

Richmond & Twickenham **TIMES**

news

Pages 1 to 25



Rik Mayall death shock

page 9

Pages 28 to 31



Master of

Going back in time for special anniversary

World environment day saw science experts celebrate the 20th anniversary of a time capsule that was buried at Kew Gardens.

Lord Robert May, former president of the Royal Society and chief scientific adviser to the Government, joined emeritus Professor John Guillebaud and others on June 5 to celebrate the

time capsule project.

Professor Guillebaud, who buried the time capsule in 1994 as an address to future generations, said the project was an apology to people of 2044.

Sir David Attenborough, unable to attend due to a wildlife filming commitment in Spain, said: "I agree very much with your central

concept that many of the world's most grievous afflictions can be attributed to population growth: the unprecedented increase in numbers of one species – humans – whose environmental impact threatens the habitats and the very existence of nearly all others, in both the animal and vegetable kingdoms."



Captured in time: The spot where the capsule was buried

Petition to stop the Kew axe

Amy Dyduch

amy.dyduch@london.newsquest.co.uk

Almost 100,000 people signed a petition to save jobs at Kew Gardens put at risk by Government cuts.

It comes after Kew Gardens announced it faced a £5m shortfall that would see 125 jobs lost across Kew and Wakehurst Place, Sussex, in the coming year.

The petition was handed to David Cameron at 10 Downing Street this week by union representatives, Prospect union members at Kew and MPs Zac Goldsmith and John McDonnell.

Richmond Park MP Zac Goldsmith said: "It's not clear to me that Kew



Outside No 10: The petitions ready to be handed over to the Government

Gardens can sustain its extraordinary work with the level of cuts being imposed.

"Kew Gardens is a national jewel, and it would be a tragedy if its work and

reputation were to suffer as a result of excessive cuts."

Fears are growing for the work at Kew Gardens, which has already lost about 50 posts, due to plans to cut a

further 50 to 70 posts across the two centres.

GMB regional officer Paul Grafton said: "The Government needs to listen to the experts and restore Kew's funding to levels that will ensure the world's plant life remains protected now and for the future.

"Never before has Kew faced such a significant threat to its future."

The job cuts are in response to the loss in Government funding to Kew, which has fallen from 90 per cent in 1983 to below 40 per cent this year.

Speaking to the Richmond and Twickenham Times earlier this year Sir David Attenborough said Kew Gardens played an "absolutely crucial

role in looking after our botanical heritage and our botanical future".

He added: "The Government and the scientific departments should recognise that and support it properly."

A spokesman for Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew, said: "We are grateful for the incredible public affection shown for Kew from across the globe.

"We want to reassure our supporters, donors and partners that we have a plan in place to combat the deficit, and to put Kew on a firm footing for the future so that we can continue to make a vital contribution to plant science, conservation, education and horticulture."



Cuddly critters: Kuljit Dhami holding two guinea pigs TW85052