

Challenge to solve school place issue

Education Secretary Nicky Morgan has challenged Twickenham residents to come up with a plan to deal with the growing demand for school places.

The cabinet minister in charge of education visited Waldegrave School on Thursday December 11 after watching the Women's Varsity Rugby Match at Twickenham stadium earlier in the day.

For the past two years there has been an ongoing discussion over the lack of secondary school provision in

the borough. There have been several proposals, and in August plans were announced to move Turing House School, in Teddington temporarily to Whitton.

But residents are concerned there will be reduced social cohesion and an increase in cross-borough commuting. An online petition against the Whitton location has attracted more than 1,800 signatures.

In response to the concerns over secondary school provisions the Education Secretary said: "If there is a local

demand then absolutely we want to see great schools where parents want them."

She added: "We've seen some innovative free school openings and applications across the country and I don't see why Twickenham should be any different and I'll wait for the proposal to come from the community."

The Secretary of State for Education joked that perhaps she should run an appeal in the Richmond and Twickenham Times to encourage residents to come forward with



Questions: Nicky Morgan, in black suit, with headteacher Philippa Nunn and pupils

the proposal. The comments were made after her trip to Waldegrave School where she watched students play rugby,

was treated to music and drama performances, and students and teachers put questions to her.

In brief

ADVICE SURGERY: London Assembly member and Hampton Wick Councillor Tony Arbour will hold his regular advice surgery on Saturday at Chiswick Library. The former Richmond Council leader will be on the first floor, opposite the reference library, between 10.30am and 11.30am. No appointment is required.

FUN RUNS: Almost 800 Princess Alice Hospice supporters dressed up as Father Christmas to fundraise for the charity's care and support services. The annual 5k Santa fun runs took place at Bushy Park and Richmond Park on November 29 and December 13. To watch the video, visit pah.org.uk/santafunrun.

JUDGE ANNOUNCED: A Barnes resident and University of Roehampton professor has been announced as a judge for the 2016 Man Booker Prize for Fiction. David Harsent is a poet and professor of creative writing, winning the renowned TS Eliot prize in January for his collection of poems, *Fire Songs*.

WINNING RECIPE: A Teddington School student was the runner-up in the national You're The Chef recipe competition. Rosie Swan, a year 9 student, received the second place prize for her berry sponge tart dish. The competition is run jointly by the Love British Food organisation and school catering firm Cucina Restaurants.

BAT CASH: Kew home-wares and gift business Creature Candy has donated £207.49 to the Bat Conservation Trust. It donates 10 per cent of all sales to British wildlife charities, including £357.26 in 2015. The money will contribute towards a hotline for people to call with concerns and questions about bats.

CREW SEARCH: A man is trying to track down relatives of the crew of the 1st Mortlake Sea Scouts whaler Wangle III, which was lost in August 1950. James Weeden is looking for the relatives of Bernard Bell, Kenneth Black, Maurice Percival and William Woods. Contact him on jweeden193@gmail.com or call 0208 883 6631.

VOLUNTEERS: Twickenham charity StreetInvest might have concluded its 12,000 orphans are not just for Christmas Sierra Leone appeal, but is appealing for more help in the weeks and months ahead. Team StreetInvest is currently looking for volunteers to help with their schools programme, TryCycle Twickenham and Join our Journey events. For more details visit streetinvest.org.

Traffic jams

Motorists have faced traffic chaos due to emergency gas repairs in Petersham Road, Ham.

Residents have reported journeys taking as long as 90 minutes between Richmond and Ham Common, with the 371 bus diverted.

Councillor Sarah Tippett said "I have tried to impress on National Grid what a huge impact the constant roadworks have on the community. Obviously safety is a priority, and many of the pipes are very old, but when traffic light operators work between 3pm-6pm and miss the bulk of the rush hour National Grid must take action.

"With further road works due at Easter, I will be meeting relevant parties."

Initiatives

Radnor House's annual Make a Difference Day was commended with an award for community initiative at the Independent Schools Awards.

Each September, staff and pupils take part in community-minded initiatives.

Rosie Gill, senior deputy, said: "This is an utterly fantastic achievement for the school and is a testament to the hard work put in by all the members of our community to Make a Difference Day."

Art auction for trust

Leading UK artists have donated works to support the Turner's House Trust restoration appeal.

They will be auctioned in a sale to include paintings, prints, ceramics and clocks at Dreweatts, Donnington Priory, near Newbury, on January 12.

Visit dreweatts.com for opening hours and details.

Drummer fell in Thames to an accidental death

Tom Ambrose

tom.ambrose@london.newsquest.co.uk

A Twickenham man drowned when he "tripped" and fell into the River Thames at Eel Pie Island after an evening drinking with friends.

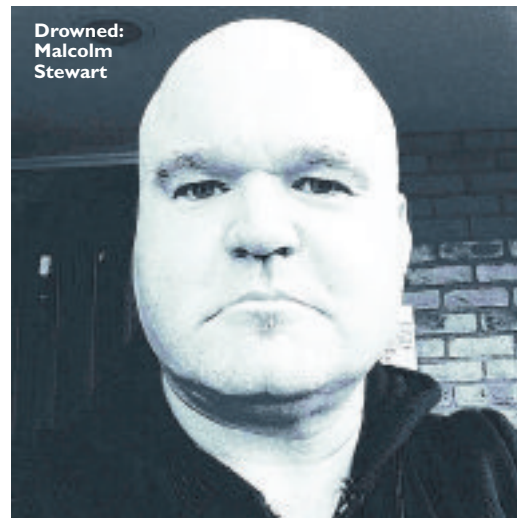
The body of Malcolm Stewart, who lived in London Road, was discovered, face down in the water, on May 22.

The 44-year-old drummer had been drinking with his friend Benjamin Gittins on another man's house boat on the island during the previous night, West London Coroner's Court heard.

Mr Gittins, guitarist in local band The Carnabys, told the inquest he met Mr Stewart in the Barmy Arms pub, on the riverside, before walking across to the island.

He said: "I had to come back to meet my girlfriend after work and we both left together, but at that point, because of time, I said I need to go ahead. He said he was fine so I went on - there was only another 30m until the bridge - and that was the last time I saw him."

Mr Gittins, who had known Mr Stewart for three years, said he had appeared "quite



Drowned: Malcolm Stewart

drunk" when he arrived at the Barmy Arms that evening.

He added that he believes Mr Stewart tripped and fell into the water while returning to collect documents left behind at the boat house.

Mr Gittins added: "The following day, I got a text from the man whose boat it was saying he had left some

important documents there.

"I know he had been at the job centre that day and my friend asked for Malcolm's number to get him to collect them. Having seen where Malcolm was found, I do believe he had gone back to get these [documents] and come a cropper."

Mr Stewart's body was discovered by island resident

Andrew McConnachie, who was routinely checking his boat's rudder, on May 22.

Sergeant Yvonne Saunderson, of the Metropolitan Police's marine unit, said it was likely Mr Stewart had "fallen into the water while negotiating a hazardous area while under the influence of alcohol". She added that police had recovered 52 bodies from the water in London this year.

A toxicology report found that Mr Stewart had recently taken cocaine and was more than twice over the drink driving limit at the time of his death.

Coroner Chinyere Inyama also said he was found to have had a "fatal range" of anti-depressants in his system.

He added that he was still trying to track down Mr Stewart's next of kin.

Mr Stewart was also suffering from an advanced heart disease and sudden collapse could have occurred at any time, the post-mortem report said.

Coroner Inyama said Mr Stewart had drowned as the result of an accident. Conclusion: accidental death.

Send in tributes and memories to tom.ambrose@london.newsquest.co.uk.

School to change name and move to new building

A Hampton school will be changing its name next year to coincide with a move to a new building.

From February 22 next year, Denmead School will become the Hampton Pre-Prep and Prep School, a move seen as a "natural progression" by the headteacher and governing board as it moves to a new site.

Pupils will be moving into their new building in Gloucester Road during the

spring term.

Denmead headteacher, Tim Smith, said: "Pupils and staff are very much looking forward to moving into our wonderful new building in the spring term.

"Denmead became part of The Hampton School Trust in 1999, since when its links with Hampton have grown ever closer. I look forward to continuing to build on our school's reputation for all-round excellence."

The school will have on-site playing fields and a games area, offering pupils what the school thinks will be a bright, welcoming and purpose-built learning environment and classrooms equipped with bespoke facilities.

Features include a green roof covered with alpine plants and a ground source heat pump, which will use the earth's energy to help heat the building in the

winter and keep it cool during the summer months.

Hampton chairman of governors, Nigel Spooner said: "This is an important development for the Hampton School Trust.

"The new name reflects the close, mutual relationship between the pre-prep and prep and the senior school.

"This was established more than 16 years ago and continues to prosper."