

# Twickenham & Richmond TRIBUNE

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## Editors

Berkley Driscoll  
Teresa Read

Union Flag at half mast, St Mary's Church, Twickenham  
Photo by Berkley Driscoll

# Richmond Mayor expresses condolences following the death of Queen Elizabeth the Second

The Mayor of Richmond upon Thames, Councillor Julia Cambridge, has expressed her condolences on behalf of the Council and residents of the borough, following the sad news of the death of our late Sovereign, Queen Elizabeth the Second.

*As we learn of the sad news that Queen Elizabeth the Second has passed away, the thoughts of Richmond Council and the residents of Richmond upon Thames are with the Royal Family at this time.*

*The Queen has been a constant and reassuring figure in the lives of the British people. Through decades of rule from her accession to the throne in 1952 and throughout her seventy-year rule, the Queen's lasting presence and commitment to the nation and its people, has provided reassurance for so many.*

*Queen Elizabeth's devotion to her family and this country has been a true inspiration. Her work as the longest reigning monarch has had a huge impact on the lives of so many and what she has achieved has been extraordinary. She will be remembered for her service, devotion, and dedication to the people of the United Kingdom and the Commonwealth.*

*Please pass the sincere condolences of Richmond Council to all members of the Royal Family.*

In accordance with protocols the Union Flags that fly above York House and the Civic Centre have been lowered to half-mast. Any further details of local events will be published on the Council website as and when details are confirmed.

## **Flowers**

Public floral tributes in Richmond upon Thames can be laid on the main driveway at York House, in Twickenham.

Tributes will be kept for up to two weeks following the funeral of the Queen (although any withered or dead flowers will be removed on a regular basis).

We ask members of the public to leave flowers only.

All endeavours will be made to compost the flowers, so we ask that people please remove any cellophane or other wrapping/package before laying.

Any cards left alongside floral tributes will be collected and added to the borough's physical Book of Condolence.

Any other forms of tribute that are left (e.g. teddy bears), will be considered for archiving or will be recycled.

For more information about other public locations please visit [The Royal Family website](#).

### **Book of Condolence**

Buckingham Palace is welcoming messages from the public in an online [Book of Condolence](#).

For Richmond upon Thames residents who would like to sign this online book, but do not have personal access to the internet, a dedicated a computer is available in each of the Borough's [libraries](#).

While we encourage residents to sign the online book, physical books are available at the York House reception and Civic Centre reception in Twickenham and at each of the libraries. If support is needed to write a message in the physical book, Council officers are available to help.

Over the weekend, the book at York House will be accessible from 9am to 5pm. The book at the Civic Centre reception will not be accessible over the weekend.

For residents who are unable to sign the online Book or visit one at the above locations, messages may be sent by post and the Council will add these to one of the physical books. Please send written messages to:

*Book of Condolence  
c/o The Mayor's Office  
York House  
Richmond Road  
TW1 3AA*

Once the books are closed the books will be archived at the Richmond Reference Library.

### **The Proclamation**

The Proclamation is the formal announcement of the new monarch. It will be made by St. James' Palace at 11am on Saturday 10 September 2022.

The Proclamation will be made locally by the Mayor of Richmond upon Thames, at 2.30pm on Sunday 11 September on the steps of York House in Twickenham.



# TickerTape - News in Brief

## Official book of condolence

You can submit your message of condolence to the royal online book of condolence [HERE](#)

## Don't miss your final chance to apply for your £150 energy rebate payment

The deadline for applications for the government's energy rebate payment is this Sunday 11 September 2022.

To help with rising energy costs, the government previously announced that eligible households in Council Tax bands A-D (or in band E and qualifying for the disabled band reduction) will receive a one-off £150 'energy rebate payment' which does not have to be repaid.

Nearly 22,000 energy rebate payments, totalling over £3 million, have already been issued to the majority of existing Direct Debit payers.

Residents who do not pay their Council Tax by direct debit and have not already received their energy rebate payment should submit their applications before Sunday's deadline. Find out further information and details of how to apply for an [energy rebate payment](#).

## Transform Work Life returns with a seminar on The Hidden Job Market

Transform Work Life has been delivering a series of interactive seminars aimed at developing knowledge and understanding of personal and professional skills, to enhance employability.

The sessions are designed to be accessible to all, whether you are looking for your first job or a career changer.

This month's session will focus on the hidden job market and making speculative approaches to employers. The seminar will take place on Tuesday 27 September from 10am to 12pm at Richmond's Old Town Hall, and is free to all Richmond residents.

All are welcome to attend with the group session not expect to exceed 12 participants so sign up early to avoid disappointment. For queries or to register your interest, email [nicksmithcareers@gmail.com](mailto:nicksmithcareers@gmail.com)

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# COVID-19

Teresa Read

## World Health Organization

### Weekly epidemiological update on COVID-19 - 7 September 2022

At the country level, the highest numbers of new weekly cases were reported from Japan (1,164,787 new cases; -7%), the United States of America (586,509 new cases; +2%), the Republic of Korea (585,374 new cases; -21%), the Russian Federation (323,500 new cases; +12%) and China (238,044 new cases; +22%).

The highest numbers of new weekly deaths were reported from the United States of America (3,558 new deaths; +26%), Japan (2,059 new deaths; +3%), Brazil (865 new deaths; -17%), the Russian Federation (628 new deaths; +20%) and the Republic of Korea (524 new deaths; similar to the previous week).

## European Region

The European Region reported just under 1.1 million new cases, a 15% decrease as compared to the previous week. Two (3%) countries reported increases in new cases of 20% or greater, with the highest proportional increases observed in Gibraltar (20 vs 15 new cases; +33%) and Ukraine (11 437 vs 9,113 new cases; +26%). The highest numbers of new cases were reported from the Russian Federation (323,500 new cases; 221.7 new cases per 100,000; +12%), Germany (183,715 new cases; 220.9 new cases per 100,000; -19%) and Italy (136,211 new cases; 228.4 new cases per 100,000; -14%).

Over 3,300 new weekly deaths were reported in the Region, a 22% decrease as compared to the previous week. The highest numbers of new deaths were reported from the Russian Federation (628 new deaths; <1 new death per 100,000; +20%), Italy (496 new deaths; <1 new death per 100,000; -23%) and Spain (350 new deaths; <1 new death per 100,000; +7%).

### Special Focus: Update on SARS-CoV-2 variants of interest and variants of concern

#### Geographic spread and prevalence of VOCs

Globally, from 5 August to 5 September 2022, 118,028 SARS-CoV-2 sequences were shared through GISAID. Among these, 117,317 sequences were the Omicron variant of concern (VOC), accounting for 99.4% of sequences reported globally in the past 30 days.

## IN THE NEWS

Voice of America 8 September 2022:

US Orders 100 Million COVID Tests, White House Says More Needed.

Voice of America 6 September 2022:

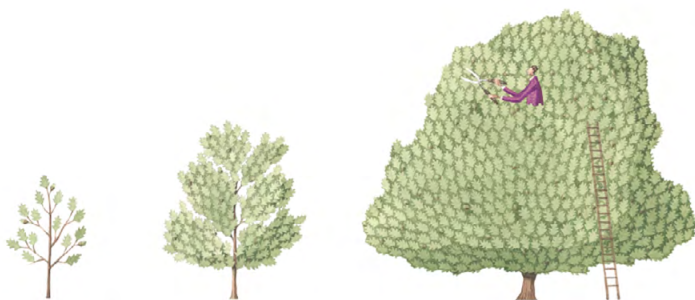
Explainer: Is COVID-19 Winding Down? Scientists say No.

Nature, 7 September 2022:

What scientists have learnt from COVID lockdowns:

Restrictions on social contact stemmed disease spread, but weighing up the ultimate costs and benefits of lockdowns is a challenge.

CNN, 7 September 2022: Americans may need yearly shots to protect against Covid-19



### The Tree Agency

darryl parkin

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*The Tree Agency*

# Horace Walpole and the highwaymen

By Simon Fowler

Highwaymen were a considerable irritant in the last decades of the eighteenth century preying on affluent local travellers. What favoured them most was the lack of effective policing: local parish constables were almost wholly ineffective and commonplace detection and arrest were very difficult.

In October 1781 Horace Walpole was robbed while in his coach with a friend, Lady Browne, on their way to a dinner party with the Duchess of Montrose at Twickenham Park (now St Margarets).

“A black figure on horseback pushed by between the chaise and the hedge on my side. I suspected it was a highwayman...I heard a voice cry ‘Stop!’ and the figure came back to the chaise. I had the presence of mind before I let down the glass to take out my watch and stuff it with my waistcoat under my arm. He said, ‘Your purses and watches!’ I replied: ‘I have no watch.’ ‘Then your purse!’ I gave it to him; It had nine guineas. It was so dark, that I could not see his hand, I did not give it to him, but felt him take it.’

He then asked for Lady Browne’s purse, and said, ‘Don’t be frightened, I will not hurt you.’ I said, ‘No, you won’t frighten the lady?’—He replied, ‘No, I give you my word I will do you no hurt. ‘Lady Browne gave him her purse, and was going to add her watch, but he said, ‘I am much obliged to you, I wish you good night,’ pulled off his hat and rode away.

Well,’ said I, ‘Lady Browne, you will not be afraid of being robbed another time, for you see there is nothing in it.’ ‘Oh! but I am,’ said she, ‘and now I am in terrors lest he should return, for I have given him a purse with only bad money that I carry on purpose.’ ‘He certainly will not open it directly,’ said I, ‘and at worst he can only wait for us at our return.’”

The Duchess sent her servants out to hunt for the thief, but were unable to find him. Walpole himself turned detective when he interviewed the ostler at the George Inn in Twickenham because he had been told that the highwayman had left his horse there, and falsely accused a corn-factor, who was dining at the inn, of being the robber.

Walpole was deeply affected by the experience. He later wrote to a friend that: ‘I have lived here about thirty years and used to go everywhere round at all hours of night without any precaution. I cannot now stir a mile from my own hours after sunset without one or two servants with blunderbusses.’

Join Simon Fowler as he talks about some of the Twickenham stories he has covered in his local history columns at Twickenham Library on Tuesday at 7pm.



Twickenham Park House about 1795  
(Orleans House Gallery LDORL 01667)



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# Photos by Doug Goodman



# Lord Nicholas True, Leader of the House of Lords and former Leader of the London Borough of Richmond upon Thames

Congratulations to Lord True on his appointment as Leader of the House of Lords.

Lord True was appointed Lord Privy Seal and Leader of the House of Lords on 6 September 2022. He was previously Minister of State at the Cabinet Office between 14 February 2020 and 6 September 2022.

Nicholas True was Private Secretary to the Opposition Chief Whip in the House of Lords from 1997 to 2010 and Deputy Head of the Prime Minister's Policy Unit for Sir John Major, 1990-1994.

Lord True was made a Life Peer in December 2010 and Chaired the Select Committee on Intergenerational Fairness. He was appointed a CBE in 1993.

Nick, as he was known to many, was a friendly leader encouraging many community events on Twickenham Riverside and allowing the first temporary ice rink to take place in the gardens of York House.

One of his most important legacies was to designate Diamond Jubilee Gardens Public Open Space.

*"While in opposition, Nick (as he asked to be addressed), expressed two wishes. First, that Council affairs should proceed with less confrontation and more cooperation, and second, that the old pool site on Twickenham Riverside be put into Trust to remain Open Space in perpetuity. Later, as Leader, he achieved both aims, the first by his personal conduct, and the second by enlisting the active support of residents. We should be grateful to him for this".* Jeremy Hamilton-Miller

Lord True read Classics and History at Peterhouse College, Cambridge, graduating in 1973. The government website records Lord True's interests as history, gardening and sport. He is a fluent Italian speaker and has previously lived and studied in Italy.

*We wish him well in his new role serving the country.*

## **The Role of Leader of the House of Lords:**

The Leader of the House of Lords is responsible for the organisation of government business in the House, providing assistance to all Lords and offering advice on procedure. The Leader also expresses the collective feelings of the House on formal occasions, such as motions of thanks or congratulations.



# DID THE QUEEN LEAVE US ONE LAST TEACHING...

By Deep Patel

I am usually writing about how we should endeavour to stop ants using talcum powder or white vinegar around where they come (not directly on them) or humane live capture mouse traps, copper mesh for stopping slugs kindly and even sweeping less outdoors, shaking outside upside down and home grown leafy veg or flowers and gently lifting large pots instead of dragging in order to avoid crushing the many little lives living in these places and plants, however my article today is dedicated to someone else...

The passing of HRH Queen Elizabeth II earlier this week not only shook the entire nation, but it has also indirectly bought a nation together, at least in mourning and sharing the grief of losing an individual most of us didn't know personally, yet most of us felt so unusually close to. Every person that has entered my family run convenience store since (Meet & Deep Newsagents in Twickenham) has had something to say about the passing of the Queen, whether it was "She meant everything to me and I feel my life will never be the same again" or "hooray that means we will get another bank holiday now!"

I have heard every view possible on her passing...but could there be one final message the Queen wanted us to understand...perhaps something for the higher thinkers...something far more than the material and ritualistic ceremonies that are all too familiar in the royal sphere...? If you are with me on this...read on...if you are not with me...read on anyway and you may see these final subtle teachings too...

The first synchronicity to note is the fact that just moments before the Queen passed, a huge rainbow naturally appeared over Buckingham Palace...and not only there...but at the exact same time...a rainbow also was visible above Windsor Castle...more than just a coincidence?

The second synchronicity to note is that hours before her passing, the Queen officially welcomed our new Prime Minister into her new role, and hours later for her first official appearance after, the Prime Minister stepped out of number 10 Downing Street to address the nation with a statement regarding the Queens Passing...

Reading this now you may be thinking that this is nothing out of the ordinary right? Well consider this...as the Queens reign ended with that final duty of welcoming the PM into her new role, the PM started her "reign" in power...both the most powerful women in the UK, one ending her reign and another starting her role in power at EXACTLY the same time, symbolised through the exact same meeting, and BOTH named ELIZABETH!!!

Through showing us all the 2 rainbows over her palaces just moments before her death was announced, as well as revealing the bizarre synchronicity of one powerful women ending her reign at the time another was starting her role in power...both women sharing the name Elisabeth, was our Queen trying to teach us one final lesson perhaps...that there is something bigger than all of us in this life...a higher order...supreme power...divine plan...was she teaching us to think bigger than ourselves and revealing that there is something far bigger than human understanding? It's not the first time something like this has happened after someone passes away...I for one believe she was teaching us exactly this...and I will live the rest of my life carrying that within me in honour to her divine soul. God Bless Our Queen...today...tomorrow...and always...



The rainbow seen over Windsor Castle moments before the announcement of the death of HRH Queen Elizabeth II.  
Photo credit: <https://wegotthiscovered.com/news/rainbows-appear-over-buckingham-palace-and-windsor-castle-as-britain-mourns-the-queens-passing/>

Dear Tribune,

**Smile, please!**

A recent news report states that Richmond Council is installing cameras across the borough produced by Dahua, a Chinese firm criticised for using facial recognition technology and one which is banned from selling its cameras in the USA due to claims that they create a security risk:

*[www.securityinfowatch.com/video-surveillance/article/21243600/congress-passes-bill-banning-new-fcc-equipment-authorizations-for-hikvision-dahua-and-others](http://www.securityinfowatch.com/video-surveillance/article/21243600/congress-passes-bill-banning-new-fcc-equipment-authorizations-for-hikvision-dahua-and-others)*

Apparently, this company is partially state-owned. That, in itself, is worrying for security even in Richmond.

It has also been reported that, in October 2019, the U.S. government placed Dahua on the Bureau of Industry and Security's Entity List for its role in surveillance of Uyghurs in Xinjiang and of other ethnic and religious minorities in China. And in February 2021, the Los Angeles Times published an investigation of Dahua's technology for the purpose of Uyghur surveillance.

In 2020, after security researchers identified facial identification software code with designations by ethnicity, Dahua removed the code in question. But would they have removed it had they not been discovered? Even a broadcast industry colleague of mine reported that he had discovered a hidden SD card in his Chinese-made drone which was secretly recording whatever he filmed.

I am well aware that security cameras have their uses as I have used them several times on police duty to catch criminals.

But I don't know any of my neighbours who have been asked whether they want to be spied upon by Richmond Council.

Of course, the excuse will probably be that, if you aren't doing anything wrong, you have nothing to fear. But the Uyghurs weren't doing anything wrong either.

These are serious issues.

So why is Richmond buying these cameras?

And if we really do need more cameras, why are they not buying British and giving the jobs to British workers?

Next time you go shopping or for a walk, look around to see who is watching you.

Don't forget to smile!

Michael Jay  
Hampton

# Warning: Fake emails pretending to be from Ofgem

People have received scam emails pretending to be from Ofgem telling them they are due a payment under a new government scheme to help deal with escalating gas and electricity costs.

The email provides links for the recipient to follow in order to apply for the rebate. The links in the emails lead to malicious websites designed to steal personal and financial information.

The scam emails display the email subject header 'Claim your bill rebate now!' and uses the Ofgem brand logo and colours to make the email appear authentic.

Between Monday 22 August and Monday 5 September 2022, nearly 1,600 reports of suspicious emails relating to this scam have been reported to the police.

Help raise awareness of this scam by sharing this information with your friends and family. Examples of the fake emails have been shared on [Cyber Protect UK's Twitter](#) and [Cyber Protect Instagram](#) accounts.

Please remember that if you have any doubts about a message, contact the organisation directly.

Don't use the numbers or address in the message – use the details from their official website.

Remember, your bank (or any other official source) will never ask you to supply personal information via email.

Additionally, if you have received an email which you're not quite sure about, forward it to [report@phishing.gov.uk](mailto:report@phishing.gov.uk) so that they can check them and warn others.

For advice on how to stay secure online, please visit [Cyber Aware website](#).



# Richmond Mind Marathon Walk

Richmond Marathon Walk on Sunday 2nd October.

This is the third year since its launch with other local charities to raise much needed money for charity work in Richmond.

They walk from The London Eye, mainly along the river back to Richmond and Hampton court.

This year, as it takes place on London Marathon Day, all finishers will get a London Marathon medal and finishers T-shirt.

Find more information and register [HERE](#)



## Community Toilet Scheme (CTS) Twickenham Green

**Twickenham Cricket Club**  
**The Cricket Pavilion, The Green, Twickenham, TW2 5TU**  
**020 8894 3110**

Opening hours:

Monday/Wednesday/Friday - 10am to 5pm

Saturday 11am to 10pm

Sunday when cricket is being played

(Also open when there is a cricket match and the pavilion is in use)

The Cricket Pavilion does not seem to display the obligatory CTS LBRUT sign. A permanent, visible TOILET notice is needed in the central area of Twickenham Green.

# Council's Mega Skip Day cancelled

The Council's mega skips which were due to be in place in Hampton and Barnes this Saturday 10 September have been cancelled due to the death of Queen Elizabeth the Second.

Richmond Council previously announced a trial of new community skips at two separate locations in the borough to give residents the opportunity to bring their old possessions to the community skip to recycle their items responsibly and for free.

The skips which were due to be located at Bloxham Crescent in Hampton and at the corner of Stillingfleet Road and Barnes Avenue in Barnes will not be operating this weekend.



Further details of the Mega Skip Day will be shared once the trial has been re-scheduled.

# Hampton Kempton Waterworks Railway all set for Family Dinosaur Train weekend

Visitors to the Hampton Kempton Waterworks Railway will have the chance to see 'Dino' the dinosaur train on the weekend of Saturday 24 and Sunday 25 September 2022.

The Hampton Kempton Waterworks Railway volunteers have been flat out working to creating their very own 'Dino' the dinosaur train. The train has been created ahead of their big family dinosaur train weekend on Saturday 24 and Sunday 25 September 2022.



Hampton Kempton Waterworks Railway have expert modellers in their volunteer team who have been very busy building 'Dino' the large model dinosaur train, that will pull the carriages for family trips around the railway at their dinosaur event.

Find out more about [Hampton Kempton Waterworks Railway](https://www.hamptonkemptonwaterworksrailway.co.uk/) and their Family Weekend.

# Kew Society launches Historic Walk with support from the Local Area Fund

Last Friday 2 September 2022, the Mayor of Richmond upon Thames, Councillor Julia Cambridge, and local MP Sarah Olney attended the official launch of a new circular walk around Kew devised by the Kew Society and part-funded by Richmond Council's Local Area Fund.

The aim of the walk is to encourage people to explore the local area and discover some lesser-known places of historic interest whilst getting some exercise and taking in the beautiful sights in and around Kew including the riverside.

The idea for the walk came during the lockdowns in 2020 and 2021 when everyone was confined to their local area often discovering places they knew nothing about.

Kew Society Chair, Shiona Williams said:

'The pandemic really made us realise how fortunate we are to live in such

a beautiful area and to have the Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew on our doorstep, but we also want to draw people's attention parts of Kew other than the gardens that they might not have noticed before.'



After the official launch a group of walkers set off from the Tap on the Line in Kew Village to try out the 2.7 mile circular walk for the first time.

The project was funded by a grant from [Richmond Council's Local Area Fund](#) and the Kew Society.

Find out more about the fund and how it can support your idea or project.

[Explore the walking route](#)



## SEPTEMBER FOOD AND DRINK NEWS

Fingers crossed for an Indian summer folks! And with this in mind, and those misty autumnal days that seem to have descended on us, I've put together some food and drink suggestions that are just right for this time of year:

**Belazu**, one of my personal favourites when it comes to Middle Eastern ingredients, also has a fabulous range of pestos. The company's entire pesto range is nut free, containing 'no nonsense', high quality ingredients that any foodie would be proud to serve. And just like the other products, the flavours really pack a punch and these little pots of deliciousness will enhance any meal. Five new flavours have been added, bringing the total Belazu pesto range to 12. Priced at around the £3 mark, they are great value too. The new flavours are: Wild Mushroom Pesto (my favourite!); Vegan Basil; Pea & Mint; Saffron & Piquillo Pepper (so Spanish and versatile - try stirring into a paella) and last, but by no means least, Tomato & Sage (to give a Sardinian flavour to your meal). Available from Ocado, or Belazu.com (where you will be tempted to stock up with lots of delicious products!)



**Paxton & Whitfield**, the UK's oldest cheesemonger, has launched an exclusive, new, British hard cheese to celebrate the company's 225th birthday. It's been developed with one of Paxton & Whitfield's long-standing partners, the award-winning cheesemaker Martin Gott of St James Cheese, Cumbria. Martin and his team make the cheese in summer when the milk production is high, and transfer it to Paxton & Whitfield at two weeks old, where maturation begins. Jazz Reeves, Paxton's quality manager, and her team of cheesemongers mature Cullum, regularly brush down the moulds and turn the cheeses twice weekly. In the second month, it's rubbed weekly with locally sourced Cotswold Gold Rapeseed oil and brushed down to encourage even permeation of the oil. According to Jazz: "The flavour of this first batch is bright and juicy. There is a fruitiness which is well balanced by savoury notes, with a subtle sweetness coming from the ewes' milk. The texture is butter and smooth in the mouth, and very

moreish." Well, I'm lucky enough to have tried this exciting new cheese and I can report that it's delicious, so head up to St James's to buy some or order it [online](#)

Sometimes a salad will benefit from being livened up with a sprinkling of seeds or cheese or another topping. When catering for a vegan in the family, it can be difficult if you like bacon or cheese in your salad. But now, thanks to **Pimp My Salad**, you have some options - and they are surprisingly moreish. Coconut Bacon, Cashew Parm Cheez or Activated Super Seed Sprinkles The toppers use ingredients sourced from ethical suppliers, are plant-based, gluten-free, and keto/paleo-friendly. To be honest, in our house, the 'bacon' and the Super Seed Sprinkles, have also been enjoyed with pre-dinner drinks - and when you try them, you'll understand why! From Ocado at £5 a bag.



**Tracklements** have come up with another special, limited edition chutney: **Date & Tamarind**. Tamarind has a pleasantly sour, yet fruity flavour which bounces off the sweetness of the dates. With traditional spices including Asafoetida, Fennel Seeds, Ground Cloves and Coriander Seeds it pairs with curries, and dishes such as sambhars, rasams, puris, pakoras and samosas. **Tracklements Special Edition Date & Tamarind Chatni** RRP £3.50 for 250g, is available from fine food delis and farm shops nationwide and online at [www.tracklements.co.uk](http://www.tracklements.co.uk).



Many butchers sell meat products that are ready to cook, complete with flavour rub. Now I've discovered a company that produces sachets of these rubs, and what's more, they're widely available - and great value. With something for the whole family to enjoy, including: Chinese Style; Garden Mint; Smoky Barbeque; Garlic

& Herb and Piri Piri, it's the **Flava-it!** range. These **Flava-it!** 35g seasoning sachets are versatile and adaptable for a host of different recipes. Available in Tesco, Morrison's, Ocado and Amazon, RRP £1.00. These seasonings are suitable for vegetarians too, with the exception of Chinese Style.

Riesling is one of those wines that people often tend to dismiss, associating it with sweetness and some of those rather awful, famous brands from the 70s and 80s. Well, I've got news for you: the **Cono Sur Reserva Especial Riesling from Tesco** is fabulous! This Chilean wine has an impressive aromatic intensity, with notes of white flowers, white peaches, orange blossoms and grapefruit. Its elegant palate shows great balance between sweetness and acidity... "a silky and persistent wine". And this delicious white is £10 a bottle, but for Tesco Clubcard members, it's only £8 till September 26. So stock up now!



One doesn't generally associate cider with South Africa, but **SXOLLIE** (pronounced sko-llie) is a 'xider' made using some of the world's favourite eating apple varieties from South Africa. **SXOLLIE** has no sugar, sweeteners, concentrate or added water. South African sun-kissed eating apples are fermented with champagne yeasts in stainless steel tanks to preserve the bright apple varieties. It makes for a decidedly different cider, that's why SXOLLIE calls it 'xider'. A brand built on sustainability, it's the first cider to be certified as a B Corp. It's got an ABV of 4.5% and it's really refreshing. The SXOLLIE range comprises three different 'xiders' that can be paired beautifully with food: Golden Delicious, Granny Smith, and Cripps Pink

**Baileys**, the iconic drink, has diversified and launched a special limited edition Tiramisu Cocktail. All I can say about it is "Wow, just wow!" With delicious chocolate and coffee notes of the Italian dessert we all know and love, **Baileys Tiramisu Cocktail** is a tasty treat. It's tiramisu in a bottle and as well as a delicious drink served chilled, it's fabulous poured over vanilla ice cream. (I've only tried it with vanilla, but I'm sure it will be as good, perhaps even better, with chocolate or coffee ice cream) And of course, it will be a stunner for a desserts-style cocktail. Available from Tesco nationwide at £17 for a 70cl bottle.





## The Two Sides of Martin Figura

Poetry Performance at The Adelaide, Teddington

There is a serious side to the poet Martin Figura. Quite serious. It was revealed when he read the title poem, *My Name is Mercy* from a pamphlet based on his observations at Salisbury District Hospital during Covid. A former soldier himself, a poem called *Bear* was based on talking to soldiers with physical injuries and PTSD who had served in Iraq and Afghanistan. His poem *Vineyard Boys* is about his time in a children's home in Wellington, Shropshire, in the 1960s. You can find out the reasons that he ended up there in his remarkable collection *Whistle*.

And then there is his funny side, with poems like *(The Trouble With) Middle-Aged People* – “Theres even one reading you this poem, and look / he’s wearing red trainers with white stripes.” It certainly got a good laugh from the Poetry Performance audience, many of whom - including your correspondent – now contemplate middle age in their rear-view mirror. Another well-received one was *This Be the Worst*, Figura’s take on Larkin’s *This Be The Verse*, which concludes:

Children return love as guilt to parents  
that deepens like crap on a bedroom floor.  
Move them on as early as you can  
and don’t ever try for any more.

These sentiments are belied by his poignant poem about a daughter who has Downs Syndrome. Yet Figura, who is also a photographer whose work has been exhibited at the National Portrait Gallery, has a bit of an affectionate fixation for Philip Larkin. In another poem, he imagines the famously grumpy poet complaining of being “trapped in a corner with Martin Figura” - a fate apparently worse than that inflicted by Larkin’s mum and dad - and blaming Monica “for dragging me to this”.



For me, it was possibly my last visit to Poetry Performance’s regular nights at Teddington before moving to the north-east. I will miss its convivial atmosphere, and healthy appetite to share poetry.

Read Greg Freeman’s review at [www.markaspen.com/2022/09/06/martin-figura](http://www.markaspen.com/2022/09/06/martin-figura) and on the poetry website [Write Out Loud](http://Write Out Loud).

Photography by Greg Freeman



*The Apartments* by Verity Rowsell

*At Least I Can Dance* by Michelle Hanks

*Cooking With Microphones* by Deborah Whitmarsh-Boyce

Bird Mouth Collective at the Etcetera Theatre, Camden and

Sensible Footwear at The Canal Café, Paddington, now at the Bread and Roses, Clapham until 9<sup>th</sup> October

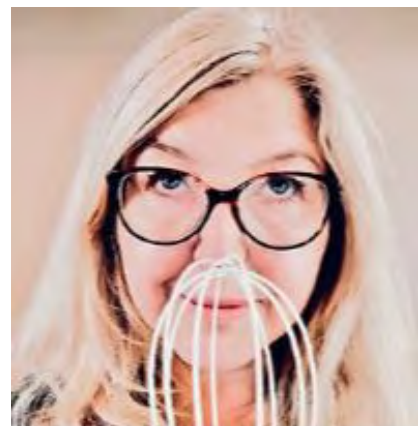
As the summer holidays come to an end, the colourful patchwork quilt of experimental theatre that is the Camden Fringe has had its last few segments sewn in place.

Bird Mouth Collective took us headlong into a sometimes farcical, sometimes surreal, sometimes eccentric yet always vibrant production of *The Apartments*. This first and shorter play of its double bill gave us vignettes of a young couple and their hysterical neighbour. Lottie, played by the highly watchable Sharon Trotter, reflected on her own experiences, drawing everyone into a profound look at life ... all through an alluring pink boa.



The more complex second play, *At Least I can Dance*, a tragi-comedy, illuminates the hope that shines in everyday things. Brandon Thorne put over the issue of mental illness with great conviction as Joe, Lottie's grandson. Buddleia Maslen played Linda, and with her controlling ex-boyfriend, energetically conveyed by Avi Mendelson, made an intelligent and sensitive scene. But was Lottie, flawlessly acted by Trotter, deluded, plain mad or a symbol of hope? She seemed to spread happiness more than concern. The final scene of Linda and Lottie was touching and optimistic.

Sally is a woman of a certain age in *Cooking with Microphones*. However, leave your cookbooks at home. Sally presents a milk whisk as her personal microphone, sharing a common bond with women to use their voices, as videos show them singing with similar cooking utensils, friends that made her stronger on those special Friday nights. Friday nights really belong to them, after a hardworking week putting everyone else first. Skilfully realised by the all-female theatre company Sensible Footwear, *Cooking with Microphones* is a clever concept with a strong and moving ending.



Read Heather Moulson's reviews of *The Apartments* and *At Least I Can Dance* at [www.markaspen.com/2022/08/29/apart-least-dance](http://www.markaspen.com/2022/08/29/apart-least-dance), and of *Cooking with Microphones* at [www.markaspen.com/2022/08/30/cooking-with-microphones](http://www.markaspen.com/2022/08/30/cooking-with-microphones)

Photography courtesy of Bird Mouth Collective and Sensible Footwear



## The Sea Between

by Demi Leigh

Driftwood Productions at the Barons Court Theatre until 17<sup>th</sup> September

*The Sea Between* offers a snapshot into a modern day problematic relationship intertwined with elements from Greek Mythology. From the awkward first meeting, the chemistry between Ginny and Mike builds into being more familiar, but never properly to knowing each other. We see through foreboding moments where the problems lie, for the play explores those red flag incidents that can be so easily missed when you're in the subjective rather than objective position.



Demi Leigh's performance creates a very likeable but



complex character in Ginny. Whether Ginny is being manipulated psychologically through actions such as gaslighting, financial dependency or even physically, Leigh plays these effects with a perfect amount of realism and understatement that actually makes it understandable as to how someone could fall for such ploys.

Matthew Kay handles the part of Mike very well. From the opening scene he comes across as just a typical guy who meets his ideal partner. However, as each scene goes by he, guided by director Vittorio Parri, make the little flashes of the monster underneath stand out. As the play progresses Kay does well to take the character away subtly from the more imposing monster figure to flashes of a much weaker form.

Parri allows his actors space to really feel the subtle elements in each scene, whether it's a crucial moment in delivery from Mike or a pause and look from Ginny. The tension is built well, as the drama and the stakes increase. The rising anxiety that Leigh generates through the piece is palpably felt at the crucial climax. The moment of physical violence is very powerful and the silence that follows it allows Leigh to play the desperation of the circumstances well.



*The Sea Between Us* offers an interesting insight into how toxic relationships can be built, not just in modern society, but throughout time.

Read Denis Valentine's review at [www.markaspen.com/2022/09/08/sea-between](http://www.markaspen.com/2022/09/08/sea-between)

Photography by Jevgenija Kuznecova

# Jeeves and Wooster in Perfect Nonsense

by P.G. Wodehouse, adapted by David and Robert Goodale  
Progress Theatre, Reading until 10<sup>th</sup> September

I anticipated that a show with 'Nonsense' in the title and a promise of layered and excessive multi-roleing would serve for a fun (but chaotic) evening of entertainment; and indeed *Jeeves and Wooster in Perfect Nonsense* started well with Dan Clarke confidently in the role of Wooster and guiding us through the plot. As Clarke eased into the show he became a stable narrator figure, playing well on the farcical moments, and holding the plot together dexterously - even when clearly struggling to change costume quickly just off stage!

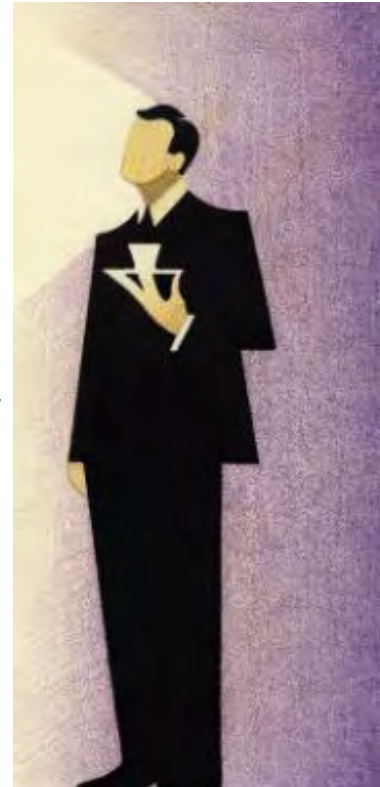
Accompanying Clarke were Owen Goode in the role of Jeeves and Jeremy Radburn in the role of Seppings, both with complex, quick-witted and clearly well practiced performances. As the play sped along to some dizzying changes and transformations, both were up against a huge feat to embody each of the characters and – at some particularly strange but wonderful moments – even switch so quickly as to have a conversation with themselves! I enjoyed Goode's calm and purposeful portrayal of Jeeves, dutifully fulfilling the whims and wants of Bertie.

Completing the trio of actors in this nonsensical narrative was Jeremy Radburn who arguably evoked some of the biggest laughs of the evening. His masterfully crafted, pitch-perfect characterisation delighted the audience. Radburn's "Aunt Dahlia" was invigorating – especially anticipating the changing positions of her wig! "Spode" was positively intimidating, despite the perhaps overused dramatic music that accompanied each of his entrances.

Ably directed by Laura Mills, the performances were a whirlwind of energy that pulled skilfully on the response of the audience and played the exaggerated genre well. A gag with the follow-spot tickled me, as did the ludicrous portrayal of Jeeves and Wooster's car journey (and yes, the level crossing prop was impressive!) Simple moments brought the chaos and absurdity of the situation alive: my personal favourite was Bertie's failure to answer Jeeves knocking on the door ... something you have to watch to truly appreciate.

Read Sam Martin's review at  
[www.markaspen.com/2022/09/03/jeeves-wooster](http://www.markaspen.com/2022/09/03/jeeves-wooster)

Images by Amy Mitt



# TRAVELLER'S TALES 131

## MALLORCA'S TOP ATTRACTION

Doug Goodman visits Valldemossa

My favourite place in Spain is Mallorca and its capital Palma is the city I enjoy the most. My first trip to the island was over 50 years ago when the package-tour resorts were developing and spreading along the coastline. Hotels in Palma were few and the manor houses and their estates were yet to be converted into grand country hotels. Rural tourism and private villas were also just being thought of. While tourism has grown dramatically it's still possible to find quiet villages, local markets and fine restaurants serving the best Mallorcan dishes, inland away from the tourist hot-spots. Palma is a perfect city to explore on foot. It offers excellent art galleries and museums, a stunning cathedral, the King's Palace, Moorish architecture and narrow streets in the old town with pretty patios – the entrances to the big houses. Buses are cheap and cover the whole island and a railway system from Palma to the north provides a scenic journey. Shopping for clothes, leather shoes, glass and ceramics as well as local produce is a delight and a vast choice of tapas bars and restaurants are to be found in the centre.



Monastery at Valldemossa



Poster for the Monastery



Chopin

### TOP ATTRACTION

Whenever I hire a car I visit Mallorca's most popular place, Valldemossa only 25 minutes from Palma. The hill-top town is famous for its monastery and best known for its early visitors- Frederic Chopin and his lover Amatine Dupin, otherwise known as George Sand. They were accompanied by their two children during their stay in the monastery in the winter of 1838/1839. The family lived in some of the cells which had been occupied by the Carthusian Monks until the religious order was expelled in the 1830s. The government confiscated the monastery and its land and sold it to local inhabitants who then rented the rooms to visitors. The monastery dates from the 14th century and gained recognition for its tranquil beauty through the efforts of Austrian Archduke Ludwig Salvat who fell in love with the region. Today hikers can explore the Tramuntana Mountains along the paths named after the Archduke.

### WINTER BREAK

In 1838 Chopin and George Sand arrived in Palma and spent a few days in the city before heading to Valldemossa. From the account of their winter's stay in Sand's book 'A Winter in Mallorca' they had a miserable time. The weather was wet and the accommodation was damp. Chopin became ill and George Sand hated the local food and called the local people peasants. The 'peasants' in turn disliked the visitors, disapproving of children running wild and a woman who smoked and wore trousers in public and failed to attend mass. Worst of all was Chopin's missing piano which arrived only three weeks before the family left Mallorca. But despite having to work with an inferior Mallorcan piano Chopin composed 24 preludes including the one in D-flat major called 'Raindrop'.



Chopin's Piano



Monk's Cell



Kings' Palace

### VALLDEMOSSA TODAY

Until around 09.30 and after about 18.30 Valldemossa is comparatively quiet and uncrowded. If you are visiting independently make sure you arrive before 10.00 ahead of the tourist coaches. There's parking on the edge of the town just a few minutes' walk from the monastery. Your ticket gives you entry to the great building, an art gallery, The Palace of the Kings and the chance to enjoy a short piano recital. You enter through the spacious chapel and then see the room where potions were mixed to cure all ills. Here you'll find the first of the stalls selling guide books and souvenirs. As many of the rooms have different owners save your purchases until you've seen everything. A walk around the cloisters brings you to the cells containing Chopin's piano, a bust, death mask, music, letters and much memorabilia. More cells show the monk's way of life, their gardens and religious items. Further on there are rooms dedicated to local history with maps and pictures. At the very end of the long corridor is the art gallery full of paintings by Miro, Picasso and other great artists. At the end of your visit leave the monastery by the exit near the cells and go into The Kings' Palace right next door. The state rooms are lavishly furnished and beautifully preserved. The ancient furniture, tables set for a grand banquet, faded portraits and weapons bring back the splendour of an age long gone. Check the times of the recital and make your way into the music room for a performance by a brilliant pianist.



Local Specialties



Hotel BonSol

After all the walking and sightseeing find a restaurant or tapas bar and try Mallorcan wine and some of the island's specialities. Roast suckling pig is one of my favourites accompanied by a bottle of fruity red from Macia Batle. Drop in to the little shop around the corner from the monastery to sample some of the local spirits from barrels. A glass costs €1 and you can try as many liquids as you like. I prefer Hierbas with its strong aniseed flavour. My choice of hotel is always The Bonsol. ([www.hotelbonsol.es](http://www.hotelbonsol.es)) Five miles from Palma in the quiet resort of Illetas, it's owned by the Xamena family, offers wonderful food and has tropical gardens down to a secluded beach. Buen viaje.



# WIZ Tales: SOMALIA – drought and famine

Teresa Read

This week Martin Griffiths, UN Relief Chief, posted on Twitter “We are in the last minute of the eleventh hour to avoid a full-blown disaster in Somalia” - the worst drought in forty years.

The drought began early in 2021 displacing a million people in Somalia; drought is also affecting parts of neighbouring Ethiopia and Kenya.

Earlier this year the Save the Children’s director in Somalia was reported as saying that the ultimate culprit is climate change.

Climate change is affecting the natural weather patterns of La Niña and El Niño, accentuating their effects which in turn worsens climate change itself.



The Voice of America has reported that the ongoing drought in the Horn of Africa and southern South America bear all the hallmarks of La Niña. Oxfam also reports that the exceptional weather situation is attributed to La Niña, a natural large-scale cooling of ocean surface temperature in the central and eastern equatorial Pacific Ocean. Thus, it seems that the interaction of climate change and La Niña is causing the dry weather and high temperatures in East Africa.

Throughout the world countries and organizations are giving aid to Somalia, even war-torn Ukraine: “Ukraine to ship 28,600 tons of grain to famine-stricken Somalia”. President Volodymyr Zelensky tweeted this week “Ukraine continues to save the world with its grain” – the grain shipment will arrive in the next few weeks.



Information about Somalia from World InfoZone:

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



# St Mary's University

## Performance Analysis Lecturer Attends Commonwealth Games

Rhiana Galvin, Lecturer in Performance Analysis at St Mary's University, Twickenham attended this year's Commonwealth Games as an Analyst for Team Wales Women's Hockey.

The matches were held at the University of Birmingham, where Wales played Canada, India, Ghana, and England in the pool matches and South Africa in the classification match for 7th/8th place, finishing 8th.



As the analyst for Wales, Rhiana was required to provide live feedback and video footage to the coaches and collect data from the live gameplay to be analysed post-match in preparation for the next opponent.

Rhiana Galvin, Hockey Women's Analyst and Lecturer in Performance Analysis at St Mary's said "For anyone wearing a Welsh shirt this is the highest level of performance competition there is, and to attend with the squad and staff members was a dream come true. There aren't many opportunities like this. To go to home soil games and for them to be the most inclusive games yet, I am proud to be part of the experience and history.

"It's hard to put into words how incredible the experience was, from the village to the crowds and the mass of friendly people you meet day in and day out. The most memorable moment for me was the roar of the crowd when Wales played England, and that day Leah Wilkinson received

her 200th combined cap, so that was a special day.

"The aim for us as a team was to get our highest finish, which was 7th place but unfortunately, we just missed out on this by one goal and that can be difficult to take but also it gives scope to come back fighting harder for the next time. That's what professional sport is all about, the highs and lows.

"In terms of analysis, I think that was the most luxurious set up I've ever experienced. Being an analyst isn't always glamorous and in different situations, you must adapt and improvise to ensure that you get the footage and the information back to the coaches as quickly as possible.

"At a training session there was a tower that only went up to a certain height which wasn't high enough to see over the fence so I had to think quickly to find a solution, and, in the end, it all worked out in the end but it doesn't always go to plan.

"Meeting analysts from all over the globe and making life-long friends is a bonus to the memories we made together over two weeks. Supporting one another to be the best we can be, always makes the process and being part of the analysis team better."

Subject Lead for Football and Performance Analysis at St Mary's, Mike Gilham commented "We are really proud of Rhiana for undertaking this work at the Commonwealth Games. The fact that our staff are out living and breathing applied settings is a testament to their quality and dedication. This was a fantastic experience for Rhiana

and one I am looking forward to her sharing with our students."



St Mary's  
University  
Twickenham  
London

# England squads for Rugby World Cup Sevens named

The England men's and women's sevens squads for Rugby World Cup Sevens 2022 in South Africa have been named. The tournament takes place at the iconic Cape Town Stadium and begins on Friday 9 September and broadcast live on [ITV Hub](#).

All 24 men's and 16 women's teams heading to Cape Town have been seeded based on points accrued across the HSBC World Rugby Sevens Series 2020 and 2022.

Alex Davis captains the men's side with former GB and England captain Tom Mitchell selected following his return in LA. Tom Bowen, who missed the 2018 World Cup due to injury is also selected.

Like in San Francisco four years ago, both the men's and women's tournament will operate in a 'winner-takes-all' knockout format.

Entering at the round of 16, Tony Roques' side kick off their campaign on Friday and will play either Ireland or Portugal in the round of 16 (KO 14.39 local time/ 13.39 UK time).

Roques said: *"The squad we've selected have worked incredibly hard in our preparations and we're really looking forward to the World Cup in Cape Town.*

*"There is a good mix of youth and players who have vast experience on the biggest stages. This is a big opportunity for us as an England Sevens programme to show what we can do and end this current cycle on a high."*

Meanwhile, women's head coach James Rodwell has selected 12 of the 13 players who formed the Commonwealth Games squad who competed in Birmingham in July. Abbie Brown and Megan Jones co-captain the group. They take on Spain in their opening round of 16 match (14.16 local time/13.16 UK time)

Rodwell said: *"All players and staff are really excited to be here in Cape Town for the World Cup.*

*"There hasn't been a sevens tournament here since 2019 and to have the opportunity to play in an England shirt will be amazing. The format is slightly different with being straight knock-out so all our focus is on the first game against Spain. We've had a good few weeks of training since the Commonwealth Games where we were a little bit disappointed with some of our results and this is a chance to go out and make everyone proud of our performances.*

*"The squad is made up of the same group who competed in Birmingham, with one change due to the 12-player squad size. For me on a personal note, it's the last tournament I'll be involved in on the sevens circuit as I step away from the game. The last 15 years have been incredible from my playing days to coaching the men's and women's teams and most recently as head coach of England Women.*

*"These are an incredible group of athletes and staff to work with and I feel privileged to have had the opportunity. I have missed one tournament in 15 years and it's time to spend more time with my young family. It's been a difficult decision. I am excited to lead the team this weekend. Our aim is to make England proud as the programme moves to Great Britain which is a new chapter for the home unions and one I'll be closely following from home."*

## England men's Sevens squad

Jamie Adamson  
Api Bavadra  
Jamie Barden  
Tom Bowen  
Alex Davis (C)  
Tom Emery

Will Homer  
Charlton Kerr  
Tom Mitchell  
Calum Randle  
Freddie Roddick  
Ethan Waddleton

## England women's sevens squad

Ellie Boatman  
Abbie Brown (CC)  
Heather Cowell  
Grace Crompton  
Meg Jones (CC)  
Alicia Maude

Isla Norman-Bell  
Celia Quansah  
Jade Shekells  
Lauren Torley  
Emma Uren  
Amy Wilson Hardy



## ENGLAND FOOTBALL LEARNING LAUNCHES TWO NEW WOMEN'S HIGH PERFORMANCE FOOTBALL CENTRES AT UNIVERSITY OF ESSEX AND BIRMINGHAM CITY UNIVERSITY

The University of Essex and Birmingham City University have joined eight existing universities, which are partnered with England Football Learning, to offer support for women's and girls' football coaches at specialist Women's High Performance Football Centres [WHPFC] across the country.

The centres provide an educational and community-based hub to recruit, develop and deploy coaches and the wider workforce to lead and inspire player development within the women's and girls' game. They will further provide a link with the player pathway to help talented players, who will benefit from coaching, sports science, sports medicine and scholarship opportunities in an academic and community environment.

The addition of Essex and Birmingham City University is part of The FA's ongoing commitment to develop coaches within women's and girls' football. The existing eight universities have renewed their partnership to continue operating Women's High Performance Football Centres until July 2024

- Northumbria University
- Manchester Metropolitan University
- Nottingham Trent University & University of Nottingham
- Sheffield Hallam University
- University of Gloucestershire
- Plymouth Marjon University
- **St Mary's University**
- University of Chichester

In these areas, clubs from across the football pyramid and women's football academies will benefit from the partnership by the recruitment of coaches, and the wider workforce, with the Universities providing a wide range of student placements from strength and conditioning, sport therapy, performance analysis, marketing, media and business management.

FA Women's Pathway Coach Developer Lead, Abbie Sadler commented: *"It's brilliant to add two new partners to our Women's High Performance Football Centres offering at universities. The opportunities the programme creates will be invaluable to coaches and the wider workforce wanting to take their next steps in women's football.*

*"We are also thrilled to have also extended our partnership with all the universities we work with for another two years and cannot wait to continue the great work in the women's and girls' game.*

*"With 10 centres across the country, there's real depth and breadth to the programme and opportunities for coaches nationwide."*

Dr Dave Parry, Director of Sport at the University of Essex said: *"We are delighted to have been selected by The FA and England Football Learning to be one of their Women's High Performance Football Centres.*

*"The success of the Lionesses at the UEFA Women's Euros has inspired the whole country, and there really couldn't be a better time to be part of the next phase of growing the women's and girls' game and developing coaches and support staff."*

On the renewal, Phil Cook, Head of Development at Manchester Metropolitan University added: *"We are excited to enter our sixth year of the project and are delighted to be one of ten universities national-ly with a WHPFC. One area of growth has been the Women's Goalkeepers Centre hosted at our Platt Lane Sports Complex where over 40 goalkeepers now train whilst being supported by FA accredited coaches and student volunteers.*

*Our existing partnership with Manchester City Football Club has already opened up a number of exciting opportunities for our students, coaches and community, and we hope this new extension to our partner-ship will take the development of the women's game to an even higher level."*

For further information on the Women's High Performance Football Centres, please follow this [link](#).



# London Loos Paper is Launched

## London Loos

During the past few weeks we have been collating the responses and crunching the numbers to get the results of our London Loos Survey.

We are pleased to announce we now have our [London Loos briefing paper](#) with some powerful statistics to use in our campaign calling on local authorities to improve public toilet provision.

We wanted to share this with you, hot off the press, along with the recommendations we are making to councils across London.

Good provision of public toilets is a hallmark of a civilised and welcoming place to be and an important part of public health provision. That is why this campaign is so important to ensure the needs of Londoners, and importantly older people, are met.



Over 630 of you responded to the London Loos Survey. An astounding 81% of you say provision of public toilets in the borough where you live is bad, and 70% of you say toilet provision is not good enough in your local high street. For almost half of you (48%) cleanliness of toilets is the important consideration when it comes to public toilets, followed by opening times (25%) and accessibility (13%).

**Click here to read [The London Loos Paper](#)**

When it comes to leaving home, nine in ten (90%) have considered toilet provision before making a journey to a particular place and over half (52%) will drink less before a journey. This is bad news given the dangers of dehydration. 81% of you also said you would be more likely to visit shops, cafes and businesses if toilet provision was better - with 40% of you spending less time in a place because of the lack of loos.

The last word here must go to one of the older Londoners who replied to our survey who said:

**“Lack of clean, accessible public toilets traps people at home and prevents them getting out and about. It affects more of us than you might**

Find more information [HERE](#)



# Woodland Trust reopens applications for free trees for school & community groups

Get free trees from the Woodland Trust and join hundreds of thousands of people in helping wildlife and fighting climate change.

The Woodland Trust has ambitious plans to break its record annual giveaway of more than 1.3m free trees to schools and community groups as the next round of tree-pack applications opens.

Almost 9,000 schools and community groups benefited from the UK's largest woodland conservation charity's ever-popular scheme in 2022.

Applications for trees to be delivered in spring 2023 are now open and Woodland Trust senior project lead Vicki Baddeley hopes even more schools and groups will take up the offer of free saplings and get planting in the coming year.

She said: *"This year our communities have really felt the impact of climate change first hand, and many are seeing the incredible benefits trees can bring to provide much needed shade, shelter, and help to prevent flooding. "By offering the free packs we aim to equip our schools and communities with a simple yet mighty tool to combat the effects of climate change, as well as provide ever more vital food and habitats for local wildlife."*

The figures for 2022 are the Trust's best yet, surpassing the previous best total of more than 1.1m in 2021.

Eco-friendly pupils at RAF Benson Primary School were just some of the enthusiastic youngsters who played their part by creating a native hedge which has helped the wildlife and environment.

The Oxfordshire-school's 'Eco Club' now meets twice a week and teaching assistant Adele McCrindle said she was "thrilled with the results and impact", which has increased biodiversity and raised awareness of environmental issues for the children.

She added: *"It's so important to develop a love of nature because, to quote Sir David Attenborough, 'no one will protect what they don't care about, and no one will care about what they have never experienced. "By planting the hedge and seeing the project through, the children have been so engaged and have been able to learn so much. "Aside from the satisfaction of planting 30 new trees at this critical time, doing something positive to help combat climate change and improving the local ecosystem, it has the potential to inspire both children and adults and it's so easy to apply."*

The Woodland Trust's free tree packs scheme has seen trees sent far and wide this year, with the spring giveaway alone delivering a total 623,910 saplings to 3865 organisations across the UK:

- England: 506,415 trees to 3186 organisations
- Scotland: 76,665 trees to 474 organisations
- Wales: 40,830 trees to 205 organisations

Our tree packs have been generously funded by lead partners: Sainsbury's, Lloyds Bank, Ovo Energy, DFS, Joules, Bank of Scotland and Sofology.

Baddeley added: *"We couldn't do this without the support and generosity of our funders. We have great backing and our thanks go out to each of them for their vital support.*

*"The desire to plant trees is growing all the time and we expect demand for our free trees to be even greater this time out.*

*"There will be 600,000 saplings up for grabs in the spring round of applications and I have no doubt they will go quickly so I would advise any interested groups to apply sooner rather than later to secure their saplings!*

*"Giving away 1.3m in 2022 will be a huge achievement, but I am confident we can do even better in 2023 and deliver every one of the 1.4m saplings available."*

Find more information [HERE](#)



**WOODLAND**  
TRUST

# Chancellor Kwasi Kwarteng sets out economic priorities in first meeting with market leaders

Chancellor Kwasi Kwarteng met market leaders this morning (Wednesday) and set out the government's new, pro-growth economic approach.

Kwasi Kwarteng began by acknowledging the extraordinary challenges that families and businesses across the UK are facing this Winter, exacerbated by Putin's barbaric invasion of Ukraine. He stressed that the government will immediately focus on supporting families and businesses to navigate the gas crisis this winter and next, supporting the economy to grow, and committing to fiscal sustainability.

Speaking after the meeting, Chancellor Kwasi Kwarteng said:

*"We face extraordinary economic challenges in the coming weeks and months and I know that families and businesses across the UK are worried.*

*"The Prime Minister and I are committed to taking decisive action to help the British people now, while pursuing an unashamedly pro-growth agenda.*

*"We need to be decisive and do things differently. That means relentlessly focusing on how we unlock business investment and grow the size of the British economy, rather than how we redistribute what's left.*

*"With a strong and resilient economy, we deliver more jobs, higher wages, and raised living standards – all while reducing our debt-to-GDP ratio in a fiscally sustainable way."*

Due to the scale of the gas crisis, the government's first priority will be to support families and businesses in the immediate term. The Chancellor was clear this will mean necessary higher borrowing in the short-term whilst ensuring monetary stability and fiscal discipline over the medium term. He committed to ensuring the economy grows faster than our debts and keeping debt as a proportion of our economy on a downward path.

The Chancellor also reiterated his full support for the independent Bank of England and their mission to control inflation, which is central to tackling cost of living challenges.

Mr Kwarteng stressed that the government will support the economy to grow. He recognised that the rate of growth has been too low and committed to a radical supply side agenda to deliver lasting economic growth. This will mean creating the right conditions for business investment and innovation, reducing burdensome regulation and taxes, which will in turn create jobs, wealth and drive economic growth.

The Chancellor reiterated his aim to get to 2.5% trend growth, delivering a stronger economy and a Britain that works for everyone.



HM Treasury

# New Prime Minister must show leadership and get to grips with crisis in Emergency Care

Responding to the [latest Emergency Department performance figures published by NHS England for August 2022](#), President of the Royal College of Emergency Medicine, Dr Katherine Henderson said:

“The data is stark. We are worried about the coming winter. These are the second worst data on record. Too many patients are waiting too long. We know long waits contribute to patient harm.

In August over 29,000 patients waited over 12 hours after a decision to admit was made, with some patients waiting up to three days for a bed. We think the consequence of this is shown in the ONS data as 500 excess deaths a week. We must not accept these long stays as normal. We need to see leadership and meaningful action that gets to grips with this crisis.

“We urge the new Prime Minister, Liz Truss, and incoming Health and Social Care Secretary, Therese Coffey, to make tackling the crisis in Emergency Care a priority. The scale of patient harm occurring is shocking.

The Emergency Care system is failing to its core functions; it is vital that we mitigate the impact of this crisis ahead of winter and do all we can to keep patients safe and reduce these dangerous waiting times.

“The Prime Minister and Health Secretary must urgently bolster the social care workforce. Thousands of beds are occupied by patients who are medically fit to be discharged, but the lack of social care service means that getting patients home is a slow and complex process.

This means that hospitals have difficulty in discharging patients in a timely way, leading to exit block, poor flow throughout the hospital and subsequent problems in Emergency Departments and ambulance waits. The need for investment in social care couldn't be clearer.

“Staff are exhausted, overwhelmed and in the midst of the worst crisis the NHS has ever faced. Widespread shortfalls of staff across all grades and departments mean health care workers are spread increasingly thinly and more prone to burnout – there are currently around 130,000 vacancies in the NHS almost 10% of its workforce.

The Prime Minister must deliver the fully funded long-term NHS workforce plan that the government pledged to deliver in 2019. Emergency Care is in crisis and there is a shortfall of 2,000-2,500 Emergency Medicine consultants and widespread shortages of vital nursing staff, trainees, SAS doctors and junior and supporting staff are contributing to the challenges.”





# The Affordable Homes Programme since 2015

The Department for Levelling Up, Housing & Communities (DLUHC) forecasts that it will spend £20.7 billion on new grant funded homes through three rounds of the Affordable Homes Programme between 2015 and 2032. However, the Department could be more ambitious in how the Programme supports wider government objectives, such as how it contributes to the government's net-zero commitments, according to the National Audit Office (NAO).

DLUHC intervenes in the housing market to try to ensure there is sufficient supply of affordable housing. The Affordable Homes Programme (the Programme) provides grant funding to housing providers in England to support the costs of delivering affordable homes. There are two main iterations of the Programme that are running concurrently, the 2016 programme and the 2021 programme.

The NAO found that the Affordable Homes Programme's targets have a focus on the number of new homes built. The 2021 programme has clear targets about the tenure (e.g. for rent or for sale) of housing it wants housing providers to provide, but there are few targets based on wider factors such as the quality or size of homes or environmental standards. DLUHC has not fully defined the wider outcomes it wants from the Programme, such as reductions in fuel poverty and the creation of mixed communities or set out what success would look like.

There is a forecast shortfall of 32,000 in the number of homes to be delivered compared with published targets for the 2016 and 2021 programmes, as at May 2022.

Under the 2016 programme, DLUHC forecasts it will achieve 96% of its target for housing starts, but some of these homes will not be built until 2032. DLUHC's forecast is that Homes England and the Greater London Authority (GLA) will collectively achieve 241,000 starts, against a target of 250,000 starts, by March 2023 (this target includes some homes not directly funded through the Programme).

Under the 2021 programme, DLUHC expects 157,000 new homes will complete by the time the programme has ended in 2028-29 compared with its target of 'up to 180,000 should economic conditions allow'. It does not expect to meet sub-targets for supported homes (homes with support, supervision, or care provided alongside) and is at high risk of not meeting a sub-target for rural homes. There is also a risk that fewer homes are completed than currently forecast because of building cost inflation, a shortage of materials and labour and other challenges.

The NAO found that DLUHC had inadequate oversight of the GLA in the 2015 and 2016 programmes. DLUHC receives performance reports from the GLA, but these contained insufficient information on GLA's management of the Programme, for example lacking information on spending.

In October 2021, DLUHC found that between April 2015 and October 2021, it had given the GLA £1.8 billion of funding which the GLA had committed but not yet used to pay housing providers. DLUHC accepts these payments were a basic error of programme management. DLUHC has started to make improvements to its governance and oversight of the Programme,

including in data and performance reporting.

There is a lack of strong incentives for housing providers to deliver affordable homes in areas of high housing need or in the most unaffordable areas. The Programme is not delivering a high proportion of affordable homes in areas that the Department assesses have high general housing need. In addition, housing providers are delivering fewer homes in more unaffordable areas, measured by the difference between local house prices and wages.

The Programme could bring greater value to other parts of government. When designing the 2021 programme, DLUHC considered how it could generate cross-government benefits in relation to housing benefit spend, the number of people in temporary accommodation and adult social care. However, it did not include savings in temporary accommodation or adult social care costs from providing supported housing in its economic modelling. Potential savings in these areas are not factored into the way DLUHC allocates the Programme's funding and the kind of homes delivered.

If DLUHC used the Programme to deliver more affordable homes in London, this would lead to significantly higher savings on future housing benefit costs (including the housing element of universal credit). DLUHC and Homes England did not include any specific targets relating to reducing emissions under the 2021 programme.

Before the end of 2022, the NAO recommends that the DLUHC should develop plans to mitigate the risk that the objectives for delivering affordable homes may not be achieved, and continue to improve its oversight of the Programme.

For the next iteration of the Programme, DLUHC should consider what information it needs to improve its understanding of housing need in local areas, and review how the programme sets and monitors the Programme's targets and sub targets and be clear how the Programme is contributing, when feasible, to wider government objectives, such as net zero and savings for other departments and local government.

Gareth Davies, the head of the NAO, said:

*"Since 2015, the Department for Levelling Up, Housing & Communities has made improvements to the running of the Affordable Homes Programme, but there are still areas it needs to address.*

*"It should reassess targets to ensure the Programme is delivering affordable homes in areas that need them the most. It should also use the Programme to bring about greater value to other parts of government, and advance wider efforts around net zero."*

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



National Audit Office

# New fund for pandemic prevention, preparedness and response formally established

Designed to reflect inclusive and effective governance and operating arrangements with high standards of transparency and accountability; hosted by the World Bank with technical leadership from WHO

The new [financial intermediary fund \(FIF\) for pandemic prevention, preparedness, and response \(PPR\)](#) was officially established by the FIF Governing Board at its inaugural meeting from 8-9 September 2022.

The fund will provide a dedicated stream of additional, long-term financing to strengthen PPR capabilities in [low- and middle-income countries](#) and address critical gaps through investments and technical support at the national, regional, and global levels. The fund will draw on the strengths and comparative advantages of key institutions engaged in PPR, provide complementary support, improve coordination among partners, incentivize increased country investments, serve as a platform for advocacy, and help focus and sustain much-needed, high-level attention on strengthening health systems.

The first calls for proposals for investments to be funded by the FIF will open in November 2022.

*“COVID-19 has highlighted the pressing need for action to build stronger health systems,”* said World Bank Group President David Malpass. *“Investing now will save lives and resources for the years to come. We welcome the broad support from the international community for this new, multilateral financial intermediary fund at the World Bank to help low- and middle-income countries and regions become better prepared for global health crises and are pleased to have been able to proceed quickly in establishing the fund.”*

The fund’s establishment follows approval by the World Bank’s Board of Directors on June 30, 2022. The World Bank will serve as the FIF’s trustee and host the Secretariat, which will include technical staff seconded from the World Health Organization (WHO). The Governing Board will appoint a Technical Advisory Panel, chaired by WHO, and comprising leading experts to assess and make recommendations to the Governing Board on the technical merits of proposals for funding, ensuring linkages to the International Health Regulations, as part of the broader global PPR architecture.

*“The COVID-19 pandemic has been a seismic shock to the world, but we also know that the next pandemic is a matter of when, not if,”* said WHO Director-General, Dr Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus. *“The suffering and loss we have all endured will be in vain unless we learn the painful lessons from COVID-19 and put in place the measures to fill critical gaps in the world’s defences against epidemics and pandemics. The FIF is one of those key measures, and WHO looks forward to fulfilling its technical leadership role in advising the FIF Board on where to make the most effective investments to protect health, especially in low- and middle-income countries.”*

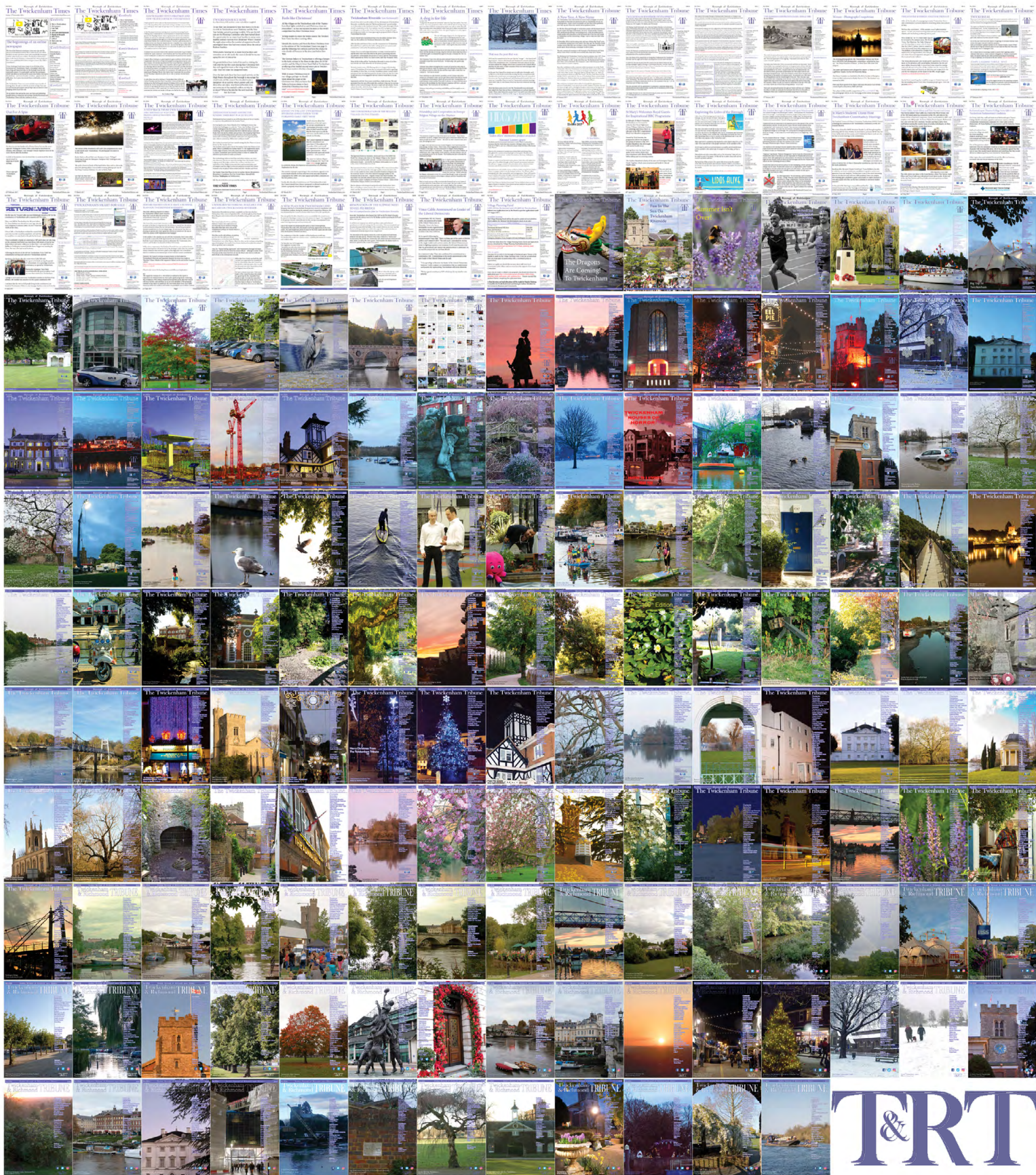
The new fund is overseen by a Governing Board, which will set the overall work program and make funding decisions. The FIF’s Governing Board includes equal representation of sovereign donors and potential implementing country governments (co-investors), as well as representatives from foundations and civil society organizations (CSOs). The World Bank and WHO will intensify their work with the Governing Board in consultation with CSOs and other stakeholders, to help operationalize the fund and develop the FIF results framework and priorities in the run up to the first call for proposals.

FIF financing could help strengthen and sustain PPR capacity in areas such as zoonotic disease surveillance; laboratories; emergency communication, coordination and management; critical health workforce capacities; and community engagement. FIF-financed projects can also help strengthen PPR at the regional and global levels, for example, by building capacity for medical countermeasures. The FIF can support peer-to-peer learning, provide targeted technical assistance, and help with the systematic monitoring of PPR capacities.

The FIF was developed with broad support from members of the G20 and beyond. Over US\$1.4 billion in financial commitments have already been announced and more are expected in the coming months. So far, commitments have been made by Australia, Canada, China, the European Commission, France, Germany, India, Indonesia, Italy, Japan, Republic of Korea, New Zealand, Norway, Singapore, South Africa, Spain, the United Arab Emirates, the United Kingdom, the United States, the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, the Rockefeller Foundation, and Wellcome Trust.



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