

# Twickenham & Richmond TRIBUNE

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## Editors

Berkley Driscoll  
Teresa Read



19<sup>th</sup> January 2024

T&RT

# TickerTape - News in Brief

## Transport

### South Western Railway

Altered train services and buses replace trains in the Barnes area **Saturday 20 and Sunday 21 January**  
The lines in the Barnes area will be closed all weekend due to maintenance work.

Queenstown Road station will be closed all weekend. Please use other nearby stations.

Due to the diverted Reading and Windsor services, some services via Wimbledon are also revised.

#### Saturday

- **London Waterloo to Reading** services will be **revised** and will be diverted between **Clapham Junction and Twickenham**. These services will call additionally at **Kingston**.
- **London Waterloo to Windsor** services will be **revised** and will be diverted between **Clapham Junction and Twickenham via Kingston** calling at all stations.
- **London Waterloo to Weybridge** services will be **revised** and will start from **Barnes**.
- **London Waterloo to London Waterloo via Richmond and Wimbledon** services will be **revised** and will only run between **Barnes and Kingston via Richmond**.
- **Buses** will run between **Clapham Junction and Barnes**.
- **London Waterloo to Hampton Court** services will be **revised** to run **hourly** and will start from **Surbiton**.

#### Sunday

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



**The Tree Agency**

darryl parkin

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# The Local Picture Postcard Page - Part 232

By Alan Winter

## Moormead Park – St Margarets

I first wrote about Moormead Park in this column some six years ago but since then I have found a couple more postcards of the park from well over 100 years ago that we can now look at. Also, since 2018 the Tribune has gained many thousands of additional subscribers who may not know much about this gem of a park in St Margarets.

To give it its full name according to LBRUT – Moormead and Bandy Recreation Ground. The park hosts many sports and has a playground, tennis courts and pavilion.

Postcards 1 and 2 were both photographed by local photographers and postcard publishers Young & Co in the 1920's. Interesting that they named the location Moormead Pleasure Grounds on their captions.



Postcard 1 shows schoolboys on the bank of the River Crane which forms the western boundary of the park, making it a great vantage point to spot riverside wildlife. Postcard 2 looks across the park to the junction of Kenley Road and Moormead Road.

I love this next bit which in February 1893 appeared in the editorial of the local paper and advocated a recreation ground here as being financially desirable (it would increase the rateable value of land here).



“It would be physically desirable by providing a ‘place for healthy exercise and promotion of clean lives’ and morally desirable ‘by supplying the means of innocent recreation to counteract evil influences which are always too plentiful, and by inducing that healthfulness of body which has so much to do with a healthy moral condition’. So, I suppose they meant that if you need to counteract evil influences you should go for a walk in the park?

By 1898 the pleasure ground at Bandy Close and Moor Mead is listed in Twickenham Urban District Council's Bylaws governing pleasure grounds

The park has since 1979 provided the setting for the annual St Margaret's Fair which takes place every July and is very popular amongst the locals. There is an active friend's group - Friends of Moormead Park

Moormead Bridge over the river Crane is in the north-west of the park and dates from 1902, with a new plaque erected by the Cole Park Residents Association to celebrate Twickenham Week in May 1981.

Our third postcard is from the mid 1960's and shows a cricket match (possibly between St Margarets and someone else)! If you played in this game please let me know!



The final postcard is a new acquisition to my collection and will probably stun today's residents



in the Moormead area. It is an advertising postcard from the Estate Office in Winchester Road. They are offering rental accommodation in Moormead Road facing the park at £2.4 shillings per month (£2.40 pence) downstairs and £2.8 shillings (2.80 pence) per month upstairs. That's a nice flat with a park view for under£1.00 per week!

If you have any old postcards sitting in a box or album at home that you are considering parting with, I'd be very interested in arranging to see them. Please contact me on 07875 578398 or by email at [alanwinter192@hotmail.com](mailto:alanwinter192@hotmail.com)

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



## Feel the love!

Limited edition Love magnet included with every booking that includes the 14th of Feb or if booked on the 14th of February!



# Notice of application for a Premises Licence

Notice is hereby given that **SEBAHATTIN KEMAL** has applied to Richmond Council for a new premises licence at **KEW'S PASSION, 300-302 SANDYCOMBE ROAD, TW9 3NG**, for Sale of Alcohol for Consumption Off the Premises, Monday to Sunday 08:00 to 21:00.

Any person who wishes to make a representation in relation to this application must give notice in writing by 2<sup>nd</sup> February 2024 stating the grounds for making said representation to: Richmond Licensing Authority, Regulatory Services Partnership (Serving Merton, Richmond and Wandsworth Councils) Merton Civic Centre, London Road, Morden, Surrey, SM4 5DX or by email: [licensing@merton.gov.uk](mailto:licensing@merton.gov.uk)

The record of this application may be inspected Monday to Friday (except Bank Holidays) by prior appointment at the offices of Wandsworth Licensing Authority, Regulatory Services Partnership (Serving Merton, Richmond and Wandsworth Councils) Merton Civic Centre, London Road, Morden, Surrey, SM4 5DX between the hours of 10.00 a.m. and 4.00 p.m. Information on all new and variation applications received by the Licensing Authority can be viewed on the Council's website [www.wandsworth.gov.uk](http://www.wandsworth.gov.uk)

It is an offence, under section 158 of the Licensing Act 2003, to knowingly or recklessly make a false statement in or in connection with an application, punishable upon conviction by an unlimited fine.

## Rob Blackie visits Teddington

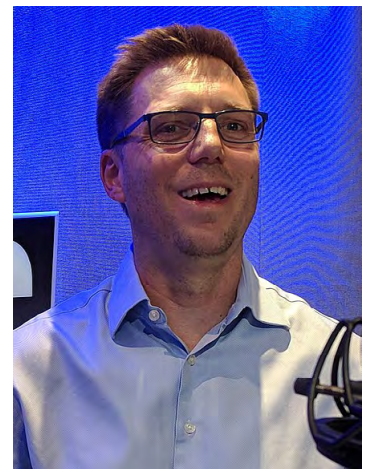
By James Knight

The Liberal Democrat candidate for the Mayor of London, Rob Blackie visited Teddington to campaign in the Teddington by-election last Saturday (13 January). He said on X (formerly Twitter) that people were bringing up the recent stabbing and were interested in his ideas for cutting crime.

He was referring to the tragic death of Anojan Gnaneswaran, 21, from Twickenham, who was stabbed just before midnight on Monday 8th January at Strawberry Hill Station. Knife crime has steadily increased in London over recent years, with the mayoral candidates offering different approaches to one of London's most pressing issues.

Rob's approach is to 'reset The Met' to get the police to focus on serious crimes and earn the respect of Londoners. He proposes to stop the police from wasting time on low-level drug offences, like laughing gas and cannabis. He would use this freed-up police time to investigate rapes and serious sexual offences properly and focus on reforming the Met so that it represents all Londoners and works more efficiently.

Photo of Rob Blackie © Chris Gee



# Hampton North and Teddington by-election results declared






On Thursday 18 January 2024, residents of Hampton North and Teddington elected new councillors to represent them, following the deaths of councillors Martin Elengorn and Geoffrey Samuel in November.

Carey Anne Leuw Bishop of the Liberal Democrat Party has been duly elected as councillor for the Hampton North ward. View the published [election results for the Hampton North ward](#).

Hampton North - results				
Election Candidate	Party	Votes	%	Outcome
 Carey Anne Leuw Bishop	Liberal Democrat Party	1177	53.19%	<b>Elected</b>
 Nupur Majumdar	Conservative Party	771	34.84%	Not elected
 Sam Cullen	Labour Party	159	7.18%	Not elected
 Danielle Anne Cornelia Coleman	Green Party	106	4.79%	Not elected

Voting Summary	
Details	Number
Seats	1
Total votes	2213
Electorate	7205
Number of ballot papers issued	2229
Number of ballot papers rejected	16
Turnout	30.94%

Richard Scott Baker of the Liberal Democrat Party has been duly elected as councillor for the Teddington ward. View the published [election results for the Teddington ward](#).

Teddington - results				
Election Candidate	Party	Votes	%	Outcome
 Richard Scott Baker	Liberal Democrat Party	1716	64.27%	<b>Elected</b>
 Elizabeth Foster	Conservative Party	561	21.01%	Not elected
 Chantal Lyn Kerr-Sheppard	Green Party	184	6.89%	Not elected
 James Dylan Thomson	Labour Party	163	6.10%	Not elected
 Dominic Francis Stockford	Independent	46	1.72%	Not elected

Voting Summary	
Details	Number
Seats	1
Total votes	2670
Electorate	7923
Number of ballot papers issued	2678
Number of ballot papers rejected	8
Turnout	33.80%

Congratulations to our newly elected councillors.

# Council Reports

## Adult Social Services, Health and Housing Committee

By James Knight

On Thursday, 11 January, the Adult Social Services, Health and Housing Committee met with a packed agenda. The most interesting information came at the end of the meeting when the matter of the council applying to become a registered housing provider was added to the Forward Plan. This suggests they plan to cut out existing housing associations when building new homes; will this be the return of the council housing in Richmond?

The first item on the agenda was the **L&Q Housing Report** on their performance over the past year. They are one of the largest housing associations in the country and have over 115,000 properties, 736 of which are in Richmond upon Thames. In 2021, L&Q Housing found itself in the national news when ITV News broadcast the story of Junior Juimoh, a tenant who needed the assistance of a ventilator to breathe and was being forced to live in a squalid flat covered in damp and black mould. This was another high-profile case, along with the death of Awaab Ishak, that led to the Social Housing (Regulation) Act 2023. The BRE Trust (formally the Building Research Establishment) estimated that bad housing costs the NHS an estimated £1.4 billion annually, and there are established links between dampness and health issues like respiratory issues, pain, and headaches.

After L&Q introduced their report, a public speaker, **Nick Dexter**, addressed the committee on behalf of the Labour Party; he said there needed to be more scrutiny of housing associations as the council did not appear to be holding them to account properly. **Cllr Jim Millard** (Hampton Wick & South Teddington) replied testily to Nick Dexter, “we undertake a lot of scrutiny behind the scenes.”

The questioning of the L&Q representative uncovered a range of issues affecting tenants, such as anti-social behaviour, dampness, poor energy efficiency, and repairs taking too long. 84 units have an Energy Performance Rating (EPC) D, which means they are only 55-68% efficient, and the representative could not say if there were any plans to improve them. In cases of black mould, they have a specialist contractor who will identify and address the root cause, and they fit monitors to see if temperatures fall below a particular level and can advise if the properties need to be heated more. They do not have the information to say the percentage of the stock that meets the new Decent Homes standard, and the committee expressed dissatisfaction with the lack of Richmond borough-level data.

To reduce void periods, L&G no longer fully refurbishes houses between lets. They used to replace the kitchens and bathrooms, fully redecorate, and re-carpet. **Cllr Jim Millard** noted this was an interesting difference from their other social housing provider, RHP, who provides flooring but takes longer to turn around properties. He said that in his experience, not providing carpets can be a real hardship, and the council asked for L&G to change their policy and provide them again.

**Cllr Piers Allen** said the council, as a corporate parent, is very keen for care leavers to have a choice of property. L&G said this can be challenging in terms of their expectations, but if they don't accept the offer made, they can get taken off the waiting list altogether. The writer suggests that Cllr Allen needs to ask for the Richmond Council housing allocation policy to be amended, as it does not currently offer a choice of property.

The next agenda item was the **Corporate Plan Performance Report**, which had 14 key performance indicators and a list of actions taken. The public speaker, **Nick Dexter**, spoke again. He said that given



the council's "woeful record on the delivery of affordable housing," why is the performance report only reported once a year when there needs to be the option of in-year remedial action? Cllr Millard replied that the councillors were all over this and the report was mainly to look back over the past year.

The corporation plan actions showed, amongst other things, that 850 Ukraine refugees had been supported, the winter warmth home service has supported 300 households, 17 properties were acquired on the open market to provide affordable housing with GLA funding, and 13 more will be acquired with Government funding – the writer notes that these buy-back schemes are generally used when councils cannot spend the funding on the preferred option of building new units. 420 careers had been supported via short breaks. The KPI indicators showed that 606 households lived in temporary accommodation, up from 438 the previous year, and 49 private sector dwellings had serious hazards identified and removed.

The next item was the homeless update and the severe pressure the council was under because of the increase in demand and the decrease in the supply of homes. The council had to top up the homeless service funding by £2.2 million in Jun 2023, bringing the total budget to £6.3 million. Many social landlords have a backlog of refurbishing homes between lets, with the largest social landlord in the borough, RHP, having a backlog of around 200 homes; the council believes that as the backlog is cleared, this will release around 80-100 properties. The government's decision to increase local housing allowance rates in April 2024 will also help reduce homeless demand substantially, as affordability will become less of an issue.

The meeting then agreed on the **extension of contracts for residential care services** for adults with a learning disability for 12 months. The borough currently places 53 adults in one of the 14 care homes at a cost of £5.802m. Most of the services are rated as "good" by the Care Quality Commission apart from two; one is waiting for a reinspection, and another is rated inadequate.

Then, the two **Joint Health Overview and Scrutiny Committees (JHOSC) updates** were given – these are committees made up of representatives of the boroughs located in NHS commission groups. For the Southwest JHOSC, the committee discussed the **planned move of paediatric oncology specialist** services from the Royal Marsden to the Evelina or St Georges Hospital. The committee has raised concerns about how certain elements are being scored and weighted in the evaluation criteria, especially concerning transport, as it will be much more difficult for these very sick children. Along with the impact on paediatric services at St Georges if the existing oncology services were abstracted. The director of public health said the council also responded and raised concerns about the quality and accessibility of the services if the changes went ahead.

The Northwest JHOSC update was that the **Central Middlesex Orthopaedic Centre**, near Park Royal, had treated its first patient. This means that patients without any complicating factors will be sent to this central unit for their operation, but the pre- and post-care will continue to be carried out at local hospitals. They have devised a transport strategy for those who find it difficult to travel independently to the centre. Cllr Piers Allen said that many residents would have the option of being referred to the specialist centre at Epsom, where the transport challenges are not quite so great.

The last item was the **Forward Plan**, and right at the very end, with no fanfare, an officer asked for the GLA Council Home Acquisition Program & Richmond Council, applying to become a registered social housing provider, to be put on the forward plan.

# Night-time road closures planned for George Street, Richmond

George Street in Richmond will be closed from the junction of Red Lion Street to outside number 80 for mobile crane operations overnight on Saturday 27 January and Saturday 10 February 2024.

The closures will take place from 8pm to 4:30am. Local traffic and buses will be on diversion during this time.

If you have any questions about these works, please contact Sheen Lane Developments on 020 3598 2398 or at [hfoxall@sheenlane.co.uk](mailto:hfoxall@sheenlane.co.uk).

[Sign up to LBRuT roadworks mailing list](#) to receive our weekly bulletin of all the scheduled works taking place in the borough, as well as notifications of any emergency works.



## Visit the Twickenham Repair Café

On the third Saturday of each month, the Twickenham Repair Café will open its doors for repairs.

The café's ethos is to bring broken items or unwanted tools to be repaired. The team are experienced to fix almost anything including: iPads, clocks, lawn mowers, coffee machines, clothes, bikes, lamps, ceramics, furniture and even sharpen garden shears!

The next repair café takes place on Saturday 20th January from 10.30am to 12.45pm at St Margaret's Church Hall, 130 St Margaret's Road, TW1 1RL.



If you would like more information and future dates, visit the [Twickenham Repair Café website](#).

Dear Tribune

**Your 12 January 2024 edition (No. 375)**

Scrolling through the pages of your 12 January 2024 edition (No. 375), it was difficult to discern, from parts of it, whether it was intended to be an edition of the Tribune or an electoral communication on behalf of the Conservative Party.

Three full pages comprised flyers for Tory candidates: two for candidates in two local council by-elections (which were to be held on 18 January 2024) and the third advertising a “Shadow MP Surgery” by the Tories’ Twickenham Parliamentary Candidate, Mr Hulley. All were endorsed with the wording required for an electoral communication.

There were two articles. One, under the headline “Big hitters on the campaign trail”, reported on electoral campaigning for the Conservative candidates in the two by-elections. The “Big hitters” were a deputy chairman of the Tory party, the Tory candidate for London Mayor (who, it was reported, did a bit of campaigning for herself in attacking Sadiq Khan’s record as Mayor), the Tory SW London candidate for the London Assembly and Mr Hulley. No journalist was named as author of this ‘article’. I wonder who wrote it. Was it a ‘news’ report or electioneering on behalf of the Conservatives? Other than the critical comments about Sadiq Khan, no mention was made of any other party’s candidates, campaigns or campaigners.

The other article was “Social Media Watch By James Knight”. The first paragraph reported on an alleged “spat” on X/Twitter involving LibDem Council Leader Gareth Roberts, in which he was said to have been “blocked” in an exchange over Ed Davey’s “no-show” at a Parliamentary debate on the Post Office ‘Scandal’. The first paragraph ended with a sentence which criticised Mr Roberts for allegedly preventing anyone other than “his pre-approved followers” from replying to his tweets. The other three paragraphs set out allegations about Ed Davey in relation to the Post Office ‘Scandal’, the possibility of an independent candidate standing against him at the next general election and the adverse effect this was likely to have on two neighbouring LibDem MPs’ re-election campaigns (I doubt that either is losing sleep over it). There was no statement that either of those criticised had been contacted for comment.

Finally, there was a letter from the would-like-to-be Conservative MP, Mr Hulley, in which he followed the Tory press in an attack on Ed Davey’s alleged wrongs concerning the Post Office ‘Scandal’, before setting out why he considered he should be voted in as Twickenham’s next MP.

There were no flyers for other political parties, no articles about their electoral campaigns and no letters in support of them. No Conservative was criticised. No LibDem or Labour politician was given positive coverage.

In the interests of balance, the allegations published by the Tribune, in particular those against Ed Davey, should be addressed. As a retired litigation solicitor (non-practicing), I have followed the Post Office ‘Scandal’ for two years, listened to journalist Nick Wallis’s Radio 4 series about it, followed and commented about it on LinkedIn, read countless media reports about it, including Computer Weekly, and followed evidence given at the Public Inquiry.

The allegations and criticisms made against Ed Davey are misplaced. Aside from that, to single him out for criticism from amongst the many Conservative and Labour politicians who have also had ministerial responsibility for the Post Office over many years is unwarranted. The most recent editions of The Sunday Times and Private Eye set this out in detail. Time does not allow me to do so in this letter, but I will follow up with a more detailed analysis. That will also address the unwarranted criticisms of Ed Davey’s consultancy with the energy group of the international law firm, Herbert Smith Freehills, between 2015 and 2021.

For sake of transparency, I wish to disclose that I am a member of the LibDems, but that I have not discussed this letter with anyone and that no-one asked me to write it.

Yours

Jonathan Haydn-Williams, Richmond

# Council Reports

## Education and Children's Services Committee

By James Knight

The committee met on Monday, 15 January, with the biggest issue being the budget overspending by the committee and the recovery plan, which included a spending & hiring freeze and cutbacks to services to some of our most vulnerable residents.

The first item of substantive business was the 2025/26 **admission arrangements** for the 24 infant and primary schools the council is still responsible for – academies are responsible for setting their admission policies themselves. The councillors asked general questions about admissions, but none related directly to the issue at hand. Cllr Jo Humphreys raised the secondary school admission of black holes in Hampton, where some pupils cannot obtain a school place on National Offer Day.

They then moved on to the **Special Educational Needs and/or Disabilities (SEND) Future Plan**, the strategic plan to improve outcomes for children and young people aged up to 25 years old and address the funding gap. The recent Ofsted & Care Quality Commission inspection of the partnership found there had been improvements but three areas of improvement needed: (1) leaders at NHS South West London Integrated Care Board should ensure there are robust oversight and improvement plans to reduce the lengthy waits for children and young people waiting for an autism or attention deficit hyperactivity disorder diagnosis; (2) all expectant parents are able to access an antenatal contact from a health visitor which is a mandated contact; (3) the quality of information in Education, Health and Care (EHCH) needs to be improved (there are 1,694 children with these plans). But there are also a host of other recommendations in the report. The safety valve agreement, which tops up funding for SEND education, was discussed. However, the council is still around £2 million away from balancing the funding received from the Government for high-need children and what it spends. This is mostly down to the council being overly dependent upon private schools and out-of-borough placements.

Mr Philip Moshi, a trustee of Mencap, spoke as a public speaker about the continuing problems SEND children have as they transition to adulthood. Cllr Jo Humphreys (Whitton) questioned the council's approach, trying to avoid doing diagnoses for milder cases of autism or ADHD to free up time for clinicians. She said that children with milder cases find having a formal diagnosis the most useful, enabling them to access help more easily rather than having to go private for one.

Next up was the Quarterly Monitoring Report, with the main issue being **budget overspending**. The committee is projected to overspend by £3 million on the General Fund revenue services this year, which is 6% of the total budget. The cost of looking after **children in care** has increased, with placements in residential homes now costing, on average, £4,168 per week and £1,049 for independent foster care. External placements are 27% to 36% more expensive than last year due to inflation, increased complexity of care and a shortage of places. The highest cost is £29,000 per week for secure placements. There is an overspend of £591,482 in **social**

**care staffing** due to recruitment problems requiring more agency staff to be employed.

There is £464,000 overspending in **Section 17 payments** used to support the safety or well-being of children, young people, and their families where they have no other means of obtaining financial support. Guidance has been reviewed to be clearer about what can and cannot be funded from this budget. The **legal budget** has projected an overspend of £360,000, thought to be caused by care cases increasing in length from 43 weeks to 59 weeks. The **parent and baby assessment** budget has an overspend of £340,746; these are often court-ordered and cost an average of £5,051 per week per child.

**The council is supporting 20 unaccompanied asylum-seeking children**, of which the Government funds most of the cost. It also supports 83 **young asylum seekers over the age of 18**, of which 17 have no recourse to public funds, and they will be funded locally by the Council's Refuge and Homelessness Reserve. The council is spending £4.2 million on **SEN transport** for 344 pupils, giving an average cost of £10,837 per pupil. This high cost is due to most SEN children being educated outside of the borough, 210 compared to 129 within the borough. The councillors asked how costs could be brought down, and the officers replied that they are trying to support foster carers more, there are no plans to open new children's homes in the borough, and they are considering looking at a house deposit scheme for care leavers rather than giving them social housing. A review has taken place on SEN transport, and more users will be given independent travel training so that transport can be withdrawn. Cllr Butlin (South Twickenham) asked, "When is the council going to go bust."

The council originally budgeted for £781,300 of cost savings, but only £207,300 is now expected to be achieved. To mitigate the pressures on the budget, there has been a **non-critical spending freeze** focused on back-office roles and education roles. All vacancies must be approved at the director level, and budget managers have been asked to stop all spending where it is deemed non-critical.

Officers drew the attention of councillors to their concerns that the support offered to children with **speech and language difficulties** has had to be reduced by 50% from September 2024 by the NHS, the commissioned providers cannot offer any more support, and the council is having difficulty finding other providers who have spare capacity. Due to the council's spending freeze, the Waldegrave specialist resource provision and IT suite are on hold. There is no health representative on EHPC panels, and there are gaps in health provision for SEND children due to recruitment issues and the council's pay and benefits being less than neighbouring authorities.

The last item was the quarter 2 mid-year performance report when Cllr Crookdake (Mortlake & Barnes Common) said the performance indication for **annual health assessments** for children in care was poor. Officers conceded it was the worst in some years, and a big backlog had built up caused by problems gathering documents together and a shortage of appointments with medical staff. Only 53.8% of Education, Health and Care Plans (EHCPs) are completed within the statutory 20-week timeframe. This was attributed to the turnover of senior staff and caseworkers.

# The World of Boris Pasternak

Piano recital showcasing the little known compositions of author **Boris Pasternak at St Mary's Church, Twickenham on Sunday 28th January**

Pianist Hannah-Elizabeth Teoh performs the only surviving compositions of Boris Pasternak, author of Dr Zhivago, alongside works by Scriabin, Rachmaninoff and Chopin.

Celebrated as the Nobel Prize awarded author of Dr Zhivago and one of Russia's most beloved poets, Boris Pasternak's first love was music. Raised amongst the Russian elite, his mother was a renowned concert pianist, and Scriabin and Rachmaninoff were regular household visitors. As a teenager Pasternak was an accomplished pianist with aspirations to become a composer; this concert provides a rare opportunity to hear his only surviving works.

## PROGRAMME:

**Boris Pasternak:** Prelude No. 2 in G-sharp minor

**Scriabin:** Mazurka Op. 3 No. 6 in C-sharp minor

**Scriabin:** Prelude Op.11, No.15 in D-flat major

**Boris Pasternak:** Prelude No. 1 in E-flat minor

**Scriabin:** Etude Op. 42, No. 5 in C-sharp minor

**Boris Pasternak:** Piano Sonata in B minor

**Chopin:** Fantaisie in F minor, Op. 49

- Interval -

**Rachmaninoff:** *Morceaux de salon*, Op. 10:

.- Waltz in A Major

- Romance in F minor

**Scriabin:** Piano Sonata No. 3 in F-sharp minor, Op. 23

New Zealand born **Hannah-Elizabeth Teoh** studied at the Royal Academy of Music, the Ecole Normale de Musique de Paris and the Royal College of Music, and has won numerous awards including the Harold Samuel Prize, the Florence Murray Award, the Lesley Holland Scholarship and the Ivy Corkill Recital Award.

As a concerto soloist she has performed around the world, including a premiere recording of Ross Harris' Concertina for Piano and Orchestra with the New Zealand Symphony Orchestra, and most recently making her Italian debut with the Master Orchestra in Brescia playing Saint-Saëns' second piano concerto. Supporting her musical life, Hannah-Elizabeth draws inspiration from literature and art and has a Masters in Philosophy from Birkbeck University.



## Time & Location

28 Jan 2024, 17:30 – 19:30

Twickenham, Church St, Twickenham TW1 3NJ, UK

Find more details and booking [HERE](#)

# An Old Story

Teresa Read

I am not sure how many readers would have come across Victorian horror stories told around the fire on a dark night in a room with flickering candle lights; atmospheric and no doubt unnerving at times.

One such story is of a Fagin-like character who walked the streets of London with a child in a sack. The man would approach likely “customers” and tell them that his sack could sing and for a payment he would show them. Once paid he would then kick the sack and the child would sing – “Sing Sack Sing”.



Kensington Slums

As I woke this morning this story came to mind as I was thinking of complaints made by a few people in our Borough who say that at the Tribune we do not promote a particular political

party – but, they, in fact, do nothing to engage with or support us, rather the reverse. I am not sure why I thought of this story but maybe I just felt that there was a bit of undeserved Tribune kicking going on in some quarters by those who do not understand that if something is free for you to read, it is not necessarily free to produce.



“A London Fog”, from The Illustrated London News (1847)

It may be of interest to readers to know that a Freedom of Information request has been sent to the Council about an issue that badly affects the financial security of the Tribune; there has been no reply, and the Council is legally out of time. The original FOI request was made on 20th November 2023, more letters and reminders

have since been sent. Once again, a further letter has been written to the London Borough of Richmond upon Thames with not even an acknowledgement.

So, I say to those who complain about any perceived “bias”, find out the facts and think before you complain about the Tribune, a free community newspaper where residents can add their news, views and have their say. If you want your information published engage with us, be polite and genuine, do not treat us like the man with the sack and kick us when we take paid advertising from those who appreciate and support a weekly news publication.

We do ask for donations as the Tribune must pay for all fixed and variable costs; all work is voluntary but there is a financial shortfall that has to be paid in order to produce your weekly newspaper. As someone who has worked on the internet since 1997, I sometimes wonder if some people think that everything on the internet is free; It is not to the publisher of an online Newspaper or in fact a respected website. Surely this should be understood?

Btw, I think the Victorian story ended with the child in the sack being rescued by a gentleman who was approached by the Fagin character. Over to you ...



# Twickenham Conservatives

Jonathan Hulley, the Conservative prospective Parliamentary candidate for Twickenham constituency, will be holding a Shadow MP Surgery on **Saturday January 20th from 10am to 12noon.**

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

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

There is no need to make an appointment.

## Shadow MP Surgery

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

**All are  
Welcome  
To attend.**





# Coming Home

By Shona Lyons

This week lots of good things happened. Pierre seems much more settled. I think the huge support of the local community hearing of his plight has helped him enormously. Call it moral support, I think it has really boosted his spirits and he is now not so low anymore and seems to be in a good state of mind to start planning for his future. The fact that so many people thought to combine their finances in support has raised almost £5,000 so far so hopefully he is now in a much better state financially too.



I hope soon he really will find his happy place and be much more comfortable and content.

But for now the outpouring of encouragement, and everyone's real affection for him has been a huge help. This week he has been back at his shop. <https://gofund.me/7e47b13f>

And now I want to tell you about the Queen! We had a surprise message on face book at the weekend, and a lovely local couple (Alex and Ben Jones) had gone to the trouble of buying a new white queen to replace the ones that were stolen and smashed up.

So that is very heartwarming too. You will see that the giant chess is now complete!



# Twickenham Cyclis

Doug Goodman

Spotted by the station this evening



'We wish the cyclis a safe journey.'

## Celebrate Richmond's best young writers

Arts Richmond invites you to join them on Sunday 17 March for an afternoon celebrating the best of the borough's young writers.

There had many submissions to this annual competition which was launched back in September. The judge selected seven finalists from each age group.

Taking place at 2.30pm at The Exchange 75 London Road, TW1 1BE, these pieces will be brought to life by a wonderful group of local actors who will be performing all of the children's work.



This year will have the support of well known author, Anthony Horowitz, famous for the 'Alex Rider' Book and Film series. Anthony Horowitz will be joined by the Mayor of Richmond, Councillor Suzette Nicholson, to present the final winners of each category on the day.

[Book tickets](#)

# Parliamentary Sketch

## SEN Schools

By James Knight

On Monday in the House of Commons, **Munira Wilson MP** claimed that private Special Educational Needs (SEN) schools were holding local authorities to “ransom.” She said that many local authorities were struggling financially and needed Government bailouts whilst these companies were making “obscene profits.”

Many local authorities cannot access enough SEN school places in the state sector and thus must send pupils to private schools. She argued there needs to be more state provision and the Government should invest in new state SEN schools to prevent profiteering.

However, readers will note that questions have been repeatedly raised in the Twickenham & Richmond Tribune about the future use of the mothballed former Clarendon SEN School in Hampton. For example, in March 2023, the late **Geoffrey Samuel** struggled to get any commitments from the council. The school was extensively refurbished and used as the temporary home for Turing House School between 2018-2022. It’s currently standing empty, costing the council thousands of pounds each year to maintain and keep secure whilst vast sums are spent on private SEN school fees.

Why has the school been mothballed for so long? The council has indicated it wants to extract the capital value of the site for other projects, such as Twickenham Riverside, whilst if a new school is opened on the site, they would only receive a peppercorn rent. Simultaneously, it’s asking the Government to build a new SEN school in front of Hampton High for 25 pupils, which will cost taxpayers millions and still leave a significant shortfall in SEN places.

In June 2016, **Cllr Gareth Roberts**, when the council opposition leader, said that at least some of the Clarendon School site should be kept for educational use; now he is the leader, he needs to explain his intention for the site.

## Join the Kew Neighbourhood Association team

Kew Neighbourhood Association is recruiting for a part time Communications and Marketing Assistant.

KNA is a forward-looking charity that connects local volunteers with people in Kew who need practical help and companionship whilst still maintaining their independence.

The charity was launched by local people in 1977 and has been thriving ever since.

KNA is now looking for a Communications and Marketing Assistant to join the friendly team as they develop plans for the charity’s 50th anniversary in 2027.

The application deadline is Thursday 1 February 2024.

See [more details about the role](#).



# Council Reports

## Environment, Sustainability, Culture and Sports Committee

By James Knight

The committee met on Tuesday, 16th January 2024, and the first item discussed was the **Hampton Swimming pool** guarantee for the licence agreement between the pool trust and the Royal Parks, which was agreed upon.

The next item was the controversial new policy to make it easier for people to replace their **front garden** with **parking**. Bodies such as CPRE London and several other active travel groups have condemned this change as they say it will increase car use in London overall. Cllr Julia Neden-Watts (Twickenham Riverside) said that she believed the new rules would result in an improvement in biodiversity and drainage, whilst Cllr Chris Varley (South Richmond) said we need to encourage people to park on their front gardens because to keep the roads clear, especially with cars getting bigger. Cllr John Coombs (Heathfield) asked for the council to investigate having an instalment plan to make it easier for people to afford. Cllr Nedan-Watts also mentioned that part of the change could also introduce a prize for the best rewilded garden resulting from these changes. The committee decided to start the process to change the Transport Supplementary Planning Document (SPD), which will require a full public consultation.

The committee then discussed increasing the **finer for fly tipping** to the maximum amount of £1,000, reduced to £500 if paid within 10 days. Cllr Varley said he was concerned about people being fined for leaving stuff next to a full recycling bin, especially as there is no right of appeal. The officer in charge of the section said the council would not issue a fine in those circumstances. Cllr Fiona Sacks (Barnes) asked what happens if someone can't afford the fine of, say, £1,000. The officer said they don't accept instalment payment plans, and 'if you can't pay the fine, don't do the crime'. Cllr Sacks said this really concerned her as there are people who cannot afford to pay £500 to pay immediately. Cllr Nedan-Watts laughed and said, "it costs us as a Council, it costs taxpayers a huge amount of money to clear tips, so let that be a warning to everyone listening." The committee agreed to the recommendations.

The quarter two **corporate plan performance** was then discussed with Cllr Coombs, who said that both the arts service and libraries had excellent figures but that lending of hardback books was down. The council is receiving new funding from the government to extend its **food waste recycling** service to flats £550,000 in capital funding and some transition costs for communications and ongoing revenue finding from April 2026. However, the committee did not discuss the continuing **poor performance of the refuse collection service**, where there are 109 reports of missed bins per 100,000 (against a target of 70). Readers should note that the census recorded 80,704 households in 2021, which is 88 missed collections per week borough-wide. Nor did the committee discuss **missing housing delivery targets**; there were only 141 net new homes against a target of 411.

## DOWN BY THE WATERSIDE WITH SAM'S

It's all happening in Brentford at the moment: lots of new developments and retail outlets springing up, and I was delighted to discover that Sam Harrison, with business partner Fanny Stockder (of Sam's Riverside fame) have seized the opportunity to spread their culinary wings further still. They recently opened **Sam's Waterside**, in the new Brentford Project development by Ballymore, and situated facing the water (the River Brent, a tributary of the Thames), It was a bitterly cold Wednesday evening when we went, but the



place was buzzing, with a mix of families, couples and corporate groups. The restaurant itself is adjacent to Sam's Brentford Larder (if you are looking on google maps) and, with warmer weather, it will be wonderful to sit on the terrace and enjoy the river views.



The restaurant decor is modern and stylish, with a central island bar, and offers a warm welcome on a cold night. I'd been strongly recommended to try Sam's famous **Parmesan Churros** to enjoy with our drinks and they went down a storm with my husband's IPA (£5) and my cocktail: a TW8 Martini (£12.50 Dima's Ukrainian Three Grain vodka, dry vermouth, caperberries and brine). Reader, I was in martini heaven... a great indication of the quality of our meal ahead! And a note on the service: our waiter noticed that I'd dropped a piece of parmesan into my water glass and came over to replace and refresh the glass. On a busy evening, we thought that pretty impressive!

One of the things I really like about Sam's menu is that most of the starters are also available as a main course. As someone who's often more tempted by starters, I was able to choose two starters, and supplement the main course one with a side salad and some fries...perfect! I started with **Handmade Burrata di Puglia, Decana Pear, Pickled Pumpkin, Aged Balsamic**.

Being a fan of bitter leaves, I was delighted that this beautifully presented dish was surrounded by treviso leaves. I'd not tasted pickled pumpkin before - it was earthy, but sweet, and the whole dish had an interesting mix of textures and flavours, with grainy pears, and bitter treviso. It was a generous portion and well balanced. My husband chose **Crispy Duck, Watercress, Persimmon, Citrus**, which he declared spicy, fruity and fresh, with the crispy duck being offset perfectly by the salad and citrus.



Never one to resist a good steak tartare, I opted for a starter size of **Bloody Mary Steak Tartare, Horseradish, Quail Egg** as my main course. It really was 'bloody delicious' and the accompanying salad (with different, wonderfully fresh, Italian leaves) was ideal. The chips were fat, and piping hot and the starter portion was more than adequate. My husband had **Hereford Aged Ribeye, Peppercorn Sauce, Chips** and raved about the tenderness and flavour of the steak. (as well as polishing off quite a few of my chips)

We also enjoyed an excellent bottle of **Montepulciano d'Abruzzo Riserva Tor del Colle 2019** (£31). The wine list is well constructed and priced, starting from £28 a bottle.



The dessert menu seemed slightly scaled down compared with the range on other courses. There were four choices and a cheese option. Basque cheesecake appealed and again, a very generous serving with Sloe Berries & Wild Quince. The accompaniments were, I felt, a tad underwhelming, and didn't offer much to the lovely cheesecake. This was the only part of the whole meal that I

felt wasn't spot on. My husband had sticky rum cake with coconut ice cream and thoroughly enjoyed it.

We were really impressed with Sam's Waterside and will definitely be returning. The manager, Kristin, was telling us that it is already proving very popular with local residents and businesses. There's a set menu at £23.50 for two courses and £28.50 for three available Monday to Thursday and lunchtime only on Fridays. And for seafood lovers, there's an **Oyster Happy Hour** menu 5-6pm Monday to Thursday.

Price-wise, for the location, quality of food and service, I think it is better value than some 'gastropubs' too. It's on the 267 bus route too, a bonus for anyone living in Twickers or anywhere else on the route!

# VEGANUARY THOUGHTS

After the excesses of the festive period, lots of folk not only decide to do 'Dry January', but also embark on going vegan for the month of January: Veganuary. While I don't personally follow either regime for a whole month, we often find we are eating a vegan dish by accident, rather than design, and many Asian recipes are vegan anyway.

Here are some new products I've researched to recommend to you - whether you are vegan or not:

BBC's 'Inside the Factory' recently went behind the scenes at **Dell'Ugo**. We tried the pumpkin gnocchi; it's not only vegan, but seriously delicious. These delicate pillows of freshly steamed potato, pumpkin, make a quick and light meal, or accompaniment. The company also produces a spinach gnocchi and a 'plain' and gluten free variety. Widely available in most supermarkets at £3.50 for 450g. A touch of good EVOO or truffle oil and you've a delicious meal - vegan to boot!



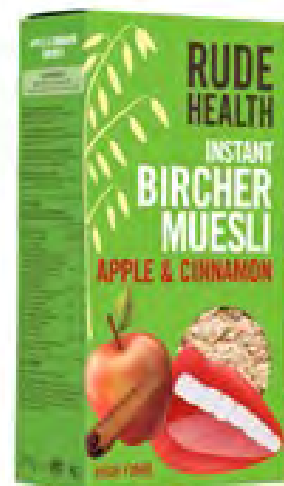
Vegan ready meals are increasingly popular, but do check the ingredients as some are rather scary! **Tesco** has an excellent plant based range, as has **Asda**, **Waitrose** and **MandS** of course. The Tesco range includes a delicious sweet potato Katsu style curry with rice and also Bean Chilli with Mexican style rice. Their Cumberland style bangers (£1.95 for six) are great value and surprisingly good: tasty and not packed with lots of nasties.

The UK's number one Kefir brand, **Biotiful Gut Health**, has launched the **Oat Kefir Yor-Gut** range, made with gluten-free oats, fruit and billions of live vegan cultures. In two flavours; *Vanilla and Cherry*. available in Tesco, RRP of £2.50 for 350g pot.



I'm told that **Boundless** are the only snacks in mainstream supermarkets like Asda & Ocado with genuine gut happy benefits. Activation removes 85% of Phytic Acid in nuts, seeds & grains, so the snacks are full of fibre, giving up to 95% more access to the nutrients. Boundless uses a cereal called sorghum, grown in the UK, and the range is also gluten-free and plant-based. With 100% natural ingredients, the snacks are full of gut-friendly fibre and a range of nutrients (magnesium, zinc, iron & potassium to name a few). There are eight flavours in the Boundless snacking range, in various pack sizes and prices: Chips: Sea Salt and vinegar, Chipotle and lime, Smoky Bacon, and Sour Cream and onion. What's more, they're delicious!

I've been a fan of **Rude Health** products for some time now, and really like the breakfast cereals, especially the delicious **Apple & Cinnamon Instant Bircher Muesli**. It's so clever and tasty, and gives a smooth muesli instantly, without the need to soak it overnight. It ticks all the boxes: high fibre; wholegrain; plant based and no added sugar. And on a cold morning you can also enjoy it with hot milk (or plant based milk) There's a standard version too, and available from Waitrose and Ocado, among other outlets, for around £3 a 375g pack



**Herby Hog's** range of plant-based seasonings are great for injecting flavour to anything savoury.

They're plant-based, GM-free seasonings and have five combos; Smoky Bacon; Maple Bacon; Spicy Chorizo; BBQ Pork and Sausage and Sage. Available in 60g sachets, these seasonings can be sprinkled over finished dishes, used as a coating or rub, stirred into rice or pasta combos, used as a boost in dips, sandwich fillings or as a topping for



potatoes. Herby Hog Seasonings are available from <https://herbyhog.co.uk/> RRP £3.49 per 60g sachet.

**The Coconut Collab**, a British-born business producing an extensive range of coconut-based products, has recently launched **M!LK™** - a barista-style plant milk that looks, tastes and behaves just like its dairy counterparts. Initially available exclusively through Ocado (RRP. £2.35, 1L), M!LK™ froths really well, doesn't split when warmed, and won't alter the taste profile of your tea, making it the ideal addition to hot drinks, smoothies, cereals and everything else you like to use milk in.



The Coconut Collab has a coconut-based range of yoghurts, creams and desserts. Its natural yoghurt is the UK's leading dairy-free coconut yoghurt, while its plant-based Double Cre&m, described as "wonderfully whippable", has been offered as the dairy-free option at Wimbledon Championships for the last two years. The Coconut Collab's range is available at leading supermarkets and grocery retailers across the UK, including Tesco, Sainsbury's, Waitrose, Asda, Morrisons and Co-op.



# Traveller's Tales 153

## Cruising On The Thames

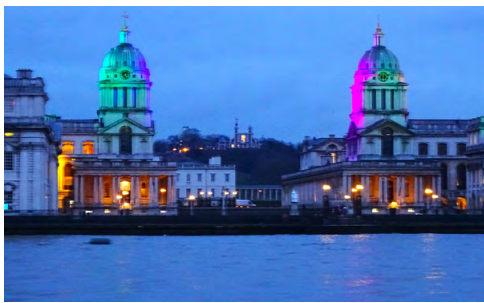
Doug Goodman Cruises Past Greenwich On The New Uber Boat



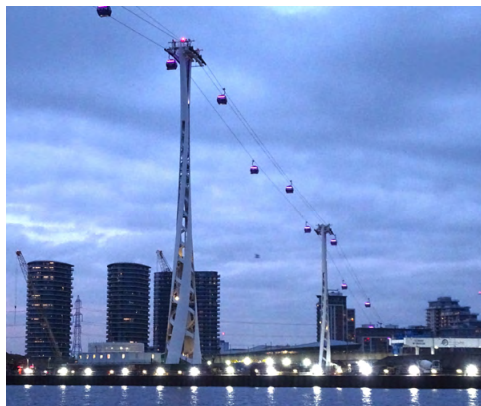
The River Thames is likely to become cleaner and less polluted with the arrival of the new Uber-Thames Clipper, hybrid passenger ferry 'Earth Clipper'. Travelling from London City pier on Wednesday to Greenwich and past the Thames Barrier was an exhilarating experience on the very comfortable boat. And two more will go into service later this year. Plenty of seating, an open, observation area at the stern and a well stocked bar will ensure that commuters and tourist see the riverside at its best through the very large picture windows. Celebrating 25 years of river bus service, the first hybrid ferry takes in 24 piers between Putney and Barking. (Plea from a Twickenham resident – please build a pier for us and extend the service.) Earth Clipper is fast and you really feel the acceleration.



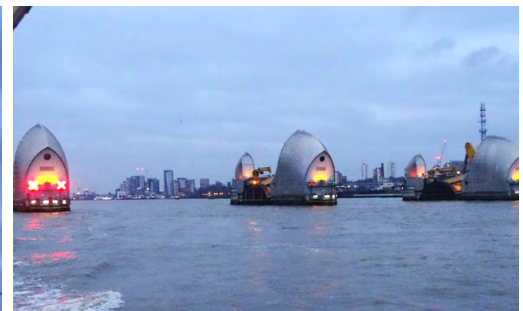
The New Uber Boat



Greenwich at Night

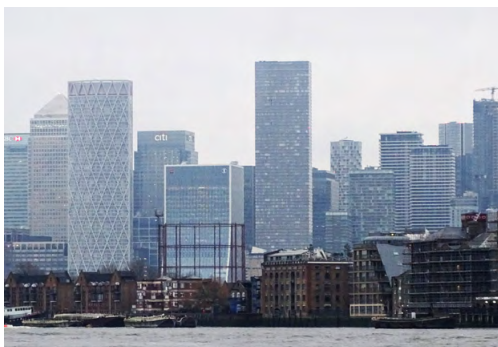


Cable Car



Thames Barrier

Walking along the riverside is interesting with so many historic sites to take in but viewed from the river places seem bigger, brighter and fascinating. At London Bridge there's a day's worth of places to see. Prominent are the Cruiser HMS Belfast, Tower Bridge with a museum on the upper walkway, The Tower of London with St Katherine Docks nearby and the spectacular views from The Monument, built to commemorate The Great fire of London and the towering Shard. We had several experts on the two hour cruise to describe some of the main places we passed as well as some of the less well known spots.



Canary Wharf



HMS Belfast and Tower Bridge



London Bridge

## ROYAL BOROUGH

The Royal Borough of Greenwich is one of only three to carry the royal name. Within the area there is a vast amount to see. While taking the boat to Greenwich pier is the easiest way to arrive, especially in winter, my favourite way is by train from London Bridge to Blackheath. Coffee in the village sets me up for the walk over Blackheath and through Greenwich Park. The view over the river and to Canary Wharf from the high ground is spectacular. Greenwich Park is the oldest enclosed Royal Park in London. When you've toured the famous Royal Observatory, built by Christopher Wren in 1675 and straddled the Meridian Line head down hill to the Maritime Museum. The galleries are filled with over two million items related to the history of shipping and seamanship. From Admiral Lord Nelson's coat to relics of the Titanic and from beautiful models of warships to magnificent paintings, there's something for every interest. Next is the Inigo Jones -designed Queen's House. The architecture is wonderful and the masterpieces by Turner, Reynolds and Hogarth must be seen. The adjacent Old Naval College is the UK's finest assembly of baroque buildings with its Painted Hall the jewel in the crown. Stroll through the colourful arts and crafts market, which has been in Greenwich for 300 years. Buy your lunch and take it to the riverside to admire The Cutty Sark. This ship once carried tea from India and was the fastest vessel in the world.



Blackfriars Bridge and the City



St. Paul's



Greenwich from the Park

## TUNNEL UNDER THE RIVER AND CABLE CAR OVER IT.

After so much sightseeing you may want to take the Uber boat back to central London but press on and walk under the river through the long tunnel to Island Gardens Station on the Isle of Dogs. The Docklands Light Railway speeds you through Canary Wharf, over picturesque stretches of water to the London Cable Car. This links The Royal Docks with the O2 Arena and gives you great views over the area. Described as the pulsating heart of Greenwich Peninsula, the O2 is a complete entertainments area with shops, bars, restaurants and headline-hitting music and dance shows. A tour of the Dome could include, for the brave, a walk across the roof. From the O2 you can take the tube or a boat back to Waterloo and then a 22 minute train home to Richmond or Twickenham. This year sees the celebration of a number of anniversaries in the Greenwich Area: the 140th of GMT; 200th of the founding of the Royal National Lifeboat Institute; 100 years of filming – parts of the film on Napoleon were shot here; 350th of The Royal Observatory.

I enjoy exploring London. Being a 'tourist' in the Capital and not rushing to a meeting; walking slowly with a guide book and discovering new places is a joy. But for a different perspective and view of places you cannot do better than take a boat trip on The Thames.

For more information: [www.visitgreenwich.org.uk](http://www.visitgreenwich.org.uk) Uber boat by Thames Clipper.  
[www.thamesclippers.com](http://www.thamesclippers.com)

# The last one...

By Deep Patel

~ Through the Eyes of a Twickenham Shopkeeper ~

As a shopkeeper, I get to observe many weird and wonderful phenomenon...today I wanted to share one such phenomenon with you all here...

I call it "last-one-syndrome"...it's very odd and completely illogical, but it happens...

Whenever there is only one of some something left on a shelf, no matter what it is...a Mars bar, a packet of Oreo biscuits, a bag of crisps...no one seems to buy it!!! I am not even joking or exaggerating...I have tested this many times...it's one of those illogical, little known facts that for some reason happen however no one can explain why?



I mean, just as it's the last one, doesn't mean it doesn't taste as good? It doesn't cost any extra? It doesn't cause any problems? So what is it that makes people so reluctant to choose/take an item off my shelf when it is the last one left? It has baffled me for years...I still don't understand it. I can relate it back to the old "last one on the table" scenario...don't pretend like you don't know what I am talking about? You know? We've all been there...you're at your friend's for dinner...there are some delicious crispy spring rolls on the table...everyone takes one...then another...and another...until the last one remains on the plate...you then have a table of friends all sitting around the table and chatting casually whilst secretly ALL have their eyes on that last spring roll (don't pretend you don't know what I am talking about here...we have all been there...this is a case of everyone wanting to devour it...but everyone is too polite...no one want to take the last one... in case someone else may want it...it happens with chocolates in a selection box too! No one wants to feel like they "took away the last one" from someone else who may have wanted it...

Could this help me understand why people tend NOT to pick up and buy "the last one" when it is a chocolate bar, packet of crisps or pack of biscuits on the shelf in my shop? I genuinely believe it can... customers don't want to be the one to take "the last one"...there is some deep-rooted psychology to this I am sure...people just don't want to be the one who "clears the plate" or in this case "clears the stock off the shelf"...perhaps it has a deeper feeling of one being "greedy" to take the last one... something somewhat inconsiderate about taking "the last one" in case someone else may want it, even aesthetics could be playing a subconscious part (removing the last packet off a shelf leaves the shelf looking empty and barren, or unpleasing to the eye)...now you may be reading this right now thinking "Deep has lost his mind...this can't possibly be true!"...I hate to tell you, it actually is! It was actually my father who first pointed this out to me...whenever he sees "the last one" of anything on a shelf in our shop, he says "watch, no one will but it"...I used to laugh and say "dad, how ridiculous of course they will!"...3 weeks later, "the last one" is still on the shelf...my father would then say ad 2 more of the item in question on the shelf and watch...so I would...and like magic, within 1 hour, 2 more would sell!!!!

It's crazy right? But true...! Next time you see "the last one" somewhere...be brave and take it...break the pattern and be unique!

**Remember...**

***"Things that sound crazy are often true!"***

**CREATURE-KINDNESS TIP OF THE WEEK:**

FOR ANY HOME OR GARDEN "PEST"...

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: [thedeepatel@gmail.com](mailto:thedeepatel@gmail.com) or join my Facebook group: "INSECT LOVERS UNITE". Thank you!

# Love – Love – Love - Love

By Bruce Lyons of Crusader Travel, 58 Church Street.



Love is where the Heart is and it's that time of year again!!!!

Shona has been busying away making her limited edition Valentine Magnets and cards (a personal gift to you) and I have been thinking hard where the Casanova's and Romeos of this world could dash off to for a Romantic Weekend.

Is it Barcelona, Budapest, Prague, Paris Maybe Gibraltar!?

Or Better Still Verona home to Romeo & Juliet. First stop should be Juliets Balcony, the Romantic way is to climb to the Balcony. Beautiful views of the Old City. Even write a love letter while there!! There's a museum too with artifacts about the play and its characters. Visit the Church where Romeo and Juliet got married! Basilica di San Zeno. Get your picture taken at Verona's Love Lock Bridge. You can even (it might be a little chilly) take a Gondola ride on the Adige through the ancient city centre. Verona is packed with beautiful walks and cozy Restaurants.

Then there's Venice. A magical city if ever there was one. You can even make a 4-night two centre of Venice and Verona! Call us for details on 020 8744 0474 or email [info@crusadertravel.com](mailto:info@crusadertravel.com)





## The Wizard of Oz

by L Frank Baum, adapted by John Kane

Step on Stage at the Hampton Hill Theatre

The fantasy *Wizard of Oz* rarely fails to delight audiences with its familiar mix of rich characters and memorable melodies. Performing arts school Step on Stage's production is no exception. An ambitious project for a children's company, it uses the two and a half hour adaptation created for the Royal Shakespeare Company. With a cast of forty youngsters, this vast undertaking is managed seamlessly.

Director Emma Tinniswood fills the stage with colour and movement, with Ashley Johnson's creative choreography executed by an energetic cast. All the production numbers are rousing and colourful and the very athletic Jitterbug scene is great fun. Countless colourful costumes evoke the enchanted world of Dorothy with her ruby slippers and gingham dress.

The exuberant ensemble exhibits great talent. Jessica Jenner's spellbinding Wicked Witch of the West scares everyone rigid, from her spooky entrance to her final screaming melt-down. Freya Peltonen creates a fresh dynamic for good witch Glinda, making her a streetwise modern-day girl with scooter and pink leather jacket. Both display confident authority and presence.



The other main characters are shared between alternate performances. As Dorothy, Scarlett Powell gives a sincere performance, including an especially emotional reprise rendering of "Rainbow". The alternative Dorothy is played with conviction by Jesika Gonzales Penny, in an engaging sensitive performance.

All the leads are confident, with strong singing voices and fluid dance movements. The four companions, Dorothy, Scarecrow, Tinman and Lion famously dancing their way upstage to the Yellow Brick Road is beautifully orchestrated.

Being an ensemble production, there is much to admire in all roles. Three haughty crows are full of animation and fun, while the excellent Munchkins are led by the amusing Ada Norris as the Munchkin Mayor. Emily Hill-Kelly's animated facial expressions aptly capture the self-righteous Miss Gulch.

*The Wizard of Oz* successfully showcases talented young people in an enthusiastically received, mature production of the classic story.

Read Michelle Hood's review at [www.markaspen.com/2024/01/13/wiz-o-sos](http://www.markaspen.com/2024/01/13/wiz-o-sos)

Image by ClipGround ©

# The Father

by Florian Zeller

Rhinoceros Theatre Company, at Hampton Hill Theatre until 20<sup>th</sup> January

A momentary murmur of confusion shivers, then plunge into the depths of doubt that plague the minds of those with Alzheimer's, and those closest to them ... Welcome to the world of André, an engineer who might have been a tap dancer ... or a conjurer. His broken mind conjures a myriad of events both real and imagined, pleasant and painful, terrifying and menacing.

*The Father*, which Zeller called a "tragic farce", premiered in Paris in 2012, winning multiple accolades. It has been equally applauded in English language versions for stage and screen, winning Anthony Hopkins an Oscar for the lead role.

White-haired Nigel Andrews takes on the role of the eighty-year old André with credible assurance. Charming and roguish one minute, then querulous and demanding the next, André is perplexed to be moved from his comfortably cluttered flat, to the "horrible minimalist" apartment of his daughter Anne and her partner Pierre, with its stark white bed and attending nurse.



We take his journey with him, accompanied by the strains of mournful cello music, and by the characters who punctuate his existence: Anne and Pierre, chirpy carer Laura, and The Man and The Woman. Roles intermesh, scenes are replayed in alternative settings by different actors. Under these confusions, the audience is mystified, tortured and even amused as André tries to untangle his brain. His distress is exemplified in his obsession over his ever missing wristwatch, and his fear of being dispatched to a nursing home. He morphs from cantankerous and masterful, into blubbing for a lullaby.

Progressive and incurable, Alzheimer's disease afflicts around 900,000 in the UK. Director Fiona Smith says, "This condition makes understanding terrifyingly impenetrable ... a particularly cruel violation, pushing the limits of love and patience".

Actor Nigel Andrews embraces his role as a gift, noting that André has lost nothing in his mind, except "the map to this Aladdin's cave, and with it the understanding of where everything is, what everything is - and why everything is". It seems, "We are all playing a kind of blind poker." To which we might add: And we don't yet know what hand we have been dealt.

Read Gill Martin's review at [www.markaspen.com/2024/01/17/father-rhino](http://www.markaspen.com/2024/01/17/father-rhino)

Photography by Anastasia

# Orange Tree Theatre Announce Ben Wishaw In Conversation

As Part Of *Under The Orange Tree* Fundraising Series

In a wide-ranging conversation, Ben will offer a unique insight into his astonishing career. This includes being one of the youngest actors to portray Hamlet on stage in Trevor Nunn's 2004 production, starring in the 2022 BBC and AMC medical drama *This Is Going to Hurt* and voicing Paddington Bear in *Paddington* and *Paddington 2*. Ben will also be taking questions from the audience at the end.

Don't miss this rare opportunity to hear from one of the UK's most talented actors.

Patricia Myers OBE will host the conversation. After roles in teaching, theatre management, and as Assistant Chief Officer for Entertainment in local government, Patricia went on to become the Registrar and part of the senior management team at RADA for 25 years, where she nurtured thousands of actors, including Ben Wishaw.

As an independent theatre producing all its own work and operating without Arts Council funding, we need to raise at least £500,000 each year through fundraising.

Every ticket sold to this event supports our wide-ranging programme, including our work with 10,000 young people each year.

Orange Tree Theatre presents  
Under The Orange Tree -  
Ben Wishaw In Conversation With Patricia Myers OBE  
Sunday 18 February at 3pm

Tickets: £60 with a glass of fizz on arrival

There will be a limited number of £30 tickets for Under 30s released on Friday 19 January at 3pm

Details and tickets [HERE](#)



**OT** ORANGE  
TREE  
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# Orleans Park School reconfirmed as outstanding

The school was inspected on the 22 & 23rd of November, 2023, and the outcome was that Orleans Park School continues to be an **outstanding** school.

Ofsted said that “Pupils thrive at this school. They are happy, safe and achieve very well. Staff and pupils uphold the school values of ‘responsibility’, ‘resilience’ and ‘respect’. By the end of Year 11, pupils are very well prepared for the next steps in their education, whether it be in the school’s popular sixth form or elsewhere. Pupils build very respectful, working relationships with each other and with staff. Pupils learn to be responsible and reflect on their own actions. This results in very positive behaviour and exemplary attitudes to learning.”

“Pupils benefit from a broad and rich curriculum which is enhanced through the study of additional subjects such as astronomy and vocational courses in Years 9, 10 and 11. Pupils are focused and eager to learn. They appreciate the many sporting opportunities and other activities such



as debating and chess. There is also the opportunity for all younger pupils to take part in new experiences such as creative days and camping or adventure trips.”

“Pupils take great pride in their school. Pupils trust staff to always have their best interests at heart. Should bullying occur, it is taken seriously and dealt with quickly. Parents and carers who responded to the Ofsted survey were very positive about their child’s education.”

This was a Section 8 Inspection where Ofsted inspects a school to confirm that the school remains outstanding, this normally takes place every four years.

You can read the full report by following this link

<https://files.ofsted.gov.uk/v1/file/50237854>

*Photo from Orleans Park School*



# St Mary's University

## St Mary's launches new MA in Domestic Abuse Trauma Informed Practice

St Mary's University, Twickenham (SMU) has launched a new master's programme in Domestic Abuse, Stalking and Sexual Violence: Trauma Informed Practice.

The course will build trauma-informed understanding of how to identify, respond to, and address domestic abuse, stalking and sexual violence.

Teaching will focus on victims, survivors, and the staff that work with them, addressing a gap within frontline service education.

Students can apply now to enrol onto the MA, starting in September 2024, with the option to study full or part-time.

The programme will partly be delivered by experts working in frontline services and the [Bakhita Centre for Research on Slavery, Exploitation and Abuse](#).

The course will also draw on expertise from four leading charities and support services in the domestic abuse and stalking sector:

- [Paladin National Stalking Advocacy Service](#)
- [The Cyber Helpline](#)
- [London Borough of Richmond Upon Thames: One Stop Shop service](#)
- [Alice Ruggles Trust](#).

This degree is one of few worldwide to include a CPD certified [stalking advocacy course](#), giving students the opportunity to take the [Independent Stalking Advocacy Caseworkers \(ISAC\) training](#) once they have completed the programme.

Speaking on the launch, course lead Dr Maria Mellins said,

“We are looking forward to the launch of our new master's degree that offers students the opportunity to gain knowledge in trauma informed practice to support victims and survivors of abuse.

“The programme will be of particular interest to students who are already working in, or wish to pursue careers in, the voluntary sector, public sector, law and human rights, campaigning and media, and the third sector, with a focus on domestic abuse, sexual violence, stalking, and other forms of exploitation.

“This degree is intended to focus on different approaches to support victims and survivors of abuse, as well as the professionals that work with them, leading to better outcomes and a more resilient, trauma-informed, and sustainable sector. We feel very fortunate to be partnered with industry leaders on delivering this programme.”

An online webinar introducing the programme will take place on Wednesday 24th January, at 2pm and 6pm. Places on this webinar can be [booked now](#) (please select Law and Society in the Subject Area field).

Find out more about the Domestic Abuse MA degree and [apply today](#).



St Mary's  
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# England U18 Women's 2024 Eps Announced

England U18 Women head coach James Cooper has selected his 2024 Elite Player Squad ahead of this year's U18 Women's Six Nations Festival.

Worcester-based trio Nat Evans, Haineala Lutui and Sarah Parry, complemented with Daisy Aspinall, Lauren Bailey, Evie Haskell, Heidi Pashaei Tarighoun, Lucie Sams and Lucy Simpson, are the nine previously-capped players at pathway level involved in Cooper's set-up once again in 2024.

The 35-strong contingent was chosen after a thorough process of five invitational pathway camps and two rounds of England Rugby Centre of Excellence fixtures to start the 2023/24 season in preparation for the third edition of the continental tournament.

The U18 Women management have organised meetings at Warwick School and the University of Nottingham in order to increase interaction time between the squad this season, which included the annual internal game back in early December.

Nine England Rugby Centre of Excellence sites, as well as a combined 20 colleges, are represented in the 2024 class as head coach Cooper credited the efforts of the pathway system in enabling his selection.

*"I'd like to thank the coaches at all of our England Rugby Centre of Excellence sites, as well as the various colleges, for their tireless efforts so far this season," he said.*

*"We're equipped with a fantastic squad due to that work put in by the coaches and players, and are looking forward to putting our plans into place for our upcoming fixtures.*

*"The determination shown by the girls in recent camps has filled myself and the coaching staff with a lot of confidence heading into 2024. We're excited for what's to come."*

As dates and fixtures are currently to be determined for the 2024 U18 Women's Six Nations meeting, the tournament serves as a crucial development tool for future international rugby in the England pathway looking ahead to a home 2025 Rugby World Cup.

Over the weekend of 13 January, the U18 squad convened on the University of Nottingham pitches for a fixture with Loughborough Students for a positive test up against a physical and organised team, which enabled Cooper's staff to test out different options in personnel and tactics.

The squad were intentionally notified the day before the meeting (12 January) against Loughborough, as players were tested on their reactions and preparation with a further trip to face Ireland U18 Women scheduled for the weekend of 2 March (venue and kick-off time TBC).

A meeting at Wellington College (15-17 February) precedes the trip over the Irish Sea, and England U18 Women assistant coach Olivia Perry expects the same intense output shown by the team in the first half of the campaign.

Perry said: *"This is my third year of involvement with the U18 age-grade at England Rugby, and I believe we possess some of the most talented players to come through the pathway in recent years – it's a real pleasure to work with these girls.*

*“Me, James and the team would like to congratulate the group on their efforts, representing England at any level is an achievement to be proud of and we’re positive that this collective can have a real impact on the 2023/24 season.*

*“They have grafted hard to be in the position they are in now, but we require more of the same heading into our meeting with Ireland as well as what we are all looking forward to, the U18 Six Nations Festival.”*

## **England U18 Women 2024 Elite Player Squad (includes England Rugby Centre of Excellence site and college)**

Kaya Acton (Yorkshire Academy, Bishop Burton)  
Ashton Adcock (Loughborough Lightning, Loughborough College)  
Daisy Aspinall (Gloucester-Hartpury, Hartpury College) \*  
Iley Bailey (Harlequins, Henley College)  
Lauren Bailey (Bristol Bears, Hartpury College) \*  
Grace Banks (Sale Sharks, Wigan and Leigh)  
Tamsin Baynes (Loughborough Lightning, Loughborough College)  
Gabriella Brown (Harlequins, Maidstone Grammar)  
Molly Bunker (Harlequins, Hartpury College)  
Bethan Candlin (Yorkshire Academy, Loughborough College)  
Emily Chieza (Thames Valley, City of Oxford College)  
Katherine Dyke (Bristol Bears, Exeter College)  
Nat Evans (Worcester, Hereford Sixth Form College) \*  
Zara Green (Harlequins, Newman College Hove)  
Evie Haskell (Loughborough Lightning) \*  
Amy Henwood (Harlequins, Epsom College)  
Lydia Humphries (Sale Sharks, Rainhill Sixth Form)  
Rebecca Jackson (Gloucester-Hartpury, Hartpury College)  
Aisha Jah (Loughborough Lightning, West Notts Sixth Form College)  
Hayley Jones (Thames Valley, Henley College)  
Poppy Love (Thames Valley, Henley College)  
Emily Lunn (Harlequins, Henley College)  
Haineala Lutui (Worcester, RGS Worcester) \*  
Sophia Macdonald (Harlequins, Cardinal Newman)  
Freya McGinlay (Gloucester-Hartpury, Hartpury College)  
Sarah Parry (Worcester, Hereford Sixth Form College) \*  
Heidi Pashaei Tarighoun (Bristol Bears, SGS Filton) \*  
Abigail Pritchard (Gloucester-Hartpury, Hartpury College)  
Lucie Sams (Sale Sharks, Carmel College St Helens) \*  
Solana Shaw de Leon (Harlequins, Worthing College)  
Lucy Simpson (Gloucester-Hartpury, Hartpury College) \*  
Grace Strickland (Saracens, Saffron Walden County High)  
Isabel van der Straaten (Saracens)  
Ellie Wilson (Gloucester-Hartpury, Hartpury College)  
Ruby Winstanley (Harlequins, The Farnborough Sixth Form)

*\*denotes a player previously capped at pathway level*



# Match Preview: Brentford v Nottingham Forest

**Analysis, team news, match officials and more. Here's everything you need to know ahead of Brentford's Premier League game against Nottingham Forest**

Written by Brentford Football Club

Brentford host Nottingham Forest on Saturday in the late Premier League kick-off, live on *Sky Sports* (5.30pm).

Thomas Frank's side, without a win since a 3-1 victory over Luton Town on 2 December, are boosted by the return of talismanic striker Ivan Toney, who is available again having served an eight-month ban from football.

Frank confirmed in his pre-match press conference that vice-captain Toney will start and lead the side out at Gtech Community Stadium in Christian Nørgaard's absence.

## Pre-match Analysis

Alex Lawes, Playmaker Stats:  
Toney's return can rectify Brentford's expected goals underperformance

As we move into the second half of the 2023/24 Premier League campaign, there is a fair bit riding on this weekend as Brentford welcome Nottingham Forest to Gtech Community Stadium.

The Bees are sitting just three points above the bottom three and the relegation places, a point behind their upcoming opponents, after a five-match losing streak in the Premier League.

Their FA Cup third-round replay defeat in extra-time to Wolverhampton Wanderers in midweek compounded a difficult spell for the Bees that has seen them record just one win in their last 10 matches across all competitions.

At the start of that run, Brentford were getting into a similar groove to the one which saw them finish ninth in the table last season, two points outside of the European spots. However, an injury and availability crisis has majorly contributed to their dip in form – which is why, despite a loss to Wolves flattening the mood ever so slightly, this could be a big week for the west Londoners.

[The arrival of Sergio Reguilón on loan](#) has helped add numbers and quality at the back and Kristoffer Ajer's return from injury is also a boost. Undoubtedly the biggest fillip, though, is Ivan Toney's availability after his long suspension from the game.

The 27-year-old striker, who has notched 68 times in 124 appearances for Brentford, will hope to be the difference in improving the Bees' expected goals underperformance.

So far this season, Brentford have an expected goals for of 34.77xG from their 19 matches. However, in reality,



they have notched just 26 times. Their 8.77xG underperformance is the third worst efficiency rate in the league, behind Everton and Chelsea.

Toney has consistently performed to more or less what his expected goals should have been. So, if the former Peterborough United man can come back and pick up where he left off then Brentford will have one of the most effective strikers in the league re-joining a side that are continuing to create chances.

They now face a Nottingham Forest team that limited Manchester United to an xG of 0.65 just before the New Year but prior to that, under Nuno Espírito Santo as well as Steve Cooper, had only managed to keep a team to fewer than an expected goals rate of one on just once in their previous 11 matches.

Brentford should, therefore, stand a really good chance of putting their poor run of form to an end if their performance level remains similar and their main attacking threat delivers the goods on his return.

## Scout Report

Forest have fresh impetus following managerial change

Nottingham Forest's extensive - and quite extraordinary - transfer business, where they brought in 29 first-team players across two windows, was the main topic of discussion last term.

The incredible squad turnover to retain the Premier League status they had pined for so long for was, maybe correctly, blamed when things took a turn in the opening months and the Tricky Trees slipped into the relegation zone, where they stayed until last January.

Steve Cooper was seemingly under intense pressure but rewarded with a new contract in October, with the foresight that things would improve, given the track record of his fledgling managerial career.

"It doesn't mean we are going to win the next match and everything is going to be okay," he admitted. "It has put an end to questioning and that is great."

The risk paid off, even if Forest's away form - one win, five draws and 13 defeats - was poor.

In late May, Cooper's side beat Arsenal 1-0 to take the title away from the Gunners once and for all and also secure survival in the Premier League for themselves. "I'm really proud," he said afterwards. "But if I'm honest, it just gives us a chance to keep building."

The summer of 2023, naturally, saw plenty of movement in the transfer market for Forest. 10 first-team players arrived on a permanent basis and four came in on loan, while seven - including Jesse Lingard and Jonjo Shelvey - were released, seven were sold and 11 were sent out on loan. The recruitment team would, imaginably, have been ready for a holiday once the window slammed shut.

With fresh legs and a better idea of what it took to succeed at the top again, Forest made a solid enough start. They stormed into a 2-0 lead at Manchester United in their third league game, before succumbing to a 3-2 defeat, and then responded with a 1-0 win against Chelsea the next week - their first at Stamford Bridge since January 1995.

At the start of November, they beat Aston Villa 2-0 at the City Ground. Even with that result having ended a six-game winless run, Cooper and Co were still seven points better off than they were after the first 11 games of 2022/23.

It was a struggle to find positivity from the next month or so. Five defeats from the next six games followed the win over high-flying Villa - including a 5-0 thumping at the hands of Fulham.

Time is a precious commodity in the modern game and the writing was on the wall when Cooper had the rug pulled from beneath his feet on 19 December. "His achievement in guiding Forest back to the Premier League

will undoubtedly remain an iconic moment in the club's history," owner Evangelos Marinakis said after the Welshman's sacking was announced.

There were already murmurs ex-Wolves and Tottenham boss Nuno Espírito Santo was being lined up as Cooper's replacement before his dismissal, and his appointment - on a two-and-a-half-year contract - was announced the following day.

The Portuguese's first game in charge saw Forest end up on the wrong side of a five-goal thriller against Bournemouth, but they have since started to distance themselves from the battle against the drop with huge - and richly deserved - wins against Newcastle and Manchester United.

"We have the talent. It's now about keeping on going," the new boss said after the first of those wins. "We cannot stop on this game now. We have to rest and go again, but I think, slowly, we will achieve our own identity and the way we want to play football."

The timing of the managerial change looks to have been executed to perfection, with the new manager bounce brought by Nuno giving them a brilliant start in their aim of securing another year in the top flight.

### **In the Dugout**

Nuno Espírito Santo

Once signed by José Mourinho during his time at Porto, Nuno Espírito Santo had a long career as a goalkeeper - though often played second fiddle - primarily spent in Portugal and Spain, with time in Russia at Dynamo Moscow during 2005 and 2006.

Nuno retired in 2010, after his second spell at Porto, but quickly went on to become a goalkeeper coach at Malaga and then Panathinaikos, working with his former manager Jesualdo Ferreira each time.

He returned to Portugal to take on his first managerial role with Rio Ave in the summer of 2012 and remained at the club for two years.

He was then hired by Valencia, whom he guided to a fourth-place finish in La Liga in 2014/15, though he resigned less than four months into the following campaign after three defeats in their first five Champions League group matches, as well as five wins from the first 13 league matches, which left them languishing in ninth when he departed.

Porto decided to take a chance on their former player in 2016/17, yet he only saw out half of his two-year deal as the club opted to replace him the following summer after he failed to deliver silverware, despite losing only six of his 49 games in charge.

The 49-year-old is perhaps best known for the four years he spent at Wolves. He joined the club at the end of a chaotic 2016/17 campaign - during which they had three permanent managers - and led them to promotion out of the Championship at the first time of asking.

In 2019/20, Wolves recorded their joint-highest Premier League finish (7th), their highest points tally (59), as well as reaching the quarter-final of the Europa League.

Having left Molineux by mutual consent in June 2021, Nuno went to Tottenham and started well with three straight Premier League wins. Ultimately, he lasted only four months in the job, having followed up those victories with five defeats in the next seven.

He then spent 16 months in Saudi Arabia, guiding Al Ittihad to the Saudi Pro League title and Saudi Super Cup, and returned to England just before Christmas, having been sacked little over a month earlier.



# Her Royal Highness The Duchess of Edinburgh visits Katherine Low Settlement, Battersea to celebrate its 100th Anniversary

Her Royal Highness The Duchess of Edinburgh visited the Katherine Low Settlement in Battersea today, as the charity begins its 100th Anniversary Year celebrations.

Katherine Low Settlement (KLS) is a much-loved busy charity in Battersea which has 100 years of experience in reducing poverty and isolation and bringing the community together. Its core programmes support over 500 vulnerable local people every week including the elderly, children, young people, their families and refugees. KLS was opened by the late Queen Mother, as Duchess of York, in 1924 and Her Majesty also returned to the Settlement in 1964 to mark its 40th Anniversary.

The Duchess of Edinburgh visited the Settlement today to learn about its work and to thank the staff and volunteers for their hard work and passion.

HRH toured the Settlement visiting an Elders' chair dance class; a sewing group for women newly arrived in the UK, which could help them into employment; a 'Love to Learn' mentoring session for children

and young people and the visit ended with a brief reception where The Duchess met more members of the local community and unveiled a plaque to mark the occasion of the visit.



*Sarah Gibb, Chief Executive of KLS says "It was an absolute honour for us to welcome Her Royal Highness The Duchess of Edinburgh to Katherine Low Settlement in Battersea today. This year marks the charity's 100th anniversary of bringing the Battersea community together and we are thrilled to start our centenary year with a Royal visit. KLS has been lucky enough to have had four previous Royal visits, since it was founded in 1924, and we are extremely grateful for each and everyone of these visits."*

*Councillor Juliana Annan, Mayor of Wandsworth who has chosen KLS as one of the charities she is supporting during her year as mayor said "We really appreciate The Duchess of Edinburgh taking the time to visit Katherine Low Settlement in the London borough of Wandsworth today. It is a very deserving charity which is at the heart of the community in Battersea helping the elderly, the young and their families, refugees and other local people who need assistance."*

For more information about Katherine Low Settlement, to make a donation and to find out about volunteering opportunities visit:

<https://www.klsettlement.org.uk/>





# Post Office scandal: why thousands of victims are yet to see justice

Authors: Karen Nokes (Lecturer in Law, UCL), Richard Moorhead (Professor of Law and Professional Ethics, University of Exeter) and Sally Day (Postdoctoral Research Fellow in Law, University of Exeter)

Following the ITV drama [Mr Bates vs the Post Office](#), which aired on January 1 2024, UK prime minister Rishi Sunak stated he intends to [introduce legislation](#) to ensure those convicted as a result of the [Post Office scandal](#) are “swiftly exonerated and compensated”.

Meanwhile, a petition calling for former Post Office boss Paula Vennells to [be stripped of the CBE](#) awarded in 2019 – for services to the Post Office – reached more than a million signatures in the days after the documentary aired.

Vennells has now [handed back](#) her CBE, saying that she “listened” to calls for her to do so. Many have questioned the decision to award the CBE at all, considering that Vennells had long been confronted with complaints and evidenced challenges to the Horizon system.

In what has been classed as [one of the worst miscarriages of justice](#) in UK history, the Post Office wrongly accused thousands of [innocent people](#) of theft, fraud, and false accounting, based on data from the flawed Horizon IT system. Hundreds were convicted, many more lost their businesses, livelihoods, and homes. The harms caused to those victimised, their families and others impacted, are vast and still ongoing.

The big question is why no one yet has been held to account and why victims are yet to be both vindicated and compensated.

Along with Dr Rebecca Helm, we are conducting a three-year [research study](#), funded by the Economic and Social Research Council, to examine what role lawyers have played in the scandal and to explore the subpostmasters’ experience of legal processes and the criminal justice system.

## How has the scandal played out so far?

Problems emerged soon after the Post Office introduced the Horizon IT system to modernise transactions across the business in [1999](#). Horizon flagged accounting “shortfalls”, which the Post Office used to take criminal proceedings and civil action against hundreds of people and terminated the contracts of thousands, of others. The “shortfalls” were in fact caused by bugs and errors in the IT system, a position which the Post Office vehemently denied for many years. In 2012, under pressure from the campaign group [Justice for Subpostmasters Alliance](#), Conservative politician Lord Arbuthnot and others, the Post Office [retained external investigators Second Sight](#) to explore complaints of Horizon deficiencies. But Second Sight was sacked in 2015, after it began to unearth problematic findings for the Post Office.

That same year, Vennells defended her company’s handling of the concerns raised by subpostmasters. She [told](#) the Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy Select Committee, that the Post Office “was a business that genuinely cares about the people who work for us” and that there was no evidence of miscarriages of justice.

555 subpostmasters, led by Alan Bates, brought a civil case against the Post Office which exposed the failings in Horizon, and in 2019 the [High Court](#) ruled against the Post Office. This contributed to the Court of Appeal quashing the convictions of 39 former subpostmasters in April 2021.

In his judgement for the Court of Appeal, Lord Justice Holroyde found the Post Office's behaviour in undertaking criminal prosecutions had been "an affront to the conscience of the court."

More convictions have been overturned since 2021. The number now stands at 93. But many hundreds remain. Some victims have since passed away, several taking their own lives, without seeing their names cleared. And many subpostmasters are yet to come forward: around 100 more people have reportedly contacted lawyers since the drama aired.

### **What responsibility does Paula Vennells bear?**

Vennells has apologised but has not accepted responsibility. Indeed in 2020, she sought to shift the blame to her lawyers.

The ongoing public inquiry, which was established in September 2020 and gained statutory powers in June 2021, is likely to now ask what Vennells knew about the faults with the IT system and when. She might also be asked about the advice the Post Office received in 2013 from an external lawyer, Simon Clarke. This criticised the reliability of a key witness the Post Office used in its prosecutions, though it did not come to light publicly until the Court of Appeal case in November 2020.

The evidence presented in court proceedings and to the inquiry suggests senior people in the Post Office knew of miscarriages of justice well before 2015. While the problems may have started with faulty IT, the failings in this scandal lie with the people who enabled it to happen and subsequently contained and covered it up.

### **Why has it taken a TV drama for the official response to ramp up?**

For years, countless subpostmasters, journalists, MPs and academics have worked tirelessly to raise public awareness. The inquiry is now hearing evidence from Post Office investigators, auditors and lawyers. A further disclosure hearing is set for January 12 2024.

News coverage has included the heroic efforts of journalists Karl Flinders and Rebecca Thompson from Computer Weekly, who first broke the story in 2009. Since 2010, Nick Wallis has been reporting on the Post Office. His book, The Great Post Office Scandal and the BBC Radio 4 series, The Great Post Office Trial, have been highly instrumental.

In a December 2023 letter to Lord Chancellor Alex Chalk, the Horizon Compensation Advisory Board called for all convictions to be overturned. It further highlighted the trauma this scandal continues to inflict.

The Post Office's failures with prompt and proper evidence sharing have been an ongoing issue. It has fought exposure of the truth with such approaches as non-disclosure agreements, threats of litigation against journalists, selective reporting of investigations and litigation methods that have elicited strong criticism from the judges involved.

In what is set to be a general election year, the impact of the ITV drama has now accelerated the government's activity. To date, legal and political institutions have failed and been slow to act. But those weaknesses have also been exploited by the Post Office.

Whether this has been due to a state of denial or siege, an organisation plagued by hubris or a lack of integrity, or incompetence and impropriety by the Post Office and its legions of lawyers across 20-plus years, is an issue the inquiry will no doubt turn to.

# Fujitsu must have a 'moral obligation' to pay for Post Office scandal, says Liam Byrne MP

The chair of the Commons Business and Trade Select Committee said he will ask company officials if they 'put profit before people'

FUJITSU must have a "moral obligation" to contribute to compensation for postmasters caught in the Horizon IT scandal, according to the chair of the Commons Business and Trade Select Committee.

Officials from the firm are due to appear before the committee on Tuesday to answer questions about the affair.

Liam Byrne MP told [GB News](#): "We've had a week of debate about this in the House of Commons and there are still these big questions unanswered. And of course one of those questions is what frankly should Fujitsu, who built this failing system, contribute to the compensation.

"I think it's clear that their system went wrong and they surely must at the very least have a moral obligation to help contribute to that whacking great compensation bill because, as you say, why should taxpayers have to front up half a billion pounds?"

In a discussion with Camilla Tominey, he continued: "Now, we don't know this but if it's true that somebody in Fujitsu was waving a red flag or they knew that something was going wrong, did they stay silent when innocent people were going to prison, did they put profit before people?"

"...I think the question for us on Tuesday is how do we make sure that justice is delayed no longer? Parliament I think has a clear view that these convictions need to be overturned and settlements need to be made.

"So, we need to know how fast is that going to happen, when is the new legislation going to arrive and, crucially, who the hell is going to pay for it?"

He added: "We'll be hearing from Mr Bates and we are bringing together lots of evidence from sub-postmasters around the country.

"Because the key thing that really worries me is that we're three or four years on from the landmark trial now, but only 15% of the convictions have been overturned and only 4% of the payments have been settled."



# New neutron facility at NPL announced

New NPL neutron facility boosts UK's nuclear energy, defence and fusion research capabilities

NPL announces new neutron measurement facility that will play a critical role in the safe and secure operation and continued development of the UK's nuclear energy, defence and fusion research sectors. The facility consists of a new particle accelerator and is one of only a few known facilities worldwide that offers precision traceable neutron standards.

In July 2023, [the UK government outlined plans for a new series of nuclear reactors](#) in a bid to boost UK energy security and reduce dependence on fossil fuels. As well as a [roadmap that sets out how the UK will increase nuclear generation by up to 4 times by 2050](#), announced on 11 January 2024. The new facility at NPL's site in Teddington, south-west London, will provide all-important traceability in terms of established safety protocols and stringent regulatory compliance that ensures these new-build reactors can help drive the rapid and safe expansion of nuclear power in the UK.

More than 60 years after the installation of NPL's first neutron measurement facility at Teddington, the new system allows the UK government to continue to "provide an enduring and resilient measurement infrastructure, ensuring that measurements can always be made in the UK with integrity and consistency", as set out in the British Government's [2022 UK Measurement Strategy for the National Measurement System](#).

The new accelerator system, rendered image below, is 6 times as powerful as the one it is replacing and will be a 2.0 MV Coaxial VHC Tandetron manufactured by High Voltage Engineering Europa, The Netherlands, the same company who manufactured the current KN3000 Van de Graaff accelerator over 60 years ago.



The upgraded neutron facility addresses a number of current, future and emerging needs in the nuclear sector, including:

- The characterisation of new instrumentation and detectors required to ensure the UK's nuclear infrastructure and future reactors operate safely and efficiently
- Provide the expertise and facilities to enable the characterisation of neutron diagnostics, neutronics benchmark and validation experiments and nuclear cross section and decay-data measurement, to support the work at UK-based world-leading fusion research organisations and their supply chains
- Produce both monoenergetic and thermal neutron fields for UK Defence and Security
- The characterisation and calibration of new area survey instruments and personal dosimeter products to assure the safety of workers within the nuclear sector

The upgrade has been funded by the former Department for Business for Energy and Industrial Strategy (BEIS) PSRE Infrastructure Fund.

**Nuclear Minister Andrew Bowie said**, "We are reviving our nuclear industry to deliver net zero and secure our energy independence, with plans to build new large- and small-scale reactors.

"These upgrades to National Physical Laboratory's (NPL) neutron facility will enable the safe and efficient operation of our new projects, as we ramp up clean and reliable nuclear power."

**Dr Peter Thompson, CEO of NPL, said**, "By extending the UK's capability in neutron standards and device calibration which leads to improved accuracy and direct measurement in place of extrapolated data and therefore helping to accelerate work on advanced nuclear technologies, we are ensuring the UK is leading in this field."

**Michael Bunce, Senior Scientist and Technical Lead at NPL, said**, "This is an exciting time for UK nuclear science and this facility is a concrete example of that. With this machine we will be able to continue to provide standards to UK and international customers with greater efficiency and reliability whilst extending our research into new areas such as nuclear data measurements in support of fusion."



# Road Safety Experts Unmask the Hidden Dangers of Driving in Sun Glare!

As drivers, we often worry about the conventional threats on the road: inclement weather, reckless drivers, and the occasional mechanical failure. However, there's a more insidious hazard that tends to be overlooked, yet its impact is equally dangerous – sun glare.

Particularly during the early morning and late afternoon, the sun can cast a blinding glare, making it extremely challenging for drivers to see the road ahead. This visual impairment not only increases the risk of accidents but also brings with it a slew of legal and financial consequences.

Motoring Expert Dom Watt, from [First Vehicle Leasing](#) explains the dangers of sun glare

*Sun glare can be a driver's worst nightmare. It occurs when the sun's rays hit the windshield at a sharp angle, scattering light and significantly reducing visibility. This phenomenon is not just a mild inconvenience. It's a serious hazard that can lead to catastrophic outcomes. Driver and Vehicle Standards Agency (DVSA) acknowledges sun glare as a significant factor in numerous road accidents each year.*

## Visual Impairment and Distraction

The primary danger of sun glare lies in its ability to impair vision. A driver facing the sun may experience temporary blindness or have to squint and strain their eyes to maintain a clear view of the road. This strain not only leads to discomfort but can also result in delayed reaction times. Furthermore, drivers may become distracted as they attempt to block the glare with their hands or adjust their sun visors, taking their focus off the road.

## Increased Accident Risk

The momentary blindness caused by sun glare can lead to severe consequences. Unable to see traffic lights, pedestrians, or other vehicles clearly, drivers are at a higher risk of causing or being involved in an accident. A study published in the journal *Medicine* states that the risk of a life-threatening crash is 16% higher during bright sunlight compared to normal weather.

## Legal and Financial Repercussions

Aside from the immediate danger to life and property, sun glare can have significant legal and financial implications for drivers. Dom Watt from First Vehicle Leasing sheds light on the lesser-known consequences that drivers may face if involved in an accident under these conditions.

## Fines and Legal Consequences

"Drivers are often unaware that they can be held liable for accidents caused due to sun glare," explains Dom Watt. "Failing to adapt to weather conditions, including bright sunlight, can lead to hefty fines and even points on your licence." Authorities consider it the responsibility of the driver to ensure they are driving safely regardless of the sun's position. This includes using sun visors, wearing polarised sunglasses, and maintaining a safe distance from other vehicles.

## Insurance Complications

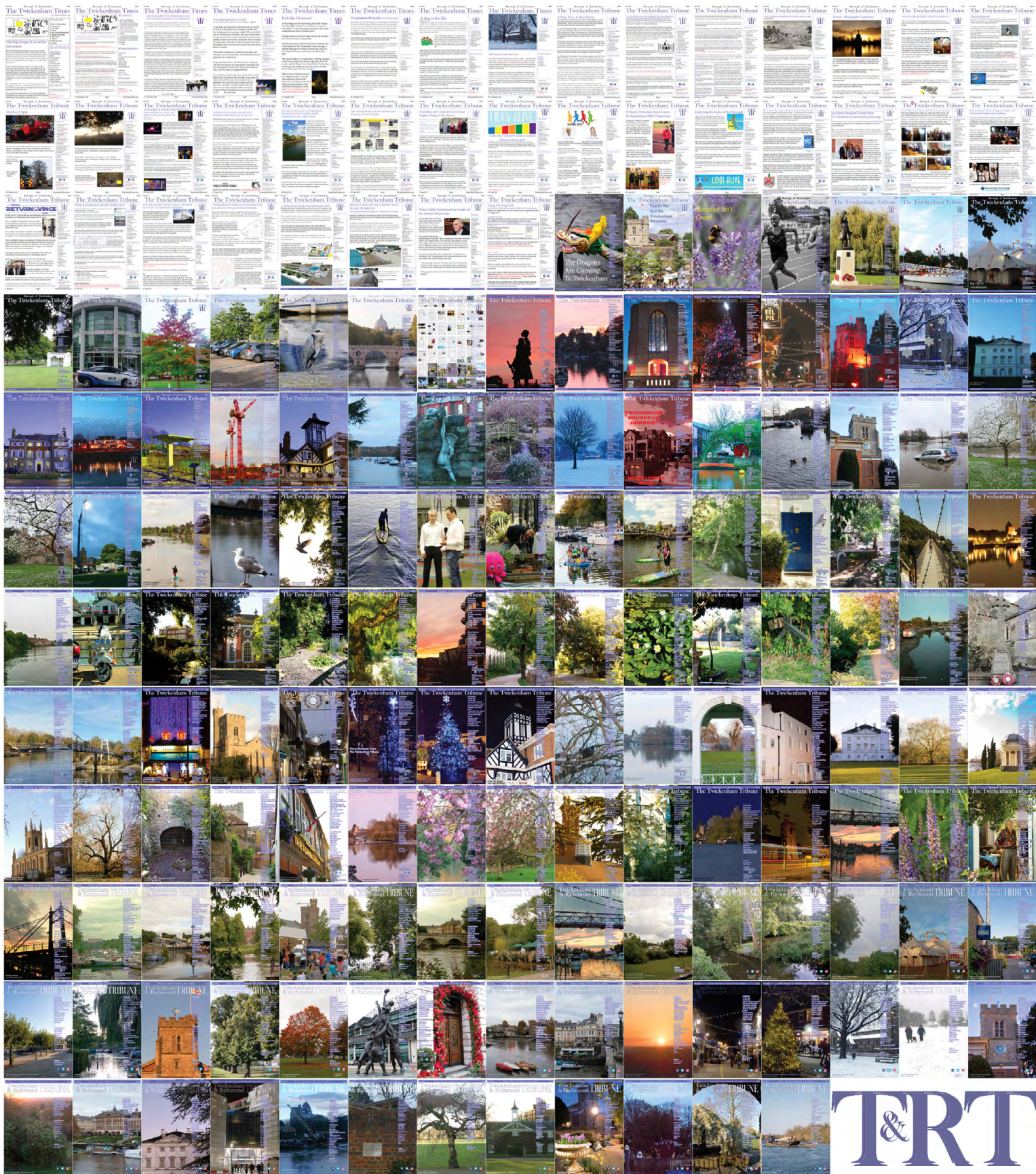
Perhaps more alarming are the potential complications with insurance coverage in the event of an accident. "Insurance companies may not cover the damages if it's found that the driver did not take the necessary precautions to mitigate the effects of sun glare," warns Watt. This means that drivers could face substantial out-of-pocket expenses for repairs, and other damages, not to mention the potential hike in insurance premiums post-incident.

## Mitigating the Risks

- While sun glare is an inevitable occurrence, there are measures that drivers can adopt to mitigate its risks:
- Use Polarised Sunglasses: These can significantly reduce glare and improve visibility.
- Adjust Your Driving Schedule: If possible, avoid driving during times when sun glare is most intense, typically during the early morning and late afternoon.
- Utilise Sun Visors and Tinted Windows: Properly using sun visors and considering window tints can help block out direct sunlight.
- Maintain a Clean Windshield: Dirt and smudges can worsen the glare, so it's crucial to keep your windshield clean.

Sun glare is more than just a nuisance—it's a significant hazard that demands attention and preparation. By understanding the dangers, recognizing the potential legal and financial ramifications, and taking proactive steps to mitigate the risks, drivers can ensure a safer journey for themselves and others on the road.

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