



The Bulletin

A newsletter for all residents of Strawberry Hill

www.shra.org.uk

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No. 189 : Summer 2026

Editor's Introduction

This newsletter is for all our members, which is everyone living in Strawberry Hill.

Welcome to the Summer edition of the SHRA Bulletin.

We were delighted to welcome so many residents and their children to the **Strawberry Hill Community Picnic and BBQ on 5th July**. As in years past this was held in the beautiful gardens of Strawberry Hill House. It was a great success featuring the **St Margarets Elastic Band and Jolly Julie** the ever popular children's entertainer. A delicious Argentine BBQ was provided by **Roots and Berries** who run the café at the House. The final attendance figure was a **sell out 350** raising a significant sum for the House which is the principal heritage asset of Strawberry Hill. The event is an excellent way of showcasing the House and bringing the local community together.

This edition of the Bulletin sees a new regular contributor on local issues, **Councillor Jack Clothier Jones**. In his first article Jack discusses, amongst other matters, the proposal for a new zebra crossing on Waldegrave Road by St Mary's University. This has been long awaited with crossing the road at that particular point hazardous. We welcome Jack to the Bulletin.

We also would like to record our **gratitude to Richard Bennett**, our long-standing contributor on local issues whom many of you know. Our Chairman, Andrew Miller, pays tribute in the Association section to Richard and his contribution to SHRA and Strawberry Hill residents.

David Gaimster, Executive Director of Strawberry Hill House, has contributed an article reflecting on the busy twelve months since his appointment and describing future plans for the House.

St Mary's University provides an update. It has announced the **appointment of Dr Øystein Lund as its new Vice-Chancellor**. He is currently Counsellor for Research and Education at the Royal Norwegian Embassy in London. **SMU also reports on it being awarded £1.2m funding to develop defence programmes**. The funding has been provided by the Office for Students and the Ministry of Defence.

On the sporting front, our Committee Member, Fiona Maxwell, interviews **Matthew Prynn Dixon, the General Manager at Strawberry Hill Golf Club**. Matthew explains his background and strategic plans for the course.

In one of his regular historical articles our resident historian, Peter Lamb, provides some fascinating insights into the interwar years in Strawberry Hill. Amongst other matters he looks into the propensity of a Tower Road family to acquire speeding convictions. As Peter mentions what would they have thought about the ubiquitous 20 mph limit!

Finally can I make my usual plea for **new Committee Members? We particularly need help with marketing and with the organisation of events**. There are 2,600 households in Strawberry Hill. Is there really no one lurking in any of them who would actually enjoy the satisfaction of giving something back to the Community? If you would like to volunteer just ask any member of the Committee or contact us via our website.

We hope you enjoy this edition of the Bulletin.

Jonathan Bayliss, Vice Chair, SHRA

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In this issue:

Local Issues : Councillor Jack Clothier Jones, one of the Councillors in the South Twickenham Ward, reports on a potential new pedestrian crossing on Waldegrave Road and other topical local issues. **June Collins** reports on crime in Strawberry Hill . [CLICK HERE](#)

The Association : We report on the success of our **Community BBQ and Picnic**, we look back at our April AGM and **pay tribute to Richard Bennett** for his longstanding contribution to SHRA and Strawberry Hill residents. [CLICK HERE](#)

Strawberry Hill House : David Gaimster, Executive Director of Strawberry Hill House, reflects on a busy twelve months since his appointment, some current successes and the House's strategy for the future. **Rosie White** reports on some recent and forthcoming programmes and events at Strawberry Hill House and Garden. [CLICK HERE](#)

St Mary's University Update: SMU announces the appointment of a **new Vice-Chancellor, Dr Øystein Lund**, and on a recent award of funding for the development of defence programmes. [CLICK HERE](#)

History & Heritage : Peter Lamb provides a miscellany of historical insights from the interwar period, including an advertisement for the sale of "picturesque houses" in Orford Gardens and day trips from Strawberry Hill Station. [CLICK HERE](#)

SMU Short Courses : Sairah Ali, Short Courses Administrator at St Mary's University, provides details of short courses which will be provided at St Mary's University over the coming months. [CLICK HERE](#)

Business: Fiona Maxwell in conversation with Matthew Prynn Dixon the General Manager at Strawberry Hill Golf Club. [CLICK HERE](#)

Local Issues

Councillor's Report- Jack Clothier Jones, Liberal Democrat Councillor for South Twickenham Ward.

SHRA is a non-political organisation and any views expressed are the Councillor's own.



What a whirlwind couple of months it's been since the elections back in May, and how lovely it is to be reporting to you all as your new 'Council insider' for SHRA since my election in South Twickenham.

I should start by thanking your erstwhile correspondent, Richard Bennett. He may be gone from the Council chamber but is absolutely not forgotten – he has been fantastic in giving me plenty of advice, pointing out key issues and suggesting improvements we should be fighting for.

This brings me onto my first issue. **A potential crossing on Waldegrave Road by St. Mary's University.**

Working with **Councillor Chard, Vice Chair of Transport**, we have engaged officers to visit the area, and after a positive response to feasibility work, we're ready to move onto the next stage. I should warn residents that no capital budget has been allocated as yet, and that there would be likely to be some impact on the pavement parking currently in place (basically to accommodate the length of zig-zag lines you need legally for a zebra crossing to provide visibility) – so let's chat at the next meeting, and see what the appetite is to make this happen. So far so good though!

Meanwhile, we've also been investigating multiple reported incidents involving drug users in the **alleyway linking Shacklegate Lane and Waldegrave Road to Strawberry Hill Station**, and the parking bays and bin storage area at the end of Southfield Gardens.

While no drug paraphernalia was found at the time of our visit, **Cllr Lee has visited the borough's central CCTV control room** to meet officers – and is supporting a police application for a re-deployable CCTV unit within the area. She will also be arranging a meeting with the local policing team, our park guard wardens, and other agencies to look at additional measures to detect or deter these behaviours within the areas described and in the nearby cemetery.

Finally, there's been plenty of chat amongst the community about **The Mediterranean Supermarket on Radnor Road**, so we're pleased to confirm we have a meeting with both sides to hopefully craft a positive compromise.

As ever, your Councillors are here for everyone and all live very locally, so if you do have any issues – please feel free to **get in touch with me, Michael Butlin or Rhi Lee** – and we'd be delighted to help. Thanks for voting for us. We can't wait to serve you all over the next 4 years.

Cllr Jack Clothier Jones

cllr.j.clothierjones@richmond.gov.uk

Local Issues

Crime in Strawberry Hill

by June Collins, SHRA Treasurer

The last Police Liaison Group (PLG) meeting was held on 8th June, 2026. South Twickenham is currently up to full strength with: one Sergeant, Jason Hudson; two police officers, PC Greg Roberts and PC Ivor Roberts who is also covering as a designated schools' officer, and one PCSO, Kyle Mackenzie.

Several officers are off sick at the moment plus absences affect operations. The Safer Neighbourhood Teams (SNTs) have also had to take over the mental health assessment duties from the Response Team and this can take 2-3 hours and can be resource heavy, taking officers away from the streets.

Below are the latest crime figures (Strawberry Hill is part of the South Twickenham Ward).

Offence	March - May 25	March - May 26	Change
Burglary	9	4	-5
Criminal Damage	5	1	-4
Robbery	2	3	+1
Theft from Motor Vehicle	10	10	0
Theft of Motor Vehicle	4	5	+1
Theft of pedal cycle	4	1	-3
Stalking & Harassment	7	14	+7
Assault : Domestic Violence	0	0	0
Assault : Without Injury	19	12	-7
Assault : With Injury	7	4	-3
Public Order Offences	5	11	+6
Sexual Offences	11	4	-7
Possession of Drugs	4	4	0
Drugs Trafficking	3	0	-3
Possession of Weapons	0	0	0
Shoplifting	11	4	-7
Miscellaneous Crimes	2	2	0

Overall, there has been a **decrease in crime** on the ward by 24.

It is still advisable to take precautions to prevent theft of your vehicle by using a good crook lock or immobiliser. The police suggest looking at the website "Secured by Design" www.securedbydesign.com which is the official police security initiative, for advice on how to protect your home and belongings.

There has been an increase in **stalking and harassment** but it is hoped better police training and reporting should help to bring this down. Whilst assaults, in general, and those connected to domestic violence have decreased, public order assaults have increased. This is linked to the summer period and the police are putting together a hot weather plan to combat anti social behaviour. There was a report of a resident being held up at Tesco cashpoint near Heath Road. This type of crime will be dealt with by other police units (other than the SNT) and they decide what action to take.

General Points

- If residents suspect drug dealing in their area it should be reported, anonymously, via **Crimestoppers** (0800 555 111) if they are worried.
- Cold calling roofing scams should be reported in the **first instance to 101**. If the behaviour becomes persistent or aggressive then via 999.
- People door knocking to sell ordinary products at inflated prices are doing the rounds. There is no law being broken but, if you feel residents are vulnerable, you can ask the SNT to come round and check on them. You can report this on 101.
- A question was raised about the World Cup and associated licensing changes causing disorder. Apparently, there will be additional policing to cover England game times.

The Ward priorities were set:

- Public Order
- Anti-social behaviour/drugs during summer nights.

MET ENGAGE – this is now the main communication channel, not the police WhatsApp channels. This is a new platform to get to know local Police Officers, help shape how they police local areas and receive key information and advice.

To sign up (free) follow this link:

South Twickenham

<https://www.metengage.co.uk/Content/LocalArea/79913/South%20Twickenham>

The Association

The Strawberry Hill Community BBQ and Picnic

The Community BBQ and Picnic was held on a hot Sunday afternoon on 5th July. It took place in the beautiful gardens of Strawberry Hill House with the backdrop of the stunning gothic building. For SHRA the picnic met two of our objectives – to support our principal heritage asset and to promote community spirit. The event is a joint venture between SHRA and the House.

The Garden Café at the House, managed by Roots and Berries, staged an outdoor Argentine style BBQ. Many residents took advantage of the delicious food on offer while others brought their own picnics.

Music was provided by the St Margarets Elastic Band and a varied routine was enjoyed by the crowds. Jolly Julie delighted a large group of children with her magic, story telling and plate spinning. Strawberry Hill House made their childrens' 18th Century dressing up rail available and parents enjoyed taking pictures of their children in Horace Walpole era outfits.

The event was a great success.



A thank you to Richard Bennett

For the past four years Councillor Bennett has been a good friend to SHRA, attending our regular meetings and writing the Councillor's Update column for the Bulletin. Richard was leader of the Green Party Group and also Leader of the Opposition on the Council. His column was a valued part of the Bulletin dealing with a wide range of issues: Council tax; parking; health and well being; Council budget and finances; Conservation areas; street parties; the local plan; mental health, Lime Bikes; Radnor Gardens Café and Twickenham Riverside. He also attended Friends of Twickenham Green meetings and was able to report to the SHRA Committee on issues facing our neighbouring green space. Richard regularly joins the SHRA litter pickers on the second Saturday of each month despite living just outside the boundaries of Strawberry Hill. He was a great asset to the Committee and was able to inform our decision making and help our communications with the Council through his regular, reliable attendance at meetings. Richard lost his seat at the recent election and is no longer a Councillor but this has not subdued his enthusiasm to continue as a local activist helping to improve the lives of residents.



The Association

SHRA Annual General Meeting

Vice Chairman's report – Jonathan Bayliss

Jonathan Bayliss chaired the meeting. He introduced himself, welcomed everyone and said he was delighted to see so many people in attendance for the combined SHRA social evening and AGM. He also welcomed Councillor Richard Bennett and, Chris Paget, Estates Director of St. Mary's University.

Jonathan then outlined his Vice Chair's report.

He began by thanking those who have supported SHRA during the year. He noted the sad loss of two former Committee Members, Teresa Read and Julia Fiehn during the last year.

He then highlighted a few strong features of last year's activities, partnership with Strawberry Hill House, the monthly litter picks, the popularity of our local history book and Carols in the Village and thanked our sponsors for their support.

Jonathan reflected on recent anniversaries. Firstly, the 175th anniversary of St. Mary's University and the 100th anniversary of its moving from Hammersmith to Strawberry Hill. Secondly, the 125th anniversary of Strawberry Hill Golf Club.

He also mentioned how welcome it was to see two new businesses established. After a protracted period it was so nice to see a new café opened in Radnor Gardens. Parsnips in the Park is a venture of Dominic Phillips who owns the very successful Benedicts and Parsnips deli and café in Teddington. Although not a new business, Kew Windows, an established business based in Kew, recently moved to Heathlands Industrial Estate to benefit from larger premises.

A full transcript of the Vice Chair's report is available on our website.



Treasurer's report - June Collins

June thanked all residents who subscribe. Sponsorship from local businesses has again been a feature 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 her accounts again this year. She noted that sales of SHRA's book on the history of Strawberry Hill have increased following the latest reprint. The cost of food for the AGM has increased and funds have been spent on upgrading the website and plants for the planter by MKG.

Approval of the accounts was proposed by Mike Allsop and seconded by Joe Brett. The accounts were approved.

Election of the SHRA Committee

Jonathan Bayliss was re-elected as Vice Chair of SHRA. Michael Allsop, Louisa Carradine, June Collins, Pam Crisp, Sam Kamleh, Peter Lamb, Mary Hughes, Fiona Maxwell, Andrew Miller and Dany Mooney were all nominated to the Committee. The following officers were appointed by the Committee: Andrew Miller as Chair, Pam Crisp as Secretary and June Collins as Treasurer.



Any other business

The following issues were raised by residents at the AGM.

A resident commented on **irritation caused by the flashing lights** in the window of a shop on Tower Road. Another resident commented about the **contents of the shop window**. Councillor Bennett will follow this up.

A resident asked if SHRA had any information about the **future use of the old Strawberry Hill station building** following its refurbishment. The Chair has been told that a new company has taken over the management of the railway property portfolio and they are preparing the premises to be leased. Mike Allsop said that no planning application has been lodged and the last designated use was as a restaurant.

Following the cutting back of the shrubbery on the footpath by the railway line, it was noted that the **path needed resurfacing**. The **planter at the bottom of Tower Road** will be maintained by the Council following its long-awaited replanting. Jonathan thanked MKG for help with watering the SHRA planter next to the garage. Jonathan declared the formal part of the meeting closed at 8:15 PM.

Chris Paget, the Director of Estates at St. Mary's University, outlined the latest developments around the site including the Centenary Building housing the new School of Medicine and other technology-related developments. He said a programme of **refurbishment of the Waldegrave Suite** was underway including a replacement of the silk wall and lift access. The **venue is available for hire for events**. He welcomed residents to use the cafe on site and said residents can take out membership to use the gym facilities. He offered to arrange a tour of the site. He said that any complaints regarding student behaviour should be directed to security with details including time and place. A resident noted how difficult it is to cross Waldegrave Road by the University.



The Association

RENEWAL OF SUBSCRIPTION:

Your contribution is vital in allowing SHRA to maintain and develop its events and activities including litter picks, the Strawberry Hill Community BBQ and 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) 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) 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
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SHRA on social media

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



Website – www.shra.org.uk



@SHResidents



Strawberry_Hill_RA

[Strawberry Hill Residents' Association](http://www.shra.org.uk)

Strawberry Hill House Update

David Gaimster, Executive Director, Strawberry Hill House

Strawberry Hill House is, as our readers are aware, of international importance as the finest example of Georgian Gothic architecture. As such it attracts visitors from far and wide as well as locally. The House is also of considerable importance to the local community and, along with Pope's Grotto, one of the two principal heritage assets in Strawberry Hill. Since the House was re-opened to the public very considerable efforts have been made by the House team to integrate the House and its offering into the local community. So far as SHRA is concerned we have a strong partnership with the House and every SHRA bulletin has a page dedicated to regular and upcoming events. These events include exhibitions, theatrical and musical events and historic talks. There is also the annual Summer Community BBQ and Picnic in the gardens of the House which is a joint venture between SHRA and the House.

David Gaimster, Executive Director of the House, reflects on a busy six months since his appointment, on some current successes and his strategy for the future of the House.

I am writing this note as I approach my first full 12 months as Executive Director at Strawberry Hill House & Garden. Having led large public sector cultural organisations in the UK and overseas, it has been a welcome change and a delight for me to lead an independent heritage charity like Strawberry Hill Trust, where I feel my experience can make a real difference to the economic and social sustainability of the charity. My first year has focused on creating the platform for future operational resilience and strategic development. Do take a look at our new strategic plan on our website

[Our Vision & Mission - Strawberry Hill House & Garden.](#)

In addition to our ticket and events revenue, fundraising from trusts, foundations and philanthropists and members of the public forms a critical part of our operational sustainability. Recently, we have had a number of successes with



our fundraising appeals, including for the **acquisition of the view of Horace Walpole's 'Little Gothic Castle'** painted by Johann Heinrich M $\ddot{u}$ ntz (1727–98), possibly in the autumn of 1755. That year, Walpole had invited the Swiss-German artist to capture on canvas Walpole's architectural masterpiece, which he had completed in 1753. However, it turns out that it wasn't really complete, because Walpole went on to expand it in later years. M $\ddot{u}$ ntz's picture, a view from the south-east, with the house sheltered by trees and 'theatrical shrubbery', records the original building before the Long Gallery and the Round Tower were added. To secure the painting, we launched a public appeal at Easter, which has seen donations come in not only from major donors but also from visitors and the wider public through a crowdfunding campaign. It shows how much interest there is in supporting the development of Strawberry Hill's collections. The picture will shortly form the centrepiece of a new visitor orientation room.

In parallel to the M $\ddot{u}$ ntz campaign, we have also launched an appeal to create a modern **replica of Horace Walpole's famous Strawberry Hill Shell Bench**, the arch rococo design of which caused a sensation in its 18th-century heyday. The timber replica of 2010 finally collapsed during the Winter and we are looking to create a new edition in a more sustainable material. Today, as opposed to fifteen years ago, new technologies are enabling us to commission a 3-D printed Shell Bench that is far truer to **the original Richard Bentley design**. The SHRA has supported the Shell Bench appeal by writing in support of our application to the Civic Pride Fund. Additional contributions are still being sought. Please see our website to find out how you can help us reach our target faster. [Shell Seat Appeal - Strawberry Hill House & Garden.](#)

To add to the good news on the M $\ddot{u}$ ntz painting, we are delighted to share with you that we have just been **awarded a £240,000 grant from the National Lottery Heritage Fund**. This major new award will help the Strawberry Hill Trust kick start work towards a fully reimagined visitor experience and help us continue our progress towards longer term economic sustainability. Highlights of the work funded by this grant include the much needed **structural repair to our Oriel window in the Round Room**, which is such an important architectural feature of the historic house, plus investment to transform our digital infrastructure and to build on the work we have already done to expand our learning and cultural programmes. **In partnership with St Mary's University**, we will also be able to pilot opportunities for young people to acquire heritage management skills, which are much needed in this sector. I am genuinely excited by these investments and will look forward to keeping our friends, supporters and local community updated.

I can't close without saying that by becoming a Member, you have an opportunity to learn more and become more closely involved in these developments [Membership - Strawberry Hill House & Garden.](#)

Strawberry Hill House Update

Summer at Strawberry Hill House & Garden

by Rosie White, Assistant Curator and Digital Marketing Manager

Summer brings a vibrant programme of open-air theatre, after-hours events and one of the UK's most anticipated floral celebrations to Strawberry Hill House & Garden. We have also just hosted the **Strawberry Hill Community BBQ and Picnic**. This is a joint venture between the House and the Strawberry Hill Residents' Association and was a great success with 350 attending.

The season began with outdoor theatre in the historic gardens. On **Saturday 4 July**, the acclaimed **HandleBards** returned with a wonderfully energetic production of **Shakespeare's As You Like It**. Travelling the country by bicycle with their entire set, props and costumes, the company is renowned for transforming Shakespeare into fast-paced, laugh-out-loud entertainment. Audiences are invited to bring a picnic, blanket or camping chair and enjoy an evening of comedy beneath the trees.

On **Thursday 23 July**, our popular **Strawberry Hill After Dark** series continued with A [History of Georgian Feasting](#), presented by historian **Dr Amy Boyington**. Following exclusive evening access to Horace Walpole's Gothic villa, guests explored the rituals, spectacle and social theatre of Georgian dining, discovering how lavish banquets became carefully orchestrated displays of wealth, status and power.

The Gothic spirit continues on **Thursday 30 July**, when **Moving Parts Theatre** returns following last month's sell-out performance with a new open-air adaptation of [Jane Austen's Northanger Abbey](#). Performed at the birthplace of Gothic literature, this witty production brings Austen's affectionate parody of haunted castles and Gothic fiction to life in the very setting that inspired the genre.



Music lovers can look forward to the welcome return of the [Pasadena Roof Orchestra](#) on **Sunday 30 August**. Set against the backdrop of Strawberry Hill House's beautiful gardens, the orchestra will perform an evening of classic music from the 1920s and 1930s. Visitors are welcome to bring picnics and enjoy a magical summer evening beneath the stars.

The highlight of the autumn programme is the [Strawberry Hill House Flower Festival](#), returning from **10–13 September**. For four spectacular days, more than thirty of Britain's leading floral designers will transform the Grade I listed house and gardens with breathtaking installations created exclusively from British-grown flowers using sustainable techniques. Co-curated by **Flowers at the House** and **Flowers on the Edge**, the festival celebrates creativity, craftsmanship and seasonal beauty while showcasing contemporary floral design within one of Britain's finest historic houses.

Visitors can also experience the **festival after dark on 11 and 12 September**, when candlelit interiors, dramatic lighting and immersive floral displays create an unforgettable evening atmosphere, complete with a complimentary glass of fizz in the Gallery.

For full details and tickets, visit www.strawberryhillhouse.org.uk.



St Mary's University News

St Mary's Announces Appointment of New Vice-Chancellor



St Mary's University, London has announced the appointment of **Dr Øystein Lund** as its new Vice-Chancellor following an extensive international recruitment process. Øystein brings with him extensive experience in higher education, diplomacy and ministry that will be a significant benefit to the University community.

He is currently **Counsellor for Research and Education at the Royal Norwegian Embassy in London**, where he has worked on UK-Norway cooperation in higher education, research, innovation and skills since 2022.

Øystein succeeds Professor Anthony McClaran who will be leaving the University at the end of the academic year, and he will be formally joining the University at the start of August.

Previously he held senior leadership roles at NOKUT, the **Norwegian Agency for Quality Assurance in Higher Education** from 2014-2022. He worked at MF Norwegian School of Theology, Religion and Society in Oslo from 1993 until 2014, initially as an associate professor before becoming **Director of Academic Affairs in 2004** and Dean of Studies and Deputy to the Rector in 2009.

Outside of his academic and diplomatic work, Øystein is a **Catholic priest in the Diocese of Oslo**. He was first ordained in the Church of Norway in 1994, before being received into full communion with the Catholic Church in 2009. He was ordained deacon in 2013 and priest in 2014.

Archbishop Richard Moth and St Mary's Chair of Governors, said, *"On behalf of the Board of Governors, I am delighted to welcome Rev Fr Dr Øystein Lund as our new Vice-Chancellor. His experience in academia, diplomacy, and leadership will be of enormous benefit to the university community. St Mary's University is at an exciting time in its development following many significant achievements under our outgoing Vice-Chancellor Professor Anthony McClaran, whom we wish well for all his future endeavours. The St Mary's Community came together last year to reflect on our 175th Anniversary and celebrate all that has been achieved so far by our remarkable university community. We now look ahead to important initiatives like the opening of the School of Medicine and the Dubai Campus, which will deepen our impact and broaden our global reach. I am confident that Øystein is the right person to lead the University into this next stage of our academic journey and I will be praying for his and the University's success."*

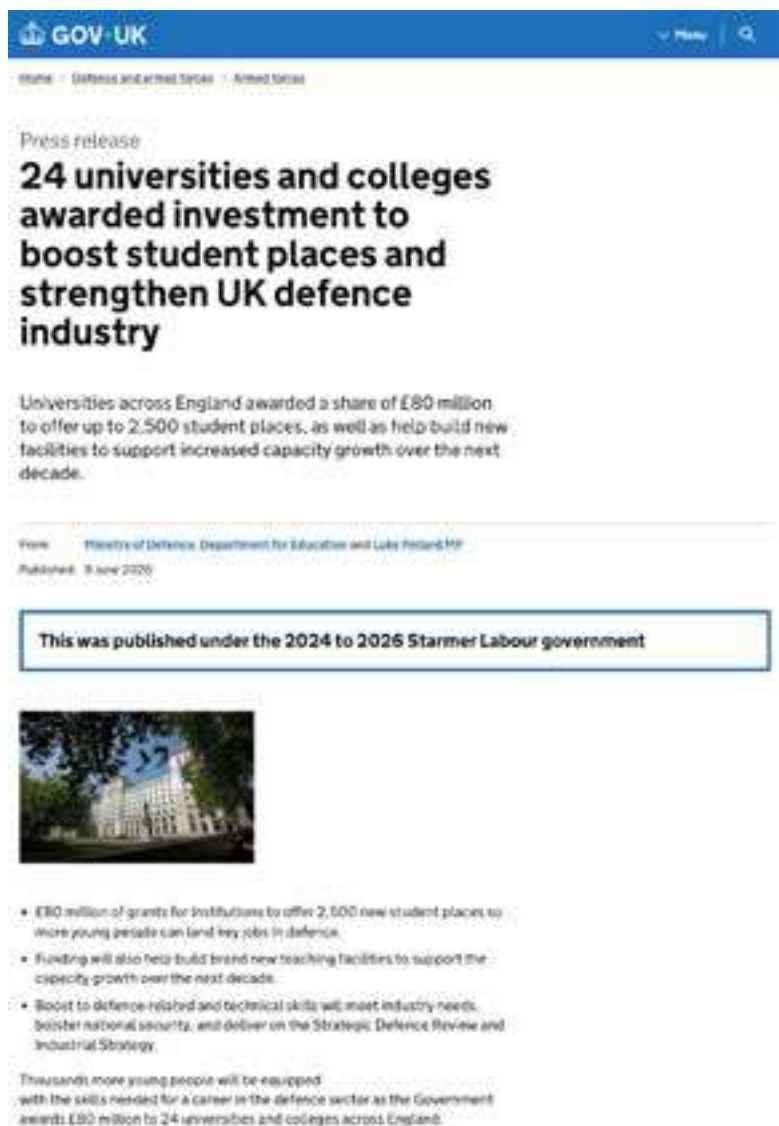
Speaking of his appointment, **Dr Øystein Lund** said, *"I am honoured to have been appointed to such an important role in Catholic higher education in the UK. What draws me most to St Mary's is its ability to combine academic excellence with a genuine commitment to human flourishing, rooted in the Church's long tradition of learning, scholarship and inquiry. Professor McClaran has overseen considerable success during his time as Vice-Chancellor, and I look forward to building on this in the future. I am eager to begin working with colleagues, students and partners to strengthen the University's impact and expand opportunities for future generations. I am excited to help shape the next chapter in St Mary's story, serving communities locally, nationally and internationally."*

St Mary's University News

St Mary's Awarded £1.2m Funding to Develop Defence Programmes

St Mary's University, London, is one of 24 universities awarded funding by the Office for Students and the Ministry of Defence to develop new academic programmes to support the development of the defence workforce in the UK.

The funding, which exceeds £1.2m, will support the University to develop specialist facilities and deliver an additional 60 student places between 2026 and 2029 on new and enhanced defence-focused programmes. This will see the University introduce new BSc Defence Systems, BEng Defence Systems Engineering, and Digital & Technology Solutions Professional Apprenticeship programmes, alongside an expansion of existing computing and engineering programmes.



The screenshot shows a GOV.UK press release page. The title is "24 universities and colleges awarded investment to boost student places and strengthen UK defence industry". The text states that universities across England have been awarded a share of £80 million to offer up to 2,500 student places and help build new facilities to support increased capacity growth over the next decade. It also mentions that this was published under the 2024 to 2026 Starmer Labour government. There is a small image of a building and a list of bullet points summarizing the funding details.

GOV.UK

Home / Defence and armed forces / Armed forces

Press release

24 universities and colleges awarded investment to boost student places and strengthen UK defence industry

Universities across England awarded a share of £80 million to offer up to 2,500 student places, as well as help build new facilities to support increased capacity growth over the next decade.

From: Ministry of Defence, Department for Education and Luke Holland MP
Published: 19 June 2025

This was published under the 2024 to 2026 Starmer Labour government



- £80 million of grants for institutions to offer 2,500 new student places, so more young people can land key jobs in defence.
- Funding will also help build brand new teaching facilities to support the capacity growth over the next decade.
- Boost to defence-related and technical skills will meet industry needs, bolster national security, and deliver on the Strategic Defence Review and Industrial Strategy.

Thousands more young people will be equipped with the skills needed for a career in the defence sector as the Government awards £80 million to 24 universities and colleges across England.

The University will use the funding to develop specialist facilities, including a new Cyber and Defence Simulation Laboratory, and to upgrade existing computing and engineering laboratories. These facilities will provide hands-on learning in cyber defence, embedded systems, robotics, AI-enabled systems, digital twins, and secure network environments.

The new facilities will enable students to develop practical skills aligned to defence and wider science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) industries, as they build expertise to support national priorities in cyber security, AI, secure digital infrastructure, autonomous systems, and advanced engineering.

Responding to the funding announcement, St Mary's Vice-Chancellor Professor Anthony McClaran said, "I am delighted that the University has been awarded this significant funding to develop these programmes, which are critical to the future resilience of defence infrastructure in the UK. Increasingly, the defence threats we face are digital, and we are proud to play our part in the development of the defence workforce of the future."

Speaking in the announcement, Minister for Skills Jacqui Smith said, "By expanding access to high-demand courses in the defence sector, we are creating new opportunities for learners across the country while helping employers access the skilled workforce they need. This is a clear example of education and industry working together to deliver growth, strengthen Britain's defence capability and support the jobs of the future."

The University will also establish a Defence Industry Advisory Board with defence and industry specialists to support curriculum design, mentoring, and applied projects.

St Mary's has a proud history of supporting the defence industry and is a signatory of the Armed Forces Covenant. Last year, as part of its 175th Anniversary celebrations, St Mary's launched the inaugural Remembrance Cup rugby fixtures with Royal Artillery, with the next fixture planned for later in the year.

History & Heritage

Bygone Strawberry Hill: A miscellany from the interwar years

by Peter Lamb

The internet with its search engines provides the historian with a huge resource for exploring the past. The British Newspaper Archive is one such. For my genealogical research some 40 years ago, I would often visit the massive collection housed in Colindale and plough laboriously through selected editions in the hope that they might contain some useful information about my ancestors. It was a frustrating process; blizzards of print, wearisome on the eyes, only the occasional reward of a snippet casting light on a previous life. Thankfully these visits to North London are no longer necessary. What a wonder it is now to have vast amounts of the archive on line! If I put keywords, such as "Strawberry Hill" into the British Newspaper Archive search engine, the trail begins, becoming more focused as I select dates and promising newspaper editions. As I write, the archive has 104,304,448 digitised pages, and ten of thousands are added every week. The Richmond and Twickenham Times and the Richmond Herald are just two that throw up all sorts of items relating to Strawberry Hill.

I decided to explore, somewhat randomly, Strawberry Hill in the interwar years, and I include here some findings that add to the picture of our neighbourhood nearly a century ago.

In 1927 the Sunday Express advertised newly built houses, I assume Orford Gardens. Page 85 of the recent edition of "Strawberry Hill; A History of the Neighbourhood" displays an advert with more details of these houses, but the one shown here highlights the opportunities for sport and education, a selling point then as it is today. One wonders whether the coloured brochure still exists anywhere. It would no doubt be a fascinating item for the current residents of Orford Gardens.

I was amused by the 1929 advertisement (see below) for bread and cake deliveries. The Twenties equivalent of Ocado? The depiction of the house on a hill somehow misses the point that we do not have a hill. Neither do we have any strawberry fields, but we can thank Horace Walpole for the charming name of our neighbourhood, somewhat disingenuous as it might be.

I remember the railway companies used to offer special day excursion trips to seaside resorts up until the Sixties. They do not seem to exist these days, but in the 1920s the Southern Region often ran trains off the normal schedule to take people on an outing for the day. These advertisements from 1929 show that it was possible to board a train in Strawberry Hill on certain days for outings to the seaside in places such as Brighton, Bognor and Portsmouth.



If you fancied a flutter on the horses at Epsom in 1929, cheap return tickets were on offer: 2 shillings and sixpence from Strawberry Hill third class; 4 shillings first class if you didn't want to mix with the hoi polloi.



Not everything was rosy on the railways in the 1920s. In January 1924 it was reported in the Herald that; *"The travelling public of Richmond and district had a most disagreeable surprise on Monday morning, when they found that the drivers of the electric trains on the Southern Railway had come out on strike"*. A strike by the steam locomotive drivers had been anticipated, but the electric trains were supposed to be running as normal. A reduced service with fewer carriages was available, but during the rush hours *"the coaches were crowded to the doors and many would be travellers were unable to find room in them The condition of things was very bad between six and eight, a time when many travellers by the District and North London lines change over to the Southern Railway in order to get on to the Kingston loop."* Strikes on the railway a hundred years ago; plus ça change...!

A letter appeared in the Richmond Herald on 27 December 1924 under the heading *"Unemployment and the Dole"* in which the correspondent complained about the lack of a porter at Strawberry Hill Station. *"An old man, who for years worked here as an outside porter, suddenly disappeared about four months ago, and since then we have been without a man."* It was pointed out there were no cabs or taxis attached to the station, so there would be plenty of work there. The letter found its way to the Richmond Labour Exchange but they were unable to find anyone to fill the post "owing to the uncertainty

of the remuneration, which carried with it fairly hard work, as compared with the certainty of the dole and no work." It was commented that the payment of dole for the unemployed was discouraging people from taking on casual work, who would then lose their state support. It was suggested that *there should be an amendment in the law "so as to enable the non-employed to accept casual labour without incurring a pecuniary sacrifice."* I have not yet discovered whether the station eventually had a porter again. We certainly don't have one now!

History & Heritage

Bygone Strawberry Hill: A miscellany from the interwar years

by Peter Lamb

In the social housing of the 1920s, gas appliances often carried a hire charge, as shown in a piece from the *Herald* in January 1922. It concerned the supply of 27 cooking stoves to the council houses in Tower Road and Riverview Gardens. In addition to rent, the tenants were being charged 6 pence a week for the hire of stoves and gas coppers where fitted. The council health committee required the company to reduce the hire charge to 4 pence a week, except where a gas copper was fitted. The copper was essentially a large metal tub used for heating large quantities of water for laundry. Clothes would be boiled with soap, then removed, rinsed, squeezed through a mangle and hung out to dry. It was a far cry from today where rented accommodation would almost certainly include cooking facilities, gas or electric, and a washing machine usually comes as a standard fixture.

Speeding Strawbs

It would appear that we had (and probably still have) a good number of people in a hurry in their motor cars. Here reported in the *Richmond Herald* are some of the bygone culprits who exceeded the 30mph speed limit.

June 1942: Dennis Norman Lever. 38-41 mph. Fined £1.10s

March 1942. Mrs Sonia Freeman. 45 mph. Fined £2

March 1938. Joseph Freeman. 40 mph. Fined £2

March 1936. Maurice Freeman. 45-50 mph. (previous conviction) Fined £4

June 1935. Sidney Lever. 38 mph. £2

I noted that all these felons were residents of Tower Road, and it would seem that the Freeman family were particularly prone to going heavy on the throttle. What would they make of today's 20 mph limit?

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EASTER SUNDAY.	TO BRIGHTON	EASTER MONDAY.
4/9	10.30 A.M. RICHMOND, ST. MARGARETS, TWICKENHAM, STRAWBERRY HILL, SUNBURY, HAMPTON, FULWELL.	1.00 A.M. 6/6 1.20 A.M. 6/6 1.40 A.M. 6/6 1.55 A.M. 6/6 2.10 A.M. 6/6

To PORTSMOUTH	EASTER MONDAY	To HYDE
5/3	From BARNES 10.30, MORTLAKE 10.40, RICHMOND 10.50, ST. MARGARETS 10.55, TWICKENHAM 10.55. See Handbill C.X. 933.	6/9

CHEAP DAY TICKETS to London and surrounding places of interest from local stations.
Get Handbills at Stations to-day.

RAILWAY

St Mary's University

Short Courses- Strawberry Hill Residents Welcome

By Sairah Ali, short courses administrator

At St Mary's University, we believe learning should be accessible, enjoyable, and enriching at every stage of life. We're delighted to share a selection of upcoming short courses designed to help you develop new skills, explore new interests, and connect with others in a welcoming and supportive environment.

As part of our commitment to the local community, **Strawberry Hill residents can enjoy a 10% discount on many of our short courses.**

Level 2 Certificate in Counselling Skills

Starting 7 October, our [Level 2 Certificate in Counselling Skills](#) offers an excellent introduction to the principles and practice of counselling.

Whether you're considering a future career in counselling, looking to strengthen your communication skills, or simply interested in understanding yourself and others more deeply, this course provides a solid foundation. You'll explore active listening, empathy, self-awareness, and professional boundaries while learning alongside others in a supportive and engaging setting.



Nutrition Courses

Our popular [Nutrition courses](#) began on 11 July and are ideal for anyone interested in improving their understanding of food, health, and wellbeing.

Led by experienced tutors, these courses explore the science behind nutrition and provide practical advice that can be applied to everyday life.

Whether you're looking to make positive changes to your own health, support family members, or develop your professional knowledge, our nutrition programmes offer valuable insights and evidence-based learning.



Summer Intensive Fitness Coaching Course, Starting July 2026

Kick-start your fitness career this summer with our [Level 2 Certificate in Fitness Coaching \(RQF\) Intensive Course](#). Delivered through a flexible blend of online learning and four practical workshop days on campus (14–17 July 2026, 9am–5pm), the course provides the knowledge, confidence and hands-on experience needed to begin working in the fitness industry. You'll learn from experienced tutors, train in our excellent fitness facilities, and gain an Active IQ-accredited qualification with a clear progression route to Level 3 Personal Training.



Join Us

Whether you're looking to gain a qualification, explore a new hobby, or invest in your personal and professional development, we would be delighted to welcome you to St Mary's University.

We're always keen to hear from our local community and would love to learn more about the courses and subjects that interest you.

Your feedback helps us shape future learning opportunities and ensure our short course programme continues to meet the needs of local residents.

If there's a course you'd like to see, or if you'd simply like to find out more about our current offerings, please get in touch. We'd be delighted to hear from you.

For our full course list, visit:

stmarys.ac.uk/short-courses

For further information, please contact the Short Courses team:

Naomi, Liz, Anna and Sairah

Email: shortcourses@stmarys.ac.uk

Call: 0208 240 4321

Local Business : Strawberry Hill Golf Club

**Matthew Prynne Dixon the General Manager at Strawberry Hill Golf Club
In Conversation with Fiona Maxwell**

Q. Matt, you are originally from South Africa, what prompted the move to the UK?

A. I had been working in sales and marketing for sports college Aspire Atlantic making use of my Bachelor of Science and Marketing degree. I then joined a start up that ultimately suffered from the onset of Covid 19. Having endured a tough three month lockdown in South Africa during Covid the UK seemed like an attractive option. My parents and brother were already here so I made the move.

Q. How does the local culture here in Strawberry Hill differ from that lifestyle?

A. I liked the anonymity of London when I first arrived and the dry British sense of humour. On moving to live in Strawberry Hill with my South African partner I was struck by the feeling of community.



Q. Has Golf always been a prominent part of your life?

A. I have played since I was five years old following in the footsteps of my big brother. I was part of the junior club in South Africa so golf was my childhood sport. On arrival in the UK I took a bar job at the Coombe Wood Golf Club in Kingston so I could indulge my passion for golf and earn a living. Then an office role opened up and I was appointed Marketing and Administration executive, enabling me to employ my marketing background.

Q. What do you feel your experiences bring to the club?

A. I spent over five years at Coombe Wood Golf Club and helped develop its business and expand the membership. I believe that experience and my business acumen is what I bring to the Strawberry Hill Club.

Q. Strawberry Hill Village is a tight knit community and this 9 hole golf course has a long history having celebrated it's 125th anniversary in 2025. Which traditions do you feel important to the identity of the club?

A. The traditions are very important and the history of the club must be honoured. It is very much the support of all the volunteers that help to keep the club running smoothly. Also important is the input of the members in how things are run such as which tournaments we put on. This is crucial to the continuity of the club.

Q. Conversely what do you see as outdated and how do you see the club developing in the future under your management?

A. I want to lose any connotations of golf being stuffy and exclusive. During my tenure I want to bring things up to date especially in equality between male and female members and less segregation. More of a one club solution with some mixed competitions rather than always a separation by gender.

Q. How do you see the club becoming more integrated into the local community? Do you have any events planned?

A. I really want to encourage Strawberry Hill residents to get involved with the club. There is a social membership available for £60.00 a year where residents can use the bar facilities and enjoy the sun terrace overlooking the Green. I want to integrate the club more into the community and to promote it as a venue hire for local events. There are a lot of non golf events run by the members such as fun runs, comedy nights, and murder mystery evenings. We put on a Summer Festival last year as part of the 125th anniversary festivities. We closed down the golf course for the day and hosted live music, food trucks and activities for the children such as a bouncy castle. People brought their own picnics and could try putting to see if they would like to learn golf. The plan is for this to be a regular community event.

Q. Do you have an ambition to bring more young players into the club and if so how would you appeal to them?

A. We do have a big junior section and definitely want to encourage more young members. We are adding to the practice area and will be hosting an academy pro golf junior competition in July.

Q. What connections does Strawberry Hill have with other 9 hole courses?

A. One thing is we are part of 'Southern 9 Networks' connecting golf clubs near the network of train tracks.

Thank you for sitting down to talk with me for the SHRA Bulletin Matt, I wish you much success with your plans for the club.

Advertising

Strawberry Hill Golf Club
Join our vibrant and welcoming club

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Enjoy the best of club life without needing to play golf

Social Membership includes access to our welcoming clubhouse, vibrant social events and excellent dining - all for **less than £100 a year**

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Membership Enquiries
For more information, contact Matt Davis Club Manager
on 020891 2255
or matt.davis@shgc.co.uk

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