

ENFIELD DISPATCH

Nº.36 THE BOROUGH'S FREE COMMUNITY NEWSPAPER

SEP 2021

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Residents urge council to stop using Trent Park for large events

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WWE wrestlers invaded Enfield Town FC's QE2 Stadium after hall-of-famer Triple H announced a shock sponsorship deal between the club and WWE's British brand, NXT UK. WWE's UK Performance Center opened in Enfield two years ago and Triple H said: "Enfield has played a big part in NXT UK and that is why I'm pleased to announce a first-of-its-kind partnership between NXT UK and Enfield Town FC in celebration of their 20th anniversary." – read more on Page 19 Credit WWE



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Last-ditch bid to stop incinerator

BY SIMON ALLIN, LOCAL DEMOCRACY REPORTER

Campaign groups and residents have written to Enfield Council expressing "strong opposition" to plans for a new waste incinerator in Edmonton and calling for a review of the controversial scheme.

Opponents of the £1.2 billion North London Heat and Power Project (NLHPP) – the official name for the incinerator development – wrote to the council's chief executive accusing the authority's leadership of routinely ignoring "compelling" evidence against the scheme.

Organisations including Enfield Over 50s Forum, Enfield Climate Action Forum (EnCaf), Enfield Black Lives Matter and Extinction Rebellion have signed the letter alongside 67 Enfield residents, including Vicki Pite, a former Labour councillor who quit last year.

The letter warns they "do not believe the decision to proceed has been made with Enfield residents' best interests as a priority" and asks how the council is sourcing independent information and applying adequate scrutiny to the project and its governing body, North London Waste Authority (NLWA), which covers seven boroughs. It also asks whether there are financial incentives in place that mean Enfield Council stands to benefit if the project goes ahead.

The letter adds: "We are confident that some independent research will lead you to the same conclusion as us; that there is real merit for a pause and review of the incinerator expansion."

The new Edmonton incinerator was awarded planning permission in 2017. According to NLWA, the project aligns with environmental policies seeking to reduce landfill and increase recycling and will

slash carbon emissions by 215,000 tonnes per year compared to the current incinerator.

But in their letter to the council's chief executive, Enfield campaigners dispute some of NLWA's environmental claims. The letter cites research claiming the new incinerator will emit 700,000 tonnes of carbon dioxide a year – far higher than the 28,000 tonnes claimed by NLWA.

Preparatory work on the site for the new incinerator at Edmonton Eco Park has recently finished and a tendering process is now taking place for its construction. NLWA has not denied reports that only one bid is currently on the table, with opponents questioning whether there was a competitive bidding process for the project and asking what's being done to ensure Enfield taxpayers get "value for money".

Further concerns raised by the campaigners include their claim that incinerators emit "a wealth

of dioxins, NOx [nitrogen oxides] and particulate matter which have proven to be damaging to health".

Because there are six other boroughs involved in the project, Enfield Council could not unilaterally make a decision regarding the future of the new incinerator.

A spokesperson for NLWA pointed out that new recycling facilities were also being built at Edmonton Eco Park and said: "NLHPP is a vital asset for North London. It is providing new flagship facilities to support our aim to increase recycling and will perform an essential service by disposing of non-recyclable waste in a safe and clean way."

"Delaying NLHPP would severely undermine our efforts to tackle the climate emergency."

The spokesperson said the project "creates direct economic benefits to Enfield" and that NLWA estimates

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Man convicted over bagel shop murder

A man has been convicted of murdering a 29-year-old at a bagel restaurant in Enfield Highway in a "cold-blooded and premeditated" killing.

Khallid Hogan, 20, of Manor Court in Bulls Cross, was convicted at the Old Bailey on 11th August of murdering Enfield resident Abdullahi Mohamoud last year.

The jury heard that on the afternoon of 19th March 2020, Abdullahi visited Bagel Brotherz in Hertford Road, Enfield Highway. As he waited for his food, Hogan walked into the restaurant and started firing a gun at him. Four shots were fired but the bullets all missed Abdullahi, who then fled through a back door into a yard of garages.

As Abdullahi was climbing

a concrete wall, Hogan fired another shot towards him, which hit him in the head. He collapsed a short distance later and died in hospital later the same day. Hogan fled the scene.

"Hogan carried out a cold-blooded and premeditated attack"

Metropolitan Police detectives launched an investigation and established Hogan had been the passenger in a car that arrived at the restaurant shortly after Abdullahi. In an attempt to give himself an alibi, Hogan had phoned his friend Alex Weekes and kept the line open during the period of the shooting. Weekes, 20, of Brimsdown Avenue, was later charged with perverting the course of jus-

tice and was himself found guilty at the Old Bailey trial.

Detective Chief Inspector Claire Hine, the lead investigator of the case, said: "Hogan carried out a cold-blooded and premeditated attack on Abdullahi Mohamoud, shooting at him at least five times.

"It was extremely fortunate that nobody else was injured in this incident, as there were four other people in the restaurant at the time.

"Thanks to the tireless and meticulous work of my team of detectives, who pieced together Hogan's movements on the day of the murder, by analysing hours of CCTV footage and mobile phone usage data, he has now been convicted of murder and will go to prison for a long time."

Hogan will be sentenced on Monday, 4th October.

Thousands raised for boy who lost his leg

BY JAMES CRACKNELL

Thousands of pounds have been raised for an Enfield schoolboy who lost his leg after being hit by a car.

The headteacher of Enfield Grammar School set up an online fundraising page for pupil Kiren Mustafa, 16, after the incident in Enfield Town in early May which resulted in him losing his lower leg. Within a few weeks, it had surpassed its £15,000 target.

Kiren, a talented footballer who had been due to start a scholarship with Tottenham Hotspur, will use the money to help buy a top-of-the-range prosthetic leg to help him walk again, which he is determined to do by the time he starts his A-levels this autumn.

Mum Andrea Mustafa told the Dispatch: "The school have been absolutely amazing, I cannot thank them enough for what they have done for Kiren, it's totally overwhelming.

"Kiren has been super positive. We have had some dark days and we have had a lot of tears, it has



Enfield Grammar School pupil Kiren Mustafa with mum Andrea

taken a toll mentally as well, but he is a soldier and is trying to look to the future.

"You can get them [prosthetics] on the NHS but they are basic. What has helped him is seeing what can be done for him privately. He will need an 'everyday leg' which will cost £20,000 and a 'shower leg' for swimming and anything else, which is £6,500. He will need to do a lot of rehabili-

tation as well, which is intense.

"Kiren has two goals now; to be able to look at himself again, and to be able to walk back into school."

Headteacher Chris Lamb said a lot of the pupils had wanted to help Kiren in the wake of the incident. He told the Dispatch: "There was a feeling in the school that we wanted to do something for him.

"The kids had a no-uniform day and then the Go Fund Me page became the central point for fundraising. It was lovely, we had local businesses contributing, the owner of a bed shop offered a bed to the family."

The incident which led to Kiren losing his leg is still being investigated by police. In addition to Kiren, two other pedestrians suffered minor injuries, as well as a 79-year-old car passenger. The 80-year-old driver of the vehicle, who had mounted the pavement, stopped at the scene and was interviewed under caution.

The Go Fund Me page for Kiren is still accepting donations:

Visit gofundme.com/f/can-you-help-support-our-student

Park damage

A music festival due to be held at Trent Park was cancelled with two weeks notice following "significant" damage caused by a previous event.

Enfield Council announced Elrow Town Festival, due to be held on 21st-22nd August, would be cancelled because of the impact of 51st State Festival, held earlier that month. A spokesperson stated: "The organisers [...] did not return the site in a condition that meets the exacting standards demanded by Enfield Council of all third parties.

"While we anticipate some wear and tear during third party events and allow for a reasonable amount of repair to the site afterwards, the damage this time was beyond anything we would expect."

Residents have previously raised concerns about the impact on the park of the two large events, both of which were also held at Trent Park in 2019. Lorries had collided with the Grade 2-listed brick entrance in Cockfosters Road that year, and this was again evident last month following 51st State Festival. Organisers did not respond to requests for comment.

Electric vans

Enfield Council is purchasing 42 electric vehicles to help reduce carbon emissions.

All 34 of the council's new small van fleet will run on electricity, while eight larger electric vehicles will be bought in addition to eight other petrol vehicles. Deputy leader Ian Barnes said: "Our climate action plan includes a switch of the council's vehicle fleet to electric, with a target of 60% by 2026 and 100% by 2030. We have already begun installing charging points at council offices."

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£50million has already been spent with local companies. "The project also benefits Enfield taxpayers," they added. "This is because, as well as being the most environmentally responsible solution, it provides the most cost-effective solution for waste disposal, retaining ownership in local authority hands and avoiding pressures which would arise on council tax costs if, instead, North London had to rely on capacity being available in private sector waste facilities."

Enfield Council did not respond to a request for comment.

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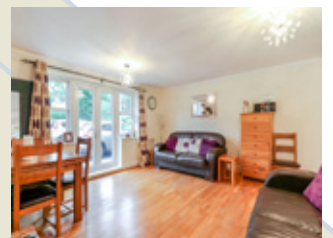
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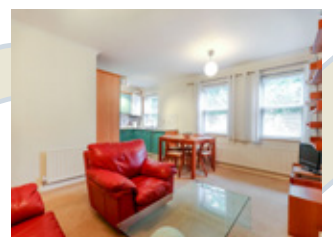
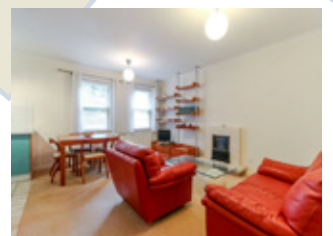
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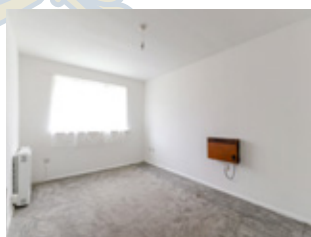
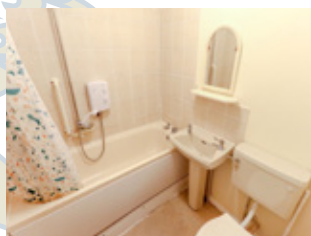
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Enfield Club House members making their donation to The Pantry, from left to right; Sadiya, Janet, Pat, Chris, Stephen, Ogezi, Míai



We all need a little help sometimes

Volunteer Claire Fisher on how a group of local not-for-profit organisations teamed up to make a difference

When charities and support groups work together, amazing things happen.

Those of you working for Enfield's charity sector will already know just how much the most vulnerable people in our community rely on small local services and groups to keep them going. There's been some real heartwarming stories throughout the pandemic of local heroes working tirelessly to feed and support the most vulnerable among us.

So, I wanted to take a moment to look at this from the perspective of someone on the receiving end of this help, and discuss how being able to simultaneously contribute to helping others has made a real difference for them.

Last month members of local mental health charity Enfield Club House, including Pat Collins, went along to Bounces Road, Edmonton, to donate some fresh fruit and vegetables to The Pantry, a food club where people on low incomes can access fresh nutritious food and support such as financial advice.

This followed work that Pat and

other members of Enfield Club House have been doing over the last six months in helping to set up a community allotment, as part of a project from Bountagu Big Local, which is growing fresh produce for sharing in the community. Bountagu is a National Lottery-funded, resident-led initiative with the ambition to support and improve the area of Edmonton around Bounces Road and Montagu Road, and the allotment project is part of its environmental remit.

For Pat, the work on the allotment and subsequent donation to The Pantry, a small act of kindness, helped make a big difference to his self-esteem. He said: "I feel a real sense of pride being able to give something back to the community."

"This allotment has been great for me, being outside, doing something useful, learning about healthy food and being part of a team working together, has been brilliant. It kept me going."

In return for helping set up the allotment, Enfield Club House has been able to use a community hub space in Bounces Road

– Social Sphere – as part of its weekly therapy sessions every Wednesday.

As lead volunteer for the allotment project, it has been a pleasure to get to know the members of Enfield Club House and, I can honestly say, we couldn't have done it without them.

There are five main pillars to keeping on track with mental health; connecting with others, being active, learning, taking time to enjoy the moment, and giving back. Not only does this project help tick all five boxes for Enfield Club House members, but everyone at The Pantry, Bountagu Big Local, Social Sphere, as well as ordinary residents, has hugely benefited from the project too.

We all need to accept help sometimes and, by being involved in doing something meaningful when you're in that place, it can give you a sense of dignity.

For more information about Enfield Club House:
Call 020 8373 6387
Email info@enfieldclubhouse.org.uk

For more information about Bountagu Big Local:
Call 020 8807 5827
Email info@bountagu.com

Campaign to smarten Southgate

Dionne John on the launch of a new community initiative in Southgate

Last month we launched a campaign to make Southgate cleaner, safer and greener.

Our community group leading the campaign is called Southgate Taskforce and we aim to improve safety, reduce litter, and expand recycling and green spaces.

Residents are being encouraged to sign up and take part in a series of initiatives taking place throughout the year, such as litter picks, planting days and street-watch patrols.

The campaign has been conceived by local councillors and community organisers, as a way to boost the local area and support residents and businesses to recover from the impact of the pandemic.

Southgate Taskforce is a partnership made up of residents, businesses and community groups. We are very excited about the campaign and we are now looking for volunteers,

including people or local groups who may wish to lead on some of the initiatives for our next event.

Hannah Newton, from Southgate Taskforce, explained: "This is a great opportunity for residents, businesses, community groups, plus the local authority, to work in partnership to improve Southgate and make it a better place to live, work and visit."

Zoey Cooper, from Enfield Climate Action Forum (EnCaf), added: "The aim of 'Cleaner, Safer, Greener Southgate' is two-fold. We want to celebrate the work being done by residents and local businesses."

"But we also want to encourage and support people to get to know their area and respect their surroundings in a more sustainable way."

For more information about the campaign and to get involved:

Email CleanerSaferGreenerSouthgate@gmail.com

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



Hannah Newton and Dionne John at the launch last month of 'Cleaner, Safer, Greener Southgate'

All in good taste

Neil Littman sets out on a mission to sample some of Enfield's best eateries as they try to recover their trade

The last year or so has been a steep learning curve for all of us; we have learned to appreciate what we have on our doorsteps and not take for granted the places where we go out to eat and socialise.

While most restaurants and cafes around Winchmore Hill where I live have survived, a few established places have not, and several have had to adapt and change their offers and be more flexible to meet demand. But home delivery is no substitute for being there and soaking up the atmosphere of a restaurant dining experience.

Some of those around the borough that didn't make it through the pandemic include Beautiful South, in Windmill Hill, and Turkish restaurant Samdan Meze and Grill, in The Green. They will be missed. But, in the spirit of enterprise, new places have also opened, and it will be interesting to see how well they do and whether they succeed. One thing I have learned living in this area is that residents are very loyal to their chosen venues!

I like to experience an eclectic mix of venues, large and small, pubs and cafés, and even a few pop-ups – such as a greasy spoon 'caff' I went to recently that was offering new Asian dishes in addition to egg and chips and a mug of tea!

I have no special qualifications as a food writer, apart from wanting to bring these



La Rocca in Green Lanes, Winchmore Hill, has been running for 15 years

places to people's attention. So with that in mind, during a break from work last month I ate at La Rocca, a little corner of Italy that first landed in Winchmore Hill Broadway (Green Lanes) in 2006. Family-run, it has

changed hands once since then, but still remains authentically Italian.

I was told the interior was "imported directly from Florence" to maintain the authentic look of their gelateria. It occupies

a long space with seating for around 30 and opens from morning until late afternoon. It's a place to escape to and pretend I am on holiday in northern Italy. The ambience is helped by the conversations in Italian being overheard in the corner of the restaurant where the owners congregate.

The Google description is a "pizza and cake shop" which is a bit misleading since ice cream is one of their main offerings. They share a lot in common with Marine Ices in Chalk Farm; they often have queues around the block but that's not the case here – yet! Their ice cream is homemade and I cannot think of anywhere else in the borough where you can have the same experience. It is also a very popular after-school and family party venue.

The food menu is straightforward; panini, pasta, pizza. I've eaten here several times and the experience is familiar and authentic. The pizzas are big and typically Italian with thin crusts and traditional toppings. Prices range from £7–£10. Pasta dishes cost about the same and they also serve risotto and chicken escalope. La Rocca also sells a vast range of cakes, including cannoli, which I try to restrict myself to purchasing about three times a year!

For more information about La Rocca, at 751 Green Lanes N21 3SA: Visit laroccalondon.com

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Council admits failings over forced marriage case ‘Rigorous review’ promised by council leader

BY SIMON ALLIN, LOCAL DEMOCRACY REPORTER, AND JAMES CRACKNELL

Enfield Council will conduct a “robust and rigorous review” of the events leading up to a girl being forced into a marriage with a man who beat and allegedly raped her.

Last month, Judge Oliver Jones found the council and its social services missed opportunities to protect the girl, now aged 15, from being married to a man ten years older than her.

Barnet County Court heard the council failed to take action despite warnings from teachers and social workers in 2019 that she was at risk of a forced marriage. In June 2020 the girl, who cannot be named for legal reasons, was forced to marry the man after travelling to a different country.

A council spokesperson said it “accepted the judge’s findings and should have dealt with the case far better” and pledged the authority would do more to ensure all potential victims of forced marriage are protected from harm, as well as conducting a review of the case.

But in a letter to the council leader, opposition councillors demanded answers on the political oversight of the case, asking what actions were taken by the then-cabinet member in charge of children’s services, Rick Jewell, and when he was personally notified. The letter also asked why he was not attending the safeguarding partnership board meetings “and asking the important and relevant questions”.

Cllr Jewell was cabinet member for children’s services from May 2019 until June this year, when he was handed the environment portfolio by the council leader.

Ayfer Orhan, an ex-Labour councillor who is now Community First’s shadow lead for children’s services, said that when she was cabinet member for children and schools she regularly attended the children’s safeguarding partnership board “to hear first-hand from all stakeholders [...] to see how diligent they all were in protecting children and young people”.

Community First’s letter, co-signed by group leader Dinah Barry and Cllr Orhan, also asked when the council leader and cabinet were made aware of the case, and why the leader “failed to take all necessary action [...] to protect this vulnerable young person”.

It continues: “We want assurances the new lead cabinet member will be instructed to attend with regularity the children’s executive board meetings so as to have political oversight.”

In a written response, council leader Nesil Caliskan did not address these points but said: “One case like this is one too



Charles Babbage House in Melling Drive is home to Enfield Council’s children’s services

“One case like this is one to many and I have asked for a robust review”

many and I have asked for a robust and rigorous review so lessons can be learned for the future.”

Cllr Caliskan added that, since 2019, it has not been mandatory for the cabinet member for children’s services to attend local safeguarding board meetings, but that Cllr Jewel had been “extremely committed and effective” and was “attending the six-monthly wider partnership meetings and monitoring local learning reviews”.

Tony Theodoulou, the council’s statutory director of children’s services, said: “On behalf of Enfield Council, I express my deepest regret for the harm suffered by the victim of this horrendous abuse. All the professionals involved are doing everything they can to help her recover from the trauma she experienced.

“Enfield Council has an unwavering commitment to do everything to protect children from abuse, and the council has invested in additional staff and services in response to a rising demand for child protection services in recent years.

“Investigating child abuse is complex work that requires a range of checks and balances to ensure that high standards of

practice are maintained. I am extremely disappointed that those standards were not fully met during this investigation and, in consultation with the adminis-

tration, have commissioned a comprehensive review of the actions taken by officers and an investigation of all similar cases.

“The officers involved will

be performing alternative duties while the outcome is pending.”

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Cleaning up our local streams

Alison Archer co-founded a voluntary group to help reduce pollution and improve water quality

Cleaning up a heavily polluted stream running beside a busy dual carriageway might not sound like everyone's idea of fun, but for Alison Archer, it's been a life-affirming experience.

Three years ago Alison, from Bowes Park, started organising a group of volunteers whose mission was to improve water quality and reduce pollution in Pymmes Brook, a tributary of the River Lea that flows east through Barnet and Enfield boroughs.

For much of its length, the stream runs alongside or underneath the North Circular, attracting a lot of litter. Undeterred by these challenges, Alison and the other volunteers have helped spark a big improvement in the Pymmes.

"I didn't know the river that well but it was obvious that it wasn't being well looked after," she told the *Dispatch*. "We realised how poor the water quality was, it was one of the worst in the UK, and we decided we couldn't keep walking



Alison Archer pictured at Broomfield Park where she was one of the volunteers who helped create a new wetlands Credit: Vinnie Lo

past, the river needed our help!"

A water quality modelling project had originally been run by environmental charity Thames21, but after it ended the volunteers took it upon themselves to take action. Alison had no prior knowledge of working with rivers, but said: "We are trained by Thames21 so

that we're proficient and we can go in ourselves and pull out old bikes and whatever else we find.

"We have grown amazingly well and new people are always welcome at our clean-ups. The thing about rivers is that you are learning all the time and you are all learning together."

The group is officially called 'Pymmes and Salmons Brookers' because the volunteers have also carried out work along the Salmons Brook, which merges with the Pymmes in Edmonton. They also organise walking tours and sometimes get involved with the creation of wetland areas in green spaces such as Broomfield Park, helping to create new habitats for wildlife as well as cleaning streams and reducing flood risk.

"It's impossible to describe the feeling you get after a day working in a river, and that sense of achievement," added Alison. "It's extraordinary."

To get involved with Pymmes and Salmons Brookers:
Email: thepymmesbrookers@gmail.com

Nominate your heroes

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

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These large events are destroying Trent Park

The chair of the Friends of Trent Country Park, Peter Gibbs, has heard enough of the council's excuses

Why does Enfield Council insist on hosting major events at Trent Country Park attended by 25,000 footloose revellers?

The park is not set up to handle such events safely without there being an impact on visitors and neighbouring residents. The council's record of allowing such events to be held there in recent years – including last month – is bleak.

The Friends of Trent Country Park and Cockfosters residents in general have had to put up with this annual invasion for six years now. This year two large festivals were planned on two different weekends in August; 51st State (7th–8th) and Elrow Town (21st–22nd).

During the staging of 51st State Festival the 200-year-old, Grade 2-listed gateway to the park, in Cockfosters Road, was badly

damaged. This was the third time this has happened in recent years, and it is caused by festival organisers who continue to insist on using massive twelve-wheeler trucks to deliver their equipment. The council is apparently too weak to tell them to stop doing it.

In addition to this damage, one of the flat, grassy areas within the

other issues such as safety, crowd control, prevention of anti-social behaviour, drug dealing, congestion, or transport? How assured can we feel about these?

The council still sets aside all of August for promoters to build their stages and palisades to support each event. During this time, at the height of summer, free access to the 'core area' of these events is denied to visitors of Trent Park. The council instead invites families to push their buggies over tree roots, through the woods, or around the bushes elsewhere.

“All we hear is that events are the responsibility of promoters, not the council”

park that many visitors use for family picnics and games became a sea of mud, because the festival promoter did not lay down sufficient protection. Again, the council apparently did not insist on sufficient safeguards.

If these basics are so poorly managed, what can we expect of

Recriminations are flying. The council stated the damage following 51st State Festival was “beyond anything we would expect to see” and announced the cancellation of the second of August's large events, Elrow Town Festival, stating it was “in discussions with the organisers of the previous



The “sea of mud” after 51st State Festival at Trent Park Credit Friends of Trent Country Park

event [51st State] and will take all necessary steps to ensure the grounds are returned to their previous condition” before admitting that “this remedial work will take some time to complete”.

The council also insists it has “robust and stringent standards and measures which all organisers have to abide by” – but do they actually care a jot? All we hear is that events are the responsibility of promoters, not the council. Really? On public land?

A large section of Whitewebbs Park is now set to be leased to

Tottenham Hotspur FC, with its public golf course already closed. It shows a pattern of commercialisation of open space in Enfield that does not benefit the 330,000+ residents of the borough.

We want this changed. We want the council's leadership to recognise that its policies are counter-productive, unsustainable and harmful, that there is nothing beneficial to show the people of Enfield in return for its loss of amenity. After six years we reckon we've waited long enough.

Hello local businesses!

If you need to advertise your licence application, you local paper will help you with that:

Email

xavier@socialspider.com



Peter Fallart was elected to represent Bush Hill Park for the Conservatives at a by-election in July



Taking pride in Bush Hill Park

Bush Hill Park ward by-election winner Peter Fallart wants to improve the local street scene

Can I begin by thanking the residents of Bush Hill Park for electing me in July. I am proud to join the ward's existing team of hard-working Conservative councillors; James Hockney and Clare de Silva.

One key concern is the way Enfield's Labour-run council has allowed the borough's street scene to deteriorate. As I walk around the ward with my fellow councillors, we find too many broken road signs, dangerous pavements, faulty street lights, and roads in need of repair.

We report problems as we find them, but we shouldn't have to. Enfield Council should be identifying these problems and acting first, not neglecting them until being chased.

One example of this neglect is the skatepark at the junction

of Great Cambridge Road and Church Street. This was allowed to get into a shocking state, strewn with litter, overgrown weeds and offensive graffiti – to name but a few issues. After much badgering by my ward colleague Cllr Hockney, the council cut back the weeds, cleared some litter and removed the graffiti. But the skatepark is still in a very poor condition and we will continue to chase the outstanding problems.

Another example is King George's Field in Delhi Road (pictured above). For some years, the council has adopted a policy of 'meadowing' parts of the field. This has meant not cutting the grass or maintaining those parts of the field; this is badged as 'promoting nature', though I suspect cost-cutting is the real reason. Over the years, these unmanaged areas have expanded to

large parts of the fields and have become scrubland, full of dog mess and wind-blown rubbish.

The irony to the council refusing to cut the grass to 'promote nature' while at the same time planning to build thousands of houses on Green Belt land has not been lost on residents who are understandably fed up with having to live with this eyesore. Frankly they deserve better, and we will continue to push the council to sort this out.

Finally, we have resumed our face-to-face surgeries at Ridge Avenue Library for Bush Hill Park residents to raise issues with us about council services. Please email me if you would like to book an appointment.

Peter Fallart is a councillor representing Bush Hill Park ward, along with James Hockney and Clare de Silva (all Conservative). To get in touch:
Email cllr.peter.d.fallart@enfield.gov.uk

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 **Monday 20th September**

Bad plan

Dear Enfield Dispatch

Having spent several weeks reviewing the 413-page draft Local Plan and the 60 or so documents in the evidence-base, I have been alarmed by what I have read. As it stands, the plan will lead to expensive, car-reliant homes being built on environmentally-valuable Green Belt land, such as Vicarage Farm near Trent Park. The evidence overwhelmingly shows that the homes built on sites like this will be unaffordable to most local people, especially first-time buyers and key workers.

We need to build new homes, but there are plenty of brownfield sites in Enfield that could be reused and recycled. These sites have not been properly considered in the plan. There are hundreds of small sites, which can be built out quickly by local firms, as well as large regeneration sites.

We face an affordable housing crisis and a climate emergency, but the draft Local Plan does not realistically or innovatively tackle either of these issues. It is developer-led and fails to properly consider the needs of local people.

Charith Gunawardena
Green Party councillor
in Southgate

Bad location

Dear Enfield Dispatch

Regarding the Covid-19 memorial planned for Town Park (*Our plans for Covid-19 memorial in Enfield*, Page 4, Issue 34); while this is a laudable project, could we possibly not locate this in the middle of Town Park? This is a multi-functional, municipal open space in the heart of town, largely unencumbered by obstacles. Why fill it up with trees and turn it into an arboretum?

The rose garden area near the entrance has changed into mixed planting, but that now seems neglected. The toilets are, in my opinion, atrocious. The former paddling pool has morphed into a splash park. The model boating pond closed many years ago.

Is there a development plan for the park, and if so, how does this memorial fit in?

John Usher
Chase Side

Bad service

Dear Enfield Dispatch

I am an elderly disabled man who needs to renew my Blue Badge pass. When my disabled female friend made a personal visit to Enfield Council she was met by two male officers who were very unhelpful and abrupt when she requested them to print out a Blue Badge form. She was made to feel uneasy and stupid. Both officers kept saying: "No-one is in the office, we don't print any forms."

When my friend asked to call the manager she was told there was no manager and to go to any local library to fill out an online form. I find this attitude from council staff very unpleasant and discriminating against disabled residents. Older residents like myself do not have a clue how computers work. I also have no family members who own a computer. So why does the council not have any discretion to print out Blue Badge and other forms to help disabled residents?

Mr Jordan
Bush Hill Park

Bad timing

Dear Enfield Dispatch

Understandably, train services were reduced during the recent lockdown. While I welcome proposals to increase the frequency back to four trains an hour [on the Hertford Loop line] from next May, I believe Great Northern could bring this uplift forward to accommodate the gradual increase we are seeing in passenger numbers.

This is also an opportunity to go further in the long-term. With the new trains now running on the line, having a 'turn up and go' service in place in the future, of six trains per hour, would encourage more Londoners to come back to using public transport and deliver a much better passenger experience.

This will not only have environmental benefits by reducing reliance on cars, but it will also provide more space for passengers on platforms and in carriages to ensure better social distancing while the virus is still in circulation.

Joanne McCartney
London Assembly member for
Enfield and Haringey

Leaks force residents to flee temporary housing block

People placed in temporary accommodation in Harlow by Enfield Council fear for their safety

BY SIMON ALLIN,
LOCAL DEMOCRACY REPORTER

Homeless people placed in a temporary housing block by Enfield Council have been hit by repeated flooding, leaving them in “unlivable” conditions.

A resident, who wished to remain anonymous, said he and dozens of other people from Enfield placed in temporary accommodation at Greenway House in Harlow, Essex, had been suffering from leaks and flooding for more than two years.

But he claimed the building was not being fixed because the council and the company that manages the block, Grange Homes, were “passing the buck” and each saying the other should foot the bill for the repairs.

Extreme weather at the end of July led the man to flee the building and stay in a hotel, fearing the flooding had put him at risk of being electrocuted.

The resident said: “A lot of flats here are flooded, and people have been left homeless. My flat is completely flooded and unsafe. It is unlivable. The electrics have been affected.

“I’ve been left to book hotels, but I’m

afraid I’ll run out of money soon and have nowhere to sleep. A lot of other tenants in this building have also been left without anywhere to sleep, or have had to sleep in the damp and rain that comes through the roof.

“There are 83 flats, and over 60% of the flats are leaking. I’ve got damp or mould, and we are expected to live in these conditions pretty much forever. The council are outright refusing to fix the building, and most of us have been left in unlivable and unsafe conditions.”

People on Enfield’s housing waiting list were moved to the building – a former office block in Harlow Business Park that was converted into flats – in 2018. At the time, it appeared brand new, the resident said.

But at the end of the year, the leaks began. The man described water pouring through the building’s smoke vent “like a waterfall” and running down the stairs to properties on the ground floor.

He claimed the leak had never been fixed, and more leaks later developed in other parts of the building. When the resident complained about the problems in his flat, he said he was moved to another flat, which was also affected by leaks. He was moved again, only to experience similar problems.

The man said he was still living in a hotel more than a week after fleeing his flat, and the situation was affecting his health. He said: “I’ve been in constant contact with the council, and I’m just being passed from department to department and have not been housed even for emergencies.

“I’ve been left to book hotels, but I’m afraid I will run out of money soon and have nowhere to sleep.”

In September 2019, Enfield Council pledged



Water has been running down the walls, causing extensive damage to homes at Greenway House in Harlow, where people have been housed by Enfield Council

to start phasing out the use of temporary accommodation outside the borough. It said tenants in a separate block in Harlow, Redstone House, would be moved to “more suitable accommodation” over the following six months, and a review of the council’s use of other accommodation in the town would follow.

“A lot of tenants have been left without anywhere to sleep, or have had to sleep in the damp and rain that comes through the roof”

An Enfield Council spokesperson, responding in early August, said: “Greenway House was purchased by [council-owned company] Housing Gateway in 2018 and is used by Enfield Council to house families who are at threat of homelessness.

“Greenway House was fully refurbished to a high standard prior to purchase but has been experiencing issues with its roof, which have worsened over the last month due to the torrential rain experienced over the summer. Where tenants have reported severe water ingress, action has been taken to move them to alternative accommodation either within Greenway House or elsewhere.

“The roof at the property has been repaired when leaks have been identified, but an overhaul of the roof has now been commissioned.

Housing Gateway has appointed the professional team that will lead the project, and work is expected to commence on 16th August. The programme of works is anticipated to take nine months to complete.

“We are aware of the resident’s situation and are urgently trying to find a solution to meet his specific needs.

“Since October 2019, we have changed our approach to emergency accommodation. We have ended our large-scale use of privately-owned blocks in other boroughs and aim to place residents needing emergency accommodation within Enfield wherever possible.”

Grange Homes was approached for comment.



Damage to a ceiling at Greenway House



Leaking water around a light switch

The reality of living in temporary accommodation

The first of a two-part investigation into Enfield's housing problems

BY SABAH HUSSAIN

Enfield's most vulnerable residents have accused the council of neglect and mismanagement over many years.

The borough has the country's second-highest number of homeless families living in temporary accommodation, and several residents have spoken to the *Dispatch* for this investigation to discuss how they feel let down by the council.

Michelle* and her two-year-old daughter escaped domestic violence in 2016 and, after approaching the council for emergency help, was offered a one-bed flat. But Michelle says it was mould-infested, damp, and unsafe for a vulnerable family.

The council subsequently moved Michelle into a one-room studio in 2017. It was one of many at Brickfield House, a former office block in Southbury Road converted six years ago into 115 homes under 'permitted development' rules and now used for temporary accommodation by the council. As with many other converted office buildings, some homes there are smaller than the minimum size normally allowed for a single person.

Living in a nightmare

Michelle said living in Brickfield House felt like "living in a nightmare". While her stay should have been short, Michelle lived there in cramped accommodation for four years. During this time she witnessed a violent physical attack and saw blood on the walls, experienced bullying and verbal abuse from staff, and was told by neighbours about maggots, mice, leaking and flooding.

While Michelle and other residents made repeated complaints about the state of the block, she says the council took little action to make improvements. "I lived in a forgotten house," Michelle said. "It feels like [the council] have no heart."

Respondents to a 2019 survey conducted by Housing Gateway Limited, the council-owned company managing Brickfield House, suggest living conditions there are "unacceptable". In anonymous comments, many residents cite overcrowding, with many single-parent

A former office building, Brickfield House in Southbury is used by Enfield Council to house hundreds of people in temporary accommodation



families having to live in a single room with one or more children.

One resident wrote about the "cramped conditions", as well as "terrible" noise levels, cockroaches, and "nightmare neighbours".

Treated as insignificant

Another resident wrote that "none of [their] needs are considered" and that they are "treated as insignificant". And a tenant who lived in a small one-room studio unit at Brickfield House with their three children for three years claimed "nobody wanted to help".

In response, a council spokesperson said: "We take the quality of our services and accommodation extremely seriously. Last year, following complaints about Brickfield House, we commissioned an independent report into the management of the building. This found that while the building was generally well managed, there were some specific improvements that we could make."

"We are implementing an action plan in response to the report. The key actions being addressed include new processes for managing complaints, increased staffing levels, and sensitive lettings to minimise disruption. To minimise overcrowding, Brickfield House residents are prioritised for 'move on'."

In common with many other councils across the country, Enfield Council has a 'take it or leave it' approach to housing offers. The council states on its website that people making homelessness applications "will not have a choice" of where they live if they are placed into temporary accommodation, adding:

"It feels like living in a nightmare"

"We will only make one offer for temporary accommodation and, if you don't accept this, then it's likely you will need to find your own accommodation."

Forced to take an offer

In these circumstances, homeless and vulnerable Enfield residents feel forced to take whatever they get offered. Kelly Pummell is another of these. The 38-year-old has been living in emergency accommodation for six years. While she had always lived in Enfield, Kelly was moved to Tottenham when she first needed emergency housing, away from the friends and family she needed for support.

Kelly said she felt "isolated" and that the Tottenham flat was so small she didn't have enough space for her daughter's cot. She later moved

into another flat, but problems with damp meant she had mould on her walls, clothes and daughter's belongings. Kelly is now living in her third emergency housing property in six years and has been sleeping on a sofa bed for most of this time because there hasn't been enough space for her own bed.

Welfare advocate Philip Courtney has worked on dozens of social housing cases and says the way his clients have been treated suggests there are high levels of "bullying" at the council. While the local authority has a duty to help its residents, Philip suggests the council has ignored the "suffering" of residents. A spokesperson said the authority "takes any accusations of verbal abuse or bullying by staff members, or of staff members, extremely seriously".

Contradictory messaging

One of Philip's clients, Helena*, was told by the council her rent would increase by over £50 a week. But she received contradictory messaging, as one council official told her there was no reason to increase her rent, while another "confirmed the rent would be increased". A council spokesperson denied rent charges for temporary accommodation residents had been raised but said "there have

been changes in service charges".

Council officials also incorrectly reported Helena's rent statements, suggesting she needed to pay more rent than she actually did, causing her undue stress. Helena was given less than 48 hours to accept a housing offer, with the risk the council would withdraw its help in finding her suitable accommodation if she didn't respond within their allotted time period.

Councillor Dino Lemonides was a council cabinet member for housing in Enfield prior to leaving the Labour Party last year. He says that Enfield's housing problems stem from a "national shortage" in affordable housing, which is only worsened by Enfield's "very old" housing stock, leading to poor conditions for residents.

An immense challenge

A council spokesperson said: "Enfield Council is committed to using all its resources to make the experience of homelessness rare, brief and non-recurring. We are determined to enable everyone to access a stable, secure and decent home."

"Enfield Council's aim is to bring an end to the long-term use of temporary accommodation within the next five years. However, we face an immense challenge. In 2019, we were accommodating 3,414 households in emergency accommodation. This equates to more than 11,000 people, with over 4,000 of these being children."

"The current government has done little to address the funding or infrastructure needed to deliver the homes desperately needed and to [meet] the needs of thousands of families living in temporary accommodation in Enfield."

"In an effort to break the cycle of long-term temporary accommodation, Enfield Council is embarking on a programme of building safety and providing sustainable and affordable homes. We are investing £1billion to provide 3,500 new council-led homes over the next ten years."

"In addition, the private rented sector has an enormous role to play. To protect tenants Enfield Council has introduced private rented sector licensing schemes."

This investigation has been funded by Trust for London, in conjunction with The Centre for Investigative Journalism. Part two will be published next month.

*Name changed to protect person's identity

How an email thread became a novel

Dan Brotzel introduces the comic novel he and his neighbours wrote via email

After five years of writing and crowdfunding a comic novel written by myself and two other authors – all living on the same road in Southgate – has finally been published.

The book, *Work in Progress*, is about a group of oddball wannabe writers who meet regularly to feed back on each other's work. The seven members are all quite eccentric in their different ways, and the plot involves romance, deception, a cosplay stalker and an alien mothership invasion, among many other things!

We all belong to a writers' group, which gave us the idea for the book, which we originally called 'Kitten on a Fatberg'. Alex explained: "We each took on a couple of the characters, and sent each other email messages in character.

"None of us knew exactly what would happen next, so you'd have to read the email, find out what your character had been up to and come up with a response. Every so often we'd have a pub meet and try to think about the overall plot.

"It's not the most straightforward process but it was brilliant fun."

The manuscript was accepted for publication by Unbound, a publisher which eschews the traditional publishing model in favour of a crowdfunding approach.

Martin said: "The idea is that you raise the money up front in advance sales to cover all the costs of producing the book, from editing, to publicity, to distribution.

"Once the book is published, there's no advance to work off, but a profit-share agreement operates instead."

"Writing the book together was a joy – a real celebration of our friendship"

Raising the money took about 18 months. In addition to attracting over 200 advance customers, we raised some of the money ourselves, for example by writing articles and editing other people's books.

It's not a quick process but it was a fantastic feeling when it was done. After another year of production, the book finally hit the



From left; Southgate authors Martin, Dan and Alex

shelves this summer and has been receiving very positive reviews – it currently averages 4.7 out of 5 stars on Amazon.

"This was a funny, clever book that made me laugh out loud," said one reviewer. "What more can you want in a pandemic?"

Would we ever do it again? Well, we already are. Alex says: "Writing the book together was a joy – a real celebration of our

friendship. Crowdfunding is hard work but we'll definitely do another book together."

The new story centres on a fading UFO cult that's running out of members.

"It's another comedy about a kooky group of unappreciated misfits," says Martin. "I can't think where we get these ideas from."

'Work in Progress' is available from Amazon, Waterstones and Bookshop.org, among other retailers.

Popping up at the palace

Shopping centre to host temporary culture space for local performers

Apop-up arts and community hub is launching this month in Enfield Town.

'Culture Palace' inside Palace Gardens Shopping Centre will be a temporary cultural playhouse that will host exhibitions, theatre, children's books, art activities, workshops, a mindfulness café and more.

The hub will be run by the same team at Enfield Council responsible for running the cultural programme at the Dugdale Centre, which is currently being refurbished ahead of its reopening next year having previously been used as a Covid-19 vaccination centre for the past few months.

In addition, Pickled Pepper Books, an independent children's bookshop and theatre company from Crouch End, will also use the space.

Palace Gardens will host a pop-up from Edmonton-based Artist Hive Studios. This pop-up – 'Field' – will bring in a range of

artists to work on site, with a shopfront gallery space and a range of workshops and activities.

Field and Culture Palace will work together on special events and activities to get people from across Enfield involved. Paul Duke, Pal-

ace Gardens centre manager, said: "We are very excited to be hosting Culture Palace at Palace Gardens this autumn. Our shoppers are sure to find lots of great things to see and do.

"We expect visitors will enjoy their time at the arts and community hub in Palace Gardens

so much that they will keep coming back to see what else there is and what's new."

Deputy leader Ian Barnes said: "Theatres, museums, libraries and art centres support our local economy, bring character to our town centres and connect and educate communities. This is a fantastic collaboration with Palace Gardens, to whom we'd like to extend our thanks for hosting this as the first of a series of culture and community pop-ups."

Local arts and culture groups have been critical of the council's future plans for the Dugdale, which will see more office space created on the first floor by reducing the space previously used by Enfield Local Studies Library and Archive, as well as others. The ground floor theatre and Museum of Enfield will remain.

Cllr Barnes added: "We have been proud to support the NHS Covid-19 vaccination efforts and are thrilled the Dugdale has welcomed more than 35,000 people to be vaccinated over the last few months. But we are also looking forward to the Dugdale Centre reopening as the borough's beloved cultural hub in spring 2022."

To find out more about Culture Palace: Visit dugdalecentre.co.uk



Children's puppetry will be among the activities hosted at Palace Gardens Shopping Centre this autumn
Credit: Enfield Council

The new exhibition space at The Southgate Club is free to browse for non-members



Community art space opens in Southgate

New gallery at The Southgate Club will showcase local artists

BY JAMES CRACKNELL

A private members club in Southgate has opened up to the public to help support local artists.

The Southgate Club is better known as a live music venue, regularly hosting the popular St Harmonica's Blues Club, but is expanding the use of its premises in the town centre to address a shortage of gallery space in Enfield.

The club in Chase Side is now providing a community space for artists to display and sell their work, allowing non-members to come in for free and browse the artwork being displayed.

Marek Pospieszalski, chair of The Southgate Club, told the *Dispatch*: "We are offering gallery space to local artists and the plan is to open up a cafe as well and have different displays up every two weeks.

"We realised there was a lack of exhibition space in the area and we wanted to support talented local artists."

The gallery's new "atmospheric" hanging space, including lighting and fittings, was funded by benefactor Ralph Hutchings. It is now open during the club's regular hours, from 5pm until late Monday–Thursday, from 3pm on Fridays, and from 12pm at weekends.

"We realised there was a lack of exhibition space in the area and we wanted to support talented local artists"

The first artists to feature at The Southgate Club are Anne Hutchings and Nicola Scott, who work in printmaking, drawing and painting.

Anne said: "Enfield has a large number of artists, but a dearth

of hanging space has always been a problem. To this effect, the redundant area was given a new floor, paint scheme, new sofas, good lighting and an efficient hanging system.

"It's curious, double-sided fireplace has been stripped back to the brickwork."

Anne says her print and pencil drawings are "driven by an untidy mind" while Nicola's work "uses nature itself, with hints of decay and regeneration". She adds: "Future shows already planned will be abstract canvases, panoramic photography and printmaking. "Post-pandemic, the simpler things in life are becoming more important, and community spirit starts at the grassroots. It is hoped the new gallery can contribute in a small way."

Prospective exhibitors at The Southgate Club are welcome to get in touch and send examples of their work. For more information:
Email southggallery@gmail.com
Visit southgateclub.com

LISTINGS

Submit your listing

We can include low-cost community events taking place in Enfield. For next month's listings, email the details of your event to enfielddispatch@socialspider.com by **Monday 20th September**

MARKET

Crafters Corner

Saturday 4th September, 9am–4pm
Enfield Charter Market, Market Place, Enfield Town EN2 6LN

Browse and buy from an amazing range of handmade crafts and arts created by people local to Enfield. Work includes children's knitwear, reusable bags and fabric gifts, turned wooden ware, paintings, pottery, jewellery and more!

Free entry

Visit thetrustenfield.org.uk

DOGS

Fun Dog Show

Sunday 5th September, 12pm
Henry Barrass Stadium, Jubilee Park, Houndsfield Road, Edmonton N9 7RE

Jubilee Park Dog Training Club presents 'Fun Dog Show' with a chance to enter your pooch into a range of different awards categories, at just £2 per entry. On the day there will also be hot food, music, stalls, beer, face painting and a bouncy castle.

Free entry

Email tailwaggers4dogs@aol.com

DANCE

Winchmore Folk Dance Club

Tuesday 7th September, 10am–12pm
Winchmore Hill URC, 77 Compton Road, Winchmore Hill N21 3NU

Starting this month Winchmore Folk Dance Club will meet every Tuesday morning to enjoy folk dancing from every era. Experienced callers used. All welcome, including beginners – join us for a free taster session!

Members £2.50, non-members £3
Call 020 8360 6226

WORKSHOP

Landscape Photography Workshop

Sunday 12th September, 10am–1pm
Forty Hall Estate, Enfield EN2 9HA

This workshop will look at how to compose more interesting landscape images, covering the basic rules of composition and camera settings. No specialist equipment required. This workshop is led by Pat Simmons from the Royal Photographic Society.

Tickets £35

Visit fortyhallestate.co.uk

FAIR

Fancy Fair

Saturday 11th September, 10am–7pm
The Green, Winchmore Hill N21 1AY

Back for the first time since 2019, enjoy a wonderful day with a huge selection of arts and craft stalls, street food and bars, classic fairground rides, our lovely Brighton beach donkey rides, plus lots of attractions new for 2021!

Free entry

Visit fancy-fair.co.uk

MARKET

Forty Hall Farmers Market

Sunday 12th September, 10am–3pm
Forty Hall Farm, Enfield EN2 9HA

Local food producers and street food stalls with a focus on local, organic produce. Come ready to fill your shopping baskets with a feast of tasty morsels.

Free entry

Visit fortyhallfarm.org.uk

TALK

An Audience with Stuart Lawrence

Wednesday 15th September, 7.30pm
Millfield Theatre, Silver Street, Edmonton N18 1PJ

Join Stuart Lawrence, younger brother of Stephen Lawrence who was murdered in a racist attack in 1993, as he talks about what inspired him to write his book 'Silence Is Not An Option'.

Tickets £18 adults, young people £8
Call 020 8807 6680

Visit millfieldtheatre.co.uk

FESTIVAL

EnCaf Big Green Festival

Sat 18th to Sun 26th September
Various locations around Enfield

Enfield Climate Action Forum (EnCaf) is supporting Climate Coalition's nationwide festival to highlight the climate emergency we are in and put further pressure on world leaders to act. Look out for activities happening across the borough, with more than 60 groups involved.

Free entry

Visit encaf.org/festival-calendar



Dr Nnenna Osuji was appointed as the new chief executive of North Middlesex University Hospital NHS Trust earlier this year

Credit North Middlesex University Hospital NHS Trust

Pandemic impact at North Mid 'will be felt for years'

BY JAMES CRACKNELL

The impact of the pandemic on the treatment of non-Covid ailments at North Middlesex University Hospital will be "felt for years to come".

This is according to the new chief executive of the NHS trust running the Edmonton hospital, who has reacted to the release of new data showing the hospital is falling behind on several national targets for key performance measures.

A report published by North Middlesex University Hospital NHS Trust last month revealed that the percentage of patients waiting under 18 weeks to be treated – described as the 'referral to treatment' (RTT) time – had reduced from 94.4% before the pandemic to 85% in June 2021. This puts it below the national target of 92%.

Out of a total of 14,374 people on North Mid's waiting list for treatment as of June 2021, 94 had been waiting for more than

a year and 16 had been waiting for more than 90 weeks. Before the pandemic, only eight patients had been waiting more than 40 weeks and none more than 52 weeks.

In diagnostics, the NHS target is for 99% of all patients to receive a diagnostic test within six weeks, but North Mid's performance has dropped from 99.6% in December 2019 to 87.1% in June 2021.

And for cancer treatment specifically, the national target is for at least 85% of patients to start a first treatment for cancer within two months (62 days) of an urgent GP referral.

At North Mid, this performance measure has fallen from 88.9% before the pandemic to 64.1% in May 2021.

Dr Nnenna Osuji, North Mid's chief executive, said: "North Mid was one of the first trusts in the country to experience the impact of Covid-19 during the first wave, and again in the second wave, with huge demand of our services from severely ill patients with Covid-19.

"Despite this, the trust has continuously adapted its services in line with government guidelines to ensure the safety and care of our patients remains a top priority."

During the peak of the first wave of the pandemic in spring 2020, the trust had more than 250 Covid-19 positive patients in an inpatient bed, while at the peak of the second wave in January 2021 there

were more than 300 coronavirus patients at North Mid.

At these peak times, non-cancer elective activity was reduced. Cancer patients requiring urgent treatment had their procedures performed at private health-care providers, freeing up space for Covid-19 patients at North Mid.

Dr Osuji added: "Throughout both peaks, the trust has continued to provide patients who require non-Covid care with the treatment they need, accelerating this where possible and using clinical review.

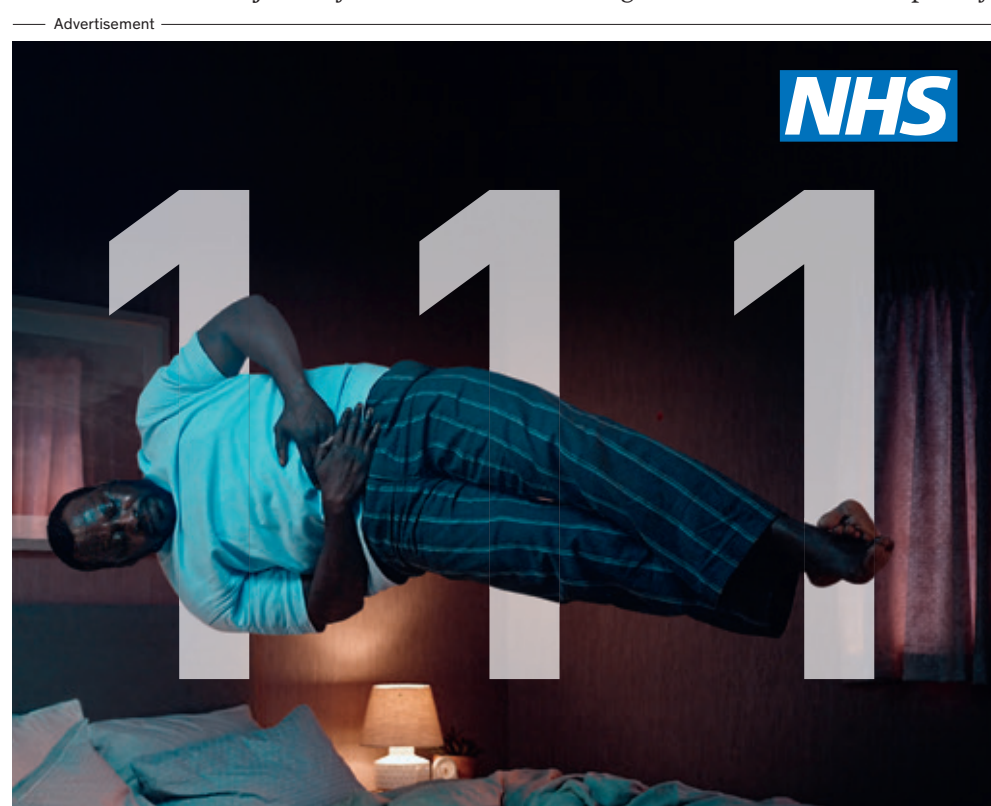
"Having said this, the impact of Covid-

19 will be felt for years to come, and we continue to work with GPs and local health partners to help make sure that local people receive care in the most appropriate setting."

A trust spokesperson added that it had introduced "a Covid-19 secure pathway" for patients having surgery at the hospital via the newly-opened Sir Captain Thomas Moore's Centenary Ward. Any patients waiting more than 52 weeks for treatment are clinically reviewed at least monthly.

Attendances at North Mid's accident and emergency (A&E) department are also up this summer, with the hospital seeing a record number of attendances in July, when there were sometimes more than 700 patients seen in a single day, compared to the average of 550–600 attendances per day.

"The impact of Covid-19 will be felt for years to come"



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AROUND THE BOROUGH

PONDERS END

New youth centre opened



The new Ponders End Youth Centre building includes a music recording studio
Credit Enfield Council

A NEW BUILDING FOR PONDERS End Youth Centre was opened in South Street as part of an estate regeneration programme.

The new two-storey youth centre in South Street features a recording studio, boxing gym, mechanics workshop and basketball court, as well as several multi-functional spaces, and is fully accessible. It is open to young people aged between eleven and 19 years, or up to 25 years if they are disabled.

The building was funded by Enfield Council's Alma Estate regeneration project, in partnership with developer Countryside. The old youth centre, first opened in 1971, was deemed "no longer fit for purpose" and is now being demolished.

The deputy mayor for Enfield, Christine Hamilton, cut the ribbon to declare the centre open and was joined by Edmonton MP Kate Osamor. Speeches were heard from young leaders, past mem-

bers, Joe Morris Boxing Club and Steppaz, which provides professional classes for all ages to help develop self-confidence.

Mahtab Uddin, the council's cabinet member for children's services, said: "This is a state-of-the art facility for all our young people living in the borough of Enfield, providing a safe place to learn and play."

"I thank everyone involved in this project bringing it to a reality."

Kevin Delve, a managing director for Countryside, said: "As the first of the new community facilities to be opened at our 'Elements' regeneration of Alma Estate, this is a particularly important milestone for us."

"The new youth centre is symbolic of our commitment to creating a sustainable community for future generations in Ponders End, and we're proud to see the regeneration take this vital step forward."

More than 1,000 new homes are being built on Alma Estate, with hundreds already complete. Three of the estate's original four tower blocks have now been demolished to make way for the redevelopment near Ponders End Station.

COCKFOSTERS

Revised tube station plans submitted

BY SIMON ALLIN,
LOCAL DEMOCRACY REPORTER

RESIDENTS AND COMMUTERS face being "seriously disadvantaged" by a development planned for a tube station's car parks, campaigners have warned.

Representatives from residents' groups slammed plans by Connected Living London (CLL) – a partnership between Transport for London (TfL) and Grainger – to build 351 flats in blocks of up to 14 storeys on the car parks at Cockfosters Station.

The developer originally planned to retain just twelve parking spaces for Blue Badge holders but added an extra 35 publicly accessible bays in response to an earlier

consultation with residents. It has also reduced the number of homes and now plans to include a pick-up and drop-off area made up of seven parking bays.

But local groups remain deeply opposed to the scheme, which Enfield Council has confirmed departs from two local planning policies. Peter Gibbs, vice president of the Federation of Enfield Residents and Allied Associations, said: "There is in no way such a shortage of building sites that these car parks have to be ripped up and a lot of people – not just locals but commuters as well – have to be seriously disadvantaged."

Campaigners warn the development at Cockfosters would add to parking stress and congestion

on surrounding streets, as well as having an unacceptable impact on those with mobility issues.

Colin Bull, chair of Cockfosters Local Area Residents' Association, said the developer was "completely overburdening" the area, as well as "taking away parking from people who really need to access the tube".

CLL claims the development would provide "urgently-needed homes", with 40% classed as 'affordable' and priority given to those who live and work in Enfield. It also claims the scheme would provide £4million to boost local infrastructure.

Residents can view and comment on the plans by visiting the council's planning portal and entering reference 21/02517/FUL.

WINCHMORE HILL

Appreciation shown

BY NEIL LITTMAN

TWO RESIDENTS HAVE RECEIVED a 'certificate of appreciation' from the mayor of Enfield for services to the community.

In an event delayed by the pandemic, mayor Sabri Ozadin was joined by Winchmore Hill councillor Maria Alexandrou, plus friends and neighbours, to present the awards to Albert Lawson and Kevin Saunders.

Albert's award was in recognition of a decade spent keeping The Green and Wilson Street clear of leaves and litter, as well as involvement with other community initiatives. Kevin's award was for similar work in the Compton Road area.

Albert, or 'Albie', has been a resident of Winchmore Hill since 1974. His late wife Ginette, who died in July 2020, has also been commem-



Enfield mayor Sabri Ozadin presents a certificate to Albert 'Albie' Lawson, joined by ward councillor Maria Alexandrou
Credit Neil Littman

orated, with a bench on The Green. After Albie fell victim to a scamming incident, losing the money he'd saved for the bench, a fundraising appeal by neighbours instead paid for it to be installed in January.

PICKETTS LOCK

Power of poo

EXCREMENT FROM DEEPHAM Sewage Treatment Works will be used to create "green biogas" to heat thousands of local homes.

Thames Water is working with gas distribution network SGN to build a new £7.3million biomethane plant at the facility in Picketts Lock Lane, using the gas generated at the site to heat 3,500 homes across Enfield borough. The water

company claims this will avoid more than 8,000 tonnes of carbon dioxide being emitted into the atmosphere from traditional heating methods.

Francis Paonessa, a director at Thames Water, said: "We're delighted to be working with SGN on this opportunity to create clean, green biogas, using waste sludge from the sewage treatment process."

BUSH HILL PARK

No love for tennis plans

BY SIMON ALLIN,
LOCAL DEMOCRACY REPORTER

A PLAN TO BUILD FLATS ON disused tennis courts was rejected amid concerns over the financial justification for the scheme and its impact on a conservation area.

Bush Hill Park Bowls, Tennis and Social Club's bid to build eight flats on two of its tennis courts in Abbey Road was refused by Enfield Council's planning committee last month after 103 residents objected.

The club wanted to use funds raised from the sale of the land to improve the five courts currently in use. Council officers recommended the scheme for approval, saying they were satisfied with the evidence of the club's declining income.

But Conservative committee member Maria Alexandrou pointed out club membership had risen since 2017 and suggested building on tennis courts would undermine the council's efforts to tackle obesity.

Attack on the track

A 99-year-old former railway worker shares her memory of the time a V2 rocket nearly hit her train at Palmers Green Station



The aftermath of the V2 rocket attack at Palmers Green Station in October 1944 Credit Enfield Local Studies Library and Archive

BY JAMES CRACKNELL

On 26th October 1944 at around 6.39pm, the Nazi Wehrmacht launched one of its much-feared V2 rockets from a German missile battery within the occupied Netherlands. Just six minutes later, it landed on a railway track just north of Palmers Green Station, narrowly avoiding a stationary train on the platform and another that was heading south towards it. The rocket left a crater 15 metres wide and 7.5m deep, sending debris flying into the air and wrecking several nearby homes. Dozens were injured, both on the platform and in the carriages, while one man was killed after being struck by a piece of debris on a nearby street. Gladys Garlick was working as a passenger guard for London North Eastern Railway (LNER) and happened to be on the train at the station. Now aged 99, Gladys spoke to the *Dispatch* about her memories of the incident. “The train

was moving about quite a bit from the impact,” she recalled. “There were paving stones from the platform landing on top of the carriages. “There was one girl who had a serious head injury and then there were more minor casualties, on the train and on the platform, so we set about helping them as best we could. “There was this great hole at the end of the platform, but they filled it in again, and [two days later] I was on the first train to go over it! They wanted to get the trains running again as quickly as possible. We went into work and carried on like normal.” Gladys was living in Bowes Park during the war and now resides in Suffolk. Her story is one of many told in a book, *Female Railway Workers in World War 2*. She added: “That was the closest Hitler got to killing me – thankfully he didn’t succeed!” The V2 that landed at Palmers Green Station was one of 26 such rockets to hit within the modern boundaries of

Enfield borough. Joe Robinson is a local writer and historian who is currently researching for a new book describing the impact of both V2 and V1 rocket attacks in the local area.

“There were paving stones from the platform landing on top of the carriages”

Joe, describing the Palmers Green Station incident, said: “Travelling faster than sound, the V2 rocket gave zero warning and hit just off the far end of the platform away from the station building. The driver of the moving southbound train frantically managed to brake the train before it crashed into the crater. The northbound train remained still as debris rained down on it, leaving passengers badly shaken and 53 injured. “Miraculously, there was only one

fatality, after a piece of metal track was blown into Old Park Road, killing an 83-year-old man named Frederick Harris. “The explosion left a vast crater [and] over 50m of track was smashed with large pieces blown out. One section embedded itself like a giant arrow in the trunk of a nearby tree. The blast wave wrecked adjacent houses, as well as damaging shops in the surrounding streets and breaking windows on two passing buses, leaving a conductor suffering from shock. “Looking at photographs of the destruction it is hard to believe that the authorities were able to get the huge hole filled and the track repaired for trains to start running just two days later.” The V1 and V2 ‘flying bombs’ campaign, carried out between June 1944 and March 1945, killed around 100 people in what we know today as the London borough of Enfield (the area was still part of Middlesex at that time). Across England, there were around 9,000 casualties from V weapons in total (the ‘V’ stood for Vergeltungswaffen, meaning ‘retaliatory weapons’). While this was far lower than the impact of the Blitz earlier in the war, which claimed upwards of 40,000 deaths, the V1s and V2s were widely feared because they gave little or no warning of where and when they might hit.

Anyone who has further information about any of the V1 and V2 rocket attacks in Enfield during the war is urged to contact Enfield Local Studies Library and Archive: Email local.history@enfield.gov.uk

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Volunteers at the Pymmes Park event



The return of Parkrun

Stephen Lloyd-Jones invites people to lace up their running shoes again

After a 16-month, pandemic-enforced hiatus, Parkrun is back! The UK's biggest mass participation sporting event now has three locations in Enfield borough; two five-kilometre adult races at Pymmes Park in Edmon-ton and at Grovelands Park in Southgate, taking place every Saturday morning from 9am; plus a new 2km junior Parkrun event taking place every Sunday from 9am at Town Park in Enfield Town, open to all children aged between four and 14 years.

The concept of Parkrun is simple – you turn up, run the route, and use a personal barcode to record

a time at the finish line, so you can see how your performance measures up against others in your age group.

Pre-pandemic attendances at our Parkrun events in Enfield had reached record levels in early 2020, but the restart this summer has been cautious for obvious reasons. More volunteers are needed per event in order to avoid any crowding at the finish line and barcode scanning areas. Runners are also asked to start roughly according to their likely finishing time.

After six 5km events run under these arrangements over the summer, we are pleased to say that everything is looking safe and well

organised, giving us confidence to start encouraging runners back to start encouraging runners back in larger numbers this autumn.

If perhaps you have been less active during the pandemic, Parkrun is a welcoming environment in which to start physical exercise again. Parkrun is free to join and is a great community event, held outdoors in some of Enfield's fantastic green spaces.

Registration online is required before you start, but then all you need to do is turn up on time with a printed copy of your barcode (scanning from phone screens is not available) and then the website records your weekly times, plus any volunteering you have done. Free milestone running shirts come with 50, 100, 250 and 500 runs, and also after volunteering at 25 separate events.

Volunteer roles include time-keeper, barcode scanner, pre-race briefing, course setup, safety marshalling and 'tail runner' to support and encourage those needing to take their time. Remember to opt in to the volunteer email when you register.

For more information on the Pymmes and Grovelands Parkrun events:

Visit parkrun.org.uk/pymmes
Visit parkrun.org.uk/grovelands

For the junior Parkrun event at Town Park:
Visit parkrun.org.uk/enfieldtown-juniors



Runners cross the finish line at Grovelands Park

Going global

Andrew Warshaw on how Enfield Town FC hooked up with a US entertainment company

BY ANDREW WARSHAW

It isn't every day that a non-league football club signs a sponsorship deal with a global brand.

Of all the celebrations surrounding Enfield Town's 20th anniversary this year, none can quite match the excitement triggered by the remarkable shirt sponsorship deal with wrestling company WWE's British arm, NXT UK.

Commercial details of the recently announced tie-up, covering the 2021/22 season with an option to extend, are not being revealed. But, suffice to say, it has generated unprecedented national and international exposure for the club – the UK's first supporter-owned team – with media coverage across Europe, the United States, Mexico, India and beyond.

Two years ago, WWE launched its first state-of-the-art international performance centre with two full-size wrestling rings smack in the centre of Enfield borough, at Great Cambridge Industrial Estate in Lincoln Road, just a five-minute drive from Queen Elizabeth II Stadium. NXT UK wrestlers have been training there ever since.

Right from the start, the idea of linking up with the local community was a specific goal of the company, according to WWE representatives. The conversation thereafter was all about how WWE, which has a global 'reach' of one billion people, could develop a way of working with the football club, in what is being viewed as far more than merely showing the NXT UK logo on players' shirts.

Michael Levin, WWE vice president, international, said: "The launch of WWE's UK Performance Center in 2019 saw the roots of NXT UK firmly grounded in Enfield and, through this partnership, we are thrilled to continue supporting

the Enfield community."

Significantly, never before has the organisation, which broadcasts to more than 180 countries in 28 languages and is used to partnering with some of the world's biggest blue-chip companies, struck this kind of deal with any sports body, let alone a non-league football club. It may sound extraordinary, but it's true.

The announcement video by hall-of-famer Triple H generated more than 450,000 views in the first couple of days, accompanied by 200-plus pieces of written editorial across the globe. For Enfield Town FC, it resulted in an immediate rise in demand for replica shirts.

Throughout its tenure, WWE's mission statement has been to "put smiles on peoples' faces" and officials have stressed to the *Dispatch* that Enfield Town's supporter-owned ethos had a lot to do with the tie-up. In fact it's the crux of the entire partnership.

Levin added: "Enfield Town FC and WWE share an intrinsic value of putting fans at the heart of everything we do, a vision of supporting the next generation

of talent in sport and entertainment, and a goal of putting smiles on the faces of our fans."

Towners chair Paul Reed, who helped negotiate the deal, could not contain his excitement and said: "For a fan-owned club committed to delivering a sense of community and entertainment to the local area, to have a partner with the magnitude and ethos of WWE is truly special."

"Our vision is one of inclusivity and equality for all and to be a social centre for Enfield, and we welcome NXT UK as part of the family in our 20th anniversary."

As well as off the pitch, things couldn't be going much better for Enfield Town on the pitch. At press time, after two games, the Towners were joint top of the Isthmian League Premier Division, having won both fixtures – scoring six goals in the process.

"It's truly special"

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