

Twickenham & Richmond TRIBUNE

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James Dowden

NAO

LBRuT

Editors

Berkley Driscoll

Teresa Read



26th November 2021

T&RT

Strawberry Hill Autumn

Photo by Berkley Driscoll



TickerTape - News in Brief

Apply for funding to improve your local area and make your big idea a reality

The Local Area Fund has funding available to support community driven projects to improve the quality of life and wellbeing of local communities.

The Community Engagement Team is keen to work with residents to help develop projects in their local area. Individuals and groups can share their ideas with us, for improving your community.

Share your bright ideas [HERE](#)

LBRuT have already awarded a number of groups with funding to support their community projects.

Visit the [previous Local Area Fund awards page](#) to see how much is available in your ward.

Find out more about the Local Area Fund [HERE](#)

Enjoy an evening of Wine Tasting in aid of the Mayor's charities

Would you like to spend an evening with a local wine expert whose aim is to make your next glass of wine more enjoyable than your last?

The Mayor is pleased that Doran Wines are returning for a special wine tasting evening after their very successful previously event. Edwin Doran, owner of Doran Wines, has been in business in the borough since 1974.

Edwin will be donating his wines towards the Mayor's charities as well as recommending the perfect wines go accompany your Christmas dinner this year!

The event takes place on **Wednesday 1 December at 7pm** at York House in Twickenham. Tickets are priced at £30 which includes nibbles to accompany the wines. There will also be a raffle on the night, so please bring cash with you if you wish to take part.

Book your tickets [HERE](#)

Friends of Kneller Gardens AGM

Sunday 28 November 8pm – 9.30pm

Prince Blucher Pub, Twickenham Green

Anyone interested in hearing about plans and proposals for Kneller Gardens is welcome to join us.

We are also looking for new committee members. It's a great way to get involved with your local community! Come and see us!



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TwickerSeal

TwickerSeal and his chums were on the Embankment, in the flood zone, marvelling at how wonderful it was that the Diamond Jubilee Gardens and its event space/town square were safely raised

well above the flood area. It was ironic that there was still a poster for the High Tide Festival, which had a jazz stage on the DJG's flood free event space; in the future the council wants such events to happen on the proposed new 'event space' in the flood zone, so the High Tide Festival will have to be at, er, low tide!

The council had recently established its credentials as the Nasty Party, attacking the Twickenham Riverside Trust, the Trustees and anyone else who dared oppose the council Compulsory Purchase Order to seize the Diamond Jubilee Gardens. What else would they do?

Well, it seems the council messed up the address for residents and interested parties to object to the CPO, even though the address had been changed months before! Not only did the council not give the correct address, they didn't provide an email address for objections to be submitted to either. It then took a further month before the council quietly informed only those parties directly affected by the CPO of the error, but it seems no effort was taken to inform the other residents and organisations who may have wished to lodge an objection. At best this is sheer incompetence by the council and a total disregard for the views of residents.



Covid-19

By Teresa Read

World Health Organization

Weekly Epidemiological Update – 23 November 2021

Globally, the numbers of weekly COVID-19 cases and deaths have increased for more than a month. During the week of 15-21 November 2021, nearly 3.6 million confirmed new cases and over 51 000 deaths were reported, reflecting a 6% increase for cases and deaths as compared to the previous week.

The European Region reported an 11% increase in new weekly cases, while the other regions reported a decrease or incidence similar to the previous week. The largest proportionate decrease was reported from the South-East Asia Region (11%), followed by the Eastern Mediterranean Region (9%). While the Western Pacific Region and the Region of the Americas reported relatively stable case incidence, they both reported large increases in new weekly deaths, 29% and 19% respectively. In contrast, the African and the South-East Asia regions reported a 30% and 19% decrease in new weekly deaths.

The cumulative number of confirmed cases reported globally is now over 256 million and the cumulative number of deaths is more than 5.1 million

Total cases to 26 November 2021

Richmond upon Thames	26,352 (24,856 previous week)
Kingston upon Thames	24,990 (23,995 previous week)
Hounslow	44,741 (43,345 previous week)
Wandsworth	46,633 (44,725 previous week)

Added To Red List Countries:

South Africa, Botswana, Zimbabwe, Namibia, Lesotho and Eswatini.

The USA includes Mozambique and Malawi in a flight ban.

Country Information - [Africa](#)



The Tree Agency

darryl parkin

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The Tree Agency

Classification of Omicron (B.1.1.529): SARS-CoV-2 Variant of Concern

The Technical Advisory Group on SARS-CoV-2 Virus Evolution (TAG-VE) is an independent group of experts that periodically monitors and evaluates the evolution of SARS-CoV-2 and assesses if specific mutations and combinations of mutations alter the behaviour of the virus.

The TAG-VE was convened on 26 November 2021 to assess the SARS-CoV-2 variant: B.1.1.529.

The B.1.1.529 variant was first reported to WHO from South Africa on 24 November 2021. The epidemiological situation in South Africa has been characterised by three distinct peaks in reported cases, the latest of which was predominantly the Delta variant. In recent weeks, infections have increased steeply, coinciding with the detection of B.1.1.529 variant. The first known confirmed B.1.1.529 infection was from a specimen collected on 9 November 2021.

This variant has a large number of mutations, some of which are concerning. Preliminary evidence suggests an increased risk of reinfection with this variant, as compared to other VOCs. The number of cases of this variant appears to be increasing in almost all provinces in South Africa.

Current SARS-CoV-2 PCR diagnostics continue to detect this variant. Several labs have indicated that for one widely used PCR test, one of the three target genes is not detected (called S gene dropout or S gene target failure) and this test can therefore be used as marker for this variant, pending sequencing confirmation.

Using this approach, this variant has been detected at faster rates than previous surges in infection, suggesting that this variant may have a growth advantage.

There are a number of studies underway and the TAG-VE will continue to evaluate this variant. WHO will communicate new findings with Member States and to the public as needed.

Based on the evidence presented indicative of a detrimental change in COVID-19 epidemiology, the TAG-VE has advised WHO that this variant should be designated as a VOC, and the WHO has designated B.1.1.529 as a VOC, named Omicron.



Rough times in Whitton

By Simon Fowler

It's hard to imagine how rural Twickenham was two hundred years ago. Apart the village of Twickenham and a few small hamlets the area was largely farmland. In 1861 a journalist for the *Surrey Comet* looked back on a Whitton that had almost vanished:

We learn that, 50 years ago Whitton was quite an unknown place, except in its immediate vicinity where it enjoyed a most unenviable notoriety; so much so that decent people were ashamed to confess they came from Whitton. How much, and for the better things have changed since.

It was only about 20 years ago, that a gentleman from London came to Whitton to purchase some cottages and land, and after driving about the whole day and asking upwards of a dozen people, he at last found the place, and making enquiries of a woman still living there, she informed him that the



property he intended to purchase was called the 'Pigsty Rookery', and was occupied by most desperate characters, and she warned him to get out of the village as soon as convenient, or he might probably get his throat cut, the people being very exasperated just at that time, as it had happened that Government had found it necessary to supply several of the natives with hempen cravats [the hangman's noose], and others had been forced 'to leave the country for their country's good.'

In former years the main road of Whitton presented only a spectacle of small broken-down dens, inhabited by the lowest of the low; now a traveller, passing through Whitton will see large houses, beautiful villas and pretty cottages. It was no uncommon thing on a Sunday evening after the people had left their work in the gardens, to see them then in a most beastly state of intoxication in front of the beer-house; and upon one occasion, when Mr. Kyezor had invited a minister of the gospel and had a tent erected on the same piece of ground where the church is going to be built, to have a sermon preached to the people which he himself and his family and friends attended - about 20 in all, the lower class of inhabitants came and squatted down in front of the entrance to the tent and commenced singing most profane and infamous songs, smoked pipes, passed a beer can round and made all the noise they possibly could to prevent the clergyman from being heard. Such desperate characters lived at Whitton at that time, that it took Mr. Hiscock, a powerful man, then a parish constable, Mr. Oliver, and five or six more, to come to Whitton to take a thief into custody."

Surrey Comet, 3 August 1861

Not Much COP 26

By Lucilius

Last week Governor Ralph Gobbets came back to Transfluvia from his trip to the COP 26 in Glasgow. His pockets were so full of goodies, ideas to clean out The Democratic Republic, that he ran out of time at Cllr Rutt's weekly audience. Now, as the Katchwimen Palace solar clock strikes the hour, a breathless Rutt enters the chamber.



Brownfield Site as Planned

Rutt: My apologies Governor Gobbets, my electric pogo stick ran out of charge. There was not much wind around when you were away, you know, no spin ... I mean, you know, the generator.

Gobbets: Yes, yes, enough of that; we only have a short time while my solar eyebrow trimmer charges up. Now, I told you last week all about the green tree-felling programme. So how is the Doubly Joyous Gardens eradication going? What about the thirty-seven trees?

Rutt: Done what we were forced to do: I have issued the edit in your name, as per the Firkin Architects' instructions. The gardeners were still on about their arbour of pleached limes, they kept weeping; "...our beautiful" were the words they kept using.

Gobbets: Well, we have good news. The Doubly Joyous Gardens site has been officially designated a Brownfield Site, so nothing there is now officially "beautiful". It gets us a "grant" of one million Euros from "friends on high".

Rutt: President Sliden must have pulled a few strings. When I saw the COP 26 television pictures of him, stretched in his chair, listening so intently to you, eyes shut for concentration ...

Gobbets: ... Yes, you could see he respected my opinions. I had a word with one of his minders. When I told him what hard graft we had put into greenwashing the Doubly Joyous Gardens, his ears pricked up ... so did his eyebrows. Made me think of my solar eyebrow trimmer. Good hard work really impresses that lot. It's the American dream ... skyscrapers, dollars.

Rutt: Goody, goody! So it's all in the bag then.

Gobbets: Talking of goodie-bags, you've come here for me to tell you about the other save-the-planet initiatives that I developed at COP26 with my international advisors, and of course with Goliath Rottenborough. He's a Transfluvian, so we can trust what he says.

Rutt: You can depend on the Department of Heritage Destruction to carry out your orders.

Gobbets: Reclaim the pavements! We must clear all the pavements of pedestrians.

Rutt: Er, aren't pedestrians green.

Gobbets: Green, pedestrians! Think, Rutt. All that shoe leather, all those hearty meat dishes to "build up an appetite". Think of all the farting cows that needs. Plus pedestrians get in the way of our anonymous, licence free, insurance free electric transport solutions.

Rutt: We've just "rolled out", as they say, our pavement electric motorcycles. Tilia, they're called, fetching name don't you think?

Gobbets: Well done, Rutt. Next are the electric roller-skates, electric Segways, electric skateboards and electric land-yachts to supplement the electric bikes and electric scooters. Get all the pedestrians off the pavements, they only cause accidents.

Rutt: Leave the roads free for electric cars.

Gobbets: Don't use that sort of language in front of me, Rutt. It is inappropriate and offensive. You know the "C" word upsets me. Electric personal carriers will be the only vehicles allowed on the roadways, except of course the lorries working on the Doubly Joyous Gardens Brownfield Site.

Rutt: And the Presidential stretch limousine.

Photography by Bill Benson

New local COVID-19 testing site to open in Hampton

A new COVID-19 PCR testing facility is to open in Hampton, based on the multi-use games area on Bramble Lane, adjacent to the White House Community Centre.

As levels of COVID-19 remain high in the borough, we want to make it as easy as possible for local people to get tested. This new walk-through testing centre is due to open on 3 December.

To access a test you MUST book an appointment (the planned date of site opening is 3 December, with appointments being made available after 3 December). Test appointments will be available to book for those with Coronavirus symptoms. These include a high temperature, a new continuous cough, or a loss or change to sense of smell or taste. In addition, PCR testing is also available for those who have tested positive via a lateral flow test, or have been asked to get a test, which could be by NHS Test and Trace if they're a close contact of a positive case, by a clinician or their local authority, by a testing pilot or via their work. Instead of self-isolating, those who are fully vaccinated and under 18s identified as close contacts of positive COVID-19 cases are advised to get a free PCR test as soon as possible.

Tests can be booked on the new NHS Covid-19 app, online: nhs.uk/coronavirus or by calling 119.

The new site is situated so it is easily accessible without a car. Those being tested will be required to follow public health measures, including social distancing, not travelling by taxi or public transport, practicing good personal hygiene and wearing a face covering throughout, including while travelling to and from the testing centre.

This new facility is in addition to the mobile testing unit regularly based at Old Deer Park in Richmond and the Teddington centre on Broom Road.

Cllr Gareth Roberts, Leader of Richmond Council, said:

“Levels of COVID-19 in Richmond upon Thames remain higher than the London average. As we move into the winter months, pressure is growing on the NHS. Therefore, it is vital we test people with symptoms to help stop the spread of the virus and protect our community.

“Finding cases and asking these people to self-isolate is key to breaking the chains of transmission, so we can keep Richmond upon Thames safe. It remains vital that anyone with Covid-19 symptoms gets tested. By increasing the testing capacity within our borough through this new site, we want to make it easier for all residents who have symptoms to access a test quickly.”

The new site will be open seven days a week, from 8am to 6pm. There will be security on site 24 hours a day.

Those visiting the walk-through site for testing will be required to follow stringent public health measures, including social distancing, wearing face coverings, practising good personal hygiene and **not** travelling by taxi or public transport, including while travelling to and from the testing centre. Access to this site is **ONLY** for those arriving on foot or by bike.

Anyone attending an appointment at the new walk-through site will be provided with guidance on getting to and from the test site safely when they book their test.

Please note – **there is NO access to the testing centre via the White House Community Centre**. The testing centre entrance is via Bramble Lane only. The White House Community Centre remains open for community activities. Anyone displaying any symptoms of COVID-19 or has a positive lateral flow test is reminded not to enter the centre.



Update from Teddington Action Group



You may be wondering what's going on with Heathrow and airspace modernisation as we are hearing more noisy planes above us again. The threat of a third runway still lurks in the background and the Government-backed Airspace Change Organising Group has recently published a new report entitled 'One Sky One Plan', extolling the benefits of Performance Based Navigation (PBN) for airports, industry and communities. This will create very concentrated flightpaths round airports like Heathrow

and offer respite to some.

Not so many benefits are evident for those who find themselves under one or more of these 'noise sewers' which have blighted the lives of many across the world. There have been protests in USA, Frankfurt and in the UK - not forgetting the notorious 2014 trials in Teddington which resulted in the birth of TAG. Consultation on PBN is in progress but the reality is no-one wants these concentrated paths over their homes, impacting the health of their families. In the densely populated airspace round Heathrow, it's very difficult to provide enough flight path separation to have any meaningful respite, as there simply isn't room. Being consulted on such changes does not make them any more palatable.



Part of the motivation for PBN is to increase capacity despite the overwhelming evidence that we need to manage demand in order to reduce emissions. There has been a great deal of greenwash about sustainable aviation fuels and carbon off-setting as an excuse to carry on polluting. In 2019, Heathrow was reported to be the single biggest source of greenhouse gas emissions in the UK. Aviation accounts for around 9% of UK CO2 emissions and this gas has a lifespan of hundreds of years, contributing to global warming. We need to act urgently as this increases the risk of heatwaves, famine and flooding and many places are experiencing these extreme weather events now. A better report might be One Sky, One Planet....

For more information, please see www.teddingtonactiongroup.com and add yourself to our mailing list or join us on Twitter [@TeddingtonTAG](https://twitter.com/TeddingtonTAG)



TEDDINGTON ACTION GROUP
Against Increased Aircraft Noise and Pollution

Council's Twickenham Riverside Compulsory Purchase Order Official Public Notice used wrong address

The Council used the wrong address for objections to the CPO in the official public notice published on 28th October 2021 in the Richmond & Twickenham Times.

The notice also stated that objections had to be made in writing, to the incorrect address, without providing an option to send objections via email. The incorrect address was also provided in a letter sent on 22nd October and by the Council's agent, Ardent, again without providing an email address as an alternative. Ardent eventually sent a letter on 18th November, to the properties directly affected by the CPO, providing the correct address and an email address. There does not appear to have been any attempt by the Council to publish a correction to the Public Notice, to issue a press statement or clarify the 'error' to residents.

The correct address is:

The Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, 23 Stephenson Street, Birmingham B2 4BH
Email: pcu@communities.gov.uk

**THE LONDON BOROUGH OF RICHMOND UPON THAMES
(TWICKENHAM RIVERSIDE)
COMPULSORY PURCHASE ORDER 2021
COMPULSORY PURCHASE OF LAND AND NEW RIGHTS
IN TWICKENHAM RIVERSIDE**

Notice is hereby given that the London Borough of Richmond upon Thames made on 11 October 2021 The London Borough of Richmond upon Thames (Twickenham Riverside) Compulsory Purchase Order 2021 under sections 226(1)(a) and 226(3)(b) of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 and section 13(1) of the Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976. It is about to submit this order to the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing & Communities for confirmation and if confirmed, the order will authorise The London Borough of Richmond upon Thames to purchase compulsorily the land and the new rights described below for the purpose of facilitating the carrying out of development, redevelopment, or improvement of the land, consisting of a scheme including demolition and other works and the provision of open space, residential, commercial, retail, restaurant, public house, café, recreational and other complementary uses, as well as new infrastructure, public realm, highway works and access.

A copy of the order and of the accompanying map may be seen at Twickenham Library, Garfield Road, Twickenham, TW1 3JT between 9.30am – 7.00pm on Mondays, 9.30am – 6.00pm on Tuesdays, 10.00am – 7.00pm on Wednesdays, 9.30am – 6.00pm on Thursdays and 9.30am – 6.00pm on Fridays; they are also available for inspection at https://richmond.gov.uk/compulsory_purchase_order. Alternatively, a hard copy of the order and map may be requested by contacting Anna Sadler using the following contact details: Anna.Sadler@richmondandwandsworth.gov.uk or 07850 513568.

Any objection to the order must be made in writing to Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing & Communities, Planning Casework Unit, 5 St Philip's Place, Colmore Row, Birmingham B3 2PW before 23 November 2021 and should state the title of the order, the grounds of objection and the objector's address and interests in the land.

DESCRIPTION OF LAND AND THE NEW RIGHTS

Land To Be Acquired
The Order Land comprises approximately 2.03 hectares of land in around Water Lane, King Street, Wharf Lane and the Embankment, in Twickenham, London, and includes 1-1b King Street (3 retail and office units at the northern end of Water Lane); Diamond Jubilee Gardens; a closed public car park at the southern end of Water Lane; an area of derelict land and buildings to the north of the Gardens; and a part of the Embankment highway.

New Rights To Be Acquired
The Order also seeks to acquire new rights over land for the purpose of oversailing cranes, being land at and buildings on King Street, Wharf Lane, Water Lane and the Embankment, and an extent of the River Thames, all in Twickenham, London.

21 October 2021
Paul Chadwick, Director of Environment and Community Services, on behalf of the London Borough of Richmond Upon Thames

Official CPO Public Notice, 28th October 2021

Emails from the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities:

"I can confirm that we have always allowed local planning authorities the option to provide our email address to potential objectors if they wished to do so. This has been especially useful throughout the Covid situation whilst our officers have been working from home and formed part of our CPO Covid guidance. The Council however do not have to use the email address. On this occasion we advised that they inform interested parties of our new address and email too, to enable objections to arrive to us as quickly as possible. As we're still working digitally where we can, this helps speed things up."



Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities

Planning Casework Unit 23 Stephenson Street, Birmingham B2 4BH
pcu@communities.gov.uk

Last week in Edition 263 the Tribune published a letter (dated 18th November 2021) from the agents for the Council giving the correct address for Objections. It has now been revealed that the change of address took place almost three months previously:

"I can confirm that the actual move to our new office took place over a number of days towards the end of August 2021"



Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities

Planning Casework Unit 23 Stephenson Street, Birmingham B2 4BH
pcu@communities.gov.uk

Statement from the Conservative Group

A councillor from the Conservative Group said that *“not only is the refusal of the Liberal Democrat Administration to listen to residents who reply to their consultations deplorable, but so is their management of a very sloppy consultation on the proposed compulsory purchase of the Diamond Jubilee Gardens from the trustees. The address of the consultation changed at the end of August and even when residents were eventually notified, it remained incorrect on the Council website.*

Furthermore, by resorting to a Compulsory Purchase Order to grab the Diamond Jubilee Gardens from the trustees, they show they have no respect for earlier commitments made by The Council to the people of Twickenham.”

Twickenham Riverside - the importance of checking the “small print” - Is What You See What You Get?

Our Council has certainly been busy during Lockdown. Ninety-two reports and forty drawings to wade through to find out if what they tell us is what we will get.

Hopkins' Architects have produced images of what they propose, but

if we look at this link in the reports on the LBRUT planning website -

<https://images.richmond.gov.uk/iam/IAMCache/3356830/3356830.pdf>

- we see the following:

“6.3 To support the visual assessment, 11 representative viewpoints were agreed with LBRuT. These all look towards the Site and are intended to illustrate the maximum visual conjunction between proposal development and its townscape context. Hopkins Architects have produced Computer Generated Images (CGI's) of the proposal from these viewpoints, which in each case are set against an 'existing' photograph for comparison. ***It was agreed with LBRuT that the CGI's did not need to be produced as Accurate Visual Representations (AVRs), which are verified for accuracy.***”

The last sentence should remind some of us of the email sent out to residents by the Liberal Democrat Party, endorsed by a very senior Liberal Democrat councillor and used in a paid advertisement on FaceBook by a Riverside councillor of the same party.

The email said that there had been 40 years of neglect on Twickenham Riverside and used a photograph of the boarded up “Santander” car park which belongs to the Council to convince people that this is “Twickenham Riverside”. Thus, the photograph could be said to have been disingenuously used to represent Diamond Jubilee Gardens, under threat of a Compulsory Purchase Order, and the Embankment; some of the recipients of this email echoed its theme of “get it done” in comments on the planning website.

Yes, get it done, destroy 37 trees when there is concern over climate change, “get it done” and destroy a much-loved public open space, and a recently refurbished Embankment. “Get it done” and build high rise luxury flats to be sold by a West End estate agent.

We should have a Council that does not show residents inaccurate visual representations in order to get support for their plans. Most of us prefer that ‘what we see is what we get’. How else can we put our view forward if it is not based on accuracy and how many will have been swayed by inaccurate visual representations and inaccurate information (40 years of neglect!) distributed in order to get support?

A novel idea for a very green Christmas

The Richmond Furniture Scheme works to prevent poverty by supplying donated furniture and household goods at minimal costs to people in need and protect the environment by encouraging reuse/recycling of donated furniture and household goods.

Every year at Christmas time, families from across the UK shell out for 'emergency chairs and tables' to cram friends and relatives around the festive dinner table. Many resort to using cheap plastic or foldable chairs which are used once and then discarded or stored in the loft.

The Richmond Furniture Scheme (RFS) wants to help with an environmentally friendly solution. They are inviting people to think differently this year and instead of buying new, focus on reducing waste by reusing.

RFS currently have over 100 chairs and 25 dining tables that they are encouraging residents to consider 'borrowing' for the festive period. The furniture is great quality, at an affordable price and can be returned in January. Dining chairs are available from £5 each with sets of 4 and 6 available.

Dining tables start at £26.50 and can seat from 4 to 8. RFS has an [online shop](#) and the warehouse is open six days a week at 1a Fortescue Avenue, Twickenham, TW2 5LS.

All money raised from furniture sales supports the charity in helping those on grants with affordable furniture and also offering the unemployed work-experience and training in skills such as up-cycling.



New gym at Moormead now open

LBRuT have installed a new outdoor gym in the park in Twickenham, working with the Friends of Moormead Recreation Ground.

This is part of a continued commitment to improve parks and open spaces. New equipment includes a mixture of static and moving items to help support people to be active.



Mayor of Richmond upon Thames presented with English Oak tree

The Lord-Lieutenant of Greater London, Sir Kenneth Olisa OBE, presented The Mayor of Richmond upon Thames with an English Oak tree sapling to mark Her Majesty The Queen's Platinum Jubilee next year.

Cllr Geoff Acton, Mayor of Richmond upon Thames, was presented with the Oak tree sapling at a special event held in Hyde Park last Thursday, 18 November.

The presentation was organised to promote [The Queen's Green Canopy](#) initiative. The Queen's Green Canopy is a unique tree planting initiative created to mark Her Majesty's Platinum Jubilee in 2022 which invites people from across the UK to 'Plant a Tree for the Jubilee'.

As well as inviting the planting of new trees, The Queen's Green Canopy will dedicate a network of 70 Ancient Woodlands across the United Kingdom and identify 70 Ancient Trees to celebrate Her Majesty's 70 years of service.



Sir,

20mph speed limit

I see the Councillor for St Margaret has been engaged in a little fanciful thinking in a recent statement about the effects of their flagship 20mph blanket speed limit.

He quotes that between the first quarter of 2020 and the first quarter in 2021 there had been a reduction of 13%-21% in NO2 levels proving the 20mph limit may be working.

He rather underplays the fact that in March 2020 we saw the start of the effects of the pandemic on vehicle use and by the first quarter of 2021, car traffic had decreased by 31% across Britain. (DfT Provisional Road Traffic Estimates Great Britain: April 2020 to March 2021).

Given that borough traffic probably reflected that across the country, we might be forgiven for doubting the statistical validity of comparing those two very different periods to support the councillor's remarkable conclusion. It would perhaps have been more reasonable to conclude a 30% reduction in traffic volume and the consequent free flow of traffic achieved the claimed reduction in NO2 levels, it is surprising it wasn't more! I imagine the same comparison on almost any road in Britain would have shown similar results.

The council's own review of the effects of the 20mph limit states that after one year, a 1mph reduction in average speed had been achieved across the borough. DfT Vehicle Speed Compliance Statistics indicates a 20 mph limit, under free flow conditions, will be ignored by up to 86% of drivers where there are no obvious physical restrictions. The Atkins report concluded that from other studies the actual reduction in speed after the introduction of a 20 mph limit was less than 1 mph where the mean speed was already less than 30 mph. I see nothing on the road to make me doubt those statistics.

To arrive at the conclusion the comparative reduction in NO2 levels was related to the 20mph limit requires some suspension of belief in deductive logic given the limit was and still is widely ignored. Dare I suggest it looks more like wishful thinking in support of a manifesto promise? 20mph limit is working?

As for the claim that he had seen very large speed reductions as a result of the 20mph limit, I suggest he gets out more often. The only things very large about the 20mph limit I see are the level of non-compliance and the amount of London residents tax money spent on signage, white paint and smiley speed signs.

Sincerely

Brian Shepherd
St Margarets

Dear Editor,

Twickenham Riverside

The Tribune is to be congratulated for ensuring balance in this debate by printing Mr Makin's lengthy letter in defence of the current proposals. Although as a defence it is so flimsy as to be embarrassing.

Also, he does himself no favours by describing some of the scheme's critics as 'mischievous' and dismissing the best public facility that Twickenham ever had -the Lido -as a 'happenstance'.

It is, or should be, self evident that this unique riverside site offers a once in a life time opportunity to ensure the economic regeneration of Twickenham and provide significant and meaningful community benefits. The current proposals do neither.

Instead they give us expensive private housing on the best part of the site and offer us a speculative privately owned pub/restaurant as a major planning benefit.

It is true that the amount of public space will be increased - although many think its quality will not.

The provision of affordable housing and the claimed improvements to traffic and parking arrangements are a requirement of any development of this site. They do not justify the present proposals which, in land use terms, provide nothing that Twickenham does not already have.

I do not believe that I am alone in thinking that history will thank us for taking even more time to get this right rather than just get it done.

Yours

William Stewart
Teddington

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

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

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

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

The Church Street Association's Living Advent Calendar! 02-24 December 2021

By Shona Lyons

Following on from our Epic Church Street Association Christmas Craft Fair, keeping in with the Christmas theme, we now have a lovely 24 Day Living Advent Calendar that the Church Street shops are taking part in.

It will make a wonderful diversion for your children whilst you are busy browsing for Christmas presents in our lovely boutique shops in the street which have everything from Spa Vouchers to Pet accessories to gifts, homeware, travel vouchers, vaping, craft beer sets, vintage & boutique fashion and Italian delicacies and much more!

These Advent Calendars traditionally started in the mid-19th Century when German Protestants made marks on their doors or lit candles to help them count the days before Christmas.

Different Churches now still also light candles each Sunday before Christmas Day, and many Children are also brought Advent Calendars from shops with a little present behind each door.

There are also living Advent Calendars and we will be doing this in Church Street from the 2nd of December until Christmas Eve. You will be able to find the calendar in the shops in Church Street and will find corresponding pictures in the shop windows that you will be able to match on the Advent Calendar.

There will be a small prize of a £5 Church Street Voucher for the first 20 lucky winners who manage to complete the trail (and also the tiebreaker questions!) & post or drop it into Crusader Travel, at 58 Church Street, Twickenham, TW1 3NR by the 1st of January.

Bring a pencil but you may also find these at some of the shops as well!

Thank you too to the wonderful local artist Simon Cassini who designed the calendar for us.



Hampton North Ward News

Councillors Geoffrey Samuel and Kate Howard

NURSERY GREEN

This is a pleasant open space in our Ward which for years has been the site of the Annual Hampton Carnival. We are very fortunate that a local resident has taken real personal interest in the Green and we have supported him at site meetings over the years which have led to real improvements. There was such a meeting with officers recently. At the end of the meeting we all agreed that it would be of benefit to the community if a Friends of Nursery Green were set up. There are 70 such groups in our Borough. Friends Groups are independent, voluntary groups set up at community level to work with the Council to improve and promote parks. They can help to solve problems, increase awareness and even bring in funding for improvements., We need your support! If you would be willing to join a Friends Group, do let us know on gjshn@btinternet.com and we will work with our local residents and Council officers to set up such an independent group

LADY ELEANOR HOLLES SCHOOL

We had a meeting with the School in March when the School was seeking permission to erect a single storey building and were able to ensure that the interests of local residents were safeguarded. It appears that this can be regarded as Permitted Development. However the School now wants to build an additional storey on this building and has set out the educational benefits that will be achieved. There is no intention to increase the number of year groups admitted. We are now planning another meeting on site with the school and will be representing the views of local residents, some of whom have already contacted us. Please let us know as soon as possible of any issues you wish us to raise.

POLLING STATIONS

These will be the same in the May 2022 Elections when several hundred new voters are added to the Ward. We have sought and received an assurance that the same parking arrangements as were in place this year will be available at All Saints. Limited parking will be available and parking restrictions in the vicinity will be relaxed unless a vehicle is causing an actual obstruction.

ROY GROVE

Visitors are interested to see the relatively new plaque with details of General Roy. We have asked RHP to improve the fence and surrounding area. We have taken the opportunity to ask RHP to address other issues and, once again, we will do our best to improve the parking situation for residents.

HOUSING ASSOCIATIONS

We maintain regular contact with the leadership of both RHP and PA and are currently raising

issues in **Fulmer Close** with PA and **Maple Close/Chichester Close** with both PA and RHP. Tell us of any other problems!

OUR QUESTIONS

At the next full Council meeting we will raise the closure of the **White House Nursery** which has upset many local people: the need for the Council to expedite the comprehensive review of traffic and parking in **Hanworth Road**: and, following our promise to address answers given in our recent Survey, the Council's intentions when Turing House School vacates the **Clarendon site** next Spring. Most residents want to retain educational provision whilst others prefer affordable housing.

SEND PROVISION AT HAMPTON HIGH

With the provision of a new Government grant Hampton High has installed new provision for up to 20 pupils with autism or moderate leaning difficulties. Provision includes: two new classrooms, a new sensory room, two new group rooms [one room caters for 4 pupils and one member of staff for group work and therapy] a break-out space [especially for pupils to use during break if they prefer not to go to the dining areas]and an accessible toilet.

ISSUES IN INDIVIDUAL ROADS

In addition to our work in Chichester Close, Maple Close and Roy Grove, we are addressing issues of pavements in **Fearnley Close**, a planning application affecting a resident in **Hanworth Road** and building regulations in **Stanford Close**.

SHORTER ITEMS

- A resident is living with his wife and three children in a one-bedroom flat in **Hanworth Road**. They have been on the Waiting List for six years. We do not accept that this is right.....
- We are once again supporting a resident threatened with losing his much-loved allotment off Hatherop Road
- There is regrettably no progress on **The White House**. The popular café remains closed and most of the classes and courses have not re-started. Residents have been deprived of this community provision since March 2020.

OUR NEXT NEWSLETTER

We will circulate between 18th and 20th December a short Christmas/ New Year edition.

Keep in touch with us by phone or gjshn@btinternet.com: tell us of issues which concern you: we are both here to help

Barnes Community Gardening initiative brings together local community groups

The exciting new Barnes Community Gardening initiative involving Barnes Community Association, FISH Neighbourhood Care Group and Friends of Barnes Common was launched this month with two projects.

Well-kept gardens give us all a boost. Helping those who cannot tend their gardens is popular with volunteers and owners and deters scammers who prey on the elderly and vulnerable.

Two recent projects, backed by Barnes Community Association, FISH Neighbourhood Care and Friends of Barnes Common, brought together volunteers with people and organisations that needed help. This proved such a success that the initiative will be extended into a programme of regular activity in the New Year.

Most good ideas start small - in this case with volunteers Nicki, Elizabeth and Crispin replanting the tubs outside the Barnes Green Centre - local base for Age UK Richmond and FISH. That led to a group of 13 volunteers aged 12 to 78, working together to clear FISH clients' gardens which had become hugely overgrown during lockdown.

If you know of anyone who might be interested in becoming a Community Gardening Volunteer, please contact Julia Bebington at info@barnes-ca.org



A TOUCH OF GINO'S ITALIAN ADVENTURE

I will never forget that pizza that I bought from a street stall in a back street in Naples many years ago. It tasted absolutely incredible. So if, like me, you're thoroughly enjoying Gino D'Acampo's lovely TV series on TV, you'll be pleased to learn that he's just published a great new cookbook to accompany the series. ***Gino's Italian Family Adventure: Easy recipes the whole family will love*** has recently been published by Bloomsbury at £22 for a beautifully photographed (by Haarala Hamilton) hardback book. In the book, Gino takes inspiration from his upbringing in Napoli, transporting the classic methods and ingredients that he grew up with to the modern family table. And there are recipes for Neapolitan pizza too! Most of the recipes are effortless and without loads of complicated ingredients to obtain. You've probably got most of them in your cupboard, but if not, they're easily available at the supermarket. The dishes in the book range from crowd pleasers to fresh takes on classics, such as seafood tagliatelle or spicy pork ribs. The chapters are divided into meal types to help you find the perfect dish for the occasion.



With Christmas entertaining coming up, here are a couple of recipes I thought you'd like from the book to tempt you into buying a copy for yourself or a present (but I bet you decide to keep it!)

SALMON AND AVOCADO TARTARE WITH DILL AND BALSAMIC GLAZE (Serves 4)

'Living on the coast of Italy until I was eighteen, I was very privileged to always have fresh fish readily available. The fish were caught and sold on the same day, and, in my house, some seafood – for example razor clams – was often served raw with just a squeeze of lemon juice. My eldest son, Luciano, is a huge fan of avocados, so I combined my past and present and created this dish especially for him. Please try this, even if you are not a huge fish lover; it really is amazing and so easy, as well as insanely impressive at dinner parties'

- 2 tbsp finely chopped dill, any coarse stalks removed
- 2 tbsp capers in brine, drained and roughly chopped
- 1 tbsp crème fraiche
- 1 tbsp Dijon mustard
- 1 lemon, plus lemon wedges to serve
- 2 small shallots, finely chopped
- 400g skinless salmon fillet
- 200g smoked salmon
- 2 large ripe avocados
- 4 tbsp balsamic glaze, plus a drizzle for decoration
- 8 slices of ciabatta, cut into 1cm-thick slices
- 4 tsp extra virgin olive oil
- fine sea salt and freshly ground black pepper



Before you start, note that you can prepare the first 3 stages and place in the fridge separately, but do not mix until you are ready to serve, as the salmon will 'cook' in the lemon juice. Stir the dill, capers, crème fraiche, mustard and 1 tbsp lemon juice together in a small bowl, cover and set in the fridge.

Place the shallots and the remaining lemon juice in another small bowl, mix, cover and set in the fridge.

Cut the salmon fillet and smoked salmon into small cubes, place in a medium bowl, mix, cover and set in the fridge.

When you are ready to serve, pour the crème fraiche and shallot mixes into the larger bowl of salmon and stir gently. Peel and pit the avocados and chop into small cubes.

Place in a medium bowl and add ½ tsp salt, ½ tsp pepper and the 4 tbsp of balsamic glaze. Stir gently.

Toast the bread on both sides, using a griddle pan or toaster. Zig-zag balsamic glaze over 4 serving plates. Place a cooking ring in the centre of a plate. Spoon in one-quarter of the avocado and gently push down, covering the base evenly.

Spoon one-quarter of the salmon on top, again pushing down. Gently lift off the ring. Repeat on all 4 plates.

Drizzle 1 tsp of extra virgin olive oil over each pile of salmon tartare and garnish each with a lemon wedge.

Place 2 slices of toasted ciabatta on each plate and the dish is complete. Your guests will feel very spoilt.

IRISH CREAM PANNA COTTA WITH CHOCOLATE COFFEE BEANS (Serves 4)

'I created this recipe especially for my mother, Alba. She absolutely loved Irish cream liqueur. Growing up, she would often whip up a traditional vanilla panna cotta for us all on a weekend as a special treat, but, as soon as she tried this recipe, it became her signature dish, not mine. If you prefer it the traditional way, substitute the liqueur for 100ml more milk and add a vanilla pod and its seeds when cooking the cream... but I'm pretty sure, once you try this dish, you will never go back! You will need four 175ml moulds, or you can use ramekins or even cleaned-out yogurt pots, if you like'

- 100ml whole milk
- 300ml double cream
- 100ml Irish cream liqueur
- 50g caster sugar
- 2 gelatine leaves, or enough to set 400ml of liquid (check the instructions on the packet)
- cocoa powder, to dust (optional)
- 8 chocolate-coated coffee beans

Pour the milk, cream, liqueur and sugar into a small saucepan and warm gently over a low heat, stirring continuously with a wooden spoon until the sugar dissolves and the cream starts to lightly bubble at the sides of the saucepan, about 6 minutes. Do not boil the milk.

Remove from the heat and set aside.

Meanwhile, place the gelatine leaves in a bowl of cold water for 5 minutes. Squeeze them dry, then stir the gelatine leaves into the cream mixture until completely dissolved.

Divide the mixture between 4 x 175ml moulds, cover with cling film and refrigerate for at least 5 hours.

To serve, dust 4 plates with a little cocoa powder, or use a dark plate so the panna cotta will stand out. Dip the moulds into warm water for 20 seconds (make sure you don't get any of the water in the panna cottas), then carefully turn out on to the prepared plates. Place 2 chocolate-coated coffee beans on top of each and serve.



COPPA CLUB PUTNEY – WORTH MAKING THE JOURNEY

Coppa Club Putney opened at the beginning of November on the riverside by Putney Bridge. It's the company's second London location (there's one near Tower Bridge) and there's another locally in Cobham. In six years since opening at Sonning, this café/club/ restaurant now has nine locations, many of them overlooking water, two of which with accommodation. It's obviously doing something very well, so we hopped on a train to Putney to find out more...



Situated in a prime riverfront spot with views of Putney Bridge, the place looks, and feels, really welcoming. There are some 'pods' in the outside terrace where guests can enjoy private dining while still feeling part of the action. Once inside, you feel as if you've entered a trendy private members' club: and that's the ethos behind Coppa Club - a private members' club feel, without membership fees. The bar and library area is a fab place to meet friends for coffee, hold an informal business meeting, or just chill out with the paper or a book.

So, what's the menu like? It's a modern take on British and Mediterranean classics, sensibly priced. What's more, the food's damn good and the portions generous. The part of the restaurant where we were seated has a brasserie feel and was comfortably busy. We enjoyed a Pink Negroni (£9.50) and a Camden Hells beer (£5.75) while studying the menu. Our starters of Crispy Fried Squid (£8.50) and Burrata (£8) arrived very swiftly and were joined by warm tear and share seeded bread with olive oil (£3.50). My husband's squid was served with a spicy ponzu dip and sriracha mayo. The squid was piping hot and crispy and the ponzu dip in



particular was packed with fresh herbs and perfectly balanced with a gentle heat from the chillies. The creamy burrata was served with roast baby beets, on a bed of mashed beets, with candied walnuts and a drizzle of olive oil. It was excellent, but I think it would have benefitted from a few wild rocket leaves too.

My husband chose a 10oz dry aged sirloin (£27) and I opted for Devon crab linguini (£10/16) for our next course. Our friendly and efficient server Clara suggested the truffle fries to accompany his steak and I asked for a house salad. The steak was declared cooked to perfection and was accompanied by grilled Portabello mushrooms. My linguini was an enormous portion (I would suggest ordering the starter size unless you have a big appetite!). I was slightly disappointed that the dish didn't have crab running through it; it was more of a crab bisque sauce with some fresh crab on top of the pasta – but it was still very good. The



house salad (£5) was tasty, but rather difficult to eat, being a very large chunk of lettuce rather than dressed leaves. We enjoyed a glass of wine with our mains (Sauvignon Blanc at £6.20 a glass for me and Merlot at £6.95 for my husband). The wine list is well composed, clearly laid out and again, well priced.



Having seen Sticky Toffee Pud on the dessert menu (£7.50) my husband looked no further. My gaze settled on the Flourless Chocolate Cake (£8.50) and I asked for a very small portion. It was served with caramelised white chocolate and coconut yogurt, topped with orange zest. Reader, it was very rich, ultra chocolaty and heavenly! I struggled to eat more than a small piece, but Clara kindly boxed up the remainder to be enjoyed the following day by two of us with a cup of tea.

Coppa Club is great: the formula really works, and I thoroughly recommend it if you are meeting friends or planning a family meal out over the festive season.

What's more, it's open on Christmas Day in Cobham, Sonning and Streatley with a great value Christmas lunch at £75 a head and some great-sounding festive specials are available now at all the sites – see menu [here](#).

You could even book one of the lovely pods!



Island Poke comes to Richmond

If you've not tried poke (pronounced Pokey), then now's your chance if you're in or around Richmond. Poke means "to slice or cut" in Hawaiian and refers to chunks of raw, marinated fish – usually tuna – which is then tossed over rice and topped with vegetables and umami-packed sauces. There's a varied menu, including meat or veggie options. Located in George St, opposite the old House of Fraser store, Island Poke is great value, and really tasty. Oh, and it's pretty healthy too! Do check it out. You can also order takeaway and home delivery.



Richmond Music Trust are hiring

Richmond Music Trust are currently seeking to recruit new members of staff for the roles of Operations, Media & Events administrator and Music Centre Manager.

The trust provides instrumental tuition in schools to over 5,000 students each week, running weekly orchestras and bands for all abilities at three music centres. Regular large-scale events and collaborative projects are integral to the work of the organisation. The flourishing Music Therapy department provides services to over 250 children and adults across South West London every week.

As Operations, Media & Events Administrator the lucky candidate will assist the Chief Executive in the delivery of RMT's day to day operations. Main duties will include scheduling and support for our 90 instrumental teachers, dealing with enquiries from parents, teachers and schools, and assisting with the invoicing process. You will also be in charge of RMT's social media content and finding additional social media opportunities from which RMT would benefit.

The Richmond Music Trust are also looking for a Music Centre Manager for the Richmond Music Trust Saturday Centre from January 2022. The deadline for completed applications is 12 noon on Friday 10 December 2021.

To apply, please email your current CV and a cover letter explaining why you are a good candidate for the role to bethanycalder@richmondmusictrust.org.uk

For full details and job descriptions check out the [Richmond Music Trust website](#).

The Real Junk Food Project to open new Twickenham Food Surplus Hub

The Real Junk Food Project are opening a new Food Surplus Hub with takeaway soup, coffee, smoothies and pastries at Linden Hall, Hampton.

The new Food Surplus Hub will operate every Thursday from 11.30am to 1.30pm.

The Hub will help to divert food from landfill operating on a 'pay as you feel' basis. Please do come along to Linden Hall and don't forget a bag for your food surplus!

www.trjfptwickenham.com





Rose Opera in Recital

Rose Opera, at the 1901 Arts Club, Waterloo

Here is salon culture in style, the intimate soirée, sans salonnières. Strip away that formality and conversazione and enter the charming 1901 Arts Club, the bijoux bolt-hole known only to chamber music aficionados, tucked away near the hustle and bustle of Waterloo Station. Think a miniature version of a Pall-Mall club, but where you don't need to wear a necktie. All is chintzy or bee-waxed antique furniture, comfy in a whisky-and-cigars sort of way.



Tonight's programme comprises three sets of Lieder by Mahler, Strauss and Rachmaninov, parenthesised by two pieces by the contemporary English composer, James Francis Brown, who is with us, an honoured guest in the audience. The wide portfolio of Brown's oeuvres ranges from chamber music to brass bands compositions. He has notably worked with the Royal Opera House in settings for Wagner.



James Francis Brown

The soloist for the recital is Ukrainian-born soprano Tamara Ravenhill. She cuts an assured figure in a pale blue chiffon cape, as she stands before the brilliantly burnished Steinway where her accompanist Andrew Robinson sits. The backdrop of golden swags completes the opulent picture; and enhances the acoustics in a small room that hardly contains an opera-singer's voice.

Gustav Mahler's *Rückert Lieder* premiered in 1905, with Mahler himself conducting. Ravenhill's lirico-spinto soprano is well suited to these settings of Rückert's poetry, but is taken to the next step with Richard Strauss's *Opus 27*, which was completed just before his wedding, as a present to his new wife, Pauline. For the Rachmaninoff songs the piano is foregrounded, but Andrew Robinson is a consummate pianist and gives unassumingly without pulling the focus.

The special focus of *Rose Opera in Recital*, though, is on two works by James Francis Brown, *Ozymandias*, a setting of Percy Bysshe Shelley's sonnet, Brown's take on the poem is certain very dramatic. The final piece of the evening is *Adieu* based on a poem by Camille Saint-Saëns. (Yes, a composer as poet). Brown's music hints at Romanticism with a touch of Britten or Tippett. The composer, who sits immediately in front of me, seems delighted.



Tamara Ravenhill

Now, the charms of the 1901 Arts Club: upstairs to the retiring room (spot the hidden chamber organ) and that proffered whisky. Then again, its Prosecco is second to none, and a toast is in order.

Read Mark Aspen's review at www.markaspen.com/2021/11/21/rose-opera-1901

Photography courtesy of the Hattori Foundation, Rose Opera and Music Haven



We Gather: Poets on the Move

Poetry Performance, Part of the BE Richmond *We Gather* Programme

To be fair, the rugby fans didn't turn a hair when they encountered a group of poets beside the Thames while they were heading from the pub to nearby Twickenham. On the other hand, they didn't break their stride. We only not clashed with the England v South Africa match, but with the closing events of Richmond literature festival. Our walk around local landmarks was not on the festival bill. Perhaps it should have been?

No matter. The walk, and poems, started outside [Richmond Theatre](#), crossed the Green, surrounded by historic and attractive houses, before stopping by a gatehouse, all that remains of Richmond Palace, torn down brick by brick after the execution of Charles I. More poems were read, packed with interesting details about the old palace, with pauses while descending planes trundled over our heads. A Georgian estate, original and imitation, remains in place of the palace. They too nestle under a flight path on the approach of Heathrow, and the nearby Victorian steel railway bridge over the Thames, which adds to the competing soundscape.



More poems were read along the riverside, and at the war memorial, especially by Poetry Performance member Carol Wain, whose father Flight Lieutenant Denis Hornsey published a book about his wartime RAF exploits – he was shot down during a bombing raid on Germany - which included a poignant and heartfelt poems he had written.

At Whittaker Square walk compere Ian Lee-Dolphin rounded off the event with songs on the guitar, one

The Streets of Richmond about the poets who had taken part in the walk.

I think it's quite fair – if it's not too off-putting – to say that our poetry walk was an exercise in 'psycho geography', which has been described as "a way to delve into the soul of a place". It also demonstrated the sheer conviviality and communality of grassroots poetry. It was great fun being out in the open air, with fellow poets, delivering the poetry of place.

And our audience? Very attentive, if you count the gulls lined up on moored boats near the Thames slipway, [two herons with their private box](#), Egyptian and Canada geese (the latter a bit noisy) plus the odd mandarin duck, and even the cormorants arrayed in the branches of a tree on the far bank.

Read Greg Freeman's review at

www.markaspen.com/2021/11/22/poets-move or on [the poetry website Write Out Loud](#)



Photography by Meena and Gillian

The Good Life

by Jeremy Sams, based on the TV series by John Esmonde and Bob Larbey

Fiery Angel at Richmond Theatre until 29th November, then on tour until 4th December

Working from home, learning new life-skills, growing one's own produce; escaping the monotony of the daily grind and discovering the joys of simple living instead. In recent years, these dreams and ambitions of the few have become a normal way of life for the many. Well, for a spell at least. But how many would be prepared to give it all up for a life of total self-sufficiency?



It was, therefore, with that extra level of interest that many of us were drawn to see how *The Good Life*, a staple of British television comedy, would transfer to the stage. Moreover, would the lifestyle choice of the disillusioned Tom and Barbara Good, which seemed so whacky on our screens back in 1975, still seemed as alien to us today?



The audience is immediately taken on a hugely nostalgic journey back in time. Complete with hideous wall-paper, drinks cabinet, an entertainment system and countless other props, we immediately find ourselves in the kitchen-diner of a typical 1970's semi, owned, in this case, by the Goods (Rufus Hound and Sally Tatum).

What follows is two riotous hours, during which the stage cleverly revolves between the contrasting homes of the Goods and their neighbours. We are introduced to Jerry Leadbette (Dominic Rowan) and his wife, Margot (Preeya Kalidas), who is highly disapproving of their neighbours dragging the reputation of The Avenue down with their peasant-like behaviour, not least because of the smell and noise from the menagerie of farm animals that are now kept next-door!

Through the wonder of animatronics and puppetry, we are introduced to these animals, including a goat that Barbara is revealed milking in her kitchen. Animals do what animas do, so that Margot's dinner party does not go as planned. Due to some crucial house repairs, Margot and Jerry are forced to move in with their noisy neighbours. This gives rise to some hilarious antics and an unexpected collaboration between the two couples when the Good's sow gives birth to a litter of piglets ... one in need of urgent veterinary attention.



Read David Stephens' review at www.markaspen.com/2021/11/24/good-life

Photography by Dan Tsantilis



The Valkyrie

by Richard Wagner

ENO with the Metropolitan Opera, at the London Coliseum, until 10th December

Richard Jones's new staging of Wagner's *Ring Cycle* begins with a small fire downstage that, given safety concerns about the venerable Coliseum, is the largest conflagration we're allowed. It's a slow-burner, and in that respect rather like the opening encounter between separated siblings Siegmund and Sieglinde (Nicky Spence and Emma Bell). The burgeoning relationship could be human and affecting, but instead the first act tends to be slow and, peculiarly, quiet.



The tone is also at odds with the sturdy, outdoor aesthetic of our ill-fated protagonists, with their sensible boots, jeans and tees, and the woodshop vibe of Sieglinde and Hunding's marital home. Hunding at least stirs the action from its lethargy, and Brindley Sherratt brings a menacing presence and ominous power to the stage. From the way he threateningly handles his wife, it's clear he's a wrong 'un. This in turn makes Sieglinde and Siegmund more sympathetic, and their semiconsciously incestuous relationship a little the less unsavoury.



If the first act is bound up with fire and water, the second is a breath of fresh air. When we first see Brünnhilde she is bouncing on a sofa in a ski lodge playing darts, showcasing performer Rachel Nicholls' gleeful charisma. Meanwhile Matthew Rose as dad-god Wotan is reliably commanding.

While the titular Valkyrie is brightly clad in *après-ski* athleisure, Brünnhilde's sisters sport sensible puffer jackets in line with the overall outdoorsy aesthetic. This generally wholesome air give the impression that they are enthusiastic Girl Guides on an ambitious expedition to the Arctic rather than angels of death. There is a practical care in the way they hook the victims of battle to the Kirby wires, but rather than being hoisted off to Valhalla the dead warriors dangle before us like trainers flung over telephone lines.

A similar fate awaits Brünnhilde herself, and her final torpor mirrors that of Siegmund and Sieglinde in the opening scene. Indeed, wrapped tenderly by her father in his anorak, she is part Sleeping Beauty, part Red Riding Hood. Low-key and lonely, that final image exemplifies this, at times engaging, at times underpowered, production.



Read Matthew Grierson's review at www.markaspen.com/2021/11/20/the-valkyrie

Photography by Tristram Kenton

Black Friday – Like no Other -2021/2 Style

Travel News by Bruce Lyons



Last Year Black Friday was a non – event “Lockdown” was in full spate. Events all cancelled, Even the Mistletoe fair was abandoned – that’s right No Mistletoe – poor Brucey!!

Well this year it’s full on and more than that you can even get discounted Christmas Travel And they’re all available –

So here’s a few pointers, but there are more – this is just a selection.

They are all valid to book over this weekend and many thru all next week. - just pop in to 58 Church Street (Crusader Travel) or call (02087440474) for more details.

Mainstream tour operators; Tui, Jet2, Olympic, EasyJet Holidays, Sandals, Balkan, Club Med & Newmarket are offering up to £200 per booking reduction.

Adventure Trips; Explore, GAD Adventures, Intrepid up to 25% off

River Cruises; APT, AMA Waterways, Uni World & Marella up to 50%

Cruises; Ambassador, Azamara, APT, Celebrity, Cunard, Fred Olsen, Holland America, Hurtigruten, MSC Cruises, NCL, Oceania, Princess, Royal Caribbean, Seabourn, Star Clippers, Tradewinds, Marella and Virgin Voyages. The offers differ from free flights – Cabin Spend, 2nd Passenger 50% and more – and many offer “low deposits too.

Rail; Railbookers up to 35% off

Attractions I Do Something Different, Worldchoice Sports, River Craft Hire; Le Boat & Small Group Tours with Wendy Wu all have offers,

We have details on many here – come to see if can help you have an incredible 2022!

Come & see us at Crusader Travel, off the square in iconic Church Street Twickenham!



WIZ Tales – Gibraltar: Climate Change Report

By Teresa Read

This week the Gibraltar Chronicle published details of threats to Gibraltar in relation to Climate Change; the assessment was carried out by the Gibraltar government, published in the National Mitigation and Adaptation Plan 2021.

In line with other countries there is the prospect of a rise in temperature, drought and extreme weather events. There could be risk of fires in the Upper Rock and rock falls.



Rising sea levels would affect infrastructure along the coastal areas including the hospital and the airport runway.

Marine and bird life, flora and fauna would also suffer from rising temperatures.

Health would be adversely affected, especially in the older population. Tiger mosquitoes could spread across Western Europe transmitting viral diseases.

The pattern of tourism, important to Gibraltar's economy, would change.

Urban flooding would be a concern with heavy rainfall impacting major roads.



Find out more about Gibraltar at this link:

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

Remember:

Our most powerful weapon against climate change: "Trees are the ultimate carbon capture and storage machines. Like great carbon sinks, woods and forests absorb atmospheric carbon and lock it up for centuries. They do this through photosynthesis." *The Woodland Trust*



REMEMBER! THATCHERISM

By Doug Goodman

On November 28th 1990 an era or perhaps a reign came to an end: Margaret Thatcher resigned as Prime Minister. She had been our first woman PM as well as the first European woman to hold such a position. She governed the country from May 1979 to November 1990 and left 10 Downing Street for the last time in an emotional departure 31 years ago.

Margaret Hilda Thatcher, Baroness, LG, OM, DstJ, PC, FRS, HonFRCS was born on 13th October 1925 and became the longest serving British Prime Minister of the 20th Century. Appointed MP for Finchley in 1959 she later defeated Edward Heath to become leader of the opposition. During her three terms in office she reduced the power of the unions, privatised some of the nationalised industries and cut social services. These moves made her very unpopular amongst certain sections of the population and ultimately resulted in removal from her role as PM. Margaret Thatcher died on April 8th 2013 age 87.



Pope's Grotto Preservation Trust presents:

A Virtual Arcadia

An interactive digital reconstruction of
Pope's Villa and Garden

- Travel back in time to Twickenham in 1740
- Be transported up the Thames by a waterman in a rowing boat
 - Walk up to Alexander Pope's Villa and through the Grotto
 - Explore Pope's famous garden
 - Admire the view from the circular mound



5:30 to 7:30 pm, Thursday 6th January 2022

The Exchange, 75 London Road, Twickenham, TW1 1BE

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Colonoscopy – One Person’s Story

By: TwickWatch

I tell my recent personal story as a layman not a medic, to inform and not to scare and to show what I thought was irrelevant is far from it. It is definitely not medical advice or intended as such. If you’re worried about anything in my story that worries you as a personal concern, a family history of bowel cancer or have any symptoms, please check with your General Practitioner (GP) as soon as practical to put your mind at rest.

Everyone aged 60 to 74 who is registered with a GP and lives in England is automatically sent a routine bowel cancer screening kit every 2 years (it is hoped to transition to include age 50 upwards in future). This applies to both men and women. Bowel cancer is treatable and curable, especially if diagnosed early. Nearly everyone survives bowel cancer if diagnosed at the earliest stage. However, this drops significantly as the disease develops. Early diagnosis really does save lives!

The test is simple but the thought of it can put a lot of people off doing it but I now see how important it is they should do the test. We all eat and we all poo, even the most famous amongst us but it is a natural bodily function we all tend to avoid. Parents deal with babies, carers and medical staff look after invalids; mums pop the dad and children’s pants in the wash! This is all part of a natural caring regime so it is time to ensure you care for yourself. One of the reasons for the non-participation is obvious, you have to take a poo sample - big deal compared to bowel cancer!

**This free NHS test kit
could save your life.**



The test kit has a plastic stick with a serrated tip. All you have to do is gently poke the stick into a bit of “freshly caught” poo (it only takes seconds! - even if the thought puts you off!). The stick is placed into a small sealable container. The container goes into a post-paid envelope off to the laboratory and about two weeks later you will get a letter with the results. If negative that’s it for

another two years. Some people will be told that further tests are needed. This doesn’t mean you have cancer. The bleeding could be caused by a non-cancerous growth or another health problem. If positive you will be invited for further tests to ensure you’re well-being.

Two years ago, I completed my third national bowel cancer screening test. The result came back negative. This year it came back positive! I have no known family history of bowel cancer so now at last I took it seriously! Typical man! In the last two weeks I have been surprised at how much I have learnt during my follow-on testing and treatment and the importance of taking the test in the first place, which has prompted me to share my experience.

My positive result scared me – I have bowel cancer was my first reaction! I hadn’t realised there are many causes of blood in the poo, not all serious and after all I hadn’t seen any sign of blood in my poo. I hadn’t realised the test is mainly preventative and had picked up tiny blood traces from polyps in the bowel.

Bowel polyps are small growths on the inner lining of the large intestine (colon) or rectum being very common, affecting around 1 in 4 people aged 50 or over. The easiest comparison is to a skin tag on the surface of your body. It is a small piece of soft, hanging skin that may have a peduncle (like a barnacle attached to a surface), or stalk. They’re slightly more common in men and some people develop just one polyp, while others may have a few. Bowel polyps do not usually cause any symptoms, so most people with polyps will not know they have them unless they do the test!

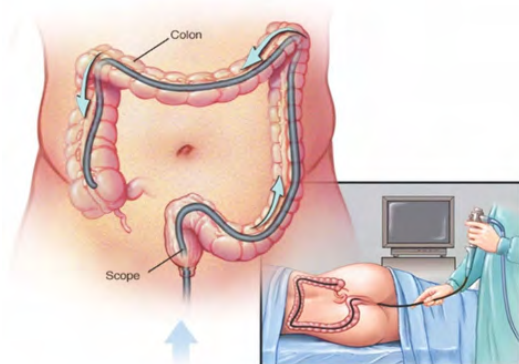
Polyps do not usually or always turn into cancer. But if some types of polyps (called adenomas) are not removed, there's a chance they may eventually become cancerous. As I had no obvious symptoms and was scared of the full colonoscopy, I was offered a virtual colonoscopy. Virtual colonoscopy is also called CT colonography. Instead of having the colonoscope put inside your bowel, the doctor looks at pictures created by a computer. To be effective the colon must be clean so that scanners or cameras can see the internal walls clearly to spot any polyps hidden in the complex of folds.

Before the test you have medically prescribed laxatives and plenty of fluids to clear out your bowel. You also follow a special diet for a couple of days beforehand. This taught me what was fibre and non-fibre food, something I hadn't fully understood before but found very interesting. You will be given full details.

The test uses a CT scanner, so you have this test in the CT scanning department. Just before the test the doctor or nurse puts a small tube into your back passage to pump air or carbon dioxide inside. This helps to open up the bowel, which gives clearer pictures on the scan. A computer then creates a 3D reconstruction of the inside of your bowel. This shows up any growths on your bowel wall. If a growth is found you will still need a full colonoscopy to biopsy or remove it.

My CT scan identified three polyps meaning I had to go for a full colonoscopy in the end (no pun intended) as the polyps needed to be removed to be on the safe side. Before my appointment I did the prepping and arrived at Hammersmith Hospital a little tense. The nursing staff were great and I was offered the option to be partly or fully sedated for comfort (after relevant medical checks and considerations). As this required someone to collect you from the ward and drive you home and I was on the bus, I opted to remain awake and use self-serve "laughing gas" if required but I didn't need to use it.

A colonoscopy is the gold standard for colon cancer screenings. The doctor can view your entire colon and rectum and any abnormal tissue, such as polyps, and tissue samples or biopsies will be removed through the scope during the exam.



A small diameter tube is inserted into your bottom and the colon inflated with carbon dioxide gas. There are no pain nerves in the colon but the inflated bowel can feel like a mild tummy ache with a bearable degree of discomfort but no pain. You can feel like you want to poo or pee but it is not possible as there is nothing there to pass. I think this is the thing people feel more uncomfortable and worried about, in case they publicly embarrass themselves, rather than the medical process itself.

The bonus was being able to watch and see inside my own body in live-time while being able to see the surgery and ask questions. Absolutely fascinating to see the inside of the colon and understand what a polyp was. I thought it would be snip-snip but the surgeon was so focused, caring, thoughtful and considered. The best time was expelling the gas after the medical procedure! Quite tuneful!

It turned out they found six polyps with the "hands-on" procedure and these have now gone off to the laboratory. Results awaited!

Further information:

Using your bowel cancer screening kit <https://vimeo.com/showcase/6663813>

NHS - What is a colonoscopy? <https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/colonoscopy/>

HAY FEVER in DECEMBER ? YES, AT THE MARY WALLACE THEATRE

Hay fever may have abated during the winter months but, in defiance of the December gloom, the Mary Wallace Theatre is heralding the Christmas season with Noel Coward's brightest and most summery comedy. HAY FEVER, Coward's notoriously "clean" play, which closely followed the *success de scandale* of his "debauched" THE VORTEX in 1924, is as clean as a whistle, packed with The Masters style, wit and charm and has been delighting audiences ever since. The unconventional Bliss family, Judith and David and their children Sorel and Simon, have each invited a guest for the weekend. Their bohemian lifestyle and tenuous grasp of the niceties of conventional social



behaviour bode ill for a harmonious weekend in a household where passions run only skin deep and insincerity is the order of the day. Laughter is infectious so come and catch HAY FEVER at the Mary Wallace Theatre from December 11th – 18th. Booking now at www.richmondshakespeare.org.uk

The Mary Wallace Theatre is cosily situated next to the Barmy Arms on Twickenham's Embankment.

Photography PETE MESSUM

Teddington Theatre Club – December Production Loot by Joe Orton

An amateur production by special arrangement with Samuel French Ltd, a Concord Theatricals Company

Directed by: Nigel Cole

Dates: Wednesday 7th – Saturday 11th December 2021

Performance Times: Wed – Fri 7.45pm, 6pm on Saturday

Venue: Hampton Hill Theatre Auditorium

In a nutshell: Riotous slapstick meets dubious morals in Orton's outrageous comic masterpiece

Two young friends stash the proceeds of a bank robbery in an occupied coffin, attempting to hide their spoils from the attentions of a psychopathic policeman, a serial-killer nurse and a grieving widower. In the ensuing comic carnage, Orton creates a world gone mad, wielding a satirical sledgehammer to conventional English morality.

Join us for an evening of glorious black farce from one of Britain's finest and filthiest playwrights.

View more information [HERE](#)



St Mary's University

St Mary's Lecturer has been Elected as Academic Bencher

Professor Judith Bourne Head of the Department of Law, Criminology and Politics at St Mary's University, Twickenham has been appointed as an Academic Bencher by the Treasurer of [The Honourable Society of the Inner Temple](#).

An Academic Bencher is a senior member of an Inn of Court with an academic background. An Inn of Court is a professional association that all barristers must belong to. In the UK, there are four: Gray's Inn, Lincoln's Inn, Inner Temple, and Middle Temple.



A bencher's duties can vary depending on the Inn they were elected by. The main function of the Inner Temple is the provision of education and training in professional skills such as advocacy for students as well as continuing professional development for more experienced barristers.

Speaking of her appointment, Professor Judith Bourne said, "I am honoured and extremely grateful to have been appointed as a Bencher of the Inner Temple. I have worked extensively with their archivist, Celia Pilkington, for example in December we will launch a digital exhibition on diversity in the legal profession, which follows on from the success of our [Women in Law](#) digital exhibition. It is great pleasure to work with them and really benefits our students."

St Mary's is a Winner at Spark! Awards 2021

St Mary's University, Twickenham was awarded 'Work Experience Provider of the Year' at the [Spark!](#) annual awards.

Spark! is dedicated to supporting young people to make sure they are equipped with the knowledge and skills to effectively transition into the workplace. They provide work placements; careers mentoring and help young people develop their employability skills.

St Mary's were nominated by Cranford Community College, who St Mary's have partnered with over the last nine months to support students undertaking their T Levels. Introduced in September 2020, T Levels are similar to BTEC courses that include a placement working in a relating industry.



Speaking of the award Head of Organisational Development, Tally Kandola said, "We are absolutely delighted to win this award. We look forward to building a strong partnership with Cranford Community College so we can support more young people, locally, with work experience opportunities."

To find out more about the work placements we offer, visit the University [website](#).



St Mary's
University
Twickenham
London



BRENTFORD FC

Bees gain a point from six goal thriller

Newcastle United 3 – 3 Brentford

Brentford stopped their run of Premier League losses with an entertaining 3-3 draw away at Newcastle United, although they once more failed to win against a side that started the day mired in the relegation zone. In a game that swung back and forth Brentford recovered after an early goal from Jamal Lascelles to equalise through Ivan Toney and then take the lead with a Rico Henry header. This lead however was wiped out before half time as Joelinton score once more levelled up the score. An own goal just after the hour mark once again sent the Bees ahead only for Alan Saint-Maxime to equalise yet again as the Magpies gained a point.



Newcastle could have taken the lead early on when a crossed was delivered from the right that Callum Wilson got on the end of with a powerful header that went narrowly wide with Álvaro Fernández scrambling across.

They did however open the scoring shortly after from a set piece. Matt Ritchie curled in a dangerous cross and captain Lascelles rose above Vitaly Janelt to head the ball in.

Their lead lasted barely a minute as Toney made it a goal scoring return against his former club. An attempted pass from Sergi Canós was initially blocked by Joe Willock but at the second time of asking the Spaniard chipped the ball over for Toney to run onto. From a tight angle the Brentford striker than shot across goal that Karl Darlow couldn't hold as the ball went into the back of the net.

Toney then had the ball in the back for the second time in the match, although it was quickly ruled out for offside. Bryan Mbeumo had found space and curled a shot that came back off the post which Toney was quickest to react to but his celebrations were cut short by the linesman's flag.

The Bees then took the lead for the first time in the game though a rare Henry goal. A Crossfield switch found Canós on the right wing who then cut inside and delivered a teasing ball to the back post that arrived onto to head home.

Once again though the lead didn't last long as Joelinton levelled up the score once more. A shot from the edge of the area by Saint-Maxime was blocked and fell kindly for Joelinton who after taking a touch curled the ball into the bottom corner.

In a thrilling first period Toney then showed his work rate in his own penalty area as he made a goal line clearance to ensure both teams headed into the break on terms. Fernández had come

for a cross and missed the ball allowing Wilson to pounce but Toney was in the right place at the right time to make the key intervention.

After a whirling first half the game calmed down in the second although the outcome was never secure. With just over an hour played Brentford once more scored to take the lead. There was an element of fortune about the goal though as Frank Onyeka's shot looked to be curling wide but then deflected off Lascelles and past Darlow.

Brentford looked to be heading for all three points but once more Newcastle dug deep to find an equaliser. On the break Ryan Fraser picked out an inch perfect cross to the back post which Saint-Maxime volleyed first time to deny Brentford all three points

UP NEXT FOR BRENTFORD

Game 1

Opponent: Everton (H) Sunday 28th November 16:00 Brentford Community Stadium

Nickname: The Blues, The Toffees

Competition: Premier League – Matchday 13

Opponent record: P12 W4 D3 L5 GF16 GA19 (11th in Premier League)

Manager: Rafa Benitez

Interesting fact: Everton have competed in the top division for a record 118 seasons since the Football League's creation, having missed only four top-flight seasons

Game 2

Opponent: Tottenham Hotspur (A) Thursday 2nd December Tottenham Hotspur Stadium

Nickname: The Lilywhites

Competition: Premier League – Matchday 14

Opponent record: P12 W6 D1 L5 GF11 GA17 (7th in Premier League)

Manager: Antonio Conte

Interesting fact: Tottenham were the first British club to win two different major European trophies (the European Cup Winner's Cup and the UEFA Cup)

Hampton & Richmond Borough

Beavers edge out Billericay

Billericay Town 0 – 1 Hampton & Richmond Borough

Hampton & Richmond Borough returned from their trip to Essex with three points following a routine 1-0 win against Billericay Town courtesy of a goal from Jake Gray.

The first game of note fell the way of the home side when a cross from the left found a Billericay player in the box but it was easy to deal with for Alan Julian in goal for the Beavers.



Hampton & Richmond's first chance then came when a powerful run from Jayden Harris led to a free kick. From the resulting set piece Ryan Gondoh delivered a dangerous ball into the box that Dean Inman headed wide from close range.

Minutes later they went even closer with Harris once again involved. Dribbling into the box he pulled the ball back across goal but neither Jerome Slew nor Sam Deadfield could get on the end of it.

The Beavers then had their next great opportunity as well when Ruaridh Donaldson did well to bring the ball out of defence and find Gondoh, but the forward's shot was narrowly wide of the post.

The home side's best chance came when Jack Munns and Shaq Coulthirst combined to open up the Beavers defence but Joe Felix was able to score from the cross into the box and the scores remained level.

Just before half time Imran Uche went close to breaking the deadlock when a fantastic shot from outside the box went narrowly past the post.

The stalemate was broken fifteen minutes into the second half as Gray scored for the second match in succession. The ball dropped to the midfielder on the edge of the area and he put it in the top left hand corner to give the keeper no chance.

It was nearly two for the Beavers soon after when Donaldson made space for Tyrell Miller-Rodney in the box but once again no one was able to get on the end of it to divert it towards goal.

The Beavers had to be alert though and a volley from Munns from distance dropped onto the roof of Julian's net. Inman also had to get back to make a last minute tackle to keep the home side at bay.

Late on Julian made a great save to keep out Charlie Lee from outside the area as the Beavers were rewarded on their travels with all three points.

UP NEXT FOR HAMPTON

Opponent: Plymouth Parkway (A) Saturday 27th November 15:00 Bolitho Park

Nickname: The Parkway

Competition: FA Trophy Second Round

Manager: Mark Russell

Interesting fact: In 2008 the club became founding members of the South West Peninsula League, when the South Western Football League and the Devon County Football League merged

DWP employment support: the Kickstart Scheme

Kickstart is a large scale intervention, designed at speed to prevent a significant rise in youth unemployment and the long term “scarring” effect this can have on young people’s life chances. But the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) has limited assurance that Kickstart is actually having the positive impact intended, according to a new report by the National Audit Office (NAO).

The Kickstart scheme was launched by DWP in September 2020 in response to an expected surge in youth unemployment as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic. It aimed to create ‘high-quality six-month work placements aimed at those aged 16-24 who are on Universal Credit and are deemed to be at risk of long-term unemployment’ through funding provided to employers to create new jobs.

Within the context of the ongoing pandemic, the planned end of furlough in October 2020 and an expected rise in youth unemployment, there was a clear rationale for Kickstart in the summer of 2020. With a budget of £1.9 billion and a cost of around £7,000 per participant, Kickstart is more than twice the cost per participant of DWP’s next most expensive support scheme. The Department calculated that its benefits to society will outweigh its costs by up to £1.65 for every £1 invested if it is targeted effectively at the right people and the jobs created would not have otherwise been funded by employers.



DWP set up an initial version of the scheme rapidly. The Department based the Kickstart Scheme on a previous programme, the Future Jobs Fund, which ran from 2009 to 2011, but made changes it did not have time to test before implementation. This included greater private sector involvement, so that the jobs more resembled real jobs that would help young people find sustained employment after the scheme. However this created the risk that some funding would go to businesses that would have created jobs anyway. The scheme also experienced a number of technical and logistical problems, and attracted some criticism from stakeholders about unclear rules, and a lack of published data on progress. The Department made changes in response, continuing to develop its rules, systems, and management information over time.

The labour market conditions have developed in ways that were not then expected. Repeated lockdowns meant many of the young people who started to claim Universal Credit at the start of the pandemic were on Universal Credit for over a year before the scheme could get going at scale. As the programme did begin to scale up, the economy was reopening, which increased the risk of government subsidising jobs that would have been created anyway. By summer 2021, the Department acknowledged it was unrealistic to achieve its initial aim of 250,000 young people starting a Kickstart job by 31 December 2021, and is now planning on the basis

of up to 168,000 starts by the end of March 2022. Some 100,000 people have started jobs created by the scheme so far. Nonetheless, the Department decided to continue the scheme on the basis that it could have a positive impact for the large number of young unemployed people who have been on Universal Credit for over a year, which has trebled since the start of the pandemic.

While Kickstart was created to target those young people who were ‘deemed to be at risk of long-term unemployment’, DWP did not set any formal eligibility criteria for the scheme beyond being aged 16 to 24, claiming Universal Credit, and seeking work. There are no firm rules to restrict eligibility to those most likely to benefit. DWP empowers front-line work coaches to use their discretion as to which of those young people eligible for the scheme would benefit most from it, and provides training and guidance to help them make these judgements. This may mean that it is better able to tailor support to individuals’ needs, but DWP cannot know how effectively the scheme has been targeted without monitoring how work coaches have used that discretion.

DWP has limited assurance over the quality of the work placements created by the scheme, or whether jobs created by employers are truly additional and would not have existed without the funding provided. The employability support or training employers must provide is not specified, and DWP does not collect data to monitor what support they actually provide. Employers are asked to explain why the jobs they want Kickstart funding for are additional and are then asked a series of questions about these aspects of their bid, but the delivery of these commitments is not routinely monitored by DWP.

The Kickstart Scheme has now been extended to March 2022. The overall impact of the scheme will not be fully clear until DWP completes its planned evaluation of participants’ future employment prospects, several years from now. It is important in the meantime that the DWP monitors whether it is on course to achieve its assumptions and can adjust the programme accordingly. The NAO has made recommendations to DWP to help it ensure the scheme remains on track and learn from this experience the next time such a scheme is needed. These include monitoring whether work coaches refer the right people to the scheme and assessing why there are many people who, in principle, are eligible for the scheme but are not taking up the outstanding vacancies. DWP should also conduct routine inspections and monitoring of Kickstart employers to ensure that they are fulfilling the condition that these jobs are high quality and additional.

Gareth Davies, the head of the NAO, said:

“At the start of the pandemic, DWP acted quickly to set up Kickstart to help young people into work when youth unemployment was predicted to rise significantly.

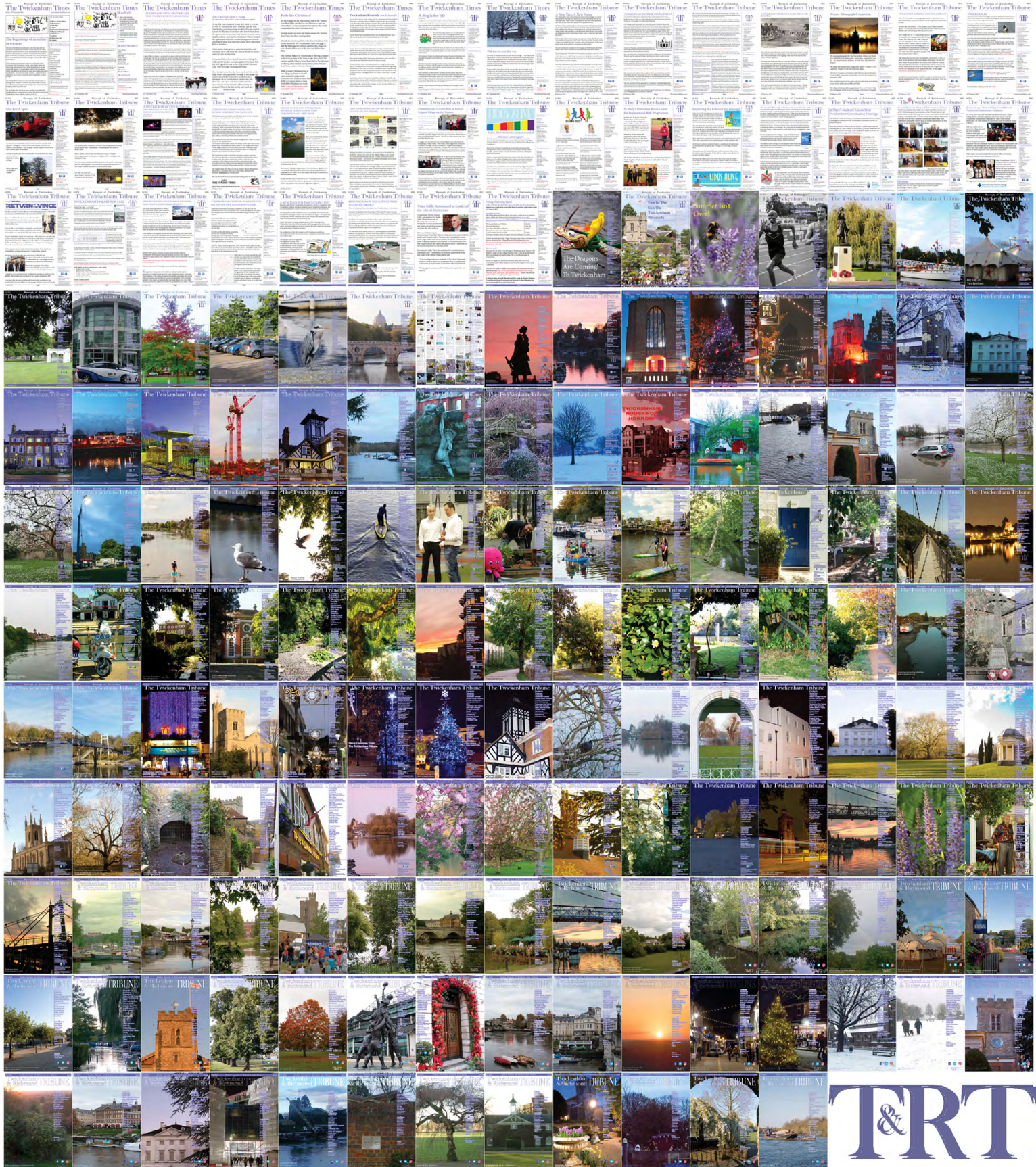
“However, DWP has limited assurance that Kickstart is having the positive impact intended. It does not know whether the jobs created are of high quality or whether they would have existed without the scheme. It could also do more to ensure the scheme is targeted at those who need it the most.”

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



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