

## Editor's Introduction

### Welcome to the Strawberry Hill Residents' Association Bulletin

In this issue we report on the successful new format for the SHRA AGM in April at Strawberry Hill Golf Club. This was billed as a social evening incorporating the annual general meeting and there was a convivial atmosphere as residents, Committee and visitors mingled over complimentary drinks and the finger buffet. The Chair's address drew attention to the **six vacancies on the SHRA Committee** and asked for expressions of interest. We have since had eight such expressions and have invited people to tip their toes in the water by attending one of the two-monthly Committee meetings. If you are interested in finding out more about the SHRA Committee please email us at [contact@shra.org.uk](mailto:contact@shra.org.uk).



A key aim of SHRA is to look after the amenities of Strawberry Hill and in this edition of the Bulletin we report on additions and losses to our local amenities. The principal addition is the bronze **Caligula**, thought lost, which returns to Strawberry Hill House for the first time since 1797. Another amenity is the range of short courses offered to residents by St Mary's University.

On the downside the loss of Antipodea, **Radnor Gardens Café**, has been felt by residents this spring and summer and a new tenant remains some way off. Another sad loss in Radnor Gardens is that three of our magnificent trees have to be removed because of their dangerous condition.

It is also tragic that, after 37 years, **Strawberry Hill Ballet School** and, after 28 years, Strawberry Hill Pre-School, are having to leave our area. We understand that their lease on **St James's Hall** was terminated at six weeks' notice. We also learn that St Catherine's School will be taking over the space for music lessons room in anticipation of their new music block gaining planning permission. It is always sad when community assets are forced to close their doors through no fault of their own.

A final piece of good news is that we have just received copies of the fifth edition of our definitive local history book – **Strawberry Hill: a history of the neighbourhood** by Anthony Beckles Willson. The fourth edition was extensively revised but the fifth is substantially the same with minor edits. Local residents aka SHRA members can order a copy for **£8** by emailing us at [contact@shra.org.uk](mailto:contact@shra.org.uk).

**Andrew Miller, Chair, SHRA**

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### In this issue:

**Local Issues :** Councillor Richard Bennett, Leader of the Green Group, reflects on green issues ahead of the General Election. June Collins reports on crime in Strawberry Hill. [CLICK HERE](#)

**The Association :** We report on April's AGM and recent activities involving SHRA. [CLICK HERE](#)

**Green Pages :** Andrew Miller and Louisa Carradine report on tree removal in Radnor Gardens and residents' views on the LBRuT verges policy. [CLICK HERE](#)

**Arts:** Peter Lamb profiles local landscape painter, Ian Sidaway. [CLICK HERE](#)

**St Mary's University :** Helen Barnes from the short courses team provides a description of upcoming courses with discounts for local residents. [CLICK HERE](#)

**Heritage & History :** Rebecca Leuw informs us on upcoming events at Strawberry Hill House, including the return of the 'lost treasure', the bronze head of **Caligula**. New Director, Zoe Colbeck is introduced. [CLICK HERE](#)

**Business :** Andrew Miller meets the manager of Brewers Decorator Centre on Heathlands Industrial Estate. [CLICK HERE](#)

## Local Issues

To ensure that residents are informed about developments at the Council, we have invited **Richard Bennett**, one of our councillors for South Twickenham Ward, to provide an update on issues that will affect Strawberry Hill. SHRA is an apolitical organisation and any opinions expressed are the councillor's own.

### Councillor's Update

Councillor Richard Bennett, Leader of the Green Group & Leader of the Opposition, London Borough of Richmond-upon-Thames ([Cllr.r.bennett@richmond.gov.uk](mailto:Cllr.r.bennett@richmond.gov.uk)).

I write this before the General Election on July 4th. It has been the most extraordinary campaign that I have witnessed, and it will probably have culminated in an extraordinary outcome. Political events and upheaval in France are unprecedented with serious concerns about what the future holds. In the USA polarisation, a lack of commitment to truth, intolerance, and seriously rabid views have produced intensely worrying Presidential and Congressional contests.

The world's volatile politics have been matched by volatile weather across the Earth. Once in a century temperatures and floods are becoming commonplace in their frequency. "Global average temperatures have broken records for every month of the past year" ('The Economist' 29/6/24). Although 'The Economist' doesn't appear to recognise the issues posed by their suggestion that "more air conditioning is needed to weather hot spells". Let's just contemplate the level of energy demands of coping with an Indian Summer with scores of days above 40° accompanied by high humidity.

The urgency to fully appreciate and respond to the planet's environmental challenges should be obvious. However, for all the heat and bluster of political debate there has been a depressing lack of interest shown by politicians and media during any political campaign. I don't expect a dramatic focus on saving/conserving the planet to loom large. However, there many more discrete concerns that could and should have achieved greater prominence.

The sewage and agricultural waste releases into our rivers and the sea have had some prominence but more for attacks on opponents rather than for detailing solutions. Britain's homes are exceptionally inefficient in their usage and leakiness of energy. Programmes to promote the installation of, for example, insulation, solar panels, and heat pumps must be more committed and sustained. New building will always represent a small percentage of our housing stock. Retrofitting is essential.

The continuing excessive use of pesticides and the knock-on effect of its impact on insect life persists. The decline of our topsoil continues and is only occasionally reflected on. Food security is a concern for our future when we import about half of what we consume. The EU's Common Agriculture Policy was not its shining star, but it has not been replaced and improved upon.

But that's enough! I really didn't want to put you off enjoying Summer. It can still be a glorious time.

Richard Bennett



Dying Trees in Radnor Gardens

## Local Issues

### Crime in Strawberry Hill

by June Collins, SHRA Treasurer

Below are the latest crime figures for January-February 2024 for South Twickenham Ward (of which Strawberry Hill is a part):

Offence	Jan - Feb 2023	Jan - Feb 2024	Change
Burglary	8	4	-4
Criminal Damage	8	3	-5
Robbery	0	1	+1
Theft from M/V	2	3	+1
Theft of M/V	6	1	-5
Theft of pedal cycle	9	1	-8
Non Domestic	9	15	+6
Domestic	9	2	-7
Youth Violence	0	0	0

The last Police Liaison Group (PLG) meeting was held on 10th June 2024. South Twickenham is currently up to full strength with one Sergeant, Jason Hudson, two Police Officers, PC Greg Roberts, PC Ray Sullivan and one PCSO, Kyle Mackenzie. However, the Team will be losing PC Ray Sullivan who will be transferring to Royal Parks Command Unit. PC Sam Parkinson will be dividing his time between West Twickenham and South Twickenham until a replacement can be posted. The demonstrations in Central London are still taking their toll on the team with the Safer Neighbourhood Team (SNT) 'strand abstraction rate' currently at 26.4%, i.e. for nearly 1 in 4 of their shifts they are being redeployed elsewhere. The knock-on effect is that the Team is always on the back foot trying to catch up with work within their SNT role.

Since the last PLG three Anti-Social Behaviour warnings, one Community Protection Warning and a Caution for Harassment have been issued. The good news is that all reported crime with the exceptions of Robbery, Assault and Theft from Motor Vehicle has reduced and Richmond still has the lowest crime rate of all the 32 London boroughs.

The number of reports for violence has risen since the last set of figures. However, domestic assaults have fallen. The fatal stabbing of Anojan Gnanewaran at Strawberry Hill Train Station which occurred on 8th January is included in these figures. Mr. Dino Donaldson, aged 19, from Ealing has been charged with the offence of Murder and two counts of Possession with the Intent to Supply Drugs. There was also one robbery recorded in February in Radnor Gardens. Three juveniles had their mobile phones stolen from them. No weapons were seen.

The crime reports for Theft of Motor Vehicle and theft from them has fallen. There was only one report of a theft of a Motor Vehicle which is a decrease of five crimes for the period. There was only one record of a theft of a bicycle. Burglary reports have dropped this quarter to four which is a reduction of four crimes.

Over a 12-month-period of all crime reported in South Twickenham, the total has risen by 9%. The top four areas which generate crime reports on the Ward are: St Mary's University; Sainsbury's Supermarket, (The Green); Riley's Sports Bar, (Heath Road); Radnor Gardens, (Cross Deep) (NB only St Mary's and Radnor Gardens are in Strawberry Hill).

#### Contact information

The point of contact telephone number for South Twickenham (not a reporting number) is 020 7175 9464  
X/Twitter address for South Twickenham is SNT@MPSSTwickenham  
South Twickenham SNT email address is southtwickenham.snt@met.police.uk

#### Protection resources

There is a Faraday protector which is an anti-theft device for cars, see link:

<https://www.amazon.co.uk/Faraday-Blocking-Keyless-Antitheft-Protector/dp/B077XTMHZW>

Protect your bike from theft and join the UK's national, Police-approved, bicycle-marking-and-registration scheme. [www.bikeregister.com](http://www.bikeregister.com)

Also, Richmond Safer Neighbourhood Board offers a free crime-prevention visit to residential addresses: email [crimepreventionadvice@yahoo.com](mailto:crimepreventionadvice@yahoo.com)

#### Reporting homelessness

You can report people who are homeless to SPEAR (the homeless charity) and they will go out and help them – tel. 0208 288 6506 – <https://www.spearlondon.org/>

The following link is to the Street Safe online reporting APP.

<https://www.met.police.uk/notices/street-safe/street-safe/>

#### Viewing crime figures

The following link allows you to view crimes in your area. Simply put in your postcode. UK Crime Statistics ([crime-statistics.co.uk](http://crime-statistics.co.uk))





## The Association

### SHRA Social Evening incorporating the AGM

The SHRA Annual General Meeting was held at Strawberry Hill Golf Club on Wednesday 24 April. Altogether there were 40 residents and Committee members in attendance – in line with previous years when there are no major ‘controversial’ issues on the agenda. South Ward Councillors Richard Bennett and Michael Butlin supported the event as did PC Ray



Sullivan from the Police Liaison Group. Unlike previous practice the event was billed as a ‘SHRA Social Evening for Residents incorporating the AGM’. This meant starting the evening with complimentary drinks and a finger buffet with residents able to mingle and talk to members of the Committee. This seemed to work well and the business end of the evening began naturally after 45 minutes as people took their seats in the cabaret-style seating arrangement.

**Andrew Miller**, Chair, thanked everyone for attending and also thanked those members of the Committee who were standing down – Richard Hudspith, Robin Moran and the two Events Coordinators, Cathy Bird and Julia Fiehn. Despite continuous advertising for new members SHRA has been unable to recruit residents to replace those leaving. This poses a problem going forward as it constrains our activities and calls the future of the Association into question.

He then gave a brief overview of the 2023-2024 year in the life of the Association. Strong features in the year’s activities included:

- **The partnership with Strawberry Hill House and St Mary’s University remains strong** – with the summer picnic and regular features in the Bulletin – SMU informs us that residents do take advantage of the discounts offered on courses. SMU students have also volunteered to litter pick during their volunteering weeks.
- **The monthly litter picks** have been very successful and **Louisa Carradine** – our environmental coordinator has done an excellent job in organising the regular SHRA litter pick group – thanks to all residents contributing to keeping SH clean and tidy.
- Our two big events this year were well attended – **Carols in the Village** in December had a big audience of 120 and the **Strawberry Hill Summer Picnic** had over 120 people attending. Thanks again to Strawberry Hill House and all our business sponsors for both events.
- Our business liaison coordinator, **John Tjaardstra**, has done sterling work in building bridges with our local businesses and securing sponsorship for events. John has also just compiled a directory of some **30 local businesses** which can be downloaded from our website.
- Sales of our local history book have gone well and we are now sold out and plan a reprint.
- The three-times-a-year Bulletin continues to be well received.

On the other side of balance sheet are other events over which SHRA has little or no control.

- \* The fatal stabbing at the station in January was a reminder of the dangers of **knife crime** even in usually quiet crime areas such as Strawberry Hill.
- \* The saga of the noise barriers was a reminder of how chaotic decision making can be even in big national and regional companies like **Network Rail and SWR**.
- \* Last year we highlighted the multiple potential impacts of the **Strawberry Hill Traffic Survey** – we understand that this has been scaled right back with main impacts likely to be on Cross Deep – rather a damp squib.

Going forward we will maintain our core activities but will have to rein back on events – such as the picnic – as we lack the Committee personnel to support such an event. Next year’s AGM will be a critical one for SHRA with key Committee members due to stand down and as yet no replacements or new blood coming onto the Committee.

## The Association

Members of the Committee were formally nominated and re-elected. A lively question and answer session was held with Councillors and the Police liaison officer contributing. Issues raised included fly tipping, graffiti, items on the pavement outside shops in the Village, and St Catherine's School new music-block planning application. Following Andrew's request for new Committee members, six residents expressed an interest in finding out more.

June Collins, SHRA Treasurer, thanked all residents who subscribe to SHRA and, in particular, **thanked the Fortescue Park Residents' Association** who have made a block donation. Sponsorship from local businesses has again been a feature thanks to John Tjaardstra and she **thanked St Mary's University** and the **Alexander Pope** for providing a room for committee meetings. June thanked **John Naish** who has verified our accounts again this year and **Louisa Carradine** who printed the papers for the meeting.

### Strawberry Hill: A history of the neighbourhood

The **fifth edition of our popular local history book written by Anthony Beckles Wilson is now available.** It was originally published by SHRA in 1991 following extensive research and was extensively updated in 2022 with new research and photographs added. Following the launch in the Green Room at Strawberry Hill House attended by our local MP Murnira Wilson, the book sold well and we were out of stock by spring 2024. The main outlet for sales has been the shop at Strawberry Hill House. Residents can also buy copies at the discounted price of £8 which includes delivery to an address within Strawberry Hill by contacting SHRA at [contact@shra.org.uk](mailto:contact@shra.org.uk).

### New Medical School at St Mary's University

At the recent meeting between Andrew Miller, Chair of SHRA, and **Anthony McClaran, Vice Chancellor**, we learned that the General Medical Council had just approved the establishment of a new Medical School. Work will begin during 2025 on a new building on an existing footprint adjacent to the Sports Hall and the School will open in September 2026. There will be no encroachment on Metropolitan Open Land.

On another positive note, SMU provided a free place for Committee Member, Louisa Carradine, on their First Aid Course to enable her to become our first aider at future SHRA events with a Quallsafe Level 3 Award in Emergency First Aid at Work (RQF) certificate.

### Radnor Gardens Café Update

SHRA has been in touch with the Wandsworth council official responsible for letting the café, previously run by Antipodea. Following the ending of the contract between our Council and **Antipodea over alleged breach of contract**, the café has been abandoned and is in decline. The property consultants, Avison Young, are responsible for letting the premises and for securing best value for the Council. We understand that there was considerable initial interest in taking on the café with 48 expressions of interest by April. Since then there has been a hold up as Antipodea had not removed their equipment from the building, so it was deemed unsuitable for viewing by prospective tenants. Our understanding is that would-be tenants will have to submit a tender saying what they are prepared to pay in rent. **SHRA's concern is that, although designed to serve the council tax payer by saving money, this process will potentially make the café unviable economically. SHRA would favour a not-for-profit management of the café that would work closely with the local community to serve the area and we have raised this issue with our local councillors.**



### St James's Hall, Radnor Road

SHRA was approached by Strawberry Hill Ballet School which has **used the hall for 37 years after St James's Church moved to terminate their lease at six weeks' notice.** The same notice to quit was issued to Strawberry Hill Pre-School (28 years at the hall) which looks after many young children from local families. It is sad that these community assets are having to move out of our area reducing amenities for local people. We learn that the Parish Hall is instead to be used for St Catherine's School for music lessons. **SHRA has written to the Church to ask on what grounds this decision has been made (and our South Ward Councillors have been copied in).**

## The Association

### RENEWAL OF SUBSCRIPTION:

Your contribution is vital in allowing SHRA to maintain and develop its events and activities including litter picks, the Big Family Picnic, the planter, the Bulletin, local history, protecting the heritage and monitoring planning applications. We also maintain a fund for legal fees which are required if there is a need to challenge local planning decisions. All Committee members are volunteers. The suggested subscription fee is £5-£10 annually per household (April-March).

### You can pay by BACs, Standing order or cheque.

**BACs** - please email the Treasurer ([june.collins@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:june.collins@hotmail.co.uk)) when making a BACs payment so we know what it is for and who you are. Details:

NatWest Account Name: *Strawberry Hill Residents' Association*  
Sort Code: 55-50-39  
Account Number: 71550410

**Standing order** – please email the Treasurer ([june.collins@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:june.collins@hotmail.co.uk)) for a SO form.

**Cheques** payable to *Strawberry Hill Residents' Association*, drop in or post to June Collins, *23b Tower Road*, TW1 4PD OR Post Office, 50 Tower Road, TW1 4PE (please enclose a note with your name, address and email).

**RENEWAL OF SUBSCRIPTION** : Your contribution is gratefully received and helps maintain the planters near the station, assists in publication costs and allows us to run and manage the AGM's as well as funds for possible local legal and planning requirements. All committee members are volunteers. Suggested subscription fee is **£5-£10 annually per household**.

### Cheques to Strawberry Hill Resident's Association

**NAME:** \_\_\_\_\_

**ADDRESS:** \_\_\_\_\_ **POSTCODE:** \_\_\_\_\_

**EMAIL ADDRESS:** \_\_\_\_\_ **TELEPHONE:** \_\_\_\_\_

Please drop in to either A: June Collins, 23b Tower Road, TW1 4PD or  
B : Post Office, 50 Tower Road, TW1 4PE

## The Committee

### Officers

Andrew Miller,  
Chair & Bulletin Editor,  
07866801299,  
[activelearning@blueyonder.co.uk](mailto:activelearning@blueyonder.co.uk)

June Collins,  
Hon. Treasurer, 020 8891 0448,  
[june.collins@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:june.collins@hotmail.co.uk)

Pamela Crisp,  
Hon. Secretary,  
020 8898 1878,  
[contact@SHRA.org.uk](mailto:contact@SHRA.org.uk)

### Members

Mike Allsop, Planning Monitor  
020 8891 1614  
Peter Lamb, Local Historian  
[lambpc0950@hotmail.com](mailto:lambpc0950@hotmail.com)  
Louisa Carradine, Environment Coordinator  
[louisa@strawberryfillstation.com](mailto:louisa@strawberryfillstation.com)  
Sam Kamleh, Bulletin Designer  
John Tjaardstra, Business Liaison  
[tjaard@btinternet.com](mailto:tjaard@btinternet.com)  
Mary Hughes, Roads & Transport Coordinator  
[maryhughesx736@gmail.com](mailto:maryhughesx736@gmail.com)

### SHRA on social media

Please join/visit the following for more regular posts about Strawberry Hill.

**Website** – [www.shra.org.uk](http://www.shra.org.uk)

 [@SHResidents](https://twitter.com/SHResidents)

 [Strawberry\\_Hill\\_RA](https://www.instagram.com/Strawberry_Hill_RA)

 [Strawberry Hill Residents' Association](https://www.facebook.com/Strawberry_Hill_Residents'_Association)



## Green Pages

By Louisa Carradine & Andrew Miller

### The SHRA Litter Picks



#### Tree removal in Radnor Gardens

We are sorry to see three of our lovely Radnor Gardens trees have reached the end of their lives.

First, the Scots Pine that was badly damaged during Storm Eunice in February 2022 has finally been removed.

Second, the magnificent weeping willow that stood on the river front next to the water safety centre is in deep trouble. This golden weeping willow originates from the time of Radnor House and is one of the oldest specimens in the borough. It once stood at a recorded height of 25 metres which at the time made it the tallest of its species in the UK and Ireland. The tree has been 'in decline' for twenty years and recently a 'crown reduction' was necessary for safety reasons. Given the tree's historic importance, the Council commissioned an independent expert assessment, who regrettably recommended its immediate removal on the grounds of public safety. The expert found fungal fruiting bodies leading to white rot and another leading to brown rot that can cause trees to collapse. The tree has been lopped prior to removal.

Third, a further willow has also died – the-river fronting tree adjacent to the bench by Radnor School has not developed leaves this year and is also marked for removal. SHRA hopes that these trees will all be replaced in due course.

#### Verges – what do you think?

The month of June is often a prodigious one for plant growth. It also highlights the contrast between the verges in Strawberry Hill's streets. This invariably means residents take sides in the 'green battleground' of our highway verges. The newly cropped short back and sides of Orford Gardens contrasts dramatically with the two-feet-high, country-lane look of the adjacent Tower Road.

The current verges policy was introduced by the Council in spring 2021. It involves a two-maintenance regime – the 'rural cut' of three times a year 'when necessary' (usually March/April and August/September) and the urban cut (6-7 times a year). The policy aimed to: increase biodiversity; improve habitats for native flora and fauna; reduce the carbon footprint; and improve air quality. Currently only Orford Gardens has the urban cut, all other verges in Strawberry Hill are on the rural cut.

We note that some Strawberry Hill residents have taken things on themselves, for example, by planting and maintaining flowers around the trees in Wellesley Road, or by planting annuals in Abbotsmede Close. We note that some residents may also scatter wild flower seeds on their local verges to encourage the diversity that is a goal of the verges policy.

#### One resident writes:

'Verges with selected grasses and wild flowers look fabulous and must be better for the environment, but they require considerable maintenance and expertise. Letting the grass grow and rubbish accumulate on suburban verges just looks scruffy and I so much prefer our Orford Gardens grass trimmed.'



Orford Gardens Rural Cut



Tower Road Urban Cut

#### Others complain about the long grass concealing dog poo and rubbish.

'While not obvious on these smaller verges, the larger areas like Strawberry Hill Close are being used to dump rubbish that gets concealed by tall grass.'

Perhaps it is time to investigate the extent to which the verges policy is achieving its objectives, as the Tower Road verges, in particular, seem to be dominated by coarse competitive grasses. Residents who are concerned about the state of the verges might also keep a record of when the cuts are actually made. They might also secure support from other residents in the street for a change from a rural to an urban cut by collecting signatures and submitting them to the Council.

#### SHRA Litter Picks

Join the regulars on the SHRA Litter Picking WhatsApp group. Picks are from 9am to 10am on the second Saturday of the month – next picks are 14 September and 12 October (the 'Big Litter Pick' – when we aim for 100% coverage of the 42 streets and closes of Strawberry Hill).

## Arts

By Peter Lamb, SHRA

### Profile of Strawberry Hill Artist - Ian Sidaway RI



To say that the arts flourish in the Borough of Richmond upon Thames would be an understatement. The visual arts, music, drama, crafts, dance and more find expression in the numerous societies and events that take place regularly. Art lovers and practitioners, amateur and professional, relish the creative vibe that pervades our part of London.

Annually, when possible, Arts Richmond organises an Open Studio event where artists invite the public into their creative spaces to view and discuss their work. Flying the flag for Strawberry Hill is the distinguished artist, Ian Sidaway. Ian, a professional painter and illustrator, works from his charming cottage in Strawberry Hill Road. He enthusiastically takes part in the Open Studio project, and anyone who visits will be welcomed by his warm hospitality whilst viewing the stunning array of work he has on show.

#### Backstory

Ian was born and brought up in Tamworth in the Midlands. His working class family background was one of miners and clay workers, and as further education and university hardly figured in the local tradition, the assumption was that he would follow in his father's footsteps and become a clay

worker or similar. There were, however, broader horizons that beckoned him, and a passion for natural history could have drawn him in another direction. But it was his art teacher who recognised his talent for drawing and painting and urged him to apply to art college. With the added encouragement of his parents this is what he did.

He came to Twickenham to study art and design, met his wife Lydia, and they have lived and worked in this borough ever since. He has been a resident of Strawberry Hill for 28 years. The rooms in his house are dedicated to art. As well as his studio paraphernalia, easels, library and walls adorned with artwork, the place is a fascinating treasury of collected curios and quirky artefacts. Don't be surprised to see his art sharing space with a skeleton and various stuffed creatures. The garden is equally whimsical with its winding path leading through luxuriant shrubs to verdant nooks and arbours

#### Body of work

Ian has a far-reaching and glowing reputation for his work, especially in watercolour. He was admitted to the Royal Institute of Painters in Watercolours and bears the RI accolade after his name. His paintings have been in demand internationally, and he exhibits in a number of prestigious galleries, particularly the Mall Gallery in London. He has worked as an illustrator, portrait painter, landscape painter and author. He has made major pictorial contributions to books on gardening, cookery and artistic techniques. His own authorship of the hugely successful 'Colour Mixing Bible' has become just that, a bible for painters, although Ian found its production a painstaking process with countless swatches of mixed colours to compile.



he pressures and demands of making a living from art meant that he could not always work as freely as he would have wished. In his current version of retirement, he is now able to paint whatever takes his fancy. Landscapes figure highly, trees in particular, also ancient standing stones, seascapes, rock formations, recently some exquisite drawings and paintings inspired by Venice. The subjects that engage his interest are those things and places that have an individual presence and exude a vibration that calls out to him for depiction. His large number of sketchbooks are bursting with visual ideas, and they are artworks in their own right. Visitors to his open studio should look through these and not focus entirely on the finished paintings. They are remarkable.

Unfortunately, the bulletin in which this article appears will probably be too late for the 2024 Open Studios. But for future Open Studios I urge our residents to visit Ian and Lydia and acquaint themselves with this prodigious talent that we have in our midst.

[www.iansidaway.co.uk](http://www.iansidaway.co.uk)

[www.artsrichmond.org.uk](http://www.artsrichmond.org.uk)

Instagram: [@isidaway](https://www.instagram.com/isidaway)

[@artsrichmonduk](https://www.instagram.com/artsrichmonduk)



# St Mary's University

## Short Courses – Strawberry Hill Residents Welcome!

By Helen Barnes, Short Course Administrator

We have a number of courses that will run over summer but most will start in earnest from September 2024. Most of them have a special discount in place for our local Strawberry Hill neighbours. You can access them via our dedicated neighbours page [stmarys.ac.uk/neighbours-discounts](https://stmarys.ac.uk/neighbours-discounts) which is regularly updated.

### Career change?

In September we have a host of courses starting that are perfect, if you are thinking of changing career, or retraining, or, perhaps, adding in an earning-side hustle. The courses run on a part-time basis, so are very easy to fit around current work commitments and family life, and will allow you to achieve a new qualification and embark on a new career route. You can choose from [Health Coaching](#), [Gym Instructing and Personal Training](#), [Reflexology](#), [Massage and Sports Massage](#).

### Courses to support business needs

Courses that support local business needs and professional development include [Emergency First Aid](#) at work and two brand new evening courses - [Public Speaking](#) and [Generative AI in the Workplace](#).

The [Public Speaking](#) course will build your confidence to address large audiences and will focus on language, voice projection and tone, use of hands, how to handle questions and display confidence.

[Generative AI in the Workplace](#) will look at the practical applications of the emerging technology. Throughout the course we will evaluate potential ethical issues and considerations and some essential tips for navigating the technology, including a workshop on prompt engineering and multimedia best practices.

### Fancy getting fit and strong and having fun?

If you fancy getting fit and strong our popular [Lean-to-Lift](#) course returns. It runs for an hour on a Wednesday evening and will teach how to safely lift weights and get fit in a friendly and supportive environment. The sessions run in our state-of-the-art Performance Education Centre (PEC) on campus and we have a course for every experience level, [Beginner \(6-7pm\)](#), [Intermediate \(7-8pm\)](#) and [Advanced Level Olympic Weightlifting Group \(8-9pm\)](#).

### French or Spanish?

Our French and Spanish Language evening courses return and offer a choice of beginner and intermediate levels.

### Travel Writing

If your summer travels inspire you we are also offering a brand-new course - [The Journey: A Travel Writing Workshop](#). It will run from 10am–1pm on Saturday 21 September. In the workshop, led by critically acclaimed author and journalist Jini Reddy, we will explore approaches to long-form travel writing (books) and look more closely at the challenges and joys of writing in the genre. Through a mix of readings, discussion and writing exercises, we will begin our own voyage of discovery. Bring your curiosity, your enthusiasm and your ideas, and draw creative inspiration from writing that deepens our understanding of the world and ourselves.

### Nutrition

Our popular [Level 4 Award in Nutrition](#) will run over a number of dates throughout the Autumn term, plus our online [Eating Well, Inflammation and the Gut](#) course will return.

Our website is regularly updated and a full list of all our courses is available via <https://www.stmarys.ac.uk/short-courses/overview.aspx> or call 020 8240 4321 for more information.



St Mary's University Twickenham London

## Short Courses at St Mary's University, Twickenham

Explore a new career path, start a new hobby, or learn a new skill with a short course in Reflexology, Massage, Sports Massage, Nutrition and many more!

[www.stmarys.ac.uk/short-courses](https://www.stmarys.ac.uk/short-courses)  
shortcourses@stmarys.ac.uk | 020 8240 4321



## History & Heritage

### Strawberry Hill House

By Rebecca Leuw, Marketing & Communications Manager

#### Introducing Zoë Colbeck new Director of Strawberry Hill House and Garden



Strawberry Hill House is delighted to announce that Zoë Colbeck will succeed Derek Purnell as Executive Director of the historic South West London attraction. Zoë joins the team from her previous role as Project Manager at the Solent Cluster, a major decarbonisation initiative based in Hampshire, bringing over 20 years of experience in the heritage sector to Strawberry Hill House and Garden.

Having read Chemistry at University, Zoë worked for one of the UK's largest retailers, specialising in logistics and people management, before joining the National Trust (NT) to combine her passion for heritage with her commercial

background. She left the NT in 2021 after 18 years, ultimately as General Manager of the Chartwell Portfolio, one of the NT's top properties. More recently, she was Commercial and Operations Director with the Mary Rose Trust in Portsmouth.

She took up her new position at Strawberry Hill on 3 June, after her predecessor, Derek Purnell, left to take up an opportunity with the Frederick Ashton Foundation, based at the Royal Opera House in Covent Garden. Announcing the appointment, Paul Kafka, Chairman of Strawberry Hill Trust, said: "I am delighted that Zoë is joining Strawberry Hill at this moment in our history. 2024 is going to be a year of change and new directions. Our quest for a sustainable business model continues, even as our reputation as a museum and cultural destination continues to grow." Zoë commented: "I am passionate about making a difference for our history and heritage and making it relevant for different audiences. Horace Walpole is such an interesting character, and I am looking forward to leading the team at Strawberry Hill House and Garden through the next stage of development, preserving his legacy and contributing to its future."



#### Ancient Bronze Bust of Caligula returning to Strawberry Hill House

Horace Mann, British Envoy to Florence, was a close correspondent and generous benefactor to Horace Walpole, providing numerous artefacts for Strawberry Hill. In May 1767, Mann sent Walpole a small ancient bronze bust of the Roman emperor Caligula, reportedly one of the first treasures unearthed from Herculaneum. Walpole was ecstatic. The bust, a high-quality artwork, depicted one of Rome's most notorious villains. Initially a noble ruler, Caligula became increasingly self-indulgent and cruel, traits that fascinated Walpole. He expressed his satisfaction to Mann: "I gaze on it from morning to night... the eyes, which are absolutely divine, and have a wild melancholy in them, that one forebodes might ripen to madness." (Walpole Correspondence, 30 May 1767)

#### Lost and found

At the 1842 Strawberry Hill sale, the bust was purchased, and its traces were subsequently lost. Generations of enthusiasts searched but it remained lost until its recent discovery in the Schroder collection by Silvia Davoli where it was described as a possible Renaissance bronze of a youth. The identity was confirmed by comparing the small bronze with John Carter's drawing in the Horace Walpole Collection in the Huntingdon Library. Initially, the lack of patina suggested a sixteenth-century origin. However, the inlaid silver eyes and recent metallurgical analyses confirm that the bronze's composition aligns with ancient dating.

The final validation came from German archaeologist **Dietrich Boschung**, the foremost expert in Caligula's iconography. His identification is further supported when comparing the bust with other contemporary portraits. The bust's small scale suggests it may have served a ritual function, displayed in public or household shrines and altars. Until now, only seven small-scale bronze portraits of the emperor were known so this is a hugely important find. We are very grateful to have the bust on long term loan at the house. Come and see the treasure for yourself in the Tribune at Strawberry Hill House from the 28 June 24.

#### Other events this summer:

- The Handlebards return for an early evening performance of the **Comedy of Errors** on **14 July 5-7pm**.
- Summer at Strawberry Hill features The Swing Ninjas playing elements of **New Orleans swing, blues and jazz** on **25 August 4-7.30pm**
- A **twilight tour** of the House is being held on **15 August at 6.30pm**.
- **Nature Unbound: Flower Festival 13-15 September 10-4pm**

The flower festival returns for the sixth year **curated by Leigh Chappell and Janne Ford**. It focuses on sustainable blooms by 30 floral designers from across the

UK. Book early to avoid disappointment (**Standard adult ticket is £19**).

To book your tickets go to the House website – [www.strawberry-hillhouse.org.uk/whats-on](http://www.strawberry-hillhouse.org.uk/whats-on)



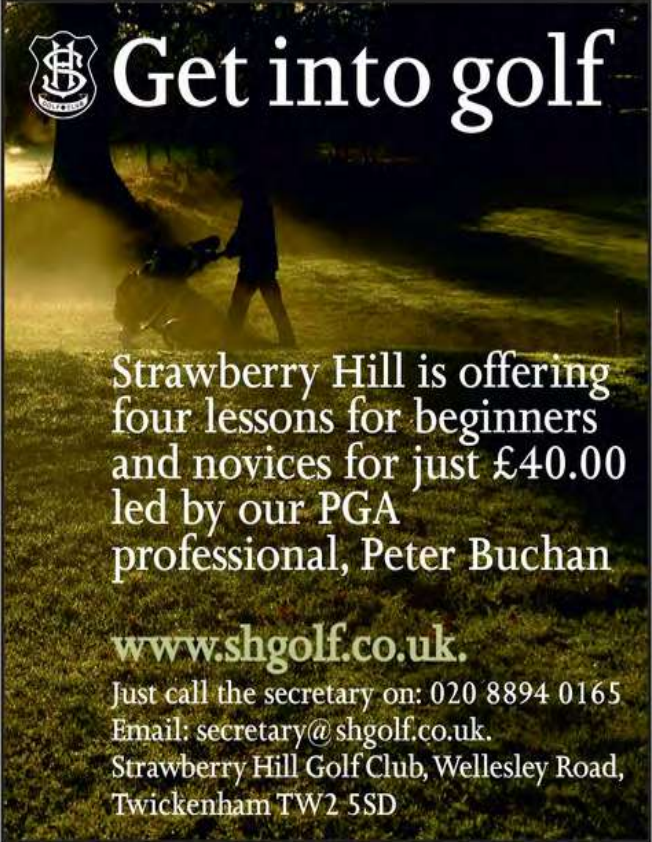
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## Business Pages

### Brewers Decorator Centre By Andrew Miller

Brewers Decorator Centre is located at unit 9 on the Heathlands Industrial Estate where it has been trading since opening in 1996. The store is tucked away in a corner of Strawberry Hill but the abundant free parking gives it an edge over other businesses on Heath Road. The Branch Manager, John Rivenell (pictured) has worked for Brewers for nearly all his working life and has been at this store since it was set up. He is now supported by staff members Cal, Josh and Jo.

Brewers is now a leading player in the home decorating market with around 200 stores across the country. This is a major expansion since Clement Brewer founded the business in Eastbourne in 1904 – the company website has a fascinating history of the growth of the business during the 20th century ([www.brewers.co.uk](http://www.brewers.co.uk)). It remains a family business which won the Family Business of the Year Award in 2024.

Although the business began in the Edwardian era selling wallpaper, Brewers is best known now for stocking an impressive range of paints, including top of the range brands such as Little Green and Farrow & Ball – also popular brands such as Dulux and Crown, Johnstones and own-trade brand, Albany. Staff training and experience mean that they are able to offer advice to DIY customers which is generally unavailable in larger DIY stores. The 7am-5pm Monday-Friday (8am-5pm Saturday) opening hours attract trade customers and give local customers good options – as well as somewhere to park.

Customers are roughly 50% trade and 50% DIY. The DIY market has been boosted by Covid, the cost of living crisis and the high costs of moving house which encourage people to decorate their own properties. The main limitation on business at Brewers Twickenham is that, being tucked away, residents do not know it exists – SHRA hopes that this profile will encourage Strawberry Hill residents to give it a try.

### SHRA Directory of Strawberry Hill's businesses

The Directory can be accessed using the following link – [www.shra.org.uk/business](http://www.shra.org.uk/business).

The aim is to periodically update the list based on any new information provided to SHRA by the businesses concerned. We feel this initiative will benefit both residents and our local businesses alike. SHRA encourages all Strawberry Hill's 2,500+ households to make use of them, so they can remain an integral part of our community.

