

# Twickenham & Richmond TRIBUNE

## Contents

- TickerTape
- Local Postcard Page: Barnes Railway Bridge
- Whitton Shopfront Improvements
- Twickenham Riverside and Radnor Gardens
- Letters
- Do You Feel Safer After Eight Years of Sadiq Khan?
- Loss of Visibility at St Margaret's Station
- Happy Birthday RNLI
- Library of Things
- Elleray Hall
- Twickers Foodie
- Three Legs and No Tail!!
- Mother's day
- Mum's the word...
- Sport

## Contributors

- Alan Winter
- Ron Mushiso, Conservative GLA Candidate for South West London
- Paul Velluet
- Doug Goodman
- Alison Jee
- Michael Jay
- Shona Lyons
- Mark Aspen
- Deep Patel
- St Mary's University
- Richmond College
- Oak Lane Day Nursery and Preschool
- RFU
- Brentford FC
- HM Treasury
- LBRuT

## Editors

Berkley Driscoll  
Teresa Read



8<sup>th</sup> March 2024

T&RT

RG.I..PR.....A.AJ.....SS.I.....ST.....SF.I.t..PR....  
..... 200.8 1/2.....66.92 3/4.....20.99....16 1/8.....76.

# Ticker Tape - News in Brief

## Road closures in Twickenham ahead of Six Nations

On Saturday 9 March, England will play Ireland at Twickenham Stadium in the Six Nations, kicking off at 4.45pm.

The game is expected to reach an attendance of 82,000. It is anticipated that London, Rugby and Whitton roads will close between 2.45 and 4.45pm, and then between 6.15pm and 9pm.

A full CPZ will be in force between 11am and 11pm. Shuttle buses will run to the stadium from Richmond and Hounslow East stations. We appreciate residents' patience whilst these closures take place and will make every effort to reopen as soon as possible.

Live traffic updates will be posted on X/Twitter [@rfuhometurf](#) on the day.

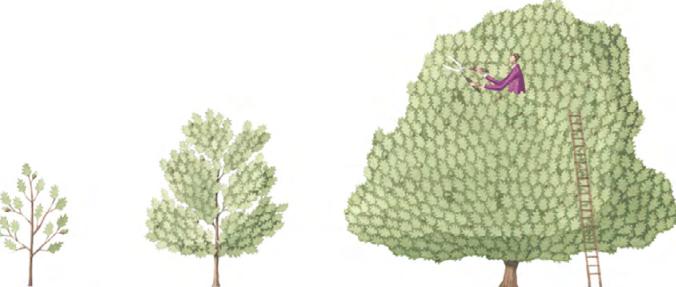
## South Western Railway

Altered train services between Reading and London Waterloo, London Waterloo and Shepperton, London Waterloo and Chessington South, London Waterloo and Guildford via Cobham **Saturday 9 March**

- **Reading to London Waterloo** services will be revised.
- **London Waterloo to Shepperton** services will be revised.

Altered train services and buses replace trains in the Barnes area **Sunday 10 March**

- **London Waterloo to Reading** services will be **revised** and will be diverted between **Clapham Junction and Twickenham**. These services will call additionally at **Wimbledon, Kingston and Strawberry Hill**.
- **London Waterloo to Windsor** services will be **revised**. An **hourly** service will be diverted between **Clapham Junction and Twickenham via Kingston** calling at all stations. An **hourly** service will start from **Richmond** calling at all stations.
- **London Waterloo to London Waterloo via Wimbledon and Kingston** services will be **revised** and will only run between **Kingston and Richmond**.
- **Buses** will run between **Clapham Junction and Twickenham via Richmond** calling at all stations **except St Margarets**.
- **London Waterloo to Woking via Staines** services will start from **Kew Bridge**.
- **Buses** will run between **Clapham Junction and Kew Bridge**.
- The afternoon and evening **London Waterloo to Kingston via Hounslow** services will **not** run.

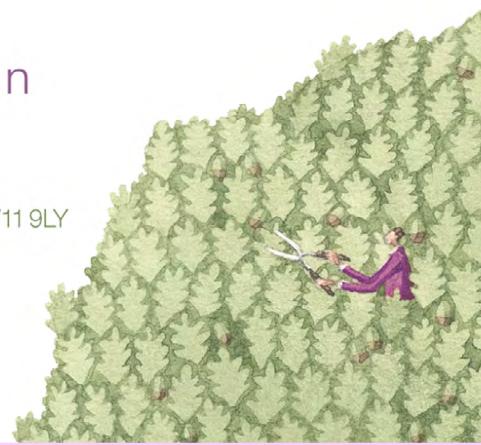


# The Tree Agency

The Tree Agency

darryl parkin

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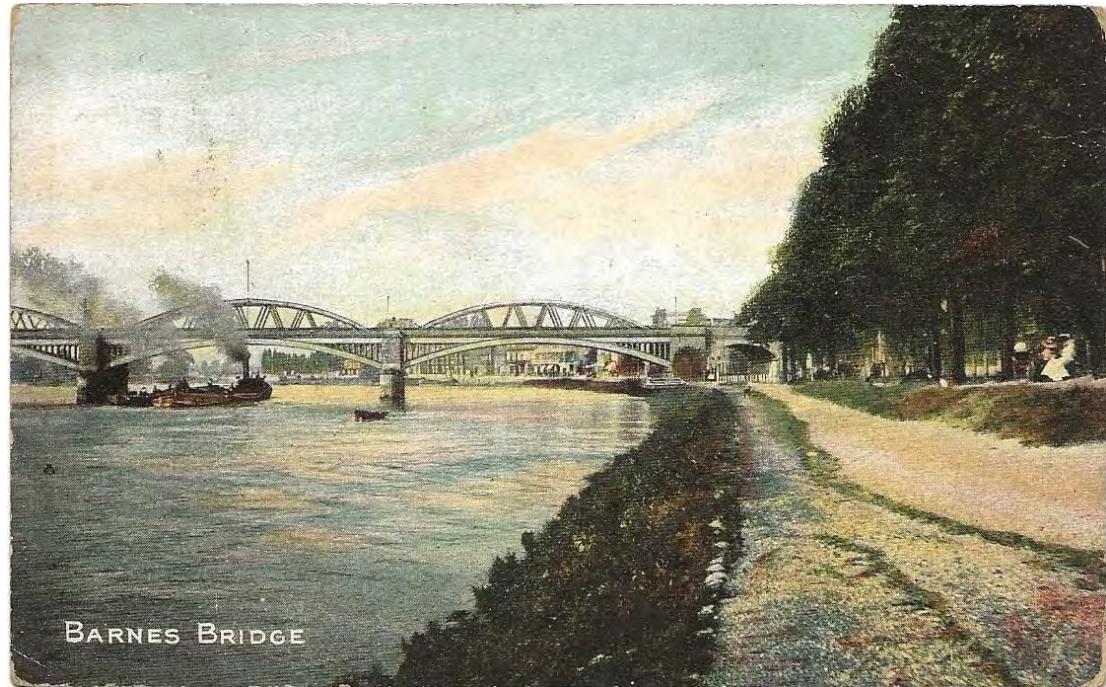
# LOCAL PICTURE POSTCARD COLUMN - Part 239

By Alan Winter

## BARNES RAILWAY BRIDGE

Our postcards this week are of the second Barnes Bridge which was constructed in the 1890's and is still in use today. The coloured postcard was posted in 1910.

Barnes Railway Bridge is a Grade II listed railway bridge in the London Borough of Richmond upon Thames and the London Borough of Hounslow. It crosses the River Thames in London in a northwest to southeast direction at Barnes. It carries the South Western Railway's Hounslow Loop Line, and lies between Barnes Bridge and Chiswick stations. It can also be crossed on foot, and is one of only three bridges in London to combine pedestrian and rail use; the others being Hungerford Bridge and Fulham Railway Bridge.



The original bridge at this location was constructed during late 1849 in accordance with a design produced by the civil engineer Joseph Locke; this structure, which consisted of two pairs of cast iron arch spans, bore a considerable resemblance to the original Richmond Railway Bridge, which was also designed by Locke. Prior to the building of this structure, Barnes,

which was a small settlement at that time, had never featured a river crossing. In order to accommodate the bridge's construction on the south side of the river, several properties within The Terrace, a street of modest Georgian houses, had to be demolished to provide sufficient clearance, as the structure and





connecting lines pass directly through the estate. Barnes High Street is located towards the eastern side of the bridge.

On 22 August 1849, the Barnes Bridge was opened to rail traffic. While Locke's incarnation of Barnes Bridge provided relatively trouble-free service, it has not seen use since

the 1890s. During the latter decade of the nineteenth century, there was a scare regarding the suitability of cast iron bridges following the collapse of one such structure. As such, it was decided that a successor to the original Barnes Bridge should be constructed.

During the 1890s, a wider replacement bridge, which was designed by Edward Andrews, was constructed by Head Wrightson on behalf of the London & South Western Railway. This structure, which was built directly alongside its predecessor, comprises three spans of wrought iron bow string girders, which carries a pair of railway tracks across the river. A pedestrian walkway was also added to the bridge at this time. The original Locke span remains standing along the up-stream side of its replacement but is not used by any traffic. Both the footpath and the second incarnation of Barnes Bridge have remained in use through to the present day. In late November and early December 2022 the bridge was closed to rail traffic for urgent repairs.

During 1983, Barnes Bridge was given protection as a Grade II listed structure.

Since the 2010s, the Barnes Bridge has been temporarily closed to pedestrians during the annual Oxford and Cambridge Boat Race to avoid excessive crowding on the structure.

If you have any old postcards sitting in a box or album at home that you are considering parting with, I'd be very interested in arranging to see them.

Please contact me on 07875 578398 or by email at [alanwinter192@hotmail.com](mailto:alanwinter192@hotmail.com)

I am happy to pay cash for any postcards or photographs that I find of interest. So don't throw old postcards etc. in the skip or recycling bins. Show them to me first!

# CrusaderTravel

020 8744 0474

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

Escapology Experts

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With over 50 years experience we pride ourselves on being able to offer an unrivalled service with attention to detail. Come and have a chat with us in our cosy office off the Church Street Square, we are open 6 days a week from 11am until 6pm (Closed Sunday)



# Next week at Richmond Council

On Wednesday, the **Planning Committee** will meet to discuss (1) use of the Stag Brewer site as a film set, (2) The demolition of 22 Broad Lane Teddington for the construction of two semi-detached houses, (3) The variation of planning permission for the former House of Fraser Building in central Richmond, (4) Demolition of Sheldon House in Cromwell road Teddington to be replaced with a 27 flats – start time: 7 pm, York House.

On Thursday, The **Health and Wellbeing Board** will meet to (1) receive a verbal update on local pharmacies, (2) discuss the Better Care Fund update, - start time 1.30 pm – York House.

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

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

On Thursday, the **North West London Joint Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee** will meet at Brent Civic Centre – start time 10 am.

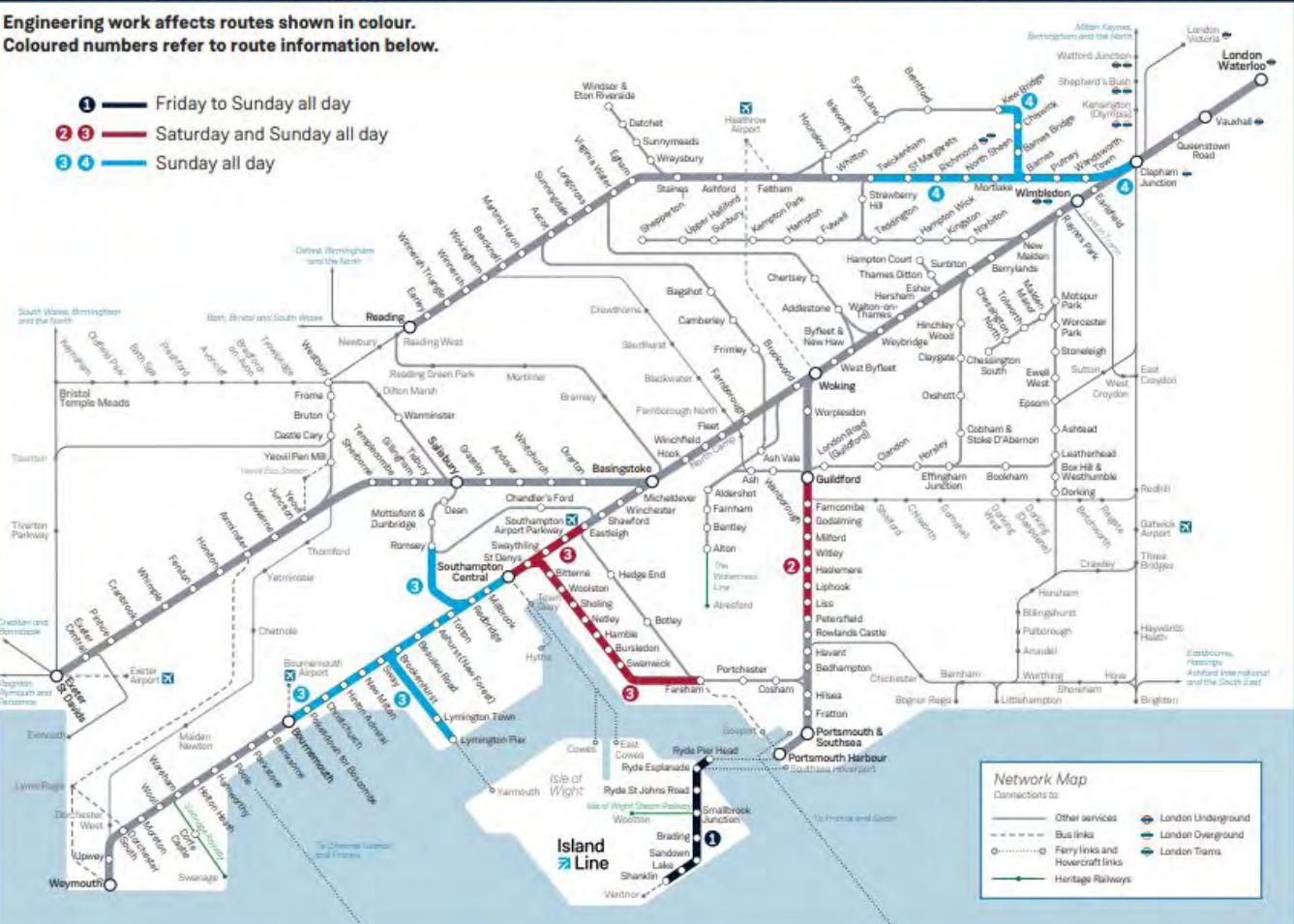
For full details, please follow the link [HERE](#)

## Engineering work summary

We are sorry that bulky luggage, cycles and prams cannot be carried on the replacement bus services.

Engineering work affects routes shown in colour.  
Coloured numbers refer to route information below.

- ① Friday to Sunday all day
- ② ③ Saturday and Sunday all day
- ③ ④ Sunday all day



# Whitton Shopfront Improvements

The £53,000 shop front improvement program has started in Whitton High Street. Guess Jewellers and Mobility Aids the first two of six businesses to receive new signboards as part of the scheme.

This is part of a £2 million borough wide investment fund for high streets and green spaces promised in the Liberal Democrat 2022 local election manifesto to help the borough's centres as they emerge from the pandemic.



## BARNES PLG MEETING

**Wednesday the 13th of  
March 2024, 7pm, Rose  
House, 70 Barnes High  
Street, SW13 9LD**



# Twickenham Riverside and Radnor Gardens in Strawberry Hill

*Radnor Gardens in Strawberry Hill may make up the loss of play space for the 12+ age group, in the Council's Twickenham Riverside plan.*

It has been revealed that the provision of play space in Council plans for Twickenham Riverside need to be met as part of the planning permission.

The London Plan requires play facilities for children and youngsters who will live at the new Twickenham Riverside Development - but it seems that the council does not have enough space within their plans and have suggested making facilities available at Radnor Gardens in Strawberry Hill:

“to offset the shortfall of play provision for children aged 12+ (23m<sup>2</sup>)” [on the Twickenham Riverside site].

It has been reported that Radnor Gardens is on the *limit of acceptability* for the required play space. Whilst Radnor’s play area is provided for young children to eleven years, “additional play could be located here [Radnor Gardens] for the older age group.”

Radnor Gardens, situated in an idyllic spot next to the Thames, has a playground for small children, two eighteenth-century heritage buildings - a gazebo and a summer house - buildings acknowledged by Historic England.

There is a World War I Memorial, Grade II listed, in Radnor Gardens and Strawberry Hill Bowling Club has been a feature of Radnor Gardens since 1920.

It seems that in the past there have been some issues in Radnor Gardens at night, and young people have also been observed on one occasion sitting on the roof of one of the heritage buildings.

Note: The Strawberry Hill Residents’ Association Committee was requested by a resident and Committee member to give a view on the Twickenham Riverside plans during the consultation period but unfortunately this suggestion was not accepted by all members of the Committee so was not agreed.

Planning detail - London Borough of Richmond upon Thames:

“To offset the shortfall of play provision for children aged 12+ (23m<sup>2</sup>), a contribution of £6026 is sought (£221 per m<sup>2</sup> and £41m<sup>2</sup> for maintenance of 10 years). The submission identifies several spaces within 800m walking distance of the site, for the 12+ age group. However, actual walking distance have not been applied and several sites are across the river in Ham. Only York House tennis courts is within the distance and this is only free to under 15s (membership and booking required). Radnor Gardens is 850m away. It is on the limit of acceptability but there are no significant access barriers for this age group. Whilst Radnor’s play is focused up to 11, additional play could be located here for the older age group.”

Condition: NS100: Off site play

“No occupation of the residential units hereby approved shall take place until a scheme to deliver offsite play provision for children aged 12+ has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

REASON: To ensure the necessary infrastructure in place to meet the needs of the development.”



# Twickenham Conservatives

Jonathan Hulley, the Conservative prospective Parliamentary candidate for Twickenham constituency, will be holding a Shadow MP Surgery on **Saturday March 16th from 10am to 12noon.**

The venue will be the Conservative constituency Office, **90 York Road, Teddington, TW11 8SN.**

Jonathan will be in attendance to take up any issue of local concern and give his professional opinion and offer his expertise and support on any matter that you wish to bring to his attention.

There is no need to make an appointment.

Promoted by  
Jonathan Hulley  
of 90 York Road  
Teddington  
TW11 8SN.

All are  
Welcome  
To attend.

## Shadow MP Surgery



Dear Editor

## Blrthday Bribery?

As we are facing quite a large rise in Council Tax (again), I need to know how the Council is spending my money.

I was therefore mystified when I read that there is a proposal '*to provide cheaper and free swimming sessions to eligible residents in summer*' (I wonder just who is 'eligible') - and, even more exciting, '*sending birthday cards to all 18-year-olds to remind them to register to vote*'.

Is someone sitting in an office in York House thinking up ways of using (wasting) our money to get votes? Shame on them.

If I was 18, I'd return my birthday card in an envelope with no stamp, just to make sure they paid for it at the other end, just as I do with all junk mail.

On second thoughts, perhaps not, as it would mean they were making us pay yet again.

Finally, here's a suggestion for the unknown culprit holed up in York House trying to get us voting LibDem in May: Don't stay holed up - get the holes in our roads filled up (and not those temporary lumps which make them worse - see photos). Here are a few to start with:

Oaklands, Howgate and Vernon Roads, SW14 (there are many more of course)



Signed  
Shocked of Sheen

# Do You Feel Safer After Eight Years of Sadiq Khan?

By Ron Mushiso, Conservative GLA Candidate for South West London

During my campaign efforts in Whitton last week, an impromptu visit to a renowned local high street store offered me a startling insight into the evolving landscape of security in our shops. Intent on purchasing a steak for dinner, I was surprised to find the meats encased in security-tagged containers, reminiscent of anti-theft measures typically seen in clothing stores. A conversation with a store employee revealed that merely twenty minutes prior, an individual had brazenly absconded with unsecured meats, resorting to threatening behaviour when pursued by a vigilant bystander who happened to witness the incident. This incident, though alarming, is increasingly becoming the norm across London.

Instances of shoplifting are on the rise, with an unprecedented 48% surge recorded last year alone, culminating in 55,860 reported cases across the capital. This escalation is accompanied by a growing resignation among shopkeepers and store managers, many of whom believe thefts under £50—or, by some accounts, £200—go uninvestigated. This perception undermines the efforts of small business owners operating on razor-thin margins, for whom every loss exacerbates the challenge of attracting customers in a competitive environment. Shoplifting, contrary to some beliefs, is far from a victimless crime.

It is imperative to challenge the defeatist attitude that trivialises theft under the guise of petty crime. The law unequivocally classifies theft as a criminal offence, irrespective of its scale. The current administration, led by Mayor Sadiq Khan and armed with a £21 billion budget for London, has witnessed a mere 6% resolution rate for crimes in the past year, indicating a significant advantage for perpetrators over law enforcement.

In light of this, I wholeheartedly endorse Susan Hall's proposal to allocate an additional £200 million to bolster our police force, ensuring every incident of crime is met with the seriousness it deserves. We must stand united against criminality in all its forms, reinforcing the obvious principle that law breaking will not be tolerated.



As we approach the upcoming mayoral election on 2nd May 2024, I urge you to contemplate whether your sense of security has been enhanced or eroded over the past eight years. The evidence suggests a pressing need for change, to a leadership committed to the restoration of Law and Order across London. As your GLA representative, I will work with the community and law enforcement every day to forge a safer, more secure borough for all of us.



# Loss of Visibility at St Margaret's Station

By Paul Velluet, Regular user of St Margaret's Station since 1982

Almost two weeks ago, a contractor acting on behalf of South-Western Railway affixed protective film to the glazing on the over-bridge and to the glazing on the flights of stairs leading down from the over-bridge to Platforms 1/2 and 3 at St Margaret's Station - my well used local station. South Western Railway has explained that such works prevent and resolve the etching and application of graffiti to the glazing in its stations by vandals. In this South Western Railway deserves our support.

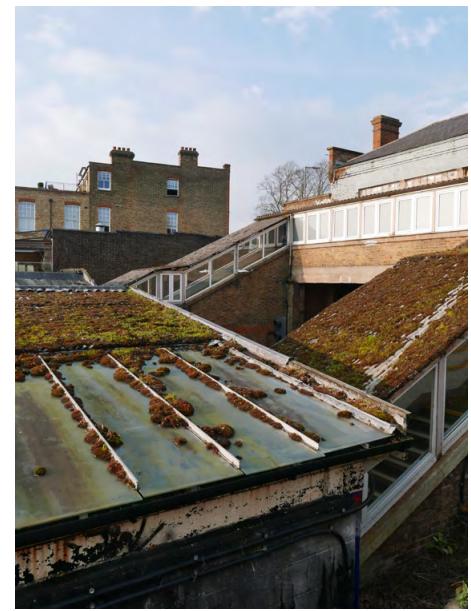
However, whilst the affixing of transparent (clear) film to the glazing on the flights of stairs leading down from the over-bridge to Platforms 1/2 and 3 is wholly uncontroversial, the affixing of translucent (non-transparent) film to the glazing on the over-bridge now precludes station staff and intending passengers from seeing:

- Whether stopping trains heading to Richmond and stations on the 'up' line beyond to Waterloo are approaching platforms 1/2 or have already arrived at the platforms (normally Platform 1), or have arrived but are awaiting for several minutes beyond their scheduled departure time to allow for late-running non-stop trains from Reading or Windsor and Eton Riverside to overtake the stopping service to Waterloo as is frequently the case, or are already leaving Platforms 1/2, or
- Whether stopping trains heading for Kingston and other stations on the 'down' line have already arrived at Platform 3, or are already leaving Platform 3.

Precluding station staff and intending passengers, whether on the outside or inside of the ticket-barriers, clearly poses a significant safety issue by preventing those waiting to pass through the barriers from having to speed-up or delay their decent of the flights of stairs leading down to Platforms 1/2 or 3, thereby increasing the risk of intending passengers rushing on to the platforms when the doors on the trains are already closing or the train is already departing. The work also prevents intending passengers waiting on the outside of the ticket-barriers from seeing whether stopping trains heading to Richmond or beyond are approaching Platforms 1/2 or have already arrived at the Platforms (normally Platform 1), or have arrived but are awaiting for several minutes beyond their scheduled departure time to allow for late-running non-stop trains from Reading or Windsor and Eton Riverside to overtake the stopping service to Waterloo as is frequently the case, and if they have missed the train, from travelling to Richmond using the H37 or 110 bus instead.

Sadly, the works have been carried out without any prior consultation (or explanation) with staff and regular users of the station. Sadly too, the only response I've received to date from South Western Railway to my writing to a senior manager in the company on the 29th February wholly misunderstood and failed to recognise my particular concern about safety risks and problems for the travelling public.

Given South-Western Railway's decision to reduce the former 15-minute stopping service to Waterloo from St Margaret's through the greater part of the day to a 30-minute service without any consultation with regular users a couple of years ago; the wholly unacceptable proposal (advanced with other train-operating companies) to close all ticket-offices and relocate staff to the platforms instead where they cannot be reached by intending passengers on the outside of the ticket-barriers, thankfully abandoned in the light of massive public opposition; and the deplorable state of the canopies serving Platform 3 and the flights of stairs, suggests little understanding of the reasonable needs of regular users of St Margaret's Station. Sadly, such a situation contrasts with the very successful works of restoration recently undertaken at Richmond Station, just one station up the line.



# Budget Day 2024 Event

Submitted by Twickenham Conservatives

Twickenham Conservatives held a packed budget day event at Cole Court in Twickenham on Wednesday, March 6th, for party members & supporters to hear about the latest budget news and meet their candidates in this year's London and parliamentary elections.



**Ron Mushiso**, the Conservative candidate to be the next GLA assembly member for the South West London Constituency, spoke about his journey from a small rural village in Uganda to the UK when he was twelve. By age 15, he had been placed with six different foster families but eventually settled permanently with his seventh foster placement in Richmond. He is now a teacher at a school in Ealing and the deputy leader of the Conservative group on Hounslow Council. His priority will be to speak up for Hounslow, Kingston, and Richmond borough residents and get things done for our part of London.



The meeting also heard a message from **Susan Hall AM**, the Conservative candidate for Mayor of London. She thanked the party members for the warm welcome they gave her when she visited for the two recent council by-elections. She talked about her plan to get a grip on crime in London: stopping police stations from closing, keeping more police on the streets, creating safe places for women, and new funding for scanning and searching in knife hot spots. She will set up specialist units to tackle burglaries, robberies & thefts and dismantle the criminal gangs behind them. There will be zero tolerance for toxic or corrupt officers and those who protect them. Getting down crime will be her top priority as Mayor. London will be 'safer with Susan'.

Susan also said that the ULEZ tax has been absolutely devastating for people who cannot afford to go to work, get to the hospital, or visit their family. I have been campaigning against the ULEZ expansion since the beginning. It is nothing but a tax on hardworking Londoners in places where public transport alternatives are few and far between. As Mayor, I will scrap it on day one—no ifs, no buts. In its place, I will set up a £50 million Pollution Hotspots fund to tackle air pollution where it is, instead of taxing people everywhere.



The next speaker was the parliamentary candidate for the Twickenham constituency, **Jonathan Hulley**. He warmly welcomed measures in the budget to cut national insurance by 2%, a tax cut of £900 for someone on an average wage of £35,400 and the changes in child benefit. He said there was everything to play for in this constituency as voting Liberal Democrat is no longer a safe option without consequences. A Labour Government will target the asset base of the middle classes to fund their spending commitments. They already want to burden you with new taxes on your house; they will reduce the amount you can save in your pension fund and punish you with more taxes on school fees if you commit the socialist sin of educating your children privately.

The meeting then heard from Association Chairman John Davey, who introduced **Sara Gezdari**, the Richmond Park and North Kingston parliamentary candidate; **Laura Blumenthal**, the Brentford and Isleworth Parliamentary candidate; and **Helen Edward**, the Conservative Parliamentary Candidate for Kingston and Surbiton. He said they are the next generation of Conservative representatives and are the future of south-west London.



# Community Conversation

Twickenham Riverside, South Twickenham, St Margarets and North Twickenham

We are inviting residents, local organisations and businesses from Twickenham Riverside, South Twickenham, St Margarets and North Twickenham to take part in a local Community Conversation with Ward Councillors focused on local matters such as: Thames Water Abstraction proposal, Community Safety, Town Centre Vitality and Transportation and Sustainable Travel. The event is on **Thursday 14<sup>th</sup> March 2024 at 6.30pm arrival for 7pm start at Clarendon Hall, York House, Richmond Road, Twickenham TW1 3AA.**

The Community Conversation is an opportunity for residents, local businesses and organisations to come together and discuss ideas, concerns, and initiatives to enhance the local neighbourhoods.



Attendance is **free**

but must pre-register for the event using Eventbrite as places are limited (or call 020 8487 5032 for those unable to use online options).

Link: <https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/twick-riverside-south-twick-st-margaretsntwick-community-conversation-tickets-795240695327?aff=oddtdtcreator>

The themes covered for our Twickenham Riverside, South Twickenham, St Margarets and North Twickenham event are:

1. Thames Water Abstraction
2. Community Safety
3. Town Centre Vitality
4. Transportation and Sustainable Travel

After the discussion, there will be an open Q&A where residents will be able to put questions to Councillors on other local matters or any ideas they may have for the future.

For more information about the event and how to register, please visit: [https://www.richmond.gov.uk/council/have\\_your\\_say/community\\_conversation](https://www.richmond.gov.uk/council/have_your_say/community_conversation).

Alternatively contact the Community Engagement Team:

Email: [communityconversations@richmond.gov.uk](mailto:communityconversations@richmond.gov.uk) Phone: 02084875031 between 9am and 5pm Monday to Friday.

# Happy Birthday RNLI

By Doug Goodman

Last Monday marked the 200<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the founding of the Royal National Lifeboat Institution.

In 1824 in the City of London The Royal National Lifeboat Institution was founded during a meeting convened by Sir William Hillary. The founder, who was brought up on The Isle of Man, had witnessed many shipwrecks and wanted to do something to save lives at sea. His 1823 pamphlet with proposals for a rescue at sea service met with little enthusiasm from the Admiralty but Hillary persevered and in 1824 The Preservation of Lives from Shipwrecks was launched. King George IV gave it a royal title and in 1854 the RNLI name was adopted. During the past 200 years lifeboats have been launched 380,000 times resulting in the rescue of 146,277 people. In that time the lives of over 600 rescuers have been lost. In 1981 the crew of the Penlee lifeboat perished.



*A Familiar Flag*



*Refuge Castle, Isle of Man*



*Sir William Hillary*

A fleet of 448 boats is based at 238 stations around the UK with lifeguards watching over 240 beaches. All crews are highly trained and all volunteers are on call 24 hours a day. The RNLI runs water safety courses and designs and builds its own boats. Its headquarters are in Poole Dorset where one of its five South Coast stations is located: others are in Lyme Regis, Weymouth, Swanage and Mudeford. The RNLI is a registered charity and relies on public donations.

## Isle of Man and Teddington Connections

Sir William Hillary, who lived on The Isle of Man, realised that St. Mary's Island in the Bay of Douglas was a great hazard to shipping. He built the Refuge Tower on the rocky outcrop to warn ships of the danger. Right now barrels of rum produced by the Fynoderee Distillery are stored there for maturing until their release for sale at the end of 2024. To remember the founder of the RNLI, who died in 1847 and to commemorate the 200<sup>th</sup> anniversary, the distillery will give two bottles of its rum to every lifeboat station in the UK.



*Lyme Regis Lifeboat at Sea*



*Teddington, Launch of New Boat*

At Teddington Lifeboat Station operations manager Matt Allchurch took delivery of a new D Class boat last summer. Named Alderman Penny Shelton, the boat was donated by local resident Hilary Saw in memory of her sister. Teddington Station has seen over 1350 launches of its boats since 2002 when it was established and has saved more than 23 lives. Over 75 volunteers keep watch on our stretch of the Thames.

# Sara Gezdari launches her campaign

Submitted by Richmond Park and North Kingston Conservatives

**Sara Gezdari** launched her campaign to be elected Richmond Park and North Kingston's next MP last Saturday (2 March).

Guest of honour was the national **Conservative Party Chairman Richard Holden MP**, who described the launch as "cracking".

She was also joined by adjoining parliamentary candidates **Jonathan Hulley** (Twickenham) **Tom Prideham** (Battersea), the GLA South West London candidate **Ron Mushiso** and scores of activists from across South West London who canvassed and delivered leaflets.



# Celebrate the opening of Library of Things

On Wednesday 13 March, Patch Twickenham will be hosting a drop-in event to celebrate the launch of the community focused lending project.

The free event will be hosting interactive sessions, supplying some light refreshments and giving live demos of useful Library of Things items.

Join the team on Wednesday between 3.30 to 7pm and receive a 25% discount on your first reservation.

The Library of Things aims to help people save money and reduce waste by affordably renting out useful items like drills, sound systems and sewing machines. It also helps people share practical skills like DIY and repair with others in their neighbourhood.

Guests can drop in to enjoy the range of things available to rent and discover other local initiatives that can help you save money, cut waste and live more sustainably.



Local seamstress Laura, founder of Thread Club, will be on hand to show you some sewing machine basics.

There will also be demonstrations taking place by the lockers, where you'll be able to ask questions and find out about this exciting new local lending service.

A full list of things to rent is available to view on the [Library of Things website](#).

Event details:

- **Date:** Wednesday 13 March
- **Time:** 3.30 to 7pm
- **Location:** Patch Twickenham, 42 York Street, TW1 3LJ
- **Price:** Free

# Council Reports

## Annual Budget Meeting

By James Knight

Council Tax increased above inflation | £5 million of cuts in 2023 | £6 million in new cuts in 2024 | Reserves up from £26 million to £75 million

Cllr Robin Brown (Hampton Wick), the lead member for finance, presented his budget report for 2024/25. He stated that Richmond did not have the financial problems of other local authorities and had healthy reserves. However, he blames Brexit and Liz Truss for inflationary pressures on council services. In the current financial year, he said the council had made £5 million in efficiency savings; next year, they would try to make another £6 million in savings. In the medium term, they want to achieve a further £15 million in cost savings. The report does not explain how these savings were made in previous years; one person's efficiency savings can be cut by another person's cuts. To give but one example, the council has changed how it carries out street cleaning, with the traditional steep sweeper phased out and replaced with less frequent visits by a team using leaf blowers, resulting in many complaints from residents on social media.

Cllr Brown explained that the Liberal Democrats administration had decided to raise Richmond's share of the council tax by 4.9%, the maximum amount, without triggering a local referendum. Despite this rise, Richmond's spending plans do not balance this year, and they will need to take a £2.2 million contribution from council reserves. The mayoral precept is increasing by 8.6%, so the net effect of these changes is that the **band D** households will see **council tax rise from £2,141.21 to £2,263.66**. This is an increase of £122.44 per year or £2.35 per week.

In the following question section, Cllr Michael Wilson (Heathfield Ward) said the council had reduced the high-needs education deficit, which he claimed was the result of Munira Wilson's lobbying in parliament, who just so happens to be his wife. However, the extra funding is part of the Government's safety valve agreement that many other local authorities also benefit from and is part of a more comprehensive national plan to improve alternative provision and move to a consistent national system of alternative provision.

Councillor Andrée Frieze's (Ham, Petersham and Richmond Riverside) question forced Cllr Brown to admit that reserves equate to 40-50% of annual revenue spending. He said this was close to the level of other authorities in London. He said when they took over the council in 2018, reserves stood at £26 million, and the equivalent figure today was £75 million. Many readers will be asking if the reserves have gone up this much, how can the council justify putting up the council tax each year during such hard times?

Moving on to the next section, Cllr Frieze, as leader of the opposition, said that aspects of the budget worried the Greens. They did not think it wise to start construction on the £21 million Clarendon School in Ham before government approval as there was a risk it may not be forthcoming. She was probably thinking of Turing House School, where the government

unilaterally decided not to pay the council rent for the use of the Hampton site until planning permission was granted on the permanent site in Whitton. She said too much money was being spent on this one provision, restricting the ability to invest in other early help at the primary stage, mental health, and the 18-25 provision.

The Greens were also worried that borrowing would go up in the medium term, and there was no plan to pay it down. There was not enough investment in tackling the climate crisis, with just £500,000 from the revenue budget and only £1 million from the capital budget. She said it would barely touch the edges of reducing carbon emissions. They called for the weekly bin collections to be replaced fortnightly to improve recycling rates, saving £500,000 annually.

The Greens applauded benchmarking car parking to a return bus fare (£3.50), but it should be applied consistently. She said, "I understand that it can be hard to be consistent at all times, particularly being a Liberal Democrat, but this is just illogical." The Greens also called for the main town centre car parks (such as Aragon Road in Twickenham and Paradise Road in Richmond) to be closed and redeveloped for housing. The Greens also wanted the 30-minute parking for residents withdrawn, the 50% discount for electric cars reduced, and parking charges introduced in the council's five free car parks. The Greens are genuinely aggrieved that they have been prevented from asking questions they wanted to table tonight. This is not in the spirit of open and transparent discussion, which we understand the Liberal Democratic party supports.

In the following Debate, Cllr Cardy (Fulwell and Hampton Hill) said he opposed the removal of the free parking behind Hampton Library in his ward. The car park was located on the 'deer leap' area of land owned by Royal Parks. The lease states it can only be used as free car parking, and whilst he is sure contracts can be renegotiated, I suspect they would want some of the money. The free car park in Hampton North has the only food bank with a free car, which, to him, was a good reason to keep that car parking free. He also said that many properties in his ward could not accommodate the wheelie bins required for fortnightly collections. Cllr Penelope Frost (Ham, Petersham and Richmond Riverside) said she was very disappointed at the proposal for chargeable car parks in Ham. She said Ham has the lowest PTAL (Public Transport Accessibility Level) rating in the borough, and a large part of Ham has no bus service, which will create parking pressure on surrounding roads.

Cllr Alexander Ehmann said the council would spend £4.5 million on roads and pavements in the next financial year. He said they "had a blitz" on potholes this year, with over 2,000 filled. He described the Green Party's call for increased parking charges as "punishment beatings". However, he failed to mention that the Liberal Democrats are raising parking fees for central Twickenham by 30% (made up of a 20% increase in fees and the withdrawal of the 10% discount to take place in July) and increasing the premium for second and subsequent CPZ permits by 50%. Those over 75 currently benefit from 20% off car parking, which is being withdrawn, meaning they will pay 40% more to park in Twickenham – some punishment indeed.

Cllr James Millard (Hampton Wick and South Teddington) put on a brave face and claimed affordable housing was a priority for the administration. However, the council is at the bottom of London's affordable housing delivery league, undermining his claims. Acting is his day job, but he didn't perform well tonight. Cllr Piers Allen (West Twickenham) said he does not support

the Green Party amendment to reduce charges for adult social care recipients. He said they are charged because they get benefits to cover these charges. He said the council has a discretionary scheme for those whose charges would cause hardship. Cllr Rob O'Carroll (Whitton) said he opposed fortnightly bin collections as he did not live in a mansion and thus had no space to accommodate four bins. He criticised the Green Party's opposition to the new special school in Ham as he said it was desperately needed.

Cllr Alan Juriansz (West Twickenham), the lead member for sport, said that 20% of children aged between 7 and 11 currently do not meet the national curriculum requirement to swim competently over 25 meters, use a range of strokes and perform self-rescue. He welcomed the budget, which provides children with free swimming lessons over the summer and reduces the admission price for those who qualify for concessions. However, he omitted to mention that the budget is increasing the cost of swimming for senior citizens. Cllr Julia Neden-Watts, chair of the environment committee, defended changing the driveway policy, making replacing front gardens with parking spaces easier. She made a very unconvincing argument that the requirement for 10% soft landscaping will constitute a biodiversity enhancement over keeping front gardens intact.

Cllr Richard Bennett said he wanted to praise the council where possible, and the Greens wanted the Liberals to do well. However, he criticized the Liberals' record on affordable housing. He said the committee system was becoming a rubber stamp, with the chair acting like cabinet members, before the mayor cut him off for drifting too far away from the budget amendment. There was a need for a proper strategy, but they only had a shopping list of items from their manifesto.

Cllr Gareth Roberts, council leader, thanked Cllr Brown for his budget. He said he missed Cllr Samuel's presence in the chamber because, though he would violently disagree with everything he said in his budget amendment, at least he had the good taste not to read it out in turgid, dull, monotone, with scripted, off-the-cuff remarks like Cllr Bennett. We need people with passion and dynamism, and they will fight for their cause. He said the Greens opposed two schools in the borough just for the sake of opposition. He criticised Cllr Crookdake for making the same speech tonight on care charges as she had done at the Adult Social Services Committee and the Finance Committee. He said she was stopped from asking questions tonight because she asked them at the Finance Committee just the other night. Cllr Brown replied to the debate, saying they could not support the amendment to end the 30-minute free parking or introduce a fortnightly refuse collection service. He does not think adult social care charges should be reduced as discretion already exists.

There were recorded votes on the two amendments, and they both failed. The voting on the main budget passed with most councillors voting in favour apart from Councillors Bennett, Crookdake, and Warlow, who all abstained, and Cllr Frieze, who voted against the budget.

You can view the webcast of the meeting and view the papers by following by clicking [HERE](#)

# Can you help shape Teddington's exciting new community centre?

Ahead of building work beginning on the new Elleray Centre in the heart of Teddington, the Elleray Community Association are looking to strengthen their board of volunteer trustees.

Within a few weeks, building work will start on the new Elleray Centre in the heart of Teddington. By May 2025, it is hoped to have a brand new, purpose-built centre containing a large hall that can be divided into separate sound-proofed spaces, several other rooms, a café area, an attractive garden and a terrace with seating.

While the Council will own the building, Elleray Community Association (ECA) are being entrusted with running and managing it for the benefit of the community at large: a centre run by the community and for the community.

To help do this, the ECA would like to strengthen their board of volunteer trustees. They are particularly interested to hear from people with experience and expertise in the following areas: marketing, social media, fundraising, website design, finance and treasury.



It is expected that all trustees attend the management meetings every other month, usually in the late afternoon on a Tuesday, and take part in a sub-committee on a specific project. The ECA anticipate a time commitment of approximately 10 to 12 hours per month.

The vision is to make the new centre a vibrant and lively community asset that really does have something to offer to just about everyone living in and around Teddington - a thriving venue that will provide:

- A wider range of activities and a social hub for existing members
- Facilities for a range of classes and activities including arts and crafts, health, fitness and wellbeing, hobbies and pursuits, training, self improvement and advancement
- Space that can be used for events such as children's parties, exhibitions, etc

If you would like to know more about becoming a trustee, contact Chairman Joan Barnett for an informal discussion at [info@ellerayhall.org](mailto:info@ellerayhall.org) or 020 8977 0549.



# Free MMR vaccine walk-in clinics available in March

NHS South West London are offering walk-in Measles, Mumps and Rubella (MMR) vaccine appointments to residents who are registered with a Richmond Upon Thames GP.

The walk-in clinics will take place on the following days:

- **Dates:**
  - Saturday 9 March - 9am to 5pm
  - Saturday 16 March - 9am to 4pm
- **Location:** Hampton Wick Surgery, Tudor House, 26 Upper Teddington Road, KT1 4DY

You do not need an appointment to attend the clinic, but please ensure you bring proof of vaccinations or your child's red book. If you are unsure if you or a child are up to date, you can check the red book or GP records.

As measles cases continue to rise in south west London, it is important to make sure that you and your family are protected against becoming seriously unwell with measles by checking you are up to date with your MMR vaccines.

The first vaccine is typically given at age one year, and the second at age three years and four months.

However, if you have missed any doses, even into adulthood, it is not too late to catch up.

Find out more about [NHS vaccinations and when to have them.](#)



# Mystery knitter

A mystery knitter has ‘yarn bombed’ the Montrose Avenue post box in Whitton in recent months.

The latest creation is an Easter Bunny complete with a set of eggs.

Yarn bombing is thought to have originated in the USA with Texas knitters.

In the UK the trend was popularised by Lauren O’Farrell, also known as Deadly Knitshade, who founded the graffiti knitting and craft collective knit the city.



## New Pop-Up Youth Friday at ETNA Community Centre

If you’re between 13 and 16 years old and live around East Twickenham, come along to the ETNA Community Centre for an exclusive taster session on 22 March.

The session will involve board games, lively rounds of table tennis, upcycling crafts and more.

The evening is all about fun, whether you’re looking to spend time with friends or keen on making new ones.

Yukiko, a crafts and upcycling guru, along with her team of volunteers, will ensure guests have a fabulous time.

Spaces are limited for this exclusive ticket-only event.



Event details:

- **Date:** Friday 22 March
- **Time:** 7 to 9pm
- **Location:** Community Kitchen at ETNA Community Centre, 13 Rosslyn Road, TW1 2AR
- **Price:** £4 per person

[Book tickets](#)

## Sunday Style At Scott's In Sunny Richmond

What better way is there to spend a winter Sunday afternoon than enjoy a good roast lunch?

Actually, it felt wonderfully spring-like last Sunday as we headed over to Richmond Riverside to try the recently launched Sunday roast at **Scott's Richmond**. A few years ago now, Scott's nabbed, arguably, the best location on Richmond Riverside and transformed the former Revolution bar into a stunningly beautiful venue. It's one, by all accounts, that's a destination for the glitterati of SW London, often joined by their pals from busy central London seeking a little jaunt to somewhere quieter, less urban and built up.



If you're lucky enough to bag a table by the window, you can enjoy the river view as well as observing the seamless service and the central bar where the mixologists are busily making cocktails. The interior is simply sensational - I dread to think how much was invested in its transformation.

We started with a mocktail for my husband (who's recently decided to try life without alcohol) and a glass of house champagne for me. He chose to start his lunch with Wild mushroom soup with pickled walnut and Stilton muffin, and having tried the delicious baked crab on a previous occasion, this time I chose Devon crab with green apple remoulade, fennel and lemon mayonnaise. The soup was proclaimed excellent and knowing that we were going to have a roast for the main course, the crab was the ideal starter: delicate and lightly seasoned, allowing the hero crab to hold its own.

While Scott's is renowned for its seafood, the roast sirloin of Argentinian Black Angus beef served as the **Sunday Roast** is definitely worth a trip. We were advised that it would be served pink (the pinker the better as far as I'm concerned). Two beautifully pink slices, accompanied by roast potatoes and a mega Yorkshire pud were joined by some seasonal veg (roast carrots, peas and cabbage), gravy and horseradish sauce. The spuds were the crispiest roasties I've ever had, and were sensational. The beef was beautifully tender and flavoursome and I'd forgotten how delicious cabbage can be (especially if dripping in butter as ours was). A glass of Malbec and an alcohol free beer paired well with our mains.

I foolishly thought that a dessert of Amedei chocolate mousse with blood orange would be a light (ish) finale to our meal. Reader, it was so smooth and rich and was spectacularly presented with a chocolate tuile with candied cacao nibs lid. The orange sorbet offset it

perfectly but I still didn't manage to finish it. My husband sensibly opted for a selection of home made ice creams.



The Sunday roast at Scott's isn't cheap (£32 a head) but when one compares it with the cost of a roast in a pub or other restaurant, and considers the amazing setting it's served in, it really does offer a splendid way to spend a Sunday afternoon (with people spotting thrown in).



Later this month, there's an exclusive culinary partnership between Scott's and **Harry's Bar**, the esteemed Private Members' Club founded in 1979. From 6pm, **Monday 18th – Thursday 21st March**, one can step into a realm of further opulence, as Upstairs at Scott's is transformed into a haven of Italian decadence, with a special A La Carte menu paying homage to Harry's Venetian roots. From the food menu to the drinks, iconic Harry's crockery and look-and-feel, you will have the opportunity to experience a taste of Harry's Bar in Richmond. You can

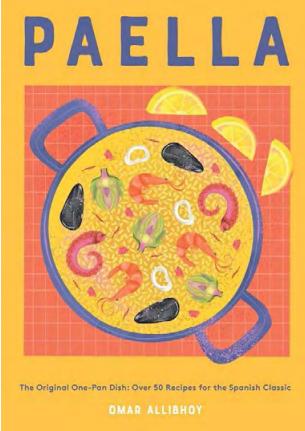


also be transported to the sun-kissed landscapes of Northern Italy through cocktails, including the iconic **Bellini** (£12) made from white peaches, lemon, and Prosecco, perfectly encapsulating the spirit of Harry's Bar. There are also live music performances on the evenings of Wednesday 17 and Thursday 18 March, to accompany a taste of *la dolce vita*!

# Twickers Foodie - By Alison Jee

## Omar Alliboy Puts Paella Into Perspective

Do you remember your first taste of paella? I certainly do: a family holiday in Spain when I was about three! Since then, this dish, to me, has been the epitome of good Spanish food. (also, of course, is Iberico ham). **Omar Alliboy** - aka '**The Spanish Chef**' - has produced a superb tribute to his country's national dish and I would urge anyone who, like me, visits Spain regularly, to buy a copy...it will broaden your 'paella repertoire' immensely.



**Paella, by Omar Alliboy**, is published by **Quadrille** at £18 for a hardback book, packed with evocative images to whet your appetite and tempt you to sunnier climes. Madrid born Allibhoy is the founder of the critically-acclaimed **Tapas Revolution** – the largest Spanish restaurant group in the UK. He began his career training under legendary chef Ferran Adrià, then with Gordon Ramsay in London, who dubbed him the 'Antonio Banderas of cooking'. Omar is committed to being at the forefront of representing the wonderful food of Spain in the UK and has picked up multiple awards along the way. As well as running a successful business, Omar maintains a career as a successful TV chef.

I'm lucky enough to visit Mallorca regularly and have been doing so for decades.

I will always remember cycling into Pollensa town on a Sunday morning for the market, and then going to a basement cafeteria at the foot of the Calvario steps where paella was the hero dish at lunch - sadly the building is now a shop, one I can't pass without the memory of those amazing paellas. From its humble beginnings, this ultimate one-pan feast and generous, colourful creation, dates back centuries and has countless variations. In this love letter to his favourite dish, chef Allibhoy unveils the insider knowledge and tips you need to produce a perfect panful of glorious tastes and textures with ease. The book helps you master the basics of making paella, so that you can be as traditional or creative as you like, whether it's one thrown together with whatever is left at the bottom of the fridge on a Tuesday night, or a wildly inventive and decadent paella cooked on the barbecue at the weekend.

Here are a couple of recipes to tempt you to buy the book:

### **Arroz de Matanza (Pork Feast Paella) Serves 4 Prep 30 minutes Cook 2 hours**

*'This is a dish based on a recipe from days gone by, when no one had a fridge and you had to use the whole animal every time you slaughtered one. Any cut of pork can be used in the paella – just how it was made back then.'*

- 100ml (scant 1/2 cup) extra virgin olive oil
- 150g (5oz) pork belly, cut into lardons
- 150g (5oz) mini chorizo sausages
- 150g (5oz) smoked bacon
- 3 shallots, quartered
- 6 garlic cloves, finely chopped
- 1 tsp sweet smoked paprika
- 1 tomato, grated
- 1 bay leaf
- 0.4g saffron (see page 33 for a measuring guide)
- 2 sprigs of thyme
- 3 litres (12 cups) water
- 400g (2 cups) Spanish paella rice
- Salt, to taste



Place a paella pan over high heat, add the olive oil and fry all the meats and shallots for 10 minutes. Add the garlic, closely followed by the paprika and grated tomato, and cook for about 2 minutes until the oil starts to separate from the tomato paste. Add the bay leaf, saffron and thyme, pour in the water and simmer over a low heat for 1 hour.

Taste and adjust the seasoning if necessary. Add the rice and stir to distribute it evenly. Cook over a high heat for the first 10 minutes, then reduce the heat to medium and cook for a further 9 minutes, without stirring. Let it rest off the heat for 5 minutes before eating.

### Arroz de Carrilleras (Beef Cheek, Carrot and Chickpea Paella)

Serves 4 Prep 20 minutes Cook 3 ½ hours

*'Beef or pork cheeks are a sublime cut: when properly cooked they are meltingly tender. They benefit from long, slow cooking – but I promise this paella is worth the wait.'*

- 100ml (scant 1/2 cup) olive oil 800g (1lb 12oz) beef cheeks
- 3 carrots, cut into small batons
- 1 medium onion, chopped
- 1 celery stick, finely chopped
- 6 garlic cloves, chopped
- 2 tomatoes, chopped
- 2 bay leaves
- 1/4 cinnamon stick
- 2 cloves
- 1 tsp sweet smoked paprika
- 5 black peppercorns
- 175ml (3/4 cup) red wine
- 3 litres (12 cups) water
- 100g (1/2 cup) dried chickpeas
- (garbanzo beans), soaked in water for 24 hours
- 400g (2 cups) Spanish paella rice
- Salt, to taste

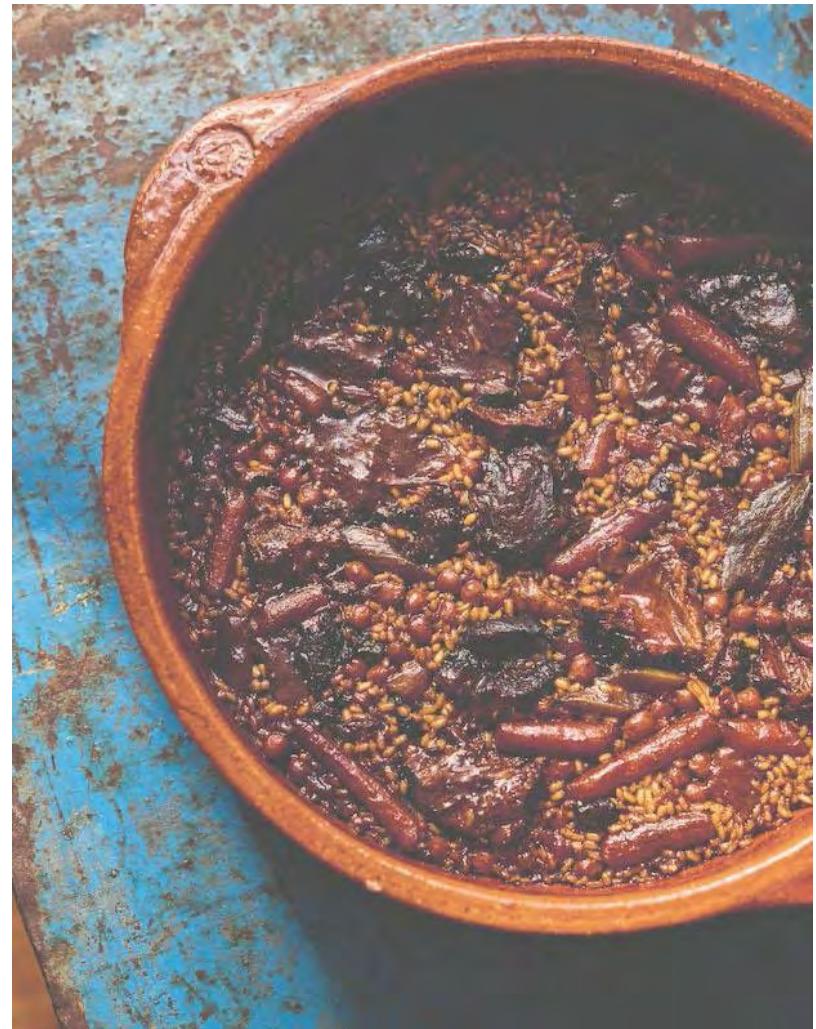
Heat the olive oil in a wide pan over a medium heat.

Season the beef cheeks with salt and pan-fry for 5 minutes on each side.

Add the carrot, onion, celery and garlic and fry for 10 minutes until well browned. Add the tomatoes and reduce down for 3 minutes, stirring to deglaze the bottom of the pan.

Add the bay leaves, cinnamon stick, cloves, paprika and black peppercorns, then add the red wine and reduce for a minute. Pour in the water, reduce the heat to low and add the chickpeas. Let them simmer gently for the next 3 hours until both the chickpeas and cheeks are soft to the touch.

Add the rice and give it a good stir, distributing it evenly, then taste the liquid and adjust the seasoning if necessary. Cook over a high heat for the first 10 minutes, then reduce to medium and cook for another 9 minutes, without stirring. Let it rest off the heat for 5 minutes before eating.



# HAMPTON CHORAL SOCIETY

## Rossini's Petite Messe Solennelle

**Musical Director - Richard Harker  
with professional soloists**

**Saturday 23 March 2024 - 7.30pm**  
**St James's Church, St James's Road,**  
**Hampton Hill, TW12 1DQ**

**Tickets: £15 (Adults), £7 (Under 16's)**  
**Box Office: 020 8941 5394**

**On the door: contactless, card, cheque, cash**  
**[www.hamptonchoral.org.uk](http://www.hamptonchoral.org.uk)**

Charity Number 261788

# Three Legs and No Tail!

## A Small Boy in Wonderland - Part 1

by Michael Jay



The recent Tribune articles by Doug Goodman about the Isle of Man reminded me of my happy childhood on this wonderful island so I thought that Tribune readers might enjoy hearing about it.

Before I was born, my mother had been a singer and dancer and, just before World War II broke out, toured Germany several times in a famous dance troupe called the Jackson Girls. They were a great success but, on one occasion, they crossed the border in a snowstorm near Aachen where a German border guard, whom they thought looked exactly like the stereotypical tall, blonde, Nazi storm trooper, came on the train to inspect their baggage. He ordered one of the girls to get her suitcase down from the luggage rack to which she replied: '*Get it down yourself, you pig*', a reply which didn't go down too well as they soon found out that he spoke perfect English! So they were all dragged out in their dressing gowns to stand around in the blizzard while he went through everyone's suitcase!

They travelled all over Germany which she loved as a country but she saw what was looming and even witnessed what happened on Crystal Night when the Nazis smashed up all the Jewish shops. One day, one of the girls rushed in and said: '*Quick, come outside, Adolf Hitler is coming past*', so they all rushed into the street to watch Hitler in his massive Mercedes sweep past in a gigantic Nazi parade. I remember her telling me later that it was all very impressive but that she never wanted to see that kind of thing happen here. Unfortunately, it is.

They came home three months before the war started and spent the war years touring the UK including during the Blitz when she had a long walk home every night from the London theatres in the dark because of the blackout.

She then married my father who was a stage manager and, after retiring from active dancing, became the wardrobe mistress for my two uncles who were London theatre impresarios.

Every year, they would take two variety shows to the Isle of Man for the summer season one of which was at the Palace Theatre on the seafront in Douglas.

The summer seasons partly coincided with my school holidays but my teachers were amenable to sending my homework to the Isle of Man, something which rather spoilt the holiday atmosphere but had to be done! In preparation for the shows, I remember often going with my parents and uncles to what was called 'The Stores', a massive building in Lodge Road, St John's Wood where all the scenery and costumes were kept. It had originally been the stables for London's tram horses and was a treasure trove of theatre props for a little boy to play with. I used to hide in the big wicker baskets containing the costumes and surprise everybody by suddenly popping out wearing a German helmet and waving Binnie Hale's diamond encrusted sword!

Many of the big names of the London variety theatre came to our flat in Maida Vale to try on their costumes and discuss arrangements with the musical director – stars such as Richard Murdoch, Lita Roza, Nat Jackley, et al. Too many to mention here but all great fun!

Finally, the big day would arrive and we all set off for Euston station to begin our expedition to the mysterious Isle of Man. I still remember the fantastic smell of oil and steam from the engine, and the engine driver waving to all the cast as we walked along the platform, followed by the long journey up to Liverpool, then even more excitement as we boarded the ferry for the Isle of Man.

The Irish Sea can be quite stormy but I was never seasick on board except once when I survived the incredibly rough voyage only to become rather 'ill' once I set foot on dry land!

It is said that the Three Legs of Man represent: 'One leg to kick you onto the island, one leg to kick you around it, and another one to kick you off it'.

Well, I had been kicked onto it so **next week** I will tell you what happened once I had recovered from the voyage!



# Mother's day

By Shona Lyons

It will be Mother's Day on the 10th of March. Last year I took my beautiful mum to [The Petersham Hotel](#) for tea. I asked for a table with a window over the river so she would have the view in front of her. The three of us had such a special time together. She enjoyed it so much that she was reluctant to go home.

I think it was the last special adventure we had all together because on the 14th of May she died at the age of 83. She was not well at the time but it really doesn't seem possible that just 2 months later she was no longer with us.

I am so glad that she enjoyed this trip so much. It is the last really magical experience the three of us had together. My dad and me miss her so much, but I think that every day she is still is here in spirit all around us. I love looking at pictures of her that I took on the trips we had together, it brings her closer, I feel her spirit again, her love for me and I feel she is back with us and that helps me cope with her loss.

Even though in the last few years she wasn't well. She was always cheerful, always smiling and I always felt her love for me strongly. My dad and I cherish every moment we 3 had together. She was the brightest shining light in our lives.

I was by her side before she died and the last thing she did was grip my hand strongly and took it to her lips, she kissed my hand with passion, told me she loved me and told me not to cry. But the loss is intense and I still cry for her every day.



# Mum's the word...

By Deep Patel

~ Through The Eyes of a Twickenham Shop Keeper ~

So this week in my newsagents shop the focus has been on mothers...but not everything I've heard has been positive...some spoke about their mother as if she is nothing more than a dictator, whilst others spoke about their mother as if she was nothing less than a goddess...then there were some who looked emotionally at my Mother's Day card selection and then looked back at me saying "I wish she was still here..." What I did notice was that everyone had something to say about Mothers Day...

I was trying to figure out why there was such a variety of opinions about mothers in general? Which opinion was right? After a lot of pondering, and talking to my customers as well as standing at the door of my shop looking out at the main road in contemplation (one of my favourite spots to stand and think about the meaning of life), I finally came up with the answer...all of these opinions were right but at different times of a person's life...at the beginning of life...when we are very young infants, a mother's job is to dictate to her child perhaps about what the child should and should not do...so perhaps in some ways a mother is a dictator? Then as we grow from infants into being young children, our mothers become our heroes, our strength, our safety blankets and ultimately...our goddesses...so at that stage of life...our mothers are our goddesses...and then when we are older ourselves, and no longer dependent on her love, we begin to spread our wings and fly...sometimes life gets so busy that we forget to call our mothers to check how they are, even though we have free phone calls on our mobiles, many of us still don't make time...if we do this, then one day we may become the one looking emotionally at my Mother's Day cards in my shop saying "I wish she was still here..."

So I guess from analysing the responses of customers in my shop when considering Mother's Day...all



responses were correct...just at different periods of our lives...but the key lesson here was to "love your mother... as you will never have another"...when she was pregnant with you, she held you within her body for over 270 days and gave you the gift of life...the least you could do is celebrate her being, her sacrifices and her love by calling her once a week, buying her a random bunch of flowers every now and again throughout the year to show you think of her, taking her for the odd lunch at a local café even, to give her a break and share a meal and some quality time with her...so where she held you within her for over 270 days when she was pregnant with you, don't celebrate her for just one day on Mother's Day...celebrate her regularly throughout the year...

Above: me and my mother Pallu, my own "goddess" outside a temple we often visit. Our mothers are nothing short of being divine themselves. Always remember, love your mother as you will never have another...

For those of you reading this right now who have lost their mothers...it's still not too late...mothers souls are always around their children...the bond they form with us throughout those 9 months of pregnancy is so strong that even death cannot separate them from us...so do something for her...even if she isn't on this earth in her mortal form...if you are reading this today...do something for her that she always wanted you to do...change a habit that she always wanted you to change and offer that as a gift to her soul...as in the joy of her children is her own joy and it's never too late to please her as her soul will still appreciate it...her soul will still know...it's never too late to show her how much she means or meant to you...it's never too late....

## **Remember...**

***"A mum is for LIFE...not just for Mother's Day..."***

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

**STOP TINY BEETLES KINDLY (GOOD KARMA):** Sprinkle pure essential peppermint oil, Olbas oil, fine black pepper or white vinegar around places where you don't want them to come (but NOT directly on them)...they will go without you having to harm them. This works for most insects too! For ANY specific tip to stop any "pest" or insect KINDLY (for good karma/blessings), email me: [InsectLoversUnite@gmail.com](mailto:InsectLoversUnite@gmail.com) or join my Facebook page: "INSECT LOVERS UNITE"



# Art

by Yasmina Reza

OHADS at the Hampton Hill Theatre

*Art*, first shown in translation from the French in 1996, has aged well. Director Harry Medawar's production is as sharp and witty as ever. The plot, three middle-aged men talking about their friendship, comes alive as the convincingly played characters explore their shaky relationship with understanding and beautifully timed comedy.

As a woman I am intrigued by male friendships, which seem to be both deeper and yet less personal than women's friendships. Serge, Mark and Yvan have known each other for fifteen years, and thought they knew each other well. Yet Serge has unexpectedly shown an increasing interest in modern art, an enthusiasm not shared by Mark. Encouraged by a set of new friends from the contemporary art world, he has bought at great expense a white on white painting by the acclaimed modernist, Antrios.



Each character can be seen to represent a different aspect of our response to art: the enthusiast Serge, the sceptic Mark and the "I know what I like" Yvan. Mark feels threatened and excluded, as he does not comprehend the art that Serge is drawn to. Serge can't understand why his enthusiasm is not shared and wants validation from his friends. Yvan is not bothered, but just wants their usual jolly companionship; and ends up irritating both.

The sparse set brings us right into the three homes, differentiated only by the picture on the wall, effectively underlining each character's taste in art. Nigel Cole's Mark moved seamlessly between urbane arrogant disdain, laughing at his friend's choice, and petulant, slightly pathetic friendship, resenting his loss of his perceived role as the wise all-knowing friend. Vaughan Pierce's laid-back Serge is recovering from a divorce by throwing himself into a new passion, yet is still unnerved by Mark's condescending response. These two were perfectly offset by Yvan, a jolly clown, made serious and conciliatory by his pending marriage. His exasperation at his friends' bickering is a *tour de force* in Peter Easterbrook's portrayal.

They fight, at one point literally, to get back to the friendship they all crave, for maybe like art itself, it is the essence that matters.

Read Polly Davies' review at [www.markaspen.com/2024/03/01/art-ohads](http://www.markaspen.com/2024/03/01/art-ohads)

Photography courtesy of OHADS



## Stepping Out

by Richard Harris

Teddington Theatre Club, at Hampton Hill Theatre until 9<sup>th</sup> March

There is a Sue Townsend feel about Jack Tidball's set design, with its authentic scout hall atmosphere. Here a tap dance class tap their souls as they tap their soles. And tap their smartphones in this updated version of the 1984 musical *Stepping Out*.

Director Mandy Stenhouse creates just the right balance with the ambivalent text. The air is thick with pathos and sinister undercurrents, not to mention unmentionable secrets, and very edgy humour. Tense feelings build-up as the eight tap dancing pupils' secrets are gradually revealed.



The immaculately turned-out Vera holds a shocking revelation, but is pampered, and tends to OCD; the vibrant Samantha McGill is engaging in the role. Her co-pupil, the cynical, witty Maxine, is played with great stage presence by Clair Jardella, and with just the right level of melancholy.

The dance teacher Mavis is a long way from opening up on her secrets, but the pianist Mrs Fraser is upfront from the start. Outspoken and colourfully dressed, Mrs Fraser, played by Helen Geldert, has a rocky bond with Jen Moorhead's Mavis.

The rest of the cast do a sterling job carrying their own subtexts, Ella Ashdown's uptight Andy, and Sylvia, a bawdy delivery by Libby Coyte. Enid Gayle captures the earthy humour of Rose beautifully. The reticent insecure Dorothy is sensitively performed by Kirsty MacDonald, while Georgia Henderson's nurse Lynne opens up smoothly about her own trauma.

Meanwhile, David Hannigan as the shy widowed Geoffrey, the only male class member, carries jibes with equanimity, while Jacob Taylor makes a very funny coarse course technician.

Despite the apprehension of the class, there is terrific dancing and music, choreographed by Dawn Lacey, even before their final long-anticipated production. So, if you want to be stepping out to see *Stepping Out*, you'd better get your tap shoes on.



Read Heather Moulson's review at [www.markaspen.com/2024/03/06/step-out](http://www.markaspen.com/2024/03/06/step-out)

Photography by Kim Harding



## The Lady or the Tiger

by Jeremy Paul, Michael Richmond and Nola York

Take Note at the Tabard Theatre, Chiswick until 23<sup>rd</sup> March

Based on an 1882 short story, *The Lady or the Tiger* seems an unlikely musical. In a barbaric kingdom, a hero must choose between two doors. Behind one is a lady he must marry, behind the other a ferocious tiger.

Stockton's story is expanded into an absurdist fantasy filled with songs, all lively, memorable, and brief, leaving us wanting more. Given the band comprises just double bass and piano (Angus Tikka and M.D Philip Shute), the music is stylistically diverse. *Here's Gold* showcases the musical quality, but all four actors display their singing skills.



Bob Karper breaks the fourth wall to announce he will be playing many characters. His versatility is indeed constantly surprising, but for the most part he is the Prime Minister.

The King sets the Prime Minister the task of finding a victim for his new arena, with its perilous two doors. Wayne Smith, as the King, is a tyrant with a twinkle in his eye and the best jokes. He and The Princess (a lively Georgie Roberts) visibly enjoy several reprises of the duet *Daddy's Little Girl*.

This small Royal Family's populace are conspicuous by their absence, but then Juan Lobo swaggers on with his guitar as the Hero, or Angelo. As befits the fairytale tone, he and the Princess quickly fall in love, made more plausible by the easy chemistry between Lobo and Roberts. Angelo becomes the King's minstrel, but the Prime Minister sets him up as the arena's victim to make final choice between the two doors.

Keith Strachan directs this quirky show at breakneck speed, and he's completely on top of the material. The absurdist fantasy element is well-reflected in Alice McNicholas's striking costume designs.

The songs are lively, the lyrics are wonderfully witty, sung with clarity and great gusto. *The Lady or the Tiger* is a joyous musical, where the cast and crew have as much fun as the audience. My first instinct on leaving the Tabard was to book tickets to see it all over again.



Read Andrew Lawston's review at [www.markaspen.com/2024/03/08/lady-or-tiger](http://www.markaspen.com/2024/03/08/lady-or-tiger)

Photography by Charles Flint

# Come along to the Climate and Nature Fair in Barnes

On 23 March, the Community BlueScapes Project are holding the first Climate and Nature fair at Lowther Primary School in Barnes.

The aim is to bring local people of all ages together so they can learn about the work being done to prepare the area for the future.

This free event will be an opportunity for guests to share their ideas and find out how they can get involved.

Join the fair and take part in family-friendly activities focused on nature. These include storytelling, crafts and a discovery table.

There will be information about the work of the Community BlueScapes project within the Beverley Brook Catchment area, from Richmond Park to north Barnes.

Free street food refreshments will be provided as well as prizes and other giveaways.

Event details:

- **Date:** Saturday 23 March
- **Time:** 11am to 3pm
- **Location:** Lowther Primary School, Stillingfleet Road, Barnes, SW13 9AE
- **Price:** Free

[Book your ticket](#)

**Barnes  
Common**

# St Mary's University

## St Mary's Students Chosen for English Universities Women's Hockey Squad

Two students at St Mary's University, Twickenham (SMU) have been chosen to join the English Universities Sport (EUS) Women's Hockey Squad for the 2023/24 season. Lulu Banks and Maisie Davidson were selected to join the squad of 23 women after completing successful regional and national trials.

Two students at St Mary's University, Twickenham (SMU) have been chosen to join the English Universities Sport (EUS) [Women's Hockey Squad](#) for the 2023/24 season.



Lulu Banks and Maisie Davidson were selected to join the squad of 23 women after completing successful regional and national trials.

Both Lulu and Maisie are final year students at St Mary's, studying [Physical Education, Sport and Youth Development](#).

[English Universities Sport](#) is the official

association for England which administers and sanctions all representative student sport and competition across higher education. It is a membership organisation made up of over 90 higher and further education institutions.

EUS provides first-class coaching and high-end competition for top students in hockey, football, netball, basketball, and rugby sevens. Speaking on this achievement, Maisie said, "I'm really grateful to have had the opportunity to play at this level of hockey. It's my second year in the programme and

I'm looking forward to our upcoming fixtures. We've already had a couple of games which were a positive start to the season."

Lulu added, "I'm really looking forward to playing on the team this season and I feel really thankful to have this opportunity".

St Mary's is internationally

renowned for sport, offering degrees in physiology, rehabilitation and physiotherapy, sport psychology, nutrition, coaching science, and strength and conditioning. The University has established links with national sporting organisations including Fulham FC, Chelsea FC, Harlequin RFC, and London Gymnastics.



St Mary's  
University  
Twickenham  
London

# RuTC Supports AoC's Colleges Week

From 26th February to 1st March, Richmond upon Thames College (RuTC) celebrated Colleges Week, an annual initiative organised by the Association of Colleges.



The AoC launched Colleges Week in 2018 as part of the #LoveOurColleges campaign, as an opportunity to recognise and celebrate the brilliant things colleges do to support learners and staff. The theme was 'Influencing, Engaging, Celebrating' in which we acknowledged the work, effort and skill of our staff and students.

Various events and interactive lessons were organised in the college to support the celebration. On Tuesday 27th our HR department ran a 'Health & Wellbeing Fair'

available to all students and staff. This took place in our main Atrium space over the course of the day and featured stalls from various health organisations, including the NHS and equality charity, METRO. Attendees were able to chat to representatives from these organisations about any health and wellbeing concerns and obtain information of the kind of support and services available.

RuTC also delivered a Women in STEM Conference to Year 10s at our neighbouring school, Richmond upon Thames School, on Wednesday 28th. This was a brilliant opportunity to promote our wonderful college facilities and teaching staff to potential new students, and to inspire and empower young women to pursue studying science, technology and engineering subjects.



To round off the celebrations, students were asked to leave comments detailing what they love most about attending RuTC on our college Padlet forum. The responses were overwhelmingly positive, with one student saying, "I love how diverse and unique this college is" and another quoting, "The teachers are very helpful, and they understand us."



is incredibly proud to be able to have such a valuable impact on our students lives and their college experiences.

Everyone at RuTC



**Richmond upon  
Thames College**

# Nursery in Twickenham Celebrates St David's Day

Bright Horizons Oak Lane Day Nursery and Preschool in Twickenham recently celebrated St David's Day with a range of exciting activities. The children at the nursery were immersed in Welsh culture as they learned about the traditions and significance of this special day.

The highlight of the celebration was the children's enthusiasm as they engaged in various creative activities.

The toddlers had a delightful time painting daffodils, meanwhile, the preschoolers delved deeper into the Welsh culture by drawing dragons and engaging in discussions about the life of St David.

Through these activities, the children not only showcased their creativity but also gained a deeper understanding of the historical and cultural aspects associated with St David's Day.



[Bright Horizons Oak Lane Day Nursery and Preschool](#) takes pride in providing a nurturing environment where children can explore and celebrate different cultures, teaching children the appreciation for diversity amongst their young learners. They also held a fun and engaging open day on Saturday for new and existing families to explore the setting and find out more about the enthusiastic environment they create for young children.

The photographs shared by Bright Horizons Oak Lane Day Nursery and Preschool captured the joy and excitement of the children as they participated in the St David's Day activities.



# England Team to face Ireland at Twickenham

England men's head coach Steve Borthwick has named his team to play Ireland at Twickenham Stadium on Saturday 9th March (kick-off 4.45pm GMT live on ITV1).

There are three changes to the starting XV who took on Scotland in Edinburgh in round three of the 2024 Guinness Six Nations with Immanuel Feyi-Waboso, Alex Mitchell and George Martin all included.

An unchanged front row sees the England captain Jamie George joined at hooker alongside vice-captain Ellis Genge on the loosehead and Dan Cole at tighthead.

In the second row, vice-captain Maro Itoje is partnered with Martin who gets his first start of the Championship. The back row sees Ollie Chessum move from lock to start at blindside flanker, with Sam Underhill on the openside and Ben Earl at No.8 to round off the forward pack.

Scrum-half Mitchell, who missed out through injury at Murrayfield, links up again with vice-captain George Ford at 10. The midfield pairing of Ollie Lawrence at inside centre and Henry Slade at 13 remains the same.

In the back three, Feyi-Waboso is named on the right wing to win his third England cap and his first start of the tournament. Tommy Freeman moves to the left wing and George Furbank is selected at full-back.

Amongst the replacements, Danny Care will win his 100th England cap when he takes the field having first made his debut for England in 2008 against New Zealand at the age of 21. The evergreen scrum-half will become England's sixth male Test centurion. Care takes his spot on the bench alongside club teammate Marcus Smith – who returns to the side from injury to feature in his first game of the tournament – as well as Theo Dan, Joe Marler, Will Stuart, Chandler Cunningham-South, Alex Dombrandt, and Elliot Daly.

*"As always, we've selected what we think is our strongest 23 to leave us best placed to win the game," said Borthwick. "Ireland are without doubt currently one of the best teams in the world, and we'll have to be at our very best against them on Saturday. We've prepared well for what will be another classic Six Nations game at Twickenham. I'd like to pay special tribute to Danny Care who will win his 100th cap at Twickenham on Saturday. Danny has been a tremendous servant to English rugby and reaching this milestone is an incredible achievement. He's a wonderful player and someone who always puts the team first. I'm sure Saturday will be an emotional and memorable day for Danny and his family, and the team couldn't be prouder of his accomplishment."*

## ENGLAND v IRELAND

**Saturday 9th March 2024, Twickenham Stadium, Kick-off: 4.45pm (GMT)**

- 15. George Furbank (Northampton Saints, 7 caps)
- 14. Immanuel Feyi-Waboso (Exeter Chiefs, 2 caps)
- 13. Henry Slade (Exeter Chiefs, 60 caps)
- 12. Ollie Lawrence (Bath Rugby, 22 caps)
- 11. Tommy Freeman (Northampton Saints, 6 caps)
- 10. George Ford (Sale Sharks, 94 caps) – vice captain
- 9. Alex Mitchell (Northampton Saints, 13 caps)

### Replacements:

- 16. Theo Dan (Saracens, 10 caps)
- 17. Joe Marler (Harlequins, 91 caps)
- 18. Will Stuart (Bath Rugby, 36 caps)
- 19. Chandler Cunningham-South (Harlequins, 3 caps)

- 1. Ellis Genge (Bristol Bears, 60 caps) – vice captain
- 2. Jamie George (Saracens, 88 caps) – captain
- 3. Dan Cole (Leicester Tigers, 110 caps)
- 4. Maro Itoje (Saracens, 79 caps) – vice captain
- 5. George Martin (Leicester Tigers, 10 caps)
- 6. Ollie Chessum (Leicester Tigers, 21 caps)
- 7. Sam Underhill (Bath Rugby, 33 caps)
- 8. Ben Earl (Saracens, 28 caps)

- 20. Alex Dombrandt (Harlequins, 15 caps)
- 21. Danny Care (Harlequins, 99 caps)
- 22. Marcus Smith (Harlequins, 30 caps)
- 23. Elliot Daly (Saracens, 67 caps)



# Match Preview: Arsenal v Brentford

**Analysis, team news, match officials and more. Here's everything you need to know ahead of Brentford's Premier League game against Arsenal on Saturday, which will be broadcast live on Sky Sports (5.30pm kick-off GMT)**

Written by Brentford Football Club

Brentford head to Emirates Stadium on Saturday to take on Premier League title challengers Arsenal, live on *Sky Sports* (5.30pm kick-off GMT).

The Bees have faced the north Londoners twice so far this season, narrowly losing 1-0 in both the Premier League and Carabao Cup.

Thomas Frank's side drew 2-2 with Chelsea last time out, while Arsenal extended their winning streak in the league to seven matches with a 6-0 victory at Sheffield United.

## PRE-MATCH ANALYSIS

Alex Lawes, Playmaker Stats: Brentford face stern test at the Emirates

Aaron Ramsdale is expected to start in goal for Arsenal this weekend, with David Raya ineligible after joining the Gunners on loan from Brentford last summer.

And the disruption at the back for Mikel Arteta's may be something the Bees can seek to exploit.

No keeper in the division has kept more clean sheets than the nine Raya has earned so far this season in the Premier League and the Spaniard is aiming to have the most shutouts in total over the last two seasons (he is currently level with Liverpool's Alisson on 21).

That said, Raya has received plenty of protection from the meanest defence in the top flight.

In fact, Arsenal have conceded the fewest goals in the league (23) and, going forward, they have the most productive attack in the league (68).

Their 6-0 defeat of Sheffield United last Monday was their seventh successive victory in the league and they have scored 31 times in those seven matches.

There is a certain control about the way the Gunners have gone about their business, both mentally and tactically. They have received the fewest bookings in the league (41) and also conceded the fewest shots on target (61).

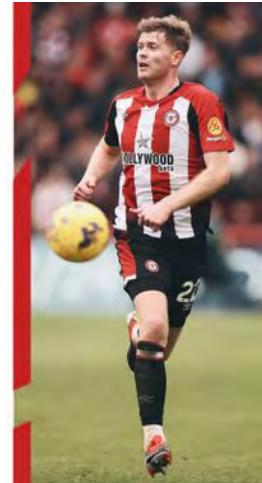
It will be interesting to see, therefore, whether Arteta's side can curb a Brentford side that - though less secure defensively this season - have been involved in plenty of free-scoring encounters.

To underline this point, Brentford have conceded four more goals than they did in the entirety of last season, but their 2-2 draw with west London rivals Chelsea last weekend does mean they have now



## Head to Head

Comparisons	Goals	Goals Conceded
Arsenal vs Brentford	68	39
Goals Conceded	23	50
Shots	314	253
Possession	61%	45%
Yellow Cards	39	61
Red Cards	2	1



scored two or more goals in six of their last nine matches across all competitions, since Ivan Toney returned from suspension.

The Bees can look at the Premier League's expected goals statistics with some hope. Thomas Frank's side are the third biggest underperformers in relation to their xG, with only Everton and Chelsea scoring fewer goals than their performances would have statistically suggested. Given that, it is likely there will be a reversion to the mean at some stage.

Brentford went ahead in north London against Tottenham Hotspur in January, took the lead against Manchester City and came from behind to lead against Chelsea last week. They got a point at Emirates Stadium last season and have consistently bloodied the noses of teams with more resources than them since gaining promotion to the Premier League in 2021.

Here's a rather random stat to finish with: Arsenal are the top scorers from set-pieces in the Premier League with 18 goals, and they have earned 163 corners this season - all but one of them being an in-swinger!

### **Scout Report**

Arsenal showing sheer ruthlessness as Premier League run-in approaches

On the day of this game, exactly one year prior, Arsenal were leading the way in the Premier League. The Gunners were five points clear of second-placed Manchester City and, seemingly, on their way to a first title since 2003/04, with 12 games to go.

Fairy tales rarely happen in football, though. The pressure caught up with them and three wins in the last nine was simply not sufficient to halt Pep Guardiola's juggernaut from retaining the trophy for the third straight season and a fifth time in six campaigns.

This time around, there's a captivating three-way title race taking shape and the Gunners – clearly keen to prove last term was not a one-off - are right in the thick of it.

27 games in, Liverpool lead the way on 63 points, Manchester City are second on 62 and Mikel Arteta's men are third on 61. It could hardly be better set up for a dramatic finale.

It is also pretty hard to call at this stage, given the strength of each team's form.

Liverpool have won eight of their last nine – with the one defeat coming against Arsenal at the Emirates – but they do face a hectic month, with two league games, an FA Cup quarter-final against Manchester United and a two-legged Europa League last-16 tie against Sparta Prague. The Reds are relying on many youth prospects at the moment, too, following a string of injuries to key players.

Similarly, Manchester City have won 10 of their last 12, will face Newcastle in the last eight of the FA Cup and are through to the quarter-final of the Champions League.

With that in mind, on paper at least, Arsenal are probably the best placed to give another title tilt a real go.

They are still in the Champions League and have a 1-0 aggregate deficit to turn over against Porto three days after Brentford's visit to the Emirates, but their Carabao Cup run was over by the start of November and a 2-0 defeat to Liverpool meant they did not make it past the third round of the FA Cup for only the third time since the 1995/96 season.

The crucial Christmas period was always going to pose a challenge and it proved that way, with the Gunners picking up only 10 of the 21 points on offer and ending the year with a 2-1 defeat to Fulham – their first loss at Craven Cottage since January 2012.

But they have come out of the other side unscathed and have shown sheer ruthlessness in recent weeks in order to claw their way back into the conversation they were dangerously close to slipping out of; they have won seven games in succession, scoring 31 goals and conceding just three. It's been some response.

*"We have to believe we can win every game,"* said Arteta after the 5-0 win over Burnley on 17 February. *"We are approaching every game in that way. When the team has that belief and confidence, something good can happen. We know the standards and what it will require – we have to keep elevating those standards. I believe we can do that as I see them in training every single day. Let's go for it."*

With that mindset, it could be second time lucky for the high-flying Gunners.

## IN THE DUGOUT

Mikel Arteta

Mikel Arteta was a product of Barcelona's famed La Masia youth set-up in the late 1990s and started his professional career at Barcelona B, for whom he played until 2002, with a loan spell at Paris Saint-Germain preceding his sale to Rangers for £6 million.

In 2002/03 - the first of his two seasons at Ibrox - he lifted the Scottish Premier League and League Cup. After 68 appearances and 14 goals in all competitions, he returned to Spain in the summer of 2004 and signed for Real Sociedad. However, his time at Anoeta was over in a flash; he started three league games during the first half of the season, before joining Everton on loan.

He was an instant hit at Goodison Park and signed a five-year deal in 2005. He ended up staying for seven seasons and more than 200 appearances.

Such was his talent that there was even speculation he could play for England under Fabio Capello, having not received a Spain call-up, though it ultimately did not materialise.

In August 2011, Arteta signed for Arsenal for a reported fee of £10m and, three years later, was appointed club captain by Arsène Wenger. He appeared 150 times for the Gunners, winning the FA Cup and Community Shield on two occasions each.

He retired in 2016 at the age of 34 and soon became part of Pep Guardiola's coaching team at Manchester City.

In 2018, he was linked with a return to the Emirates Stadium after Wenger's exit. Although fellow Spaniard Unai Emery took on the role of manager at that time, Arteta replaced him in December 2019. He led them to a second FA Cup win in four years but could not prevent an eighth-place finish - the lowest since 1994/95.

The 41-year-old surpassed 200 games in charge of the Gunners this season; a milestone only 10 managers in the club's history have surpassed.

Under his stewardship, Arsenal have so far lifted the FA Cup once and the Community Shield twice.



# AustralianSuper announces £8 billion investment in the UK

A fresh £8 billion investment from Australia's biggest pension fund, AustralianSuper, will take its total investment in the UK to over £18 billion by the end of the decade.

It comes after Chancellor Jeremy Hunt met with CEO Paul Schroder, alongside some of the Board, this afternoon and rounds off a day of significant investment announcements, including the government announcing over £360 million of funding for advanced manufacturing.

The Prime Minister attended the groundbreaking of a development site in Swindon today owned by Panattoni, Europe's largest developer of new build industrial and logistics facilities, which has the potential to create 7,000 jobs for local people and add £1.2 billion to the economy, and the Chancellor visited Siemens Mobility, which revealed a €100 million investment for a manufacturing and research and development centre in Chippenham.

Growing the economy is one of the Prime Minister's priorities, and is part of the plan to improve economic security and opportunity for everyone. The UK has secured investment from major corporations over the past year, and according to PWC, around 4,000 CEOs see the UK as a top-three priority country for investment, alongside the US and China.

It also follows the announcement of a series of pension fund reforms to back British business and increase returns and transparency for savers, including a new Value for Money (VFM) framework aimed at improving the performance of defined contribution pensions – a market growing rapidly, fuelled by the success of Automatic Enrolment in increasing pension savings by over £26 billion between 2012 and 2022.

**Prime Minister Rishi Sunak said:**

*"The raft of investment announcements we have seen today show that the UK remains one of the most attractive places to invest in the world.*

*"But because of the difficult, long term decisions the government has taken the economy is now turning a corner, and we must stick to the plan – driving investment and growth to deliver long-term change and a brighter future for everyone."*

**Chancellor Jeremy Hunt said:**

*"This major investment from AustralianSuper will promote growth and strengthen the UK's position as a leading financial centre, creating wealth and helping to fund public services.*

*"Britain continues to be Europe's leading hub for investment, and it is through commitments like this that we will funnel billions into our brightest, burgeoning businesses to scale up and grow."*

The Australian pension fund industry is the fastest growing in the developed world with assets

under management doubling every five years, and the Chancellor has previously referred to the success of the pensions model in Australia, which has pioneered a similar set of reforms to VFM.

AustralianSuper has had a presence in the UK since 2016, with approximately £8 billion currently invested in the UK and holding over £2.5 billion in UK listed equities. It is on track to deploy more than £8 billion of new capital by 2030 into large-scale, long-term investment opportunities in some of the fastest growing sectors in which Britain excels in comparison to its European peers, such as the energy transition and digital infrastructure.

Mr Schroder has praised the UK's investment opportunities for enabling high-quality, long-term returns for members. In future the company stated it expects £7 of every new £10 invested to be deployed outside Australia, as it pursues the best global investment opportunities and long-term returns for members.

The United Kingdom has the largest pension market in Europe, worth over £2.5 trillion. Last year the Chancellor set out his 'Mansion House Reforms' to capitalise upon this, with the possibility to unlock an additional £75 billion for high growth businesses - supporting the Prime Minister's priority of growing the economy and delivering tangible benefits to pensions savers. These include the 'Mansion House compact' which encourages pension funds to invest at least 5% of their assets in unlisted equity, which is in line with the Australian model.

**Minister for Investment Lord Johnston said:**

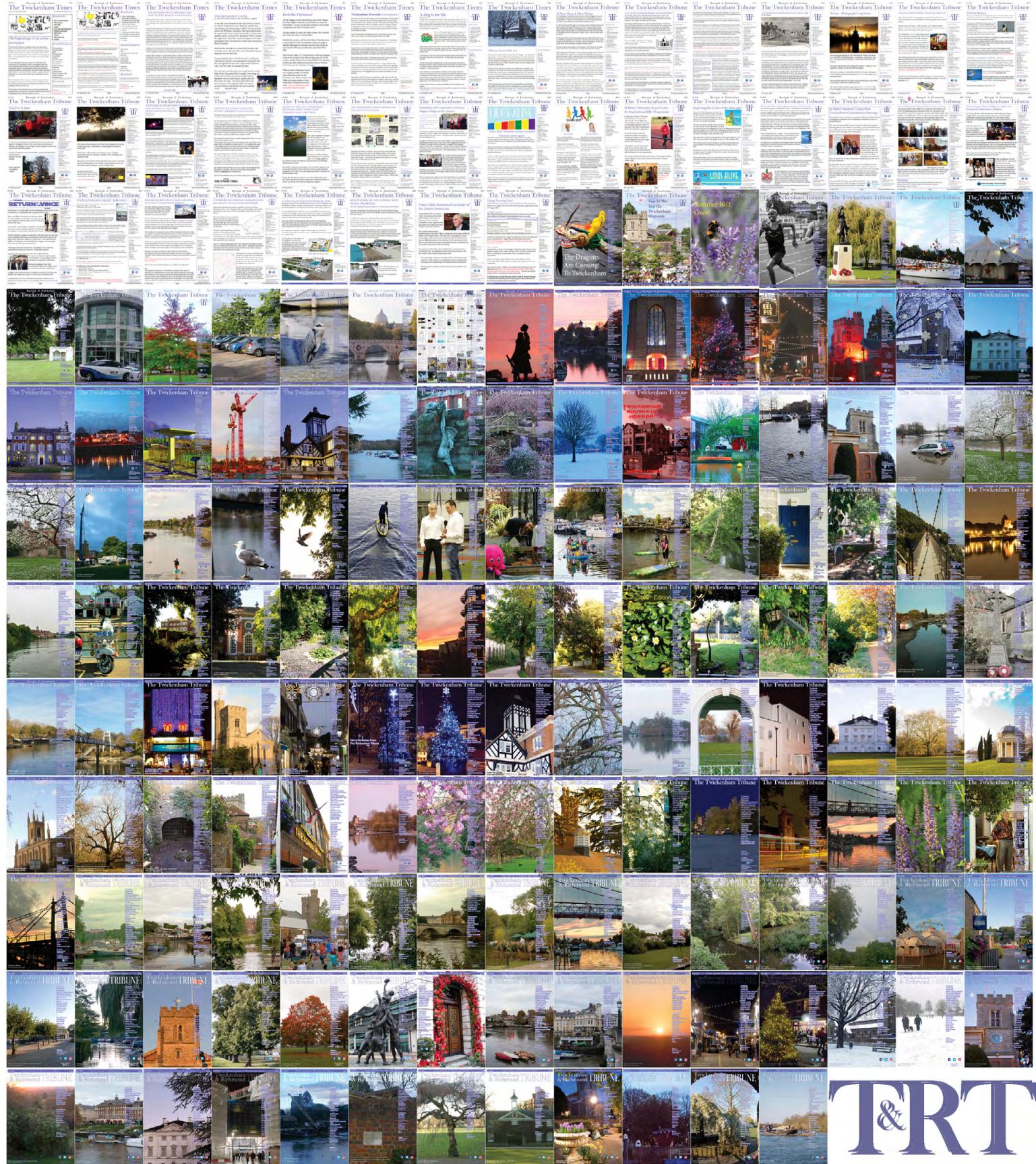
*"Foreign investment is not just about numbers on a spreadsheet. It creates jobs, nurtures skills and unleashes our nation's innovative spirit. That's why the UK's recent trade deal with Australia prioritised boosting investment flows."*

*"AustralianSuper's ongoing commitment shows the strong relationship we have built as they create a global centre of excellence in London. We are a top choice for major investments like this, and the Government is committed to promoting the opportunities available to global investors so they choose the UK."*

The UK-Australia free trade agreement, which came into force on 31 May 2023, includes comprehensive provisions on investment, which has made the UK a more attractive place to do business.



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