

ENFIELD DISPATCH

Nº. 29 THE BOROUGH'S FREE COMMUNITY NEWSPAPER

FEB 2021

NEWS

Council blamed over failure to stop office conversions into flats

P. 4

FEATURES

Campaigners seek to restore borough's Fairtrade status

P. 6

ARTS & CULTURE

New photography book tells people's lockdown stories

P. 13

SPORT

Enfield Town FC fans vote to cancel the season

P. 15



VOLUNTEERS FROM charity Hearts and Helpers, set up by Enfield resident Adrian White (pictured far right), have received 400 pairs of donated trainers to give to homeless and vulnerable people in London since the start of the pandemic. Adrian says: "Our dedicated team works for hours to help people get the best footwear, ensuring all donations are cleaned and in good condition. A pair of new shoes and socks can really make someone's day." Anyone with donations should email heartsandhelpers@hotmail.com to arrange for a collection.

Praise for hospital staff after pandemic hits new high

BY JAMES CRACKNELL

Staff at North Middlesex University Hospital have been praised for their "incredible" effort during a period when they've treated more coronavirus patients than at any time in the pandemic.

Speaking to the *Dispatch*, the boss of the NHS trust that runs North Mid admitted the second wave of Covid-19 had been bigger than feared but that they'd still been able to cope – even while being forced to divert ambulances to other hospitals.

Cases surged in December after the discovery of a more transmis-

sible variant of Covid-19 in Kent, which spread quickly across London – with Enfield borough itself among the worst-hit local areas for several weeks. By early January, a new peak in cases led to a record 322 coronavirus patients being cared for at North Mid, compared with 270 in April last year.

Mercifully, the mortality rate has been lower with 177 deaths between November and the end of January compared with 265 deaths recorded at the hospital between March and June. North Middlesex University Hospital NHS Trust chief executive Maria Kane told the *Dispatch*: "It has felt different to the first wave. We have had a

lower proportion of deaths even though we've had more patients.

"We understand more about the disease, using treatments such as dexamethasone and two or three other drugs which we didn't have last time and have really made a difference."

Maria said that the availability of personal protective equipment (PPE) was much improved and that there had been greater flexibility in the availability of both staff and critical care beds. At the busiest times, however, ambulances have been diverted to other hospitals.

"We were having upwards of 100 ambulances on some days. We were helped out by London Ambulance Service being able to

divert some patients to hospitals with spare capacity."

To date about 100 patients going through their recovery from coronavirus have been transferred from North Mid to "community wards" established by other health providers, including at Chase Farm Hospital in Enfield. Extra capacity was also provided at North Mid by repurposing wards such as paediatrics, with care for children provided instead at Great Ormond Street Hospital, as well the provision of a "modular ward".

Maria said: "We have coped, and that is a testament to both external

▶ CONTINUED ON PAGE 2

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Enfield Dispatch is the borough's free community newspaper. We publish monthly and distribute 10,000 free copies of each issue – and we will continue to do so during the ongoing public health crisis.

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Film studios to open at Meridian Water

BY JAMES CRACKNELL

Another studios complex is set to open in Enfield as the borough grows its reputation as a hub for the film industry.

Troubadour Theatres struck a deal with Enfield Council to build the new film and television studios at the local authority's £6billion Meridian Water development. The complex will be known as Troubadour Meridian Water Studios and will "assist with the economic regeneration of Edmonton and Enfield".

The new facility is said to be the largest studio complex inside the North Circular and is set to open later this year. It swiftly follows the opening last year of OMA Film Studios in Enfield Lock, which itself claims to be the largest such facility in London.

The council's deputy leader, Ian Barnes, is an Oscar-nominated film director and has boasted of his ambition to make the borough "a premier location for TV and film production in London".

Oliver Royds and Tristan Baker, joint chief executives of Troubadour Theatres, said: "Troubadour Theatres are enormously excited about coming to Enfield and working together with Enfield Council in opening Troubadour Meridian Water Studios.

"We strongly believe that this project will quickly become an integral part of the community in the heart of the council's regeneration plans."

Three purpose-built sound stages will be built as part of a first phase of works, with a further two stages planned after strategic infrastructure works are



The proposed film studios will feature three stages initially, opening later this year

completed on the 2.4-hectare site. A skills academy will be built on site so local residents can be trained how to work in the film and television industry. The initiative will also provide training and logistical support for the media sector. Troubadour is currently working with the council to create six work placements for 18–24-year-olds not currently in education, employment or training.

Oliver and Tristan added: "Troubadour Meridian Water Studios will not only attract world-class film and television productions to the area, but also the skills academy will have an immediate positive and demonstrable local impact in an area currently going through urban and cultural regeneration.

"We hope that these studios become a catalyst for employment within the borough."

The studios could create up to 450 permanent jobs once the facility is fully established. An esti-

mated 150 training opportunities are planned in the first four years, increasing to nearly 500 a year.

Council leader Nesil Caliskan said: "This is incredibly exciting news and means Enfield is poised to become one of the leading London boroughs for high-end television and film production.

"The delivery of [these] film studios is the boldest and most exciting project in Meridian Water to date. It would help transform Meridian Water into a destination by providing a major public theatre venue and help stimulate the economic regeneration of the borough through the training academy and a new media and arts hub.

"Not only that but the provision of a skills academy will give Edmonton's residents a way of entering the film and TV industry, raising aspirations and improving their employability. This is genuinely a game-changing development for Enfield and seriously good news for the people who live here."

▶ CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

colleagues and staff at North Mid. We were able to scale up quickly and make sure we had enough beds and we felt very heartened that we had done the preparation work.

"Staff were trained and felt more comfortable treating patients – they have been incredible, as have the wonderful community in Enfield in supporting their local hospital."

Vaccinations are now well underway, having commenced in December, and Maria said 3,000 out of the hospital trust's

3,500 staff had now received their first jab. While most vaccinations are taking place at GP surgeries, North Mid will itself be running its own vaccination hub from the Dugdale Centre in Enfield Town from the start of February.

Last month the *Dispatch* spoke to some elderly patients who had received their second vaccination, even though the government has advised GP surgeries to prioritise first doses. Enfield Over 50s Forum president Monty Meth, aged 94, got his second jab in January and said: "It is a hell of a job to get it out

across 42 surgeries in Enfield. In my view they are doing a great job."

At time of going to press at the end of January, just under 500 people from Enfield borough had died within 28 days of testing positive for Covid-19 since the start of the pandemic – one out of every 670 residents.

Among those lost is Malinda Disanayake, 51, an A&E doctor at North Mid who died at the hospital on 16th January. A JustGiving page set up in his memory has so far raised £17,000; donate at shorturl.at/bBJMX.

Councillor charged

An Enfield councillor has been charged with breaking Covid-19 lockdown restrictions.

William Coleshill, an independent councillor for Bush Hill Park, was arrested at Hyde Park in Westminster during the second national lockdown in November. A Metropolitan Police spokesperson said he was "charged with participating in a gathering in public outdoor place of more than two people".

Cllr Coleshill, of Nash Road in Edmonton, appeared at Westminster Magistrates' Court on 15th December, where he pleaded not guilty. He is next due to appear at the court on Tuesday 25th May.

The 26-year-old was elected in 2018 for the Conservatives, but became an independent member later that year.

High water

Rivers in Enfield recorded their highest water levels in many years following a long period of heavy rain.

Salmons Brook, Cuffley Brook and Turkey Brook all topped their banks on 14th January, and again on 28th January, flooding green spaces including Cheyne Walk Open Space, Whitewebbs Park and Forty Hall Estate. Enfield, Whitewebbs, and Bush Hill Park golf courses were also flooded. Although some back gardens and allotments were submerged, there were no reports of flooded properties.

For Turkey Brook, water levels were higher than they had been for seven years, while Salmons Brook recorded its highest level since February 2009. Salmons Brook has a history of flooding but was subject to a major flood alleviation scheme in 2016, when the Environment Agency spent £15.3million on a series of interventions, including new embankments at Cheyne Walk Open Space.

A council spokesperson said: "Several weeks of heavy and above average rainfall has led to many of Enfield's rivers reaching their highest levels for almost ten years.

"No properties were flooded during this time, which is a measure of the success of flood protection measures delivered by the council and Environment Agency in recent years, including the Salmons Brook Flood Alleviation Scheme. Floodplains including Cheyne Walk Open Space were submerged, but these help store water away from properties."

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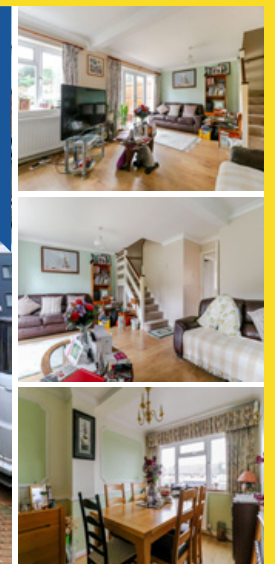


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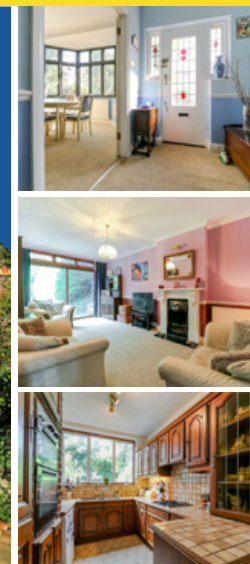


AN EXCEPTIONALLY WELL PRESENTED THREE BEDROOM FAMILY HOUSE – EPC C71
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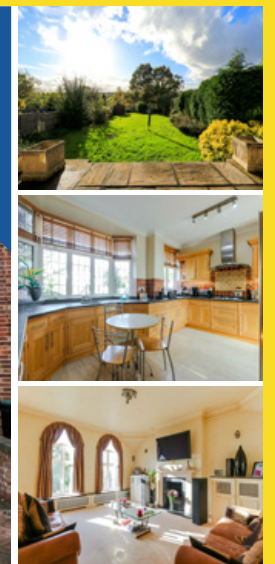


A SUBSTANTIAL FOUR BEDROOM DETACHED FAMILY HOUSE – EPC D57
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Council blamed over failure to stop office conversions

BY JAMES CRACKNELL

Office buildings are still being converted into blocks of flats under 'permitted development' rules despite Enfield Council previously pledging to ban such schemes.

A slew of new applications for office-to-residential conversions have been made in the past few months as property developers seek to take advantage of existing rules allowing them to create "rabbit hutch" flats without meeting minimum space standards – before this loophole is due to close in April.

The permitted development rules introduced by government in 2013 allow owners of offices to convert their buildings into new homes without submitting a full planning application. It has led, in some cases, to new homes that fail to meet the usual minimum standards for size and natural light.

Council leader Nesil Caliskan previously announced her intention to use an 'Article 4 direction' to remove permitted development rights for office-to-residential conversion – and the council had been set to consult on such a move last year. But because of other changes to 'use class' planning law, the council claims it is "no longer viable".

Several office conversions have been proposed since Cllr Caliskan made her original commitment in September 2019, including at Blackhorse Tower in Cockfosters, where 200 homes were authorised last November under



Offices at Refuge House in River Walk, Enfield Town, are being converted into 76 studio flats – some smaller than minimum space standards

permitted development rights. Other schemes in the pipeline include Ross House in Windmill Hill, where 24 flats are proposed, and Southgate Office Village, where 74 homes are now planned.

Matt Burn, from campaign group Better Homes for Enfield, told the *Dispatch*: "In April the rules are changing so they will need to meet minimum space standards. It means it will become less lucrative for developers, so now they are

rushing to get their schemes in before the deadline – that's what happened at Blackhorse Tower."

Pressure began to mount on the council to introduce an Article 4 direction in early 2019 when plans were unveiled to convert Refuge House, a five-storey office building just 150 metres away from Enfield Civic Centre, into 76 studio flats. After a protracted battle with the council, work began last year, with the smallest flat there just 22 square metres – well below the national space standard

of 37sqm. At Blackhorse Tower, the smallest flat will be 31sqm.

"These schemes are about as bad as planning gets," said Matt. "They are cramming people in. It's been going on for years. The council had a report done in February 2017 which said there was a big problem – it warned office space was shrinking because of permitted development and that an Article 4 was needed – but the council didn't do anything."

Many London councils have introduced Article 4 directions restricting office-to-residential conversions, including Barnet in 2019, and Better Homes for Enfield itself launched a petition two years ago calling on Enfield to make the same move.

Matt points out that the amount of office space lost to residential conversions in recent years is comparable to what the council is proposing to create at Meridian Water. He added: "There's been a lot of can-kicking going on. If the council had just got on with it, Refuge House wouldn't be being turned into tiny micro-flats."

The council has issued a statement on why its Article 4 direction had stalled. It said: "In Enfield, this [permitted development] has resulted in the loss of office space and inconsistent standards of accommodation.

"We commissioned research on the threat to the local area and started work to prepare a new Article 4 direction. Government changes to planning legislation which came into force from August 2020 mean the intended Article 4 is no longer viable.

"We are now investigating alternative options for this important issue for Enfield's communities."

The owners of Refuge House, Magic Living Ltd, did not respond to requests for comment.

Boost for cycling after £1.5m government grant

Enfield Council has won a second tranche of funding from the government to develop 'active travel' schemes during the pandemic – more than ten times larger than its award last year.

A grant of £1.55million from the Department for Transport is set to be spent on completing the last section of the Cycle Enfield A1010 scheme in Ponders End, as well as on a brand new cycle route between Ponders End and Enfield Town.

The last part of the grant from the government's Active Travel Fund will be spent on installing a 'bus gate' and other new features within the council's low-traffic neighbourhood currently being trialled in Bowes Park – itself funded using the council's previous £100,000 grant from the same fund last summer. Bus gates are designed to block all motor traffic except buses, and the council is proposing to put one in Brownlow Road.

The Active Travel Fund was launched in spring last year as a way to boost cycling and walking during the pandemic, with people being advised to avoid using public transport whenever possible.

"We will continue to make the borough a cleaner, greener, safer place for residents"

Deputy leader Ian Barnes said on Twitter: "Absolutely delighted that Enfield Council has been awarded over £1.5m from the government's emergency Active Travel Fund for further schemes to encourage walking and cycling across our borough, particularly in these socially-distanced Covid times.

"This is a huge vote of confidence from both the government and TfL [Transport for

London] in our low-traffic neighbourhood, school streets and Cycle Enfield schemes.

"We will continue to make the borough a cleaner, greener, safer place for residents."

The first tranche of funding awarded to the council last summer caused controversy when it came with an eight-week implementation deadline, leading the council to skip public consultation prior to installing the Bowes Park Quieter Neighbourhood scheme.

This time, DfT has ditched that time constraint. A council spokesperson said: "This is welcomed and will allow us to apply our normal process of engagement with the community before any implementation.

"The Bowes [Park] project will progress in conjunction with Haringey Council and their own low-traffic neighbourhood plans, along with TfL

"The council anticipates further funding from TfL at the start of the new financial year. This funding will be prioritised for



Cycleway 1 extends through most of Edmonton but has yet to be completed in Ponders End

the [newly proposed] Connaught Gardens Quieter Neighbourhood. Also, early community engagement on two new quieter neighbourhood projects in Upper Edmonton will begin later in the year."

For more information on the council's low-traffic neighbourhoods programme:
Visit letstalk.enfield.gov.uk/neighbourhoods



ENFIELD COMMUNITY HEROES

Sponsored by Edmonton Green Shopping Centre

Volunteer who helped transform local park

Carole Stanley led the revamp of a wildlife garden and organises regular litter picks



Carole Stanley organises litter picks around Bush Hill Park

BY OLIVIA DEVEREUX-EVANS

Carole Stanley has been co-chair of Friends of Bush Hill Park for four years and in that time has helped transform the park's previously rundown wildlife garden into a haven for nature.

Local residents have called the wildlife garden a "lifeline" for them during the coronavirus pandemic. The garden is one of four parts of the park the volunteers help maintain. It began as a neglected space which was often subject to vandalism but, after numerous meetings, the idea to transform the garden came to fruition.

There were volunteers with learning difficulties from the charity One-to-One, schoolchildren from George Spicer Primary School, and local residents who volunteered with the friends group. The pupils even drew pictures of what the area could look like.

Carole said: "At first I was just doing

voluntary gardening there and then I started to realise that there was nobody with a vision for it. The aim was to make it somewhere where people can have a bit of peace and quiet and somewhere children could learn a bit more about nature."

The garden is for everyone who wishes to use it. It features educational activities for parents and children to do together. Each section of the garden has a sign with information to read. It includes a bug hotel, ponds, and a seating area.

Carole said many people visiting the garden live in flats without outdoor space and have praised the wildlife garden as somewhere for them to enjoy nature. "It's a place to take the children – they are very grateful."

Volunteering sessions are paused during the current lockdown but will resume as soon as restrictions are lifted. The garden also relies on donations. Carole added: "We could always take

on more volunteers. Anybody who loves the park, we can find you a job that will suit your skills."

Enfield Council's new 'blue and green strategy' aims to make Enfield the greenest borough in London, but Carole said more help was needed in future. "We are hoping they will treat us a strategic partner. It is left to us to get on with it now [which is] a bit of a shame."

For more information about Bush Hill Park Wildlife Garden:

Facebook /groups/822661584539087

Visit friendsofbushhillpark.org.uk

Nominate your heroes

Dispatch readers are welcome to nominate their own 'Enfield Community Hero' – someone who you think has gone above and beyond to help support the local community. Simply email your nomination to EnfieldDispatch@socialspider.com

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Spreading the joy

Victoria Thompson wants Enfield schoolchildren to be inspired by positive news stories

Victoria with the latest edition of The Happy News



It's not often that we are inundated with positive news stories. In fact, the news is usually dominated with negativity, only offering a sprinkling of little uplifting gems here and there.

For young people, the last year has been particularly difficult, and we don't really yet know the impact this has had on their long-term mental health and wellbeing. In the UK, schools are once again closed to most students and have had to battle with the government, unions, worried and scared parents, teachers, not to mention the kids themselves, while staying positive and enthusiastic for the young people in their care.

Having previously worked in education for 14 years, as a secondary school teacher I know all too well how hard it is to stay positive so the students you are teaching are taught in an encouraging environment. Teachers and young people need all the help they can get and, although I've now left the teaching profession, I truly believe that our young are extremely important and hugely underrated.

At the beginning of last year, I

discovered a newspaper that celebrated "all that's good in the world" called *The Happy News*. Set up via a crowdfunded campaign in 2015, the paper is full of colourful and inspiring messages. It didn't take me long to sign up!

Unfortunately, for schools to get this amazing newspaper for free, two people need to be signed up for a subscription. It could be a great tool for them; I remember being desperate to share positive news stories in morning registrations, but found them hard to source. This newspaper could not only help teachers but also provide positivity for young people.

So, *Dispatch* readers, I am asking for your help! I would love to be able to raise money to purchase this "little bit of happiness" for each Enfield school library or learning resource centre, every quarter. I have now set up a fundraising page to achieve just this! Please have a look and donate as little or as much as you can and share with as many people as possible. I know this doesn't solve many schools' issues, especially financially, but generosity in small and many forms can have greater outcomes.

Support Victoria's fundraiser:

Visit gofundme.com/f/zj25j8-a-little-bit-of-happiness

Find out more about The Happy News:

Visit thehappynewspaper.com

Check out Victoria's debut children's picture book, 'Guess What I Found in the Playground':

Visit troubador.co.uk/bookshop/picture-books/guess-what-i-found-in-the-playground

Making Enfield Fairtrade again

Bill Linton on how Enfield Fairtrade Campaign is seeking to restore the borough's former status

The last week of February and the first week of March each year are designated as Fairtrade Fortnight, when communities across the country attempt to shine a spotlight on Fairtrade products.

Fairtrade goods are those for which a co-operative of poor farmers somewhere in the developing world have been paid a fair price; a price that permits the farmers and their families to live a dignified existence with at least the minimum of life's necessities, and for their community to begin to develop.

This year's Fairtrade Fortnight runs from Monday 22nd February until Sunday 7th March and the theme is 'choose the world you want'. That seems appropriate, as most of us want a world that is fair!

But how does Fairtrade work? For each commodity – such as tea, coffee or bananas – a Fairtrade price is set, sufficient for a diligent small farmer to make a decent living. The farmers get the market price or the Fairtrade price, whichever is higher. This frees farmers from the whims of the New York or London stock markets.



David Lowbridge from Fairtrade Foundation (left) presents a certificate declaring Enfield as a Fairtrade borough to then mayor Lee Chamberlain (right) in 2008 – the borough has since lost its official Fairtrade status (credit Keith Emmitt)

Additionally, there is a small premium for community development, which the whole community must decide democratically how to use – perhaps for a school or local health post. The whole process is minutely inspected to ensure there's no cheating either by farmers or by companies labelling produce as Fairtrade.

Garstang in Lancashire declared itself the world's first official Fairtrade town in April 2000, and the idea quickly caught on. Regu-

lated in the UK by the Fairtrade Foundation, which sets five tough criteria for a Fairtrade community to meet, there are now hundreds of such communities in the UK and worldwide.

The campaign to add Enfield to that number started in early 2005 and reached fruition in September 2008, when we were declared a Fairtrade borough. Enfield's success was mirrored by London's – the declaration of London as the world's largest Fairtrade city came just days before ours.

Since then the Enfield Fairtrade campaign has faltered and our accreditation has sadly been lost. But now we are back in business again with a dynamic steering group in charge and we will be particularly active during Fairtrade Fortnight – so look out for us and for the Fairtrade logo!

Fairtrade communities aren't confined to towns, cities and London boroughs. Your school or place of worship can be one too; the main thing is to make a point of including Fairtrade in your weekly shop, or when you buy a cup of coffee.

Get involved with Enfield Fairtrade Campaign:

Visit fairtradeenfield.btck.co.uk/news

Donate a cuppa

Lucy McGinn from The Nightingale Cancer Support Centre



Branded coffee mugs will be sent to the first 15 people who sign up to the campaign

Did you know that the average British person drinks 676 cups of coffee per year?

Many of us who are working from home and not making our usual morning commutes are saving as much as £300 a year on coffee alone. So why not donate the cost of one of those coffees to The Nightingale – and help beat Covid-19 loneliness?

For the price of just one take-away coffee per month we can provide a cancer patient and their family with counselling or a friendly chat to support them through their difficult cancer journey and deal with the mental health effects made worse by the pandemic.

Our head of clients services, Fiona Connell, says that since the start of the pandemic she's seen an increase in the number of clients needing one-to-one support. "Many are dealing with a cancer diagnosis and the mental health effects of long-term isolation caused by the pandemic," Fiona says.

"Over half of our clients have felt panic, despair and hopelessness about their situation in the last year and we want to change that."

Those undergoing cancer treatment are classed as extremely vulnerable to Covid-19. With more than half of our clients shielding since the start of lockdown nearly a year ago, we have seen the lasting mental health effects that self-isolating can have. To battle this, at The Nightingale we have regular telephone catch-ups with each and every one of our 300-plus clients – so they know we're always there for them.

We'll be sending our branded mug or travel bamboo coffee cup to the first 15 people who sign up to donate £5 per month. But no matter if you donate the cost of a short, tall, grande or venti coffee with us, all donations make a huge and drastic difference to the lives of those affected by cancer.

Support the 'share a coffee' campaign:

Visit nightingalesupport.org.uk/share-a-coffee

How past redevelopment shaped Edmonton's present

Neil Littman takes a look at how past development schemes have influenced the Edmonton of today



Much has already been written about the sharpening divide between the east and west of Enfield borough, but I want to focus specifically on Edmonton and the events that shaped it.

Enfield Council today is facing the same challenges that have been around for well over a century. These challenges were clearly spelled out by the Enfield Poverty and Inequality Commission, which published its findings one year ago and was covered by the *Dispatch* at the time.

Annual surveys of London boroughs show that Enfield compared favourably with neighbouring Barnet in 2015, but that the gap has since widened in three areas; employment, average weekly earnings, and home building. These are also the same issues that affected the way the borough developed and grew in its early days.

In 1850, the borough as we know it today was actually three separate districts; Enfield, Southgate and Edmonton. Despite the growth of the railways during the early Victorian period, Edmonton did

not benefit from a direct route into central London until 1872, when the lines from Liverpool Street were extended into this part of North London.

“It created a confusing, disharmonious urban jungle landscape that remains today”

Fore Street at that time still consisted of a mix of 18th and 19th Century terraced houses, interspersed with grand merchants' residences and their walled gardens. Things largely stayed this way until the 1950s, when the former Municipal Borough of Edmonton carried out a series of ambitious comprehensive development schemes and, within ten years, left little of the original dwellings.

In the 1960s the council built a number

tower blocks, centred mainly around Edmonton Green. But this investment also resulted in the obliteration of Edmonton's historic town centre, demolishing cottages with back gardens to make space for high-rise developments. These tower blocks brought with them a series of social issues and, combined with the new shopping parades, created a confusing, disharmonious urban jungle landscape that remains today. One of the few historic features that survived was The Crescent, in Hertford Road, and it now acts as a reminder of what Edmonton once was.

The Angel Road and Silver Street areas, meanwhile, also endured change at this time – the development of the North Circular led to slum clearances. One of the results was that the gentry that had lived in the area since it was a rural Middlesex village fled Edmonton and never came back.

In 1974, Edmonton Green was relaunched with optimistic fanfare, boasting “North London's newest and most exciting shopping centre”. But it was only two decades later, in 1995, when further mass demolition took place and the area was revamped yet again, this time drawing comments comparing the development to

Erich Honecker's East Berlin.

The solutions of the past, however well intentioned, quickly became the problems of the present. Redevelopment has stopped and started several times and the worry is that simply replacing tower blocks with new ones, even if they are more contemporary in design, does not resolve the issues of the 1960s and 70s.

Another major issue, still evident now, is the loss of identity for the borough of Edmonton. This has been an issue since 1965 when it became absorbed, together with Southgate, into the modern Enfield borough we know today. Although similar mergers were going on all over London, the later demolition of the historic Edmonton Town Hall building in 1989 – to be replaced by Asda – confirmed fears that the area would eventually lose its individuality.

Looking ahead, Enfield Council recently published a development plan for the next two years entitled *A Lifetime of Opportunities*. Leader Nesil Caliskan said it will launch “the most ambitious council-led house-building programme in the history of the borough”. Future plans commit the council to “directly deliver or acquire 3,500 new council-owned homes over the next ten years” as well as making new employment opportunities for young people.

The key to all these potential achievements is having the financial resources to implement them. While it is impossible to ignore the effects of the Covid-19 pandemic, and how its longer-lasting effects on the community could set back social change, hopefully the next budget from the council will reassure the residents of Edmonton that their future is a positive one.

— Advertisement —

LICENSING ACT 2003 Notice of Application for a New Premises Licence

Notice is hereby given that **Ledi Cafe Ltd** has applied to the Licensing Authority of London Borough of Enfield for a Variation of Premises Licence to permit:

Sale of alcohol

Monday to Friday, 08:00–22:30
Christmas Eve, 08:00–23:30
New Years Eve, 08:00–24:00

Provision of late night refreshment

Christmas Eve, 23:00–23:30
New Years Eve, 23:00–24:00

Playing of recorded music

Christmas Eve, 23:00–24:00
New Years Eve, 23:00–00:30 New Years Day

For the premises Ledi Cafe situated at 1 Savoy Parade Southbury Road Enfield EN1 1RT

The public register where applications are available to be viewed by members of the public can be accessed online by visiting <https://new.enfield.gov.uk/services/business-and-licensing/> and following the link to the Licensing Register. Email licensing@enfield.gov.uk to request a copy of the application within 28 days from the date of this notice. Any person wishing to submit relevant representations concerning this application must give notice by emailing licensing@enfield.gov.uk, giving in detail the grounds of the representation no later than: **19/02/2021**

Representations received by post will not be accepted during the Covid-19 emergency period.

The Council will not entertain representations where the writer requests that his identity remains anonymous. Copies of all representations will be included in the papers presented to the Licensing Authorities Sub Committee and will therefore pass into the public domain. Representations must relate to one or more of the four Licensing Objectives: the prevention of crime and disorder, public safety, the prevention of public nuisance and the protection of children from harm.

It is an offence, under section 158 of the Licensing Act 2003, to knowingly or recklessly make a false statement in connection with an application for a premises licence. A person guilty of an offence is liable on summary conviction to a fine not exceeding level five on the standard scale.

Dated: 22 January 2021

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Cllr Vince was elected to represent Highlands ward in 2014, having previously represented Grange since 1994

Hitting the Highlands

In our latest councillor's column, Highlands ward member Glynis Vince discusses the issues faced by residents and her hopes for ending the pandemic

I have been a councillor in Enfield for 26 years and during that time I have seen many changes – sadly, not all for the better.

Highlands ward is having more planning issues at the moment than I have seen for some considerable time, with controversial developments being submitted at Chase Farm Hospital, Windmill Hill and Royal Chace Hotel in The Ridgeway.

Residents are concerned about any developments being proposed on the Green Belt – such as the one previously mooted for the open space in Enfield Road – as well the high-rise development now planned for Enfield Town, which would take away from the character of the historic town centre. There is also concern from residents over a lack of planning enforcement action being taken by Enfield Council.

I and my two ward colleagues work closely with Western Enfield Residents' Association, which represents people living in Highlands ward, and I regularly attend CAPE meetings (Community Action Partnership in Enfield) with local residents and Met Police officers.

One of my main interests on the council is providing support for vulnerable children and for the last nine years I have sat on the fostering panel, which is one of the most worthwhile and satisfying roles I have ever had. Fostering makes so much difference to the young people involved and our excellent foster carers are doing an amazing job.

During the first lockdown, when the pandemic began last year, I spent a large amount of time calling residents who were shielding, as I was myself. It was very worthwhile. The local community and the council has come

together to work for the most vulnerable during this difficult time, and it is also good to see that the most at-risk groups of residents are now being vaccinated. Hopefully all adults will be offered their vaccine within a few months – it's important that when you are contacted by the NHS that you please make sure you take the vaccination.

This is our route out of the pandemic. There is now light at the end of the tunnel and, if everyone keeps to the rules of staying home and following the rules, Enfield and the country can get back to normal later this year.

Please take care of yourselves and continue to stay safe.

Glynis Vince is one of three councillors representing Highlands ward, along with Joanne Laban and Lee David-Sanders (all Conservative). Ward surgeries are not being held at the current time.

Call 020 8379 2589
Email cllr.glynis.vince@enfield.gov.uk

Send us your letters

Got an opinion on something in Enfield? We accept letters of up to 150 words from people and organisations in the borough. Email EnfieldDispatch@socialspider.com before the next deadline on Tuesday 16th February.

Strategic approach

Dear Enfield Dispatch

Andy Young writes opposing low-traffic neighbourhoods (LTNs) on behalf of the otherwise secretive 'One Community' group (*Divided*, Page 9, Issue 28). The "tokenistic schemes" being criticised span the UK, are government funded, and are increasing in number, while locally they reflect the implementation of London's transport strategy; an approach long since developed, in public, in answer to adverse strategic trends.

One Community suggest these schemes will hinder drivers such as the elderly, disabled, busy families and others going about their day-to-day business. It neglects to mention that one third of our borough's households have no access to a car, thus having always faced such matters.

In campaigning against forecasted short-term LTN impacts, rather than addressing underlying transport challenges, while ignoring a substantial portion of the borough's population, One Community risks being seen as no more than a self-serving segment, considering today at the expense of tomorrow, looking to embed a particular lifestyle choice irrespective of its implications.

Karl Brown
Palmers Green

Missed chances

Dear Enfield Dispatch

I read the recent article on Enfield Council's draft 'blue and green strategy' with great interest.

EnCaf (Enfield Climate Action Forum) is a local organisation of 100-plus affiliated community groups and took part in the consultation – you can read our response at encaf.org/working-groups. To summarise, overall the strategy is an important development which will drive our environmental infrastructure for a lifetime, so we welcome a great deal of the content. However, we have specific concerns about the lack of proposals to capitalise on our

farming heritage in Enfield; community involvement, exacerbated by a limited online consultation; and targeted interventions to address the identified health inequalities between east and west.

The working group that reported on EnCaf's behalf concluded that the strategy has strengths in providing for cycling, water and flood management, and climate-friendly transport. It's ambitious, with laudable goals and intentions. Nevertheless, the working group also felt that some of the benefits anticipated for the draft strategy were over-inflated and that the priorities identified do not fully address the recognised weaknesses and threats, particularly regarding the impact on health inequalities and carbon emissions.

We hope Enfield Council responds constructively.

Vicki Pite
Enfield Climate Action
Forum (EnCaf)

Cancel the cut

Dear Enfield Dispatch

I am calling on the government to urgently cancel their plans to slash Universal Credit by more than £1,000 per year in April – a move that would affect thousands of families in Enfield North. Under current government plans, 13,495 people in Enfield North who claim Universal Credit will see their income slashed by £20 a week as cuts come into effect in April.

Families across Enfield North have had to make so many sacrifices over the past year, and Universal Credit has been a crucial lifeline for many households. But instead of providing support for low-income families, Conservative MPs are instead choosing to push them further into hardship by cutting this lifeline by £20 a week.

It is unthinkable that the government is choosing to slash Universal Credit as this most critical point of the pandemic. I will continue to stand up for struggling families across Enfield North, and call on Boris Johnson and Rishi Sunak to cancel the cut.

Feryal Clark
Enfield North MP (Labour)

Tackling the wider impact of Covid-19

Monty Meth from Enfield Over 50s Forum on a new project to help address the fallout from the pandemic

The coronavirus pandemic is causing not only record death rates and pressure on our hospitals, but also unprecedented demands on Enfield GPs tackling the fallout from Covid-19 among older people – loneliness, depression, isolation, stress and anxiety.

I've spoken to one local GP about this, who told me: "In the third lockdown we are seeing more older people than ever before and having more and more mental health consultations, resulting from increased social isolation. Patients with a mix of financial problems and increased deprivation are of particular concern."

"We are also seeing elderly patients with significant digital isolation, not being able to contact their GP practices, the NHS and other services, and this is both causing and adding to their depression."

Fortunately, Enfield Over 50s Forum has recently won a £9,600 National Lottery grant to help

tackle loneliness and help bring people back into the community. The forum will be battling on three fronts to involve people aged 65 and over living alone; low-income pensioners over 75 without a free TV licence; and lastly people over 50 seeking help with their CV to find work, or anyone needing help in applying for Universal Credit.

We are hoping that *Dispatch* readers, with their special links in the community, will spread news of these initiatives so that people feel there is no need to be old and lonely in Enfield. Our membership secretary Jan Oliver, who applied for the lottery grant, is planning a unique public display of artistic items created at home by older isolated people around the themes of hope and despair. These can be poems, a song, painting or photograph, a video, woodwork, knitting, a cake, or anything else you can think of.

"It doesn't have to be a masterpiece," says Jan. "Hopefully this



special lockdown display will go on public view in June, or when the good times return."

To help combat loneliness, the forum will also launch a telephone friendship group, provide mobile phones to our most vulnerable members, enabling them to have safe contact while chatting with self-isolating friends.

Jan explains: "We shall ensure that those most at risk from isolation are involved – people living alone over the age of 65, black, Asian and minority ethnic com-

munity members, and we'll also be inviting residents from 24 Enfield care homes to participate."

The forum will be encouraging more low-income pensioners aged over 75 to apply for a free TV licence. Jan adds: "With 1.3 million pensioners aged over 75 still not applying for the pension credit entitlement to a free TV licence – at least 400 of them Enfield residents – the forum sees this as another campaign helping to reduce loneliness among older people."

When we applied for the lottery

grant, I wondered what the government was doing at a local level to help prevent this deterioration in people's health. There have been three ministers for loneliness since the first was appointed in April 2018 and the current post holder, Baroness Diana Barran, a former investment banker, has managed to find a trifling £5million to tackle loneliness since July 2019. It is being shared among nine organisations – one of them the wealthy English Football League.

So it is largely being left to voluntary sector organisations like Enfield Over 50s Forum to grapple with the mental health outcomes from coronavirus. In a separate project, forum volunteers and a professional job coach will be offering remote support to residents aged over 50 who are seeking employment.

For more information about any of the above projects:
Call 020 8807 2076 (Mon-Thurs, 10am-2pm)
Visit enfieldover50sforum.org.uk

2021 marks major milestone with construction starting on new recycling facilities in Edmonton

Find out more on the **North London Heat and Power Project** website at northlondonheatandpower.london

N NORTH LONDON WASTE AUTHORITY

north london **Heat and Power project**

The North London Waste Authority manages the waste produced by two million north London residents, including the London Borough of Enfield.

Construction is now under way on new, modern recycling facilities as part of the **North London Heat and Power Project**. The facilities will help boost recycling rates in north London and continue diverting waste from landfill. When completed they will bring new benefits to the community including:

- A **Reuse and Recycling Centre** where you'll be able to bring

household recycling direct to the EcoPark for the first time ever

- A **Resource Recovery Facility** with capacity to recycle 135,000 tonnes of materials every year
- A visitor and education centre called **EcoPark House**, where you will be able to learn more about waste management and recycling.

We are creating local apprenticeships and training opportunities, with eight Enfield residents already on apprentice programmes in the project.



Indicative image of Edmonton EcoPark from across the North Circular Road

Tube car park flats plan rejected

Mayor of London will have final say on Arnos Grove proposal



How the Arnos Grove development would look if built

BY SIMON ALLIN,
LOCAL DEMOCRACY REPORTER

A plan to build flats on the car parks at Arnos Grove Station has been resoundingly rejected in a setback for Transport for London's (TfL) housing programme.

Councillors threw out plans to build blocks up to seven storeys high at the Grade 2-listed station, following a planning committee debate last month that lasted nearly four hours.

Planning chiefs at Enfield Council had recommended the 162-home "build to rent" scheme for approval, claiming the proposals "align with relevant local, regional and national policy".

But the committee disagreed after hearing objections from residents, councillors and Conservative MP Theresa Villiers, who represents neighbouring Chipping Barnet and criticised the housing mix, impact on the station building, and loss of 292 parking spaces. Two petitions with more than 3,000 signatories were also submitted in objection to the scheme.

The decision is a setback for TfL's wider plans to develop several tube station car parks across suburban North London, including at Cockfosters, High Barnet and Finchley Central – all of which are larger schemes than the one rejected this week.

During the meeting, planning officer Allison De Marco said a survey showed 98.8% of car park users could use alternative modes of transport, as they lived close to bus routes and other railway stations, or within walking and cycling distance of Arnos Grove.

But although the plans included eleven parking bays for blue badge holders, oppo-

nents claimed they would have a negative impact on elderly people and those with mobility issues who do not own a blue badge.

Speaking at the meeting, Peter Gibbs, vice president of the Federation of Enfield Residents and Allied Associations, warned of the impact of losing the car parks on "mums with kids and buggies, shift workers, unsocial hour workers, health workers travelling with equipment, visually impaired persons, women, pregnant mums and so on".

He added: "Beyond that, there are tradesmen, commuters and key service workers – not just now, but in the future as well. It is a very large community, and they are all dismissed by this report."

The scheme was also criticised over the affordability of the planned homes. Although 39.5% were classed as 'affordable', opponents argued most of the flats would be out of reach of the majority of Enfield residents.

Southgate Green councillor Daniel Anderson, within whose ward the station sits, objected to the scheme as a ward councillor and told the committee only 19 units would be at London Living Rent levels, meaning less than 12% of the homes would be "genuinely affordable to local residents".

He added: "The other 45 affordable homes will only be affordable to those on annual incomes of between £50,000 and £60,000, and there are no homes at social rent levels."

TfL and its developer, Grainger, defended the scheme. Rebecca Crow, associate director at Grainger, said the flats would provide an option for "Enfield's growing population of renters".

Rebecca claimed 40% of the homes would be "genuinely affordable" and added: "Affordability has been considered alongside information on local household incomes

to ensure they are genuinely accessible to those on low and middle incomes, including key workers and local employees."

Lee Campbell, senior property development manager at TfL, refuted claims that building on the car parks would make Arnos Grove Station less accessible for those with extra mobility needs. He said:

"All TfL buses are accessible. TfL also offers help and support to those who most need it, through assisted travel programmes, its travelling mentoring services, door-to-door travel services, and its support for visually impaired travellers and those with hidden disabilities."

But the plans were sharply criticised by several committee members. Conservative member Maria Alexandrou claimed there was a lack of larger, family-sized units, with only 14 homes containing three bedrooms and the rest either one or two-bed flats. Labour's Hass Yusuf also said the fact that the affordable homes were situated all in the same block amounted to "segregation". Kate Anolue, another Labour member, said most Edmonton residents would be unable to afford the flats, meaning they were "not addressing the issues in our borough". And Derek Levy, who was substituting on the committee as a member of Community First, described it as the worst application he had ever voted on.

Eleven out of twelve committee members voted against planning officers' recommendations to approve permission, with only chairperson Sinan Boztas abstaining. All members then voted to refuse the scheme.

Because it is a major application, the plans have been referred to Mayor of London Sadiq Khan – who is also the chair of TfL – to decide whether to confirm or overturn the committee's decision.

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HM Government

NHS

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Tony Covid-19 patient

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Time to get political

The 'Asperger Artist' is releasing a new album inspired by the seismic global events of the last year



BY JAMES CRACKNELL

How can we try to make sense of the events of the last year, and the emotions that arise from them?

Patrick Samuel from Palmer's Green – also known as the 'Asperger Artist' – is both a painter and musician, known locally for his popular

exhibitions at the Dugdale Centre. But Patrick decided early on in the pandemic that music would be his primary focus, writing songs to deal with his frustrations of the seismic events going on around him, beyond his control.

Now, he is ready to launch his third full-length album, *Communion*. Patrick told the *Dispatch*: "With everything that was happening

last year, from the bushfires in Australia to the pandemic, Black Lives Matter and Trump, it created a lot of anxiety, anger and frustration, but I was able to put it all into my music.

"Up until then I was writing music about my autism and how trauma has affected me, but I started looking at everything going on globally and tried to put myself in other people's shoes, experiencing it from a different perspective and channelling that through my music."

Unlike Patrick's previous efforts, the album is overtly political, opening with the desperate cries of "I can't breathe" that rallied people against racist police violence last summer. He explains: "The album opens with a song about not being able to tolerate fascism, and that is a theme that continues all the way through."

"There is another song called *White America* which is a frightening title but it is saying things need to change and we can't go on like this."

"There is optimism sprinkled throughout, but there is a lot of heavy stuff all around it. There are a couple of ballads, including

a love song about falling for someone who you know tells lies.

"There is an irony to the album as well. It is called *Communion* because the dictionary definition of the word is 'communicating intimate thoughts and ideas' – but with the lockdown, being able to commune with others is something quite difficult to do."

As well as a creative outlet, Patrick uses both painting and music to manage his mental health and cope with his emotions. "When I am frustrated I write, I record, or I paint. I felt with the last album I said enough about my autism and this time I wanted to tackle these other ideas."

"I felt it was the best way to deal with it, rather than going online, on social media, where people go around in circles arguing with each other."

Being cooped up indoors for most of the last year also gave Patrick plenty of time to get creative with making music videos in his own home, with the help of close friend Uwe Nietzold. These are now being uploaded to YouTube.

Written and performed by Patrick, and produced by Uwe, *Communion* is being released on Friday 5th February via Tiergarten Records, a label run by and for neuro-diverse artists.

Order a copy of 'Communion' and check out Patrick's music videos:

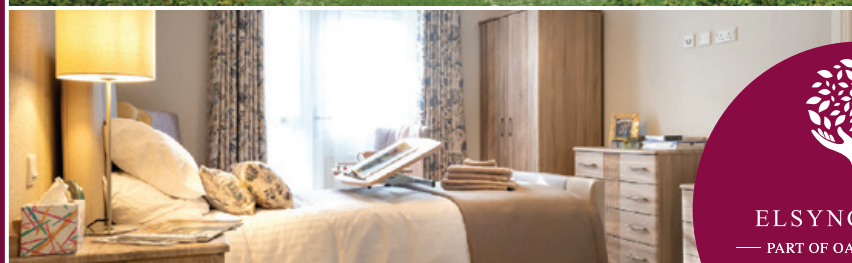
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Portraits from a pandemic

A new photography book tells the stories of people from across Enfield as they live through lockdown



Elli and Theodore from Grange Park are among scores of families photographed by Katrina Campbell and featured in her new book, 'When We All Stayed At Home'

BY JAMES CRACKNELL

While we are enduring a third national lockdown, it's an apposite time to reflect and think back to how we were feeling in March 2020 when the pandemic first closed in around us.

There was a strong sense of togeth-

erness and community spirit, with neighbours reaching out to support vulnerable people, everyone taking part in the 'clap for carers' on Thursday nights, and the idea of staying at home for nearly 24 hours a day was still a novel concept.

Like many others, portrait photographer Katrina Campbell suddenly found herself out of work, and was

looking for other things with which to occupy her time. She decided to try and capture the collective mood of her local neighbourhood of Grange Park, and began photographing people on their own doorsteps, capturing little snippets of personal stories as she went along.

It began with Katrina's own street, in the first week of the first

lockdown, but soon she found herself hopping on her bike to meet people in Winchmore Hill, Palmers Green, Southgate and other parts of Enfield borough. The images and the accompanying stories were shared on Instagram at first, before the opportunity arose to put them all together in a book, *When We All Stayed At Home*.

"I was struck by the many and varied stories from all the people I spoke to"

"The idea came to me right at the start of lockdown," Katrina explains. "I was struck by the many and varied stories from all the people I spoke to.

"Not only was a deadly virus overwhelming the country, it was apparent that behind every front door, there were so many everyday lives unravelling; postponed exams, delayed medical treatment, children struggling to study at home, loss of income, to name a few.

"Yet at the same time there was a heightened sense of connection, people were talking more, sharing

their worries, reaching out to help each other. Personally I felt bereft at not being able to work, and wanted to capture this unusual time – the challenging circumstances everyone faced, as well as the buoyant mood and sense of community."

The range of people Katrina met during this project were incredibly diverse. There was a furloughed taxi driver, a family of Iranian refugees, a yoga teacher using Zoom to run classes, an architect working from home, a vicar of a local church, a nurse from North Middlesex Hospital, foodbank volunteers, people who were sewing NHS gowns, and families who had lost loved ones, to name a few.

Katrina adds: "In the first couple of months there was a real sense of togetherness, of a shared experience. I asked local people if they would let me photograph and interview them and was surprised by the huge response, especially by people's willingness to share how they were really feeling.

"The need to hear about other people's experiences and share their own stories was clearly very important."

'When We All Stayed At Home' is self-published and can be bought online:

Visit katrinacampbell.co.uk/galleries/when-we-all-stayed-at-home

Singer songwriter's debut single

An Enfield singer has released her debut single, *Some Days*.

Caitriona Burke is a former George Spicer Primary School and St Anne's and Woodhouse College pupil who has spent the last few years running Crouch End Studios. But after watching countless other artists recording and releasing music and curating a music blog, Caitriona is finally ready to release her own music.

"I actually wrote the chorus to this one quite a few years ago while in sixth form college," said Caitriona. "I had a bit of a stumble right before that in my personal life, and after a bit of soul-searching I realised that I need to learn to give myself permission to take time out for myself.

"I guess the song is a take on the 'it's okay not to be okay' slogan, but with an underlying, hopeful message that it's better to be getting better."

Caitriona's style is compared to Kate Bush, Lisa Loeb and Taylor Swift, among many others, and she is described as having "gentle, melancholic vocals with narrative, emotive lyrics".

All proceeds from Caitriona's single are going to Beder, a mental health charity that she says is "close to my heart".

Check out Caitriona's music and listen to 'Some Days':
Instagram @caitrionamusic Visit caitrionamusic.com

"The song has an underlying, hopeful message"



Caitriona is a former St Anne's and Woodhouse College pupil

AROUND THE BOROUGH

GORDON HILL

Justice for James

TWO TEENAGERS HAVE BEEN jailed over the violent death of James Amadu in October 2019 – one for murder and another for manslaughter.

Nineteen-year-old Romeo Mapeza, of Watermill Lane in Edmonton, was found guilty of murder, violent disorder and possession of an offensive weapon in his trial last year and was sentenced at the Old Bailey last month. He received life imprisonment with a minimum term of 20 years.

Another teenager, a boy from Enfield aged 16, was found guilty of manslaughter and violent disorder and has been sentenced to five

years' imprisonment. The youth cannot be named for legal reasons.

During the case in October last year, the court heard how James had been stabbed by Mapeza following a confrontation near a block of flats in Blossom Lane. Police had been called just after 1pm on 31st October 2019 to reports of a stabbing but did not find any victim when they arrived. A short time later, James arrived by himself at a local hospital, but died at 2.21pm from a single stab wound.

Officers were able to determine that Mapeza had stabbed James following a “shocking and fast paced” violent dispute between

different groups. He was arrested on 1st November 2019 and charged with murder.

James was a father of a young daughter and had recently launched a clothing business at the time of his death. Detective Chief Inspector Laurence Smith said: “This was a piece of appalling violence on a quiet Thursday afternoon that brought terror to local residents.

“The participants didn’t care who was nearby and sadly this shocking violence led to the death of James Amadu.

“I would like to thank those who came forward to assist the police in this investigation.”



Murdered dad James Amadu pictured with his young daughter

BULLSMOOR

Motorway junction upgrade

WORK HAS STARTED ON AN “essential” major upgrade of junction 25 of the M25 – in an effort to cut congestion at the notorious traffic hotspot.

Several parts of the junction will be widened and reconfigured, including slip roads, while new crossings for cyclists and pedestrians will also be built. The work is estimated to

cost between £25million and £50m and is due to finish in summer 2022.

During construction, motorists are being urged to avoid the junction whenever possible. Highways England project manager Indy Grewal said: “Improving this junction will mean better journeys for the 6,300 drivers who use it every hour at peak times; it will

also increase capacity and help to boost the economy.”

Research by Highways England showed that if improvements to the junction weren’t carried out, by 2037 journey times could be doubled and average speeds reduced by up to 30%.

For more information:
Visit highwaysengland.co.uk/m25j25

NEW SOUTHGATE

New supermarket

BY SIMON ALLIN, LOCAL DEMOCRACY REPORTER

ALDI HAS BEEN GRANTED permission to open a new supermarket on the site of a former DIY store.

Councillors approved the discount retailer’s plans to convert the former Homebase in Station Road into two separate premises. Aldi will move into one of the units, while the other will become a B&M Home Store outlet.

The application was given a warm welcome by local councillors on Enfield Council’s

planning committee. Councillor Anne Brown said: “There is no similar facility within easy reach of the site, and the range of products to be offered would be very welcome to local residents – in many cases, it will avoid the need for lengthy journeys by car or public transport to obtain day-to-day items.”

The plans were unanimously approved on a temporary basis, as the site is part of an area expected to undergo large-scale residential development in five years time.

ENFIELD TOWN

Park award

BY OLIVIA DEVEREUX-EVANS

ENFIELD TOWN PARK’S NEW wetland scheme has scooped a prestigious award.

Enfield Council’s work on rejuvenating the park won it the 2020 Street Design Award for Urban Green Space from news website LocalGov, which commends “innovation and effective approaches to local borough renewal schemes”.

The council connected Enfield Town Park’s 1930s boating lake to a new flood storage area. A LocalGov spokesperson said: “Our judges were overwhelmed by the quality of the scheme and awarded it the highest possible score for sustainability, achieving its original objectives and use of materials. It also scored highly for design quality, environmental impact and value for money.”

BOTANY BAY

Woodland boost

A PROJECT TO PLANT 100,000 trees has been granted more than half-a-million pounds as one of the first environmental schemes chosen to benefit from a new government fund.

Enfield Chase Restoration Project, run jointly by charity Thames 21 and Enfield Council, is receiving £679,000 from the Green Recovery Challenge Fund, which has set aside £80m for ecological investment around the UK.

The project launched last year with a tree-planting event near Botany Bay Farm and aims

to plant 100,000 trees over a stretch of council-owned land beside Salmons Brook. The money from the Green Recovery Challenge Fund will also contribute to at least 20 small ponds and wetlands to improve wildlife habitats and reduce flooding, while the council’s public health team will offer “nature prescribing” to deliver health and social benefits.

Thames21 boss Debbie Leach said: “We’re inspired by the scale and ambition of this partnership initiative with Enfield Council.”

Into the null and void

Andrew Warshaw on why Enfield Town are backing another curtailed season

Enfield Town FC's members have voted overwhelmingly to accept a board recommendation to declare the season 'null and void'.

The vote came in response to a questionnaire from the Isthmian League, with club chair Paul Reed warning of the financial consequences of trying to play on without fans through the turnstiles or any secondary income such as bar sales.

Since the start of the second national lockdown back in November, the Towners have been able to fulfil just one solitary fixture – the fateful FA Trophy defeat against Maldon & Tiptree in December – with a number of Town players instead moving a division higher to play in the second step of the non-league pyramid, where games are still permitted.

Enfield were third in the Isthmian Premier Division when the league campaign ground to a halt in November and, although the option of a mini-season starting in March was still on the table at time of going to press, the more likely outcome remains a second successive voided campaign. It has left the club's board feeling frustrated, disappointed and realistic in equal measure.

Paul told a well-attended virtual AGM last



month: "No-one wants to watch games more than I do, but this is the situation we find ourselves in as a board. It's not a position any of us want to be in."

"We have to balance the short-term desire of all of us to play football versus the longer-term financial stability. Trying to play now and force the issue with not as much income means we run the risk of not having sufficient funds to put together a competitive side next season."

"If we were forced to play within a condensed

period, we could minimise losses by further cutting the budget next season, but that could potentially mean failing to compete in the way we would like."

Paul's comments drew widespread support from those attending the meeting via Zoom, with 94% backing the decision to bring an early end to the season.

Paul continued: "We've had to face a whole new world of operations and finances that we didn't even know existed 12 months ago. We have seen our secondary income heavily reduced."

"There has been no clarity on government funding to step three clubs [such as Enfield Town]. We believe the vast majority of the money talked about will come in the form of loans, so whatever we can take we'd have to pay back."

"There are no assurances of promotion and relegation either, so what would we be playing for?"

On a brighter note, Paul praised fans for their generosity and understanding during the toughest period in the club's recent history.

"By far the biggest positive of the last 12 months has been our people; the financial support from our members, the work from our volunteers, in really trying conditions."

The meeting also saw the election to the board of this correspondent, as a numerical replacement for the outgoing Ken Brazier, who received a well-deserved accolade for his tireless dedication over the past seven years.

As a passionate fan, I decided to put my own name forward in order to help maintain the club's standing in the community, widen its appeal as the country's first supporter-owned club, and enhance its exposure on and off the field – in whatever way I can.

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