

ENFIELD DISPATCH

Nº. 31 THE BOROUGH'S FREE COMMUNITY NEWSPAPER

APRIL 2021

FEATURES

Bid to create 'green chain' link in Palmers Green

P. 5

NEWS

Anger as council set to keep low-cost golf course closed

P. 6

HEALTH

Local GP speaks to the Dispatch about the 'success' of Enfield's vaccine roll-out

P. 14



PUBLIC ARTWORK aimed at encouraging people to be kinder and to "care for their community" has been unveiled at the entrance to Edmonton Green Shopping Centre. The mural was designed by local artist Kareen Cox (pictured), who said: "I often ask on social media, can you be someone's rainbow today? I want to encourage people to think about how their actions can have a positive impact on others."

Chaos as councillors quit and 'no confidence' motion tabled

Three council by-elections to take place in May for Chase, Jubilee and Southbury wards

BY JAMES CRACKNELL

Political turmoil has engulfed Enfield Council on the eve of a series of by-elections – with a fifth councillor defecting from Labour and a second quitting the civic centre entirely.

Shortly before the council's annual budget meeting last month, Southgate Green councillor Anne Brown announced she had resigned from Labour to join breakaway group Community First, following a row over an increase to allowances for senior councillors. Within hours it was

also confirmed that Bernadette Lappage, a former mayor of the borough, was standing down as a councillor.

The twin announcements bring the total number of defections and resignations by Labour councillors over the last year to seven, with all but one citing their displeasure with the current leadership as key factors in their decisions to quit. The seventh – Bernadette – has not publicly stated her reason for leaving.

The political chaos at the civic centre escalated further in March when the opposition Conservative group tabled a motion of 'no confi-

dence' in the Labour-run administration. In what amounted to a bid to regain control of the council, Tory councillor Edward Smith said the turmoil within Labour had "reached a crisis point".

But a row then blew up over a decision to schedule an extraordinary council meeting to debate the 'no confidence' motion on a Friday night during the Jewish Sabbath, preventing two Jewish members – both disaffected ex-Labour councillors who are now members of Community First – from taking part.

The London Jewish Forum wrote a letter to the council leader urging her to rearrange the meeting.

It was subsequently postponed, just hours before it was due to take place, when the Conservative group withdrew its motion.

Strict election rules prevent party political debate in the council chamber in the six weeks prior to an election, so the potentially pivotal council meeting will now take place on Wednesday 9th June. It means the three by-elections in May could influence the future leadership of the council.

Both the Conservatives and Labour blamed each other over the controversy of the previously

▶ CONTINUED ON PAGE 2



enfielddispatch.co.uk



enfielddispatch@socialspider.com



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



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



[/EnfieldDispatch](https://www.facebook.com/EnfieldDispatch)

Sales & Lettings Agents

e

C

Chamberlains

020 8366 3551

The Dispatch is supported by Chamberlains Estates – turn to page 3

ED.

Nº.31
APR 2021

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.

Publisher
David Floyd

Editor
James Cracknell

Designer
Jonathan Duncan

Head of Advertising
Klaudia Kiss

Head of Operations
Paige Ballmi

Engagement Manager
Penny Dampier

Contributors
Simon Allin, Olivia Devereux-Evans, Lea Gibson, Lubna Reid, Jim Cante, Dăna Burstow, Doug Taylor, Andrew Warshaw, Suzanne Kelly, Claire Fisher, Gary Boudier, Marc Bear

CONTACT

Call 020 8521 7956
Email EnfieldDispatch@socialspider.com

ADVERTISING

Contact Klaudia Kiss:
Call 07732 000 430
Email klaudia@socialspider.com



Defected: Anne Brown

► CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

scheduled Friday-night meeting, with Tory group leader Joanne Laban alleging that the mayor of Enfield, whose job is to chair full council meetings, had “sat on our request for seven days” – resulting in the Friday scheduling.

A council spokesperson refuted any suggestion that the usual procedures on scheduling meetings had not been followed. Council leader Nesil Caliskan said: “It had been in the Conservative group’s hands for a number of days while Labour and others tried to convince them to drop their political stunt and put residents first.”

The council’s Labour group has been beset by turmoil ever since Cllr Caliskan’s unexpected deposition of former leader Doug Taylor in May 2018, two weeks after that year’s election. A rebuke from Labour’s National Executive Committee (NEC) followed in 2019, amid complaints over the way the group’s selection process for the 2018 election had been run, after which half the members of the cabinet left their posts.

Community First was subsequently established by former Labour councillors Derek Levy and Dinah Barry, and their ranks doubled shortly after when Dino Lemonides and Daniel Anderson joined them in August 2020.

Cllr Brown last month became the fifth ex-Labour member to join Community First. In her resignation letter to the Labour Party, seen by the *Dispatch*, she raised the national direction of Labour as a factor in her decision, claiming former leader Jeremy Corbyn had been “maliciously and systematically demonised”.

But she also raised local issues, writing that she had “grave concerns” over “a lack of regard for

the proper processes of scrutiny” within Enfield’s Labour group, echoing concerns previously raised by her colleagues in Community First.

Cllr Brown had been suspended by the Labour group last year for refusing to vote in favour of a rise in allowances for senior councillors, which she said was a “matter of conscience” for her at a time when council finances were under strain.

When the same issue arose again this year in advance of the council’s budget debate, Cllr Brown made the decision to leave Labour altogether. Talking to the *Dispatch* about what happened, she said: “The main thing is I can’t do my job as a councillor, because of the obstacles put in the way.

“Decisions are being taken while the mechanisms that are there to hold them [the leadership] accountable are being ignored. Council officers seem to be uncomfortable giving information to people who are not on this sort of ‘approved list’.

“I assumed when I became a councillor there would be meetings where things are openly discussed and it wasn’t just a case of which side you are on.

“There is a frustration at not being involved and not being able to speak openly without being accused of being a traitor”

“There is a frustration at not being involved and not being able to speak openly without being accused of being a traitor.”

The row over allowances for senior councillors continued at last month’s budget meeting. Community First proposed cancelling a £36,000-a-year increase in total allowances and a £46,000-a-year cabinet support officer role, but Labour rejected the move.



Council leader Nesil Caliskan



Resigned: Bernadette Lappage

During the discussion, Cllr Caliskan accused Community First of being “a collection of misfit councillors who are exposing themselves to be pretty right-wing” and defended the increase to allowances, adding: “Unless we want councillors to only be those who are retired and those who are very wealthy, it is utterly ridiculous to suggest councillors should not receive an allowance – including a special responsibility allowance.”

Cllr Brown, who describes herself as a “Corbynista”, dismissed the leader’s “right-wing” accusation and told the *Dispatch* she was joining Community First because “they are people I know and respect and I am pleased to be working with them”.

Bernadette Lappage, who represented Jubilee ward in Edmonton, became the seventh Labour

member to quit or defect in the last year, joining former Chase ward member Vicki Pite in resigning from the council altogether.

Bernadette has not commented on her reasons for leaving but told councillors in a statement read on her behalf that she had “worked hard to get the best results for any resident who asked for my help”.

There will now be three council by-elections held on Thursday 6th May; for Chase, Jubilee and Southbury wards. The Southbury vacancy arose last summer after the death of Labour councillor Chris Bond.

The list of candidates standing in the three by-elections will be confirmed later in April. For the latest election coverage, visit EnfieldDispatch.co.uk.

Eligible voters can register to vote online:
Visit gov.uk/register-to-vote

Rapist jailed

A rapist who attacked a woman in a Southgate bar has been jailed.

Alhaji Sesay, 22 from Greenwich, was found guilty last month of rape and attempted rape at The Hart Lounge in Chase Road last August, plus another attempted rape at a Bristol venue in July 2019. He was sentenced at Bristol Crown Court to ten years’ imprisonment.

The Southgate attack on Sunday 30th August took place in the venue’s toilets, where the female victim was pushed into a cubicle and forced to perform a sex act on Sesay. Detective Constable Kim Davies said: “Alhaji Sesay has on two separate occasions subjected women to violent acts in what should be a safe and private space.”

Charity boost

An Enfield charity supporting people with learning disabilities has been awarded a National Lottery grant totalling almost a quarter-of-a-million pounds.

Zebras Children and Adults Charity, which last year launched a new charity hub in Lancaster Road, received £220,140 to fund its work over the next three years.

The charity put a message on social media thanking National Lottery players, adding: “We are over the moon and looking forward to continuing to make a real difference to many lives.”

Cash fund

BY OLIVIA DEVEREUX-EVANS

Community groups are being given a chance to win a slice of a new £1.4million fund by coming up with ideas for improving their neighbourhoods.

The Enfield Council initiative is launching in May to “transform neighbourhoods” in the aftermath of the Covid-19 pandemic. Enfield Neighbourhood Fund will make a series of grants – between £10,000 and £60,000 – to charities, voluntary groups, public bodies, educational institutions and other community organisations that submit ideas for reducing deprivation, improving the environment and widening opportunities. They could involve new facilities, food growing initiatives or improvements to open spaces.

Council leader Nesil Caliskan said: “We want to support projects that will make a real difference to the lives of people in our communities.”

Visit: enfield.gov.uk/services/your-council/community-development.

Sales & Lettings Agents



Chamberlains

chamberlainsestates.com

Chamberlains Estates

Residential Sales & Lettings Agents

020 8366 3551

Free professional video tours for all new Sales & Lettings instructions!

VIDEO TOUR



RETIREMENT HOME

TWO BEDROOM FIRST FLOOR RETIREMENT FLAT – EPC C72
Cavell Drive, Enfield EN2 7PR



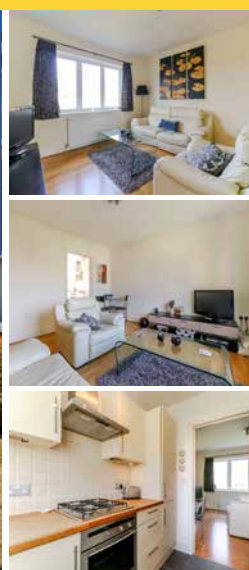
£279,950 Leasehold

VIDEO TOUR



SOLE AGENTS

MODERN PURPOSE BUILT FIRST FLOOR APARTMENT – EPC C
Mallory Court, 58A Valley Fields Crescent, Enfield EN2 7QL



£280,000 Leasehold

VIDEO TOUR



SOLE AGENTS

CHAIN FREE, FULLY MODERNISED TWO BEDROOM FLAT – EPC TBC
Sketty Road, Enfield EN1 3SE



£315,000 Leasehold

VIDEO TOUR



SOLE AGENTS

RECENTLY CONSTRUCTED PENTHOUSE APARTMENT – EPC B88
Windmill Hill, Enfield EN2 7AU



£325,000 Leasehold

VIDEO TOUR



SOLE AGENTS

CHAIN FREE EXTENDED FAMILY HOUSE – EPC E43
Queens Road, Enfield EN1 1NH



£525,000 Freehold

VIDEO TOUR



SOLE AGENTS

A SPACIOUS OLDER STYLE FOUR BEDROOM FAMILY HOUSE – EPC E
Parsonage Gardens, Enfield EN2 6JS



£675,000 Freehold

arla | propertymark
PROTECTED

naea | propertymark
PROTECTED

The Property Ombudsman

tsj
APPROVED CODE
TRADING STANDARDS UK

rightmove

OnTheMarket

Fighting period poverty

Lea Gibson on her campaign to tackle period poverty

Lea Gibson, founder of Anthro Vision



I have always worked in a care capacity with adults and young people, and I have always been passionate about ensuring people have positive wellbeing.

I launched Anthro Vision Community Interest Company at the beginning of the pandemic last year, while I was still doing outreach and mentoring in my free time with young people, as well as my

nine-to-five job. The aim is to empower and strengthen communities.

As the first wave of lockdown commenced, I had conversations with friends, family and young people, which highlighted how difficult it was to acquire essential items. As the pandemic continued, period poverty also saw a rise within London, and I knew I wanted to launch an initiative that was inclusive for all people who menstruate.

This is when I decided to start an initiative called 'People with Periods' to help people in the community to access period products. I started off the first few wellbeing care packages using my savings, sending it out to young people I know and getting feedback in order for the project to be youth-led and also to ensure the packages were carefully crafted to meet the wellbeing of each individual during that time of the month.

This was well received, and I decided to set up a GoFundMe page to raise funds to deliver the initiative to young people aged from eleven to 25, across London. Since then, we have received support from local community organisations such as

Bountagu Big Local, which helped fund the project for residents in Edmonton. It gathered a buzz and lots of positive feedback from young people.

If anyone is in need I aim to support as much as possible!

This year I have also received funding from Tesco to continue the project, focusing on children and young people from Enfield to obtain wellbeing care packages as part of the initiative. If any young person in Enfield is in need of period products please get in touch!

The project is going well but there will always be a need for more support in the community, so I am still sharing fundraising. I am more than happy to be contacted by any organisation, business, or individual who is happy to donate hygiene products or period products.

Support the People with Periods campaign:

Email officialanthrovision@gmail.com

Visit uk.gofundme.com/f/anthro-vision-initiative-care-packages-for-yp

For more information about Anthro Vision:

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

Twitter [@Anthro_Vision](https://twitter.com/Anthro_Vision)

Website AnthroVision.co.uk

A special place for children

Lubna Reid introduces her play group for autistic children

On 14th March last year it was a typical Saturday afternoon at the Lancaster Centre in Enfield for children with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND).

The SEN-den playgroup was brimming with activity, children explored the sensory toys – some alone, some playing alongside others. Parents queued to see the speech and language therapist, keen to ask questions about their child's communication.

It was a safe space for the children to play, a safe space to access specialist information, and a safe place for parents to interact with other families on their journey, navigating all things SEND. A safe place to go – and just be.

But then Covid-19 struck. We went into lockdown for five months. Playgroups were put on hold. Autistic children considered vulnerable enough were offered school places, others were not. Some kids loved being away from the anxiety-provoking school day. Others struggled with the sudden, prolonged, uncertain change of routine. There was no longer a safe place to go.

Going to the local playground with young, autistic children, for fresh air and exercise, was an ordeal for many of SEN-den's families – for some, it was impossible. It was

too busy, too loud, and too many potential hazards to deal with for children with lower awareness of danger.

Families of neurotypical children watched, noticing the different 'unusual' behaviours and communication styles of the neurodiverse children. SEN-den families felt judged. It was not fun, or relaxing. Our families needed a safe place to go.

I was a schoolgirl in Enfield 30 years ago, then left for university, followed by years working on community projects around the world. I returned in 2013 to raise my own family. I was struck by the lack of regular, inclusive play opportunities for young, autistic children. So I founded SEN-den 18 months ago, to provide play opportunities and signpost families to the information and services they need, across education, health and social care – even practical things, like a safe place for the dreaded haircut; we recommend Adam at Town Barbers!

Our aspirations for the future? Well, we hope never to find ourselves in lockdown again. But we would also love to work with Enfield Council, local businesses, and benefactors in the community to build a specially-adapted playground, so that young, autistic children in Enfield, and their families, always have a safe place to

go, to play – and just be.

Autism Awareness Week runs from Monday 29th March until Sunday 4th April. We celebrate all families in Enfield affected by autism, and your amazing resilience through the lockdown. See you at SEN-den soon!

For more information about SEN-den:

Email info@sen-den.org.uk

Visit sen-den.org.uk



Edward, age three, engaging in sensory play at a SEN-den playgroup, a safe place in Enfield for families of young, autistic children to access play, information and support in the community Credit: Lubna Reid

Supporting visually-impaired people in Enfield

BY JIM CANTLE

The Geranium Club for the Blind meets in Enfield Town on a fortnightly basis and provides a social environment for people with visual impairment.

The club was formed about 40 years ago by the then-director of social services at Enfield Council. The co-ordinator for the past 25 years has been Sylvia Chapman, who is ably assisted by volunteers.

It is extremely important in helping prevent isolation among people who may not be able to otherwise get out to socialise. During the two-hour meeting we have entertainers, solo singers, choirs and musicians.

The volunteers provide tea and biscuits while our members have a chat. We hold a raffle and the occasional bring and buy sale. We also have outings by coach to Clacton, a regular visit to a hotel in Hatfield Heath for a meal with entertainment, and an annual trip to Broxbourne for a boat trip on the River Lea with afternoon tea.

We also have regular theatre visits to the Dugdale Centre and transport is provided for these outings. For regular meetings all of our members are picked up on council transport and taken home after the meeting. Members pay £15 every four months for the club.

The Geranium Club is for members who live west of the A10 and takes place every other Tuesday afternoon. If you live in eastern Enfield there is the Merrion Club, which is exactly the same but on Tuesday evenings. It is also run by Sylvia Chapman and the council runs door-to-door transport. The two clubs occasionally get together for coach trips, theatre trips and meals.

Over the years many great long-lasting friendships have been formed by members of both clubs. During lockdown, Sylvia has kept in touch with all the members by telephone for a chat and everyone will be contacted as soon as it's known that we can get together again.

If you know anyone with a visual impairment who would be interested in joining the Geranium Club or Merrion Club, or perhaps any entertainers who may be able to perform for an hour once or twice a year, please get in touch with me on the number below!

For more information:
Call 0208 363 4969

Pam's Pantry is based at Ponders End United Reformed Church and is led by Melanie Meacher, pictured left



A foodbank for everyone

Olivia Devereux-Evans talks to the founder of Enfield's newest foodbank

Melanie Meacher and her husband Mark are church members in Ponders End who helped to provide free school meals over the Christmas period, in partnership with Enfield Council.

While members felt the partnership was good, they wanted to help the community in other ways and, as a result, decided to create a foodbank.

Melanie told the *Dispatch* there was a great need for another foodbank in the area. "It is really tough," she said. "People have not got enough money to feed themselves well."

"Even though there should be food for children on free school meals, there are still parents that are struggling. Debt is a big problem and people have lost their jobs."

Melanie explained that many people using foodbanks rely on a voucher system. This means users need to be referred from a public service to access a foodbank. However, people do not always know where to get referrals from and they can find it difficult.

Pam's Pantry opened in January and Melanie hopes to tackle the problem of referrals by welcoming anyone

and everyone who needs help. The foodbank is named after a much-loved elderly parishioner who died of Covid-19, aged 94.

Support has come from many other local Enfield groups, including Zebras Children and Adults Charity and Enfield Neighbourhood Watch. Pam's Pantry also operates as part of a network called Enfield Food Alliance, set up in conjunction with the council and other groups such as North Enfield Food Bank. It ensures all of the donated food is shared out between the groups, so no food is wasted.

Melanie praised the community spirit which has appeared as a result of the pandemic and said: "The food network is across secular and religious groups. The co-operation is now stronger than ever. It has brought us together."

The foodbank opens on Tuesday mornings between 10am and 12pm, welcoming everyone. Fresh food, rice and pasta is available alongside toiletries. Donations needed include rice, cooking oil, long-life milk and low-sugar squash.

Pam's Pantry is based at Ponders End URC in College Court Road. For more information: Visit facebook.com/PamsPantryPondersEnd

Let's green Green Lanes

BY DÄNA BURSTOW

We have a long-term vision for a green corridor linking Broomfield Park with Hazelwood Recreation Ground.

At the moment, Green Lanes – ironically – has almost no green. Trees planted in the ground are not possible because two gas mains run along both sides of the street but, to make a start, in the autumn Palmers Green Action Team (PGAT) is bringing two trees in pots to the high street.

This is thanks to a grant from the Mayor of London's 'Make London' programme, which will pay for at least two beautiful potted trees. The team has had great community support and that is what persuaded the mayor to back it. With some more donations, we could buy more!

PGAT is a voluntary, community organisation and we have been working for the last couple of years to help Green Lanes be as successful and as attractive as it can be. As people use local shops more, rather than commuting into London,

we want to make the high street as attractive as possible, to improve the economy and make people's shopping experience more enjoyable. Trees are relaxing and improve people's sense of wellbeing.

We hope this will be the start of a green chain between Broomfield Park and Hazelwood Rec, allowing birds, butterflies and other pollinators to cross from east to west across Green Lanes. It will bring some biodiversity and beauty to the high street by planting pretty pollinator-friendly plants around the base of the trees.

Thor's Trees, a local business, has generously volunteered

to help physically plant the trees and manage their important ongoing tree care. Volunteers are also lining up to help with watering and lower-level planting.

The pots have been chosen because they have been seen in action at King's Cross and still look good years after they were installed, so can withstand being in a public place. The locations have been selected to ensure they do not inconvenience pedestrians, cyclists or drivers.

Green Lanes is blessed with attractive buildings and a variety of independent shops and cafés, many of which have struggled with closures during the pandemic. Thanks to all the local funding, including a generous donation from Sole D'Oro Pizzeria, the team can now plan for three trees. If you would like to help the campaign fund a fourth tree, please visit the Spacehive page and make a pledge!



Donate towards the Green Lanes street trees campaign:
Visit spacehive.com/bring-trees-to-palmers-green-high-street

For more information about Palmers Green Action Team:
Visit palmersgreengreenactionteam.org/

Advertisement

There is a smarter way to EMBRACE YOUR RETIREMENT

Are you close to retirement? Then you have one more big decision to make - how to draw down your pension and get it working best for the lifestyle you want.

There are a few options to consider, do I take out a lump sum? Invest some of it? Or get an income for life?

At Archers, we have over 25 years of expertise to help you find a plan that best suits your needs.

So, no matter who your pension is with, contact us about your retirement planning with Archers - it's a smart way to make the most of what you have and fully embrace your retirement.

For more information on any other matter contact Archers on:
020 8364 5445 / 020 8364 6099
or email: info@archersonline.co.uk

Archers
Financial Services Ltd

Archers Financial Services Ltd, 1 Windmill Hill, Enfield, Middlesex EN2 6SE
Tel: 020 8364 5445 / 020 8364 6099 • Email: info@archersonline.co.uk • www.archersonline.co.uk

Archers Financial Services Ltd is directly authorised and regulated by the Financial Conduct Authority (FCA: 650075). Your home may be repossessed if you do not keep up repayments on a mortgage or any other debt secured on it. Investments can be made into a selection of funds which invest in different asset classes such as cash, gilts, property and stocks & shares. These funds carry differing levels of risk. The value of the funds can fluctuate and may fall as well as rise. The Financial Conduct Authority does not regulate taxation and tax advice.

Whitewebbs Park Golf Course is popular among people who cannot otherwise afford to play the sport



Council to keep low-cost golf course closed

BY SIMON ALLIN,
LOCAL DEMOCRACY REPORTER

A golf course that Enfield Council plans to lease out to a private contractor will not reopen as Covid-19 restrictions are eased.

According to the council, Whitewebbs Park Golf Course, in Clay Hill, has lost more than £1.1million during the past five years and it would be “irresponsible” to continue to subsidise it using taxpayers’ money.

But there has been anger among people who use the course, which remains a much cheaper and more accessible option for golfers to use compared with other clubs in the borough. Andrew Warshaw, a local resident and golf club user, told the *Dispatch*: “The timing is a disgrace. Players are itching, in fact craving, to get back out on the course post-lockdown.

“Think of all those – there must be hundreds – of players who regularly play there and can’t afford private clubs and now have nowhere else to play.”

The golf course, which is in the borough’s Green Belt, could have reopened from Monday 29th March under the government’s plans to lift lockdown restrictions. Based on the popularity of the golf course after last year’s lockdown, park users claim it could bring in up to £300,000 over the next six months if it reopened.

Conservative group leader Joanne Laban branded the closure “outrageous”. Cllr Laban said: “Whitewebbs Park is a much-loved asset in our borough, and it is outrageous that the Labour administration has decided to close the golf course with immediate effect, and with no consultation with residents.

“The reaction of residents on social media to this decision shows the strength of feeling on this issue. This action, in my opinion, indicates that the Labour council has already decided that the golf course will not remain, and some other form of commercial activity will replace it in the future, which seems to also prejudice the

process of the procurement.”

A report published by the council last week acknowledged there was an increase in bookings for the course during summer 2020 but claimed this was “a temporary situation where existing golfers made up for lost rounds during lockdown”.

Enfield Council first revealed plans to lease out the course and its surrounding woodland to a commercial partner in 2019. The original marketing prospectus said the site had capacity for “inert material” – a category that could include building waste. The council later said this was a “mistake” and the reference was removed.

A council spokesperson said the course will still remain open for walking, jogging and other recreational use. They said: “Whitewebbs Golf Course has been making a loss for a number of years, despite the introduction of measures designed to increase income and reduce costs at the site.

“Since 2014/15 the golf club has lost more than £1.1million. At a time of national crisis, when our priority is protecting all of our communities and providing support for our most vulnerable residents, it would be irresponsible and unsustainable to continue to use taxpayers’ money to subsidise an activity that is well provided for elsewhere across the borough, with six full-length courses and a pitch and putt course available for golfers in Enfield.

“We are currently in a marketing process which will determine the future of the Whitewebbs Golf Course site. This process requires applicants to meet the needs of the council and the wider community and to increase community access to Whitewebbs for walking, recreation, leisure and other uses.

“Unfortunately, this process has been delayed because of the pandemic. However, Enfield Council will be in a position to announce the next steps shortly.

“Any suggestion the site will be used for housing or landfill are utter nonsense and scaremongering.”

Thousands oppose new gambling venue

BY SIMON ALLIN,
LOCAL DEMOCRACY REPORTER

A fifth gambling venue set to open in Palmers Green will be a “magnet” for vulnerable people and lead to anti-social behaviour, campaigners have warned.

A group called Game Over for Merkur is battling a decision by Enfield Council to allow Cashino to open a Merkur Slots gaming centre in Green Lanes.

There are already four betting shops in the area – and campaigners say residents were not aware of the plans for the latest gambling venue because they had been staying at home during lockdown.

A petition calling on the council to revoke the premises licence has gained more than 4,000 signatures – but the cabinet member for licensing said there was little the local authority could do to oppose the application.

Shirley Rose, a Palmers Green resident and spokesperson for Game Over for Merkur, said: “With unemployment at the highest level it has been for years, it is irresponsible for Enfield Council to give its approval to a 24-hour gaming centre. This is likely to profit at the expense of those in society who least can afford it.”

The council held a consultation on the premises licence for Merkur Slots in December

last year, but Shirley claims that because this was a time of “severe restrictions on people’s ability to get about” very few people in the area knew about the application at the time it was out for consultation.

George Savva, cabinet member for licensing and regulatory services, said: “It is extremely difficult for a local authority to object to an application such as this. If it meets the conditions set out in law, it must be granted.

“The advertising and consultation were undertaken correctly and in compliance with the Gambling Act, and no allowances were made by the government regarding extending or amplifying consultations during lockdown.

“Residents or ward councillors can request a review of the licence by the licensing committee.”

A Merkur Slots spokesperson said adult gaming centres “have never had the fixed odds betting terminals, which have caused so many awful problems and led to the sector having such a bad name”. They added: “Our focus is fun, and we do everything to ensure our customers gamble responsibly and within easily manageable limits.

“We’re confident our expansion programme will demonstrate that an adult gaming centre on your local high street is a good thing for everyone.”

— Advertisement —



Freesprings

Premium home care service

We ensure that our client's physical, psychological, emotional, cultural, spiritual care are met.

Our services

- Registered Nurses (All Grades)
- Care Staff ● Autism
- Domestic Staff
- Health Care Assistants
- Home Residential

Why Freesprings?

- CQC registered ● Quality service at competitive Rates
- Our team have experience in providing specialist care throughout
- Staff may be provided at short notice and out of hours notice

Our All Services

- Call in services ● Cancer Care ● Cleaning Service ● Companionship
- Dementia ● Domestic Service / Home help ● Food preparation & serving
- Elderly Care ● High Dependency Care, two Carers attending ● Autism
- Hospital Discharge ● Learning disability ● Medication Assistance
- Mental Health Condition ● Personal Hygiene Care ● Palliative Care
- Physical Disability ● Respite Cover ● Sensory Impairment
- Shopping Service / Errands ● Laundry Service ● Sit in Service

Contact us: ☎ 01992236061

✉ Info@freesprings.co.uk

📍 Freesprings Ltd 1G Stirling Business Center Britannia Road EN8 7NY



ENFIELD COMMUNITY HEROES

Sponsored by Edmonton Green Shopping Centre

Reaching those in need

Nishan Dzvingozyan works with communities struggling to overcome language and cultural barriers

Enfield is a diverse borough with people from many different countries and cultures, speaking many different languages – and reaching out to them has never been more important.

To tackle the global pandemic, language and cultural barriers must be overcome, while there is also the small matter of a looming deadline for EU citizens to apply for their UK 'settled status'.

One Enfield resident, a community outreach worker originally from Bulgaria, has made it his mission to help residents of similar backgrounds struggling to navigate the various challenges they now face.

Nishan Dzvingozyan arrived in the UK in 2005 to study at Kingston University, and later settled in Enfield. As a community outreach worker for Brent Council, Nishan realised there was a need to bring Eastern European communities together. He set up

the Eastern European Forum, which includes a network of 50 organisations, from local authorities to embassies.

Nishan organised the Festival of East European Heritage and Culture at Forty Hall in 2019 and, since February last year, has been working with Edmonton Community Partnership on a scheme encouraging people from the Bulgarian Roma community to apply for settled status.

"We discovered there were many Bulgarians in Edmonton with a Roma background," explained Nishan. "We think there is at least 15,000 of them and they are probably the largest group of Bulgarian Roma in the UK."

"They have been identified as 'hard to reach' and they are experiencing specific problems. They need to apply for settled status but they are struggling because you need internet access. Our concern is that if they can't do it they will become illegal immigrants in June."

Nishan has been calling Roma fami-



Nishan Dzvingozyan

lies from school offices, the only way to reliably reach them. As well as talking about their settled status and about Covid-19 vaccinations, he checks whether they have enough food, if they have laptops, and whether they are in need of financial support.

"We will deliver up to 40 information

sessions on different subjects, including how to get vaccinated," Nishan says.

"In Enfield 16,000 people are not registered with a GP and we believe a lot of these people belong to the Bulgarian Roma community."

Nishan has also set up his own community group, The Bulgarian Centre for Social Integration and Culture, and sits on a new Gypsy, Roma and Traveller Project Board set up by Enfield Council. He added: "When I first came to the UK my English was very basic, so I understand the challenges these communities face"

Nishan was nominated as an 'Enfield Community Hero' by Hannah Bawden, his colleague at Edmonton Community Partnership, who said: "Nishan is a passionate activist, cares very deeply, and has formed positive relationships with everyone he's worked with."

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

Advertisement

Enfield's newest luxury care home has opened its doors



Elsyng House in Forty Hill is part of the Oakland Care group of homes and provides state-of-the-art facilities including a café bistro, cinema room, hair and beauty salon, barbers, multiple air-conditioned lounges, as well as a family room, quiet lounge

and garden areas for residents and families to enjoy.

Oakland Care has a reputation in developing and operating exceptional care homes across London and the south east and has been awarded an impressive average score of 9.8 on carehome.

co.uk. All Oakland Care homes offer quality personalised care, with luxury living facilities, top quality dining and nutrition, a range of fulfilling activity programmes, and an exceptional living experience.

But don't just take our word

for it! Stanley Fishman moved into Elsyng House last month and has spoken about how he has settled in.

"It's exceptional," Stanley said. "The staff are very good and the room is excellent – you couldn't get a better room!"

"You've got all the furniture you need and because the place is so well organised, you never get bored."

"It is a great location and everything is up-to-date and very modern."

The pandemic continues to raise challenges for residents and their families but Elsyng House has a number of safety measures and infection control procedures in place. Family visits can take place in a specially-adapted room with a glass screen, which divides the room into two halves with separate entrances to maintain social distance, hand sanitising stations and PPE are readily available. The visiting sessions can be booked in advance for a 30-minute session.

Elsyng House manager Sonia

Kasese explained: "We have achieved a safe service during the pandemic and we have a very high vaccine uptake."

Forty Hall Estate is the 'Jewel in the Crown' of Enfield and is the borough's top visitor attraction. Elsyng House is named after a former royal palace that once graced the estate, just a five-minute walk away from the home. Henry VIII used Elsyng as a base for his hunting trips, and his children Mary, Elizabeth and Edward spent part of their childhood there. As Queen, Elizabeth is also believed to have stayed at Elsyng on at least four occasions.

Today Forty Hall Estate is the 'Jewel in the Crown' of Enfield and is the borough's top visitor attraction.

For more information and to book a visit:

Call 0300 303 5445

Email clientrelations.eh@oaklandcare.com

Visit oaklandcare.com/our-homes/elsyng-house-enfield

Lighting up Ponders End

In our latest councillor's column, Ponders End ward member Doug Taylor sheds light on the area's regeneration



Cllr Taylor has represented Ponders End since 2002

While Ponders End was a thriving industrial area from the 19th Century, much of that has gone, and now the ward has the fourth-lowest household income in Enfield borough.

But the future can still be bright. Served by two railway stations and with good road connectivity, quality investment in

people and place can improve opportunities for our local

people. Ponders End is in a period of intense transformation and residents deserve to benefit.

As a ward councillor I am delighted that we are seeing positive moves to tackle poor housing and create jobs. Firstly Dujardin Mews (named after the gold-medal-winning dressage rider Charlotte Dujardin, who was born in Enfield) comprises 38 homes and was completed in 2017 as part of the wider Alma Road Estate regeneration. It was the first social housing built directly

by Enfield Council for 40 years.

The estate is made up of high-rise and low-rise flats in need of modernisation. The council surveyed residents about their preferences, which was to demolish and rebuild. This is what we are now witnessing. The first phase has been completed, with more than 220 homes and space for a cafe and gym near the railway station. Overall

there will be nearly 1,000 homes; a new medical centre opening shortly; a rebuilt youth centre

that is almost complete; as well as a replacement community centre. There will also be more than 700 square metres of commercial space.

Alma Road Estate is a long-term project requiring substantial demolition and rebuilding, which should be finished by spring 2029. Already, three of the four large tower blocks have been demolished. But that is not the only transformation in Ponders End.

At the turn of the 20th Century Sir Joseph Swan, a co-creator of

the light bulb with Thomas Edison, founded the Ediswan Institute on Ponders End High Street, delivering education and social activities. This later was purchased by the former Middlesex County Council and was retitled as a technical institute. The building still bears this inscription.

Swan not only pioneered education but opened factories in Ponders End, providing local jobs, and his innovations helped spark other enterprises nearby. When it was planned to redevelop the area opposite the institute site, an opportunity was taken to create a reminder of our local heritage. This is the new Electric Quarter. The idea is to add to the high street's vibrancy, create employment, and increase footfall, linking this area to the adjacent local employment zone, while also building much-needed housing of different types.



Electric Quarter is nearly complete, providing 167 new homes, a new community library, and modern commercial shop units. Sixty-one of the homes are finished and occupied, and the remainder are expected to complete in early summer. The library will be fitted out by the autumn and the commercial space is

under construction. Already the pavement area is re-laid and the look of this part of the high street is being transformed before our eyes, as a catalyst for further regeneration.

Cllr Taylor represents Ponders End alongside Susan Erbil and Ayfer Orhan (all Labour).

Call 020 8379 4115
Email cllr.doug.taylor@enfield.gov.uk

Advertisement

CASH FOR CLOTHES

OPENING

12th April 2021

Tel: 01708 685 076

www.cash4clothesuk.org

**Address: Phoenix Rose Home & Garden Centre
Cattlegate Road, Crews Hill, Enfield EN2 9DP**

MONDAY TO FRIDAY 9:00 - 17:00

WEEKENDS & BANK HOLIDAYS - Closed

Why women don't feel safe

Olivia Devereux-Evans on how the Sarah Everard case has reminded women of their vulnerability on the streets

The tragic disappearance and suspected murder of Sarah Everard last month made me sad. Sarah did what women are told to do; she wore bright clothes, called her boyfriend, wore flat shoes and was on a well-lit path. Yet she still was not safe. It has left many of us, me included, on edge and scared.

It is because we know it could still happen to any one of us. It is because 97% of women aged 18-24 in the UK have been harassed. It is tiring and we are angry.

There are a plethora of things we do on a daily basis without even thinking about it to supposedly keep ourselves safe. Yet this awful event reminded me again.

When I was younger I would take the bus home from secondary school and walk back from the bus stop as it got dark in the winter. Looking back, I always quickened my pace without even realising I was doing so, looking over my shoulder. Even now, when I am walking a short distance down my road in the dark or leaving an Uber and opening my front door, I quicken my pace.

When I was 15. I was on the tube alone for the first time, in a packed carriage at Southgate Station. The carriage was silent as usual, with everyone sat trying not to make eye contact. But then a man I had never met looked at me directly for a few minutes. He broke the silence by telling me I was wearing a nice blouse. It was a completely unsolicited comment, which put me on edge and led me to move carriages.

This is the reality many of us face, being stared at by strange men and being given unsolicited – and unwelcome – comments.

I am lucky to have some amazing male friends who live locally. When we are together they will step in and make sure



I and my female friends are okay if we are being harassed by other men. I also have an unspoken agreement with them where they walk me home if we meet at each other's houses. It is kind of them, but it infuriates me to have to rely on them so often. I want to live in a world

“This is the reality we face”

where I do not need to rely on them to walk me home when I cannot get an Uber.

It is good that there are solutions and things men can do to help us if we are being made

to feel uncomfortable. When men cross the road when we approach them, try to step in if we look visibly uncomfortable, and try to understand the scale of the problem; it reassures us.

The issue is very widespread and while I can feel relatively safe living where I live, I wish

I could feel safe out at night alone. For years, I have wondered what it would be like to go on a leisurely walk at night by myself. I want to just be able to walk for recreation

and without having to rush at night.

What happened to Sarah Everard should not keep happening. We should feel safe alone at night.

LETTERS

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 20th April

NHS at risk

Dear Enfield Dispatch

Will it still be ‘our’ NHS? Privatisation continues in the NHS despite the publicity the recent white paper received about ending competitive tendering. The changes mean that there will be no transparency about deals being done and private companies will continue unhindered to invade our NHS.

The most recent scandal is the takeover of a company we had never heard of – AT Medics – which had been operating and expanding in the London area over the last 15 years. It works in 19 London boroughs, has contracts for 37 GP practices, a turnover of £47.8m, and profit of £7.1m. Lucky investors! Not so lucky taxpayers.

AT Medics has just been taken over by a UK subsidiary of a large and powerful US health insurance company called Centene. This combination now provides GP services to 58 practices and half-a-million patients across England. Five of these practices are in the North Central London area and health campaigners are shocked that no-one seemed to know how this takeover came about – its legality is currently being strongly contested.

Sue Davies
Defend Enfield NHS

We need a skatepark

Dear Enfield Dispatch

I am writing to you because I am concerned about the crime rate and detachment of youth in Palmers Green. Being 14, I find myself lonely and detached from my fellow teens living in the area. To try and connect, I believe the most effective way to do this is to build a skatepark in Broomfield Park.

When I was younger, I lived in Finsbury Park, and I would take my skateboard and bring it to the local skatepark and talk to people significantly older than me and ask them how to do certain tricks; this allowed me to develop

relationships with people in the local area, making me feel safer walking around.

The impact of skateboarding on mental health is phenomenal. It is such a good de-stresser; learning something new or landing a new skateboard trick releases a lot of dopamine and fills you with satisfaction, making you more relaxed.

Overall, I believe a skatepark would be the best way forward for the youth in Palmers Green as it would be a good meeting point and keep young people occupied and away from petty crime.

Joseph Wagland
Palmers Green

Wrong course of action

Dear Enfield Dispatch

When Whitewebbs Park Golf Course was reopened for a couple of months last year, the number of rounds played increased dramatically, despite the number of tee times being reduced because of Covid-19 restrictions. It is likely that a good proportion of this increase in numbers would become long-term. Even on a conservative estimate of a 20% increase in rounds, this could give Enfield Council an extra revenue of £50,000 per year. In the short-term the gain would likely be much higher.

Unlike most golf courses, Whitewebbs is equally shared by ramblers, dog walkers and even cyclists, who enjoy the area as much as the golfers. There is no enclosure around the course to keep the public out, nor does there need to be.

But the council says it would be “irresponsible” to keep the golf course open. On the contrary, it would be irresponsible to close it now, giving up a golden opportunity to see it become profitable, eliminating a dozen or so good jobs in the process and bringing to an unjustifiable end a wonderful facility that has served residents for nearly a century.

Michael Lord
Southgate

ADULT COURSES APRIL 2021 START

The UK government is investing £2.5 billion in the National Skills Fund to help adults to train and gain the valuable skills they need to improve their job prospects.

It is never too late to begin a new chapter in your life and to take control of your future career. Waltham Forest College will be offering an exciting range of Adult Level 3 courses starting April 2021 in:

- Accounting
- Automotive Engineering
- Electrical Installation
- Education and Health Care
- Information Technology

Adults aged 24 and over who want to achieve their first full Level 3 qualification will be fully funded (subject to eligibility), therefore you may be able to study for **FREE!**

Visit our website

www.waltham.ac.uk or
scan the QR code using
your smartphone to apply
and for more information.



☎ 020 8501 8501 ✉ myfuture@waltham.ac.uk

📍 707 Forest Road, Walthamstow, E17 4JB



Create Your Future

Waltham Forest College



Council leader hits back after minister's rebuke

War of words between government and council over its communications on Covid-19 funding

BY JAMES CRACKNELL

The leader of Enfield Council has hit back at a government minister who accused the authority of breaking the publicity code regulating its communications.

Luke Hall, the minister for local government, wrote a letter to Nesil Caliskan alleging that two press releases issued by the Labour-run council last year had failed “to observe the principles of objectivity and even-handedness” in the Code of Recommended Practice on Local Authority Publicity, which requires all publicity to be “politically impartial”.

The press statements in question had called on the government to provide more funding to meet the costs of Covid-19, but the minister said in his January letter that they had omitted to mention how much support the government had given to the council during the pandemic.

The Conservative MP wrote: “My department has reviewed your website and, at time of writing, notes there is no update and it does not mention Enfield had received some £31.99million from the government across three tranches of emergency funding and wider Covid-19 grants.”

He added: “I would urge you to keep your public materials both accurate and updated.”

Cllr Caliskan hit back with her own letter



to Hall, describing the council's previous public statements on its Covid-19 finances as “entirely factual” at the time they had been issued. She also pointed out that the council had been given “just over half” of its forecast £28.8m pandemic-related costs for the year ahead and was being forced to raise council tax to help cover the gap.

The council leader wrote in her response: “The press statements you refer to in your correspondence were clearly dated and entirely factual. Enfield Council is committed to transparent and accurate financial reporting and our budget position is reflected in regular reports published on our website.”

She went on to offer the Conservative minister for regional growth and local



government help in “understanding council finances” by directing him to the Local Government Association website.

Opposition councillors in Enfield said the fact the minister had felt the need to write to the council over its public communications was “alarming”.

Tory group leader Joanne Laban said: “It is damning that the minister felt the need to write to the Labour leader of the council and include a reminder of the code of practice relating to taxpayer-funded council communications.”

“What is particularly alarming is the point in the letter about financial figures posted on the website not tallying with what has been formally submitted by the council to the government.”

Prepare for ULEZ, drivers told

BY SIMON ALLIN, LOCAL DEMOCRACY REPORTER

Drivers are being urged to check their cars ahead of the rollout of a new zone designed to cut pollution into the south of Enfield.

Transport for London (TfL) wants motorists to ensure their vehicles comply with the standards for the Ultra-Low Emission Zone (ULEZ), which will be extended to the North Circular Road next year.

Drivers with older cars that do not meet the emissions standards will have to pay £12.50 per day to travel into the zone starting from 25th October.

TfL has launched an online tool that allows people to check if their vehicles comply by entering their registration details.

Lorraine Hinds, engagement officer at TfL, told a meeting of Enfield Council's environment forum: “Our main message is first and foremost to check your vehicle – 80% of vehicles are compliant, so most people will find their vehicle is compliant anyway.”

Lorraine claimed a van scrappage scheme set up by TfL had been a “huge success” since its launch in February 2019, adding it had “supported small businesses and charities to replace vehicles that do not meet ULEZ standards”.

She said the scheme – which offered payments to owners to scrap polluting vehicles and buy compliant ones – “had committed over £30million to help thousands of small and micro businesses”.

Esther Johnson, major projects consultation team manager at TfL, said the transport body was working with North Middlesex University Hospital to make sure “there is a strategy that does not deter or penalise patients, and of course staff, travelling to the hospital”. Patients from Enfield and other boroughs regularly travel across the North Circular to attend appointments at the hospital.

Conservative councillor Lindsay Rawlings raised concerns that people were “starting to panic” about the ULEZ roll-out, with some drivers claiming to have bought vehicles the previous owners said were ULEZ-compliant – but when they checked online, they found they were not.

Esther suggested checking the vehicle documents to ensure it is ULEZ-compliant by meeting or exceeding the ‘Euro 6’ engine standard.

Check the TfL portal to find out if your vehicle is ULEZ compliant:
Visit tfl.gov.uk/modes/driving/check-your-vehicle-35896

Pet owner desperate to find stolen dog

BY JAMES CRACKNELL

A Winchmore Hill dog owner is appealing for helping finding her beloved pooch after she was stolen – amid a huge rise in dog thefts nationwide.

Melina Georgiou has been desperately trying to track down her one-year-old maltese dog Nala ever since she was stolen in February. Dog thefts have risen by 170%



Melina with her beloved pooch Nala, who was stolen in February

over the last year according to Dog Lost, a charity that helps find missing pets, as the demand for new puppies has soared during the pandemic.

Nala was in a dog walker's van being driven home along with two other canines when an opportunistic thief stole the vehicle while it was parked for a drop-off. The van was later found dumped near Green Lanes, with one dog still in it. Another was later found in Kent, but the third, Nala, remains missing.

Melina has posted appeals across social media and even appeared on national radio and TV in her efforts to track down Nala. The issue has drawn media attention since pop star Lady Gaga's dog walker was shot and nearly killed in Los Angeles and two of her dogs stolen.

Describing Nala, Melina told the *Dispatch*: “She is the most playful, energetic, loving, cheeky dog and everyone who's ever met her at the park or knows us is utterly in

love with her too.

“She needs to be back with her family where she's loved and cherished, so we are doing everything we can to get her back.”

In a recent discussion about the rise in dog thefts on BBC Five Live, Debbie Matthews, co-founder of Stolen and Missing Pets Alliance, said such crimes were not taken seriously enough by police and that the meagre punishments handed out to those caught – sometimes fines of just £250 – had created a “low risk, high reward” scenario for crooks.

“It's a criminal's dream job,” said Debbie. “We need protection for our pets.”

A petition calling for the government to create “a specific offence for dog theft, with eight years minimum sentencing and a fine of at least £5,000” has been signed by more than 250,000 people and is set to be debated in parliament.

Have you seen Nala?
Visit doglost.co.uk/dog-blog.php?dogid=164611

Music festival announces summer comeback

Andrew Warshaw welcomes the return of one of Enfield's biggest annual events

After last year's forced absence, Enfield's much-loved annual Livestock music festival at Forty Hall Farm is returning this summer – and promises to be better than ever!

The event on Saturday 24th July will mark the tenth anniversary of the first Livestock

and a number of acts have already confirmed their appearance, including a couple of crowd favourites from past festivals such as Gentlemen of Few and The Vipers.

Also on the bill are the Britpop Boys, the embodiment of the '90s era; award-winning local Enfield artist Natalie Shay; retro

rhythm maestros The Streamline 55s, covering mainly rarer tracks from the vinyl vault; The Cinelli Brothers, one of the hottest blues bands in the country; and the multi-talented soul/funk outfit The Jezebel Sextet, specialising in the music of Otis Redding.

That's only a smattering of what festival goers can expect, with a headline act still to be booked along with a plethora of other artists. Such is the craving for the return of the festival – which is subject to any future coronavirus restrictions – that all early bird tickets are already sold out, many of them rolled over from last year's cancelled event.

Event organiser Paul Dengel said: "We are all incredibly excited to have the festival on again and hope that people will enjoy the programme we are putting together for the highlight of the summer.

"We are of course being vigilant regarding the ongoing Covid-19 situation and will do whatever is necessary to make this and other events safe for all of those who attend.

"Enfield Council's culture department have been so supportive as have all those at Forty Hall Farm. But, as ever, the people

we are most indebted to are the fans who either already had tickets or have purchased tickets since we were able to relaunch – without them we would have no chance to put on the show."

Standard advance tickets for the 12-hour festival are now on sale at £25. On the gate, the price is £30. For those who want to come just in the evening, tickets are £15 and are valid from 7pm. Children up to the age of 12 are free, though they will still need a pass, and there is a teen ticket priced £5 for those aged between 13 and 17 years.

Before the festival, Livestock has teamed up with Friends of Broomfield Park in Palmers Green to launch Park Live, featuring three exciting outdoor events on Friday 21st May (subject to council approval), Friday 25th June (The Vipers) and Saturday 17th July (Skatronics).

Meanwhile, Music from the Black Barn, the borough's iconic monthly live music venue, is set for its comeback at Forty Hall Farm in August.

To buy Livestock tickets or to sign up for volunteering:
Visit livestockuk.com
Visit livestockuk.com/volunteers



Crafting with care

Suzanne Kelly from Palmers Green arts organisation Stitch! on the growing popularity of crafting

The first anniversary of the pandemic lockdown restrictions has brought into sharp focus the many unforeseen changes we've all had to grapple with over the past 12 months.

One of the more positive trends has been a surge in the number of people taking up or returning to crafting as a hobby. Taking up a hobby or learning a new skill even comes recommended by Public Health England as a way of managing mental health while isolating.

I spoke to two life-long crafters, who have been busy passing on their knowledge and skills as part of the creative team here at Stitch! Crafts & Classes, to reflect on what lessons they have learned over the past year.

Sharon Wallin has been hosting the Stitching Circle that switched to running on Zoom every Thursday last year. She said: "During lockdown, being forced to spend more quiet time at home has really made me come out of my comfort zone.

"The Zoom meet-ups have been a great way of staying in touch and making new friends. It's been so comforting sharing what we've been making, seeing what other people are doing, and it has inspired us all to try new things.

"Doing something creative every day is integral to my wellbeing. It's a feel-good activity.

When I'm knitting or spinning, I really get into a relaxed state of mind and 'in the zone' – I truly believe the whole process of physical crafts is so good for all our mental states and that this is precisely why crafting has become so popular in these times."

Will the trend for crafting last? "I think there will be a continued boom," says Sharon.

"So many friends are now darning, visible mending, coming up with fresh ideas about how these skills can be deployed."

Susan Mehmet is the person behind the Ashkim Bears brand of cuddly toys. She said: "Lockdown has really rekindled my love of sewing. Having attended two quilting courses at Stitch I bought a new

sewing machine and started exploring a variety of sewing projects.

"For a few years now I have been hand sewing bears and rabbits, but lockdown gave me the opportunity to develop further skills and expand my knowledge.

"Setting myself new challenges and goals has given me a real purpose and mindfulness. Also, the pleasure of sharing my new knowledge with others and giving friends and family homemade gifts has been very rewarding.

"I've been making facemasks, fabric pots, bears, rabbits, quilting projects, decorations, bags, snoods, just to name a few things! I've kept a record of everything I made through a blog and photographs."

At Stitch! Crafts and Classes we are looking forward to reopening the doors to our shop in Palmers Green – stocking fabric, wool, haberdashery and crafting supplies – on Monday 12th April. In-person classes in crochet, knitting, sewing, darning, quilting and calligraphy (to name a few!) will restart in May.



Stitch! is preparing to reopen its shop in Green Lanes this month

For more information about Stitch!
Call 07903 614 726
Facebook /N13crafts
Instagram @Stitch_n13
Visit stitch.org.uk

Making the right choices

PC Simon Odong talks about his work with Enfield's safer schools programme and the influence of his own turbulent childhood



BY JAMES CRACKNELL

Simon Odong arrived in the UK in 1990 as a young boy, unable to speak English, having fled a civil war in Uganda where he'd grown up.

Today Simon is a police officer who works in 65 primary schools across Enfield, helping to motivate the next generation to make the right choices at an early age.

Drawing on his experiences and his incredibly difficult childhood, Simon wants to steer children to follow a route through their education that keeps them safe and avoids delving into criminality.

Simon, a Metropolitan Police officer since 2005, told the *Dispatch*: "I want to

help guide young adults and my job is to guide them, together with parents and teachers, on their life choices as they develop.

"It's things like being online and peer pressure and where that can lead them, and encouraging them to take responsibility for every choice they make."

When children are preparing to leave primary school, Simon argues, they are at a crucial age. "All the things you know before you are eleven have an impact on your life," he says.

"It is about going in and doing presentations and assisting parents who might be having difficulties and speaking to pupils individually and talking about my own story."

Simon's family went into hiding when he was five years old, hoping to avoid being caught up in the conflict that ravaged Uganda for eight years, starting in 1986. His father fled the country and lost contact with the rest of the family, with each thinking the other was dead for years, until they were reunited and emigrated to England.

Being able to share such a story of overcoming difficulties during his childhood gives Simon a unique ability to motivate pupils to make positive choices in their own lives.

"If I can do it, anyone can do it," he says. "I want to motivate children to be a better version of themselves."

"I felt guilty when I was 18 that I was alive when a lot of other people my age didn't make it. So when I see children make bad choices, when they could make different choices, it gets to me personally."

"You can concentrate on the negative but it doesn't get us anywhere. I want to make a difference."

What are some of the challenges children face today? "In my day everything we did remained anonymous, but now everything is online with images posted on social media, and then when you get a job interview it can affect you."

"Gangs are glamourised in the way they are portrayed. People are social creatures

and they want to belong and if their parents are neglecting them and they are vulnerable, joining a gang can be appealing.

"My job is to get them as much support as possible. They might think that joining a gang gives them an easier life but it is not sustainable."

"Up to the age of eleven is the most crucial time to talk to children, before they start secondary school, and that is the most important age. If we don't get it right before they get to secondary school

"I want to motivate children to be a better version of themselves"

we are just chasing our tails.

"If they can see police as humans it gives them confidence. It is about preventing them from getting involved in crime, which for me is more rewarding than putting handcuffs on them."

Over the last year, Simon has been forced to talk to schoolchildren via Zoom, but that will soon change and he is looking forward to getting back into the classroom.

"I am very passionate about it," he says. "I can't wait to get back into schools."



**Sign up to the
ED newsletter**

Sign up: eepurl.com/dIDKNH

Doctor hails vaccine roll-out 'success' in Enfield

BY JAMES CRACKNELL

An Enfield doctor helping to co-ordinate Covid-19 vaccinations has hailed the speed of the borough's roll-out.

Dr Ujjal Sarkar spoke to the *Dispatch* to discuss how the vaccination programme had been going so far, three months after the first Covid-19 jab.

He explained that Enfield has been leading in London with its roll-out and credits the speedy vaccine delivery to a well-organised operation between GP practices and the creation of three main hubs.

Dr Sarkar, who is running one of the hubs at Carlton House in Tenniswood Road, said: "Enfield has been leading from the start, leading in North London and [the rest of] London.

"The three hubs at Carlton House, Evergreen Surgery and Winchmore Hill are vaccinating residents in the whole of Enfield.

"We have access to all the patients across Enfield and we are able to draw down the data for eligible cohorts and send the invitations out via text. If they don't have a mobile, we have a central team calling people up – because we have done it centrally for the whole of Enfield

it has been a success."

Dr Sarkar works for Medicus Health Partners, which runs 14 Enfield GP surgeries, but he stressed that all practices in the borough had been able to work together and send their patients to one of the three main vaccine hubs. Some 70 vaccinators and 40 administrative staff had been brought in especially to help with the roll-out, he added.

Dr Sarkar said that one of the other benefits of having three main hubs was that it enabled GP practices to carry on as normal, treating non-Covid related health issues without interruption.

"We have also set up 'pop-up' vaccine clinics," said Dr Sarkar. "We did one at Ponders End Mosque where we vaccinated 350 people. They weren't coming to the other sites, but at the mosque they felt safe and secure and it gave them the confidence they needed."

Take-up rates for the vaccines among ethnic minorities have been lower across the UK and this is one of the issues now being tackled with various publicity campaigns. Enfield Council launched its 'V means vaccinated' campaign targeting hard-to-reach groups by communicating information about

the vaccine in several different languages, including Bulgarian and Turkish.

Dr Sarkar said there is no reason for any community to fear the vaccine and urged people to get jabbed as soon as they can. "This is about immunity in the community. The only way to get out of this is to vaccinate our way out and we need everyone's support.

"This is the only hope we have. If anyone has any concerns, just speak to your doctor and we can reassure you."

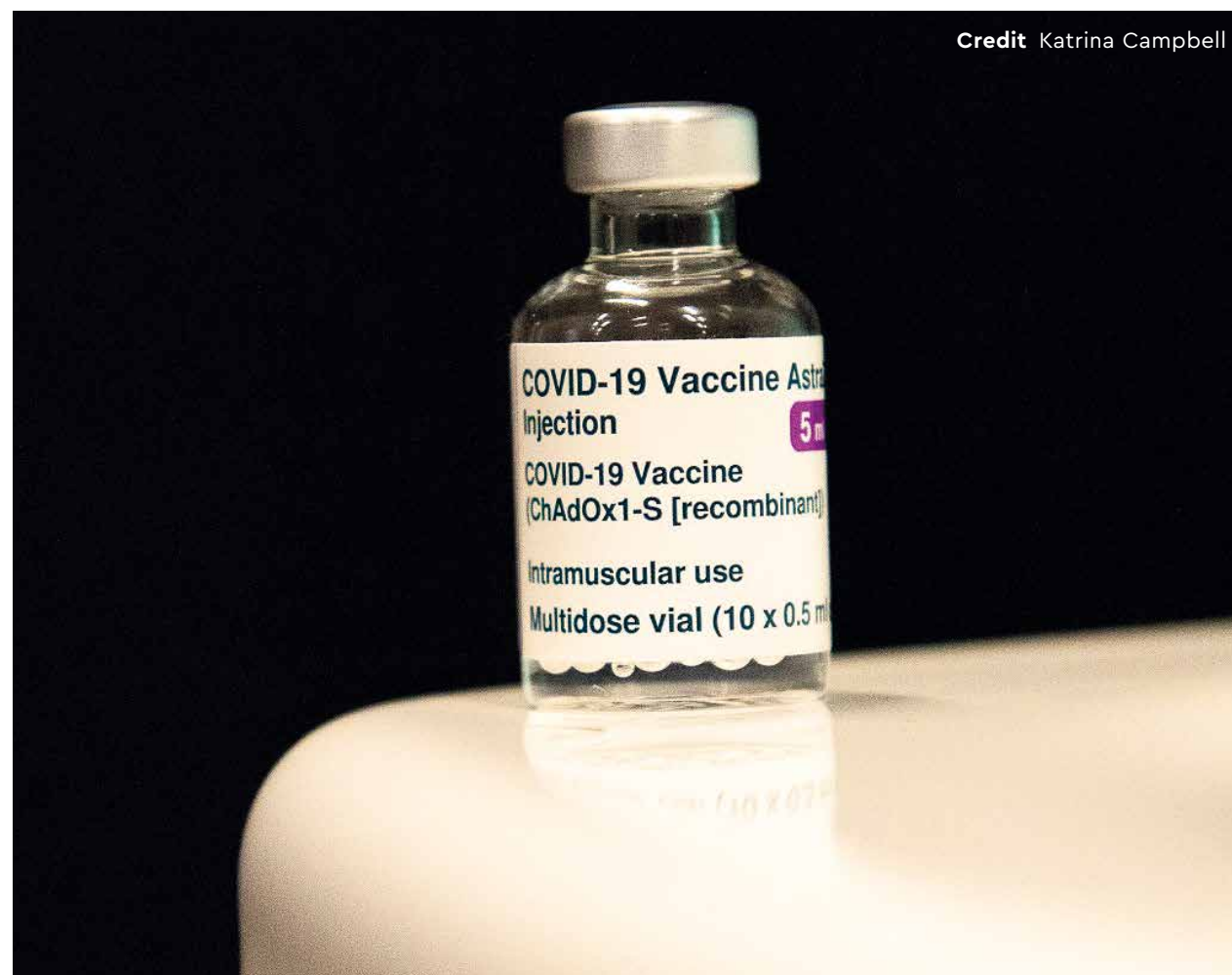
As well as the three hubs being run by Enfield GP practices, mass vaccination centres have also been set up using pharmacies and other venues, even including the Dugdale Centre in Enfield Town. These are being used to vaccinate people who fall into the priority groups for vaccinations but either haven't been invited yet or who are not registered with a GP.

If you are aged over 60 and have not yet received a first vaccine dose, you can book an appointment online:

Visit nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/coronavirus-vaccination/book-coronavirus-vaccination/

Watch the vaccination webinars held by Enfield Council for speakers of other languages:
Visit facebook.com/EnfieldCouncilUK

Credit Katrina Campbell



Focusing on mental health

Claire Fisher from Healthwatch Enfield on some of the advice from mental health groups heard at a recent webinar

It's hard to imagine that anyone might have come through this pandemic not having been impacted emotionally on some level.

Whether thinking of our own mental health or that of a friend or family member, expressions such as 'self-care' and 'wellbeing' are now part of our everyday language, never more so than through recent enforced periods of isolation.

Symptoms for those who already experience poor mental health may have become worse and many more may have been caught off guard by unfamiliar feelings, having never been in this position before.

That is why we brought together some of Enfield's top professionals in mental health services to join our panel at an online mental health event we held last month. Over 40 members of the public joined us to ask questions and hear about what local services are doing to support the community and find out where to get help and support.

We heard about the many services in Enfield that you can access for free to help support you and your loved ones with mental health. These include a range of services from practical things like counselling by telephone or self-referral to wellbeing activities and self-help advice.

For those needing extra support, the advice was loud and clear; speak to your GP as your first port of call. Don't delay getting help. GPs can direct you to the best support and, if necessary, make a referral. Members of the panel were unanimous in agreement that there is no shame in asking for help – you should think about getting help with your mental health in the same way as you would for your physical health.

We also heard about the five scientifically proven things you can do every day to help improve your mental health or help prevent it from worsening; connecting with others, keeping active, being present, learning, and giving.

Looking to the future, there is more funding coming into the borough to improve mental health services, such as more beds and support for crisis response services. Barnet, Enfield and Haringey Mental Health Trust also has a well-established 'experts by experience' programme as the whole of North Central London's health services move toward integrating physical and mental health services for patients.

In other words, people who have personal experience of using local mental health services are very much part of discussions around planning future services.

Watch a video of the online mental health event via Healthwatch Enfield's website:

Call 020 8373 6283

Text 07526 645 683

Visit healthwatchenfield.co.uk

healthwatch
Enfield

Monty's mighty local legacy



Monty Meth pictured at his home in Oakwood in 2018

Tributes pour in for Monty Meth, a 'relentless campaigner' and local champion who has died aged 95, writes James Cracknell

Tributes have poured in from across the borough for Monty Meth, the president of Enfield Over 50s Forum who died last month aged 95.

Monty was a journalist and campaigner who will leave a lasting legacy in Enfield and beyond, having remained active in the community right up until his death.

Friends and colleagues have described Monty, a former *Daily Mail* reporter, as a "people's champion", a "relentless campaigner" and as a "driving force" at the forum where he played an integral role for 22 years.

Born in Bethnal Green, Monty took an interest in photography at an early age and had a role as a messenger for a photo agency in his teens, before joining the Royal Navy in 1944 to help with the war effort.

After the Second World War, Monty's journalism career took off, and he became a well-respected reporter. He worked in local journalism in Leeds before joining the *Daily Mail* as industrial correspondent in 1965 and later being promoted to industrial editor. In 1970, he won the News Reporter of the Year award for his

"capacity to secure exclusive news".

In Monty's later career he moved into public relations and ran his own private consultancy, before retiring in 1999. Having lived in Enfield since the 1960s, in retirement Monty got involved with local community campaigning and joined Enfield Over 50s Forum.

Monty was made chair of what was then called Enfield Older People's Forum after attending just two meetings; the group had been in need of some dynamic leadership and Monty had demonstrated a wider vision for the organisation.

Under Monty's stewardship, the forum expanded massively – from just 70 members to more than 6,000 – and is now thought to be the largest voluntary sector organisation in the borough. It runs weekly advice sessions, social events, a film club, meetings with guest speakers, and annual events such as a winter fair that brings local healthcare providers together to tackle winter-related issues affecting elderly people.

The forum has also run several successful and influential campaigns, using connec-

tions with Enfield Council and local MPs to campaign for fairer public health funding, protecting the winter fuel allowance and free prescriptions, and calling for local improvements such as community toilets, better bus services, and pavement repairs.

Monty was made a Member of the Order of the British Empire (MBE) in the 2007 Queen's Birthday Honours for services to the communities of Enfield and Bethnal Green.

Still an active writer, Monty wrote a newspaper column in the *Enfield Gazette and Advertiser* prior to its closure in 2017, and subsequently began writing regularly for the *Dispatch* after it was launched in 2018. He also wrote for the forum's newsletter.

Monty lived in Oakwood with his wife Betty and together they had two children, Ian and Gill, plus four grandchildren and two great-grandchildren. He died last month having recently returned home from a short spell in hospital with an illness.

The executive committee of Enfield Over 50s Forum issued a joint tribute that said: "It is hard to describe how much we all will miss Monty's contribution to our work to improve the lives of older

people in Enfield. He has been one of the driving forces behind the forum for more than 20 years and his dedication, enthusiasm and sheer hard work has been instrumental in our success.

"He was particularly good at identifying problems and creating campaigns to provide solutions. He was hugely admired and loved by those who knew him and we will miss his humour and humanity."

Monty was a long-time Labour Party supporter but was well-respected across the political spectrum for his work championing local causes.

Council leader Nesil Caliskan described Monty as "a brilliant character and effective campaigner" who was "utterly committed to making Enfield a great borough for everyone to live in". Enfield North MP Feryal Clark said he was "relentless in his campaign on health" and that his death was "a huge loss to Enfield".

Joanne McCartney, the London Assembly member for Enfield and Haringey, said: "Monty was a great campaigner for the people of Enfield. His campaigning brought people together with the aim of making our borough better and fairer."

"He was hugely admired and loved by those who knew him"

Former council deputy leader Daniel Anderson said Monty was a "true people's champion" who "did so much for Enfield". Joanne Laban, leader of the Conservative group, said: "He worked tirelessly as president of [Enfield] Over 50s Forum and will be very much missed."

Former Enfield mayor Saray Karakus, who chose Enfield Over 50s Forum as one of her charities during her year as mayor in 2018/19, said Monty had been very supportive during her mayoralty, adding: "He soon conquered my heart. He truly was a gentleman, caring for others in the sweetest way."

As editor of the *Dispatch*, I first met Monty when the paper was in its infancy, after I arranged to interview him about his life and work with the forum. Monty had a tremendous enthusiasm for local journalism and was keen to help this new fledgling publication – he knew the role that local media could play in representing, supporting and championing the community.

Monty wrote for us often, usually on our health page (most recently in the February edition), and helped raise awareness of crucial local issues that might otherwise have been missed. He attended meetings of the local clinical commissioning group, scrutinised reports, and put in a level of hard work that I found quite staggering given his advancing years!

Thank you Monty, you will be much missed.

Council ‘hypocrisy’ claim over fossil fuel investments

New figures show local authority still investing millions in fossil fuel firms via its pension fund

BY SIMON ALLIN,
LOCAL DEMOCRACY REPORTER

Campaigners have accused Enfield Council of “mind-blowing hypocrisy” over £30million-worth of investments tied up in fossil fuels – despite declaring a climate emergency.

Environmental group Divest Enfield called for a “clear timeline” for the council to end all fossil fuel investments – and warned failing to do so could harm its reputation and finances.

Figures published by Friends of the Earth and Platform London reveal that 2.6% of the council’s pension fund holdings have been placed with firms linked to fossil fuel extraction, including ExxonMobil, BP and Shell.

The £30m total is well below the average for UK councils, which is just over £100m, but it comes less than two years after the council declared a ‘climate emergency’ and pledged to “divest the council from investment in fossil fuel companies”.

Adam McGibbon from Divest Enfield said: “It is staggering that nearly two years after declaring a climate emergency, Enfield Council is investing its pension fund in companies who are actively making the climate emergency worse.



Enfield Council cabinet members celebrate declaring a ‘climate emergency’ in July 2019 Credit Enfield Council

“The hypocrisy is mind-blowing – saying they care about climate change, while investing the council’s pension pot into polluting and increasingly risky fossil fuel investments.”

Enfield Council declared a climate emergency in July 2019, pledging to slash its

carbon emissions to net zero by 2030. The council’s climate action plan, published last year, includes a commitment to “achieve 100% divestment of fossil fuels from all council pension funds” by March 2025.

Adam claimed the pension policy and

investment committee had yet to act on the divestment pledge to ensure it is binding. He added: “The council’s pension committee is asleep at the wheel, with financial risk mounting for the pension fund.

“The committee must publish a clear timeline to end all fossil fuel investments or continue to incur reputational risk and place the financial consequences on its pension fund stakeholders.”

The top ten fossil fuel-linked firms the council’s pension fund invests in are ExxonMobil, BHP, Mitsubishi, Chevron, Royal Dutch Shell, Mitsui, ConocoPhillips, BP, Sumitomo, and Anglo American. The figures published in the report were obtained via Freedom of Information requests submitted to councils and are based on the 2019/20 financial year.

“The hypocrisy is mind-blowing”

An Enfield Council spokesperson said: “A number of actions are being taken in response to the council’s climate change commitment. An assessment of the carbon impact of all of its investments is underway, to significantly help reduce its carbon footprint during the next five years.

“The pension fund will invest up to 10% of its fund directly into renewable and sustainable energy. Furthermore, the transfer of up to £190million of passive equity investments into a low-carbon fund is being progressed. The council’s exposure to fossil fuels is already low, however, this is estimated to reduce carbon emissions further.

“The investment strategy will meet the council’s obligations to pension fund members and its responsibility to the environment.”

Plans revealed for North Mid housing scheme

BY JAMES CRACKNELL

Plans to build hundreds of homes on parts of the North Middlesex University Hospital site have been unveiled.

The Greater London Authority (GLA), which bought the land two years ago, is aiming to build 220

homes on the Edmonton site, with half “genuinely affordable” and at least ten set aside for NHS staff.

North Middlesex University Hospital NHS Trust is itself planning to build a multi-storey car park close to the northern entrance to help offset the loss of parking spaces in the south and

east of the site, where the GLA plans to build its homes. More housing could be developed in other parts of the site in future.

Architects IBI Group have put together a master-plan encompassing proposals from both the GLA and North Mid, with new and expanded hospital facilities also forming part of the wider long-term redevelopment over the next 15 years – incorporating the trust’s pathology department, education centre and multi-use Pymmes building.

Maria Kane, chief executive of the NHS Trust, said: “We have set out to explore how we can make North Mid fit for the future and be a positive community asset – service provider, employer, purchaser, educator and neighbour. Our ambitious plans will help chart a future that will help us make sure we continue to provide outstand-

ing care for the local community now, and for the next 100 years.”

The GLA states that its plans will “demonstrate how modern methods of construction can be used to deliver high-quality, net zero-carbon homes on NHS sites” to “prioritise the health and well-being of the residents, addressing the evidence that links poor-quality housing with poor health”.

The Department for Education had previously owned the hospital car park site with an expectation of building a new academy school there, but sold it to City Hall’s property development arm, GLA Land and Property, in March 2019. The site also includes the NHS trust’s headquarters, which will need to be moved elsewhere.

Despite the reduction in the hospital’s landholding, the GLA states there will be “no reduction in clinical provision”. A developer

is due to be announced in September and, subject to winning planning permission, construction is due to start in March 2023.

Tom Copley, deputy mayor for housing and residential development, said: “This is just the latest example of City Hall taking the lead to unlock the land needed to ease London’s housing crisis. I’m proud that this development will provide our NHS staff with much-deserved key worker homes, and that half of all homes on site will be genuinely affordable.

“This is also an exciting opportunity to use modern methods of construction to deliver the high-quality, modern, energy efficient housing Londoners deserve.”

A ‘walk-through’ video of the master-plan for the North Middlesex University Hospital site can be viewed on YouTube:

Visit youtube.com/watch?v=JNbVjW5-CLc



A vision for how the North Middlesex University Hospital site could look in 15 years after new housing and NHS facilities have been built

AROUND THE BOROUGH

EDMONTON GREEN

Man jailed for killing wife in their Edmonton flat

A MAN WHO ATTACKED AND killed his wife in their Edmonton flat has been given a life sentence.

Hussein Yusuf Egal, 66, was convicted of the murder of 57-year-old Maryan Ismail in a trial at the Old Bailey and was sentenced at the same court to a minimum of 22 years.

Egal had admitted killing Maryan but claimed he was acting in self-defence during a domestic argument last year. This claim was later proven false.

The court heard how, in the early evening of Monday 6th April 2020, police received a call from a member of the public. He stated that Egal had approached him in the

foyer of the flats in South Mall, Edmonton Green, and confessed to killing his wife.

When police officers arrived, Egal told them: "I killed her yesterday morning." In the flat, officers found Maryan covered with a purple duvet. She had suffered extensive head injuries as well as multiple other injuries all over her body; paramedics from the London Ambulance Service pronounced her dead at the scene.

Egal was interviewed by police and provided a statement saying he had argued with Maryan after he developed symptoms of Covid-19 and she asked him to move out.

Detective Sergeant Lucy Carberry said: "The officers who discovered Maryan's body were faced with a truly terrible scene. Maryan had suffered extensive injuries and the turmoil and disorder in the flat showed there had been a considerable disturbance. Egal claimed he was defending himself, but there was no indication of him suffering any injuries.

"This was a wanton act of violence, carried out with sheer ferocity. It is important, particularly in the current climate with isolation and periods of lockdown that all of us do everything we can to stop domestic violence."

ANGEL EDMONTON

New cycling route



ENFIELD COUNCIL HAS FINISHED work on a new walking and cycling route – using land that was once a railway line.

Angel Walk is a fully-lit, tree-lined path that now completes a long-promised green route connecting Meridian Water with

Edmonton Green. It uses the old track bed of a branch railway that closed in 1964 and had since become overgrown and neglected, often dogged by fly-tipping.

The council was granted £720,000 from Transport for London in 2019 to fund the project, which

links – via a new zebra crossing on Montagu Road – to the Cemetery Walk pedestrian and cycle path that runs all the way to Edmonton Green Shopping Centre.

At the southern end, Angel Walk links to the Angel Gardens play area opened in 2015, as well as to a segregated cycle path that runs alongside Conduit Lane and later connects to Meridian Water Station.

The 350-metre route includes lighting across its entire length along with an avenue of trees and shrub planting. Wildflower meadow planting will help to promote wildlife and complement an existing small watercourse.

Council leader Nesil Caliskan said: "This project transforms a derelict piece of land into a wonderful new community space. In addition to this, the project provides a key active travel link between Meridian Water and Edmonton Green.

"The project has seen a huge amount of planting and includes places for people to sit, rest and enjoy the space."

ENFIELD TOWN

Offices open

A NEW FIVE-STORY OFFICE building will give the local economy a much-needed boost, according to Enfield Council.

Technology firm Metaswitch last month completed its new global headquarters in Genotin Road, which can accommodate 500 staff. Its former site, a smaller office building in Church Street, will be torn down for new housing.

The council played a "pivotal role" in the development, allowing Metaswitch – now owned by Microsoft –



The new Metaswitch building in Genotin Road to build on a former car park, while also funding the £27million construction. The site will now provide a regular income through rent.

PONDERS END

Nightclub punished

BY OLIVIA DEVEREUX-EVANS

A NIGHTCLUB HAS BEEN ORDERED to close after it was busted by police for hosting parties in breach of Covid-19 rules.

The Incense Lounge in Alma Road, Ponders End, ignored repeated warnings from Enfield Council and the Metropolitan Police and has now been hit with a three-month court closure order.

Police officers found a large gathering at the venue in October 2020, when none of the revellers were social distancing and few wore face coverings.

During another visit, the shutters were found closed to conceal the inside

of the venue. Inside the space had been operating as a nightclub and shisha bar, serving alcohol and playing music without the required permissions. Enforcement notices were served but the business continued to operate.

George Savva, cabinet member for licensing and regulatory services, said: "Council licensing officers were left with no confidence that those in charge were capable of complying with the law."

The closure order was granted in February by Highbury Corner Magistrates Court, under section 80 of the Anti-Social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014. The court also awarded costs of £4,454.24 payable to Enfield Council.

ENFIELD HIGHWAY

Wetlands scheme

BY SIMON ALLIN,
LOCAL DEMOCRACY REPORTER

A WETLANDS AREA WILL BE created at Durants Park to reduce the risk of flooding and boost biodiversity.

The council-led scheme is designed to protect properties in surrounding roads in an area deemed to be at high risk of flooding. It will involve creating three wetland 'cells' covering an area of 1,300 square metres in the

south-eastern corner of the park, to absorb surface water run-off. Seven new trees, wildflower meadows and a footpath linking Alma Road to Exeter Estate are among other benefits.

At a planning committee meeting where the scheme was approved, planning officer James Clark told councillors: "The surrounding roads are peppered with areas highly liable to flood. Having storage on this site will protect areas at risk."



Sir Henry Bowles with wife Lady Florence at Forty Hall Credit: Enfield Local Studies Library and Archives

The remarkable life of Sir Henry Bowles

Gary Boudier recounts the life and times of an Enfield legend, including his connection to the current royal family

Born in 1858, Sir Henry Ferryman Bowles was the eldest son of Henry Carrington Bowles Bowles of Myddleton House, Bulls Cross, who was for many years the governor of the New River Company.

Young Henry was educated at Harrow, then Jesus College Cambridge. At age 23 he received his bachelor of arts degree and aged 26 became a master of arts.

Carrington Bowles purchased Forty Hall in 1894 and the following year Sir Henry, his wife Florence and daughter Wilma, moved into the hall. During their time they renovated, modernised, altered the main staircase and installed electricity.

During his lifetime Henry became more and more involved in politics, being elected as a Conservative MP, as well as becoming embroiled in local activities,

so much so that he purchased the *Enfield Gazette* newspaper. He was also a very active member of the Freemasons and even led a long legal career as a justice of the peace (JP).

After joining the army's reserve forces, Henry received his first commission as a second lieutenant and, in 1879, was part of the Kings Own Royal Tower Hamlets Militia. He also had the same rank in the 7th Battalion Rifle Brigade (The Prince Consort's Own).

He became a captain in 1882, followed by major and second-in-command. By 1900, Henry was lieutenant colonel for the 1st Volunteer Battalion DCO Middlesex Regiment. During the First World War he was the county commandant for volunteer units in Middlesex, before retiring from

military service in 1918 at the end of the conflict – with rank of colonel.

While he was still been active in the military, Henry made his move into politics. As a Conservative he won the Enfield seat in parliament on 1st April 1889. The same year, he became one of the first councillors for the newly-formed Middlesex County Council. He retired from Westminster politics in 1922, after winning five elections (as well as losing once, in 1906, before regaining the seat in 1918).

From then on Henry became more active in local associations. He became heavily involved with an organisation that was seeking to conserve Enfield's heritage and in 1936 became one of the first members of the council on Enfield Preservation Society.

Henry also had a successful legal career. As a JP he became chair of the bench for Enfield Magistrates' Court. He was a JP for 54 years in total and was also chair of the Edmonton Petty Sessional Division for 21 years. In 1918 he was appointed as deputy lieutenant for the County of Middlesex, and later served as Lord High Sheriff of Middlesex in 1928, before retiring from the bench in 1936.

In 1926 Henry had been conferred a baronetcy from the king in recognition of his political and local affairs. Remarkably, during my research I found that Henry had held office in at least 30 organisations in Enfield and London, including as fellow for The Royal Society of Arts, London Zoo and The Royal Horticultural Society. He was in several masonic lodges and chapters of the Freemasons, including a past master of the Bard of Avon Lodge which, during 1925, installed the Duke of York, later King George VI, as its worshipful master.

Henry took control of the *Gazette* in 1893 when a new group titled Meyers, Brook and Co Ltd was established. The new company moved into Lancaster Hall in Silver Street. Over the forthcoming years the paper had numerous ups and downs, but the mainstay during all this was the main shareholder, Henry. With wife Lady Florence, he often laid on garden parties at Forty Hall and excursions to the coast, and stayed with the paper until his death.

Lady Florence, who had been heavily involved with the newly-established girl guide movement, died in 1935. In her obituary it was noted that she would be "deeply mourned" by the residents of Enfield.

Sir Henry died on 14th October 1943 and, although it was war-time, over 700 people attended both St Andrew's Church for the ceremony and later Jesus Church, Forty Hill, where he was interred alongside Lady Florence. The family vault can be seen just inside the entrance.

The couple's only daughter, Wilma Mary Garnault Bowles, married Eustace Parker in 1913. The additional surname of Bowles was later added by royal licence, thus starting the famous family name of Parker-Bowles. The couple had one son, Derek Parker-Bowles, who married Ann De Trafford, and their son Andrew Henry Parker-Bowles was born in 1939. Andrew married Camilla Rosemary Shand in 1973, who eventually divorced and married the heir to the throne, Prince Charles, in 2005.

Derek Parker-Bowles inherited Forty Hall in 1943 and lived there until 1951, when the property was eventually sold to Enfield Council and became a local museum, and the estate became a public park.

Advertisement

NHS

After clean water, vaccination is the most effective public health intervention.



The group pictured in Grovelands Park shortly before the pandemic

Why running is good for the mind

Marc Bear leads a group of runners in Winchmore Hill focused on improving their mental health

Run Talk Run is a friendly, safe and open space to talk about the good days, bad days and everything in-between.

Part of a global initiative, Run Talk Run (RTR) aims to make both physical activity and mental health support less intimidating and more accessible.

There are so many reasons why running makes it easier to open up. When you run with a community, you are all facing forwards, rather than looking at each other. That often makes it easier to talk about the difficult things on our minds and allows us to speak without feeling judged by those with us.

At Enfield Run Talk Run we set off at 6.15pm every Tuesday evening from The Green in Winchmore Hill. We follow a 5km route around the beautiful lake at Grovelands Park, at a very casual pace. We run/walk depending on how we're feeling and the conversations we are having. The group is open to anyone and no-one should feel too intimidated to come along.

I created the Enfield arm of Run Talk Run after discovering the Euston group in 2019. Having experienced the benefits of the initiative first-

hand in helping to manage and support my own mental health, I wanted to get involved in a group closer to home. I looked around and the closest I could find was in Finsbury Park!

So, in January 2020, I decided to set up the Enfield Run Talk Run community. Although the group has been a bit stop-start because of the lockdown periods, I do my best to offer a consistent space for our community to use, as and when they need. We have a WhatsApp group too so that we can keep in touch when we can't run together.

The past year has been so isolating for many people and now, more than ever, our mental health is suffering from the effects of lockdown. Run Talk Run offers a space to talk through worries, and a community to exercise with.

When people have come for their first time, they are often nervous about their own fitness levels, but we will always be a beginner-friendly group. Walking is fine and we never leave anyone behind.

For more information and to get involved:
Visit runtalkrun.com
Instagram [/runtalkrun_enfield](https://www.instagram.com/runtalkrun_enfield)

Grassroots sport returns

Football is among the sports now allowed to resume, writes Andrew Warshaw

Competitive league football at Enfield Town may be several months away in terms of a first-team restart but below senior level it's all systems go, starting in early April, after the government gave the green light for organised grassroots sport.

The club runs a number of junior sides, all of whom are back in action having been mothballed for the best part of three months. Easter Sunday is the projected date for the resumption of most of the club's 16 teams, from under-sevens to under-18s, playing in organised leagues on park pitches at weekends until the end of May.

"They can't wait to get going," said Town board member Ram Ismail. "They've lost a huge chunk of their active life. We have always been about trying to give everyone a chance, no matter what their age."

A vast majority of the kids who make up the various age groups are from in and around the borough, serving as a conveyor belt to rise through the ranks, just as players do at professional level. The youngest ones start off in five-a-side teams, moving up to seven- and nine-a-side as they get older and finally to eleven-a-side.

It's not just the youth teams

who are starting up. At the other end of the scale there is walking football for the over-50s, while the club is particularly proud of its Saturday morning football school which kicks off again on Saturday 3rd April, created for kids who may not otherwise get picked for their respective age groups.

"This is so important for us," said Ram. "You get kids of ten, eleven, twelve who are not ready or do not enjoy the competitive side and regular mid-week training commitments. By coming to the football school, they are getting their fix. The whole programme buys into the concept of us being a community club."

Even more laudable is a partnership between the club and the local NHS trust, offering children with cerebral palsy and other co-ordination difficulties specialised coaching sessions. The financing for the kit and match expenses of the adult learning disability squad comes courtesy of one of Enfield's leading companies, Metaswitch, whose executive assistant Gill Paschalis has been driving the collaboration.

She told the *Dispatch*: "I have seen for myself the positive impact that this has had on these children and their families."

"I have had the privilege of

joining some of those families on the touch line and was able to hear the wonderful and positive stories that our involvement has helped to achieve."

Last but very much not least in terms of the club's community activities, the large-scale coaching initiative extends to helping local schools that focus on older children with social problems. One such school is Orchardside, whose head of physical education, Simon Bolden, outlined the benefits of the sessions provided by Enfield Town in assisting emotional development.

"Students are at Orchardside School because they have barriers to their learning which can affect the opportunities they are given to succeed and achieve in life," said Simon. "This initiative allows students to not just develop skills and techniques, through football, but to improve health benefits socially, physically and emotionally."

"I believe this also improved the attendance to school, as the students were so excited. Enfield Town have been very supportive. It has been a very tough time for all schools across the UK but these initiatives are more important than ever to support local communities and support mental health."



Enfield Playing Fields will soon be hosting football and other outdoor team sports

Support independent local journalism

What we do

Here at *Enfield Dispatch* we do things differently. We combine professional journalism with voluntary contributions from people who live and work in the borough and create content which is responsive to and reflective of the community.

These are challenging times for print media with many newspapers closing and advertising revenue in decline, but our not-for-profit model offers a new approach to creating local journalism which is inclusive and accountable.

How you can help

As a not-for-profit publication we rely on the generous support of our community. We look to our readers, who recognise the value of independent journalism, to help support us.

You can do this by becoming a member either as an individual or as an organisation. See the rewards opposite and once you've decided what package you would like, visit our website:

enfelddispatch.co.uk/join

Individual rewards

£3 per month upwards:

Name in print and online, pin badge

£5 per month upwards:

Name in print and online, pin badge, tote bag, paper posted to you every month

Organisational rewards

£10 per month:

Name in print and online, 10% discount on advertising

£20 per month:

Name and logo in print and online, 20% discount on advertising

£50 per month:

Name and logo in print and online, 40% discount, six free small adverts per year

Members

Derek Grant, Michael Dickinson, Michael Cole, Young Notes, Ed Balleny, Natasha Boydell, Elizabeth Crosthwait, Richard Stones, Philip Ridley, Suzanne Beard, Chris Kaufman, Martyn Stogden, Susan Cook, Rupert Price, Meryn Cutler, Andrew Irvine, Basil Clarke, John Naughton, Right at Home Enfield, MumSing Choir, Penelope Williams, Lloyd Tew-Cragg, Andrew Warshaw, Anna Crowley, Neil Churchill, Karl Brown, Anthony Fisher, Dan Wright, Kay Heather, Julia Mountain, Jerome O'Callaghan, Carole Stanley, Mervyn Maggs, Aditya Chakraborty, Norman Bennett, Vivien Giladi, Greg Andrews, The Old Enfield Charitable Trust, Matt Burn, Enfield URCs, Martin Russo, Marilyn Hamilton, Laura Davenport, Mick Wood, Helen Osman, Ranvir Mallick, Enfield Over 50s Forum, Francis Sealey, Caroline Banks, Bill Linton, Joe Hickey, Irene Richards, William Yates, Petr Mitterbach, Gianni Sarra, Tracy Hughes, Kristiana Heapy, Neil Bachelor, John Crowther, Hannah Salvidge, Adrian Day, Sean Wilkinson, Janice Nunn, Julia Daniel, Ranjana Pieris, Deborah Dalglish, Philip Foxe, Phil H, Matthew Eade, Dána Roberts, A Cleary, Stephen Evans, Julian Rhys-Williams, Steve King, Robert Pite, Lauri Clarke, Anne Cullen, Ross Cunningham, Diana Goforth, Basim Jafar, Brendan O'Brien, Kirsten Lowe, Seton During, Aurora Yaacov, Sylvia Collicott, Paula Lamont, Ryan Hebbs, Adam White, Sue Grayson Ford, Malcolm Stow, Matt McLaren, Bush Hill Park Residents Association, Liz Wright, Elsie Rigden.

Member organisations



To become an organisational member email:
klaudia@socialspider.com