

Twickenham & Richmond TRIBUNE

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Editors

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Teresa Read



23rd December 2022

T&RT

TickerTape - News in Brief

Twickenham Police Order

Twickenham Riverside Police have obtained a full closure order for an address on Queens Road, Twickenham. Due to persistent and ongoing ASB issues and criminal investigations that were detrimental to the local community.

The order will be in effect from 05.01.2023.

Hampton Nursery School opens brand new facilities

Hampton Infants and Nursery School has recently opened a new nursery, replacing a dilapidated building, resulting in a fresh, modern learning environment for its youngest students.

The newly constructed main space features a large interactive touch screen, designated rooms with a sensory space, a kitchenette, new toilets, and a gated outdoor play area. It offers spaces for 26 children in the morning and 26 in the afternoon.

The project, which started in June 2022, was made possible with funding from Richmond Council as well as being project-managed by the Council's Programme Management Office. Work was completed in October 2022 and the school hosted an opening event on Monday 5 December 2022, to mark the successful delivery of the new facilities.

Residents donate 68 stockings of essential items for young care leavers

As part of the annual Richmond Christmas Day Dinner for care leavers between 18 and 25 years old, residents in the borough helped to raise 68 stockings full of essential items. With the annual Richmond Christmas Day Dinner fast approaching, the event has shared their gratitude with the community.

The Christmas Day Dinner is an annual event for care leavers between the age of 18 and 25. For the last four years, the event has celebrated care leavers for their resilience and helped to create positive memories. No young adult care leaver should feel alone during the Christmas holidays.

Find out more about the Richmond Christmas Day Dinner and how to volunteer [HERE](#)

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Merry Christmas

From all of us at the Tribune



Travel

South Western Railway confirms 21 extra services to support customers celebrating New Year's Eve

- The last trains into London Waterloo on Saturday 31 December will arrive by 2200
- An additional 21 services will depart London Waterloo on the morning of Sunday 1 January, between 0030 and 0315
- Extra services will run to Basingstoke, Guildford, Kingston, Reading, Staines, Strawberry Hill, Twickenham and Woking
- Customers should check both parts of their journey, on the day, using journey planners

SOUTH Western Railway (SWR) has confirmed 21 additional services from London Waterloo in the early morning of Sunday 1 January, New Year's Day.

These limited, extra services will allow customers to travel back from New Year's Eve festivities in the capital, which will host its first New Year's Eve fireworks since 2019.

As a limited timetable is being operated due to RMT industrial action, services into London Waterloo will end by 2200 on Saturday 31 December, with some London-bound trains departing much earlier. The 21 additional services out of London Waterloo will then begin from 0030 on Sunday 1 January with the 21st and final service leaving at 0315.

Those services will run to Basingstoke, Guildford, Kingston, Reading, Staines, Strawberry Hill, Twickenham and Woking. Customers should check journey planners before travelling for more information as trains will have differing calling patterns.

Claire Mann, Managing Director, South Western Railway, said:

"We're very pleased to confirm these limited, extra services for our customers. It's been three years since the traditional New Year's Eve fireworks in London and we know just how important this occasion will be.

"Anticipating the demand for this special occasion, we've worked hard to ensure as many customers as possible can take part in the festivities. We're advising customers looking to travel on these extra services to check both parts of their journey carefully. These services will be very busy after the fireworks and we're working with Transport for London and British Transport Police on a queueing system at London Waterloo.

"As per our amended timetable, services into London Waterloo will end by 2200, but some of those trains will start their journeys a lot earlier. After 2200 there will be a gap of two and a half hours before the first of the extra trains out of London Waterloo, with the last leaving at 0315. Please do check carefully and if you're travelling, we hope you enjoy the festivities."

Seasons Greetings from



The Tree Agency

darryl parkin

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25 King Edwards Grove
Teddington, Middlesex TW11 9LY
Telephone 020 8274 0107
Mobile 07960 123580
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The Tree Agency

Boxing Day 1942

By Simon Fowler

Between 2008 and 2010 the Borough of Twickenham History Society newsletter included extracts from a series of delightful letters sent by Faith Buckley to her daughters, who had been evacuated to Canada in 1940.

For most British people Christmas 1942 was a sadly pared-back affair. Cards were tiny and printed on thin card. Wrapping paper was unavailable. Festive food and drink was in desperately short supply. The Times suggested that “many British households are wondering if they will get their turkey for Christmas”. Christmas puddings were in equally short supply. The Ministry of Food had said that a large number of puddings had been manufactured, but this was regarded by housewives as being nothing more than a “Christmas joke”

American troops however were largely exempt from such shortages and most were very willing to share what they had with the host population. Mrs Buckley wrote to her daughters that on:

Boxing Day we went to Hampton Court Palace and there in the beautiful old Oak Room the Kinsmen and ladies of the Palace gave a turkey Xmas Party to 150 Americans. We did enjoy it. Daddy did not have to carve after all but he helped to wait on table. The

tables looked lovely with gold chairs on both sides. They were decorated with silver candlesticks in long rows, silver stands with Stars and Stripes and Union Jack flags, vases of holly and bonbons.

First, we served soup, then turkey with Spam, sausages, apple sauce, baked potatoes and Brussel sprouts, then Christmas pudding and mince pies and finally coffee. I became quite an expert at balancing my tray and plates. The men had beer to drink, their glasses being filled from glass jugs which we filled from huge barrels in the kitchens. When we had served the coffee, we found there were heaps of pudding and mince pies left over so we helpers all enjoyed ourselves, and had coffee too.

Before the men were served with their pudding and mince pies the chef carried from the kitchen to the dining room, walking the full length with the dish held high above his head, a huge pudding ablaze with spirit, the flames leaping up around the centre of holly. It looked beautiful.

We thought everything had been so carefully planned and arranged and then when Lady Howard had mounted her ladder and the blazing pudding set before her, she suddenly waved her hands frantically about and shouted “There’s no spoon or fork - how can I serve it without a spoon?” We all went rushing for a SPOON!! Accidents happen, apparently even in the highest circles!

Then there was a Christmas tree with a present for each man -- then community singing, and then we all went home on a lovely clear night - very happy.



CHRISTMAS THEN AND NOW

By Alan Winter

THEN

Throughout Edwardian Britain before the first World War, there was a morning post delivery on Christmas day. You could send postcards on Christmas Eve secure in the knowledge that they would be delivered on Christmas day.

This was the era known as the golden age of postcards as it was the cheapest and quickest form of communication with anyone that you couldn't call to over the garden fence.

No computers or telephones then of course and so multi millions of postcards were landing on door mats every day. Everyone knew their postman who worked on a particular area for many years. The postman was part of the solid fabric of local community that existed in those days along with the milkman, vicar and the local police officer.



Christmas postcards were the forerunners of Christmas cards and the vast majority at this time were printed in Germany where the most efficient and up to date printing works were based.

The two examples shown here are postcards from the first decade of the 20th century and are classic examples of the work of artists and designers at that time.

NOW

Christmas cards piled up in post office delivery depots, postmen on strike (not that I blame them).

The letterboxes are silent. Oh well, we can always send a two - line email! I'm really unsure that 120 years on we have made much progress.

Happy Christmas everyone!

Mature trees lock away more climate warming carbon than previously estimated

By Teresa Read

This week University College London published an article highlighting new findings into the importance of trees in the fight against climate change; the study was published on 20 December 2022 in the journal Ecological Solutions and Evidence.

The key point of the research is that mature trees lock away more climate warming carbon than previously thought.

Professor Mat Disney (UCL Geography and the National Centre for Earth Observation) is reported as saying “This has serious implications for our understanding of the benefits of protecting trees in terms of climate mitigation—and deforestation and afforestation targets more broadly.”

This research must be borne in mind by local Council’s, especially when preparing their own development briefs and assessing planning applications.

In the case of the Twickenham Riverside development there are mature trees around the perimeter of the area the Council aims to develop, the London Borough of Richmond upon Thames could save these trees – and the trees on the Embankment; destruction and replacement of healthy trees must be reconsidered in any plans for the area.



Hampton Nursery School opens brand new facilities

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The newly constructed main space features a large interactive touch screen, designated rooms with a sensory space, a kitchenette, new toilets, and a gated outdoor play area. It offers spaces for 26 children in the morning and 26 in the afternoon.

The project, which started in June 2022, was made possible with funding from Richmond Council as well as being project-managed by the Council’s Programme Management Office. Work was completed in October 2022 and the school hosted an opening event on Monday 5 December 2022, to mark the successful delivery of the new facilities.

As part of the opening event, the nursery children shared their thoughts on the new nursery. Watch here: [Hampton Nursery Pupils Presentation](#)



Work set to begin on Elleray Hall redevelopment

Work will shortly begin on the redevelopment of Elleray Hall in Teddington with a new Community Centre set to be delivered in early 2024, and work on the affordable housing units starting shortly after that.

During this construction phase of the new centre, the current centre on Elleray Road will remain open to the public and services from the centre will continue to run. The Elleray Community Association will only move into the new building once it is complete, to allow for a continuous provision of its key services for older people.

Cllr Nancy Baldwin, Lead Member for Communities and the Voluntary Sector, said: *“I am delighted that we now have a start date for work to commence on the long-awaited redevelopment of Elleray Hall. The plans for the site are hugely exciting. They will create a state-of-the-art community space which will serve the community long into the future. With flexible indoor and outdoor space, it will bring benefits to residents of all ages.”*

Cllr Jim Millard, Lead Member for Housing, said: *“The provision of sixteen new affordable homes will be a welcome and much-needed addition to the housing in the local area. As a Council we are committed to making sure residents of all ages are able to live in Richmond upon Thames and enjoy all that our borough has to offer, as part of a thriving and diverse community. Delivering genuinely affordable homes like these will help us achieve this commitment.”*



The North Lane car park closure is scheduled for 5 January 2023. Cosmur will then erect hoarding, complete their site set-up and carry out archaeological investigations which will take place in the week commencing 9 January. Following this, the main construction works are due to start on 6 February 2023.

The second phase will see the demolition of the existing community centre in early 2024 to make way for the affordable housing units with the full project set to be completed by early 2025.

The scheme will deliver a new community centre that is fit for purpose and will provide space for the needs of the local community to be met now and in the future. The new Community Centre is part-funded by 100% affordable housing on the existing site. The housing scheme will deliver sixteen residential units, as well as:

- Private gardens and communal amenity space
- Car-free units with the exception of the two accessible wheelchair units
- A car club space

Following extensive consultation with the local community, plans were approved by the Local Planning Authority and planning permission granted in June of this year. Richmond Council has now finalised planning agreements with the Local Planning Authority and the building contractor Cosmur has been appointed.

Find out more information [about the scheme](#). For details of the Resident Liaison Officer for the construction period, please email info@cosmur.co.uk.

Dear Sir

Ageism omitted from last week's letter

I would like to comment on the letter in last week's Twickenham & Richmond Tribune concerning an overheard conversation about the debacle over Lady Hussey's conversation with Ms Fulani. The writer is certainly up-to-date with some of the current "isms" but perhaps Ageism should be added to the list.

Surely there should be concern about the attitude of the six 'retired' men mentioned in the letter who were said to be "calmly discussing" Lady Hussey, 83 years of age, apparently saying that Lady Hussey should have retired long ago.

Would they have said that about Queen Elizabeth II who was still working at the age of 96? Presumably, they were aware that our late Queen appointed Liz Truss as British Prime Minister, just two days before her death in September this year.

Our present sovereign King Charles III, the Head of State, is 74 and the Queen Consort is 75. What about Sir David Attenborough (96) or Dame Judy Dench (88)?

V.W. East Twickenham, (Name and address supplied)

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.

Seasons Greetings from Richmond CVS

At the close of another eventful year we'd like to thank all our colleagues for your continuing hard work to support our local community.

The amazing commitment and initiatives across our network are always an inspiration and we feel fortunate to work alongside you. We wish you a well deserved safe and happy holiday and look forward to seeing you in 2023.

Our office will close at 5pm on Thursday 22 December and we will be available again when we reopen on Tuesday 3 January 2023.

In the meantime, we have listed below a brief range of information and resources to help residents through the holiday and winter period.

www.richmond cvs.org.uk





Youth mental health services in Richmond receive major boost

Fulwell Golf Club raises £51,326.78 in support of Richmond Borough Mind's work with Children and Young People

Fulwell Golf Club's 'Captain's Charity Campaign 2022' has raised an unprecedented £51,326.78 in support of local mental health services. Richmond Borough Mind, as beneficiaries, will use the money to support their continuing expansion of mental health support for children and young people living or at school in the borough of Richmond.

"We are absolutely delighted with the amount we've raised this year" said Susanna Gillett, Fulwell Golf Club's Captain. "Coming out of the pandemic we were aware mental health was an issue that needed more support, particularly where young people and children were concerned. Club members really got behind the cause and helped us more than double our original target of £20,000. I am so proud to have helped start more conversations about mental health".



The club led a comprehensive awareness and fundraising campaign, including talks and challenges, such as the 100-hole challenge, Ride London and completing 3 marathons in 1 month as well as auctions, raffles and sweep stakes.

"With waiting lists so long and funding for mental health services not nearly enough, this significant contribution from Fulwell Golf Club will help us start to fill the gaps" said Val Farmer, Chief Executive of Richmond Borough Mind. "Young people have higher mental health need than ever".

Richmond has high rates of hospital admissions for mental health, self-harm and alcohol presentations compared to the rest of London (Richmond Mental Health Needs Assessment 2022).

As an independent charity, Richmond Borough Mind relies on donations from the community to fund our work. Donate - Richmond Borough Mind (rbmind.org) For more information about mental health support, please contact 020 3137 9590 or info@rbmind.org



Ham Close redevelopment gets the go ahead

Richmond Council's Planning Committee has resolved to approve the planning application for the Ham Close redevelopment. The committee voted unanimously.

The proposals for the regeneration of Ham Close were submitted by housing provider RHP Group (the largest provider of affordable housing in Richmond upon Thames) and their development partner, Hill. The Ham Close redevelopment will include 452 new homes, alongside community facilities and a range of public green spaces.

Councillor Jim Millard, Richmond Council's Lead Member for Housing, said: *"I am delighted that this landmark regeneration project has been approved and can now move forward toward providing the new, healthier and easier-to-heat homes we all want to see for the current residents of Ham Close, with the many added social benefits including*



the provision of many more additional genuinely affordable, sustainable homes, a fantastic new community centre, improved public realm and connectivity.

"The new affordable homes will be a welcome addition to the area and will play a significant part in helping us achieve our goal of delivering over 1,000 affordable homes in the borough over coming years that will cater for the needs of the community into the future."

RHP has worked closely with Richmond Council on the development of the plans, including carrying out extensive consultation with the residents of Ham Close and the wider community over the last 10 years. The focus has been on creating a sustainable new development that meets current and future local housing needs. Benefits include more private and community outdoor spaces, opportunities for apprenticeships and construction jobs for local people and a 23% net biodiversity gain for the site.

You can find out more about the [Ham Close Regeneration Programme](#) and [watch a flythrough video](#).

No one should feel cold or alone at Christmas...

By Deep Patel

For those beautiful souls who read my articles each week, you will be very familiar that I am always writing about kindness to the little lives around us, like using your mobile phone torch when walking in the rain at night to pick up any slugs, worms and snails stranded on the pavements so they are not crushed by others walking there, or choosing to sprinkle talcum powder around where ants come to stop them kindly (but not directly on them!) and swapping out nasty mouse traps for humane live capture traps to set them free in woodland areas after...but this week, for the lovely Christmas edition, I wanted to bring the focus back onto humans. Meet & Deep Newsagents on Hampton Road will once again be opening their doors on Christmas Day to offer the community a warm and welcoming place to come for free mince pies and free hugs. You do not have to buy anything, you are family. Owners Pallu and Shashi Patel (pictured above outside their shop) started this tradition 25 years ago to try and help combat loneliness during a time where most people are spending time with their families. They have one mission with their Christmas Community Party (which now attracts in excess of 200 visitors through the 3 hours they are open)...they just want to make sure no one is lonely or cold on Christmas day. That's all. Two pleasures that so many of us take for granted perhaps.



Shashi (left) Pallu (right) owners of Meet & Deep Newsagents on Hampton Road, Twickenham

If the lockdowns over the past few years taught us all anything, they taught us the importance of human interaction. It doesn't matter if you are rich or poor, black or white, young or old, male or female...we all need to feel the association of some other. The human touch. Socialising with others. Pallu said "this year many of our customers have said they cannot afford to heat their homes, we have no heating in our shop but our shop is naturally warm because of all the machinery and motors, we don't want anyone to feel cold or alone on Christmas so we are inviting everyone to have my Christmas samosas and my husband Shashi's own blend masala chai tea, you don't have to buy anything, we are family".



*Pictured above left to right:
Meet (son) Pallu (mum) Shashi (dad) and Me! (Deep)*

Shashi has always said “I do not measure the success of my shop on the number of coins in my till, but on the number of smiles on our customers faces, if they buy nothing I don’t care, as long as they leave with a happy face, that makes me happy most, because my shop is also my home and everyone should only leave happy from my home”.

So, there we have it...as well as preaching kindness towards the spiders, ants, worms and spiders, Meet and Deep newsagents loves people too! If you are walking by on Christmas day between the hours of 12pm-3pm, please pop in for a mince pie, hug and some of Pallu’s samosas (she has prepared over 200!) and a glug of Shashi’s own blend masala chai tea...and if that still isn’t enough to warm you up, you will also be greeted by a free hug from one of their sons (Meet or Deep) or both if you are in need of extra warming up...you do not have to buy anything...we are family.

Follow our Facebook pages “Meet and Deep News” and “Kind World” for more information on our Christmas event and future events we do. Until next time, happy Christmas and may I take this opportunity to thank the owners, editors and readers of the Twickenham Tribune for supporting and reading my articles throughout the year. May good karma be with all in 2023 also. Happy 2023 to all.

Happy Christmas to all Tribune readers from Meet & Deep Newsagents xxxx



*Yes...Shashi felt he had to spell it out for you...
Do come in for his Masala chai tea...it's free!*

HAPPY CHRISTMAS TO ALL

Pharmacy opening hours over the holidays

Bank holidays can affect the opening hours of local pharmacies. Here we include information about pharmacies which have been asked to open over the Christmas and New Year holidays in the borough and wider area.

Christmas and New Year bank holidays

[KC Pharmacy](#) in Teddington will remain open with amended hours during the Christmas and New Year bank holidays.

Contact information:

Address: 23 Broad Street, Teddington, TW11 8QZ

Phone: 020 8977 1351

Opening times will be as follows:

Christmas Day (Sunday 25 December): 10am to 6pm

Boxing Day (Monday 26 December): 10am to 6pm

Tuesday 27 December: 10am to 6pm

New Years Day (Sunday 1 January): 10am to 6pm

Monday 2 January: 10am to 6pm

Pharmacy opening hours in other areas

There may be additional pharmacies opening which are not listed. If the pharmacy you would like to visit is not listed here, then you can check their opening hours by using [NHS find a pharmacy](#) or by calling NHS 111.

In addition, there will be some pharmacies who normally open who may be closed or closing early on Saturday 24 December 2022 and Saturday 31 December 2022. If you are unsure, please visit [NHS find a pharmacy](#).



Visiting your local pharmacist

For quick and easy health advice, residents are being encouraged to visit their local pharmacist. Pharmacists are medically trained experts in a variety of areas and can help with lots of common conditions and minor illnesses, such as colds, sore throats, tummy trouble, aches, pains and minor injuries.

They can also offer medication advice, free consultations, vaccinations, emergency contraception, incontinence supplies, pregnancy testing and much more.

No appointments are needed, and many local pharmacies have private consultation rooms so people can ask for advice in confidence.

Pharmacists also have the right training to identify and advise if someone needs to see a GP, nurse or other healthcare professional.



Ring Out, Wild Bells

*Ring out false pride in place and blood,
The civic slander and the spite;
Ring in the love of truth and right.
Ring in the common love of good.*

*Ring out old shapes of foul disease;
Ring out the narrowing lust of gold;
Ring out the thousand wars of old,
Ring in the thousand years of peace.*

Alfred, Lord Tennyson 19th century poem

Beautiful poem written a century ago to confront the inequalities of the time and as true today we need to decide if we want The Gutter Britain News to dominate our lives or truly want a Great Britain again for all. Our group is a nature focused one and that includes people who are, after all, animals at the top of the food chain. Some of us are now on the 'RED LIST' as the powerful media and interests target those not in line with their goals. Many still use anonymity to hide behind as even they are ashamed of what they are saying.

Stand up and be counted for the sake of those who cannot defend themselves.

Wishing all a peaceful space and time to reflect as the year draws to a close and fun to with friends and family! *Love and Light to all Life, Sammi and Iain*

'TWIXMAS' FOOD AND DRINK IDEAS

If you haven't done your final Christmas food shop by the time you read this, then you'd better get your skates on! If you're doing some last minute stockings, then head to Oxfam or Waitrose and do yourself and the recipient a big favour, by buying some **Divine chocolate**. This gift pack of six chunky bars is £9.99 from Oxfam, but there is also a great selection in Waitrose. And remember, every cocoa bean Divine grows and every chocolate bar they make directly improves the lives of farmers and their families.



This panettone is a great standby in case you are invited out or receive an unexpected gift and want to return the compliment. In the **Tesco Finest** range - its **Tiramisu style panettone** is great value at £10 for a generous 790g with coffee chocolate chips and a coffee flavoured filling. (£9 if you have a Tesco Clubcard). But I warn you, you'll be tempted to buy one for yourself too!

And Christmas, for me anyway, isn't Christmas without those delicious pickled walnuts on Boxing Day with the cold meats. Opies, THE name for pickled walnuts, also produces some other fabulous products, such as bottled fruits in alcohol syrup, (Black cherries with Luxardo Kirsch is currently on offer in Sainsbury's - down from £6 to £3.50) that offer a delightfully refreshing and easy change from mince pies and Christmas pud! Here are some recipes from Opies that will be great for that 'Twixmas time. First a casserole that uses up that turkey and then a modern take on baked Alaska but using ready made ice cream and sweet Belgian waffles.



Turkey Casserole (Serves 4)

Preparation time: 10 minutes **Cooking time:** 40 minutes **Allergens:** Dairy, Gluten, Nuts, Sulphites (White Wine) and Celery, Barley (dependent on stock cube)

8 Opies Pickled Walnuts, halved

50g Butter

50ml Oil

2 Onions, sliced

250g Lardons

25g Flour

650g Cooked Turkey, shredded

200g Carrots, sliced

700ml Chicken Stock

250ml White Wine

Salt and Black Pepper

100g Frozen Peas



1. Pre-heat the oven to 180°C.
2. Heat the butter and oil in a shallow pan. Add the onions and lardons, fry until the onions have softened and the lardons have browned.
3. Place in a casserole dish together with the turkey, walnuts and carrots.
4. Stir in the flour well and pour over the stock and wine. Season to taste.
5. Cover tightly and bake in the oven for approximately 20 minutes.
6. Remove from the oven and stir in the frozen peas. Re-cover and return to the oven for 10 minutes.
7. Serve immediately with delicious, crispy and buttered jacket potatoes.

Hints and tips: Swap cooked turkey for leftover roast chicken.

Individual Alaskan Bomb with Cherries in Kirsch

Serves 4 Preparation time: 20 minutes **Cooking time:** 5 minutes **Oven temperature:** 220°C

Allergens: gluten, eggs, milk, **Cooks notes:** piping bag and large star nozzle

500ml vanilla ice cream

4 x 8cm round sweet waffles

100g Opies Black Cherries with Kirsch and reserved syrup

4 egg whites

200g caster sugar

1. Pre-heat oven to 220°C
2. Place the waffles on a lined baking tray, drizzle about a tbsp of reserved syrup on each one.
3. Place 2 – 3 scoops of ice cream on top of each waffle and push in Opies Black Cherries with Kirsch, refreeze until solid.
4. To make the meringue, place egg whites in a very clean bowl, whisk until stiff peaks are formed.
5. Whisk in half of the sugar for about a minute until there are soft peaks, gradually fold in the remaining sugar.
6. Put the meringue in a piping bag fitted with a large star nozzle, pipe rosettes all over the ice cream mixture.
7. Bake immediately in a very hot oven at 220°C for 3 minutes until the meringue is golden.
8. Serve immediately. Hints and Tips: As an alternative to using the oven, a kitchen blowtorch can be used to brown the meringue.



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The Wizard of Oz Jr.

by L. Frank Baum, music and lyrics by Harold Arlen and E. Y. Harburg
Dramacube, at the Hampton Hill Theatre

Everyone knows the plot of *The Wizard of Oz*, the familiar tale that offers a beacon of hope that better days are “over the rainbow”, with strong moral messages and the simple adage that “there’s no place like home”.

Dramacube is producing this play with four different casts, which must be quite a challenge for director Matthew Bunn and his MD-Choreographers Heather Stockwell and Rory Cubin. But they’ve managed to pull off this amazing feat and all casts perform with a confidence and aplomb that is quite astonishing for children so young.



Dramacube’s fifty-minute version of the musical retains the strong plotline and our four critics note that the young actors do an excellent job of telling the story. The trio of Scarecrow who has no brain and wishes to gain one, Tin Man who desperately wishes he had a heart, and the cowardly Lion who wishes he had courage and strength, are all masterfully acted. The four Dorotheas act with wistful conviction, singing that wonderful song *Over The Rainbow* with heartfelt and exquisite sensitivity. A canine quartet of sweet and loyal Totos completes the gang of adventurous travellers. The whole cast’s energy and enthusiasm becomes infectious and is truly life-affirming.

Hannah Calaroo’s set, complete with Yellow Brick Road, is delightful, and impressively boosted by atmospheric projections.

Special mention must be made of Calarco’s remarkable parade of over fifty costumes, with her apple trees a standout.

The audience, many as tiny as the performers, were enthralled by a strong production of fifty enjoyable minutes with great talent on full display. Dramacube’s *The Wizard of Oz* is certainly the perfect Christmas confection.



Read the review of the Twickenham Green Cast by Evie Schaapveld, one of our younger reviewers, aged 12, at www.markaspen.com/2022/12/17/wiz-oz-green

Read Daniel Wain’s review of the Hampton Hill Red Cast at www.markaspen.com/2022/12/18/wizard-oz-red

Lottie Walker’s review of the Twickenham Blue Cast at www.markaspen.com/2022/12/19/wiz-oz-blue, and

Heather Moulson’s review of the Hampton Hill Yellow Cast at www.markaspen.com/2022/12/20/wiz-oz-yellow

Photography by Simone Sutton

Arms and the Man

by George Bernard Shaw

Orange Tree Theatre, Richmond until 14th January

For his swansong in the artistic chair at the Orange Tree, director Paul Miller has created a brisk, well-paced and beautifully-acted piece of theatre. His latest foray into the world of Shaw, *Arms and the Man*, focuses on the life of Raina Petkoff, a Bulgarian heiress who is engaged to a swaggering Bulgarian cavalry officer, Sergius. In the midst of the Serbian-Bulgarian war, the unexpected arrival of a battle-wearied enemy officer, Bluntschli, a Swiss mercenary fighting for the Serbian army, turns Raina's life upside down after he's taken refuge in her bedroom. And so begins Shaw's satire on the debunking of the romantic ideals of war and heroism. Bluntschli's pragmatic and cynical attitude to war and soldiering shocks the idealistic Raina, especially after he admits that he uses his ammunition pouches to carry chocolates rather than cartridges – the prototype “chocolate soldier”.



Alex Bhat's swaggering cavalry officer, Sergius, is masterfully funny – anarchic comedy indeed – yet striking exactly the right balance between comedy and farce. It is an outrageous and mesmerising physical performance. As the counter-balance to the war-hero, Bluntschli is the pragmatic idealist and is very much the mouthpiece for Shaw's ideals. He also provides the romantic hero and Alex Waldmann's Bluntschli comes across as both believable and sincere. As for the heroine, Rebecca Collingwood's Raina is full of well observed expression and reaction, capturing the transition from the naïve open-eyed girl to a knowing and mature young woman. Raina's mother, played by Miranda Foster, turns in a particularly fine and authentic performance.

Arms and the Man, is an intelligent, funny and romantic play in equal measures, a thumping good evening's entertainment in the theatre. Despite being a comedy, it tells of the harsh realities and futility of war, and retains a stark resonance given today's war in Ukraine.



Read Steve Mackrell's review at www.markaspen.com/2022/11/24/arms-man

Photography by Ellie Kurttz

TRAVELLER'S TALES 137

SNOW TIME

Doug Goodman wonders if we've had our ration of snow for 2022

Snow clogged up the roads, made travelling difficult and froze our garden plants. But if you like the white stuff and the prolonged cold spell you may have enjoyed walking along the river path, whizzing down a hill in a black sack or trying to build a snowman. For readers who may be dreaming of a white Christmas just like the ones we used to know, we are likely to be disappointed according to the latest forecast. There's no sign of snow for Christmas just yet but who knows what next week will bring.



I've experienced 35 below zero walking through snow drifts by Lake Baikal in Siberia and I've skied in deep powder snow in The Alps. But there's something about Richmond Park's snowy landscape and views across The Thames in winter that take a lot of beating.

Here are some pictures taken by Doug all of which were shot in Twickenham, apart from the snow-covered farm gate, during previous winters' snow falls.



WIZ Tales: Malaysia – Floods and Landslides This Week

Teresa Read

On 21 December 2022 it was reported in the Bangkok Post that over 70,000 people were evacuated during floods in Malaysia.

Floods took place in over eighty areas with landslides and roads and bridges affected.

Malaysia, located in Southeast Asia, consists of the Malaysian Peninsula and the States of Sabah and Sarawak on the island of Borneo - Borneo is also shared with Brunei and Indonesia.

The jungles of Malaysia are said to be the oldest in the world. They cover more than two thirds of the country and play a vital role in both its economic life and its climate.

One of the world's most endangered animals is unique to this part of the world – the orang utan - found only in Sumatra and Borneo, is the only great ape living naturally outside Africa.



Canopy Walkway



Bukit Tabur



Lenggong Valley

Malaysia – more information and photographs:
<https://worldinfozone.com/gallery.php?country=Malaysia>

Borneo: photographs:
<https://worldinfozone.com/features.php?section=Borneo>



Covid-19

By Teresa Read

World Health Organization

COVID-19 Weekly Epidemiological Update, Data as of 18 December 2022

Globally, the number of new weekly cases reported during the week of 12 to 18 December 2022 was similar (+3%) to the previous week, with over 3.7 million new cases reported. The number of new weekly deaths was 6% lower than in the previous week, with over 10,400 new fatalities reported. In the last 28 days, over 13.7 million cases and over 40,000 new fatalities were reported globally – a 36% increase and 2% decline, respectively, compared to the previous 28 days. As of 18 December 2022, over 649 million confirmed cases and over 6.6 million deaths have been reported globally.

At the regional level, the number of newly reported weekly cases decreased across four of the six WHO regions: the South-East Asia Region (-36%), the African Region (-29%), the Eastern Mediterranean Region (-26%), and the European Region (-16%); while case numbers increased in two WHO regions: the Western Pacific Region (+8%) and the Region of the Americas (+18%). The number of newly reported weekly deaths decreased or remained stable across five regions: the African Region (-95%), the Eastern Mediterranean Region (-39%), the European Region (-22%), the South-East Asia Region (-20%), and the Region of the Americas (+3%); while death numbers increased in the Western Pacific Region (+7%).

At the country level, the highest numbers of new weekly cases were reported from Japan (1,046,650 new cases; +23%), the Republic of Korea (459,811 new cases; +9%), the United States of America (445,424 new cases; -3%), France (341,136 new cases; -20%), and Brazil (337,810 new cases; +74%). The highest numbers of new weekly deaths were reported from the United States of America (2,658 new deaths; -13%), Japan (1,617 new deaths; +19%), Brazil (1,133 new deaths; +88%), France (686 new deaths; +27%), and Italy (519 new deaths; -23%).

The European Region reported over 952,000 new cases, a 16% decrease as compared to the previous week. Five (8%) of the 61 countries for which data are available reported increases in new cases of 20% or greater, with the highest proportional increases observed in Kosovo (13 vs four new cases; +225%), Guernsey (369 vs 180 new cases; +105%), and Azerbaijan (535 vs 350 new cases; +53%).

The highest numbers of new cases were reported from France (341,136 new cases; 524.5 new cases per 100,000; -20%), Germany (201,105 new cases; 241.8 new cases per 100,000; +1%), and Italy (130,145 new cases; 218.2 new cases per 100,000; -34%). The European Region reported over 952,000 new cases, a 16% decrease as compared to the previous week. Five (8%) of the 61 countries for which data are available reported increases in new cases of 20% or greater, with the highest proportional increases observed in Kosovo (13 vs four new cases; +225%), Guernsey (369 vs 180 new cases; +105%), and Azerbaijan (535 vs 350 new cases; +53%). The highest numbers of new cases were reported from France (341,136 new cases; 524.5 new cases per 100,000; -20%), Germany (201,105 new cases; 241.8 new cases per 100,000; +1%), and Italy (130,145 new cases; 218.2 new cases per 100,000; -34%).

The number of new weekly deaths in the region decreased by 22% as compared to the previous week, with 2853 new deaths reported. The highest numbers of new deaths were reported from France (686 new deaths; 1.1 new deaths per 100,000; +27%), Italy (519 new deaths; <1 new death per 100,000; -23%), and the Russian Federation (389 new deaths; <1 new death per 100,000; +2%).

IN THE NEWS THIS WEEK

Independent: Covid: Britons given Christmas warning as cases rise again

SKY News: COVID in China: Half of Shanghai's population of 25 million 'could be infected by end of next week'

Aljazeera: WHO chief 'very concerned' over COVID situation in China: WHO head Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus appeals for detailed information as China battles a surge of COVID cases

The Hindu: COVID-19 Omicron subvariant BF.7 linked to China spike

NDTV: Covid Variant BF.7 Has Come to India

St Mary's University

St Mary's University Announces Launch of New Academic Press

St Mary's University, Twickenham has announced the launch of the St Mary's University Press which will oversee the publication of new academic work.



The Press will produce publications that further scholarly investigation, advance interdisciplinary inquiry, stimulate public debate, and enhance cultural life in an atmosphere that is supportive, enthusiastic, and pleasurable.

It will cover a broad range of subjects. Including Theology and Religious Studies, Education, Philosophy, Humanities, Psychology, Sport and Human Physiology, Business and Law, Social Sciences and Health and Applied Science.

As an inclusive Catholic University seeking to develop the whole person and to empower our community to have a positive global impact, St Mary's promotes interdisciplinary research and scholarship which it aims to disseminate through the Press.

The Press will embody the core values of St Mary's by seeking to encourage inclusiveness, generosity of spirit, respect, and excellence in the publications it sponsors. Its publications

will be produced to the highest professional standards, providing a forum to influence public policy debate and problem solving for the common good. In this respect the St Mary's University Press will, through its publications, stress the formation of the whole person: mentally, emotionally, and spiritually, as well as the creation of a social conscience.

Speaking of the launch, Secretary of the St Mary's University Press Prof Peter Tyler said, "We are delighted to see the St Mary's University Press after significant work from members of the University community, including our Chair, Emeritus Professor John Charmley. The Press is committed to furthering knowledge and making innovative and rigorous scholarship available to the widest possible readership through our range of research publications. I look forward with excitement to seeing the first volumes from the press being published."

The Press's primary publications will be academic volumes based on research sponsored by the University or its scholars, including scholarly monographs and reference works. Through combining high quality scholarship with excellent production values, the Press aims to produce academic works of lasting value.

Alongside traditional hard and paperback volumes, the press will operate with electronic editions and Print on Demand models. The Press will also endeavour to reprint new scholarly editions of classic books that have now fallen out of print.



St Mary's
University
Twickenham
London

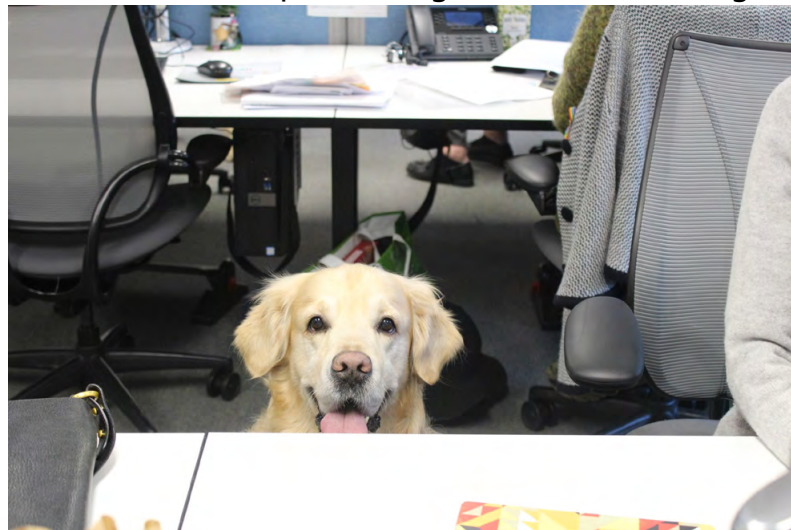
Bring Your Dog to Work Day a hit at Princess Alice Hospice

Bring Your Dog to Work Day at Princess Alice Hospice is always a paw-fect way for all furry friend lovers to spend a day as part of the Hospice's Wellbeing Programme because research shows that for some, the act of stroking a pet can reduce blood pressure, stress and significantly boost mood.

This year, the Hospice combined the day with a canine festive jumper competition which was judged by one of the Hospice's patients, Margaret, who is currently being cared for in the In-Patient Unit. Margaret was thoroughly wrapped up against the chilly morning but was thrilled to be asked to judge and meet the excitable entrants, who eagerly lined up to be introduced.

It was a very tough decision for Margaret, who thought all of the contenders were winners, but after some careful deliberation, the prize - Dog Deli Premium Dog Treats - was

awarded to Iona (pictured in Santa suit and leggings), an 18-month-old Cavapoo.



Iona is looked after from time to time by Partnerships Fundraiser, Rianna Davies, based with the Community & Events team.

Iona had a paw-some time and was excited to receive her treats and get home to tell her owner about the adventure. Bone-appetite!

Clinical Support Worker, Anna Kim, said: 'It was fantastic to see so many beautiful dogs in the building. We wanted Margaret to judge the competition as we know how much she loves dogs and was missing her own dog back at home. It meant so much to her, thank you to everyone'

Steve Borthwick appointed England Rugby men's head coach

Steve Borthwick Appointed England Rugby Men's Head Coach together with Kevin Sinfield OBE in the role of Defence Coach.

The RFU is delighted to confirm that former England captain and forwards coach, Steve Borthwick will take on the role of England men's head coach from today.

Kevin Sinfield has also been appointed to the position of England men's defence coach taking on the role this week.

Borthwick started his playing career at Preston Grasshoppers, he represented England Schools, Colts U21 and Saxons.

He played lock in 57 Tests for England from 2001-2010 and captained the side 21 times. He played Premiership rugby for ten years at Bath and six years at Saracens; captained both teams and became a Premiership winner in 2011 making 265 Premiership appearances, a record at the time.

His coaching career has included positions with Saracens and Leicester Tigers, where he led the team to winning the 2021-22 Premiership title.

He was also recognised as the season's Director of Rugby, having spearheaded the club's best winning run for 25 years.

In his international coaching career, Borthwick worked as forwards coach in two Rugby World Cup cycles alongside Eddie Jones for Japan from 2012 to 2015 and for England between 2015 and 2020, with England reaching the final at the 2019 Rugby World Cup.

He also coached on the British and Irish Lions' tour of New Zealand in 2017 which saw the side draw the Test series against the All Blacks.

Steve Borthwick said: "I'm deeply honoured to be appointed England head coach, and I am very excited by the challenge.

"The English game is full of talent and I want to build a winning team which makes the most of our huge potential and inspires young people to fall in love with rugby union the way I did. I want the whole country to be proud of us and to enjoy watching us play.

"The hard work starts now and planning for the Guinness Six Nations and Rugby World Cup begins today. I will give it everything."

Borthwick has signed a five-year contract reporting into RFU CEO, Bill Sweeney, who said: "We are delighted to be welcoming Steve back to the RFU. He has been part of the England team

for over 15 years and he is our first-choice successor to Eddie.

“Steve and Kevin’s insight and first-hand knowledge of the players will be a great asset and everyone at the RFU is right behind them with our full support.”

Sinfield started playing Rugby League at Waterhead ARLFC. He was a player, captain and director of rugby for Leeds Rhinos where he led the team to seven Super League championships and two Challenge Cup successes. He was a loose forward as well as a stand-off.

He played 26 rugby league tests for England which he captained and 14 tests for Great Britain. He holds the record for the highest points-scorer in Super League history and earned many individual accolades including the Lance Todd Trophy (2005), Harry Sunderland Trophy (2009, 2012) and the Golden Boot (2012).

Sinfield has been defence coach alongside Borthwick in their record-breaking run at Leicester Tigers.

Sinfield was appointed Member of the Order of the British Empire (MBE) in the 2014 Birthday Honours for services to rugby league and Officer of the Order of the British Empire (OBE) in the 2021 Birthday Honours for services to rugby league football and charitable fundraising.

He has raised over £7m for charity and championed research in support of ex-Leeds teammate Rob Burrow, who was diagnosed with Motor Neurone Disease (MND), his fundraising also honours former rugby union player Doddie Weir and former footballer Stephen Darby, both of whom were diagnosed with MND.

Sinfield said: “It is a special moment to join England as a coach. I know what representing your country means and to get the chance to do it as a coach is a real honour.

“There is so much player talent in England and I am really looking forward to working with the wider squad of players to see what we can achieve together, especially with such a massive year ahead of us.

“I’d like to thank everyone at Leicester Tigers, the players, staff and supporters, for welcoming me to the club. I’ve loved my time there and wish them all the best for the rest of the season.

“I’m looking forward to getting started and there’s no better opening campaign than the Guinness Six Nations.”

The wider coaching team to support Borthwick will be announced in the coming weeks.



Tottenham matchday guide

Joining us for our Boxing Day Premier League fixture against Tottenham Hotspur? Here's what you need to know

Written by Brentford Football Club

Premier League action returns following the World Cup break with Brentford hosting Tottenham Hotspur on Boxing Day.

The match kicks off at 12.30pm and will be televised on Amazon Prime Video.

Travel disruption

Fans should [plan their journey](#) to the Gtech Community Stadium ahead of time and prepare to arrive early to avoid delays.

Public transport

There will be no train services running on Boxing Day. Strike action could also cause disruption to the London Overground, Elizabeth line and some tube services. Operating tube lines will run a Sunday service.

Parking

If you are unable to use public transport and are driving, please be aware that parking is unavailable in Chiswick Park due to an ongoing security operation.

As it's a Bank Holiday, parking in council-managed pay and display bays, resident permit bays and shared-use bays is free.

Single yellow lines in a controlled parking zone which are not accompanied by a separate time plate are also unrestricted. Please be respectful of our local residents and do not park irresponsibly.

Members and season ticket holders: list your ticket if you can't attend

If you are a member with a match ticket or a season ticket holder but you are unable to attend, please list your ticket on our ticket exchange.

By doing this you will be able to give a fellow Bees fan a chance to purchase your ticket and help ensure we have a full stadium to support the team. You will also be credited the resale amount.

Fans should not pass tickets or resell tickets to away fans, sanctions may apply.

[Find out how to list your ticket on the ticket exchange.](#)

Changes to upgrading matchday tickets are now in effect

On 15 November, we announced [a policy change relating to upgrading season tickets](#) encouraging supporters wishing to change the tariff of a concession season ticket to do so before matchdays to avoid a £5 administration charge.

The last day to avoid the admin charge for upgrades for this fixture will be **Friday 23 December**. Please note that tickets will be checked at turnstiles to ensure you have the correct tariff.

Taking the stand against racism

Brentford and Spurs players will take the knee ahead of kick-off before the fixture.

This is one of the match rounds that was selected by club captains before the start of the

season for players to take the knee, highlighting unity against all forms of racism and use their platform to promote change.

Food and beverage at the Gtech Community Stadium

Looking for the nearest food and drink spots near to your seat? Use our map below.



Umbro x Brentford FC – ‘How deep is your love’ shirt launch

For fans, tattoos are the ultimate gesture of devotion to the club and game they love. Each one tells a story of highs and lows, crests and colour, of simply unforgettable moments. In our ‘How deep is your love’ campaign launched in April 2022, we called on Brentford FC fans to tell us about their devotion to our club and share the story of their club tattoos with us. From the most poignant stories and tattoo designs, we have created unique artwork that features on Brentford FC men and women’s jerseys. Come down to the Fan Hive outside the Bees Superstore to check out the jerseys available for purchase, created by the fans, for the fans.

Show your support!

Head coach Thomas Frank has called upon supporters to bring their red and white scarves and create an unbelievable atmosphere when the team walk out the tunnel to *Hey Jude*. You’ll also have the chance to congratulate our players that were away representing their country during the World Cup before we kick off.

Countdown to kick-off - the timings you need to know

- 9.30am:** Bees Superstore opens (closes at 4.30pm)
- 10am:** Box office opens (closes at half-time)
- 10am:** Hospitality opens
- 11am:** Turnstiles open
- 12.30pm:** Kick-off



Government announces six-month extension to alcohol duty freeze

- Alcohol duty freeze extended six months from 1 February to 1 August 2023
- Part of government's responsible management of UK economy, plan aims to reassure and provide certainty to pubs, breweries and distilleries facing tough challenges ahead
- End date aligns with new simpler alcohol tax system taking effect, with Chancellor reserving decision on future duty rates for Spring Budget 2023

The freeze to UK alcohol duty rates has been extended six months to 1 August 2023, the government announced today (19 December 2022).

In a statement to the House of Commons, Exchequer Secretary to the Treasury James Cartlidge laid out a plan designed to provide certainty and reassure pubs, distilleries, and breweries as they face a challenging period ahead.

While new duty rates usually come in on the 1 February each year, Mr Cartlidge set out that this year the duty rates decision will be held until the Chancellor Jeremy Hunt delivers his Spring Budget on the 15 March 2023.

Further, the Minister made clear that if any changes to duty are announced then, they will not take effect until 1 August 2023.

This is to align with the date historic reforms for the alcohol duty system come in, and amounts to an effective six month extension to the current duty freeze.

As part of the government's commitment to responsible management of the UK economy, these changes will provide pubs, breweries, distilleries and other alcohol-related businesses with increased certainty to plan and make investment decisions more effectively.

Exchequer Secretary to the Treasury James Cartlidge said:

"Today's announcement reflects this government's commitment to responsible management of the UK economy and supporting hospitality through a challenging winter."

"The alcohol sector is vital to our country's social fabric and supports thousands of jobs - we have listened to pubs, breweries and industry reps concerned about their future as they get ready for the new, simpler, alcohol tax system taking effect from August."

"That's why we have acted now to give maximum certainty to industry and confirmed there will be just one set of industry-wide changes next summer."

The current alcohol duty freeze was announced at Autumn Budget 2021, saving consumers over £3 billion over five years. It was expected to come to an end on 1 February 2023, following the Chancellor's reversal of most of September's Growth Plan to restore trust in the economy

and strengthen public finances.

At Autumn Budget 2021 the government announced the biggest reforms to alcohol duty in 140 years. The changes overhaul the UK's outdated rules following exiting the EU by radically simplifying the entire system and slashing red-tape.

To give industry more time to prepare, September's Growth Plan set out that the reforms would take effect from 1 August 2023.

The new alcohol tax system will adopt a common-sense approach, where the higher a drink's strength the higher the duty, whilst new reliefs will be made available to help pubs and small producers thrive.

New Draught Relief will be worth £100 million a year and will ensure smaller craft producers can benefit, the threshold for qualifying containers will be 20 litres.

Small Brewers Relief will be renamed Small Producer Relief, reformed and expanded. Until the revamp, a cliff-edge existed when relief is withdrawn for brewers who make more than 5,000 hectolitres a year.

This will be addressed, there will instead be a gradual taper to the removal of relief, which will empower small breweries to grow, after they had made clear through consultation that the current design was acting as a barrier.

Further, the expansion of the relief means that all producers that make drinks below 8.5% – mostly craft brewers and cidermakers – will be able to get relief on their products.

The alcohol duty reforms will help create a simpler, fairer and healthier duty system.

Higher rate for sparkling wines will come to an end, meaning they will pay the same rate as still wine.

Liqueurs will be put on the same footing as fortified wine, meaning a sherry and Irish Cream will now pay the same duty, and super-strength 'white cider' will rise to address public health concerns.

The wine industry will also be supported as they adapt to the new system.

All wine between 11.5-14.5% alcohol by volume (ABV) to calculate duty as if it were 12.5% ABV for 18 months from the implementation of the new system.



Government extends Mortgage Guarantee Scheme

- The Mortgage Guarantee Scheme will be extended by a year, having already helped over 24,000 households get onto the property ladder.
- Launched in April 2021, the scheme supports first-time buyers, who make up 85% of scheme transactions, buy a home with a 5% deposit.
- The scheme is just one of the ways the government is helping people with home ownership.

The Mortgage Guarantee Scheme will be extended by a year to the end of December 2023, helping people with 5% deposits on to the property ladder.

Under the scheme the government offers lenders the financial guarantees they need to provide mortgages that cover the other 95%, subject to the usual affordability checks, on a house worth up to £600,000.

Launched in April 2021, the scheme has already helped over 24,000 households. It was originally planned to close at the end of this year but will now be extended until the end of 2023.

Chief Secretary to the Treasury, John Glen MP said:

“For hard-working families facing today’s challenging economic conditions, it’s right that we continue to help them secure their first home or move into their dream house. Extending this scheme means thousands more have the chance to benefit, and supports the market as we navigate through these difficult times.”

Since 2010, more than 687,000 households have been helped into home ownership through government schemes. First time buyers often find it hard to save for a large deposit, and the mortgage guarantee has helped over 24,000 households (as of November 2022) overcome this barrier and secure the keys to a new home with a deposit as small as 5%.

As well as first time buyers and current homeowners, the scheme has also helped support the wider housing sector. Lenders reduced the availability of high LTV products during the Covid-19 pandemic, with just eight 95% LTV products available in January 2021. The government’s Mortgage Guarantee Scheme helped restore competition and consumer choice to the market, which has benefited businesses and boosted the market.

To also support people to get onto the property ladder, the government has increased the level where first-time buyers start paying stamp duty from £300,000 to £425,000. Furthermore, first-time buyers can get relief on properties costing up to £625,000, as opposed to £500,00 previously. Both of these measures are time-limited to April 2025.

The government has also continued to provide a range of other options to support home ownership and the wider housing sector. For example, the Help to Buy ISA and Lifetime ISA have collectively facilitated over 618,000 households get on to the property ladder.



HM Treasury

Border Force strike will cost airlines MILLIONS in extra fuel costs

Airlines are facing many millions of pounds in extra fuel costs, as they deal with the likelihood of long delays over London in particular during the Border Force strike, a GB News investigation has found.

British Airways is one of a number of airlines instructing its pilots to take on additional fuel to help jets cope with having to hold for an extra hour in the skies over the Capital during the week-long walkout. A senior aviation source told GB News the contingency was “essential but extremely costly” and a “huge setback” to a sector already struggling to rebuild after the devastating effects of the pandemic on worldwide travel.

Around 1,000 Border Force staff, who are members of the Public and Commercial Services Union (PCS), are striking every day from today until the end of the year, except for 27 December. Border Force staff at Gatwick, Birmingham, Cardiff, Glasgow and Manchester, as well as the Port of Newhaven are also striking. The airports have contingencies to help minimise the delays, including the use of some military personnel at passport control. But Steve Dann, Chief Operating Officer at Border Force said he could not rule out the possibility that some airports might be forced to close for a while.

The delays at the two London airports are expected to be felt most acutely, where airliners regularly have to join holding patterns for a landing slot lasting many minutes. GB News has seen an internal memo from British Airways management to the airline’s pilots, instructing them to take on an additional hour’s worth of fuel for long-haul flights coming into London. The pilots of short-haul flights are being told to take on an extra 30 minute’s fuel into London, Manchester and Glasgow.

BA planes coming into London normally have an additional 30-minute fuel contingency to help cope with having to hold over the Capital. The additional fuel on top of that will cost BA alone many millions over the week-long industrial action. Other airlines are implementing similar contingencies and are also facing hefty additional fuel bills.

A senior aviation source said air traffic controllers may have no choice but to place passenger jets into long holding patterns.

He told GB News: *“The problem with very significant queues at the various passport controls is that as those queues grow, airport authorities are likely to ask pilots of jets that have landed to hold at the terminal gates, and not allow their passengers to disembark. That of course means that other arriving aircraft can’t use those gates in the meantime, and they can’t simply wait on the taxi-ways.*

“It can soon become very messy on the ground, so adopting a holding pattern or diverting to another strike-free airport might have to be the alternative. Either option burns up more fuel. The source added: “This is the very last thing airlines need as they try to rebuild their businesses after Covid. For airlines, it’s not as simple as just providing an extra hour of fuel for every long-haul flight.

“The mathematics mean that adding more fuel also adds more weight, and then you need to burn even more fuel to carry that extra weight. And if you’re on the likes of a 14-hour long flight back from Singapore, carrying that extra weight over such a long period fairly adds up. So actually, in your fuel calculations, you have to add quite a bit more than simply an extra hour’s worth.”

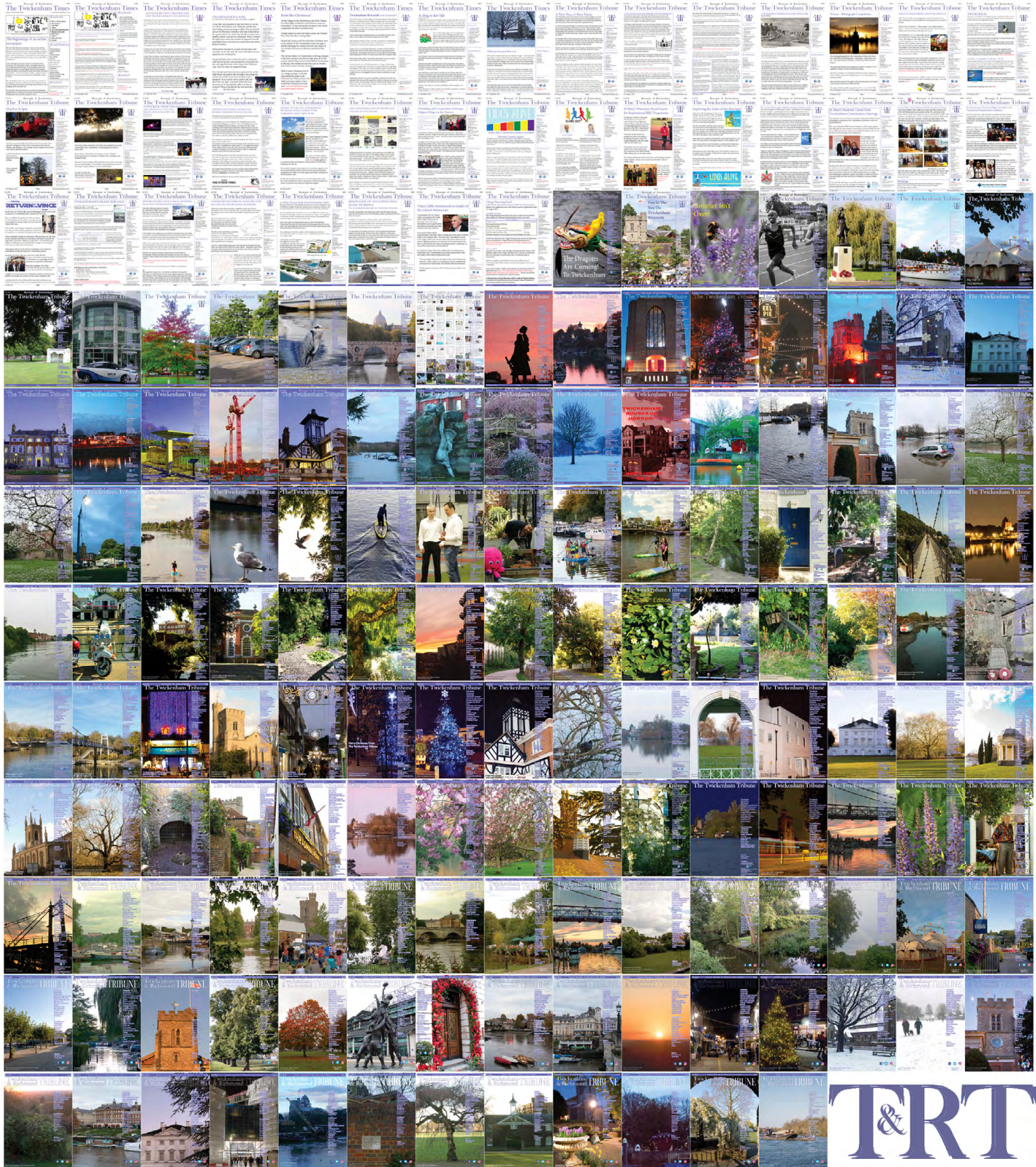
On average, a long-haul flight can burn between 5 and 8 tons of fuel each hour, depending on its weight or load. A typical transatlantic flight from New York to London can use up around 40 tons of fuel, at a cost of about £27,000. The requirement for an additional hour of fuel would add an extra £6,500 to that cost.

According to the aviation source “With more than 1000 flights landing at Heathrow every day, the cost to the airline industry from an 8-day walkout will be huge and eventually that additional cost will be passed back down the line to the weary passenger, in the form of increased ticket prices.”



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