

Twickenham & Richmond TRIBUNE

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5th April 2024

T&RT

TickerTape - News in Brief

TfL

Tube strikes cancelled

Strikes planned for Monday 8 April and Saturday 4 May have been cancelled.

South Western Railway

Industrial Action

Saturday 6 April – overtime ban, revised service

Monday 8 April – strike action, significantly reduced service

Tuesday 9 April – overtime ban, revised service

Saturday 6 April

On Saturday 6 April, a revised timetable will operate across our network due to engineering work and a ban on overtime working.

- London Waterloo – Shepperton Hourly service
- London Waterloo – Windsor & Eton Riverside

Trains will run twice per hour, diverted after Twickenham, terminating at Hounslow, due to engineering work between Staines and Windsor & Eton Riverside.

Rail replacement buses will operate.

Monday 8 April

A significantly reduced service will operate on a small number of lines. The rest of the SWR network will be closed.

Trains will run between the hours of 0700 and 1900 only. There will be no services outside of these times.

- London Waterloo to Feltham (via Twickenham)
2 trains per hour

First train from London Waterloo: 0719, Last train from London Waterloo: 1812

First train from Feltham: 0711, Last train from Feltham: 1807

[Download the strike map](#)



The Tree Agency

darryl parkin

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Local Picture Postcard Column - Part 243

By Alan Winter

Richmond Station & Station Hotel

The Richmond and West End Railway (R&WER) opened the first station at Richmond on 27 July 1846, as the terminus of its line from Clapham Junction. This station was on a site to the south of the present through platforms, which later became a goods yard and where a multi-storey car park now stands. The Windsor, Staines, and South-Western Railway extended the line westward, re-siting the station to the west side of The Quadrant, on the extended tracks and slightly west of the present through platforms.



Our first postcard shows a busy station operating in 1910. Note the Station Hotel in the background.

The second card from the late 1960's shows a colourful display of adverts on one of the platforms. The one at the second left features the much - missed Richmond Ice Rink, (which was actually in Twickenham!) and a poster for a great variety show at the London Palladium. Starring Frankie Vaughan with Cilla Black, Tommy Cooper and Merseybeat pop group the

Fourmost. Their biggest hit record was "A Little Loving" which got to number 6 in the UK singles chart in the top ten in 1964.



The station building, designed by James Robb Scott in Portland stone and dating from 1937, is in Art Deco style and its facade includes a square clock. The area in front of the station main entrance was pedestrianised in 2013 and includes a war memorial to soldier Bernard Freyberg, who was born in Richmond.



Our 3rd postcard shows a late 1970's frontage of the station. Taxis and cars still allowed to park right outside in those days. I have a particular fondness for the old number 71 bus waiting at the bus stop. I spent 5 years in the early to mid- sixties going to school on it every day. There and back from Richmond to Chiswick. Fond memories of smoking upstairs and meeting girls – but that's all another story!

Back in September 2011, work was under way to extend platforms 1 and 2 to accept 10-car trains. The bulk of the lengthening was to be at the west (country) end; extending eastwards was deemed unviable by Network Rail as Church Road Bridge would have needed widening. As part of these works, the platform canopies were also being refurbished.

Eight retail units are at the station: four eatery-cafés on alternate sides of the barriers (two on the rail side being thin and smaller) similarly two kiosks, the upper one being a hot drinks kiosk through to a M&S Simply Food grocery store. A florist and a WH Smith flank the entrance.

The last postcard this week is one of my favourites showing the Station Hotel probably just after the first World War. Note the now rare sight of a uniformed policeman standing outside the Hotel.



The Station Hotel directly opposite Richmond station was home to one of the first ever gigs of the Rolling Stones on February 24th 1963. The backroom of the hotel was the home of the Crawdaddy Club at that time and it was there on 14th April 1963 that the Stones first met the Beatles who had come straight from Teddington studios to watch them. After the show the two groups went back to the Chelsea flat shared by Mick Jagger, Brian Jones and Keith Richards. In November of that year the Stones released their second single "I Wanna Be Your Man." Which was written by Lennon and McCartney. It was their first top ten single. Today the Station Hotel premises are renamed as One Kew Road but the frontage carries a blue plaque style notice commemorating that day over sixty years ago! (see image).

My search for old postcards continues. I am always looking for old postcards and old photograph albums etc. The postcards can be British or Foreign, black and white or coloured and of places or subjects. If you have any that are sitting unwanted in a drawer, in a box in the loft or in the garage or under a bed, please contact me on 07875 578398 or alanwinter192@hotmail.com I would like to see them and I pay cash!

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Your friendly local Travel Agency
established in Twickenham since 1966

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



Riverside Revisited

By Ed Harris



Within the spirit of his excellent piece in last Week's *Tribune*, I hope that the abiding Bruce Lyons will not object to my taking advantage of his inspiration as the basis of support for another of the many wonderful attractions to be enjoyed this side of the river. In fact, a near neighbour of Crusader Travel with wonderful views of St Mary's church, the working riverside and site of the Eel Pie Island Hotel. In relative terms it is still something of a new kid on the block, in so far as if we had a pound for every time a visitor informs us 'I never knew you existed' we would be listed on the stock market by now. Hence, my interest in Bruce's DMC (Destination Marketing Company) concept focusing on the many attractions to be found between Hampton Court and St Margarets. One of these being The Twickenham Museum, about which I write.



Now, I know *The Tribune* kindly published a shout a week or so ago about our current rebuild, but I couldn't let Bruce's report on all the activity surrounding The Great River Race go by without adding us to the itinerary of places to visit; especially now as we make way for our riverside heritage as part of a comprehensive

redisplay. Doggett Coat and Badge and Kingston Regatta liveries for too long languishing as sideshows are now newly conserved by Hampton Court's finest and ready for show in our new display cabinets complete with much memorabilia and associated ephemera.

And the house itself is to be celebrated as once a waterman's cottage. The hope is for The Twickenham Museum to become as much a must-see riverside history attraction for tourists as it is for residents of the former borough that includes Whitton, Teddington and The Hamptons.

In this, we would love to extend a warm welcome to the 3000 rowers and attendant spectators from across the British Isles and overseas, as part of the excursions surrounding this iconic river race due to make its annual run from Millwall to Ham on 21st September. Meanwhile, just to say a big thank you to Bruce for this and all he does, and to let him know that The Twickenham Museum is on board, if you'll excuse the pun.

<https://www.twickenham-museum.org.uk/>

Everything you need to do to vote in the London elections in May

From Richmond Council

On Thursday 2 May, Londoners can vote to elect the Mayor of London, 14 members of the London Assembly that represent London's 14 constituencies, and 11 Assembly Members who will represent the whole of London.

The deadline to [register to vote](#) is Tuesday 16 April.

Don't forget you will now need to provide voter ID to vote at polling stations on Thursday 2 May.

All voters will need to take an [approved form of photo identification](#) to the polling station to vote, which will take place between 7am and 10pm. If you do not have an accepted form of photo ID, you can [apply for a Voter Authority Certificate](#) until 5pm on Wednesday 24 April.

If you do not wish to show ID at a polling station you can [apply to vote by post](#) or [by proxy](#).

The deadline to register to vote by post in these elections is Wednesday 17 April at 5pm. You will need your date of birth, a copy of your signature and your National Insurance number. Postal voters will not be affected by voter ID and will be issued with their postal ballot papers as usual.

The deadline to register to vote by proxy in these elections is Wednesday 24 April at 5pm.



From 2 May, voters will be limited to acting as a proxy for two people, regardless of their relationship. Anyone voting on behalf of UK voters who live overseas could act as a proxy for up to four people.

If you have any questions, you can [speak to one of our advisors via web chat](#) Monday to Friday from 9am to 5pm.

Witness Appeal Bushy Park

From Royal Parks Police

We are appealing for any witnesses to an assault that occurred in Bushy Park on 28/3/24 at approx. 11:15am near to Sandy Gate.

The altercation took place between two dog walkers, resulting in the male pushing over a female and then stealing her mobile phone. The phone was Later recovered.

The suspect was described as white, between 35-40 years old, F5'8 to F5'9, skinny build, brown/grey stubble. He was wearing a black jacket & black trousers.

His dog was a greyhound or lurcher, black in colour, with white patch on chest.

If you have any information, please email Bushypark@met.police.uk or call 101 and quote CAD 2736/28Mar24



**METROPOLITAN
POLICE**



Love Whitton *Huge Parade* *Live Music*
ST. GEORGES DAY
Street Market *Family Fun Day*

SUNDAY 21ST APRIL
11.00AM WHITTON HIGH STREET 6.00PM

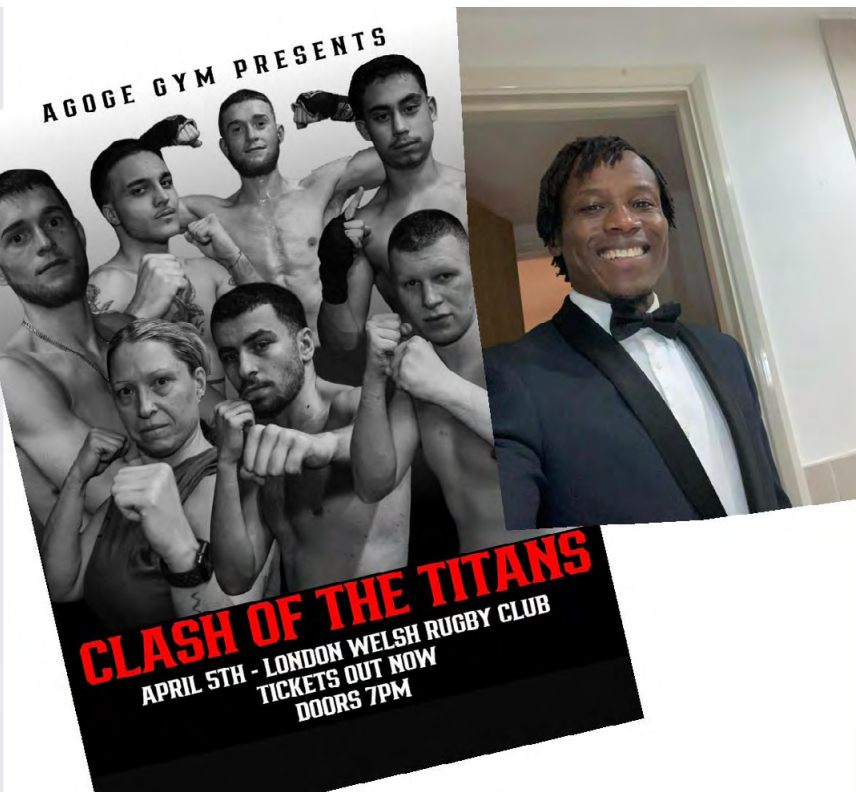
Fighting Talk

Ron Mushiso, Conservative GLA Candidate for South West London



As you read this, I will have fulfilled my duties as the ring announcer at a white-collar boxing event hosted at the London Welsh Rugby Club in Richmond. This event is orchestrated by Chris Davies of the [Agoge gym](#), located in the heart of Richmond. Chris, a professional boxer, and dedicated trainer devotes his time to mentoring young, aspiring fighters from Southwest London. His gym serves as a beacon for any youngster facing adversity but needing little bit of discipline to help turn the corner. That is the power of sports and I can vouch for that, although I found my path through rugby.

Agoge is a modest gym in size, yet for several years, Chris has been committed to training these young individuals. Their efforts will culminate in a showcase event on Friday, April 5th, an opportunity for them to demonstrate their skills in front of friends and family. My role is to introduce these young fighters as they step into the ring, a pivotal moment for perhaps a hopeful boxing career or just a statement of achievement for daring to step into the squared circle.



Parallel to this physical contest, my own battle unfolds in the political arena as I campaign for a seat on the London Assembly, with the election set for May 2nd, 2024. Like the fighters at Agoge gym, my focus isn't on the manoeuvres of my opponents but rather on what I can contribute to the community. My aim is to bridge the divide, seeking consensus on issues that bring us together.

I have grown increasingly disillusioned with the polarising nature of politics, where extreme positions overshadow the nuanced perspectives of the broader populace. I was raised to value the middle ground; I believe Southwest

London deserves a representative who eschews partisan tactics in favour of pragmatic solutions.

The boxing event features three rounds per match, a structure mirroring the triple voting process in the upcoming mayoral election. With postal ballots soon to be dispatched, voters are presented with three distinct choices. Behind the scenes, I am diligently working to secure victories across all three fronts: the mayoral race, the GLA seat, and the final round— of the list candidate. As the election approaches on Thursday, May 2nd, I extend my best wishes to all candidates involved.



JOIN THE MAYOR OF RICHMOND,
CLLR SUZETTE NICHOLSON FOR
THE MAYOR'S CHARITY EVENING

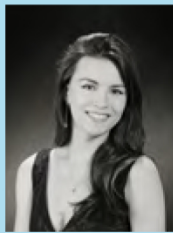
Light
Refreshments

Togetherness Concert



The Power of Music Bringing People Together
Hosted by The Mayor, Cllr Suzette Nicholson
and Richmond in Europe Association

Featuring:



Clara Orif
(singer)



Regina Gossel
(singer)



Milette Gillow
(singer)



Jack Redman
(piano)

5.30pm
Sunday 7th April 2024
Tickets £15 per adult
Under 18s Free

St Mary's Church
Church Street
Twickenham
TW1 3NJ

Light Refreshments
sold In the interval

THE MAYOR'S CHARITY THIS YEAR IS: SEEN AND AGE UK RICHMOND

Designed and Produced by Richmond and Wandsworth Design & Print. wdp@wandsworth.gov.uk MP159 (2.24). Illustration © iStock - softulka



Advanced booking is essential.

Tickets £15, available now by booking online:
www.richmond.gov.uk/council/councillors/mayor/mayors_charities



Repair & Share cycle special coming to Kew this April

On Saturday 20 April, Kew The Transition's team of friendly volunteer repairers will offer their time and advice to help the community have a go at reviving items that need a bit of love - including bikes!

For this spring event held at St Luke's Church in Kew (TW9 2AJ) from 10.30am to 1.30pm, the team will have a special focus on bike maintenance advice, in addition to the usual range of more general repair skills and advice.



The aim of these fun, free events is to show visitors how easy it is to keep the things we buy working for longer and reduce waste.

In addition to bikes, repairers will be on hand to turn their talents to things like small electronics (no microwaves), radios and lamps, toys, soft furnishing and clothes mending, and small furniture and wooden items.

If you can carry it in, they'll aim to help or point you to where you can get further help.

They'll also offer a warm, welcoming space to have a chat about what the group can do next to help build community resilience and share their visions of a sustainable future, and how you can get involved.

No advanced booking required, but if you have a particular item you would like to ask about in advance, you can email kewthetransition@gmail.com.



ETNA Centre Cheese & Wine Tasting

Join Pan Comido a fundraising Cheese & Wine Tasting

Raising money to support ETNA Community Centre and The Real Junk Food Project – Twickenham.

Fri 3rd May, 6:30pm-8:30pm at the ETNA Centre (Suggested Donation £20)

Please register to book your spot

info@pancomido.co.uk

<http://pancomido.co.uk>

pancomido

VINO Y QUESO
EN ESPAÑOL



SAVE THE DATE!

**Join us on 3rd May for our fundraising
Cheese & Wine Tasting!**

Grey Court School Ofsted inspection success

By James Knight

In February, Grey Court School in Ham received a routine 'ungraded' inspection visit from Ofsted. The Inspection report published last month stated that the school continues to be **'Outstanding'**.

Grey Court School is a co-educational school with 1,594 pupils, including the sixth form. The Times newspaper rated it the fourth-best comprehensive school in London (2023-24).

Ofsted wrote: "This is a school where all pupils flourish. Pupils are kept happy and feel safe in the school. All pupils, including students in the sixth form, experience a high quality of education. They enjoy their learning and meet the highest expectations set by the school. As a result, pupils thrive and become independent and responsible learners."

The ambitious curriculum supports all pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Pupils are always keen to improve their learning. They appreciate their valuable teacher feedback. There are strong working relationships



between staff and pupils. The mutual respect displayed contributes to the positive, stimulating environment.

Pupils' behaviour is exemplary. Staff and pupils value the restorative approach to behaviour, which results in a culture of kindness and care. This extends into the community, where pupils support others in a neighbouring school.

Pupils value contributing to the school and beyond. For instance, older pupils were proud of their work cleaning up the banks of the River Thames. The school council has introduced a messaging service for pupils to share any worries they may have. Pupils also speak about talking with a trusted adult. Families and pupils value the academic and pastoral support that is always available."

To read the full report, please click [HERE](#)

Photo by LunaEatsTuna

Get ready for
**RICHMOND'S
OWN FESTIVAL!**

MARZAMEMI

**6th - 7th JULY
Old Deer Park**

Bringing the beautiful seaside town of Marzamemi, Sicily to Richmond for an epic 2 day festival.

Get ready for a Sicilian summer getaway on your doorstep with live music & DJs, Italian banquets & food stalls, innovative fashion & homeware brands and plenty of fun for the kids. Premium but family friendly, Marzamemi is the ultimate day of indulgence and fun for all.

Mark your calendars and immerse yourself in the magic of Marzamemi!

Enoteca Turi
Arancina
The Oyster Society

Carbonara The Original
King of Arancina
Coccole Tiramisu

Etna Coffee
The Little Orange Van
Sicilian Deli



CERAUDO



LINA STORES



Apply now for free creative workspaces

Richmond Arts Service has launched the Artists Make Space programme to support local artists who need space to develop their practice.

Artists Make Space provides free spaces for artists, artist organisations, or artist collectives who live or work in Richmond upon Thames.

Spaces on offer are located at Orleans House Gallery in Twickenham, the Old Town Hall in Richmond town centre and OSO Arts Centre in Barnes.

Applications are welcomed from a range of practitioners looking to utilise our spaces across artforms, including music, theatre, dance, visual arts, literature, and combined arts.



The deadline to apply is Tuesday 30 April 2024.

Please contact artsinfo@richmond.gov.uk with any questions.

Namaste Village Makes Its Mark

There's so much happening at the moment in our local restaurant scene, and I have to be honest, a restaurant serving just vegetarian Indian food hadn't massively appealed to me...until I encountered **Namaste Village**. It's so good that I originally went with my Indian neighbour Sidrah, but was so impressed that I went back with my husband just a few days later. And it was just as good the second time!

Starting in East Anglia, the company now has branches in Norwich, Cambridge, Southend and Islington and now, of course, Twickers. *“Indian cuisine is as diverse as its people, traditions, and the country itself. From the spice fairs in the north to the abundance of the south, the rich Mughlai cuisine of the central mass to the exotic tastes of the east and west, the land of India has a palette full of flavours to celebrate.*

But the true Indian sentiment that makes any nook comfortable is the shared experience of culture. As the masalas mingle with each other in braising pots, people from all walks of life and cultures leave their differences at the gate to dine, drink and dish out conversations together. The brewing relationships as people break bread together are very close to our Indian heritage; this is why we celebrate traditions and engage in festivities, to rejoice in our shared love. Food is the heart of India, and Indians know it.”

The restaurant is informal, relaxed and very friendly. We were welcomed by Hemisha and her husband Jayesh, who are running the Twickenham branch and have moved locally to do so.

We started with some 'Street Food Specials' - **Dahi Puri** (Masala Puri topped with flavoured creamy yoghurt or 'Flavour bombs', as termed by many a reviewer) and **Crispy Spinach Chaat** (Crisp fried baby spinach topped with finely chopped vegetables, chutneys, yoghurt and finished with a pinch of chaat masala.) Hemisha also suggested we try a portion of their fries: **Chilli Lime Mogo** (Mogo (or muhogo as it's called in Swahili) tossed in fresh herbs, burnt garlic, ginger, chilli flakes with a drizzle of lime juice for a spicy-tangy hit). I'd not heard of Mogo but it's also known as cassava or yuca, is a root vegetable, similar to a potato but has a little more texture and a slightly sweet, nutty taste.



These starters were very good indeed (and, it's worth noting, portions are generous and very reasonably priced too). Our favourite was the Puri which was sensational. They were beautifully presented, delicately spiced and not surprisingly are one of the most popular dishes on the menu. The Spinach Chaat was tasty but a bit heavier than the puri and the fries were really tasty indeed with a subtle heat that built up. The menu is coded according to the spiciness and the fries were one of the spicier dishes, but I coped well with the heat of the fries.



For mains, Sidrah suggested we try a **Masala Dosa**. (South Indian savoury pancake, aka 'dosa', is made from fermented rice-lentil batter. Each dosa is served with a spiced lentil vegetable stew called 'Sambhar' & coconut chutney). The Masala one was a thin, crispy savoury crepe stuffed with flavourful mashed potatoes, tempered in mild spices - again beautifully presented.

Our other main dish was **Paneer Lababdar** (Indian cottage cheese in a rich & aromatic gravy of cashew nuts, tomatoes and a mix of ground spices and herbs). They were both sensational and to be honest, at no stage at all during our meal did I miss meat or fish. The menu is completely



vegan and does offer dishes with plant based alternatives to meat, but that didn't appeal to us - the hero veg was more than adequate. To accompany these dishes we shared a Gujwari Naan (similar to a Peshwari one and just as good) and a Garlic Butter Naan which, as with everything else we had that evening, was beautifully presented and very tasty indeed.

Not surprisingly, we were both pretty 'pogged' by this stage, but we were persuaded to share a dessert: **Hindustani** (two Gulab Jamun with kulfi ice cream and Kesar mango pulp and nuts). This was a marriage made in dessert heaven - a surprisingly light but deliciously sweet finale to a superb meal. I would thoroughly recommend saving some space for it.

Namaste Village is a business that will, I'm sure, become a strong fixture in our local curry house line up...it certainly deserves to thrive, and we are already keenly spreading the word to our friends and neighbours.

Islands In A Common Sea

I was lucky enough to meet **Jenny Jefferies**, the author of this fabulous book recently, as we were judging The Great Taste Awards together. Just published by **Meze Publishing**, *Islands in a Common Sea* raises awareness of the ingenuity, dedication, and sheer effort that goes into the production of food worldwide. Despite its global scale, the book's based on Jenny's belief that there's more in the world to unite us than divide us, and the power of this unity in overcoming the challenges that currently face us all.

Stunning photography of land and seascapes alongside captivating portraiture makes this large hardback (£35) a lovely coffee table book, while the firsthand stories of men and women across the globe provide depth and insight not often available to a UK audience. Each chapter has been written from the heart about the contributor's farming or fishing livelihood, what they produce, their challenges and solutions, passions and dreams, along with recipes showcasing the food they grow or catch as well as the cuisine of their country.



From rural Bhutan to central Singapore, the wilds of Western Australia to paddy fields in Japan, and Argentine vineyards to Nigerian aquaculture, *Islands in a Common Sea* takes a deep dive into the everyday lives of 25 pioneering individuals who nurture their environment in the hopes of a regenerative, productive, and positive future.

Jenny Jefferies describes her new book as “a beautiful keepsake dedicated to the next generation of farmers and fishermen” and has collaborated with the **United Nations World Food Programme** to help make a difference in the shorter term too, with £2 from every copy sold to be donated to their award-winning **ShareTheMeal campaign**. Those donations not only provide life-saving food in emergencies, but also facilitate school feeding, nutrition support, cash transfers and resilience

programmes all over the world helping eradicate world hunger. Jenny is an award-winning author, food writer, farmer's wife, and mother of two girls based in South Cambridgeshire. It really is a stunning book - here are a couple of recipes to persuade you to [buy a copy](#). (available from bookshops and Amazon too)

MARINATED YELLOWFIN TUNA STEAKS

PREP: 1-2 HOURS | COOKING: 10 MINUTES | SERVES 2

“This recipe is so simple. All you need to do is whip up a quick marinade, throw in your Greenfish yellowfin tuna steaks (which are already perfectly prepped and ready to go), let them marinate for an hour or two and then, with a quick toss on the braai, dinner is served!”

- 2 Greenfish yellowfin tuna steaks
- Japanese seven spice (or Chinese five spice)
- Salt and pepper
- 85ml teriyaki sauce
- 85ml soy sauce
- 3 tbsp olive oil (or sesame oil)
- 2 tbsp lemon juice (or half a squeezed lemon)



Sprinkle the tuna steaks with a small dash of the seven spice and a pinch of salt and pepper. Do not use too much of the seven spices, as it has some heat to it!

In a glass dish, create the marinade by combining the teriyaki, soy sauce, olive oil and lemon juice. Place the seasoned tuna steaks into the marinade, cover the bowl with cling film and pop into the fridge. Marinate for at least half an hour before turning the steaks over and marinating again on the other side. Leave the steaks to marinate for an hour or two in total.

Remove the steaks from the marinade and braai over medium hot coals with the grid on the middle setting for about 1-2 minutes each side. Discard the marinade and do not pour it over the steaks, as excess marinade will burn and become bitter.

Remember that tuna steaks can be rare to well done, depending on how you like your fish served. The cooking times above are based on a medium steak, so you can alter them accordingly to suit your preferences. Once the tuna steaks are cooked to your liking, serve immediately.

SWISS WALNUT CAKE Bündner Nusstorte) PREP: 1 HOUR 30 MINUTES | COOKING: 1 HOUR | SERVES 8

“The Bündner walnut cake is the most famous dessert in the canton (region) of Graubünden and consists of a pastry case with a sweet, creamy filling. Most of the walnuts come from abroad because there are only a few places in Graubünden where they grow. I mostly get my walnuts from my parents who don’t live in the mountains. You will also need a 24cm springform cake tin.”

FOR THE DOUGH

- 150g butter, chilled
- 300g white flour
- A pinch of salt
- 150g sugar
- 1 egg, beaten

FOR THE FILLING

- 300g sugar
- 50ml water
- 250g walnuts
- 200ml cream
- 1 tbsp honey

FOR THE DOUGH Quickly grate the chilled butter into the flour and stir briefly to combine. Add the salt and sugar, then mix in the beaten egg until just combined. Do not knead. Chill the dough in the fridge for 1 hour. Press two thirds of the chilled dough into the 24cm springform tin and leave a rim about 3cm high. Roll out the remaining dough to make a lid and place this on a baking sheet. Place back in the fridge.

FOR THE FILLING Caramelise the sugar and water in a wide pan over a medium heat until light brown.

Meanwhile, chop the walnuts with a sharp knife. Deglaze the pan of caramelised sugar with the cream, add the chopped walnuts and simmer until you get a creamy mixture. Add the honey and stir well. Prick the chilled pastry base several times with a fork, then spread the walnut filling on top. Put the lid on and press down on the edges with a fork to seal. Finally, pierce the lid several times with a fork. Bake in a preheated oven at 220°C for 10 minutes, then bake for another 30 minutes at 180°C until light brown. Take the cake out the oven and let it cool before removing the tin, slicing and serving.



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A day in the life of a Twickenham Travel Agent

By Shona Lyons

I have quite an unconventional life really, working and living together with my 89 year old dad, Bruce, in our little family run travel agency at 58 Church Street Twickenham.

My day begins when I wake up at around 6.30 to 7am, I go downstairs and have a coffee with Bruce, who is almost always up. He is usually tapping away at his laptop working remotely on quotes etc. Right now he is in the middle of the mammoth task of organizing and booking all the accommodation, transportation & spectator Boat for the rowers of the Great River race 2024. Our little family has been involved in the race for many years, with my parents and me rowing & coxing the race for years since it started really. We don't physically take part in it anymore but now organize the ground arrangements.

After coffee I then get my bike and cycle to the travel shop which is just a few minutes cycle away and there I will Hoover and clean a bit and put out the giant chess board, chess pieces & table and chairs, that we have in the square patio in front of our ground floor office. I really like this time of the morning actually, it is really quiet and peaceful and I usually put on some Bob Marley at the same time which I really enjoy listening to.

Then I go home and have bowl of fruit which my dad had prepared for us, and then we both check our emails and work a little bit more remotely, do a bit of housework and or gardening and then have our showers and get ready for work.

Bruce has a quick coffee at Snax at the top of the street and I go and do the day's shopping at Waitrose and get him his free newspaper, and then come back and pick him up from Snax where he has quite a little crowd who all have coffee together at that time and then we walk to work.

No day is the same really. We have a lot of calls throughout the day mostly from regular clients but sometimes times we also have calls from new clients. Sometimes the calls are for new enquiries but often they are questions and amendments to existing bookings, or calls from suppliers. We also have quite a few people visit us during the day, sometimes they are just curious people passing by but more often than not they are clients who have been recommended and come specially to see us with a new enquiry.

We also get quite a few enquiries a week by email. There is also lots of admin to try and fit into the day as well as researching the new enquiries. We often have international payments to make which is always quite a complicated process, and new bookings to put on the admin system, supplier payments to make, balances to chase, sometimes commissions and reimbursements to draw up and send off to our trustees to get validated by our trustees and put into our account and of course travel documents to get ready.

We often go home around 6 or 7pm to spend time with our little cat Stevie. We try not to stay later at the office because we know he really loves company and we don't want him to be lonely.

But even when we go home we often have quite a few files to work on, so we take them with us and work a bit at home on the dining table whilst we watch the news and if anything is good on TV or just listen to some classical music whilst we work, but we are lucky because we live on Eel Pie, just 5 minutes from the office so we do actually manage to fit in quite a lot into the day and even though we are working at home, we have a nice peaceful space to work in which is essential really.

I often cook for both of us, heathy vegetable dishes (but also some chicken or fish for Bruce as he isn't a veggie like me) that we can eat for dinner if we feel like but also take to work, as we can't really afford to get sandwiches every day and I prefer to make sure we both eat healthily as much as we can.

We work 6 days a week, but we really enjoy it, and it doesn't really feel like work. It is a way of life, quite organic really, that we fit in with cooking, cleaning, gardening, cycling etc and sometimes we even have a treat and go to the odd film, lecture, exhibition or concert once in a while on a Sunday mostly.



EASTER ISLAND – named on 5th April 1722

By Teresa Read



Easter Island, a World Heritage site, is an isolated island in the South East Pacific. Polynesians settled on the island between 300 AD and 700 AD. It was named Easter Island by Admiral Roggeveen, a Dutch explorer, who came upon the island on 5th April (Easter Sunday) in 1722. Easter Island, or Rapa Nui, is famous for giant stone statues (moai). The stone figures are thought to have been carved from the tenth century to the sixteenth century. Easter Island was annexed by Chile in 1888.

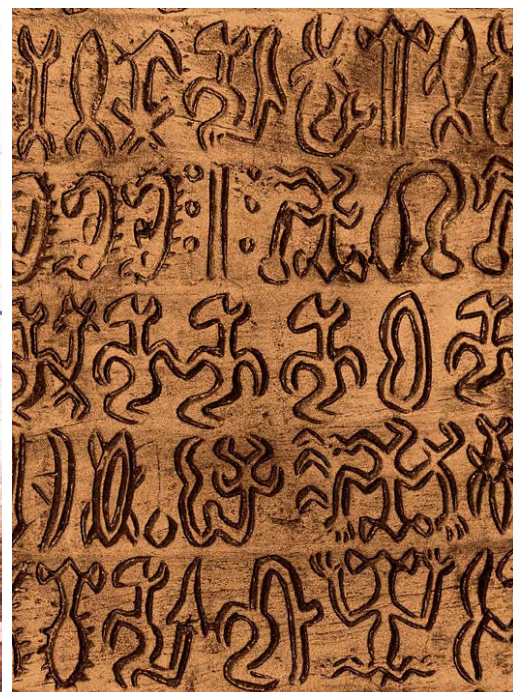
Undeciphered script (Rongorongo) on wooden tablets found on Easter Island is evidence of the development of an independent writing system.



Moai at Rano Raraku, Easter Island



Jacob Roggeveen analyzing a Moai statue, 18th-century engraving



closeup of the verso of the Small Santiago Tablet



Easter Island



Verso of rongorongo Tablet B, Aruku Kurenga

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

Easter Island was annexed by Chile in 1888 <https://worldinfozone.com/country.php?country=Chile>

The 39 Steps

by Patrick Barlow, after John Buchan

Fiery Angel at Richmond Theatre, then on tour until 3rd August

What's this? The arriving audience mill around the beautiful façade of Richmond Theatre, casting admiring glances at a vintage racing car, (identical to models in my boyhood Scalextric), as it is hoisted into position above the entrance. Inside, 1930s jazz and big-band classics further help set the mood.

In 1¾ hours of fast freneticism, *The 39 Steps* follows Richard Hannay on a crime caper filled with murder, double-crossing secret agents and romance, whilst knowing providing witty commentary on the conventions and clichés inherent in Alfred Hitchcock's iconic 1935 film. There is even an appearance from [Hitchcock himself](#) during the play.



A dashing insouciant urbane English gentleman, Richard Hannay, struggling with a distinct lack of purpose in life, goes to the theatre. There he rescues the sultry, mysterious and (of course) heavy accented Annabella Schmidt, plunging the resourceful Hannay into mystery, political intrigue, a charge of murder, a manhunt across the Scottish Highlands, and a dash of romance, before ending up saving England from the evil machinations of [perfidious foreign spies](#).

Hannay's flight involves daring escapes via steam trains, brushes with death, speeding cars, confrontations with murderous enemies, and his entanglement with the glamorous Annabella and awfully nice, yet plucky English gel Pamela. This cornucopia of intrigue, danger, thrills and spills is delivered by four inventive and energetic actors, who take on 139 roles!

Tom Byrne gives us a suit wearing, archetypal English gentleman, whose fetching pencil moustache covers the stiffest of stiff upper lips. He is an engaging, likeable and extremely energetic Hannay. Safeena Ladha's three very different characterisations are spot on. She has an instinctive comic timing, best employed during scenes in Hannay's flat! Consistently excellent Eugene McCoy and Maddie Rice create countless vignettes, ranging from simple Scottish crofters, villainous German spies, cod Scottish hoteliers, milkmen and memory practitioners. Their energy and interplay is a joy to behold.

The writer enjoins "speed, speed, speed", for the faster *The 39 Steps* narrative is driven, the more fun everyone has affectionately sending up a well-loved story and film genre, in a hilarious romp.



Read Harry Zimmerman's review at www.markaspen.com/2024/04/05/39-steps-fa

Photography by Mark Senior

Bull and Cock's Pies

Richmond Theatre until 1st April

Although a standby drama critic often gets short notice, sometimes [exclusive press performances](#) come your way. However, I was not expecting a telephone call in the small hours on a bank holiday. I was not at my most alert at 5am. (Or was it 4am; or 6am? The clocks were altered that night.).



With so much crackling on the line, the detail was difficult to catch. "A review", I thought the voice said, of "spatchcock's pies". I pointed out that I was not the restaurant critic. No, I was assured, there was drama at Richmond Theatre that morning. Could I get there by twelve noon? Better, if I could arrive before dawn, she would send a taxi. Her name was Annabella, and she hoped to still be at the theatre, as she knew all about the plot. I think she said, "get off at the fourth bridge, if there's a hitch at the lock".



It was too much to miss, a chance to review yet another [clandestine thespian experience](#), so on Easter Monday I was on my way before daybreak.

I arrived in time to admire Richmond Theatre's magnificent façade in the dawning light. Walking up its thirteen steps, I recalled that, in three days' time, my fellow critic Harry Zimmerman would be arriving for [a gala press night](#). However, the doors seemed shut!

Posters advertise a one-man show that weekend, *Mr. Memory*. A door creaked open. Maybe he had forgotten to lock it when he left. "Hello Annabella", I called. No reply. It looked as if everyone had just left in a hurry.

I began to feel a little uneasy remembering the stories about theatre ghosts. Still, screwing up my courage, I explored. Near the wardrobe, I thought I could hear the sound of yarns being ripped, and in the scenery dock, there was a strong smell of Shellach. In the stalls I nearly tripped over a hymn book ... with a neat round hole in it. I decided it was time to leave.

Richmond Theatre issued a press release that afternoon. "Two people acting suspiciously, believed to be spies, have been spotted at Richmond Theatre. There has been no comment from Scotland Yard at this stage."

Read Avril Sunisa's review at www.markaspen.com/2024/04/01/cocks-pies

Photography by Mark Senior



Double Feature

by John Logan

Hampstead Theatre Original at Hampstead Theatre

A quaint country cottage is the quirky backdrop for two significant moments in film history as two separate stories unfold in parallel. The ambitious concept is pulled off beautifully. Two iconic pairs, Tippi Hedren and Alfred Hitchcock, and Vincent Price and Michael Reeve confront demons and misdemeanours, while filming two historic productions. These icons share more than just the limited physical space of a rustic kitchen-living room. In fact one was on a studio lot in California, the other genuinely situated in Suffolk.



Tippi had an acute awareness that her looks, more than her acting skills, had carried her so far in Hollywood. So she was wary when the great Alfred Hitchcock demanded her presence at the cottage for a “rehearsal”. He had an aversion to Tippi’s admired hands, and insisted she keep them hidden in elegant long white gloves, even during this liaison. There is a moment of real tension when Tippi switches on the bedroom light – the timing is superb - and she confronts



Hitchcock with a firm “No”. Joanna Vanderhamin is polished and clever in her portrayal of Tippi’s honest charm. Ian McNeice, depicting Hitchcock’s repellent motives, nevertheless shows him as bleakly endearing. However, at the crest of Hitchcock’s demands, he neatly wipes away the empathy he has built for this powerful, if sad, little man.

Vincent Price and Michael Reeves have a less subtle showdown. The veteran actor, being a cordon bleu cook, eventually takes over making Reeve’s supper. The underlying tension blends well with the preparation of food. Price, on the verge of leaving the set of *Witchfinder General*, shares a tumultuous relationship with the tragically ill-fated Reeves. The very young ambitious director and the former matinee idol curse and banter as if in an intense tennis game. Johnathan Hyde makes an edgily humorous but empathic Price, and Rowan Polonski’s convincing portrayal of Reeves is as shrewd but vulnerable. Price eventually agrees to continue in the lead role, but we are in Price’s corner as he reduces Reeves to begging level.

Double Feature’s sharp writing, four excellent performances and Johnathan Kent’s tight direction delivers a clever, well thought-out production.

Read Heather Moulson’s review at www.markaspen.com/2024/03/16/dbl-feature

Photography by Manuel Harlan

Happy Birthday...to ME

By Deep Patel

~ Life Through the Eyes of a Twickenham Shopkeeper ~



Today as I type this article I am celebrating my birthday...I couldn't think of a better way to celebrate my birthday than to do so with you, the wonderful readers, so I purposely waited to type this article today, on my birthday, so that I could spend some time on my birthday with you ALL!

In the lead up to my birthday, I had been asking customers in my shop what a birthday meant to them...it's always interesting to hear their responses to questions like this as there is always such a variety of views...some say that they absolutely LOVE birthdays, the balloons, the silly hats, the party poppers and the cake (I'm talking about adults here by the way) whilst others will shy away, hiding under their duvets with a tub of ice cream or a bottle of wine wishing they were 17 again (if you are reading this right now, you know which of the two you are!). Me? Well, I was more like the under the duvet person...almost like "waiting for the storm to pass" and get the day out of the way...I guess it was because I knew that with each passing year, I was getting older and another year of life had ended...but one day myself and my family were having a conversation about this very topic and that one conversation changed my view on this forever...

My mother and father told me “It’s not that you are getting older that you should think about, but more to celebrate the beautiful experiences that you have been blessed to be a part of through the previous year of your life on this earth, the good and bad, there was a blessing in all” they told me. My father said “with age comes wisdom, and with wisdom you can help others around you in so many ways as well as help yourself to be the person that you want to be”...I saw things differently since then. My brother (who I often row with like cat and dog for those of you who have walked into my shop in the middle of a “heated discussion” we were in the middle of) told me something further on this matter that really made me think too.

My brother said “why are you anxious about your birthday? It doesn’t mean you’ve lost a year of life, as life is not lived in years, that is just the way we make it sound as humans”. He went on to say “life isn’t lived in years, it’s lived in moments, but it’s not about how many more moments you have left in your life, but about how much LIFE you can fit into EVERY moment...” After my brother told me that, I realised that there is absolutely nothing to be afraid of when it comes to birthdays and growing a year older...as life is lived in moments and it’s down to me how much life I wish to cram into every moment, so in this way, age really is nothing to do with life, and age is just a number, life on the other hand is just as they say, life is what you make it, so as I type this article on my birthday today, I want to appeal to everyone who is reading it that as a birthday gift to me, you change the way you view life from today onwards and never consider a birthday as something “bad” as you are getting “older”, but instead see it as a celebration of all you experienced, both “good” and “bad” as there is a blessing somewhere in all...also as a gift to me today, if I can ask that EVERY reader lives their lives from today onwards with the sentiment that it is NOT about how many more moments they have left in life to live, but instead about how much life they can squeeze into EVERY moment...that would be the best birthday gift you could all give me...because in knowing you are all living your lives to the full, cramming every moment with life in every way you possibly can, I will be very very happy too...

Remember...

“Life is made up of moments...and within every moment is LIFE...”

CREATURE-KINDNESS TIP OF THE WEEK:

FOR ANTS...

Sprinkle talcum powder, essential peppermint oil or white vinegar around where they come (but not directly on them) and they will stop without having to harm or kill them...you will get blessings in your life or have good karma for choosing a kind way too! This remedy also works to deter virtually any insect without harming them...like it & share it!

For more tips, email: InsectLoversUnite@gmail.com or join my Facebook group: “Insect Lovers Unite” Thank you!

UK's Butterfly Winners and Losers of 2023 Revealed

The latest results from the annual UK Butterfly Monitoring Scheme (UKBMS), led by wildlife charity Butterfly Conservation, the UK Centre for Ecology & Hydrology (UKCEH), British Trust for Ornithology (BTO) and the Joint Nature Conservation Committee (JNCC), show that 2023 was a mixed picture for butterflies, with some species soaring while others continued worrying declines.

Half the 58 species had a better than average year while the other half were below average at monitored sites. Species that flourished included Chequered Skipper, Brimstone, and Large Blue, which all recorded their best year since the UKBMS began in 1976.



Another species recording its best-ever year was the Red Admiral, a migratory species that has begun to overwinter in the UK as the climate has warmed, making it a common visitor across all habitats, including gardens. Its numbers have increased by 318% at monitored sites since 1976.

At the other end of the scale were the Small Pearl-bordered Fritillary and garden favourite the Small

Tortoiseshell, recording their lowest numbers in the 48 years of monitoring, declining by 71% and 82%, respectively since 1976. Small Tortoiseshell had its worst year on record in England, second worst in Wales and joint fifth worst in Scotland in 2023, but did really well in Northern Ireland, logging its second best year.

The Large Blue, which was [reintroduced to the UK](#) after becoming extinct in the 1970s, recorded its best year yet, showing the conservation work with this species is really working.

Other species that had a remarkable year include Brown Argus, Marbled White, Comma, Black Hairstreak, and Holly Blue, which all ranked in their top three best years since 1976. On the other hand, Cryptic Wood White, Grizzled Skipper, Pearl-bordered Fritillary, Grayling and Scotch Argus faced significant difficulties.

The Green-veined White and Ringlet both had a poor year, perhaps suffering ongoing effects from the drought the previous summer.

The UKBMS, which began in 1976, is one of the world's longest-running insect monitoring schemes.

Dr Richard Fox, Head of Science at Butterfly Conservation, said: *“Butterfly numbers fluctuate naturally from year to year, largely due to the weather, but the long-term trends of UK butterflies are mainly driven by human activity, including habitat damage and destruction, pesticide use, pollution and climate change. By monitoring long-term butterfly trends we can learn about the impact of climate change and other factors on our native wildlife.”*

Dr Marc Botham, Butterfly Ecologist at the UK Centre for Ecology & Hydrology, added: *“Butterflies are an indicator species, meaning they can tell us about the health of the wider environment, which makes the UKBMS data invaluable in assessing the health of our countryside and natural world in general. The mixed results this year emphasise the need for continued monitoring and conservation efforts to protect these important species and their habitats.”*

Dr James Heywood, Breeding Bird Survey National Organiser at the British Trust for Ornithology, whose volunteers contribute to the UKBMS, commented: *“In 2023, thousands of skilled volunteers monitored a record-breaking 3,316 sites across the UK, gathering valuable data that will help to inform conservation decisions for the future. We are incredibly grateful to each and every one of those people who carry out the monitoring and help us to maintain this highly valuable study.”*

Chris Tuckett, Chief Officer for Strategy and Impact at JNCC, said: *“The evidence produced through environmental monitoring, such as the UK Butterfly Monitoring Scheme demonstrates the vital role these schemes play in helping us understand the effects of pressures on the natural environment and, equally importantly, how efforts to address these pressures through nature conservation and recovery can be effective in reversing decline.*

“JNCC has supported these schemes, which involve thousands of dedicated volunteers, for over 30 years, and remains committed to continuing to support them in the future.”

The UKBMS now records data on over 3,000 sites per year and the resulting dataset is a crucial resource for understanding changes in insect populations and has provided significant insights into almost all aspects of butterfly ecology.

As the UK faces the ongoing challenges posed by climate change and other environmental pressures, the work of the UKBMS and organisations like Butterfly Conservation, the UK Centre for Ecology & Hydrology, the British Trust for Ornithology and JNCC remains essential in monitoring and protecting precious butterfly populations and the habitats they depend on.



**Butterfly
Conservation**

Saving butterflies, moths and our environment

St Mary's University

St Mary's Students and Alumni Win at Sports Journalism Awards

Sports Journalism students and alumni at St Mary's University have won several awards at this year's British Sports Journalism Awards and the NCTJ Awards for Excellence.

[Sports Journalism](#) students and alumni at St Mary's University, Twickenham have won several awards at this year's British Sports Journalism Awards and the NCTJ Awards for Excellence.

Monday, St Mary's graduate Katie Shanahan and her colleagues picked up the Television Live Event Coverage Award for [ITV's coverage of the 2023 FIFA Women's World Cup Final](#).

At the same event, current master's student Laura Howard collected the Sports Journalism Academy Award, while Former graduate Adriana Wehrens was Highly Commended in the same category.



St Mary's alumnus Ciaran Reidy was awarded Bronze in the Regional Sports Reporter of the Year category for his coverage of Newcastle United in The Chronicle.

Speaking on these

The National Council for the Training of Journalists hosted their Annual Awards for Excellence last Friday, where current St Mary's student Michael Johnson won the Podcast of the Year Award for the [Ealing Road Podcast](#), now on its 73rd episode. This is the first time a sports journalist has won an award in this category.

St Mary's graduate Adwaidh Rajan also came Highly Commended in the student [sports journalism category](#) at the Annual Awards for Excellence.

At the British Sports Journalism Awards on

achievements, Sports Journalism Course Lead at St Mary's University Dr Daragh Minogue said, "We have seen our students and graduates win awards before, but not on this scale across so many categories. It was stunning to see so many of our graduates at the awards."

For more information on the Sports Journalism MA course at St Mary's University, please visit [this link](#).



St Mary's
University
Twickenham
London

Travel & Tourism and Catering Students Take a Trip to Italy

Fifty of our Level 2 & 3 Travel & Tourism and Catering students, along with department staff members, took an exciting trip to the coastal towns of southwestern Italy at the end of March.

During the educational trip, students were based in Sorrento and immersed themselves in a rich tapestry of cultural experiences in the nearby towns. From the iconic central landmarks of Sorrento to the picturesque island of Capri, and the beautiful scenery of the Amalfi coast, they delved into the heart of Italian hospitality and tourism.



Through guided tours, and firsthand experiences, they learned about the intricate art of Italian cuisine, the nuances of hospitality management, and the diverse attractions scattered across the region. Whether exploring the ancient streets of Sorrento, savouring authentic gelato in Capri, or discovering

the hidden gems of the Amalfi coast, each destination offered invaluable insights into the multifaceted world of travel and tourism. With each town and area visited, they gained a deeper understanding of Italy's rich history, vibrant culture, and legendary hospitality industry.

We are so pleased to offer trips like this to our learners, which give them an opportunity to explore their subjects outside of the classroom and be exposed to different cultures and experiences.

The trip was a huge success, and some fantastic memories were made by our students and teaching staff!

[Learn more about our courses and studying at RuTC here.](#)



Simply The Best - Care Home Nurse Is Crowned National Winner

Smita Patelia from Barchester's Lynde House care home in Twickenham, has beaten all competition from across the country to be named Nurse of the Year at the national finals of the Great British Care Awards 2023.



The Great British Care Awards is a series of nine regional awards culminating in a national final to celebrate excellence across the care sector. The purpose of the awards is to promote best practice within both the home care and care home sectors, and pay tribute to those individuals who have demonstrated outstanding excellence within their field of work.

Smita is an excellent nurse and wonderful role model to everyone at Lynde House. She has progressed from Registered Nurse to Deputy Manager thanks to her clinical skill and underpinning knowledge plus the compassion and consistent, instinctive care she demonstrates daily to her residents and their family members.

The Great British Care Award judges said that Smita was:

“A profoundly warm and dedicated nurse, consistently prioritising positive outcomes for residents. Her proactive and innovative approach, coupled with her empathetic nature, sets her apart.”

General Manager, Alison McIntosh commented:

“This is so well deserved, Smita embodies everything a nurse should be. She is incredibly professional and yet warm and empathetic, she is adored by everyone at Lynde House. We're all bursting with pride and over the moon that she won, everyone is so happy for her, including all our wonderful residents and their families.”

Barchester Healthcare's Regional Director for the South East, Jayne Holloway, added:

“This is absolutely fantastic! I could not be prouder of Smita, what a wonderful achievement and it is testament to her hard work and dedication to her residents and colleagues. A massive well done to Smita and everyone at Lynde House!”



Alternative asylum accommodation will cost more than hotels

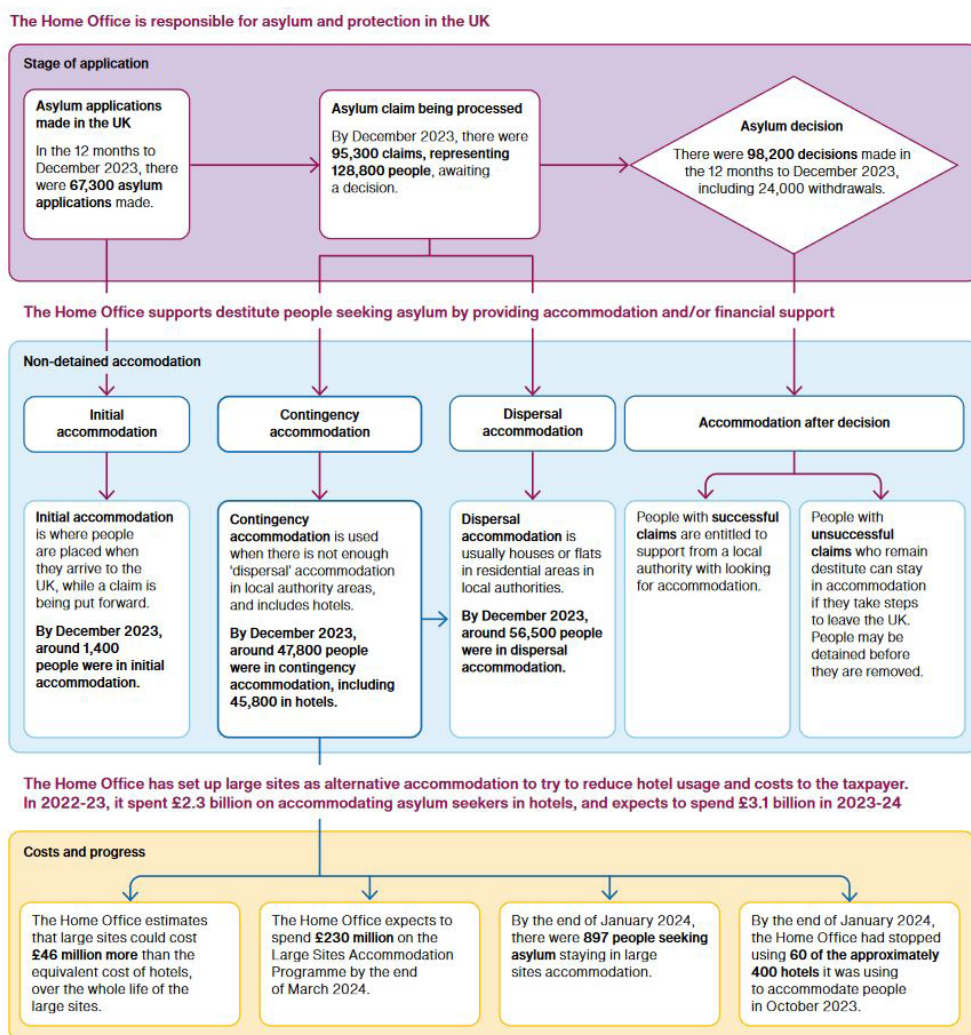
- The Home Office expects its large sites programme to cost £1.2 billion and believes the sites will now cost £46 million more than using hotels
- Asylum accommodation at four large sites is expected to cost £230 million by the end of March 2024, with 900 people living in them at end of January 2024
- The Home Office is resetting its large sites programme and developing a longer-term accommodation strategy

Government's plans for asylum accommodation will cost more than using hotels, and large sites are housing fewer people than planned, according to a new report by the National Audit Office (NAO).

In its report – [Investigation into asylum accommodation](#) – the NAO found that the Home Office expects to spend £1.2 billion on its large sites programme.

By the end of March 2024, the Home Office expects to have spent at least £230 million developing four large sites – the Bibby Stockholm, the former RAF bases at Scampton and Wethersfield, and former student accommodation in Huddersfield. At the end of January 2024 they were housing approximately 900 people.

Government has made progress in reducing the use of hotels accommodating asylum seekers and by the end of January 2024 had stopped using 60 hotels. But, in rapidly progressing its plans to establish large sites, it has incurred losses and increased risk. The Home Office originally assessed that large sites would be around £94 million cheaper than hotels. Its latest estimates suggest they will cost £46 million more than using hotels, although the Home Office believes they will provide more appropriate and sustainable accommodation.



The Home Office's assessments of value for money are affected by its assumptions of how

much it would cost to set up sites. The Home Office originally estimated set up costs at the former RAF bases would be £5 million each, but they increased to £49 million for Wethersfield and £27 million for Scampton.

So far, two of the four sites – Wethersfield and the Bibby Stockholm vessel – are accommodating people seeking asylum. These two sites were housing just under half the number of people the Home Office expected them to at the end of January. The Home Office is also considering reducing the maximum number of people it accommodates at the sites in Wethersfield and Scampton.

The Infrastructure and Projects Authority has undertaken three reviews of the Home Office’s work on asylum accommodation since November 2022. All are red-rated; meaning ‘successful delivery of the programme to time, cost and quality appears to be unachievable’. The Home Office has also recognised the challenges to delivery, rating its own assessments of progress as red, and has repeatedly revised accommodation targets downwards.

Overly-ambitious accommodation timetables led to increased procurement risks, as the Home Office prioritised awarding contracts quickly, and modifying existing contracts over fully-competitive tenders. The Home Office used emergency planning regulations to enable it to start working on sites quickly and secured some large sites before communicating with the local stakeholders about its plans, to reduce the risk of local opposition affecting negotiations. In January 2024 the Home Office was still working with providers to develop specific measures assessing residents’ safety at large sites.

The Home Office is resetting its Large Sites Accommodation Programme and developing a longer-term accommodation strategy. It is reducing the number of beds it intends to provide through such sites and proposing to identify smaller sites accommodating between 200-700 people.

Uncertainties regarding the implementation of the Illegal Migration Act will make it more difficult for the Home Office to assess what asylum accommodation it needs.

The changes that the Illegal Migration Act will introduce make it more difficult to assess how much and what type of accommodation the Home Office will need, as it does not know how effective the deterrent will be or how it will affect the amount of detained or non-detained accommodation it needs.

Gareth Davies, head of the NAO said, *“The Home Office has made progress in reducing the use of hotels for asylum accommodation. Yet the pace at which the Government pursued its plans led to increased risks, and it now expects large sites to cost more than using hotel accommodation.”*

“Home Office continued this programme despite repeated external and internal assessments that it could not be delivered as planned. Its plan to reset the large sites programme makes sense, and the Home Office should reflect on lessons learned from establishing its large sites programme at speed and improve coordination with central and local government given wider housing pressures.”



NPL scientists shed light on the chemistry of human cells

Scientists at NPL worked with Diamond Light Source to publish a [study](#) that shows how the chemistry of human cells changes, depending on the structure of their extracellular niche, are major determinants of cell responses and development pathways.

The human body undergoes renewal by specialising “blank” cells – termed stem cells – into primary cells organised into tissues according to their environment. The environment is created by extracellular matrices or scaffolds on which cells build up tissues and organs.

Cell responses to these matrices provide performance metrics that are critical for the development of cell-based diagnostics and therapies. Some of the important metrics are obtained using microscopy and biological assays, which, however, fail to capture the chemistry of cells and how it changes at different cell-matrix interfaces. This shortcoming continues to hamper progress in healthcare and technology innovation, as chemistry is the direct reflection of cellular processes responsible for tissue growth and repair.

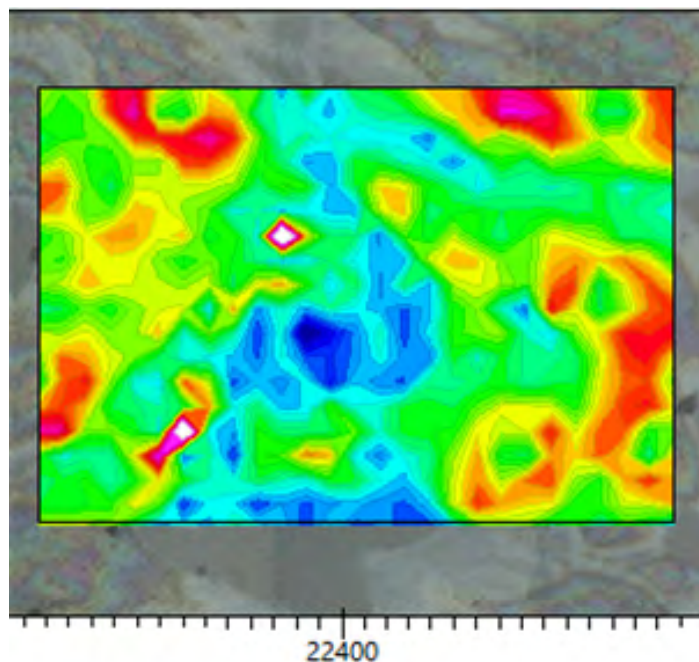
Scientists at NPL set out to address this gap by recording InfraRed maps of human primary and stem cells grown on native and synthetic matrices.

InfraRed spectroscopy can access virtually all chemical information available in the cell but cannot tell the cell from its matrix or recognise different parts of the same cell. Therefore, a correlative approach involving the use of physical imaging, provided by light and atomic force microscopy, to guide chemical spectra was necessary.

To achieve this, NPL collaborated with beamline scientists at Diamond Light Source, biologists from Sheffield and London Colleges and data expertise from Cambridge. Together, they developed a spectral imaging approach which not only allowed them to obtain chemical maps of single cells but also to cross-compare their chemistry signatures in response to matrices exhibiting distinct physical properties.

Their study also demonstrates the efficiency of correlative measurements to explain cell behaviour at cell-matrix interfaces in 2D, as well as the need to develop analogous and more advanced methodologies to measure cell-matrix interfaces in 3D, pathing a way to impact for healthcare and solutions towards human tissue regeneration.

Max Ryadnov, NPL Fellow, said: “the study was an exciting collaboration which provided us with important insights into how the chemical make-up of human cells correlates with the physical changes of the molecular scaffolds that support their growth and development. The study also informed next steps in our developments focusing on correlative measurements of living biological systems.”



hyperspectral map (coloured) of human cells grown on synthetic matrices

U19 Men's Team to Face Italy Confirmed

Andy Titterrell has named a 24-player travelling squad as the England U19 Men prepare to face Italy this weekend.

Saturday's (6 April) encounter of the pathway sides takes place at the Stadio Tommaso Fattori, L'Aquila, and will kick-off at 17:00 BST. The match will be live streamed on the [Federazione Italiana Rugby YouTube channel](#).

Titterrell and fellow U20 Men's coach Mark Mapletoft take charge of the team to utilise gametime on the international circuit for England Rugby pathway players graduating the U18 Men's set-up. Sale Sharks lock Thomas Burrow, a 2024 U20 Elite Player Squad (EPS) member, captains the side for a second week following on from a 24-21 reverse at the hands of France U19 Men at Doncaster Knights' Castle Park last weekend.

2024 Under-20 Six Nations winners Jacob Oliver (Newcastle Falcons), Olamide Sodeke (Saracens), Kane James (Exeter Chiefs) and Joshua Bellamy (Harlequins) continue their starting places in Titterrell's set-up for the trip. Sale Sharks scrum-half Dom Hanson takes the number nine shirt as the only change from last week's game with Max Blinkhorn named as one of nine replacements. Nottingham University's Blinkhorn, who trained with the U20 Men's EPS through their title-winning campaign, joins university students Owen Popple (Hartpury University) and Will Owen (Cardiff Metropolitan University) as Titterrell's finishers for the encounter.

Andy Titterrell said: *"Whilst the result last week in Doncaster wasn't what we had hoped for, these fixtures are the perfect opportunity for us to examine the plentiful talent we possess here in the pathway in competitive scenarios."*

"Our aim is to continue the alignment of our key principles; such as speed, attachment and space, throughout all age groups and provide the platform for these players to excel in an England shirt between competition time."

"We're anticipating another stern test on our trip to Italy, and the coaches and I are eager to see this group respond positively come Saturday afternoon."

England U19 Men's team to face Italy

15 Jack Kinder (Leicester Tigers)
14 Jack Bracken (Saracens)
13 Angus Hall (Saracens)
12 Charlie Myall (Leicester Tigers)
11 William Glister (Northampton Saints)
10 Joshua Bellamy (Harlequins)
9 Dom Hanson (Sale Sharks)

Replacements

16 Sol Moody (Exeter Chiefs)
17 Isaac Keller (Newcastle Falcons)
18 Owen Popple (Hartpury University)
19 Oscar Beckerleg (Exeter Chiefs)

1 Ralph McEachran (Sale Sharks)
2 Jacob Oliver (Newcastle Falcons)
3 Tye Raymont (Sale Sharks)
4 Olamide Sodeke (Saracens)
5 Thomas Burrow (c) (Sale Sharks)
6 Reuben Logan (Northampton Saints)
7 George Timmins (Bath Rugby)
8 Kane James (Exeter Chiefs)

20 Will Owen (Cardiff Metropolitan University)
21 Max Blinkhorn (Nottingham University)
22 Nic Allison (Exeter Chiefs)
23 Conor Byrne (Harlequins)
24 Campbell Ridl (Exeter Chiefs)



Match Preview: Aston Villa v Brentford

Analysis, team news, match officials and more. Here's everything you need to know ahead of Brentford's Premier League game against Aston Villa on Saturday (3pm kick-off GMT)

Written by Brentford Football Club

Brentford's Premier League run-in continues on Saturday as the Bees head north to take on Aston Villa. The game kicks off at 3pm.

Thomas Frank's side drew 0-0 with Brighton and Hove Albion last time out, while Unai Emery's high-flying Villa lost 4-1 at Manchester City.

Analysis, team news, match officials and more. Here's everything you need to know ahead of the meeting at Villa Park.

Pre-Match Analysis

Alex Lawes, Playmaker Stats: Brentford regaining defensive solidity at crucial time

Brentford head north to the midlands on the back of a goalless draw with Brighton and Hove Albion at Gtech Community Stadium on Wednesday evening.

That performance represented a continuation of a more defensively effective style of football that Thomas Frank is

attempting to utilise in order to drive the Bees away from the bottom three and the relegation places.

Between 27 December and 26 February, Brentford played 11 matches across all competitions and conceded more than two goals in a game on seven occasions. However, since then, they have avoided letting over two goals in in five successive matches.

Frank's pragmatic style since lifting Brentford into the Premier League has been difficult to beat for every side in the division and there does now appear to be a return to that kind of formula and foundation.

Perhaps it is a statistical quirk, but it has indeed coincided with the return of Republic of Ireland international defender Nathan Collins to the starting line-up.

The former Wolverhampton Wanderers man has made the third most interceptions for Brentford this season, behind Christian Nørgaard and Ethan Pinnock, with Pinnock the only man to have more clearances, too.



Head to Head

	Comparisons	
63	Goals	42
46	Goals Conceded	55
317	Shots	291
54%	Possession	44%
81	Yellow Cards	73
2	Red Cards	2



Pinnock, once again, is the only standout performer above Collins when it comes to pass completion too as he is the only player to have played more than 720 minutes of football to have a better rate than Collins' 81.2 per cent.

In the absence of former Barnsley defender Pinnock, who has been sidelined through injury alongside Ben Mee, Nathan Collins has stood up to be counted, complementing fellow centre-backs Zanka and Kristoffer Ajer.

Brentford have underperformed their expected goals against rate this season, which indicates their performances have not been getting the results they deserve. A 'reversion to mean' was actually always expected with a belief, rather than hope, that a victory is around the corner.

As Brentford go to Villa Park with the hosts potentially missing England international Ollie Watkins, as well as dealing with the upcoming distraction of a UEFA Europa Conference League quarter-final tie against Lille in midweek, the west Londoners will be confident of putting in another more commanding performance at the back, led by the impressive Collins.

Scout Report

Villa in pole position for fourth spot with finish line in sight

Aston Villa have, by and large, gradually improved year on year since returning to the Premier League after three seasons away in 2019, with 17th, 11th, 14th and seventh-place finishes.

In Unai Emery's first six months in charge after replacing Steven Gerrard, he took a team floundering at the wrong end of the table - and staring what was beginning to look like a relegation fight dead in the eye - and transformed it into one that missed out on a spot in the Europa League group stage by a single point.

Instead, Villa qualified for the Europa Conference League, which was certainly not a bad consolation prize given they had not played in Europe in any of the 12 seasons prior.

But if you thought that was impressive, the job the Spaniard has done so far this season has been out of this world. Early exits from the FA Cup and Carabao Cup have allowed his side to focus their energies elsewhere, which has been a blessing in disguise.

Starting in the Conference League, they thumped Hibernian 8-0 on aggregate to earn a place in the group stage and qualified for the knockout stages of the competition with four straight wins that followed a narrow 3-2 defeat away at Legia Warsaw on the opening matchday in September.

They have since managed to book themselves a two-legged quarter-final date with Ligue 1 side Lille later this month after a 0-0 draw with Ajax in Amsterdam and a subsequent 4-0 win in the second leg at Villa Park. It is the deepest they have gone into a European competition since reaching the quarter-final of the UEFA Cup under Brian Little and, later, John Gregory in 1997/98.

Meanwhile, in the Premier League, Villa were exquisite in the first half of the season and picked up 35 of the first 48 points on offer before the Brentford game on 17 December, which was such a good return that even Sky Bet had priced them at 16/1 to win the title, following wins over frontrunners Arsenal and Manchester City.

They started 2024 with one league win in four, which allowed the usual suspects to establish more of

a cushion, though four wins in the last six at the time of writing have allowed them to tighten their grip on fourth spot.

All things considered, it goes without saying that this has been one of the best seasons in recent memory for Villa fans: their talisman Ollie Watkins is closing in on his career-best goal tally, overdue midweek European adventures have returned and they have the fourth-best home and away records in the division at the time of writing.

That sentiment is reflected in the numbers, too. One more win, six more points and 10 more goals would see them record their highest return in each category throughout the course of a 38-game Premier League. It has not been bad going, to say the least.

A late shot at disrupting the title race might now be out of the question, but it has been some season so far and one that is not over by any stretch.

In The Dugout

Unai Emery

Having taken charge of almost 1,000 matches over the last 20 years, Unai Emery is one of the most experienced managers currently working in the Premier League.

After a career as a midfielder, mostly playing in the second tier of Spanish football, the Spaniard had a pretty quick transition into management, having suffered a serious knee injury in his early 30s.

He helped the now-defunct Lorca Deportiva to promotion in 2004/05 and got Almería into La Liga for the first time in 2006/07, before an incredible eighth-place finish the following campaign.

In 2008, his exploits saw him move on to Valencia, whom he guided to three straight third-place finishes from 2010 to 2012, before a forgettable six-month spell in Russia with Spartak Moscow.

He returned to Spain in January 2013 and guided Sevilla to three successive Europa League titles.

Two years and seven trophies with Paris Saint-Germain followed, with Emery then trusted by the Arsenal board to become the successor to Arsène Wenger, which was, to an extent, a poisoned chalice.

The Europa League king guided the Gunners to the final in 2019, where they were beaten by Chelsea in Baku, Azerbaijan, but he was unable to help them finish higher than fifth for the first time in four seasons.

He was sacked after 18 months in November 2019 and appointed by Villarreal in July 2020, with - you've guessed it - a fourth Europa League triumph following 10 months later, by way of a penalty shootout win over Manchester United in Gdansk, Poland.

The 52-year-old turned down an approach by Newcastle United in November 2021, but came back to England to replace Steven Gerrard at Villa Park in October 2022.



MARBLE HILL

COMMUNITY WEEKEND

SATURDAY 6TH APRIL

Community Yoga
8am-9am, back of
House (Riverside)

Community Games
10am-4pm, Picnic
Area beside
Playground

Landscape Tour
10am-11am, Front of
House

House open
10am – 5pm, last entry
4:30pm

Crossbats Net
session Drop in
10:30am-12:30pm,
meet at the Cricket
Nets

Arts N Crafts
11:30am – 1:30pm,
Café Lawn

Crossbats Season
Opening Game
Afternoon on the
Cricket Pitch!

Face Painting with
Design' a Face
1:30pm – 3:30pm, Café
lawn

Family storytelling
with our local library
2pm – 3pm, picnic
area beside
playground

Perrin Jazz
3:30pm – 5.30pm

Free Events Across the Weekend to celebrate the wonderful Community that exists at
Marble Hill!



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MARBLE HILL

COMMUNITY WEEKEND

SUNDAY 7TH APRIL

Community Games

10am – 2 pm, picnic area beside playground

Landscape Tour

10am-11am, meet at Front of house

Ninepin Bowling with

U3A Petanque Team
11am – 12:30pm,
Ninepin Alley

2nd Hand Bookshop

11am-4pm, Cafe

St. Margaret's Elastic Band

1pm – 2:30pm, Café lawn

Seed Sowing with our Kitchen

Gardeners 1pm – 3pm, picnic area beside playground

Arts N Craft

3pm – 4:30pm, Café lawn

House open

10am – 5pm, last entry 4:30pm

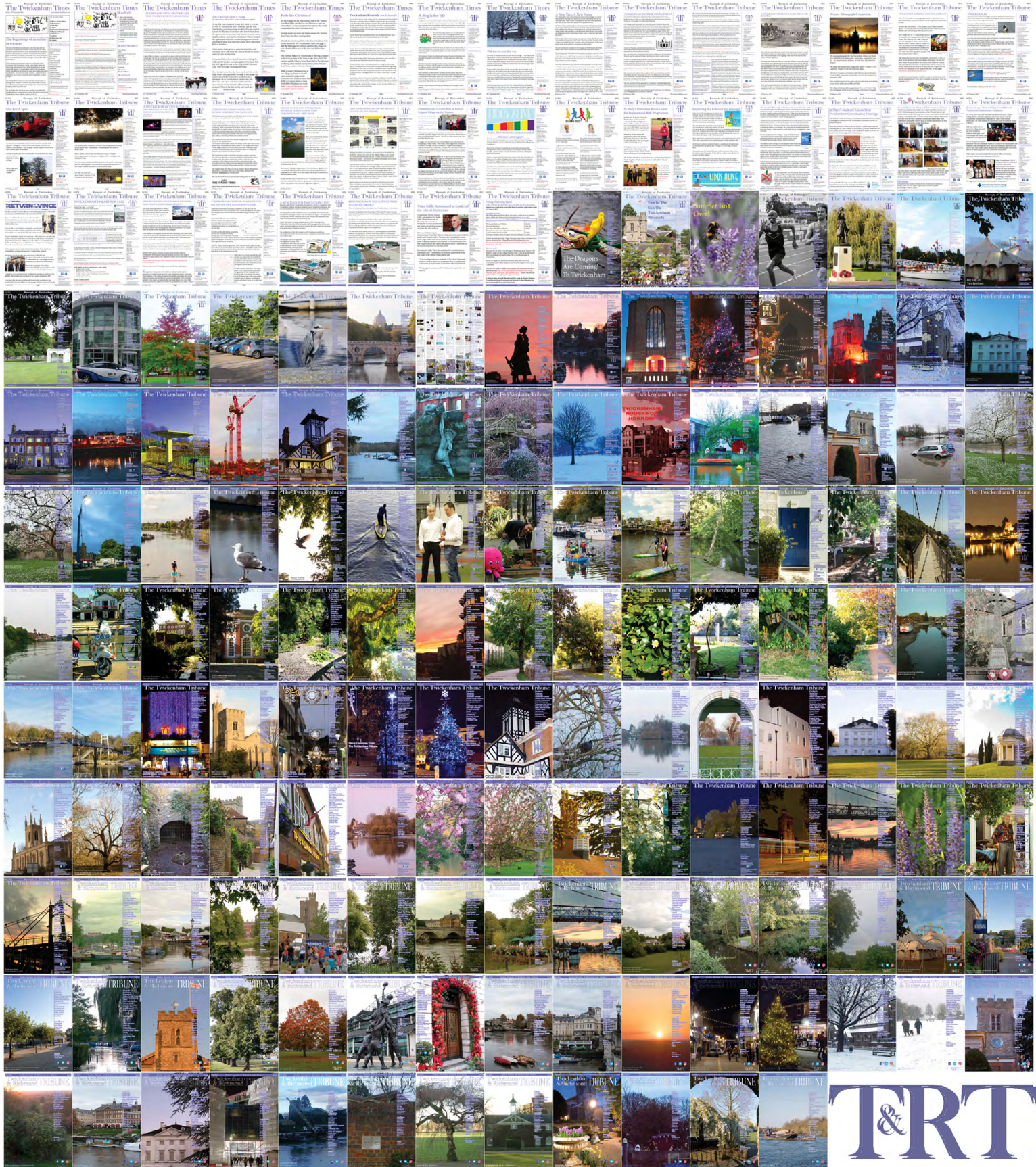
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