs for the authority to pay for repairs and maintenance. Although it is the responsibility of special purpose vehicles (SPV) – private finance companies set up to finance, build and operate PFI assets over the contract term – to maintain the assets and report to the authority, the authority still needs to monitor assets during the contract.<sup>4</sup> Around 55% of survey respondents recognise they need more knowledge of assets' condition.

<b>72</b>	<b>£3.9bn</b>	<b>4 out of 9</b>
number of private finance initiative (PFI) contracts ending over the next seven years in England (excluding devolved governments)	estimated capital value of PFI assets that will revert to public sector ownership at contract end over the next seven years in England (excluding devolved governments)	surveyed authorities, which took ownership of the PFI assets at expiry, were not satisfied with the asset's condition
>4 years	number of years between the start of expiry preparations and contract end for 57% of PFI contracts surveyed (survey respondents)	
55%	percentage of survey respondents who recognise they need more knowledge on asset condition	
60%	percentage of survey respondents who recognise they will need to recruit external consultants to help with contract expiry	
328	number of authorities (signatories of the PFI contract) which are responsible for a PFI contract across the UK, with 182 authorities responsible for one contract only	
82%	share of PFI contracts local bodies are responsible for (versus central government) out of all 700+ PFI contracts across the UK	
18%	percentage of all 700+ PFI contracts across the UK that are the responsibility of the 10 public authorities with the most PFI	
>50%	percentage of all 700+ PFI contracts across the UK that are owned by the 10 largest investors in PFI (by number of contracts)	
>33%	percentage of survey respondents who consider that disputes near contract end are likely, with 86% of disputes expected to relate to the quantity of rectification work	

The NAO has found that many PFI contracts contain contractual limitations over what information can be requested from the SPV. Around 35% of survey respondents said they had insufficient access rights to monitor the maintenance of assets, and there is evidence that PFI investors and sub-contractors are not cooperating with authorities to provide information – a fifth of authorities that asked for information said requests were ignored or denied.

While authorities will want to ensure they receive assets in the best possible condition at contract expiry, PFI providers have an incentive to limit spending on maintenance and improvement work in the final years of contracts, as savings can be used to pay higher returns to investors. More than a third of respondents expect to have formal disputes, which can be costly for authorities.

Many authorities start preparing for contract expiry more than four years in advance but there is a risk this is not enough time. A lack of adequate preparation risks increased costs for authorities and service disruption. Before contracts expire, authorities will have to decide whether services, such as maintenance and cleaning, will be provided in-house, by a new contractor or by the current provider. If authorities do not prepare, services can be disrupted, or they may have no choice but to extend contracts.

Authorities also risk underestimating the resourcing and complexity involved in the expiry process. Private stakeholders can take a more coordinated approach to managing expiry as the 10 largest private investors in PFI own more than 50% of contracts. In contrast, the 10 authorities with the greatest

involvement in PFI oversee just 18% of all contracts.<sup>5</sup> About 25% of survey respondents said they lack the necessary in-house skills to manage contract expiry and 60% are planning to hire consultants. According to the NAO, early preparations, and a collaborative approach between public and private stakeholders, can help to ensure a successful exit from these contracts.

Government departments should encourage authorities to prepare for contract expiry as early as possible and develop a contract expiry plan that identifies all the critical tasks and obstacles that may prevent a successful exit. Departments should provide direct financial support to authorities where required, helping to fund dispute resolutions and hire additional staff. Departments and the Infrastructure and Projects Authority (IPA) should also help build sector specific expertise, and a range of tools, including specialist advice and guidance documents.

The IPA should assess the value to taxpayers of providing authorities with access to a centralised pool of internal resources, such as lawyers and surveyors, during negotiations. It should also develop a consistent approach to resolving legal disputes, and an investor strategy which manages the relationship with private sector stakeholders across all PFI contracts.

Gareth Davies, the head of the NAO, said:

“With the bulk of PFI contracts expiring from 2025 onwards, there is still time for government to make changes that will help public sector bodies to exit from contracts successfully.

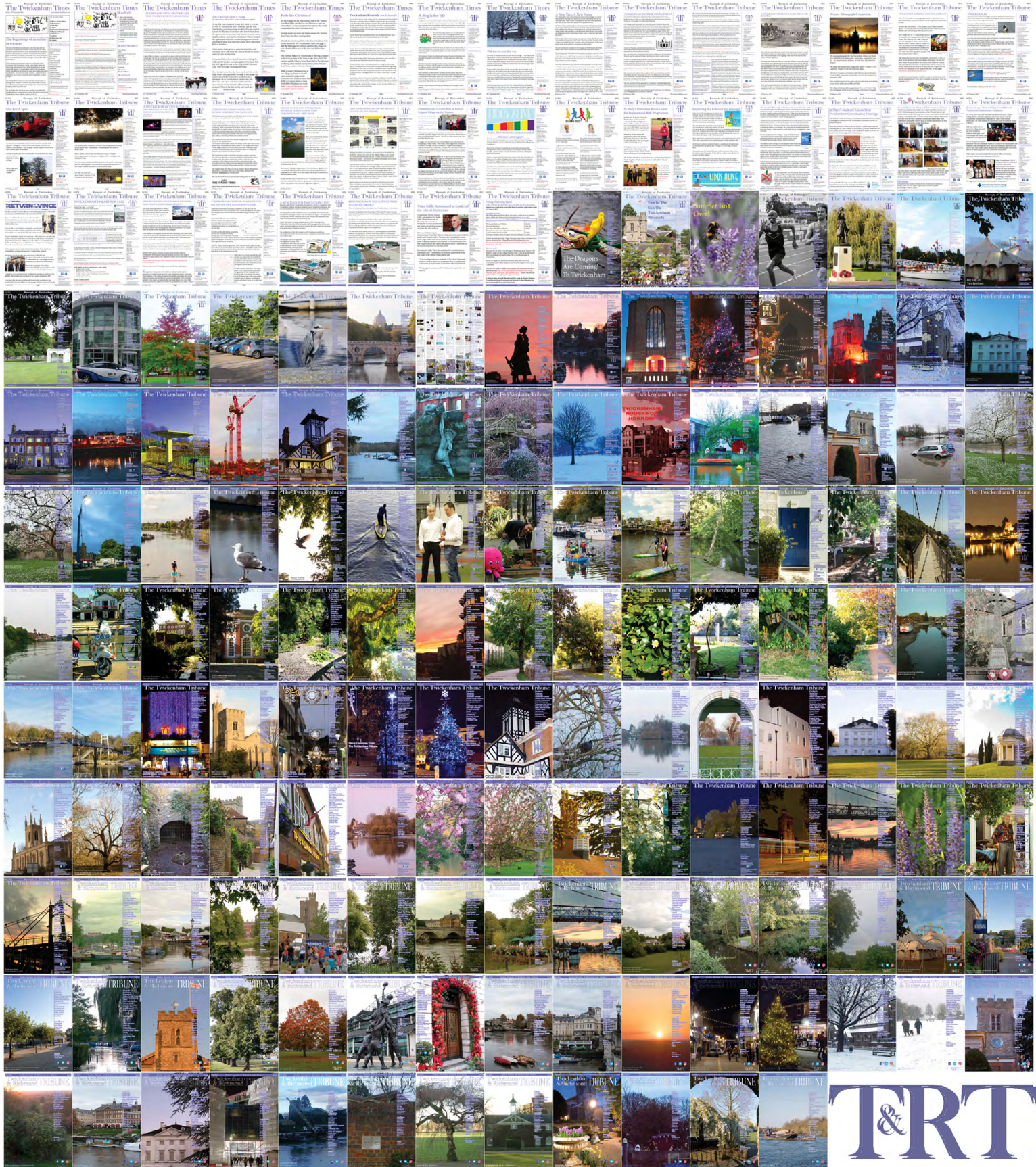
“If government does not provide strategic support and public bodies do not prepare sufficiently, there is a significant risk that vital infrastructure such as schools and hospitals will not be returned to the public sector in the right condition and taxpayers and service users will bear the brunt of additional costs and service disruption.”



National Audit Office



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**Published by:**

Twickenham Alive Limited (in association with World InfoZone Limited)  
Registered in England & Wales  
Reg No 10549345

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

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