

# Twickenham & Richmond TRIBUNE

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18<sup>th</sup> March 2022





# TickerTape - News in Brief

## Fatal stabbing in Richmond

Police have launched a murder investigation following the fatal stabbing of a man in the area of Maguire Drive last night. Police were called at around 23:20hrs on Thursday, 17 March, to reports of a stabbing.

Three males self-presented at hospital after sustaining what are believed to be stab injuries.

One man – believed to be 31 years old – was pronounced dead at hospital. His next of kin have been informed.

Two men have been arrested and remain in custody.

Anyone with information or any witnesses are asked to call 101 ref 8004/17Mar, or contact Crimestoppers, 100 per cent anonymously, on 0800 555 111.

## Twickenham's Electrical Warehouse to close

The Electrical Warehouse on Edwin Road Twickenham has long been residents' go to shop for bulbs and other electrical items. The family run shop has a strong reputation for their helpful and knowledgeable service.

It is reported that Simon has been in hospital for three months and the family have decided to close the business. They will be sorely missed.

## 2023 Review of Parliamentary constituencies

The secondary consultation will end on 4th April 2022. Visit the website to find out more about the boundary changes and how they affect you. You will also have the opportunity to submit your comments until that date.

View the website [HERE](#)

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# TwickerSeal

TwickerSeal and some of his chums met up for their regular chinwag. TwickerDuck remarked that Spring starts on Sunday; 20th March is of course the vernal equinox. TwickerMole piped up that the clocks 'spring' forward next Sunday 27th

March!

Gosh, exclaimed TwickerSeal!! You know what this means? Summer's around the corner and we can get back out on Richmond and Twickenham Green with our hampers and party bags!

We'll be back to enjoying lazy afternoons on the greens with all those crowds of people again, said TwickerBee. But hang on, what about the public loos? We've all seen terrible anti-social behaviour for the last few years; the temporary toilets last year certainly helped, although they closed far too early as groups stayed on the greens well into late evening. I presume the council have finally sorted this urgent issue and have plans in place to install permanent toilets in time for summer?

Er, no, said TwickerSeal. It seems that the council didn't realise that summer happens every year, probably blaming climate change. Apparently, the council only prepared a report in November 2021 and according to the Leader of the Council "Since then, there have only been two months (with the Christmas period in the middle of this)".

Hang on, said TwickerDuck. So, the council are whining that they've only had a couple of months to look at this? We've spent three years asking for this to be resolved! We've seen the appalling ASB over the last two years. The council put in temporary WCs last year, which proved to be in high demand and still not adequate.

What's the council been doing? It's as if the council has been focussing their time producing 400+ pages of reports for their Twickenham Riverside housing development. What's that, that's exactly what they've been doing? Oh ... priorities.





# COVID 19

Teresa Read

## WORLD HEALTH ORGANIZATION

### Weekly Epidemiological Report

#### Increase in new weekly cases

After a consistent decrease in the number of new COVID-19 cases reported globally on a weekly basis since the end of January 2022, during the week of 7 through 13 March 2022, the number of new weekly cases has increased by 8% as compared to the previous week. Across the six WHO regions, over 11 million new cases and just over 43 000 new deaths were reported. As of 13 March 2022, over 455 million confirmed cases and over 6 million deaths have been reported globally

At the regional level, the Western Pacific Region, the African Region and the European Region reported an increase in new weekly cases of 29%, 12% and 2%, respectively, as compared with the previous week; while a decrease has been reported by the Eastern Mediterranean Region (-24%), the South-East Asia Region (-21%) and the Region of the Americas (-20%)

The number of new weekly deaths increased in the Eastern Mediterranean Region (38%), the Western Pacific Region (27%), the African Region (14%) and the Region of the Americas (5%), while it remained similar to that of the previous week in the European Region and decreased in the South-East Asia Region (9%)

### TOTAL CASES LOCALLY

Richmond upon Thames	60,069 (58,895 previous week)
Kingston upon Thames	54,107 (52,921 previous week)
Hounslow	88,220 (87,177 previous week)
Wandsworth	106,884 (105,023 previous week)

### COVID IN THE NEWS

Evening Standard, 18 March 2022 Covid infections in London rocket by almost 50 percent in a week.

ITV, 18 March 2022: Covid cases rise in England, Wales and Scotland as travel rules are relaxed.

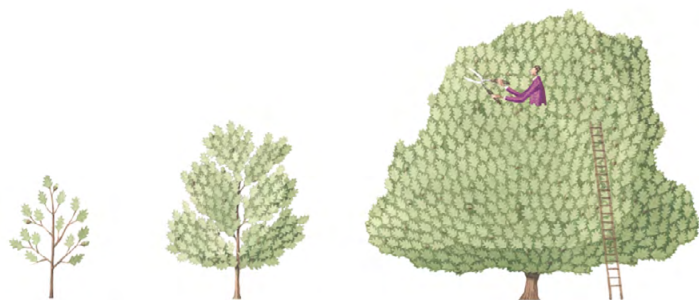
BBC, 18 March 2022: Covid: Rise in UK infections driven by BA.2 Omicron variant.

The Guardian, 18 March 2022: Covid immunity declines steeply in care home residents in England – study

Daily Express, 17 March 2022: Hong Kong sparks deadly new Covid variant panic as shock graph shows deaths SOAR in 24 hrs.

World Health Organization, 17 March 2022: Global rise in COVID is 'tip of the iceberg'.

The Bharat Express News, 17 March 2022: China's COVID governance under pressure as Omicron spreads



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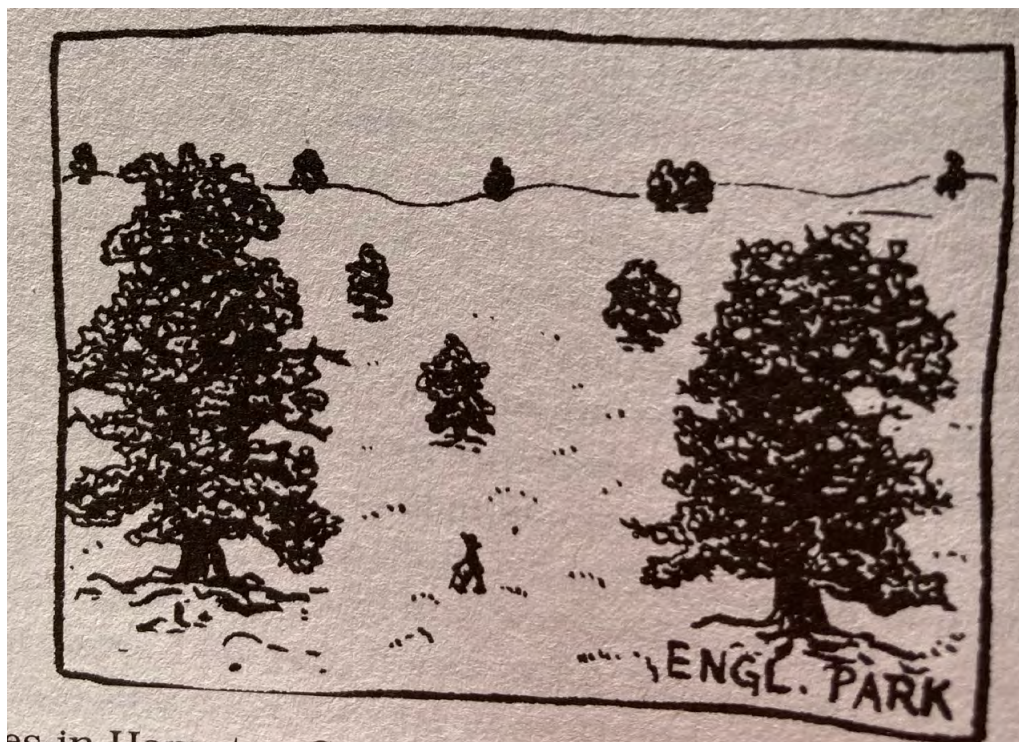
# English Trees

By Simon Fowler

The Czech writer Karel Čapek visited Britain during the summer of 1924. He wrote about his experiences in a series of articles for newspapers back home, illustrated with a series of charming woodcuts. He began his trip by staying with Czech friends in Surbiton who 'cheered me up, fed me and put me into a feather bed'. Next day he was taken to 'Hampton Park' (perhaps Bushy Park) where he meditated upon the trees he found:

The trees are perhaps the most beautiful things in England. The meadows too of course and the policemen, but mainly the trees, the beautifully broad-backed old, ample, free, venerable and huge trees. The trees in Hampton Court, Richmond Park, Windsor and I don't know where else.

Seated under an oak tree, I felt a risky inclination to acknowledge the worth of old things, the higher mission of oak trees, the harmonious branching out of tradition and a respect for everything which is strong enough to preserve itself through the ages...



It seems that in England there are a lot of these ancient trees. In almost everything that one encounters here, in the gentlemen's clubs, in literature and in households there is a level of timber and ancient leaves, of reserved and frightfully solid trees. Here, in fact, one never sees anything spectacularly new; only the underground is new, which is perhaps why it is so spectacularly ugly...

I don't even know why, but this sober England strikes me as being the most fabulous and romantic of all the countries I have ever seen. Perhaps it is because of these old trees. Or not: perhaps it is because of the lawns, it is because here people walk across the meadows instead of on the paths. We, others, dare only walk on paths and footpaths. This undoubtedly has a huge influence on our spiritual life.

When I saw my first gentleman roaming across a lawn at Hampton Court, I thought that he was some fairy tale figure, except he was wearing a top hat. I expected him to ride to Kingston on a stag or to begin dancing or some gardener to come after him and scold him bitterly. But nothing happened. Finally, even I found the courage to set off straight across the meadow to the oak...Again nothing happened, but I have never had such a feeling of such boundless freedom as at that moment.

I reflected on all of this under an oak tree in Hampton Park, but ultimately even old roots begin to pinch. I am sending you a small picture at least of what an English park looks like, I also wanted to draw a stag but I admit I couldn't manage it from memory.

Taken from Karel Čapek, *Letters from England* (Continuum, 2001)



# Another Young Visitor from Konstanz

The Richmond in Europe Association is currently hosting, Tobias Kamprad, a young trainee English teacher from our twin town of Konstanz in Germany. He contacted the association from Germany as he was seeking both to improve his fluency in English & to experience English culture.

A placement was found for him at a local school for five weeks & members of the association offered to accommodate him. Tobias is also a talented musician & he entertained REA members to a recital at a reception which was held for him shortly after his arrival. Last weekend he was delighted to be invited to play the organ in the Chapel Royal at Hampton Court Palace. It was an experience he will never forget.



As well as teaching German each day Tobias is also assisting with music tuition & the school orchestra. In addition he is taking every opportunity to visit the local sights of interest

& to attend concerts in both Richmond & London. He has spent one day in the German School in Ham, which uses the same guidelines as schools in Konstanz, & has been invited to tea with the Mayor.

Everyone benefits from such international exchanges – both teachers & pupils. It's a wonderful experience for Tobias to be here & it's wonderful for us to have him here.

For further information & to hear Tobias play please click on the following link:

<https://richmondineurope.com/latest-news/>



## Engineering works expected on Richmond Bridge this weekend

Civil engineering works will again take place on Richmond Bridge this weekend with minor traffic disruptions expected in the area on the evening of Sunday 20 March and morning of Monday 21 March.

The works are being completed in order to finalise the installation of a zebra crossing nearby. These works are the second stage of the works following initial kerb works which were completed last weekend.

The works will be completed in the early hours of Sunday morning, 20 March, with disruptions expected from **8pm Sunday evening to 12pm on Monday 21 March.**

Traffic controls will be in operation whilst works are carried out. Please use alternative routes where possible.



# First all-female crew callout for Teddington RNLI

The volunteer crew from Teddington Lifeboat Station were tasked at 1.25pm on Thursday 17 March to an unattended rowing boat with the engine still running, near the Teddington footbridge.

The shout marked two firsts for the lifeboat station as it was the first callout for newly qualified helm, Samantha Armatage, who was joined by crew members Nicola Peters and Gianna Saccomani, marking the first all-female crew callout for Teddington RNLI.



*Crew members Nicola, Samantha and Gianna went out on the first all-female shout for Teddington RNLI*  
© RNLI/Teddington RNLI

Teddington Lifeboat Operations Manager, Matt Allchurch, said: 'We believe this was the first ever all-female crew shout on the Thames which is something we're incredibly proud of and an exciting first shout as helm for Samantha.'

The station's D-class lifeboat was launched following reports of an empty rowing boat with a small engine that was in reverse and still running. The tide was rising, and the river flow was very strong so the crew were concerned that the vessel may sink as its mooring was unsuitable.

Following inspection of the vessel, they were no personal effects or casualties found nearby, raising concerns that the boat owner may be in difficulty. Shortly after Teddington's second lifeboat was launched to start a search, the boat owner was found safe and well.

The lifeboat was then returned to the station and prepared for her next launch.

Samantha Armatage, volunteer Helm, said: *'I'm delighted to have completed my first ever shout as Helm after recently passing out.'*

*'We are so pleased that this callout had a happy ending, but we urge boat owners to ensure their moorings are always safe and to always check the tide times and weather forecast before heading out.'*

*'If you ever see someone in trouble in the water, call 999 and ask for the Coastguard.'*



**Lifeboats**  
www.RichmondTribune.com



# COVID jab pop-up to return to Twickenham

Following the success of a hyper-local COVID-19 vaccination clinic in Twickenham last week, the NHS will be returning to York House to offer another opportunity for people to have the jab.

Nearly 120,000 people have now had the first two jabs and their booster vaccination in the borough. However, there are still some people who are yet to have their first jab. Last week, as part of a programme of hyper-local vaccination pop-ups, the NHS Team hosted a clinic in Twickenham. It was so popular that the vaccinators ran out! So, to enable all those in the central Twickenham area who have not yet been vaccinated to have the jab, we are hosting another session next week.

The information and vaccination event will be at York House, Twickenham, TW1 3BZ on Thursday 24 March from 1 to 7pm.

Similarly to the last session, anyone who is hesitant to have the vaccination because they have questions or concerns can also come along and discuss their worries and facts with our expert NHS team in a private and confidential area. There will be no pressure to have the vaccine on that day, but the facility will be there if people want it.

Cllr Gareth Roberts, Leader of Richmond Council, said:

*"We want to make it as easy as possible for people to have their vaccination. We are currently focusing our efforts on those areas that generally have a lower take-up. But please be reassured that there are other locations in the borough that people can just walk in.*

*"We don't want to turn anyone away who is keen to have the jab. So, we have extended the next Twickenham programme, to ensure that all those who turn up can have their vaccination.*

*"Please remember, having the vaccine is an easy step for each of us to take to protect ourselves and those around us. If you haven't had your vaccine yet and have questions, NHS health experts (including GPs and family clinicians) will be at York House next week to help. And if you are due jabs two or three, please use this opportunity to have your next dose locally."*



Anyone aged 12+ who is due their first, second, or booster vaccination will be able to have their jab throughout the day. No appointments are required, and people can just walk in.

Most children aged 12 to 17 can get a second dose from 12 weeks after they had their first dose. If your child has tested positive for COVID-19 and is not at high risk from COVID-19, they need to wait 12 weeks before they can have a COVID-19 vaccine. This starts from the date of their positive PCR test.

Those aged 18+ can get a second dose from 8 weeks after their first dose. Those aged 16+ can get a booster vaccination from 3 months after their 2nd dose. If you are aged 18+ and have had COVID-19 recently, you need to wait 28 days before you can have a vaccination.

Find out more about [vaccine eligibility](#).

For more information about the vaccine and other walk-ins available, visit [NHS South West London Clinical Commissioning Group \(CCG\)](#).



Dear Tribune,

**Come (not) into my parlour.**

Last year, Richmond Council and its Leader asked residents to accommodate Afghan refugees. The Council's website still actually says:

Richmond Council ready to offer homes to Afghan refugees (20.8.2021):

[www.richmond.gov.uk/news/august\\_2021/richmond\\_council\\_ready\\_to\\_offer\\_homes\\_to\\_afghan\\_refugees](http://www.richmond.gov.uk/news/august_2021/richmond_council_ready_to_offer_homes_to_afghan_refugees)

With that in mind, and having read about the renovated community space at St. Mary's Church in Twickenham, on 4 March I wrote to Father Jeff Williams there asking whether they could do the same. I promptly received a very nice reply saying that they were already helping the Ukrainian refugees by using the space for sorting aid packages. Excellent!

So, having been a guest at a reception in the Mayor's Parlour in York House, I also wrote to Richmond Mayor Cllr. Geoff Acton and Deputy Mayor Cllr. Suzette Nicholson suggesting that this warm, spacious room might be made temporarily available to several families escaping the Ukraine war. (For those who have never been invited to a mayor's parlour, these are usually large, elegant reception rooms).

Neither the Mayor nor the Deputy Mayor afforded me the courtesy of a reply. Instead, I received a reply from Michelle Beaumont, the 'Mayoralty and Business Manager', thanking me for my suggestion and including the words:

*'I am afraid that York House where the parlour is situated is an operational building, it does not have the facilities required for people to stay – beds, showers etc... I hope you have a lovely weekend.'*

As my neighbours said – what a cop-out!

Lack of beds and showers is no good reason especially as the government, military and aid organizations have plenty of beds plus toilet and shower buildings which could easily be erected in the large grounds at the front and rear of York House. As the Council had no hesitation in wasting our money on vanity projects such as the Rainbow crossings, then they must be able to find the money to offer sanctuary to destitute refugees who have escaped an active war zone and have lost everything including their homes.

Even a couple of tents would help. If the government can't manage it, I'm pretty sure the local camping shops would provide this equipment either free or at cost.



And how about multi-room houses like Pembroke Lodge? After all, Bushy Park housed a large United States Army Air Forces camp used by General Eisenhower and his staff during WW2. Even the gate there is now called SHAEF Gate.

The Council has promoted itself as *'Ready to offer homes to refugees'* – so why does it ask people to do what it won't do itself? To be fair, the Council has provided a room for sorting donations of equipment and clothing. And the mayor is hosting some charity events, but apparently only for his own chosen charities *'Dose of Nature'* and *'Habits and Heritage'*:

[www.richmond.gov.uk/council/councillors/mayor/mayors\\_charities](http://www.richmond.gov.uk/council/councillors/mayor/mayors_charities)

These might look good but I see no reason for such virtue signalling when people can donate directly to disaster charities as I and my friends have done. In fact, one of them is, at this very moment, driving a truck full of medical supplies and emergency equipment to Ukraine.

So I won't be making any more suggestions to the Mayor as I would not wish to distract him from his charity Easter Egg Hunt or Fish and Chip cruise.

And no, I am not *'having a lovely weekend'* whilst death, destruction and misery sweeps across Ukraine and the refugees are enjoying their own *'dose of nature'* by way of the snow and freezing weather.

I'm sure they too would love a fish and chip cruise.

The Government has now appealed to the public such as individuals, charities, businesses and community groups to offer rooms to refugees. Some already have.

So NOW will the Mayor rethink?

Yours sincerely,

Michael Jay  
Hampton

*Letters published do not necessarily reflect the views of the Twickenham & Richmond Tribune, its Publisher, its staff or its advertisers.*

*Letters of approximately 500 words of body text will be printed at our standard 14pt font size, which will publish as a single page.*

*All letters must be submitted by the end of Thursday, prior to publication the following day on Friday.*

*The Tribune prefers letters to include the writer's name, but will publish anonymously provided details are supplied.*



# Hanger Time, Guinness World Record for Edward & Rowan Draper

Rowan has a heart condition and he and his father, Edward have been raising money for the British Heart Foundation. Earlier this year, Guinness agreed to their challenge (hanging clothes as a team of two). On 6th March 2022, they made their attempt in Twickenham, UK.



The Turk's Head pub kindly gave the use of their hall for free, they had two independent timekeepers from St Mary's University, Twickenham giving up their time and The Mayor of Richmond, Councillor Geoff Acton, was an independent witness giving his time to help this appeal.

Edward and Rowan completed their task in record time, securing the coveted world record title.



You can view a video of the event [HERE](#) and you can visit their JustGiving page [HERE](#)

## Richmond Gymnastics offers free taster for children with disabilities

Richmond Gymnastics are offering a free taster session on Monday 4 April for children in primary school with a disability and/or additional needs.

As well as producing world medallists, Richmond Gymnastics provide disability and inclusion gymnastics offering children the chance to get involved with sport activities.



They are also keen to talk to organisations working with special needs children to open up further opportunities for children to take part in sport.

Their open session is being held at their RGA Centre in Kew (TW9 4EL) on Monday 4 April from 1 to 3pm. Booking is required.

Check out [Richmond Gymnastics' website](#) for further details.



# Update on 'Homes for Ukraine' scheme

The Department for Levelling-Up, Housing and Communities has announced its 'Homes for Ukraine' scheme, to allow people in the UK to welcome Ukrainian refugees into their homes.

Cllr Gareth Roberts, Leader of Richmond Council, said:

“Richmond Council and our residents are ready to support Ukrainians coming to the UK to find safe homes, so we are pleased that the Government has finally set-out its new 'Homes for Ukraine' scheme.

Unfortunately many people will have to wait a bit longer, as it appears the first step only allows people in the UK to sponsor Ukrainians who are known to them, [through a sponsorship visa application process](#) which opens on Friday 18 March.

There will be a second phase, which will allow more people to help Ukrainians without any existing ties in the UK, but at the moment it is not clear when this will go live. I do urge people who have space in their homes and want to help, or community and faith groups who can offer help, [to register their interest now](#) through the government's website.



As soon as we have refugees allocated to homes in our borough, we are ready to spring to action and support the scheme with school places and support for vulnerable adults and children through our safeguarding and social care services. Over the next few days we will be seeking clarification from the government about how this process will work to ensure all necessary support is in place, ready for the arrival of Ukrainian people to our borough.

If you are unable to offer space in your home, but still want to help, we still encourage people to donate to the humanitarian effort via the [Disaster Emergency Committee](#) (DEC) or the [British Red Cross](#).”

For more information please visit [Homes for Ukraine](#).

# Election Manifestos - the need for public toilets

Teresa Read

Three years ago I wrote to the Council explaining the need for permanent public toilets on Twickenham Green. Once into the pandemic this hygiene issue led to many reports to the police of anti-social behaviour, but the Council chose to virtually ignore the situation. Local greens, including Twickenham and Richmond became venues for outdoor gatherings with some groups arranging to come from far and wide via various social media mediums such as Snapchat.

Looking back on the last three years the Council should be in no doubt that public toilets are needed, but even in the latest Council plans for Twickenham Riverside spacious toilets are being demolished and visitors and children are being told to “pop into a pub”.

The Community Toilet Scheme (CTS) around Twickenham Green hardly exists apart from on paper. The CTS states that the cricket pavilion on Twickenham Green is the place to go, however, access is hardly ever available and certainly not when groups stay on the Green late into the night.

After many reports of Anti-Social Behaviour, the Council brought in temporary toilets last summer and this is welcomed by families who need access to hygienic facilities during the day but in the summer people stay out late into the night.

Local people have had enough of those who encroach upon private property to find a secluded spot, not to mention the sight of men urinating in groups along walls and fences. At a zoom meeting early in the pandemic the leader of the Council promised to look into this situation but after over two years there are no permanent public facilities needed for “Living with Covid”. Local amenity groups have achieved little if anything, but this is hardly surprising since they seem to be aligned with the Council.

At the last meeting at Council, Phillip Taylor a Richmond resident, asked the Leader of the Council: “What progress has been made on work examining options for public toilet provision in Richmond since the report to the Finance, Policy and Resources Committee on 15th November 2021?”

Councillor Gareth Roberts replied in the following terms “The Committee report was in November 2021. Since then, there have only been two months (with the Christmas period in the middle of this). If you recall from the papers the next steps were: “to investigate the viability and associated legal and logistical issues associated with developing the options”. I am afraid two months is a very swift turnaround for that lengthy sort of work. There will be papers coming towards Committee, but I cannot give a guaranteed timescale.” One wonders what the Council have been doing since this issue was raised three years ago - however, they have certainly had plenty of time to push forward their scheme for Twickenham Riverside - with no public toilets.

”As a supplementary question [at Council] Mr Taylor raised the adequacy of the community



toilet scheme and asked about the plans the Council has to ensure proper toilet provision and signage in time for the spring and summer periods, given the likely increase in visitor numbers. Councillor Roberts advised that there are public toilets at both the railway station and the Old Town Hall in Richmond. Businesses would also be welcome to sign up to the community toilet scheme.

Additionally, many pubs and cafes would welcome people popping in to use their facilities.”

(Council Minutes: <https://cabnet.richmond.gov.uk/documents/s95699/Minutes%2025012022%20Council.pdf>)

Maybe the leader of the Council could arrange to put up visible and permanent signage telling people where and when they could “pop in” to use facilities on Twickenham Green? Last year the restaurant on the Green displayed a notice informing people that they could not use their toilet - but who could blame them. How can such a small business accommodate all the people who congregate on the Green?

Perhaps rather than making nugatory comments the leader of the Council could put into motion the plans and work for providing permanent public toilets which are clearly needed. In fact, the leader of the Council and a Twickenham Riverside councillor are remembered for liking a rather unpleasant Tweet about the situation and the problem residents suffer. (The Piat d’Or Tweet which was translated to “pee on the door”).

Thus, this serious issue of public hygiene has become the butt of a joke by some of those running the Council but there are councillors who take the issue seriously and in the summer of 2020 Cllr Pamela Fleming arranged a petition on the need for public toilets which received considerable public support despite the need to put it on the clunky official Council petition site to gain Council attention. I had previously made an Official Complaint to the Council about the absence of public toilets but as many will know this channel does not seem to produce results.

In Twickenham, Cllr Geoffrey Samuel, a long term member of the Council, called for a Council zoom meeting to discuss the urgency for public toilets but unfortunately the Council meeting, hosted by the leader of the Council Gareth Roberts, descended into chaos when Cllr Samuel was inexplicably muted. One wonders that if the Council cannot organize a zoom meeting that they might be hard pressed to organize public toilets so perhaps it is time for those who do understand the electorate’s wishes to take over and get things done.

It has also been published in the Tribune that the Richmond Society, a civic and amenity group of over a thousand members, has long campaigned for provision of public toilets: “It was apparent that the campaign became more urgent after the anti-social behaviour witnessed last year when people desperate for relief resorted to urination and defecation on public and private property, including doorsteps and gardens.”

If we are going to “Live with Covid” with more outdoor socialising, we need a Council who can provide basic facilities for hygiene. The first public toilets were opened in 1852 and now in 2022 we need to address this situation again.

**There is a local election on 5 May this year and I hope public toilets will be in the party manifestos; public health is important and should be taken seriously.**

# “Russian Warship Go F\*\*k Yourself”

By Shona Lyons



This sentiment / phrase was something I heard right at the start of the Russian Invasion when the small contingent of 13 soldiers were told to surrender by a Russian warship that had laid siege to Snake Island and its small village of just 30 inhabitants. Far outgunned and outnumbered one of the soldiers Roman Gribov replied with “Russian Warship Go F\*\*k Yourself”. This was the last utterance heard by the soldiers and they were thought all killed, but it has emerged that they may be still alive. The phrase just sums up the courage and defiance the Ukrainians have showed, faced with this merciless Russian army,

far outgunned by them with their cities being pulverised by their missiles, they refuse to give up their freedom. I think their heroic spirit is inspirational.

I don't think any of us know what the future holds for them or for the rest of us. It seems Western Democracy is being challenged in a big way. It seems that Putin is absolutely enraged by the freedom in the West and Ukraine symbolises that freedom right on his doorstep. He is like a very angry goliath determined to wreck this free country with all his might. And we are all watching this on our screens and listening to it all on our radios, incredulous that this is actually happening in Europe. So close to us geographically and also culturally.

I didn't know too much about this country before, but now this is threatened with extinction by this thug, I am discovering what incredible people they are and how justifiably proud they are of their beautiful culture and their industrious population and country, that even feeds half the world with its wheat. How many people knew that it was the breadbasket of the world?

So, during the day when at work, we listen quietly to classic FM as it helps us focus and every hour, we hear snippets of the news. At night in between some admin work, I am making fridge magnets, that I want to sell to raise money for Ukrainian Causes. The magnets are shaped into hearts with bright backgrounds and are in the colours of the Ukrainian Flag with a few sequins for a bit of sparkle. I have only sold 4 so far but I really hope to sell more. They are £10 each.



And we still have the Ukrainian flags interspersed with a few Union-Jacks up and down Church Street. Every few days we go to unfurl them. I hope people will still keep taking pictures and this powerful image of support will get back to the soldiers on the front line & the poor civilians cowering in their basements & help give them strength, these incredibly brave individuals who are defending democracy for us all.



# Twickenham MP Munira Wilson presents bill in Parliament demanding clarity on children's mental health

*Figures reveal postcode lottery on children's mental health*

Munira Wilson, MP for Twickenham and Liberal Democrat Education Spokesperson, today proposed a new law that would require the Government to publish an annual report on children's mental health, including figures on local spending per area.

It comes after figures uncovered a staggering postcode lottery on children's mental health spending. The figures given to the Children's Commissioner show that just £15.70 is spent per child in Halton under the NHS's Children and Adolescent Mental Health Service (CAMHS), compared to £165.20 per head in the Isle of Wight. In total, 16 areas spent £50 or less per child. In South West London, which includes Munira's Twickenham constituency, the amount spent per child is £67.30.

The Private Members' Bill being introduced by Munira in Parliament today would require the Government to report strict figures on waiting times for assessment, treatment and referrals, as well as a breakdown of where NHS money is being spent on children's mental health.

This would help young people and their families hold the Government to account on spending and waiting times for children's mental health services in their area.

Munira challenged the Government over the huge variation in money spent per child on mental health, condemning Ministers for "short-changing" parents trying to access mental health support for their children.

Commenting, Munira said:

"The legacy of this pandemic cannot be a severe mental health crisis that goes unchecked across vast swathes of this country. The Government must not allow this postcode lottery to continue.

"My Bill would ensure that parents can find out exactly how much is being spent on children's mental health in their area. Ministers will not be able to hide from their underfunding and short-changing of communities that need this vital support.

"No parent should be stuck in the awful position of being unable to access mental health services for their child. It's high time we lend them a helping hand."

Munira has been campaigning to improve children and young people's mental health services since her election in 2019. Some of the specific actions Munira is calling for include:

- Expansion of access to children's mental health services
- New maximum waiting time standards
- A dedicated, qualified mental health professional in every school

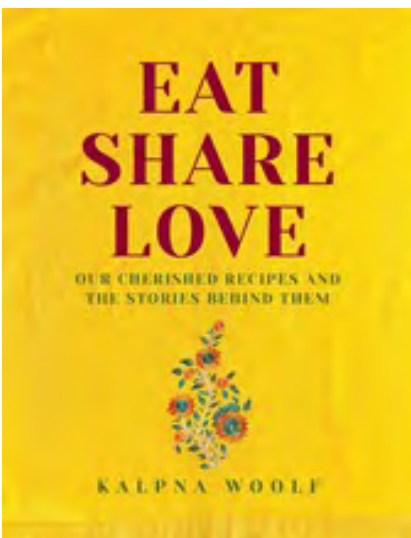
In a survey of Twickenham secondary schools that Munira conducted earlier this year, local headteachers indicated that they had seen significant increases in the number of students needing mental health support compared to before the pandemic. Yet while the need for support is growing, schools' on-site mental health provision is overstretched, while the demand for external support services outstrips supply.

"I have repeatedly heard from headteachers and parents in my constituency that mental health is the single biggest issue facing our young people - yet they struggle to access the help they need," said Munira. "It is only by getting a clear picture of where the gaps are that we can begin to fix this, which is why I'm calling on the Government to publish an annual report on children's mental health."

## EAT, SHARE, LOVE

*“Shiny red and gold glass bangles clinking on the side of the pan, the smell of a warm, spice-filled kitchen, my mum smiling... I am transported back to this every time I cook dal. By the simple act of sharing our food and stories we can make unexpected connections with each other which can bridge our cultural, religious and ethnic divides and bring us all closer together.” Kalpna Woolf*

Like Kalpna, most of us have certain dishes that awaken a host of lovely memories (and some sad ones too). Her recently published book ***Eat, Share, Love***, is a delight. It's published by **Meze** at £22 (hardback). A unique collection of recipes from home cooks bringing together inspirational global dishes with heartfelt personal stories behind the recipes, it features a myriad of dishes from the UK's eclectic cuisines, some of which are less familiar, such as berbere-spiced Eritrean stews, Iranian saffron rice and fresh Sudanese salads. Kalpna is not only an award-winning food writer, but also a charity campaigner: In 2015 she launched her charity 91 Ways, which seeks to bring diverse communities together using the power of food to share stories and break down barriers. All proceeds from this book will go to [91 Ways](#), based in Bristol and named after the 91 languages spoken there.



The book is a joyous read, particularly in these dreadful times when many of us are opening our homes to the poor refugees from Ukraine. Every dish is accompanied by the personal story behind it, revealing touching tales of love, family, friendship, happiness, loss, kindness, laughter and much more. From romance blossoming over a tantalising Persian gormeh sabzi to foraging in hedgerows for elderflowers to make Grandma's delicious cordial and gathering with family and friends to make Moldovan cheese dumplings.

Here are a couple of recipes from ***Eat, Share, Love*** to whet your appetite - it really is a lovely book and might also make a very appropriate Mothers' Day gift? The aubergine salad will be fabulous for those warmer, sunnier days we are all looking forward to and the bean stew will be a great standby for that inclement weather...

### SANA'S FRESH FETA AND AUBERGINE SALAD

**Preparation time:** 20 mins; **Cooking Time:** 10 mins,  
Serves 4 as a side or 2 as a main

2 carrots • 2 small or medium aubergines • ½ a red, orange and yellow pepper • 8-10 tbsp sunflower oil • 1 packet of feta cheese • 3 cloves of garlic, peeled and crushed • Small handful of fresh coriander leaves • 3 tbsp yoghurt • 2 tsp apple cider vinegar • 2 tsp ground coriander • 1 tsp peanut butter • 1 tsp salt • 1 tsp pepper • ½ a lemon, juiced • ½ a pomegranate

Cut the carrots, aubergines and peppers into small cubes. Heat up the oil in a wide pan and fry the diced carrot for 3 minutes, then





remove it and fry the aubergine until golden brown. Remove from the pan and leave it to cool down. Mix the fried carrot and aubergine with the fresh peppers, crumbled feta cheese, crushed garlic and fresh coriander in a large serving bowl. For the dressing, mix the yoghurt with the vinegar, ground coriander, peanut butter, salt, pepper and lemon juice in a separate smaller bowl or jug. Pour the dressing over the salad and finish by sprinkling it with pomegranate seeds just before serving.

### **POROTOS A LA CHACARERA** (PATRICIA ALVAREZ)

“My mum had a small stall in a market in Chile but her dream was to have a shop, so I have done that here in Bristol with La Ruca. I have a café upstairs with a photo of me and my mum, to remember that it was always her dream. I often cooked the dish that I am sharing here for my customers and they loved it. It’s something that we always ate in Chile in the summertime and was always fulfilling; we didn’t need any more food than that and it was the best we had. It always reminds me of home. This is a recipe that I modified from what is called porotos granados in Chile, which is made with fresh pinto beans (which are not easily found in England) and very big round yellow pumpkins. ‘Porotos a la Chacarera’ can be translated as ‘bean from the countryside’ where the maize is grown. This dish is eaten with plenty of fresh basil in the central part of Chile in the summertime.”

**Preparation time:** 8 hours • **Cooking time:** 1 hour 30 minutes • **Serves:** 6

500g dried pinto beans • 2 tbsp olive oil • 1 large onion • 1 red pepper • 2-3 cloves of garlic • 3 tsp smoked paprika • 1 tsp chilli powder • 1 tsp oregano • 2 courgettes • 2 sweet potatoes • 2 tins of sweetcorn • 1 bunch of fresh basil • Splash of milk or water • Flour to thicken, if needed • Salt, to taste

Soak the pinto beans overnight, then rinse and cook them for about 1 hour, until soft to the touch with not too much water left in the pan.



Heat the olive oil in a frying pan while you dice the onion and pepper, then chop the garlic. Add them to the heated oil along with the paprika, chilli powder and oregano. Fry until the onions are soft. Meanwhile, chop the courgettes and sweet potatoes into bite-size chunks, then drain the corn.

Add the spiced onion mixture to the cooked beans along with the prepared vegetables and 1 tin of sweetcorn. Let it cook all together on a low heat until the vegetables are cooked. The stew must not be too watery.

In a bowl, combine the remaining tin of corn with the fresh basil and a splash of milk or water. Mash or whisk until it is all mixed into a paste consistency. If it is too runny add a little maize flour or semolina (any other type of flour will work too) and stir in to thicken.

When the stew is ready, stir in the sweetcorn and basil paste to give the stew a nice thick texture. Season to taste with salt. This can now be served as it is, or you can add grated cheese, a pinch of smoked paprika and chopped fresh basil to finish. Just use vegan cheese to make it vegan!



## Shakespeare in Love

by Lee Hall, based on the screenplay by Marc Norman and Tom Stoppard  
Teddington Theatre Club at Hampton Hill Theatre until 19<sup>th</sup> March

Would the film, *Shakespeare in Love*, translate to the stage? If you have any doubt see TTC's production. Lee Hall playscript has opened the door into the world of theatre and invited audiences to marvel at the antics of an Elizabethan company planning its next production. The action is chaotic, but there is also love, both tender and vociferous, comedy that makes you chortle, and pathos that draws on the heartstrings.

Beautifully designed, with its shades of the Globe, the splendid set takes you right into the world of Elizabethan theatre. The costumes are sumptuous and very much in keeping of the period. Everything is in balance including the effective lighting plot. The music, often haunting, is melancholic or frolicsome as the action demands, and the choreography graceful and well timed. Sword fighting scenes, equally beautifully choreographed, are quite breath-taking to watch.



Director Ben Clare is true to the spirit of the play and the effect is confident and stylish. The many scenes flow smoothly and seamlessly from one to the next, yet he succeeds in placing the necessary emphasis on the high and lows of the central characters.

The cast of this production is blessed with many highly talented actors. Sue Bell as Queen Elizabeth, who steps out of history with a stillness in her performance that contrasts beautifully with the bustle of

the action surrounding her, is just one of many outstanding examples. As Shakespeare, Joe Evans succeeds in displaying the many layers of Shakespeare's personality, masculine and artistic, driven and dreamlike, egotistical but unsure. The relationship between Shakespeare and Viola de Lesseps is amusing, tender and poignant. Anastasia Drew well exploits with intelligence and sincerity all the opportunities offered by this multifaceted role.

TTC's *Shakespeare in Love* is energetic and enthralling, one not to be missed. Expect to be mesmerised by the Elizabethan convention of cross-dressing, mistaken identity and comic subplots. Oh, and award yourself points for each Shakespeare quote you succeed in identifying



Read Celia Bard's review at [www.markaspen.com/2022/03/16/shakespeare-love](http://www.markaspen.com/2022/03/16/shakespeare-love)

Photography by Jojo Leppink, Handwritten Photography





## Yes, Prime Minister

by Antony Jay and Jonathan Lynn

BCP at the OSO Arts Centre, Barnes until 20<sup>th</sup> March

What a time to stage *Yes, Prime Minister*. In these crazy political times Barnes Community Players have been mining the rich seam of the satirical TV sitcoms. Primed to enjoy this stage version by the same writers, I'd watched some old telly episodes and was in a receptive mood. But what had been slick, sharp and brisk half-hour comedy was dragged out to two overlong acts, so the actors had to battle bravely to make the script zing.



PM Gemma Hacker (played by Marie Bushell) is pitted against Cabinet Secretary Sir Humphrey Appleby (Ashley Brown) and Parliamentary Private Secretary Bernard Woolley (Jamie Barker). It's an uneven battle. Brown is larger than life with bristling moustache, overbearing manner, a Machiavellian figure with waistcoat straining over pink shirt and tie. His worst fear concerning the PM: 'she'll start running the country.' He has impossibly long lines, well delivered but too convoluted to pack punch and pace.

Young Barker, who could well find a role as a Prince Harry look-alike, is a likeable cove chipped from the same old school tie, Oxbridge classicist block.

Negotiations for a multi-trillion pound deal with oil-rich Kumranistan hang in the balance, with its Foreign Secretary demanding an orgy at Chequers to seal the deal and the Kumranistan Ambassador (played with aplomb by Deesh Mariwala) is summoned. Moral considerations collide with the economic future of the nation. How can this unsavoury crew, together with Special Policy Adviser Claire Sutton (Susan Reoch) reconcile the two?



The PM, heading for a nervous breakdown, admits: 'I don't talk to ordinary people, unless there's an election.'

Political machinations, media manipulation and an appeal for divine intervention ensue amid conniving civil servants, a diplomatic crisis, Whitehall wheedling, plots and cover-ups, mutiny and back stabbing. Just an everyday story of British politics, real and imagined.

Read Gill Martin's review at [www.markaspen.com/2022/03/17/yes-pm](http://www.markaspen.com/2022/03/17/yes-pm)

Photography by Frank Power



## Tom Fool

by Franz Xaver Kroetz

OT Productions at the Orange Tree Theatre, Richmond until 16<sup>th</sup> April

The most precious freedom is the will to determine the course of one's own life.

Franz Kroetz's controversial play *Tom Fool* starts in June 1976 in a cramped Munich flat with the Meiers watching a television broadcast of the wedding of the King of Sweden to his German commoner bride. Rather Martha, Otto's wife is watching, enthralled, while he ridicules the proceedings.

This little spark of romanticism, undermined by Otto's cynicism, is all we see to lighten Martha's otherwise humdrum life. Ludwig, their sixteen-year old son is bored; he has teenage interests, sleeping, pop tapes, car magazines.



Otto works on the repetitive production line in the BMW plant. He is resentful of his lot and increasingly he takes out his frustration on the pragmatic but care-worn Martha and on Ludwig, whom he accuses of being a layabout. Ludwig is demotivated by his father's unrealistic aspirations for him, as he wants an apprenticeship as a bricklayer. Thus are sown the seeds of the disintegration of the Meier family.

Otto is the authoritarian autocrat, but it is only over his own home that he has any agency. There is seething resentment that is building in him, which he tries to repress. When the explosion comes it is with brutal realism, and as Kroetz puts it, "reality is filthy." When it is discovered that Ludwig stole money, Otto crushes him with an abject naked humiliation in front of his mother. Martha is devastated when the boy runs away, but the damage is overwhelmingly exacerbated by Otto's reaction. His pent-up rage is vented, not directly on Martha, but on their home, in an uncontrolled physical onslaught.

*Tom Fool* is a passionate play; it is about finding the courage to choose one's own destiny and this is freedom that never should be passed over.

Read Mark Aspen's review at [www.markaspen.com/2022/03/17/tom-fool](http://www.markaspen.com/2022/03/17/tom-fool)

Photography by The Other Richard







## Così Fan Tutte

by Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart, libretto by Lorenzo Da Ponte  
English National Opera at the London Coliseum until 22<sup>nd</sup> March

Sword swallows, contortionists, fire-eaters, and acrobats take turns to climb from Don Alfonso's capacious cabin trunk and, as the carnivalesque ensemble melt into the bar in a faded recreation of 1950s Coney Island, Don Alfonso begins to harangue his two young friends Guglielmo (baritone Benson Wilson) and Ferrando (tenor Amitai Pati) about the essential duplicity of women. *Così fan tutte* has begun!



This revival of Phelim McDermott's 2014 production of Mozart's comic opera opens with a flourish that sets a playful tone for the evening. In the grand tradition of ill-advised decisions made in the pub, the two friends wager one thousand dollars that their fiancées - sisters Fiordiligi and Dorabella - are devoted and incorruptible. Hilarious consequences, as they say, ensue.

Soraya Mafi has a brilliant time with Despina the complicit chambermaid, bringing a powerful soprano voice to this comic role, even when adopting various accents for the diverse guises that Don Alfonso (bass-baritone Neal Davies) asks her to play.

The tricksters are waved them off from a wonderfully-realised seafront and the action moves to the sisters' motel. Three revolving rooms, another great design from Tom Pye, lurches the plot into the bedroom-hopping territory of farce.

The fairground setting, given a surreal twist by signwriter Joby Carter, and by set details including heart-shaped illuminated arches and swan carriages, give a dreamlike quality, and soften the turmoil experienced by the main characters.



When Don Alfonso appears in a red sequined frock coat for the final scene, the circus ringmaster, the acrobats, fire-eaters and contortionists are all assembled, but where are the clowns? It quickly becomes apparent that no one needs to send in the clowns this time - Guglielmo and Ferrando have been fulfilling that role the whole time.

Read Andrew Lawston's review at [www.markaspen.com/2022/03/15/cosi-eno22](http://www.markaspen.com/2022/03/15/cosi-eno22)

Photography by Lloyd Winters

# 'HELP YOUR LOCAL AGENCY', CONSUMERS URGED AS RESTRICTIONS LIFT.

## COVID-19 RE-ENTRY RULES SCRAPPED!

Travel News by Bruce Lyons



That's the news today, all re-entry protocols and disciplines have been cancelled for England And hopefully the end is in sight, though a word of caution there are still countries banned For travel, like Hong Kong and China and others that still have strict entry requirements -actually Strict enough to deter many from travelling there – just yet, like Israel who require two airport tests on arrival and a PCR before travel! But as each day goes by the requirements around the world lessen. New Zealand re-opens on the 3rd of May and most of Australia is already fully open too.

Despite the remaining red tape more and more families are travelling.

The next big Calendar date is Easter. But now we must keep an eye on Fuel surcharges – something we haven't seen for a few years but hopefully they will not be too draconian and as time passes and countries re-form their supply lines fuel costs will stabilise

More news yesterday is that P & O Ferries has suspended their ferry services all around Britain – another thing for our besieged travellers to bear in mind when planning your next itinerary. It never rains but it pours!

Notwithstanding all these impediments families are staving at the leash to be “off and away” I can't really remember an Easter so “in demand” usually it is a time when people weigh up the pro's and cons of travelling to Europe so early, but not this year. The call of the Levant Spring is everywhere Greece or the Balearics – Canaries or Malta even Croatia.

Turkey and Cyprus are really busy – not only sunny but good value as the rates of exchange are good in Turkey.

Hottest for Easter is Red Sea or a bit longer on the plane, Dubai – Sadly, we have seen the last of the direct flights to Jordan by the end of March. But there is plenty of Choice and Morocco is a hot bet

As it is further South than many, only newly re-opened and offers a diverse choice of experiences – City Breaks, Desert Trekking, Beach Holidays & more!

How to avoid fuel surcharges – book a package most are ringfenced against them!!

Happy Travelling all!

[www.crusadertravel.com](http://www.crusadertravel.com)





## Montenegro - a member of NATO

Last week Roman Abramovich's yacht, *Solaris*, was seen in Porto Montenegro marina. Montenegro was a traditional ally of Russia but became a member of NATO in 2017. Montenegro has supported Western sanctions against Russia in support of Ukraine.

Montenegro is in the Balkan Peninsula in South Eastern Europe. It is bordered by Croatia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Serbia, Kosova, Albania and the Adriatic Sea. Montenegro was part of former Yugoslavia. Montenegro held an independence referendum in 2006 under rules set by the EU.



Further information about Montenegro:

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



# Twickenham Art Circle Spring Exhibition announced

The Twickenham Art Circle Spring Exhibition will take place at The Landmark Arts Centre for the first time in two years next month.

All the artists have been busy creating artworks and sculptures in a variety of styles, subjects and media which will be on display at the exhibition. All pieces will be available to buy at reasonable prices with most of the prints also available to buy.

Attendees will receive a free catalogue upon entrance. The exhibition will take place on Saturday 9 and Sunday 10 April 2022 from 9.30am to 5pm each day.



# Powerjam selected to perform in New York City

Powerjam has just been selected to represent the UK at the first-of-its-kind International Teen Rock Band Festival 2022 in New York City, raising money for kids in need through UNICEF.

The festival will include some of the most exciting young bands from around the world and this will mean 3 days of festival gigging in NYC for Powerjam's young musicians!

Follow Powerjam on Instagram @ [powerjam\\_band\\_project](#) or visit the [website](#) for more updates on the festival!

Powerjam is a not-for-profit band project for 9 to 18-year old local young musicians. They form bands, rehearse them weekly, gig regularly, and record and release young musicians' music on all streaming platforms





# St Mary's University

## St Mary's Hosts Celebration of Women's Sport and Women's Network Events

Teams across St Mary's University, Twickenham came together recently for *Simmie Girls Can* week to celebrate women's sport and encourage more staff and students to get active.

*Simmie Girls Can* is annual campaign run by Sport St Mary's, which aims to celebrate female participation in sport and physical activity, create additional opportunities for students and staff to be active, and help motivate people to lead a healthier and more active lifestyle.



This year's celebration was the biggest ever with plenty of events taking place in collaboration with teams across the University, including the Women's Network, the UK:ME society, and range of student sports clubs. Sporting events included a women's rugby sevens tournament, funded by the English Rugby Football Union, a Soul Walk, a screening of the film *Transindia*, and a futsal tournament, amongst much more.

SU Sports President Tayla Nisbet said of *Simmie Girls Can*, "This year has been very successful and given a great opportunity for our sports leaders to take initiative to run events. All of our events have been well attended by both students and staff who have shown their support for the campaign"

The University also hosted *Female Health 101*, which saw academics Mel Healy and Dr Nicola

Brown host a special seminar to share their expertise on the menopause and breast health to staff and students across the University. With attendees in person and on-line, this event provided a platform to dispel some of the myths surrounding women's health and empower women to celebrate their bodies at every stage of life.

Dr Maria Mellins hosted *5 in 5*, a session to bring together staff from across the University to share their research. The sessions covered a diverse range of topics including the impact of covid on bra wearing, perceptions of the menopause, managing menstrual cycle symptoms in sport, misogyny on the internet, and responding to stalking, sexual violence, and abuse amongst young people.

Dr Nicola Brown, co-chair of the Women's Network said, "This year's International Women's Day theme was *Break the Bias*. Gender bias and gender stereotypes are so deeply entrenched in our culture that we can't break the bias in just one day. It takes a sustained commitment. We aimed to use IWD as a platform to celebrate women, raise awareness of issues impacting women, and act as a catalyst for positive change. We were delighted that so many staff engaged with the events that took place over the course of the week."

Sports Participation & Volunteer Officer Simon Jackson said, "*Simmie Girls Can* is a major event in the student's calendar that highlight female participation in sport, our aim for the event is to provide students and staff the chance to attend various different workshops and sporting events that they may not usually attend, with the end goal of providing opportunities to be healthier and active through sport."



St Mary's  
University  
Twickenham  
London

# Richmond upon Thames College pulls together to help Ukraine

The past week has seen Richmond upon Thames College and the wider Richmond and Twickenham community coming together in support of the people of Ukraine following the Russian invasion.

Many people in Ukraine have been left without food and are now in need of vital supplies after leaving their homes. Across Richmond and Twickenham there are a number of organisations and groups working tirelessly to provide aid to those affected by the ongoing crisis, including 'The Prosperity' Café.



The Prosperity is a Ukrainian café based in Twickenham, and the staff are volunteering their time and effort to help collect, sort and deliver vital supplies to those in need in Ukraine.

Richmond upon Thames College is continuing to collect items and has already donated a large amount of clothes, female hygiene products, long-life food, bathroom products and more to Prosperity.

As well as this, students held a cake sale to raise money for those in Ukraine, raising £187 for The Prosperity Café which will go directly to those in need.

## Mayor officially opens refurbished pavilion at Kneller Gardens

The Friends of Kneller Gardens recently organised an official opening ceremony for the refurbished pavilion in Kneller Gardens which took place on Saturday 12 March 2022.

The Mayor of Richmond upon Thames, Cllr Geoff Acton, was in attendance to help with the official opening of the newly refurbished pavilion at Kneller Gardens and to cut the ribbon. Attendees then joined The Friends of Kneller Gardens for some refreshments in the refurbished café.



The refurbishment project was funded through a grant from Richmond Council's Community Fund provided to The Friends of Kneller. The directors of the café and a number of young people trained by the café were in attendance on the day as well as the Friends of Kneller Gardens Committee.



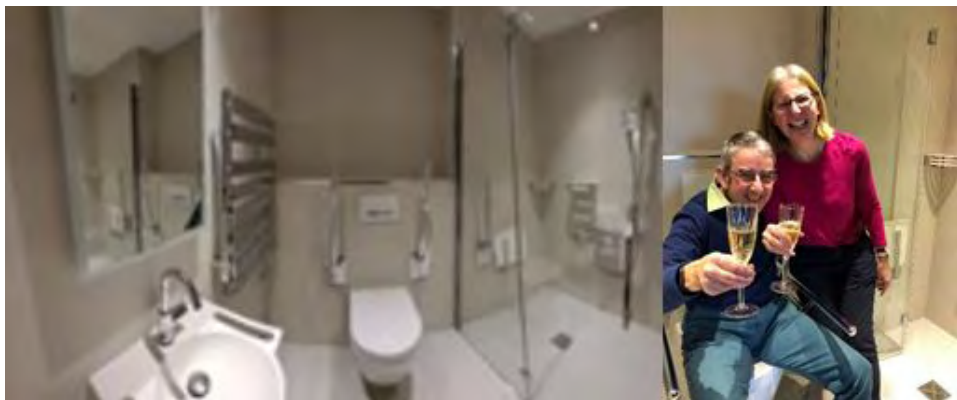
# Kew based couple win legal battle for accessible bathroom

In Spring 2021, engaged couple Neal and Louise bought a third-floor flat in Kew following their estate agent's assurance that they would be able to turn the inaccessible bathroom into a level access wetroom to accommodate the variety of mobility equipment Neal uses to support his muscle-wasting condition. However, a six-month legal battle then ensued after the Freeholder rejected permission to adapt and prevented Twickenham based accessible bathroom specialists Fine & Able being able to start work on the wetroom until the License to Alter was granted.

Despite appointing Fine & Able in July 2021, Neal and Louise's accessible wet room has only recently been completed. During this time, Neal who uses a walking stick, frame and scooter to get around at home couldn't move in due to the existing stepped shower cubicle and challenging bathroom layout. In addition to the solicitor and surveyor Neal and Louise hired to help them navigate this long-winded legal process, Fine & Able Installation Manager Bob Gibbs made it his mission to help the couple by liaising with the Surveyors and building's Managing Agent. Louise says: "Fine & Able were exemplary throughout, always staying in contact and advising via phone."

Neal comments, "We could have gone for something else, perhaps a ground floor flat, but as a mobility scooter user, the options for accessible flats are limited. Ground floor flats tend to be older stock needing a lot of work or are taken up by retail these days." Neal thinks if it hadn't been for Louise's tenacity, they would never have got their accessible wet room, and wonders how many people have been in similar circumstances but given up. He also thinks the freeholder's reluctance was partly due to the myths surrounding wetrooms, despite the fact that in Neal's opinion, "When correctly fitted, a fully tanked wetroom is safer and less likely to cause a leak than a washing machine."

At last, Neal and Louise's accessible bathroom is complete. The former dull, difficult, and dingy space has become airy and accessible, and most importantly, Neal has finally moved in with his fiancée and they can get on with planning their wedding. To celebrate the completion of their accessible wetroom, the couple invited the Fine & Able team round for an opening ceremony complete with toilet roll ribbon and champagne!



Reflecting on their new wetroom, Louise said: "Before we found Fine & Able and visited their showroom in Twickenham to sample products and finishes, all the options for accessible bathrooms seemed to look like an airport toilet. Functional for one use now and then, but this is our home, we have to live with it every day. Neal added: "Alison [Fine & Able Design Consultant] helped us to make the best use of the space. Unlike

other places, Fine & Able listened to how I use the bathroom and where I wanted supports."

Neal and Louise would like to share their top tips to help others in a similar situation:

- Allow plenty of time.
- Go to the top. Get it in writing from the Managing Agent and the Freeholder that you will be allowed to make adaptations before committing to buy. Otherwise, you risk lots of solicitor and surveyor costs further down the line.
- Work with a specialist company like Fine & Able who can show credentials about their expertise, and you can be confident everything will be fitted to the highest quality.
- It's not a small project. Move out if you possibly can, especially if you live in a small flat. Louise had to manage living (and working) at the same time as the installation in lockdown.
- Celebrate the mini victories along the way.
- Keep going! It's worth it in the end.

MOTION SPOT FINE & ABLE  
DESIGN FOR LIVING  
Winner of the RIBA Bespoke Access Award

# Get active outdoors at Kew The Run 2022

The inaugural Time Outdoors Kew 10K and Half Marathon is coming to the Royal Botanical Gardens at Kew on 9 and 10 April 2022.

Inspired by the Tokyo Olympic marathon trials, both runs start inside Kew Gardens with the 10K course staying within the gardens and the half marathon taking on a scenic tour of leafy Richmond via the riverside and Ham House.

Both runs are perfect for everyone from beginners to personal best hunters alike with flat, scenic routes culminating at the iconic finish line in the gardens. Every runner gets a medal and technical running t-shirt and can celebrate their success with family and friends who get free entry to the gardens afterwards.

The Time Outdoors Kew The Run 10K and Half Marathon is already 90% full and looks to sell out in its inaugural year. For more information on both events, and to sign up, visit [Kew The Run](#).



## Local tennis coach honoured with two prestigious Lawn Tennis Association Awards

Caroline Jordan and Cambridge Gardens won two Lawn Tennis Association Awards last Saturday 12 March at a special ceremony held at The Queens Club in West Kensington.

Caroline was named as Middlesex's 'Development Coach of the Year' in the Lawn Tennis Association (LTA) Awards for 2022. In addition to this, one of the Community Parks Tennis' flagship tennis venues, Cambridge Gardens, was named the Middlesex winner of the 'Communities and Parks Award'.

The awards were presented to Caroline by David Rawlinson President of the LTA at The Queens Club, West Kensington on Saturday 12 March. The annual LTA Awards are chosen from over 2,000 public nominations submitted nationally, with the Middlesex Tennis Awards Panel then selecting the Middlesex County winners from all of the nominations received.

[Community Parks Tennis](#) are a local established tennis provider that is passionate about serving the Richmond and East Sheen communities with friendly and enjoyable tennis.





# “Our consistency in producing good performances gives us something to believe in”

From [Brentford FC](#)

## Thomas Frank looks forward to Sunday's Leicester City clash

Thomas Frank sat down with the media this afternoon to look ahead to Sunday's clash against Leicester City. The Bees boss was asked about some high-profile international call-ups this week, the latest team news, and our game against The Foxes. Have a read of the key lines below.

### Any injury issues ...

No. It's all good.

### Taking on Leicester City ...

We know it is going to be difficult. They have maybe not hit the highest level this season, compared to the last two seasons where they were fighting for Champions League football and playing unbelievable football. They are still a top team who, on their day, can beat all the top six teams. It's going to be an unbelievably tough task. We know results are nice, but they need to be backed by the performances, so our consistency in producing good performances gives us something to believe in.

Earlier this season we put a good performance in and definitely deserved a point, if not more. Fair play to Leicester they had that quality from Tielemans and a transition where we needed to do 100 per cent better. With Tieleman and Maddison they have two of the best offensive players in the league.

It's no secret we like to focus on set-pieces. I am aware that Leicester have conceded some goals, but I am also certain that Brendan Rodgers, his staff, and the players will do everything they can to avoid conceding. That can be a battle in the game.

### Playing with confidence ...

The more free-flowing you can play, without thinking about the consequences, the better you will play. The last two games were close games which is natural because the wins mean a lot. In general, we've been reinforcing that we need to be brave, be cool, and be aggressive. The more we can enforce that on the training pitch, the better.

### Christian Eriksen's Denmark return ...

It was a very special day for him, his family, and us involved, when he came on against Newcastle United because of what happened back in June. That was a milestone and the next milestone he needs to get past is when he puts the Danish shirt on and steps into Parken. Hopefully after that it is only football with Christian.

### David Raya's first Spain call-up ...

He was top three in the Championship, maybe better, the year that we lost in the Play-Offs. He was heavily involved in the first goal that decided that Play-Off final which was devastating for him. I clearly remember going to him the day after saying he needed to be even braver and have an even higher starting position the next year. We then got to the Premier League and he performed unbelievably well in the first eight games. Then he got another slap in the face with the big injury. He's come back even stronger. We all know that mental mindset is so important; that is one thing that only gets stronger with the setbacks. You can't have a strong mentality if you don't have any setbacks. He has clear and obvious abilities in terms of playing with his feet, high position, and being very aggressive in coming for crosses. He definitely deserves it.



# England team announcement: France v England, Guinness Six Nations

Eddie Jones has named his England side to play France in the Guinness Six Nations this weekend.

England are in Paris preparing for Saturday's [20 March, 9pm CET KO] game at the Stade de France.

Courtney Lawes will again captain the side at blind-side flanker, while Sam Underhill (open-side flanker) makes his first appearance for England since their win over South Africa in November 2021. Sam Simmonds is No. 8.

In the front row, tight-head prop Will Stuart starts alongside vice-captains Ellis Genge (loose-head prop) and Jamie George (hooker). Maro Itoje and Nick Isiekwe are locks.

England men's most-capped player Ben Youngs starts at scrum half and Marcus Smith stays at fly half.

Vice-captain Henry Slade is at inside centre and Joe Marchant starts at outside centre. Jack Nowell is at left wing, Freddie Steward moves to the right wing and George Furbank is at full back.

Nic Dolly and Ollie Chessum could get the chance to add to their first England caps after being named as finishers. They are joined by Joe Marler, Kyle Sinckler, Alex Dombrandt, Harry Randall, George Ford and Elliot Daly on the bench.

Jones said: "This is our strongest 23 for the game against France.

"We are disappointed not to be in the contention for the trophy but last week's effort against Ireland was full of pride, energy and tactical discipline.

"We have focused on refreshing the team this week and we are ready to empty the tank on Saturday."

France v England is live on ITV and BBC Radio 5 Live.

## ENGLAND XV

15. George Furbank (Northampton Saints, 5 caps)
14. Freddie Steward (Leicester Tigers, 9 caps)
13. Joe Marchant (Harlequins, 11 caps)
12. Henry Slade (Exeter Chiefs, 47 caps)
11. Jack Nowell (Exeter Chiefs, 38 caps)
10. Marcus Smith (Harlequins, 9 caps)
9. Ben Youngs (Leicester Tigers, 116 caps)

1. Ellis Genge (Leicester Tigers, 35 caps)
2. Jamie George (Saracens, 65 caps)
3. Will Stuart (Bath Rugby, 19 caps)
4. Maro Itoje (Saracens, 55 caps)
5. Nick Isiekwe (Saracens, 6 caps)
6. Courtney Lawes (Northampton Saints, 92 caps)
7. Sam Underhill (Bath Rugby, 27 caps)
8. Sam Simmonds (Exeter Chiefs, 13 caps)

## FINISHERS

16. Nic Dolly (Leicester Tigers, 1 cap)
17. Joe Marler (Harlequins, 78 caps)
18. Kyle Sinckler (Bristol Bears, 51 caps)
19. Ollie Chessum (Leicester Tigers, 1 cap)

20. Alex Dombrandt (Harlequins, 8 caps)
21. Harry Randall (Bristol Bears, 5 caps)
22. George Ford (Leicester Tigers, 80 caps)
23. Elliot Daly (Saracens, 56 caps)





# Alan Dickens names his England Men's U20 Six Nations team to play France

England U20 head coach, Alan Dickens, has named his team to play France in their final game of the U20 Six Nations Championship at Stade Aime Giral, Perpignan, on Sunday 20 March (KO 20:00).



There are five changes to the starting line-up from England's game against Ireland in the fourth round of the championship.

Henry Arundell returns at full back having last represented the side against Wales. Deago Bailey remains at right wing as does Cassius Cleaves on the left. Inside centre, Ethan Grayson, also remains in position with Will Joseph joining him at outside centre. Louie Johnson returns this week as fly half with Nye Thomas joining at scrum half, having started on the bench when the side faced Ireland.

There is only one change in the forwards starting line-up with Chandler Cunningham-South coming into the second row, at 5, joining Lewis Chessum at 4.

In the front row, John Stewart is hooker, Fin Baxter remains loosehead prop with Tim Hoyt – who made his Six Nations debut last week - at tighthead prop. Emeka Ilione, remains at number 8 and captains the side for the second time in the championship. Openside flanker, Toby Knight, and Ewan Richards, blindside flanker, remain in position.

Previously capped Archie McArthur, Mikey Summerfield, Tom Lockett, Lucas Brooke, Matty Jones and Tom Litchfield are on the bench in positions 17, 18, 19, 20, 21 and 23 respectively with Ollie Fletcher and Iwan Stephens part of the match day team for the first time in the championship at positions 16 and 22.

Dickens said: *“After the game against Ireland we’ve taken time to review and analyse our performance and focus on where we need to improve.*

*“As with every week of the championship, players look at their individual and team performance in the match and areas that need to be worked on in training.*

*“This Sunday we will be against a tough France side, but I know the boys will want to give their all in this final game of the championship.”*

## England U20 v France U20

- 15. Henry Arundell (London Irish, Caps 2)
- 14. Deago Bailey (Bristol Bears, Caps 7)
- 13. Will Joseph (London Irish, Caps 1)
- 12. Ethan Grayson (Northampton Saints, Caps 4)
- 11. Cassius Cleaves (Harlequins, Caps 2)
- 10. Louie Johnson (Newcastle Falcons, 3 Caps)
- 9. Nye Thomas (Sale Sharks, Caps 1)

- 1. Fin Baxter (Harlequins, Caps 6)
- 2. John Stewart (Bath Rugby, Caps 4)
- 3. Tim Hoyt (Leicester Tigers, Caps 1)
- 4. Lewis Chessum (Leicester Tigers, Caps 2)
- 5. Chandler Cunningham-South (London Irish, Caps 2)
- 6. Ewan Richards (Bath Rugby, Caps 6)
- 7. Toby Knight (Saracens, Caps 3)
- 8. Emeka Ilione (Leicester Tigers, Caps 5) - Captain

## Replacements

- 16. Ollie Fletcher (Newcastle Falcons, Caps 0)
- 17. Archie McArthur (Wasps, Caps 1)
- 18. Mikey Summerfield (London Irish, Caps 4)
- 19. Tom Lockett (Northampton Saints, Caps 2)

- 20. Lucas Brooke (London Irish, Caps 3)
- 21. Matty Jones (Gloucester Rugby, Caps 3)
- 22. Iwan Stephens (Newcastle Falcons, Caps 0)
- 23. Tom Litchfield (Northampton Saints, Caps 4)

# Survey reveals over a third of parents don't ensure their children wear helmets when using E-Scooters

Consumer survey commissioned by Hodge Jones & Allen highlights legal and safety issues of e-scooters and potential dangers for children

*Despite private e-scooters being illegal to use anywhere except on private land, one in four parents surveyed had bought one for their children.*

*The vast majority (85%) of parents are happy for their child to use their e-scooter in public areas.*

*Three quarters of parents (75%) allow their child to use their e-scooter on the road.*

*Only 15% of parents ensure their children stay under 10MPH when riding an e-scooter.*

*Almost half of parents in Newcastle (45%) are happy for their child to ride an e-scooter without a helmet – the highest percentage in any UK city.*

*More information available here: <https://www.hja.net/expert-comments/blog/personal-injury/survey-reveals-many-parents-unaware-of-safety-and-legal-issues-surrounding-electric-scooters/>*

Despite the legal requirements and safety risks involved in using high speed e-scooters, many parents have purchased one for their children, according to new research from personal injury experts [Hodge Jones & Allen](#).

[The study](#) of 2,000 UK parents<sup>1</sup> found that one in four parents have purchased their child (aged 18 or under) an e-scooter, with a worryingly high number of parents seemingly unaware of the legal and safety risks involved in their use.

While it is apparent that e-scooters can cause serious injuries due to reaching speeds of up to 30 mph, not all parents insist their children use the advised safety equipment while using them. Over a third of parents (38%) don't ensure their child is wearing a helmet when riding an e-scooter and nearly half of parents (47%) with a child under five are happy to see them ride without a helmet.

Despite private e-scooters currently being illegal to use anywhere except on private land in the UK, the vast majority of parents in the study (85%) allow their children to ride their e-scooter in public areas, with three in four parents even allowing their children to use them on public roads.

The latest government data indicated in 2020 there were 484 casualties in accidents involving e-scooters, 384 of these were the e-scooter users themselves<sup>2</sup>. Despite the high speeds e-scooters can achieve, only 15% of parents stated they would stop their child using an e-scooter over 10mph.

**Lisa Turan, Chief Executive of the [Child Brain Injury Trust](#), explains the dangers of allowing children to use e-scooters, especially without sufficient safety equipment. She said:**

*"I would urge parents to exercise caution if thinking about purchasing an e-scooter for their children. Even when used on private land, the danger of a fall at speeds of up to 30mph could lead to serious head injuries, especially when a helmet isn't worn.*

*"Allowing a child to use these machines without a protective helmet is putting children at undue risk. The majority of accidents might not be serious, and for the most part, a trip to the hospital won't be needed. For some families however, the incident is significant enough to warrant medical attention. In England, about 35,000 children each year sustain a traumatic brain injury, and the vast majority of these are considered 'mild'.*

*"Head injuries that affect the brain can be categorised as mild, moderate, or severe, with most brain injuries falling under mild – moderate. After a brain injury, children can go on to have life changing difficulties with memory, fatigue, behaviour, sleep, and cognition, affecting education, work, and relationships, and can lead to the development of poor mental health if left unsupported. It is concerning that although wearing a safety*



helmet is a legal requirement for moped and motorcycle riders, it is not a legal requirement for e-scooter users, yet e-scooters fall under the same laws as other motor vehicles.

*“Part of the problem is that these difficulties with thought processes, memory and emotions can be harder to recognize, and so it might be a while before anyone even realises that there is a problem. And in children, because the brain is still developing, it may take a bit of time, sometimes even years, for difficulties to show. For example, it may only be when a child moves into secondary school, where independent planning and thinking skills become more important, that we see the full effects of an injury.*

*“The Child Brain Injury Trust would strongly recommend a full and thorough assessment of the safety risks of all e-scooter use, and the introduction of mandatory helmet wearing for e-scooter users.”*

## **Regional Data**

Safety risks are highest in Newcastle, where almost half of parents (45%) stated they allow their child to use an e-scooter without a helmet, followed by Manchester (43%) and Birmingham (42%).

Parents who allow children to use E-scooters without a helmet (survey size: 2,000)

Newcastle- 45%

Manchester - 43%

Birmingham -42%

Sheffield - 41%

Leeds - 41%

Nottingham - 40%

Norwich - 39%

Edinburgh - 38%

London - 38%

Cardiff - 35%

Southampton - 35%

Glasgow - 34%

Liverpool - 30%

Belfast - 28%

Bristol - 22%

Parents in Bristol were shown to be the most safety conscious in the study, yet with one in five parents there still not insisting their child wears a helmet, the risk of serious injury still exists.

## **Leticia Williams, Partner, Head of [Personal Injury Team at Hodge Jones & Allen](#) said:**

*“Whilst the law is clear on limiting the use of E-scooters anywhere except on private land, the findings of our study highlight that many parents are still happy to purchase them for their children.*

*“Only E-scooters hired through official pilot schemes are legal to use in public areas, yet sales figures show that private sales continue to grow. To hire a rental E-scooter you must hold a provisional driving licence, which means you need to be 15 years 9 months old. While there is no age limit on private use, the hire age really does imply that small, young children should not be on these as the risk of injury is high.*

*“It is even more concerning to see the proportion of parents who are allowing their children to use these high-speed machines without the correct safety equipment. A brain injury, whether severe or mild can have a lasting impact on a child’s development.*

*“My warning to parents is to take care and fully investigate the legal and safety risks before allowing their child to use an e-scooter.”*

For further information about this research please visit: <https://www.hja.net/expert-comments/blog/personal-injury/survey-reveals-many-parents-unaware-of-safety-and-legal-issues-surrounding-electric-scooters/>

# WHO Director-General's remarks at United Nations Security Council meeting on Ukraine

Mr President, Excellencies, dear colleagues,

Good afternoon, and thank you for the opportunity to address you today.

The war in Ukraine is having devastating consequences for the health of Ukraine's people; consequences that will reverberate for years or decades to come.

There is severe disruption to health services and access to basic commodities, as a result of widespread destruction of infrastructure, including health facilities.

WHO has verified 43 attacks on health care, with 12 people killed and 34 injured, including health workers.

In any conflict, attacks on health care are a violation of international humanitarian law. They deprive people of urgently-needed care and break already-strained health systems. The disruption to services and supplies in Ukraine is posing an extreme risk to people with cardiovascular disease, cancer, diabetes, HIV and TB, which are among the leading causes of mortality in Ukraine.

Displacement, poor shelter, and overcrowded living conditions caused by the conflict are likely to increase the risk of diseases such as measles, pneumonia and polio.

Services for mental health and psychosocial support are urgently needed to help people cope with the effects of the war.

There are more than 35,000 mental health patients in Ukrainian psychiatric hospitals and long-term care facilities, which are facing severe shortages of medicines, food, heating, blankets and more.

The war is also exacerbating the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic in Ukraine. With just one-third of the adult population fully vaccinated, this increases the risk of large numbers of people developing severe disease.

Critical shortages of oxygen will have an impact on the ability to treat patients with COVID-19 and many other conditions.

At least 8 facilities for producing and storing liquid oxygen have now closed, and we are seeking ways of accessing oxygen from neighboring countries and ways to deliver it safely to where it's needed.

WHO is on the ground, working with the Ministry of Health and partners to support health workers and the health system to provide care to meet immediate health needs.

So far, we have sent about 100 metric tonnes of medical supplies, including oxygen, insulin, surgical supplies, anaesthetics, and blood transfusion kits – enough for 4,500 trauma patients and 450,000 primary health care patients, for one month.

Other equipment, including oxygen generators, electrical generators and defibrillators have also been delivered, and we are preparing to send a further 108 metric tonnes.

We have now established supply lines from our warehouse in Lviv to many cities of Ukraine, but challenges with access remain. We need unfettered access.



We have critical supplies ready for UN joint convoys to enter difficult areas, but so far we have not been successful.

Today, for example, the UN convoy to Sumy that included a WHO truck carrying critical medical supplies was unable to enter.

Loads ready for Mariupol remain in staging areas and cannot proceed. Access to these, and other areas, is now critical.

To support Ukraine's health system, WHO is coordinating the deployment of 20 Emergency Medical Teams, consisting of experts from many countries, to deliver care across a range of disciplines, in Ukraine and neighbouring countries, which have been generous in welcoming refugees, but are struggling to meet their needs, as my colleagues said earlier.

Those needs are immense, and include continuity of care for basic illnesses, as well as more complex issues like cancer and renal dialysis, maternal and child health, HIV and TB, sexual and reproductive health and mental health.

Refugees, and many of those who remain in Ukraine, are already very vulnerable – especially women and girls.

Protecting them from abuse and exploitation of all kinds must be a top priority for hosting governments – and for all international organizations.

Mr President, today, I have three urgent requests.

First, we urge the Security Council to work for an immediate ceasefire, and a political solution. Prolonged conflict is in nobody's interests, and will only prolong the suffering of the most vulnerable.

The life-saving medicine we need right now is peace.

Second, we urge all donors to support the response to humanitarian needs in in Ukraine and neighbouring countries, which are immense, and escalating every day.

Thanks to donors who front-loaded WHO's Contingency Fund for Emergencies, we were able to respond immediately, deploying more than US\$10 million to address immediate health needs.

These funds were supplemented by additional funding from the UN's Central Emergency Response Fund, CERF. However, to sustain the response, we call on donors to fully fund the United Nations emergency appeal. As the Under Secretary-General said, it's only 36% funded so far.

We thank those donors who have already pledged funding to meet the needs of people in Ukraine.

And third, although Ukraine is rightly the focus of the world's attention, I urge you not to lose sight of the many other crises in which people are suffering.

In Afghanistan, more than half the population is in need, with widespread malnutrition and a surge in measles, among many other challenges.

In Ethiopia, the blockade of 6 million people in Tigray for almost 500 days has created a catastrophic food and health crisis.

In the Syrian Arab Republic, more than 12 million people are in need of health assistance, almost half of them children.

And in Yemen, roughly two-thirds of the population, more than 20 million people, are estimated to be in need of health assistance.

Mr President, in every case, the only solution is peace. Our world needs peace more than ever.

As if COVID is not enough, to have a devastating war like this is dangerous for the world.

I thank you.



# Investigation into the British Steel Pension Scheme

Some people who transferred out of the British Steel Pension Scheme have suffered significant financial losses because they were provided with unsuitable advice, the regulated financial advice market failed to protect them, and they have not been compensated fully, according to the National Audit Office (NAO).

The British Steel Pension Scheme (BSPS) was a large Defined Benefit (DB) scheme sponsored by Tata Steel UK. It was restructured in 2017 after Tata Steel experienced financial difficulty. A wide range of bodies, including government organisations and regulators, have been involved in the BSPS restructure, the regulation of the pensions and advice markets, and the provision of redress to affected steelworkers.

During the BSPS restructure, members had to decide between two options for managing their pension benefits. Some 44,000 members also had an alternative statutory option to transfer their pension fund out of the scheme altogether. Members that wanted to transfer out of a DB pension scheme were required to take financial advice from a regulated advisor if the value of their pension is greater than £30,000. Almost 8,000 members chose to transfer their benefits out of the scheme to another pension arrangement. 95% of these decisions were informed by independent financial advisors.

BSPS members were particularly vulnerable to pension advice mis-selling. Pensions are highly complex and most BSPS members had limited experience of making decisions about their pension or using a financial advisor. Members had a limited time to decide what to do with their pension and the value of members' benefits were substantial (the average transfer value was £365,000, with some worth over £1 million). Other reviews of the BSPS case have found that the communication and support provided to members at the time of the scheme restructure was not adequate to inform their decision.

The financial advice market was not prepared for the impact of the BSPS restructure. Advisors in the local steel-working areas saw very rapid growth in requests for DB transfer advice. The Financial Conduct Authority (FCA), which is responsible for supervising financial advisors, told the NAO that many of the advice firms had limited experience of processing large numbers of DB transfers and did not respond appropriately to the increased demand for their services. Most advisors were financially incentivised at the time to recommend to members that they transfer out of the BSPS, even when it was clearly not in members' interest. The FCA estimates that 79% of BSPS members who received advice transferred out of the scheme.

The FCA had limited insight into the DB transfer advice market and what was happening in the BSPS at the time of its restructure. Data on the number of BSPS transfer requests were held by the scheme trustees and administrators, who are not FCA authorised, and the FCA was therefore not aware of the level of interest BSPS members had in transferring out of the scheme. The FCA did not have any data on the number of DB transfer requests that were taking place, or on the advisor market in the local areas.

Financial advice was unsuitable in 47% of BSPS cases and unclear in a further 32% of transfers according to the FCA. This is much higher than for the DB transfer market in general (17%).



The FCA responded by working with the adviser market and pension members to try to contain the most immediate harm. For example, it diverted staff to work on the BSPS and communicated with advice firms to remind them of its regulatory expectations. It wrote to BSPS members who were considering transferring out to urge them to be careful and helped to organise a dedicated helpline for members seeking further guidance.

The FCA has issued £1.3 million of fines and has 30 more enforcement investigations ongoing. It has also changed its approach to regulating the pensions advice market in response to the BPS case. For example, from 2018 it began collecting more data from financial advisors and has changed the way it engages with regulatory partners, such as developing a joint protocol to enable early intervention in DB transfer cases and banning charges where advisers are paid only if a transfer proceeds.

The FCA has worked with financial advice firms and regulatory partners to provide redress to some BSPS members and encouraged other members raise complaints. To date, only 25% (1,878) of members who transferred out of the BPS have sought redress through complaints. The FCA is yet to decide whether to implement a consumer redress scheme for BSPS members, in which all firms involved would have to review their advice and potentially offer compensation. The FCA must gather evidence to meet certain legal tests before it can implement this scheme. The regulator started assessing the suitability of a consumer redress scheme in April 2021 and expects to launch a consultation on this by the end of March 2022.

263 pension scheme members have lost £18 million of redress to date because financial advisors have gone into liquidation and there are limits to the compensation that can be provided. 22% of complaints made to the Financial Ombudsman Service (the Financial Ombudsman) have been passed to the Financial Services Compensation Scheme (FSCS) due to firms being unable to pay compensation. The average loss for BSPS claims resolved by FSCS is £82,600, with individual losses ranging from £0 to £489,000. The FSCS's compensation limit for advice firms that failed after April 2019 is £85,000.

72% of the Financial Ombudsman's cases and 40% of FSCS's claims have also been made through claims management companies or legal representatives, who charge a fee for their service. This means some BSPS members have not received the full amount of redress owed to them.

There have been wider market impacts from the costs of compensation. The price of the relevant insurance cover for financial advisors has increased significantly since the BPS case, with some insurers refusing to cover this type of risk altogether. The number of firms providing DB pensions transfer advice has also more than halved between 2018 to 2022.

Gareth Davies, the head of the NAO, said:

“Although measures have been put in place aimed at improving how the pensions advice market is regulated and to attempt to remedy the financial losses suffered by British Steel Pension Scheme members, it is clear that many people have not been compensated fully under current arrangements. The BPS case demonstrates the costs and difficulties of remedying failures in financial services and the importance of preventing problems from occurring in the first place.”

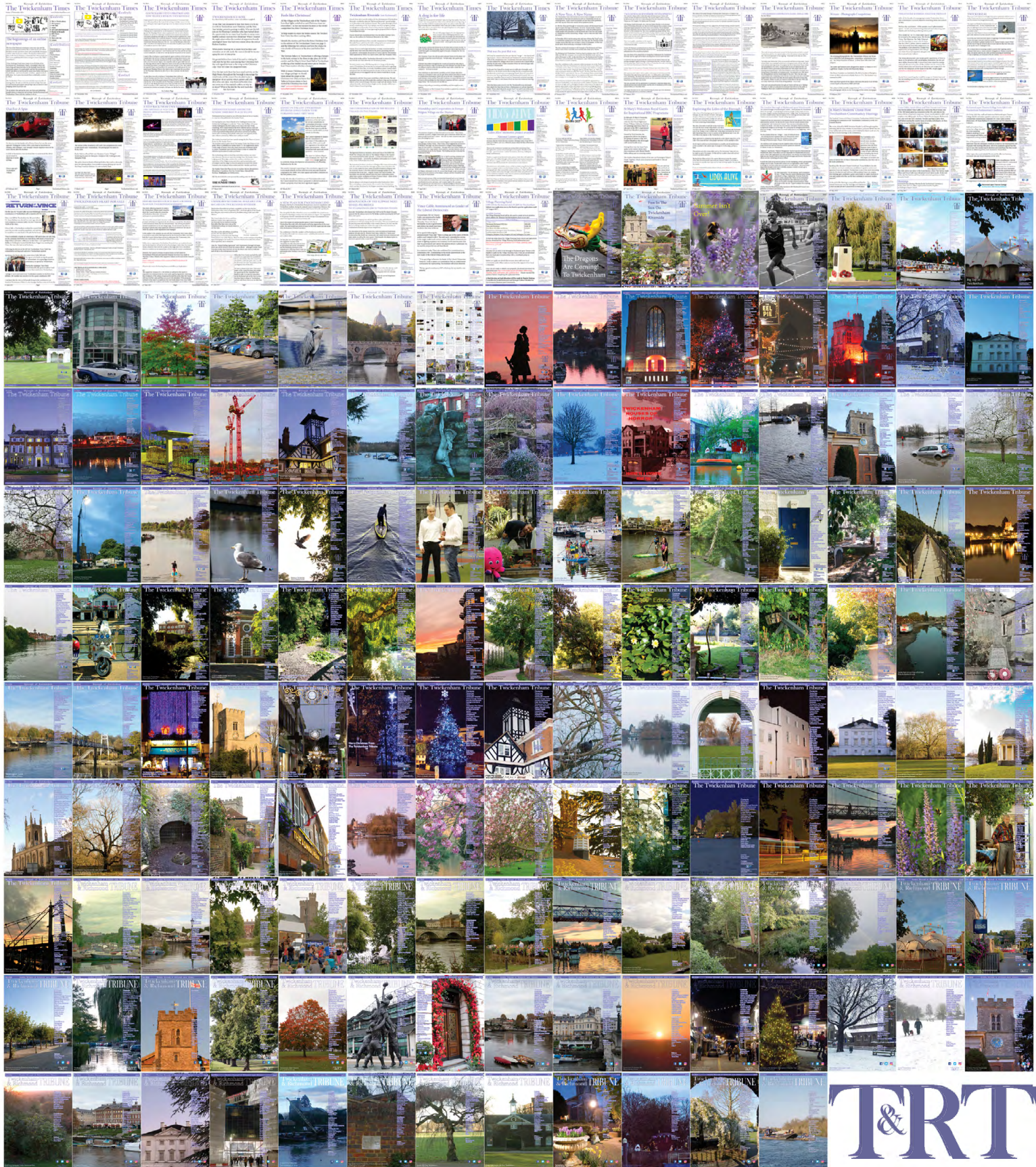
Click here for the [full report](#) and here for the [PAC Chair's statement](#).



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